

Research Title	Painting in the Ayutthaya period
Researchers	Santi Leksukhun Kamon Chayawatthana
Year	<b>1980</b>

### **ABSTRACT**

The Buddhist year of 2501(1958) saw a revival of interest in the Thai painting of the Ayutthaya period. Since then the subject has been studied in greater depths. More attention is given to the murals, their artistic value and their age. Scholars have roughly divided them in two periods: (1) from the late 19th century of the Buddhist era to the 20th century of the Buddhist era and (2) the beginning of the 22nd century of the Buddhist era till the end of the Ayutthaya period. However, the above division leaves out a period, from the 20th to 22nd century of the Buddhist era, when Siam was intermittently thrown into confusion by war. During those difficult times, very few artistic works were produced.

This research on the Ayutthaya-period painting is intended to review what studies have been conducted and to present additional information derived from some new sources on the basis of the fieldwork and documents.

The research pays special interest to the forces that influenced the subject matter and artistic style, especially those from other kingdoms, especially during the first half of the Ayudhaya period. Not only did they bear influence of Sukhothai and Sri Lanka, the old centers of Theravada Buddhism, but they reflected another source of Theravada Buddhism in the Mon kingdom in Lower Burma. The new linkage deserves further thorough study.

Also, another interesting aspect is the existence of local schools of painting vis-à-vis non-Siamese trends. It was found that different schools of artists in the Ayutthaya period showed marked differences in the presentation of details. However, the principal features remained almost the same, i.e. the style of composition and the use of the Buddhist themes used as subjects of the Thai painting. The details depicted were, as a rule, taken from the narratives found in the Buddhist scriptures or literature. Therefore, the content and composition are closely related; in fact, they could not be separated from each other in the course of the development of the Ayutthaya painting.

The contents and compositional styles of the early Ayutthaya period were similar to those of the preceding Sukkothai and Burmese mural paintings. In Burma the mural paintings had been popular since the 17th century of the Buddhist era. Their influence could be detected in the Thai paintings, while those of the Sri Lanka and Khmer paintings were not as distinct. If some similarities between Siamese and Khmer paintings existed, they would be found only in the religious themes from Mahayana Buddhism of Brahminism.

Based on the sources of inspiration in the early Ayutthaya period, the mural contents and composition gradually developed into three groups. The first group was prominent from the late 19th century of the Buddhist era to the beginning of the 21st century of the Buddhist era. The second and third groups were popular from the second half of the 22nd century of the Buddhist era to the beginning of the 24th century of the Buddhist era. The time gap between the first and the second groups is about 150 years, while the end of the second group overlaps with the beginning of the third group. Such division is based on the concentration and transformation of compositional characteristics and the contents of the mural paintings.

Research Title                    **An analysis of the study of history  
of art in Thailand from the beginning to  
the present time together with suggestions for  
future improvement**

Research                            Associate Professor Piriya Krairiksh  
Year                                 **1987**

### **ABSTRACT**

The study is divided into 11 chapters:

Introduction: This chapter gives the objectives of the research as follows:

1. To trace the development of the study of history of art in Thailand from the mid-19th century to the present;
2. To review the value of history of art as a subject taught in the Department of Art History, Faculty of Archeology, Silpakorn University; and
3. To compile an annotated bibliography of art history research in Thailand.

Chapter I                         Before the accession of King Mongkut or King Rama IV in 1851, not many Thais were interested to study the history of their country. They mentioned arts only in connection with literary works or to glorify religion and monarchy.

Chapter II                        Research in the history of art began with King Mongkut (1851-1868) who was keen to study ancient monuments in a scientific manner. His wish was continued by King Chulalongkorn or King Rama V (1868-1910), who in 1907 founded an archeological club look into history and antiquity. Research in the history of art was mostly based on personal intuitive observations, informed guesses and historical data.

