

## Esan Color Glass: Artisans and Symbolic in Buddhist Architecture

<sup>1</sup>Nittaya Phongkanpai, <sup>1</sup>Kittisan Sriruksa and <sup>2</sup>Panya Napangmaun

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Khon Kaen University,

123 Moo 16 Nai Muang, Muang Khon Kaen, 40002 Khon Kaen, Thailand

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Innovation and Technology Education, Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University

680 Nittayo Rd., Muang Sakon Nakhon, 47000 Sakon Nakhon, Thailand

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**Abstract:** This research aims to study the history of Esan colored glass study the artisanship of Esan colored glass and study the symbolism of Esan colored glass in Buddhist architecture. Using qualitative research, data were collected by field survey, e.g., field-survey questionnaire form, group interview recordings and interview form. Based on data analysis, study findings are as follows. History of Esan colored glass found in four styles of Buddhist ubosot as follows: rattanakosin style: being influenced by the late-Ayutthaya period, Esan colored glass was widely used to decorate Buddhist architecture, since, the Reign of King Rama III and to date Lan Chang style: as Esan local area has a long relationship with Lan Chang Kingdom, many temples have been built and decorated with colored glass. This was inspired by the ubosot of Wat Xieng Thong, Luang Prabang; Vietnamese style: during the colonial era, some Vietnamese escaped for asylum and main occupation at that time was crafting and construction; noticing from many of the creative works that can be found throughout the Northeastern Region, Northeast Folk style: the colored glass decoration was a mix of traditional and varied styles influenced by incoming culture or experience of the artisans themselves in that period. The artisanship of Esan colored glass is the creativity of artistic contents, concepts, materials and production processes. These are found to have been on a continuous development for the ubosot styles as follows: Rattanakosin style: it was found that the colored glass used in the early Rattanakosin period was a glass of ancient colors or Chinese glass that had a few shades of lustre whereas the modern colored glass comes with different color shades to choose from; Lan Chang style: Popularity was the decoration with colored glass cut in a shape of mosaic to depict stories. These are considered colored glass of the present days as they are shining beautifully Vietnamese style: most of the buildings are brick-and-masonry structured, decorated with low-relief painted sculpture the identity of the Vietnamese which most of the spherical mirror from a pressed powder compact or square-shaped glasses is used at some parts of the decoration. Most of the local Esan ubosot styles are brick and masonry. The gable and apex on the roof are commonly wooden while mosaic decoration is normally finished with glasses or mirrors from pressed powder compact while glass decorations are preferably only for some important parts. The study aims at the symbolism of Esan colored glass in Buddhist architecture, as well as beliefs of art decorated with colored glass in the Northeastern temples. Area of study covers 27 Buddhist temples, divided into 4 groups then analyzed the symbolism at every temple in 3 aspects: Buddhism, traditional belief and ethnicity. The study found that Buddhist symbolism is mostly used to convey the story. The importance of the religion is reflected in the symbolism through colored glass decorated to depict stories such as the Buddha's Life, Buddha's images, Tribhumikatha (The Three Worlds), Chulamani Chedi, lotus, the Sun naga while symbolism related to the original beliefs is mostly reflected in the myths, folk tales, customs, traditions, cultures and ethnic symbols. Apart from that, it is related to the way the people live. The symbolism also relates to the reality of nature through the doctrine of Buddhism.

**Key words:** Esan colored glass, artisanship, symbolism, Buddhist architecture, myths, symbolism

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### INTRODUCTION

Colored glass or stained glass has been around, since, ancient times by Egypt and Roman where pieces of

glassware of an average size were made up. In the British museum, the early Christian monasteries of the 4th and 5th centuries found windows decorated with thin alabaster slabs on the wooden frame; resembling mirror

with stained glass windows. However, what similar to windows with decorative stained-glass are those stone windows with colored glass of the Islamic art from Southwest Asia. Colored or stained glassmaking was spread to Asia from the Islamic influenced Eastern Mediterranean countries. Islamic art began about 1,400 years ago when ancient Muslims traders transported agate from Western Asia to Saudi Arabia, Cairo and Alexandria; Muslim cargo included glass beads shipped to Africa. In addition, they also shipped raw materials for bead making from India. Later, floor tiles production was developed as well as modern colored glass tiles. This was influenced by the Roman glass making 200 years before the years 200, when an archaeological site was excavated in China. It was 550 years ago that China imported these materials to make beads and sold them later. Glass beads with eye-design are famous for colored glass beads of the Muslims as it is believed many of the eyes in the glass can protect the one who wear them from danger (Intrawut, 2005).

