

ABSTRACT

Shop houses are usually built for commercial purposes, as well as a place for living. As shall be seen, there are many shop houses built and located in the old town district of many provinces in Thailand. These buildings are mostly placed within the prime commercial areas where serve as a place for trading activities and local businesses.

Old town district, Nongkhai province is considered one of the major commercial area which represents the development of economic condition of North-eastern region. Such area not only shows the historical evolution of Nongkhai economic, but also stands for a place where the local architecture, particularly shop houses, is formed and developed. Shop houses thus performs as significant evident which convey such architectural value and shows how local architecture is developed and preserved by the locals.

This research therefore examines the characteristic of shop houses which are located at old town district, nongkhai province. It attempts to understand the development of such buildings and to explore characteristic which can be linked to the identity of the local craftsmanship. Moreover, the study seeks for possible factors that affect the design principles and spatial formations in building these shop houses. However, the study finally shows that Nongkhai shop houses can be categorised into 3 types: (1) Local-design type (2) Western- design type (3) Mixture of western and local-design type. These are according to techniques of construction, building materials, and design of ornamentation that somehow influenced by western culture. Interestingly, even though their physical appearances are different but the spatial formation and the arrangement of interior spaces seem to be similar.

Therefore, the study is hoped to raised a question of how to preserve such buildings, as well as how to educate people to realize and appreciate the qualities of such remaining heritage. However, the design guideline is proposed in order to integrate this heritage into such continuously changing contexts, including physical, economic, and functional changes, as well as socio-cultural, political and technological ones. This exceedingly important issue has thus far been given scant attention, and, as is argued herein, must be brought to the fore of any discussion of current issues in architectural preservation and town and urban planning policy.

Keywords:

Shop house, Old town district, Nongkhai