A Quarterly Journal of Culture Surveillance Center aims at: disseminating cultural information as a means of providing immunity against cultural mutation; and serving as a focal point of culture monitoring network dedicated to safeguarding of Thai cultural identities. Hardly ever too late to vitalize Thai culture and Thai society to its former glory.
The objectives of the journal are:
1. To serve as a coordinating center for propagating cultural information and also for modifying cultures by various culture surveillance groups.
2. To monitor culture-related matters and alert the public of ongoing as well as potential dangers to culture.
3. To generate social cooperation in culture surveillance through cultural dissemination; and to serve as forum for exchanging views and opinions related to culture and cultural action.

Journal Staff
Mr. Somchai Sanglai
Permanent Secretary of Culture
Mr. Prorop Laovanich
Deputy Permanent Secretary of Culture
Ms. Chansuda Rukpolimueng
Deputy Permanent Secretary of Culture

Editor
Ms. Ladda Thangsuphachai

Editorial Board
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Ms. Thitima Jiramanit
Ms. Jarupha Karomboon
Ms. Thasorn Yimsanguan
Ms. Chanakarn Padungvorasart
Ms. Lalita Linitda

Cover and Artwork Designer
Tookkatoon Thai Souvenir Ltd. Part. Culture Surveillance Unit

Office of Permanent Secretary Ministry of Culture
Thanalontorn Tower
666 Boromrachachonnese
Road Bang Plad, Bangkok 10700
Tel. 0 2422 8846-8 Fax : 0 2422 8844

Greetings are extended to our members and all in Culture Surveillance Network. This issue of Culture Surveillance Center Journal coincides with the coming of Buddhist Lent for Buddhist devotees and Ramadan Fasting Rite for Islamic communities. During these sacred periods, they were encouraged to reflect and act according to their faiths, review their behaviors in deed, speech and thinking based on the teachings of their religions - as performed, observed and passed on from generation to generation. Such practices have rendered the country to live in peace and harmony, in accordance with His Majesty King of Thailand’s admonition delivered on the occasion of the opening of Chow Sam Phraya National Museum, December 26, B.E.2504 – “The safeguarding of culture is the protection of the nation.”

In the third quarter of the year, Thailand has a brand new government, which announced the National Policy of the ruling party to the House of Parliament on August 23, B.E.2554 – covering religions, arts and culture. It promised to amalgamate and in-duce Thai spirits into one entity moving the country towards national reconciliation and making Thailand a strong and happy nation amidst the global turmoil.

This issue of Cultural Surveillance Network seizes the opportunity to launch the theme of the Culture for Strengthening Nationhood through elevation of national consciousness for Thai culture, for the country with strong Thai culture will move forward. It is a strong possibility if Thai people in all sectors as stakeholders join hand to strengthen their culture. By the same token, if national culture is left wanting of caring, nurturing and safeguarding, the negative impact on national peace and tranquility will be sadly telling.

This issue of Culture Surveillance Center Journal consists of:
Six-sided mirror: Relationship between Thai King and Thai people: as seen from four Royal Palaces in four regions

Culture Surveillance Network: Sustainable development of Culture Surveillance Network

Culture Lounge: Interview with Deputy Permanent Secretary of Culture, Ms. Chansuda Rukpolimueng on Culture of Strengthening Nationhood.

Culture Promotion Activities: The custom of candle procession on the beginning day of Buddhist Lent in the Northeast

Special Report: Promotion of Thai fabric and Thai dresses as part of campaign for strengthening nationhood

Look upward Thai Skies: How long does it take Bangkok to become what it now is?

Network Power: Let us be in the know

Entertainment: Maiya-rarp Battle

Miscellaneous: Gang Tai Pla

Editor
Thai Royal Institute and Thai people have been inextricably interrelated over a long period of time that they cannot be easily separated. Sukhothai kingdom with Khun Sri Indrathitaya credited, as the first king was a patriarchy system. The monarch was the father and the people were family members. With the title of “Po Khun” in his name such as Po Khun Ramkamhaeng, the king was very close to his people. The people who had any major complaint could ring a bell placed at the gate of his palace. After the reign of Po Khun Ramkamhaeng, Sukhothai kingdom had undergone vast expansion. With the increase in the population, the king could not look after all of his subjects; the kingdom was hence shifted towards dhammraja. Partly to project the political might of the leader, the title of Paya or Phraya was given to the king –such as Phraya Loe Thai and Phraya Ngua Nam Thom. Later on during the reign of Phraya Li Thai, the title was changed to Phra Maha Dhamaraja in accordance with the religious thinking of Langka Wangsa brought in form Sri Langka.

During the Ayutthaya period, Hindu belief received via the Khmer changed the court system to deity system or the system of supposed deity. According to this belief, the king was the incarnation of god destined to rule the people. The title of the king began with the word “Somdej.” Since the king ruled people of many races, maintained good relationships with other countries and sometimes went to war to protect the sovereignty of the country, he assumed the absolute authority over the kingdom.

During the early days of the Ratanakosin period, Thailand had never felt stronger need to reform its social structure to gain acceptance from the western countries and at the same time to protect the country from being colonized. Finally, King Rama V declared abolition of slavery paving the way for the foundation of democracy in the later years. In B.E. 2575 in the reign of King Prajathipak or King Rama VII, the Kingdom was changed into constitutional monarchy, and the royal power to govern was transferred to a civilian government and the military group. The King could only exercise his power through the legislative, executive and judicial mechanism defined by the National Constitution B.E. 2575. Up to the present time, the Kingdom has
had 18 National Constitutions with the latest one being the National Constitution B.E. 2550. However the present King of Thailand still works for the well being of his subjects as well as for the progress of the country and continues to nurture religions and national culture.

The reign of the present King coincides with the time of many uneventful changes and developments. There had been several unfavorable economic and political events in Thailand such as turbulences of October 14, 2536 and October 6, 2539, the suppression of communist activities or the Asian present King had not been disturbed. The King continued to work for the welfare of the rural people in every region of every province as well as for overseas Thais.

The Activities of the King during the sixty years of his reign have laid the foundation for the good lives of his subjects, the means of earning good living and providing the protection his people from natural disasters affecting their farmlands. The Kings’ works can be divided into for major areas i.e. rural development, agriculture and irrigation, medicine and education. There are several important projects such as Suan Jitladda private project, the royal project of Ang Khang, the reforestation project, reservoir project [kam ling], the royal project of artificial rain, the project of preparing vocabulary for young people, Chai Pattana turbine project, the royally initiated project to produce gasohol, and the royal initiative project on sufficient economy.

