Abstract
The study of modern architecture in Thailand highlights the period of 1932-1985 A.D. which depicted the period of cultural transition and the founding of civilization that has been shaped by significant social, economic and political changes to the nation. All this has been much reflected in Thai architectural works. In that period, numerous buildings and structures have been constructed with the objective to serve the public interest, and have been continually maintained in service since the early 20th century onward until present-day. In the last decades, the architectural heritage of the modern movement appeared more at risk than during any other period, such as the Supreme Court was demolished in the year 2014. However, the conservation of architectural works that was built more than 50 years is registered as cultural heritage, for example the historical sites in Thailand, has been carried out for an extended time now under the care of the Fine Arts Department, which is governmental department of the Ministry of Culture. Buildings in the period of Modern Movement in Thailand have been studied in conjunction with the preservation of modern architecture on a global basis. Therefore to achieve justice and sustainability, for modern architectural works of the 20th century in Thailand, these are also should be well under conservation altogether under the same department. To enhance sustainability development, regulations and laws should line with the social and economics changed as a foundation for Thailand development.
Keywords: Modern architecture in Thailand, Modern Movement of Architecture, Modern Movement, Modern architecture
Introduction

**Background:** The characteristics of Thai architecture has been greatly influenced by Western culture in the period from 1868-1910 A.D., in the reign of King Rama V. During this period, Thailand has been communicating with European countries on a broad scale, and European craftsmen have played an important role in creating many architectural works in Thailand, which can be seen in the monasteries or “Wats”, and housing. From then on (1910-1925 A.D.), during the reign of King Rama 6 there has been extensive construction of public buildings, and various technicians and craftsmen from abroad with expertise in different fields have been hired to provide service for government sector. For this reason, architecture has been shaped in the way that integrates Thai architecture with the utilization of public buildings and construction technology; take for example, Bangkok railway station, King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital, and Vajiravudh College.

![Figure 1: Bangkok railway station, 1910](image1.jpg)

Modern architecture that originated in the Western world during the 1960s and evolved into an International Style can be considered as the starting point for the growth and expansion of modern architecture to Thailand. The period from 1958-1972 A.D. was when the architectural works in Thailand truly exhibited the characteristic of modern architecture, and completely abandoning the influence of
classical architecture from the Western world that has played an important role in the period from 1932-1957 A.D. Modern architecture in Thailand focuses on features that correspond to the environment, for example, the utilization of sun shades, long protruding eaves to guard against the sun and rain, and features that emphasize the use of modern advanced structures and technology, for instance, the use of steel-reinforced concrete with wide span to service the utility purpose of public building which can be considered as the original works of Thai architecture for the next period to come.

Figure 3. The New Suan Amporn Building, using folded-plate structure, 1972

Figure 4. Sri Feung Fung Building, a 10-storey office building, constructed in the year 1971.
High-rise buildings from the early period of 1958-1972 A.D.
This can be considered as the period with highest level of advancement in early architectural works in Thailand. As the economy experienced the heights of growth during 1965-1969 A.D., with a large population of foreigners flocking into Thailand as a result of the Vietnam War, as well as American soldiers and businessmen, there has been significant projects which brought about development in both industry and travel; expansion and growth in transportation, agriculture and manufacturing, and particularly in commerce and banking. At the same time, there was also rapid growth in the Thai population from about 24 million in the year 1958, and increasing to 37 million by 1972, an increase by 54.17%. And for Bangkok alone, the population of 2 million people has grown to 3.8 million, a notable increase of 90%. The construction of buildings to sustain the growth in economy and society has fostered a continual development for architecture in Thailand.
Figure 7. Dusit Thani Hotel, 1970.

Figure 8. Krung Thai Bank, 1960.
Buildings with International Style

The buildings constructed from modern types of materials in that period featured the utilization of steel reinforced-concrete structure of more than 5 storeys in height, and situated in the business center of Bangkok. “Curtain wall” was also used in the construction as part of the products from manufacturing. Those buildings that still function till present-day are as follows:

Figure 9. Holiday Inn hotel, Bangkok, 1966.

The design that utilizes shading panels was a highly distinctive characteristic in this period. Shading panels were created from steel-reinforced concrete, of both grid-type and egg crate type. At that time, the design of buildings that utilize shading panels are quite popular and common in South America, especially in Brazil, from the works of architects by the name of Lucio Costa, Oscar Niemeyer and Alvar Aalto.

Figure 10. 72nd Anniversary Building, Siriraj Hospital, 1971.
Towards the end of period from 1958-1972, the architectural works began to exhibit the characteristics indicating the advancement in technology in terms of structure, engineering and steel-reinforced concrete, which can be seen in Indoor stadium Huamark, designed by Louis Baker Co., Ltd. (architect) and completed in 1966, and also the New Suan Amporn Building, designed by Casa Co., Ltd. (architect) and completed in 1972.

![Figure 11. Indoor Stadium Huamark, 1966.](image)

**Towards the sustainability of the Conservation of the Modern Architecture in Thailand:** Numbers of buildings and structures were constructed with the objective to serve the public interest, and have been maintained in service since the early 20th century onward until the last decades. They appeared more at risk than during any other period. Therefore, the Association of Siamese Architects under the Royal Patronage (ASA) had applied for the membership and new working party of Docomomo International organization which it was approved in the year 2014. Docomomo International is a non-profit organization devoted to International Working Party for Documentation and Conservation of buildings, sites and neighborhoods of the Modern Movement. Docomomo Thailand stands for; Do_co is Documentation and Conservation of buildings, sites and neighborhoods; Mo.mo_ is the Modern Movement of architecture in Thailand.

**Justice:** Cultural Heritage, The conservation of architectural works that was built more than 50 years is registered as cultural heritage under care of the Fine Arts Department, which is governmental department of the Ministry of Culture. However, modern architecture in Thailand, the buildings in the period of Modern Movement, most of them are less than 50 years old, the Association of Siamese Architects under the Royal Patronage (ASA) will give awards of well preserved and protect to those buildings that are less than 50 years.
ASA Conservation Award aimed at finding those winners who deserved to be granted the royal award from Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn. The awards were classified into many types including institutions and public buildings that have elements of architectural heritage, archaeological history and uphold proper conservation methods following legal regulations and traditions.

Figure 12 . Khurusammanakharn, Rajamangala University of Technology Isan, 1960.

Figure 13. Lecture Center, Faculty of Science (Pumpkin building), Prince of Songkla University, Hatyai Campus, 1966.
Conclusion

Towards the sustainability and justice of the conservation of the modern architecture in Thailand

1. Docomomo Thailand established in 2014 in order to get awareness of demolishing in modern architecture.
2. Docomomo Thailand joined a network of experts working together for conservation, for example: Docomomo International and Docomomo Japan
3. Docomomo Thailand under The Association of Siamese Architects organized the national and the international seminar on the subject related to the conservation of the modern architecture in Thailand moderately each year.
4. Make lists of buildings in the modern movement period.
5. Giving awards to buildings that are well maintained and preserved.
6. Website and links are established as www.docomomothailand.org
References


Photo credits:

1. Mr. Thanakorn Chengaueng, figure 4, 5, 6, 11, 13


4. www.vajiravudh.ac.th figure 2

5. www.railway.co.th figure 1

6. Suphawadee Ratanamart

7. Narathip Thubthun

8. Preecha Phuluang

9. Noppawan Ratanamart