Chapter III                        During the reign of King Vajiravudh or King Rama VI (1910-1925), European scholars began to study Thai art and antiquity. In the early 1920s Alfred S Salmony and George Coedès applied stylistic comparison and methods of the study of iconography to the study of art objects.

Chapter IV An Archeological Division was found in 1926 in the reign of King Prajadhipok or King Rama VII (1925-1935). In 1927 the division undertook its first excavation at Pong Tuk in present-day Kanchanaburi Province, thereby introducing archaeological researches in Siam. In 1926 Prince Damrong published Tamnan Phuttha Chedi Siam (Monuments of the Buddha in Siam) and in 1928 Coedeès published Les Collections Archéologiques du Musée National de Bangkok, both of which became indisputable canons of art historical research in Thailand. Their methodology, however, was based on history rather than art.

Chapter V In 1933 the Department of Fine Arts founded an art school which in 1943 was elevated by Field Marshal Pibulsonggram to Silpakorn University. Art history was taught by Corrado Feroci, whose book A Bare Outline of History and Styles of Art became the guideline for teaching art history at Silpakorn University. Since then, there have been three approaches to the study of history of art as follows :

1. The historical method, using historical data to study works of art.
2. The archaeological method, using archeological data to study works of art
3. The art historical method, using the works of art themselves as data in the study of iconography, stylistic comparison and evolution of styles.

During the 1930s and the 1940s, while Western scholars were using archeological and art historical methods in their research, their Thai counterparts primarily used the historical method.

Chapter VI The Faculty of Archeology at Silpakorn University was founded in 1953 to produce archeologists for the Department of Fine Arts. While Thai scholars in the 1950s continued to use the historical method in their research, Western scholars preferred the art historical approach.

Chapter VII During the 1960s the Department of Archeology, Silpakorn University, divided archeology in two different divisions: Archeology and History incorporating research

on Thai art history, and Art History including European and World arts. Meantime, thanks to the many excavations undertaken during this decade, many Thai scholars turned to archeological methods to evaluate new findings. Western scholars, however, still preferred to use the art historical method in their research.

Chapter VIII

In 1974 the Department of Art History was created at the Faculty of Archaeology, Silpakorn University and took over the teaching of Thai art history from the Department of Archeology. As the Department of Art History had no research program in its curriculum, it became first and foremost a teaching center. Although more Thai scholars in the 1970s used the archeological and art historical methods in their research, there were more Western scholars working on the history of Thai art than there were Thai art historians

Chapter IX

In the early 1980s there were more Thais than Western art historians. Thus, it became apparent that history of art in Thailand has become a methodology for research into the human past.

Chapter X

The Final chapter is divided into 3 sections:

1. A summary of the development of the study of history of art in Thailand.
2. An evaluation of the teaching of art history in the Department of Art History, Silpakorn University. Questionnaires were sent to 50 Art History graduates, who had completed their study between 1977 and 1985, out of which 29, or 58% of the graduates replied. The response shows that 51.18% found employment in the tourist industry and that 41.38% thought that the study of art history had enabled them to find jobs. Nevertheless, they all agreed that the curriculum should be revised so that it can be made more relevant to daily life.
3. Suggestions to improve the study of History of Art in Thailand. Since the history of art is interpreted in two ways, one referring to Art History as a study of different styles of art and the other as a methodology of research into the human past, each should be studied in its own way. Art History, as represented by

the teaching of the Department of Art. History, Silpakorn University, should be made to serve the tourist industry more by adding more courses related to tourism and changing its name to “Art for Tourism”. History of Art, being a methodology of research into Man’s past, should be attached to either the Department of History, or the Department of Archeology. It should be studied as a minor subject for the Bachelor of Art Degree and a major subject for a Master of Arts Degree in either department.