His Majesty’s visit to the people in each region covered a lengthy period to allow time for the King to familiarize himself with local conditions and come up with proper solutions. This in turn necessitated royal residence in each region for the King to work and rest. A list of royal residences that affect the good relationship between the King and the people in each region is presented.

Klai Kang Wol Palace in the central part of Thailand is the palace that King Pok Kloa alias King Rama VII built out of his private purseat the seaside of Hua Hin District, Prajuab Kiri-khan as a gift for his Queen Rampai Panni in B.E. 2469. It is about three kilometers to the north of Hua Hin beach. M.C. Itthi Thepsan Kridakorn was the architect and supervisor of the construction. There are four buildings in the palace i.e. Piam Suk, Pluk Kasem, Irbprem and Empriya.

King Rama VII called this palace Klai Kang Won Resort, but the Palace Emblem of B.E. 2472 referred to it as Klai Kang Wol Palace. There is no clear record of the royal edict to name it as a royal palace; we will however call it as Klai Kang Wol Palace. At present it is used as a summer holiday resort of King Bhumipol, Queen Sirikit and members of the royal family.

Phu Ping Rajanives is in the northern part of Thailand built as a royal residence for the King and his Queen. The building of this royal palace on the top of Doi Suthep, Muang District of Chiangmai, Chiangmai province at 19th kilometer landmark about four kilometers from Doi Suthep began in B.E. 2503.

Phu Ping Rajanives is opened daily to the public including on public holidays. Exception is made during the royal visit - as a rule in the months of January to March.

The architecture of Phu Ping Rajanives with its elevated floor is in a Thai style known as ruan moo of Thai houses in the central plain. The raised floor is the private royal quarter and the ground floor is for the royal retinues. M.C. Chalerm Kridakorn and Mr. Mitrarun Kasemsri were chief designers. Gen Royal Kampanart Sanyakorn, member of the Privy Council was assigned to lay the foundation stone on Thursday, August 24, B.E. 2503. The construction took five months to complete.

This royal palace was used to entertain King Frederick IX and Queen Ingrid of Denmark during the month of January B.E. 2505.

Phu Parn Rajanives is in the northeastern part of Thailand. Situated on the ridge of Phu Parn mountain range, this royal palace is about thirteen kilometers from the province of Sakolnakorn along the royal highway 213 [Sakolnakorn-Karlsinthu]. It was built in B.E. 2518 along the western style. and used as a royal residence for King Bhumipol and Queen Sirikit. It was open to the public when the royal family is not staying there.

His Majesty King Bhumipol himself chose the area for the construction of this royal palace. Using the aerial map, the King surveyed the forest and
the waterfall to determine the building site and the surroundings. The area was divided into an inner and outer court.

Originally the site has an area of 940 rai. The project of reforestation or returning the forest to nature increases the area to 1,010 rai making the total area of 1,950 rai. This royal palace is for the King to stay for monitoring the royally initiated projects in the northeastern area – usually during the month of November to December. The public and government workers were allowed to receive audience from His Majesty to discuss the projects. During the absence of the King, the outer area regarded as one of the main tourist attractions of Sakolnakorn province is open to the public.

Taksin Rajanives is in the southern part of Thailand. It is situated on top of Tan Yong Mount on the coastal area Kalu Wor Nua district, Muang household, while the lower part is for petty royal household guards. In the outlying area there are garden for decorative plants, and trees. There are also cages for pheasants, birds and wildlife amidst the rare trees of the south. A space in the lower area is designated for the special vocational center producing ceramic and earthenware for sale to eke the income of the natives.

Taksin Rajanives is basically the residence of His Majesty the King, his Queen and members of the royal family when they are in Narathiwat. As a rule the King will come to stay at this royal palace for following up his royal projects and meeting the people of the south.

All royal palaces built in various areas have different histories and importance. One thing, they have in common all are the place that tells the story of the close relationship between the king and his district, Narathivas province about eight kilometers from Narathivas along Narathivas – Takbai highway. It covers an area of about 300 rai along the foot of Mount Tan Yong and the nearby beach area. The construction of the palace began in February, B.E.2516. It was designed for the residency of His Majesty King Bhumipol, his Queen and members of the royal family during their change of residence to the south usually in the month of August to September.

The palace was built in brick in panya style as favored by the people in the south. The upper part is the royal private quarter and the royal subjects. They are the place where the King stays in the course of his following up of the royal projects. These projects are for the benefits of the people in each region. The King takes the trouble to travel to these areas to study the way of life of the local people and to get solutions.

Throughout his reign, it has become clear to Thais and foreigners alike that King Bhumipol has been the hardest working king for Thailand and Thai people.
In the course of just over a decade, the Culture Surveillance Network has been extended to cover provinces, districts and sub-districts, and education institutes totaling over ten thousands with 2.2 million members. The Network has met with a number of success such as:

- Culture Surveillance Centers have been established at province, district sub-district and educational institute levels.
- Rating of various media i.e. television, film have been adopted and is to be extended to cover game, video disc and print media.
- Building up immunity for society through publication of literature warning the public of various dangers have been accomplished: e.g. Culture Surveillance Journal, conducting public poll on culture, preparation of video media such as Thai children in cultural dimension, Thai etiquette and production of films on mask dance, B-boy, Missing out on the News and Udom Santi.
- Spaces for safe and creative media have been opened: such as running traveling exhibition on good games, organizing traveling campaign to propagate safe and creative media, setting up action-based National Center for Safe and Creative Media with opening express line 1765 and pioneering establishment of fund for safe and creative media.

The operation of Culture Surveillance Network has been expanded to include training of young volunteers for culture surveillance and training of...
working personnel at provincial level.

In the past, the development of potential for personnel in the central and provincial areas by giving trainees knowledge, improving measures, means and tools aimed at increasing efficiency and effectiveness of cultural surveillance. The building of leadership for social and cultural changes and transferring psychological strategies required for moving the works of members in the network were considered very important.

