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**WATTANA BOONJUB : THE STUDY OF THAI TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE AS A
RESOURCE FOR CONTEMPORARY BUILDING DESIGN IN THAILAND
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Traditional Thai architecture has recently become popular among Thai people. However, the design and the construction of buildings that show Thai architectural features have limitations because of the lack of guidelines for the incorporation of traditional characteristics in modern buildings. Even though some architects attempt to apply Thai features in contemporary architecture, they have not been able to find prominent characteristics of Thai architecture or lack confidence in those Thai features. Therefore, it becomes necessary to investigate modern Thai architectural characteristics by studying three types of award winning buildings namely: residential buildings, institutional buildings and hotel and resort buildings. The study, done with buildings in four regions (north, central, northeast and south), is aimed at finding characteristic Thai features, which are accepted and incorporated in the design of those buildings. Then, the research findings can be used as the guidelines for the development of characteristic Thai features for other types of contemporary buildings.

According to the survey, both architects and laypeople agree that characteristic Thai features have evolved from architectural features of traditional buildings with some adaptation to suit modern day life styles and new technology. However, when the characteristic Thai features are classified by their physical appearance and impressions from the characteristics, focusing primarily on functions and then forms, it shows that architects and laypeople have different opinions about an acceptance of these features in contemporary buildings. Most architects still pay attention to the relationship between form and function, based on fundamental philosophies of traditional Thai architecture, while laypeople tend to be interested in the forms of characteristic Thai features of modern architecture.

The research findings show that architects need to take into account the importance of form and function and also explain to laypeople about characteristic Thai features so that Thai architectural wisdom and philosophy can be preserved and developed properly.

Additionally, there should be an application of Thai architectural characteristics in the architecture of contemporary buildings, including an adaptation of local design for the buildings in respective regions based on climate, local belief, construction materials and technology for energy efficiency.

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