4. Summary: At the present time the study of History of Art in Thailand both by the Department of Fine Arts and Silpakorn University mainly serves the interest of tourism. Yet this research paper demonstrates that the aim of art historical research in Thailand from the beginning to the present has always been and still is the study of Man’s past, and not merely to distinguish different periods and styles of Art. The other objective is intended as a methodology of research into Man’s past. Each should be studied in its own right. Art history, as represented by teaching at the Department of Art History, Silpakorn University, should be made to serve the tourist industry by adding more courses related to tourism and changing its name to “Art for Tourism”. History of Art, as a methodology of research into Man’s past, should be attached to either the Department of History or the Department of Archeology. History of Art should be studied as a minor subject for the Bachelor of Arts Degree and a major subject for a Master of Arts Degree in either department.

Research Title                   **Ancient Settlements in the Sukhothai State**  
Researcher                       **Srisakra Vallibhotama**  
Year                               **1989**

### **ABSTRACT**

Recent archeological surveys revealed the existence of 53 ancient settlements in the provinces of Sukhothai, Tak, Uttaradit, Phitsanulok, Kamphaeng Phet, Phichit, Phetchabun and Nakhon Sawan. They were formerly part of the Sukhothai territory. Prior to the second half of the 13th century, the entire region was sparsely inhabited by small human settlements along the ancient routes leading to the Chieng Mai-Lamphun valley in the north and to the upper Mekhong basin in the east. Later with the extension of trade routes from various prosperous states in the coastal regions and in the interior areas, namely, Lavo, Angkor, Mataban, Payan, Haripunchai and Vientiane, permanent settlements like villages and towns began to develop. The end of the 13th century saw the emergence of four cities of Sukhothai, Sisatchanalai, Saluang and Song Khaew in the Yom-Nan basin, roughly in present-day Phitsanulok, Sukhothai and Uttaradit. They formed an early state of Sukhothai. The State became prosperous and reached its zenith as a Buddhist center in the reign of King Maha Thammaracha Lithai during the first half of the 14th century. It expanded its territory to the west of the lower Ping basin with the establishment of the town of Nakhon Sawan and to the east of the Pasak valley where the town of Phetchabun was founded. After King Lithai, Sukhothai declined and was finally split in two spheres. The first had Kamphaeng Phet as center dominated by an Ayutthaya king while the other, mostly in the Nan River basin, remained under Sukhothai with Songkhaew as its center. During this time, new cities and towns like Phichit were founded by the king of Ayutthaya as he expanded his territory to Nakhon Sawan and Phichit. In the 15th century onward, Sukhothai was completely incorporated into the centralized kingdom of Ayutthaya. The city of Songkhaew was rebuilt and became a major northern city of the kingdom under a new name of Phitsanulok. Finally, as a result of a 7-year war between Ayutthaya and Lan Na, the king of Ayutthaya consolidated Phitsanulok and made it his stronghold with the foundation of more towns and settlements such as Nakhon Thai and Muang Phichai in the Nan River basin.

Research Title: Anthropological and Archeological Assessment on the Use of Khok  
Phanomdi Plateau in the Past and at Present  
Researchers: Pornchai Soodchitt  
Faculty of Archeology, Silpakorn University  
Year: 1979-1980

### **ABSTRACT**

The research is an archeological study on the original inhabitants of Khok Phanomdi, a major archeological research source in the Central Region of Thailand. Khok Phanomdi is situated at the river delta that grows out into the Gulf of Thailand. The stretch of the coastal land is the result of the accumulation of soil from time immemorial. Its long existence has led to the assumption that its original inhabitants lived in the environment totally different from more recent times. (For instance, the area could be part of the sea or a lake.) Based on the analysis of soil and animal fossils, one could assume that Khok Phanomdi was originally situated near the sea. Its inhabitants made much use of herbivores. A study of tools and extant ruins throws light on their economy, technology and culture as well as the climate at that time. The research also delves into the remnants of the materials, bringing to light the way of life of the inhabitants, the tools and their specialized use. The finding provides much information on activities of the original inhabitants based on archeological ruins.