Colored glass or stained glass was a decorative material known to Thai society in the Ayutthaya period, since, the reign of King Narai the great. Being glittering like jewels but at a cheaper price colored glass was used to decorate items instead of gems. Being weather resistant as well, it was used in the architectural art, resulting in glass-decorative artwork in Thai artisanship, glass and glass-decorative works of lacquer craftsmen in the old days. After that, the fine arts and decorative arts were also decorated with stained glass cut into tiny pieces and applied on a piece of furniture and even applied to the elements of Thai architecture such as gable apex, gable ridges, gable finials, gable, eaves brackets, Sarai (decorative parts alongside the pillar), Ruang Phueng (decorative triangles under the beam), door arch, window arch, even the base of the Buddha image. There are 2 types of glasses used for glass decoration in the ancient time, one is a square-shaped hard glass with different colors, plated with silver or mercury, the other type of glass is Krachok Kriab (Ancient Thai Glass) a thin-sheet glass plated with tin on the back of which the texture is so, soft it can be cut into pieces simply with scissors. Originally Krachok Kriab was produced domestically but as the knowledge of the glass making was lost after the reign of King Chulalongkorn; anyway, Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn has a royal initiative to look for a remake of the glass production which is currently in progress. At present, glass works are still popular, in particular for temples and places of worship which are sources of traditional and modern artworks for the craftsmen and artists. Thailand's glass decoration is shining a glimpse of the unique inherited

beauty (Six-sided mirror, 2015). In addition to decorating with colored glass in various Buddhist architecture, i.e., architectural buildings in the territory of a temple, in this research, Buddhist architecture refers to ubosot (ordination hall) as well as fine art, architecture, unique identities and identical characteristics. In addition, glass decoration can convey stories and symbolism. A study of the artisanship and symbolism of Esan colored glass in Buddhist architecture with unique and beautiful style, results in the spread of the creative ideas of the artists or beautiful art development in the context of the area and the present period or the ancient time. Colored glass decoration is mostly adorned on wood carving and gold-gilded to provide glittering reflects such as decorations on the gable which is found in the reign of King Rama III. However, in Thai art, glass decoration for narrative purposes has never been found, unlike the ubosot of Wat Xieng Thong in Luang Prabang.

A study of architectural art, that has an influence on the Northeastern ubosot design, found that temples in Luang Phra Bang and Lan Chang are still the center of arts in every field. Despite modern influences, the amount of interesting temples is not less including the mosaic glass adorned around the ubosot and halls at WatXieng Thong which all means art, the Buddhist architecture itself.

The interpretation of symbolism, based on Langer's philosophy, explores the continuum of meaning-building in the human's mind by using the power of "seeing" one thing in another aspect, symbolic display, presentation with independence from elements that have a fixed meaning and stable. Presentations cannot be understood by understanding the different parts on their own one by one but to understand the whole picture. For example, the elements used in a single painting may be used in a completely different meaning of the word. This same principle applies to sound recording in musical arrangements such as independent elements no meaning defined, except for the context of the whole presentation (Langer and Langer, 1984).

An ubosot is a Buddhist architecture that is the most important architectural work of a temple. It is a holy place, compared to the presence of the Buddha. It is the building that the Vinaya in the Buddhist scriptures assigned to be used for important rites performed by Buddhist monks. In Buddhism, Buddhists focus on a construction of an ubosot that follows the pattern and symbol of the religion. The construction is inherited, whether architectural, fine arts or conceptual conveyance through the creation of an ubosot construction including the decoration of the colored glass as well. Art on the glass decoration holds the meaning of symbolism behind the iconic beauty, especially, for variations that include stories about

Buddhism. For example, the portrait painting of Buddha's life. Colored glass decoration on an ubosot reflects the important meaning of the Buddhist symbolism in the Northeast of Thailand. The conceptual style of fine arts through colored glass decoration has a variety of art style. This may have a symbolic meaning that reflects the relationship with where it appears to have the decorative colored glass art at ubosots in the Northeast.