The introduction of the curriculum of training workshop known as “Pro-active leadership empowerment to sustainable development network.” represents a major step in the training of direct and indirect personnel to activate the spirits of the owner of the culture and the advancing of the cultural works. In this curriculum, trainees besides listening to experts on modernization were supervised by one facilitator who gave lecture and video presentation. Participants were given the opportunity to analyze data form case study, to engage in brainstorming session and to exchange view in order to find the principle, which could be applied to real situation and presented to their respective seniors. There had been interesting cases in which the network had optimally adopted and adjusted the proposition for their own work.

Pro-active leaders have different characteristics from ordinary leaders. Pro-active leaders think there are always ways out for each problem. They are engaged in the frame of mind that motivates followers to become effective leaders, respond to problems and challenges in the management and pro-active team, use resources and initiatives to rid the good effort of any obstacle, support the work by being good example and give the best of themselves in the current role. In addition proactive leaders are able to pause for thinking and allowing themselves the freedom to react on the basis of the desirable principle and result. When the gap between the stimulus and the reaction is determined, the freedom of choice is bound to expand. There should be no reactive behaviors that will let the outside influences i.e. emotion, feeling and situation to take control. This is to say they must think of the situation that will make them express continued reactive response i.e. running short of patience, avoiding confrontation and lacking discipline, and then choose the way to respond properly and efficiently. In doing so they must answer the question -what the positive effect may be, -who is the winner and loser and what is the main impact. Towards this end they must be constantly thinking how they should react if the same situation incurs, how they can better react to the situation. They see not only problems but also opportunities or alternatives using resources, knowledge, budget, available tools and cultural resources within and without the organization in order to arrive at optimal decision-making.

The power used to effect changes and successes may be obtained from different sources such as:

- The power from within to change themselves is, for example, self motivation can be used to induce self stimulation, to look for new perspectives, to build motive, to create personal special skills, to train themselves in the skills they do not have and to tell the organization what kind of training they need to increase the knowledge and skills of their personnel.
- The power from society to build up social motivation is for example, creating good examples and role models for others to follow, to create personal special skills, to train themselves in the skills they do not have and to tell the organization what kind of training they need to increase the knowledge and skills of their personnel.
- The power from the environment is to build motivation from the organization structure for
example, adopting rewarding return in parallel to punishment, creating skills, abilities to bring about changes using data, tools supporting working condition or using publicity or communications for such purpose.

In running such projects, the Ministry of Culture aims at using the personnel who have gone through the training program as examples to pioneer changes and strengthen the Culture Surveillance Network, to expand the network within and without the province, to alter the behavior of the personnel within and without the office to the point they can use the total strategy to drive the management of the network in a systematic manner.

The enlargement of the Culture Surveillance Network relies on the cooperation of members in monitoring way of life and all kinds of media impacting children and youth behavior, and in ridding society of dangerous media in order to arrive at knowledgeable society with immunity in accordance with government’s policy. This is an opportunity and a challenge for Thais in all sectors to unify their efforts, to join in the Culture Surveillance Network and show their proactive power to bring change and cultural strength to Thailand.
The custom of candle procession on the beginning day of Buddhist Lent in the Northeast

By Panchalee Doung-Eiad

“Upon the coming of the eighth month of the lunar calendar,
The sky was dark with the rain clouds,
My day of being ordained, And being separated from loved one was drawing near.
We saw each other on the merit-making day. She decorated the flowers in the pots, Cut into the shape of rhino, elephant and buffalo. They were for sale. Dolls of Brahmin were simply beautiful. Paul plants were marvelous. The golden tree, the flagpole and the wax hinsula bird, Sold to men and women—twenty five satang for a couple.
Every item was bought for offering to the Buddhist priests.”
Above is the translation of traveling verse “Niras Duen” composed by Nai Mee or Muen Prom Sompad Sorn, poet born during the reign of King Rama I. The composer was one of the students of Suthon Poo. Niras Duen is a lament for his lover and describes the tradition and custom of the society of the composer in those days. Like Klong Dawa Tasma of Ayutthaya period, “Niras Duen” is so sweet linguistically that wrongly thought to be composed by his master Suthorn Poo.

Buddhist Lent described also in Niras Duen is one of the most important days in Buddhism. On this day Buddhist priests make a vow to stay put in one place of residence throughout the period of three months as required by the rules for Buddhist priests.

The word “the beginning day of Buddhist Lent” or “Wan Khow Pansa” means “the day for taking rest away from rain,” and Buddhist priests promise to spend the night at one temple. During Buddha’s time, Buddhist priests had the duty to travel far and wide to proselyte Buddhism even during the rainy season and brought a complaint from the folks. Villagers complained that Buddhist priests trampled their rice fields and destroyed their crop. Buddha thus laid down the rule requiring Buddhist priests to reside in one place during rainy season, beginning from the first day of the waning moon of the eighth month of the lunar calendar to be known as “purim pansa”.

If there are two eighth months in any year, Buddhist Lent will be postponed to the latter eighth month and ends on the fifteenth day of the waxing moon of the eleventh month of the lunar calendar - to be known as Later Buddhist Lent (Pajim Pansa). Exception is made for a Buddhist priest who travels to one place and cannot return on the same day. In such case the priest is allowed to stay away for no more than seven nights. If the priests stay away more than the allowed seven nights, he will not reap the benefits of Buddhist Lent. Such conduct is branded as missing-out-of Buddhist Lent.

On the beginning day of Buddhist Lent, the faithful present candles to Buddhist priests in a glamorous procession. As bee wax is use to make candle, it is thought that the wits of the presenter of the candle will be as sharp as that of bees. The presenting of candles especially in the leading provinces of Thailand has assumed the grandeur form of procession. We cannot ignore the tradition of candle procession in a colorful parade of Ubon Ratchathani province – a city with a long tradition of culture and custom. Candle procession is definitely a major merit-making ceremony of the province of Ubon Ratchathani.

From the account of one elder, the town folks of Ubon Ratchathani had competed for the grandeur of the procession since B.E. 2470. Until 2520, the province of Ubon Ratchathani organized “Candle Procession Week” as the grandest at Tung Sri Muang ground and Chaturamuk Pavilion. There was candle contest of two kinds, -candles imprinted in pattern and candles carved in various forms. The candle processions each dominated by a candle queen of the month proceeded from various temples and lined up along the road beginning from Wat Sri Ubol-ratanaram and ending at Tung Sri Muang ground. The celebration of the candles was floodlit by candle light setting the city aglow.