Research Title: Dvaravati Art of the 11<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> Buddhist Centuries  
Researchers: Samer Nildech, Faculty of Architecture, Silpakorn University  
Chin Klaipan, Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication, Thammasat  
University  
Year: 1975-1976

### ABSTRACT

All the evidence of historic objects and places of the Dvaravati period found in various provinces leads to the assumption that the Dvaravati territory were most likely located in the provinces in the Central Region rather than elsewhere. Although there are similar hisoric objects found here and there in the Northern, Northeastern and Southern Regions, it is more likely that they were made under the Dvaravati influence emanating from the Central Region in the river valleys of the Chao Phraya and the Meklong.

The study of the Dvaravati art takes the form of collection of evidences pertaining to historic objects and places in the central area of the kingdom, especially Nakhon Pathom surrounded by satellite towns of Old Mueang U-Thong, Suphanburi province, Sub-district of Kubua in Ratchaburi province, and Sub-district of Phongtuk in Kanchanaburi province.

The research and collection are carried out through the cinematography and natural color slide arrangements of Dvaravati art. The work is accompanied by description and narration of details obtained thereafter.

The pictures of archeological and historical significance thus obtained are grouped in two categories:

1. Historic places, which refer to remnants of the bases of *chedi* and *stupa* as well as the ruins and broken objects buried in the earthen mounds, as follows:
  - The *chedi* of Phra Praton Monastery, Nakhon Pathom province
  - Chedi* remnants in the district of U-Thong, Suphanburi province
  - Chedi* bases at the sub-districts of Kubua and Phongtuk Kanchanaburi province
2. Historic objects, which refer to sculptural works and designs decorating the *chedi*, as follows:
  - In the National Museum of Bangkok
  - In the National Museum of U-Thong, Suphanburi province
  - In the National Museum of Nakhon Pathom.

Research Title: Structural Patterns and Rules of Brick-laying: Architecture of Khmer and Srivijaya Schools of Artisans  
Researchers: Anuwit Charoensuppakul  
Faculty of Architecture, Silpakorn University  
Year: 1973-1974

### **ABSTRACT**

The objectives of the research are to show how historical bricks were used as material in historic sites and monuments in Thailand by different schools of artisans and to come up with a model that can be used to determine the age of other historic sites and their artistic styles with greater precision.

The research methodology relies mainly on a study of documents and field trips. About 35 sites are used as samples. These sites have already been determined by archeologists and historians with regard to their age. They are classified and ordered into groups before a study is made on the structural patterns and brick-laying techniques. The information thus derived is then used to determine whether or not it is possible to come up with a model for a particular period.

The report consists of four chapters:

Chapter 1: Indian-based brick architecture in Southeast Asia

The archeological and historical evidence indicates that the Indian culture had already made its presence felt in the Neolithic Age. Artistic and architectural evidences clearly reflect the Indian prototypes the influence of which came to a halt only when Islam spread to India in the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Buddhist centuries.

The field study is centered on Thailand. Not only is the country centrally situated, geographically speaking, but also there are clear archeological evidences that the land has experienced the stamps of various civilizations of the past kingdoms. The survey starts with Indochina which witnessed the existence of the oldest kingdoms and had direct connections with the civilizations of the northeastern region. The study goes on to study the Malay Peninsula and Indonesian archipelago which came into contact with kingdoms in Indochina and the southern part of Thailand. It then moves to Burma and finally to Thailand.

The finding reveals that during the 6<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Buddhist centuries all the principalities and kingdoms in Southeast Asia adopted the belief systems from India, including construction of religious monuments and sites. There are three different schools of artisans: Khmer, Pagan, and Dhavaravati. A study of the patterns and construction skills shows that the artisans of the Khmer

school and those of the Indonesian archipelago were more of a craftsman than a construction builder. The Cham artisans had displayed a balanced combination of skills and building principles all along, while the Pagan skills reveal an aesthetic intricacy in their construction. The Dhavaravati builders probably show the best understanding in construction although they did not have the same advanced system of their Burmese counterparts. Nevertheless, they applied the same standard of coordinates and volume throughout Thailand.