All the above reasons inspire the researcher to study "Esan colored glass: Artisanshship and Symbolism in Buddhist architecture" with focus on the history, artisanshship in various art designs of Rattanakosin, Lan Chang, Vietnamese and Northeast Folk style including the study of historical stories, politics, administration, Buddhist beliefs, original beliefs and the ethnic beliefs. Beliefs affect the development concept, implications consistent with popularity in this modern period and in the fast-paced technological advancements. However, the beauty of cultural preservation and the inheritance of the arts and culture still remain in the context of the spread of the colored glass art becoming clearly for the artists to see and for them to be inspired for more beautiful works, in order to meet the psychological needs of the Buddhists, communities and places of worship in the Northeast of Thailand.

**Objectives:**

- To study the history of Esan colored glass
- To study the artisanshship of Esan colored glass
- To study the symbolism of Esan colored glass in Buddhist architecture

**Research framework:** Research framework of "Esan colored glass: Artisanshship and Symbolism in Buddhist architecture", explains the implications of colored glass in ubosot decoration. It is divided into 2 aspects as follows.

**Artisanshship aspects:** The study focuses on the Buddhist architectural styles and patterns of the religion architecture. The architectural styles of the Northeastern ubosot are divided into 4 types: Rattanakosin Lan Chang Vietnamese and Northeast Folk style where artisanshship in this research refers to 3 aspects: Concept: based on Buddhist concepts, beliefs, customs and traditions as well as culture and nature. Material: the study focuses on what type of the colored glass or stained used at the decoration, tools and equipment as well as adhesive glue. Production process: study the creativity in the artisanshship, design inspired by the style of architecture and religious art, patterns, paintings used at glass decoration, how to cut and stick the glass including

the glass decoration. Therefore, to study the pattern, image, position for glass decoration, artistic element composition and artistic concepts need to be involved in the study.

**Symbolism aspects:** The research aims to study the symbolism in the image. To do this, interpretation of images and hidden symbols is required. The symbolism is divided into 3 aspects: Buddhism: it tells a story about Buddhism, the life of Buddha, Tribhumikatha (The Three Worlds), the universe and Chulamani Chedi to interpret the symbolism as the whole decoration appears in the teachings of Buddhism. Traditional belief: it is a story related to folk tales, myths, the "Heet 12 Kong 14" customs and traditions including the story of the Gods and ghosts and ancestry's ghosts and Ethnicity: it is a story about a way of life, power, protection including language and philosophy to depict the thoughts, beliefs and people's faith that have a psychological effect in an abstract way.

The study also includes the linkage to the communication of artisanshship and symbolism, applying the theory of cultural spread in the analysis of history as well as cultural diffusion. Aesthetic theory is used in the analysis of the artisanshship and symbolic interaction theory to analyze the symbolism in order to gain new body of knowledge and new phenomena related to Esan colored glass, artisanshship and symbolism in Buddhist architecture.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This research uses the primary source of data obtained from the target group of the study and from the field surveys as well as secondary source of data from related study.

**Population and sample:** Key informants (8 people), this group of key informants must be knowledgeable in history, development of art, consisting of 4 community leaders or local wisdoms, 2 religious leaders and 2 academics. Casual informant group (8 people), this study is to learn about the process of developing materials, the creativity processes and the relation to the culture of the glass decoration. This group consists of four glass makers, two designers and two color cement mixers.

**Research tools**

**Research tools can be divided as follows:** Field survey form, to collect information about the current state of the Esan colored glass at 27 temples to identify the symbolism, design and pattern, images, position for

colored glass or stained glass decoration and layout of the elements. In-depth interview, to collect information about the history, beliefs, symbols, influences, patterns and stories of art and culture related to colored glass by interviewing the knowledge group and people involved. Group discussion, to check the analyzed data for the knowledge and practice groups.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Data collection**

#### **Information is collected as follows**

**Primary data:** Field surveys are launched to have the data of current state of Esan colored glass at 27 temples to study the artisanship and symbolism. In-depth interviews will be about art history, symbolism, artisanship and cultural stories related to colored glass while group discussion is to review the data analyzed for the knowledge and practice group. Secondary data is the study the documentary derived from the study of documents, textbooks, journals, books, articles and related research.

### **Data analysis**

**Data analysis is as detailed below:** Artisanship, data is analyzed by means of sorting, according to format, style grouping, art style comparison with other types of work as well as the same types of Esan architecture that have the age-range pre-defined including the use of artistic concepts to describe the lines, patterns and designs as well as data analysis using various theories the theory of cultural diffusion, functional structure, aesthetics to describe the relationship between arts and culture of Europe, Rattanakosin, Lan Chang, Esan or the nature of the diffusion, inspiration in the artistic style of the colored glass.

