

# Formal Thai National Costume in the Reign of King Bhumibol Adulyadej

Chanoknart Mayusoh

**Abstract**—The research about Formal Thai National Costume in the reign of King Bhumibol Adulyadej is an applied research that aimed to study the accurate knowledge concerning to Thai national costume in the reign of King Rama IX, also to study origin of all costumes in the reign of King Rama IX and to study the style, material used, and using occasion. This research methodology which are collect quantitative data through observation, document, and photograph from key informant of costume in the reign of King Rama IX and from another who related to this field.

The formal Thai national costume of the reign of King Bhumibol Adulyadej originated from the visit of His Majesty the King to Europe and America in 1960. Since Thailand had no traditional national costume; Her Majesty the Queen initiated the idea to create formal Thai national costumes. In 1964, Her Majesty the Queen selected 8 styles of formal Thai national costume. Later, Her Majesty the Queen conferred another 3 formal Thai national costume for men. There are 8 styles of formal Thai national costume for women: Thai Ruean Ton, Thai Chit Lada, Thai Amarin, Thai Borom Phiman, Thai Siwalia, Thai Chakkri, Thai Dusit, and Thai Chakkraphat. There are 3 styles of formal Thai national costume for men: short-sleeve shirt, long-sleeve shirt, and long-sleeve shirt with breechcloth. The costume is widely used in formal ceremony such as greeting ceremony for official foreign visitors, wedding ceremony, or other auspicious ceremonies. Now a day, they are always used as a bridal gown as well. The formal Thai national costume is valuable art that shows Thai identity and, should be preserved for the next generation.

**Keywords**—The formal Thai national costume for women, The formal Thai national costume for men, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej the Great King Rama IX, Her Majesty Queen Sirikit Queen.

## I. INTRODUCTION

THAI traditional costumes has continually changed over 200 years of Rattanakosin era (1782 to present). During the Rattanakosin era, Thai costumes can be classified into 5 subcategories: Early Rattanakosin period, Mid-Rattanakosin period, Western Colonialism period, Cultural Mandates period and the modern period. Thai traditional clothing of each period varies by the environment, so it is impossible to judge which style is the best [1].



Fig. 1 Women costume in the reign of King Rama I-II



Fig. 2 Men costume in the reign of King Rama I-II



Fig. 3 Uniform in the reign of King Rama IV

Mrs. Chanoknart Mayusoh is a lecturer at the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok, Thailand (phone: +6621601392 ; fax: +6621601392#111; e-mail: Chanoknart.ma@ssru.ac.th).



Fig. 4 The costumes Her Majesty the Queen and princess the reign of King Rama IV



Fig. 5 The costumes Her Majesty the Queen and Princess the reign of King Rama IV

For Thai costume in the reign of King Rama IX (1946 to present), universal design is preferred due to influences from the western. However, people in local areas or countryside remain wearing Thai costume and local costume, i.e., wearing sarong, strip or loincloth. In 1977, Her Majesty Queen Sirikit was established a handicraft project to support products made by local woven fabric of villagers in various regions; therefore, this type of product was more recognized. However, it still preferred by people in high level society. Consequently, Her Majesty Queen Sirikit found the ways to create this product preferred extensively by general people; therefore, the royal initial was established to order skillful craftsmen of Fine Arts Department in many university to design Thai costume for Thai men by applying historical costume to be more contemporary and suit with current weather, environment, and convenience upon each occasion and place. Currently, the important evolution of Thai costume is formal Thai national costume, i.e., formal Thai national costume for women and Thai traditional costume for men, and it is accepted as Thai national costume [2].