## Chapter 2: Settlements in the Northeastern Region, Lop Buri, the Old Mueang Si Thep, and Southern Region

Human settlements in the northeastern region and southern peninsula of Thailand had taken place since the Pre-Historic Period as evidenced from the discoveries of stone implements, pottery and drawings on the cave walls. About the 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> Buddhist centuries these two regions came into contact with Indian civilization via the northeastern route. The Indian influence was accepted in its totality, as seen in the Mon-Khmer civilizations of the Chao Phraya basin and the Kingdom of Chenla.

The settlement in the northeastern region had something to do with attempts to find a solution to water shortage. The urban community of Dhavaravati built a series of moats around their towns. The Khmer civilization spreading from Indochina applied the irrigation system profoundly tinged with the religious beliefs in the form of Baray or reservoirs representing the cosmos. The belief systems of the two civilizations therefore accounted for the construction of numerous religious places. The Dhavaravati civilization was often marked by huge stones that mark the temple boundaries while the towns were built in an oval or round shape. The Khmer towns, on the other hand, were characterized by square or geometrical shapes related to Baray reservoirs and stone temples in which the idols or objects of worship were basically made of bricks or stone.

Several settlements in the southern region took place more or less at the same time, starting with Chaiya, Wiang Sa, Sathing Phra, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Pattani, Trang, Takua Pa, Yala, and Phatthalung. The first settlement bore the Hindu influence in which religious places and objects were made of stone. Later, with the arrival of Mahayana Buddhism from Srivijaya and Sumatra the figures of Bhodisattva in various sizes were made of bronze as found from Chaiya to Sathing Phra, while the western coastal area continued to practice Hinduism with religious figures built with stone and religious places with bricks. The Hindu and Mahayana Buddhist craftsmanship existed side by side until the 18<sup>th</sup> Buddhist century when change was brought about by internal political situations and external forces.

## Chapter 3: Brick architecture by artisans of Khmer and Srivijaya Schools

This study collects information on temples built of bricks situated in 33 sites in the Mun Basin and Mekong Banks in nine provinces of Ubon Ratchathani, Si Sa ket, Surin, Buriram, Nakhon Ratchasima, Roi Et, Maha Sarakham, Sakon Nakhon and Nakhon Phanom as well as

Lopburi and Si Thep. All these areas bore a direct relationship with the Khmer School from the northeastern region. Information is classified into six main categories based primarily on the art models in Cambodia. It then is further analyzed to assess how effective the models and the approach adopted by the study are. Information that cannot yet be ascertained is put aside for further investigation.

The finding reveals that the brick craftsmanship of the Khmer School had continued uninterrupted from the Chenla period to Angkor Wat. Development was found in every aspect from shapes, structural designs, construction techniques and decoration.

The extant brick architecture in the southern region is found only in Chaiya, Sathing Phra and Nakhon Si Thammarat. The evidence is very scarce, thus making it almost impossible to trace the development of the craftsmanship of the Khmer School in Thailand.

Research Title: Survey and Excavation of Neolithic Culture at Caves in Ban Kao Area,  
Kanchanabuti Province  
Researchers: Surin Bhukachorn and others  
Faculty of Archeology, Silpakorn University  
Year: 1977-1979

### **ABSTRACT**

The research is a report of the survey and excavation of three caves indicative of the Stone Age culture. The three caves are Khao Thalu Cave, Maen Cave, and Phet Khuha Cave. The finds include animal bones, human teeth, mollusk shells, rock chips, beads, chipped stone, flower pollens, vegetative seeds, and pottery remains.

