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Resort architecture is found in public buildings with modern functions for tourists and the general public. Mostly, resort buildings are seemingly created and designed for commercial purposes, and not for strictly aesthetic or cultural reasons. In addition, the basis and development of Thai character still remain undefinable—at least in a holistic approach. For these reasons, this research aims to reveal the hidden architectural ideals reflecting Thai character in resort contexts.

Just before the end of last year the world was shocked by the tsunami disaster affecting to the west coast of Thailand. As a result of this sad event people and architects have come to be even more concerned about the importance and re-development of modern Thai architecture in resort contexts. Overall, the research covered in this dissertation is comprised of several different kinds of data and several distinct approaches. These include: 1) the results of previous research and related studies, 2) surveys of existing building environments including architectural style, and 3) the opinions of architects and building dwellers. This research focuses on many of the leading architects of modern Thai architecture with the aim to dissecting and identifying the components Thai character for resort architecture and design. To test the theories implicit in this study, questionnaires were delivered to both architects and the general public, 150 subjects in each group.

The results of the survey show that both architects and the public agree that modern Thai character in architecture derives principally from the adaptation of traditional Thai architecture and the infusion of modern technology. The character of modern Thai architecture in resort contexts is defined by and elaborated through factors such as dimensions, including building organization and grouping; roof profiles and details; the relationship among buildings and other features, such as floor patterns, ventilation, the ratio of opening and void, posts and column, brackets, and landscapes. The intangible qualities and values of modern Thai architecture reveals such factor as qualities of lightness, transparency, tranquility and coolness and, sense of hospitality. Another factor considered is regional variation. To be “successful” in cultural and aesthetic terms modern Thai architecture in resort contexts must consider factors of building organization and grouping, architectural design, landscape features, interiors—all of which must defer as well to, specific regions and reflect local architectural identities in both tangible and intangible qualities and values. The use of appropriate materials and construction technology, which can have positive environmental impacts as well, also have to be considered in architectural design. In addition, as demonstrated by the tsunami disaster, Thai wisdom needs to be employed and integrated into design solutions. Both architects and the general public have expressed different points of view on the same issues, due to their varied perception and experience. Architects must allow the public to participate more fully in the design process, so that their view point too can be taken into consideration.

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