From B.E.2542, the candle procession of Ubon Rachathani is named as follows:
“Candle Procession in Honor of Seventy Two Birthday of the Great King, B.E. 2542” to mark the
sixth cycle of His Majesty’s birthday at Tung Sri Muang

“Lom Bun Buja Tawai the Great King B.E. 2543” or “Merit Making in Honor of the Great King, B.E. 2543” by the people of Ubon Ratchathani.

“Beauty Candle – Wisdom of Ubon Ratchathani People B.E. 2544.” As the candle procession had deviated beyond recognition from the original idea, the candle procession was revised to retain the old wisdom of Ubon Rachathani people.

“Glory-Glorious City B.E.2545” or Roj Rung Muang Silp B.E.2545.” In the project “Touring Thailand in Each Month,” Ubon Rachathani province was named one of the most outstanding tourists destinations of Thailand, activities related to tourism were organized by inviting international artists from fifteen countries such as the United States, New Zealand China and Japan to participate in the competition of decorating wax candles. Tourists from many countries worldwide attended the fair throughout July 2545. “Roj Rung Muang Silp” is the abbreviation of “Ubol - the City of Learned Men, Arts and Beautiful Land.”

“The Royal Subjects Follow Dharma B.E. 2547 –Absolutely Beautiful Candle Procession in Honor of the Seventy Second Birthday of Queen Sirikit B.E.2546” or “Tuay Ras Fai Tham –Ngarm Lam Tian Pansa for Maha Rajini.” As the name indicates, the procession was to mark Queen Sirikit’s birthday.

“Fiftieth Anniversary–Royal Grace for Ubon Rachathani People B.E.2548.” There had been no royal visit to Ubon Rachathani by any royal personage during the past 200 years. The Royal Couple’s visit to Ubon Rachathani during November 16 to 17 overwhelmingly delighted the people. They are grateful to the royal graces that have blessed them throughout the last fifty years and many years to come.

“Sixty Years of Royal Grace-Beautiful Pansa Candles in Honor of the King B.E.2549.” The fair was organized to mark the King’s sixty years on the throne.

“Glorious City of Dharma, Glory and Sufficiency for the People B.E.2550,” or “Hung Huang Muang Dharma, Lert Lam Tian Pansa Puang Pracha Po Piang B.E.2550.” The fair was organized as part of the celebration of His Majesty upon reaching the age of eighty on December 5, B.E. 2550 and an expression of loyalty and appreciation for His Majesty’s admonition on way of life of Thai people.

“Tying the Candles, Tying the Minds and Tying the Merits B.E. 2551,” or “Lom Tian Lom Jai lae
Lom Bun B.E. 2551 “The title is borrowed from the tradition of merit-making conducted every month. Each merit making begins with the word “bun” meaning the tradition of merit – making. In the past, the candles was tied in a bundle and hence the name of the candle procession of B.E. 2551.

“Glorified City of Dharma, Glorious Merits, the Candle and Economic Sufficiency for the People B.E.2552.” or “Hung Huang Muang Dharma, Bun Lam Tian Pansa Puang Pracha Po Piang B.E.2552.” Ubon Rachathani is definitely a city rich in culture, dharma and fertile soil. It is branded as a glorious city or Hung Huang Muang Dharma blessed with three most important entities i.e. Buddhist dharma, culture and nature. Merit making has been known for the last three hundred years. Ubon Rachathani now becomes a gathering place for international tourists and the people nationwide. Those who attend the merit making in the eighth month will receive great merit associated with the candle procession. This year the concept of self sufficiency of His Majesty has been adopted into the title of the fair to encourage happy living without unnecessary luxuriant and vain ambition and to be content with what we have.

“Glorified City of Dharma, Great Beauty, the Candle and the Wisdom of Ubon Rachathani People B.E.2553,” or “Hung Huang Muang Dharma, Ngarm Lam Tian Pum Panya Chow Ubol B.E.2553.” The fair emphasized the three basic philosophical of Ubon Rachathani i.e. dharma, culture land environment. The location of Ubon Rachathani is known as Bee Hive Forest and the place is abundant in bees, which give bee wax needed for the making of the candle.

It is well known that the Office of the Royal Palace took bee wax from Ubon Rachathani to make the royal candle for offering. Ubon Rachathani is also known for its fair number handicraftsmen. It is no surprising that they can produce very beautiful carved candles as pictured in the minds of the craftsmen. The candle procession itself is born out of local wisdom growing into town wisdom. Its strength is to give power to the community and finally a remedy for national ills.

“Glorified City of Dharma, Great Beauty, the Candle and the Wisdom of Ubon Rachathani People B.E.2554,” or “Hung Huang Muang Dharma, Ngarm Lam Tian Pum Panya Chow Ubol B.E.2554.” The theme of the fair of this year is the same as that of last year i.e. B.E.2553. The fair took place from July 1 to July 31, B.E.2554 at the ground of Wat Tung Sri Muang. The special arrangements of the fair for this year is imprinted and carve candles were to be put on the one single candle by five famous art gurus. The aim of the fair is to mark the Eighty Four Birthday of His Majesty King Bhumiphol and to express loyalty of the people of Ubon Rachathani for their King.

The coming of Buddhist Lent may be the direct business of the priests, but it is an occasion for Buddhist devotees to make merit, observe basic tenants and purify their minds. On the day prior to the coming of Buddhist Lent, town folks go to the temple to help Buddhist priests cleaning their habitats, mending residence and pavilion. On the day of the coming of Buddhist Lent, they join in presenting food, offering, flowers, jots sticks and candles and daily appliances such as soap, brush and toothpaste and so on.

Some others listen to the sermon, observe Buddhist tenets, and refrain from drinking alcoholic beverage and killing animals. Some parents are apt to ordain their sons as priests as it is considered to be a very high form of merit making.
Thai identities and Thai cultural heritages can be seen in Thai arts, Thai manners, Thai language, Thai food and Thai costume. Thai people show foreigners the character of being Thai by using most of these items. Many oversea visitors marvel at the beauty of Thai identities to the delight and pride of Thai people. However some Thai identities long forgotten by Thai people are in need of being redeveloped. Rapidly making their ways into Thai culture are foreign cultures such as way of dressing. As Thailand is absorbing the European influence of dressing known roughly as universal style, traditional dressings are rarely seen except at some major ceremonial occasions.