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### **Research results**

**Research results on Esan colored glass:** Artisanship and Symbolism in Buddhist architecture are as the following points.

**History of esan colored glass:** History of Esan colored Gglass in Ubosot of Rattanakosin style. Esan colored glass found in the ubosot of Rattanakosin style, starting from the early Rattanakosin period, the style was influenced by the late-Ayutthaya period. The use of colored glass art for Buddhist architecture in the Rattanakosin period continued for years and reached a great peak in the reign of King Rama III, who was the royal patron of Buddhism. His Majesty initiated and gave royal support to the building and renovation of temples throughout his reign. The distribution of colored glass in the Northeast of Thailand in the Rattanakosin period has been popular, since, then.

In the Rattanakosin period, colored glass decoration became popular as the art and architecture had been preserved and supported by the monarch. Glass decorations appeared generally in temples, royal residences. Outstanding works include glass decorations at Wat Phra Si Rattana Satsadaram (Temple of the Emerald Buddha or Wat Phra Kaew). King Rama III rebuilt the ubosot of the Temple of the Emerald Buddha where the original exterior wall used to have been gold-gilded pattern on a red background changed to decorative stucco with colored glass as well as the wooden parts of the building such as gable apex, gable ridges were also transformed into decorative glass design. This was that the glass that covers the wooden part can help to maintain the wood for longer time. In addition, there are many colored glass decorations in other Buddhist architecture. Parts of the architecture that are mostly found decorated with colored glass are gable, gable apex, gable ridges, eaves brackets and the base of the Buddha image, etc. The glass is known as “KrachokKriab” (Ancient Thai Glass) with a thin sheet like a cracker and can be easily cut into shape, coming with a unique traditional Thai color. History of Esan colored glass in Ubosot of Lan Chang style.

Patterns of Lan Chang-style glass decoration and Lao culture have entered the Northeastern part of Thailand together with a migration of Lao people from the left bank to the Northeastern area as of political conflicts. This land was then for the dwelling of Lao people and became current Esan community at present. Among the groups of migrating people, there was a group of royal-court artisans from Lan Chang included. When building temples, these artisans applied the art and architecture of Laos as a model for construction and inherited the

craftsmanship from the Lan Chang culture. An ubosot of Lan Chang style is unique in its shape, structure and decorations. Characteristics of ubosot in Lan Chang style can be divided into 3 types: rectangular floor plan with no indented corners and a front hall Unique pattern of Lan Chang style is that the proportion of the building is relatively low not very tall, curved roof Decorating elements including a gable apex, mid-apex (Sattaburiphan), roof decoration (Phaeng Nak or Krueang Lamyong), decorative triangles under the beam (Hang Phung or Ruang Phueng), eaves brackets (Khan Tuai) and Aew Khan as well as the tiered roofs (Toeb) which are usually decorated with colored glass in a beautiful pattern. This is a unique feature that can be found in ubosots of Lan Chang-style.

#### **History of Esan colored glass in Ubosot of Vietnamese**

**style:** A group of Vietnamese artisans arrived in Esan along the years of about 1917-1957, especially, in the years 1945-1946, a major migration of Vietnamese migrants who settled in the Northeastern provinces of the Region like Nong Khai, NakhonPhanom and Mukdahan. In 1920 when Vietnam was colonized by France, many of the Vietnamese escaped to dwell in Esan. One of the most prominent occupations of the Vietnamese at that time was to become a construction worker, noticing from the works of art throughout the area, especially, the provinces along both sides of the Mekong River. However, the evidence of art in the field surveys that the researcher found appears to have been the craftsmanship that belongs to the lineage of Vietnamese craftsmen in the South-East Esan Region, from Ubon Ratchathani to Korat, who rather are a Thai-Khmer group of which many of the Vietnamese style artworks also appear.

It is noteworthy that, most of the creative works by Vietnamese artisans are found to have techniques applied in decorating the surface with a variety of patterns including mirror, painted stucco in both bas-relief and high-relief to round relief. The Vietnamese craftsmen are reputed to have outstanding skills in the technical aspects of mortar which can be found unique in a variety of buildings. For example, the decoration of the opened part on an arch or decorative elements on the walls with pilaster designs as similar to the Western art. Patterns of faith found in the artworks of the Vietnamese artisanship were expressed through animal symbols which are the mythical creatures according to the Chinese culture.