Fig. 6 The visiting of the King and Queen at Europe and America in 1960's

From studying on formal Thai national costume for men and women, the researcher found that it was difficult to find actual samples of formal Thai national costume for women and men in costume museums. Those that could be found easily in any costume museum were quite old and declined. In addition, there was no specific research on formal Thai national costume for women and Thai traditional costume for men. This research on Thai traditional costume is vital because it could help preserve Thailand's art and culture for the next generation. The research result would be useful for Suansunandha Rajabhat University, costume museums and learning centers in educating people and also for governmental agencies and stakeholders as a source for policy-making.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

- 1) To study the history of formal Thai national costume for women and men in the reign of King Rama IX.
- 2) To study designs, materials, occasions, and dressmaking of formal Thai national costume for women and men in the reign of King Rama IX.

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is qualitative and all data herein was obtained by the researcher with the following research procedures:

- 1) Study data obtained from related researches.
- 2) Study field data through observation and listening to comments of experts.
- 3) Analyze the obtained results.
- 4) Conclude the results and write a research report
- 5) Create 8 models of formal Thai national costume for women and 2 models of Thai traditional costume for men.

## IV. RESULT OF THE RESEARCH

This research about formal Thai national costumes in the reign of His Majesty the King Bhumibol Adulyadej is aimed to discover correct knowledge on Thai costumes in the reign of King Rama IX. The obtained data was collected by qualitative data collection, observation, papers, photographs, and from Thai costumes professional in the reign of King Rama IX, and related researches. The results of data analysis were concluded as follows:

History of formal Thai national costumes in the reign of His Majesty the King Bhumibol Adulyadej was inherited from the occasion when His Majesty the King was visited Europe and U.S.A. in 1960 [2], Her Majesty Queen Sirikit was giving the speech about Thailand without formal Thai national costume similar to other countries therefore it was proper to create Thai national costumes under good tradition. In 1964, Her Majesty Queen Sirikit gave final decision on selecting 8 designs of contemporary Thai costumes [3]. Subsequently, Her Majesty Queen Sirikit gave 3 designs of Thai traditional costumes for men and 8 designs of formal Thai national costumes for women consisted of 3 designs of Pha Sin Pai costume and 5 designs of Na Nang costume.

#### A. Three Designs of Pha Sin Pai Costumes

- 1) Thai Ruean Ton costume with round scooped neckline blouse contained with five buttonholes cut and  $\frac{3}{4}$  sleeves match with fabric strip in the frontage.



Fig. 7 Queen Sirikit in Thai Ruean Ton dress



Fig. 8 Thai Ruean Ton dress (front and back)

- 2) Thai Chit Lada costume with round neck blouse and collar contained with five buttonholes cut and long sleeves to the wrist match with fabric strip in the frontage.



Fig. 9 Queen Sirikit in Thai Chit Lada dress



Fig. 10 Thai Chit Lada dress (front and back).

- 3) Thai Amarin costume had similar appearance with Thai Chitralada costume but it was made from Learn silk and brocaded with gold lace match with fabric strip in the frontage.



Fig. 11 Queen Sirikit in Thai Amarin dress





Fig.12 Thai Amarin dress (front and back).

#### B. Five Designs of Na Nang Costume

- 1) Thai Boromphiman costume with round neck blouse and collar contained with zip behind its long sleeves to the wrist match with thin fabric gathered in folds and two ends of it fabric were twisted together and tucked up in the front.



Fig. 13 Queen Sirikit in Thai Boromphiman dress



Fig. 14 Thai Boromphiman dress (front and back)

- 2) Thai Siwalai costume had similar design with Thai Boromphiman costume but contained with breast cloth without silk fabric gathered in folds match with thin fabric gathered in folds and two ends of it fabric were twisted together and tucked up in the front.



Fig. 15 Queen Sirikit in Thai Siwalai dress



Fig. 16 Thai Siwalai dress (front and back).

- 3) Thai Chakri costume with off-shoulder blouse covered with breast cloth match with thin fabric gathered in folds and two ends of it fabric were twisted together and tucked up in the front.