AncientThai way of dressing came into two kinds i.e. slipping on like a skirt and wrapping around like a blanket. Slipping on can be seen from panung and wrapping around from jung kraben and sabaio stripe around the upper part of man and woman. Some wayward youths of those days wore wrapping-around perhaps of different or inferior quality without rolling the edges and tucking it at the back.

Promotion of Thai fabric and Thai dresses as part of campaign for strengthening nationhood

By Jarupha Kamonboon
The inter-relation between the Thai and the West in the reign of King Chom Kloa or Rama IV (from B.E. 2394 to B.E. 2411) had seen Thai people dressing more and more like western people. From then on Thai people have gradually adapted their manner of dressing until it has become as it is today. (Anek Navigmoon 2546)

At the present time, dressing is done in accordance with current fashion. Thai girls think nothing of wearing a short skirt above their knees and a tight blouse. Other fashion may call for a long skirt depending on the wearer's taste. Dressing of Thai people, dictated by foreign cultures via various media or emulating celebrities, singers or show persons is changing continuously. Jean material has come to have a commanding role in Thai fashion. Wearing jean pants or finished blouse, which are relatively cheap and easily accessible from dress shops, seems to be a normal practice for Thai girls. The manufacturing and exporting of jean dresses represent also one of the major sources of national income.

Thai government however attaches great importance to dresses made from Thai material. In B.E. 2537, the Office of National Culture Commission launched a campaign for Thai culture aiming at preserving, promoting and transmitting Thai culture in various branches. The promotion of Thai fabric as part of the campaign was in support of the career of the farmers, Thai handicraft, safeguarding and transmitting traditional weaving, designing of Thai material, dyeing all of which are rapidly disappearing.

Not every region has engaged in weaving, the occupation solely reserved for women as it depends on the availability of raw materials.

The north and the northeast where weaving is prevalent, are known for mulberry bushes, rearing of silk worms and growing of cotton as the raw material for weaving. More importantly, Thai weavers appear to have inherited the weaving tradition from their neighboring Laotian cousin. In this tradition - who will be silk, cotton, tie-and dye, kit or jok weaver depends entirely on the wisdom of their ancestors.

In the south, there are some provinces
engaged in weaving such as Nakorn Sri Thmmaraj for pa yok, Songkla for pa ko yaw and Chaiya District of Surat Thani for pa pum riang. The weaving of pa yok may be influenced by Malaysia.

In the central, there is no clear evidence of the weaver of the past. There was nevertheless a record telling of extensive cotton growing in the wake of the immigration of Laana and Laotian people into the central plain.

When talking about Thai fabric, some will think of the material made from natural fibers such as silk, cotton and to certain extent linen asa fiber in minority too. At present, some inventive weavers use rayon, known as artificial silk fiber or a mixture of a number of threads to make fabric.

Thai material, a highly valued product coming out of Thai wisdom is facing the lacking of support and slowly disappearing like “kled toa” cotton material, a long time-honored produce as the identity of Thai Khern group—with Auntie Pen or Mrs. Chanpen Tankamnerd as group chairperson.

From Auntie Pen’s account, Baan San Kampaeng is situated in Saimul Subdistrict, SanKampaeng District, and Chiangmai. Its people live simple lives, and follow Khern’s culture as the identity of the village. Each house in the village maintains a loom for weaving material to be presented to Buddhist priests and also for preparing dresses. Later on the government steps in and encourages the people in each village to form a farmer wives’ group producing material for sale to eke the income.

Our ancestors had produced material with “lai kled toa” pattern for a long time and passed on to us. The color of the material is improved by dyeing with natural dye prepared from coconut husk, and sap sua grass. Local knowledge combined with new technology leads to the material with San Kampaeng identity and fetching high prices for the villagers. Colorful beads are strung to the vertical lines alternated with the horizontal ones of the
material to get lai kled toa pattern with affixed beads.

Auntie Pen also tells us housewives’ group of San Kang Pla are very proud of their products. Although not too terribly well known, they are in cotton, hand embroidered and reflect Thai identities. The prices begin from hundred baht up to one thousand baht. At present there are about 40 to 50 persons in a group. All members have continuously undergone training, and been on study tour. There are also trained instructors teaching members the art of sewing and improving the quality of the products. The budget for training is the responsibility of related governmental unit.

The duties of group members based on individual interest are split among them. There are dyeing, weaving, thread spinning and selling units. The task of the group has now been expanded to cover designing ready to wear dresses. They are well received by Thai and foreigners.

The receipt of the award for OTOP (acronym for one tambol - one product) standard given by the Office for the Promotion of Agriculture in the North on July 28, B.E. 2542 is the reward for the hard work of Auntie Pen and housewives’ group. Housewives’ meticulous care in the selection of raw material for weaving leads the road to the award. The design of the patterns depends on individual creativeness and the production skills.

Thai people make Thai material originally for their own use. Their products now sent to various parts of Thailand have been well received especially by private and government units using them in auspicious occasions. Beside daily production routine, the housewives’ group also takes order from their customers.

Thai cotton material has the property for absorbing sweat from the body. Natural dye needs special care that requires special knowledge. The care of Thai material is delicate but not too complicated a process, if the customers take time to learn the procedure from the handbook. The methods of laundering cotton and silk are similar. Laundering calls for a mild detergent or children shampoo. The material after being soaked and lightly scrubbed is washed clean of detergent. Care should be taken to avoid using dye-attacking detergent and brush that causes the deterioration of the material. Before being put to dry, the material should be lightly squeezed or rolled up in a towel as to get rid of remaining water. Under no circumstance it should not be twisted, as it will ruin the shape of the fabric. For ironing, the material should be gently sprayed with water and ironed with high electricity rating. Good silk does not easily wrinkle and need no chemical spray for ironing for it will strain the material.

From the viewpoint of the present in the changing age, we cannot deny that ready-to-wear dresses are so popular and meet the need of the present time. They are easy to buy and can be altered to meet the different situations.

It has great importance to human beings and society - giving happiness, pleasure and relaxation to listeners. Its other merit is - music as a universal language brings people of each age, sex and race together and serves as a link for good understanding of members of society.

Source of data : Chiangmai Culture Office
How long does it take Bangkok to become as it now is?