#### **History of Esan colored glass in Ubosot of the Northeast**

**Folk style:** Coloredglass decoration in ubosot of the Northeast folk style is influenced by a mix of the art of local Esan with that of Lan Chang. Craftsman ship in

Buddhist architecture is mostly found in 'Sim' (Esan dialect) or commonly known for people in Central Thailand as 'ubosot' or 'bot' as it is called in modern Thailand. For the root of the vocabulary with ancient Thai-Esan, it was commonly called 'Sim'. This is presumed that this could be from the erosion of the word 'Sima'. Sim or ubosot is one of the most important art for the temple in Esan Region even if there is no clear plan for the layout. Before the year 1932, design of a Northeastern ubosot was influenced by art and architecture of Lao Lan Chang as the mainstream culture, especially, the use of colored glass to decorate the ubosot. All the Esan ubosots are rather the style of Lao Lan Chang folk art of which the folk architecture and folk crafts are also blended in. Therefore, there was a mix of characteristics of the two cultures perfectly. For obvious example, the ubosot of WatPhra That Kham Kaen.

The widespread of colored glass in the Northeast is a form of cultural diffusion. There is a pattern of spreading from one place to another, transforming the area by one group of people in one culture, living in a new place. It is spread through persons one person brings the culture to one another and distributes it to another in person or from one group to another group of people, remaining the original culture. It is a good combination of the new and original.

It can be concluded that the cultural distribution of the colored glass decorated in the four types of ubosots is a cultural transfer, arts and architecture by migration of people from the original place to the new place, taking with them the art of culture as well as their original faith. When they come to a new place, the people still have their traditional way of living. When they are in the community, the art is passed through as well as their culture, from person to person, from one group of people to another group. People in the existing community then get to appreciate the art and absorb these cultures blended in with their original. This is in line with the cultural diffusion model of Leo Frobenius.

**Artisanship of Esan colored glass:** Artisanship of Esan colored glass is divided into four styles of architecture.

#### **Artisanship of Esan colored glass in Ubosot of**

**Rattanakosin-style:** Artisanship of Esan colored glass in an ubosot of Rattanakosin-style in the early period was influenced by late-Ayutthaya period and early Rattanakosin period. Colored glass is used to decorate ubosots from time to time. Most of the Rattanakosin-style ubosots are decorated with colored glass in some of the roofing parts like gable, door arch, eaves brackets, Nak Sadung (curved-naga design on purlins) and gable finials.

However, there are some temples such as Wat Pa Sangarun in Khon Kaen of which the colored glass is used to decorate all parts of the ubosot including the Thai Kanok-design stucco wall where the colored glass is fully decorated. In addition, the newly created ubosots at present are also in Rattanakosin style which is decorated with colored glass of differently vivid colors.

For the concept of Esan colored glass art in the ubosot of Rattanakosin style, the study found that every temple has a Buddhist concept used as a guide to creating glass art in the ubosot. Anyway, the study found none of the temples that applied the concept of faith, the concept of nature and the concept of customs and culture in the decoration with Esan colored glass art.

According to Esan colored glass artisanship in the ubosot of Rattanakosin style for the material aspect, glass mirror was used at decoration for Wat Prathum Khongka and Wat Na Phra That while some temples used the modern glass. All the temples use tools and equipment for the glass cutting. For adhesive glue at glass sticking, Wat Pathum Khongka and Wat Na Phra That use lacquer varnish for the glass sticking while Wat Thung Si Mueang, WatPho Chai, Wat Pa Sangarun and Wat Sawang Non Ngam use epoxy which is modern adhesive glue for the colored glass sticking. All the temples have no color used in the wall decoration.

**Artisanship of Esan colored glass in Ubosot of Lan Chang-style:** According to artisanship of Esan colored glass in ubosot of Lan Chang-style, all the temples are influenced and mastered from Wat Xieng Thong, Democratic People's Republic of Laos of which the design is distinguished by the delicate and beautiful look of the architecture. Colored glass of a variety of colors are used in all parts of the decoration including gable, Ruang Phueng, door arch, window, wall in the front and the back, Khan Tuey (Corbel), poles of the ubosot. All sides of the wall are decorated with colored glass; modern colored glass is preferably used as of many colors to choose from. The glass is shining, easy to reflect light and beautiful.