Fig. 17 Queen Sirikit in Thai Chakkri dress



Fig. 19 Queen Sirikit in Thai Chakkraphat dress



Fig. 18 Thai chakkri dress (front and back)



Fig. 20 Thai Chakkraphat dress (front and back)

- 4) Thai Chakkraphat costume consisted of 2 designs: one was similar to Thai Chakri costume and Thai Siwalai costume but covered with 2 layers of breast cloth, i.e., the first layer was silk fabric gathered in folds and covered with Krong Thong breast cloth or embroidered breast cloth with one of its end was left at the waist level and another one was surrounded under wearer's right arm for leaving its end at the back side match with thin fabric gathered in folds and two ends of it fabric were twisted together and tucked up in the front.

- 5) Thai Dusit costume with sleeveless, backless and wide neck blouse with zip at the back and decorated with pearl or sequin match with thin fabric gathered in folds and two ends of it fabric were twisted together and tucked up in the front.



Fig. 21 Queen Sirikit in Thai Dusit dress



Fig. 22 Thai Dusit dress (front and back)

Formal Thai national costumes for women have been existed since the reign of King Rama IX and they were preferred to be worn in various well-known ceremonies as shown in above history. For Thai traditional costume for men, suits were previously preferred until 1977. In 1977, Her Majesty Queen Sirikit established handicraft project to support products made by local woven fabric of villagers in various regions therefore this type of product was more recognized. However, it was still preferred by people in high class society. [4] Consequently, Her Majesty Queen Sirikit found the ways to make this type of product preferred extensively by general people therefore the royal initial was established to order skillful craftsmen of Fine Arts Department to design Thai costume for Thai men by applying historical costume to be more contemporary and suit with current weather, environment, and convenience upon each occasion and place. As a result, the obtained design was

similar to Thai Raj Pattern in the reign of King Rama VI but its materials and details were different, i.e., its fabric was changed from white and thick fabric in western style to be local woven fabric. Consequently, this new design was more colorful with collar and two pockets at the bottom of the shirt and the pockets were hemmed with shirt's design. It was contained with 5 buttonholes cut and loincloth was used for waist wrapping [5].

### C. 3 Designs of Thai Traditional Costume for Men

First design: Short-sleeve shirt made of cotton fabric for casual wear;

Second design: Long-sleeve shirt made of silk for special occasion.

Third design: Shirt with long-sleeves and waist wrapping called "Thai traditional costume" [6].



Fig. 23 Formal Thai national costume for men: short-sleeve shirt, long-sleeve shirt



Fig. 24 Formal Thai national costume for men: short sleeve shirts and long sleeve shirts

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This research could not be completed without support and assistance from various organizations. The researcher would like to especially thank the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts,

Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, for funding this research project.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Anek Nawiggamul ,*Thai Costumes* ,1<sup>st</sup>edition,Kurusapa Business Organization, 1989. pp.9, Mar. 09,2009.
- [2] Jakkrit Duangpattrra and WilaiwanSomsophon ,*Formal Thai National Costumes*, Creativity and Royal Grace of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit , Kurusapa Business Organization, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1998. pp.12 , Mar. 09,2009.
- [3] Her Majesty Queen Sirikit,*published for the Celebrations on the Auspicious Occasion of Her Majest the Queen's 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Birthday Anniversary on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2004, and as the souvenir for 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Government Lottery Office Establishment*. pp.3, Mar. 09, 2009.
- [4] Achara Wannasatit , *Textbook for Formal Thai National Costumes Design and Dressmaking*, Department of Home Economics, Faculty of Science, Suan Dusit Teachers College, pp 23, Mar. 09,2009.
- [5] Puangpaka Kurowat ,*Costume History Manual (edited version)*, Textile and Costume Program, Department of Home Economics, Rajamangala Institute of Technology, PhraNakhon Tai Campus ,Printed at Aksorn Pittaya,1994. pp 140, Mar. 09,2009.
- [6] *Photo Book of Evolution of Costumes in Rattanakosin Period*, Office of National Library, Fine Arts Department, published for the occasion of Royal Ceremonies for the Rattanakosin Bicentennial, 1982. pp 51, Mar. 09,2009.