By Thasorn Yimsanguan

“O, Krungthep the city of the immortal, Fits to be the Royal Capital. So beautiful it is at night. Its beauty is beyond the description of words. The spires of the palaces are so grandeur. The people male and female rejoice, As though to challenge the gods and goddesses.”

Above is a rough translation from Thai into English of a song composed by Grand Master of song writing, the late Ua Sunthon Sanan. The song compares the beauty of the city of Bangkok with a heaven, the abode of the gods and goddesses. King Rama I, the founder of Chakri House, gave the name of the city built on the eastern side bank of the Chow Phraya River. Needless to the name is the most appropriate.

Krungthep or Bangkok’s full name is: “Krungthep mahanakorn baworn ratanakosin mahindara yutthaya mahdilok popnoparata rajthani burirom udom raj nivesmaha satan amorn piman avatarn sathit sakka thatiya visanukam prasith” roughly translated as: “Bangkok, a large city of the immortal is the dwelling place of the Emerald Buddha. Unconquerable, the city is secure, beautiful and rich in precious stones. A large number of palaces are places for reincarnated ones. Sakkaraj kindly asked Visanukam to create it.”

Krungthep is also known as Krung Ratana Kosin. It is assumed that the word “KrungThep” was borrowed from the beginning word of “Krung Thep dawaradi Sri Ayutthaya.” King Chom Kloo or Rama IV changed the name of Bangkok from “Baworn Ratana kosin” to “AmornRatana kosin.” The Royal Capital has gone through many traumatic changes affecting the lives of many individuals. Three years after the founding of Bangkok, King Padung of Burma led the Burmese army known as a nine army battle to attack land passes and water ways in Thailand, as a test of Thai strength whether the Thai could defend their territory. The Burmese army was however defeated and forced to leave Thailand.

From the reign of King Lert La or Rama II, several countries from the west began to make inroads into the kingdom and coerced the country to make unfavorable treaty. At last the first treaty on trade between England and the kingdom was signed during the reign of King Nang Kloo or Rama III. King Monkut or Rama IV who conducted his own study and became well versed in English, sciences and technology undertook to revise some regulations and traditions of the country. In the process he managed to keep up with the pressure of oncoming western ideas and show the West that the Kingdom had long history and culture unrivalled by any country. This line of development went on until the Kingdom’s confrontation with France in the crisis of R.S.112 or B.E.2436. The Kingdom during the reign of King Rama V had conceded many territories to foreign powers under several different
occasions. In total, the land lost accounted to almost what remain of Thailand today. King Rama V agreed to give up the minor effect of the First World War was the worldwide economic crisis of B.E. 2475, which was also strongly felt in the Kingdom. King Rama VII was obliged to make big cuts in the national budget in order to retain financial security.

The big event, which greatly affected the Kingdom, was the formation of People Party. In B.E. 2475, the People Party stated a revolution, which changed the Kingdom from absolute to constitutional monarchy. King Rama VII conceded to the demand of People Party by granting the National Constitution B.E. 2475, and abdicated the throne to preserve peace for the Kingdom. The Second World War, which began in 2484, came to Thailand. Thai government allied with Japan allowing free passage to neighboring countries. There were however, a large number of people disagreeing with the government of that period, and formed underground Free Thai. Their action was to spare Thailand from being declared a loosing party of the war. The end of the Second World War saw Thailand becoming member of the United Nation and began the move towards modernization. National development based on National Economic and Social Development Plan launched in 2503 ushered Thailand into the part of the land to save the country in the same way that some organ needed to be sacrificed in the operation in order to save the main part of the body. The Kingdom did not want to lose the country in the same way that we lost Ayutthaya. The declaration of the abolishment of slavery practiced since the Ayutthaya period unto that time was one of the greatest achievement of King Rama V. The implementation of the declaration took some thirty years to complete i.e. from B.E. 2421 to 2451 without any bloodshed. With the appreciation of King Rama V’s effort for the development of the Kingdom the people of Thailand have conferred the King with the title of “Somdej Phra Piya Maharaj”.

The First World War broke out in the reign of King Mongkut Kla or Rama VI. The Kingdom declared war against Germany and Austria and sent 1,200 soldiers to European theatre. Although there were no war activities in the Kingdom, the war had given the Kingdom many favorable changes. In the wake of Germany and Austria’s defeat, the Kingdom as party of the victor joined in the signing of Versailles Treaty became one of the founding members of United League in B.E. 2462 and had the opportunity to revise unfair treaties signed in the previous reigns.

One of the impacts of the war was raising patriotism. There were literary works in verse as well as in description, and patriotic songs. Other important competition with the rest of the world. At last the country became embroiled in present economic crisis. King Bhumipol of the present reign has thought and prepared for the hard times arising from the lacking of solid sound economic foundation and suggested sufficiency economy since B.E. 2517. It aims at the middle path, awareness, reasonableness, self-immunity including knowledge and virtue for righteous living. Most importantly Thai people must have knowledge and perseverance in order to arrive at happiness of living.

Our ancestors have delivered Thailand to present generation through sacrificing personal and mental comfort and protected the interest of the majority of Thai people. How Thai people in B.E. 2554 can help existing generation see the past and pass on the country to generations to come depends on our effort to make Krungthep become the city of the immortal befitting the name. Reference:

- Book on set of photographs of Kurusabha
- http://www.chaipat.or.th/chaipat/content/porpeing/porpeing.html
Let us be in the know

By Chanakarn Padungvorasart, Thasorn Yimsanguan, Thitima Jiramanit

The green family holidays

Dear Director of Culture Surveillance Center,

I am a housewife with two children at school ages. During Saturday and Sunday, I usually take my kids to participate in creative activities, be it extra tuition, merit making and listening to sermon. Lately, I had the opportunity to take my children to participate in the activities of the passing Mother’s Day. My appreciation is for the good work arranged by governmental and private units. They definitely see the importance of instilling awareness for the kids to do good deeds with the family and promoting the use of spare time in a creative way. I would like to see more of these activities.

Yours truly,
Member of Culture Surveillance Network

Is it too revealing?

Dear Director Ladda Thangsuphachai,

I had the opportunity to follow Miss Thailand World 2011-organized on the passing Sunday. There were a number of contestants and a decision had been made on the result. In the parading before the decision was made, contestants were required to wear swimming suits, which to me seemed more like lingerie. Some contestants aged between seventeen and eighteen should not be allowed to wear such suits. Madame Director, please check and do something to change wears of the contestants.