According to Esan colored glass artisanship in the ubosot of Lan Chang-Style as for the concept aspect, the study found that Buddhist concept is applied to guide the creation of the colored glass art in the ubosot. Some of the temples used the concept of faith in the artisanship of the colored glass as well as concepts of customs, arts and culture and the concept of nature.

**Artisanship of Esan colored glass in Ubosot of Vietnamese or Vietnam-style:** Artisanship of Esan colored glass in Ubosot of Vietnamese style, spherical mirror from pressed powder compact is generally used.

This style of construction is characterized by brick masonry construction of which the Vietnamese workmen were influenced by the French when Vietnam was occupied by France. The distinguished style of the building is characterized by the arch that has a curved shape. The embossed pattern is low-relief decorated with spherical mirrors. The walls are usually designed with Buddhist motifs, beliefs and local traditions. The decoration with spherical mirrors from pressed powder compact is preferably adorned on gable and walls a unique identity of the Vietnamese style.

According to Esan colored glass artisanship in the ubosot of Vietnamese style as for the concept aspect, it is found that every temple has adopted the concept of Buddhism as a guide to the creation of colored glass art in the ubosot. Some of the temples apply the concepts of faith in the artisanship of Esan colored glass art.

According to Esan colored glass artisanship in the ubosot of Vietnamese style as for the production aspect, every temple has a patterned design to adorn the colored glass by assigning the pattern and position to decorate with the colored glass as well as the shape design of colored glass to be used, to be able to cut the glass according to the desired shape and attach the glass to the designated surface including the use of decorative mirrors to decorate the walls.

**Artisanship of Esan colored glass in ubosot of Northeast Folk style:** For the artisanship of Esan colored glass in ubosot of Northeast folk style, most of the buildings are brick and masonry while the gable and all the roof decoration are wooden. For the colored glass used in the decoration, most of the Northeast folk style ubosots are decorated with spherical mirrors from the pressed powder compact; colored glass is partially decorated, resulting in the less number of colored glass decorated in the Northeast folk style ubosot. More than that as it's decorated by mirrors, the ubosot doesn't look, so, colorful it as well does not catch the eye of the passers-by as it should.

For the artisanship of Esan colored glass in ubosot of Northeast folk style as for the concept aspect, the study found that most of the temples incorporate Buddhist concepts and faiths as a guideline for the creation of glass art in the ubosots. There are no temples that incorporate customs, art and culture in the artisanship Esan colored glass. For the concept of nature, there is only one temple, Wat Phra That Kham Kaen and there is only one temple of Wat Klang Khok of which glass adornment is done without any idea as the main concept for the creation of colored glass art in the ubosot. For the artisanship of Esan colored glass in ubosot of Northeast folk style as for

the material aspect used as the decorative colored glass, the study found that there are 3 temples using spherical mirror from the pressed powder compact including Wat Phra That Kham Kaen, Wat Klang Khok Ko and Wat Chak krawan Phumphinit. There are two temples that use mirrors, Wat Phra That Kham Kaen and Wat Chak krawan Phumphinit. And there are two temples that use modern colored glass Wat SaKet and Wat Chaeng. All the temple use tools and equipment for the glass cutting, except for Wat Klang Khok Ko that uses spherical mirrors from pressed powder compact, resulting in no materials and equipment at the glass cutting. For adhesive glue, every temple uses lacquer varnish for colored glass sticking as well as all the temples has no color used in the wall decoration.

In summary, for the artisanship of every design of the Esan colored glass art as for the production process, every temple has a patterned design to adorn the colored glass, using the assigned pattern and space to decorate with the colored glass. It has the shape of colored glass designed to have the glass cut according to the desired shape and attach the glass on the assigned surface, including the uses of decorative mirrors to decorate the walls:

**Symbolism of Esan colored glass in Buddhist Architecture:** Symbolism is divided into 3 aspects. Buddhism: it is a story about Tribhumikatha (The Three Worlds), the universe and Chulamani Chedi. Traditional belief: about story tales, myths, the 'Heet 12 Kong 14' customs and traditions, ghosts, Gods and ancestry's ghosts. Ethnicity: it is about way of life, living, power, protection, language and philosophy. To conclude, for the symbolism of Esan colored glass in the ubosot of Rattanakosin style, every temple has a Buddhist symbolism applied in the Esan colored glass. Among these, 4 temples use the traditional beliefs to symbolize, which are Wat Na Phra That, Wat Thung Si Mueang, Wat Pho Chai and Wat Sawang Non Ngam while there are 2 temples that use the ethnicity to symbolize Wat Pho Chai and Wat Pa Sangarun.