The materials found are technically analyzed to determine their age. It is found that the area can be classified as belonging to three cultures:

Culture 1: the culture of the Early Hoabinhians

Culture 2: the culture of the Late Hoabinhians living in the Late Mesolithic Age and coming into contact with people of the Neolithic Age. The excavation was conducted at Bang and Lue Sites.

Culture 3: Culture of the Neolithic people who buried the dead in Thalu Cave in Chamber 3. In this period, there was contact with the Metal Age as seen in the evidence excavated at U-Thong and Don Ta Phet which belonged to the Metal Age.

The ways of life of the people in various cultures can be summarized as follow:

In Culture 1 people hunted animals for food. These animals roamed and lived in the open forest. It is noteworthy that turtles were also found. They usually lived in ponds. The evidence indicates that there must be ponds in the neighborhood.

In Culture 2 there were found chipped stones of Hoabinhian type of the late Mesolithic Age. From pottery remains and chipped axes it can be inferred that the Hoabinhians in the Khao Thalu Cave must have come into contact with people of the Neolithic Age living at the excavated Bang and Lue Sites. These two groups of people had different tool-making technologies. Not only did the people of the Neolithic Age produce polished axes, a technology more advanced than the chipped stone technology, but they were also able to make pottery. The excavation at the Khao Thalu Cave showed very few pottery remains. Those that were found were broken, incomplete and scattered here and there. They certainly did not belong to the original

Hoabinhian culture. This led to a conclusion that the people in Culture 2 were Late Hoabinhians living in the Late Mesolithic-Neolithic Age.

The way of life and environment of the people in Culture 2 were not very different from those in Culture 1. Animal bones and vegetative seeds found belong to the same category. In Culture 2 people gathered more food in the pond areas, such as turtles, frogs, and crocodiles

In Culture 3 beads in the Khao Thalu Cave and Maen Cave were found together with teeth believed to belong to the skeletons of the bodies buried there. The skeletons must have been disturbed by bat-dung seekers. The existence of the beads indicates possible connections with other excavation sites including those at Bang and Lue, U-Thong, and Don Ta Phet. According to the age determination of the sites, Bang and Lue Sites belonged to the Neolithic Age, while Don-Ta-Phet was in the Metal Age. We can conclude, therefore, that although people in the Bang and Lue Sites on the one hand and those in the U-Thong, and Don-Ta-Phet Sites on the other lived in more or less the same period, their technologies were different and at a different stage.

The result of the excavations has shed more light on the story of the Pre-historic people at Ban Kao, Kao Sub-district, Mueang district, Kanchanaburi province. We now know that the Hoabinhians of the Stone Age were cave-dwellers, especially those living at Phra Cave (Ban Kao), Khao Thalu Cave, Maen Cave, and Phet Khuha Cave. They existed side by side for a long time. The areas near water sources, on the other hand, were inhabited by Neolithic people, for example, at Bang and Lue Sites. Thus, Ban Kao is a very important source of information on Pre-historic people.

Research Title: Wat Lai: U-Thong Art, 18<sup>th</sup> Buddhist Century  
Researchers: Samer Nildech, Faculty of Architecture, Silpakorn University  
Chin Klaipan, Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication, Thammasat  
University  
Year: 1977

### **ABSTRACT**

This is a study of U-Thong art using Wat Lai as a model. Wat Lai is a historical site with objects that bear the original U-Thong art. It is therefore one of the most valuable places.

Situated at the sub-district of Khao Samo Khon, Tha Wung district, Lopburi province, Wat Lai is classified as a historic temple of the U-Thong period. It is part of the Suphanburi group dated about 18<sup>th</sup> Buddhist century. It houses an ancient cast image of Buddha, Maitreya Bodhisattva's image, and chapel, all representing the last stuccowork of the U-Thong art.

The presentation takes the form of the photography of historical objects, architectural style, and stucco work of Wat Lai narrating the story of the ten rebirths before the coming of the Lord Buddha. The photographs of the art work in this research are accompanied by descriptions of the details concerned.