Thank you.

Yours truly,
Member of Culture Surveillance Network

1765 Culture express line

Dear Director Ladda Thangsuphachai,

I have followed the Journal of Cultural Surveillance regularly and found the column for complaint on cultural matter and for inquiry data of the Ministry of Culture. I heard that the Ministry of Culture is distributing booklets on Remediing Kamrna and decided to phone in for further information on how to get the book. I found good cooperation and got the information on the activities on the coming day of Buddhist Lent organized by the Ministry of Culture. I would like to thank coordinating officer via KhunLadda.

Yours truly
Member of Culture Surveillance Network
Is it too revealing?

such as TV Pool, Entertaining Cinema, Siam Star and so on. These magazines catering for the entertainment of local and foreign readership feature gossiping news of famous show celebrities. In these magazines, there are contents and photographs to draw attention of the readers including myself. Readers are encouraged to load photographs and clips. It is just that some of these photographs border on being lewd. I would like to draw the attention of the Director of Cultural Surveillance Unit to check and notify the publishers of these magazines to correct the situation.

Thank you.

Yours truly
Member of Culture Surveillance Network

Appreciation for working team of the Ministry of Culture

Dear Director of Culture Surveillance Center,

I am a Thai student now studying in Germany. I appreciate and support the work of the Ministry of Culture in developing safe and creative media. Children and youths as the future of our country are apt to act and imitate values in fashions that come via modern technology thus bringing no end of social problems. As a member of Thai society, I would like to express my most sincere appreciation for your good work in controlling the media and making them to show more responsibility and your effort to move the country in a proper direction.

Yours truly
Member of Culture Surveillance Network
Maiya-rarp Battle

Maiya-rarp Battle, a mask dance worthy of our attendance has returned to give a grand spectacle. The stage of a mask dance on Maiya-rarp Battle by Art Vocation Support Foundation of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit on December 5, B.E. 2554 is to mark the eighty-four birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibol. The Committee to Stage Mask Dance determines to make the observance of the occasion as grandest as possible in accordance with the intention of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit to preserve the high art form and present to the public. The task of putting up Maiya-rarp mask dance began with Her Majesty's wish to promote mask dance performance. A royal command was issued to design exquisite mask dance costumes and make-ups of the performers to suit a new technology supporting the show. The first show of mask dance was on the repertoire of Brahm-mas in B.E. 2550 at the Cultural Center. The show was so well received by the public that it was redone in B.E. 2552 at the popular request of the people who missed the first performance.

In B.E. 2553, Her Majesty Queen Sirikit chose to state mask dance on the repertoire of Nang Loi. The tickets were swept up in no time before the show starting time and as usual the performance had to be reintroduced.

Tan Puying Charungjit Tikara, assistance to secretary general of Art Vocation Support Foundation of Queen Sirikit and chairman of the committee to stage mask dance opined “the arrangement for each performance was far from being a...
company a “na part” dance as Maiya-rarp enters the ceremonial pavilion.

The scene of Maiya-rarp brandishing a magic telescope creating glowing stars as a ruse to Rama’s troop and the scene of the congregation of deities as an imagination of heavens, gods and goddesses to express joys for the return of Rama’s troop represent the fact that “Righteousness always conquers Evil.” The audiences, taught by the moral of the story will adhere to the noble principle of right and wrong in their minds so that peace and tranquility will reign supreme in the Kingdom.

Although several contemporary techniques are employed, the traditional values of this high form of performance remain intact. The director of the performance combines traditional ways of singing dancing and playing pi part, with modern show technique to make the performance more appealing to new generation of audience. Care is taken not to distract the audience from the theme. A new breed of performers chosen for the roles of hero, heroine, demons and monkey are drawn from students of College of Choreography, and Educational Institutes all over the country are also another way of safeguarding noble traditions of the Kingdom.
Deputy Permanent Secretary of Culture, Ms. Chansuda Rukpollmuang honors the Culture Lounge of the Ministry of Culture by granting us an interview concerning the link up of the work of Ministry of Culture and foreign countries. It focuses on concepts, viewpoints and insights pertaining to cultural management and their impacts on the culture of strengthening nationhood. We invite our readers to familiarize themselves with her brief history in order to get a better idea of the work she is doing.

Deputy Permanent Secretary of Culture, Ms. Chansuda Rukpollmuang, known affectionately as Deputy Pom by her subordinates graduated with a bachelor’s degree in Sciences from Chulalongkorn University, and a master’s degree in Master of Art (Educational Administration) from Michigan State University in B.E.2522. She began her public career on January 31, B.E.2523 with the Office of Culture Commission as Program Office 3 in Foreign Relations Section of the Division of Foreign Relations. She had been continuously promoted and in B.E.2533 was appointed Deputy Secretary General of then the Office of Culture Commission, Ministry of Education and now the Department of Cultural Promotion of the Ministry of Culture. Concurrently Ms. Chansuda Rukpollmuang is Deputy Permanent Secretary of Office of Permanent Secretary of Culture.

Her experience is rather interesting especially in the field of international cooperation, negotiation, publicity and cultural exchange with foreign countries. Since Ms. Chansuda Rukpollmuang has been in this position for sometime, she has a very vivid view of the culture of strengthening nationhood as well as of cultural diversity.

We put a first question to Deputy Per-
manent Secretary on the historical development of the culture of strengthening nationhood. Here was her response:

“Nation is a collection of people. It begins with a small community and then becomes larger and larger. Human beings are different from other life forms, in that they have brains, which enable them to have intelligence and the ethical concepts of right and wrong. Man would be able to make inventions to improve his livelihood and live with fellow man. Groups of human beings are developed into settlements, communities and nations. Man has continuously improved his living style and essence of life - especially the four necessities i.e. habitat, food, dresses and medicine. For instance, dwelling places have been developed from just livable to luxurious kinds. Human beings can survive up to the present time because they can conquer nature through his inventions. After the basic needs of human beings have been fulfilled to a certain point, they begin to develop other dimensions of living that begin with arts and aesthetic elements. The live of cavemen have been developed into the city live with their administration, economy and identities. All of these elements have been molded and passed on from one generation to the next and become what is known as culture. Culture, being man-made, covers arts, language, literature, and way of living, way of doing, value system, custom and belief. Culture is also a vital factor that turns society into state and nation.”

We proceeded with the next question to concern the connection between the work of Ministry of Culture and the culture of strengthening nationhood. Here was her answer as seen from her perspective.

“First and foremost the Ministry of Culture is committed to safeguard, to nurture, to protect, to preserve, to develop and to pass on national culture in a sustainable manner including to instill values and promote way of life of peaceful society. As a vanguard of national culture, we are closely linked to the culture of strengthening. However there may be some differences in some details of the methodology. It also depends on the situation and the time calling for different formats of cultural management. At this moment in time, the management has been based on justice, people participation, transparency and being open to public scrutiny. In brief it follows the principle of democracy.

The operators of cultural work however are constantly aware of His Majesty’s admonition: Protection of culture is protection of country. The Ministry of Culture encourages the people to understand culture and join hand to protect the culture and pass on the culture as the national heritage and way of life to the coming generation. Yet the Thai people must be able to live comfortably amidst the cultural diversity.”

We asked Deputy Permanent Secretary on the issue of the preparation for joining ASEAN community in B.E. 2558 and the culture of strengthening nationhood. On the one hand we must maintain our identity, on the other hand we must think of ASEAN identity too. Will there be any possible conflict? Deputy Permanent Secretary clarified in the following way.

“The joining of the country in ASEAN community does not mean we will mix the cultures of ten countries into the culture of one country. The crux of ASEAN community is unity in diversity. It means each individual country shall retain its cultural identity. Upon the formation of ASEAN community each ASEAN member country will accept these cultural difference, maintain is cultural heritages “The joining of the country in ASEAN community does not mean we will mix the cultures of ten countries into the culture of one
country. The crux of ASEAN community is unity in diversity. It means each individual country shall retain its cultural identity. Upon the formation of ASEAN community each ASEAN member country will accept these cultural difference, maintain is cultural heritages and apply cultural diversity to drive the development and progress of ASEAN. Cultural diversity of ASEAN is the outstanding feature of ASEAN. There are three main pillars of ASEAN i.e. ASEAN Political Security (APSC), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC). The essence of the culture of strengthening nationhood is in deed directly related to ASEAN community.

ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) has its importance in supporting ASEAN community in for areas i.e.

- Building caring community
- Remedying negative social impacts as a result of economic unification
- Supporting sustainability of the environment and managing the environment correctly

Promoting mutual understanding amongst grass root peoples, the learning of history and culture and the acceptance of information leading to the Immersed in cultural diversity offiiits own, Thailand is set to become an active member of ASEAN community to be formed within the coming four years – especially in the area of the safeguarding of cultural heritage.”

We asked Deputy Permanent Secretary about the relationship between cultural surveillance and culture of strengthening nationhood. Here was her answer :

“At this point in time, overseas cultures have strong influences on Thai society, and we are accepting and adjusting these cultures into our culture. There are dangers associated with cultural changes, -the culture which has been with us for very long time might bedominated by foreign cultures. All of our cultural units thus should be alert and aware of the situation that how much we are deviating from our social norms. Cultural surveillance and instill of immunity for our society thus assume great importance in the protection of our culture. Our society members must be brought up to date in conducting proper way of life and are in touch with world changing events. If our citizens fall short on the knowledge of their culture, it will spell danger for the safeguarding of culture and hence our national security.

Human beings are the source of culture and the key for cultural strengthening.”

Deputy Permanent Secretary also gave her idea on the culture of strengthening nationhood from other angle.

“Culture of strengthening nationhood may be taken to meanindigenous or original custom that uniiffiifies the country. However at the present point in time nationhood always involves other cultural dimensions such as universal or creative culture that has been created by man and accepted worldwide. We need to implant this culture in society members especially our youths. By the creative culture we mean the culture of democracy or the culture of peace. This universal or creative culture should be absorbed into the culture of strengthening nationhood.”

N.B. In B.E. 2543, UNESCO made reference to culture as“..Culture should be accepted as the high point of human spirits, events, knowledge and emotional format of society.
It is a combined mix built on top of arts, literature, way of living together, value system, traditions and believes.”
The geographical conditions of the south bordering on the sea on east and west sides combined with the fertility of resources for preparing meals are the outstanding feature of food culture that blends with way of life of the south. The culture related to food of the south differs from those of other regions. In the south, there are kow yam, gang luang, gang kua gling and gang tai pla. Delicious dishes well known and favored by people all over Thailand as iconic food of the south are gang kua gling and gang tai pla. In this issue of Culture Surveillance Unit, the reader who has little or no knowledge on gang tai pla will be introduced to the favorite dish, entitled by the author as “the goddess of food of the land of sataw.”

Gang tai pla literally translated, as fish kidney curry is prepared from the gut of fish. The most favored among sea-fish is herring, and for fresh-water fish is plachon. Both of these fish after cooking give out sweet odor and gentle taste. The process of cooking begins with taking out the gut from the fish, followed by thorough washing the removed gut with water to get rid of unwanted waste and then packing it in a big jar. Salt in correct...
The mixture is then thoroughly stirred into one texture. The lid caps the jar and the content is left to cure. During the curing the jar is sometimes left in the sun to enhance the flavor and lengthen the storing period. After three months, the cured mix is ready for the preparation of gang tai pla.

Some chefs have a secret technique of cooking a delicious gang tai pla without any raw taste. This is done by pouring boiled cured gut through a filter into a pot of boiling water followed by a chilly source mix.

A big spoon is used to stir the curry until they are evenly mixed. Pieces of dried fish and hard-to-dissolve vegetable are then sprinkled into the curry. Just before the curry is removed from the stove, soft vegetable is added. A little more water is poured into the curry. After the second boiling, the curry is tasted, and seasonings are then added according to their preference. Leaves of bitter lemon may be used just before the curry is removed from the stove to complete the process. Accessory ingredients are fresh bamboo shoot, stringbeans, pumpkin, potatoes, sataw, cashew nuts, bitter lemon grass, hard-round eggplant, little eggplant and young shoots of ton dala.

Partaking of gang tai pla should be together with local vegetables to increase mildness, reduce hot chili taste, and get the medicinal benefits of useful herbs. There are varieties of vegetable such as luk sataw, luk niang, luk ching, luk po, bua bok leaves and young leaves of sataw, makok and jackfruit. The southern meal that comes complete with such accessory ingredients, are just very delicious or in the southern dialect “roy jun hoo.”