From the observation, the study found that all the temples have the Buddhist symbolism incorporated in the Esan colored glass art. For example, Wat Na Phra That, Wat Thung Si Mueang, Wat Pho Chai and Wat Sawang Non Ngam incorporate the symbolism of traditional beliefs in the art of Esan colored glass while Wat Pho Chai and Wat Pa Sangarun use the symbolism of ethnicity through Esan colored glass art. The symbolism incorporated in the art at all the temples, whether it is a symbol of Buddhism, traditional beliefs or ethical symbols all indicate the good deeds and good deeds result in protection by Gods. If

ones can detach from all the passions, happiness is surely found this is considered one step to the achievement through dharma practice. For symbolism of Esan colored glass in Lan Chang-style ubosot, every temple has a Buddhist symbolism in the Esan colored glass art 4 temples incorporate traditional beliefs in the symbolism which are Wat Manichan, Wat Wang Kham, Wat Sirindhorn Wanaram and Wat Pa Nong Son while 2 temples, Wat Manichan and Wat Wang Kham, incorporate the ethnicity.

To notice, it's found that all the temples represent the Buddhist symbolism in the Esan colored glass art. This reflects the faith in Buddhism, good deeds, Dharma practice, the Four Noble Truths that lead to detachment from all the passions one of the most important teachings of Buddhism that leads to Nirvana. The 4 Noble Truths are the principles that make the Buddha enlightened while the symbolism of the traditional belief, myths, fairy tales, want to convey the story of the faith of the Naga who protects Buddhism as well as the maintenance of the religion to last forever.

For symbolism of the Esan colored glass in the ubosot of Vietnamese style, every temple has its own symbol of Buddhism in the art of Esan colored glass and 6 temples use the symbols of traditional beliefs in symbolism which are Wat Bueng Kaew, Wat Rat Pradit, Wat Klang Kosum, Wat BanIad, Wat Wan thani Wihan and Wat Chaeng while Wat Sa Thong is the only temple that uses the symbol of ethnicity.

From the observation, it was found that all the temples represent the Buddhist symbolism in the Esan colored glass, reflecting the faith in Buddhism, good deeds, merits making by those who make merits, whether it is a flower offering or worship can have a great merit, while the symbolism of traditional beliefs, myths or tales, wants to convey the story of the beliefs of the dragon that protects Buddhism including the control of power or the greatness, according to the Chinese belief.

For the symbolism in the Esan colored glass in the ubosot of Northeast folk style, almost every temple represent Buddhist symbolism in the Esan colored glass art. It is only Wat Klang Khok Ko that does not incorporate the Buddhist symbolism while 3 temples use the symbol of traditional belief which is Wat Klang Khok Ko, Wat Saket and Wat Chaeng. No temples incorporate the ethnicity symbolism.

From the observation, the study found the Buddhist symbolism is mostly represented through the Esan colored glass art as well as the traditional belief while ethnicity is represented as symbolism by none of the temples. Most of the decorative glasses are spherical mirrors from pressed powder compact and most of the

Buddhist symbolism represented is a matter of intellectual enlightenment, the uncertainty of the world, the rule of happening, existing and ending, according to the round of existence or the cycle of life and death.

Most of the ubosots of Rattanakosin style are usually built in the post-Rattanakosin era or after the year 1957 when the decorative colored glasses are glasses of the modern days with a variety of colors white silver gold, red, green, blue, indigo, yellow and etc have become available. Architectural design is more beautiful and more contemporary. Most of the ubosots are brick-and-masonry buildings which are larger than the ancient ones and are more decorated with colored glass than the ancient ubosots too. Most of the Lan Chang-style ubosots are decorated with colored glass. Colored glasses used to decorate are glassed of modern-day colors with a variety of colors white, silver, gold, red, green, blue, indigo, yellow and etc. Architectural design is beautiful. The pattern is decorated with crystal clear glasses, covering almost all parts of the ubosot. As a result, the ubosot looks shining and light-reflect. Most of the ubosots in Vietnamese style are brick-and-masonry decorated with low-relief painted sculpture, the unique identity of the Vietnamese ubosot. For the glass used to decorate the Vietnamese-style ubosot is most commonly decorated with spherical mirrors from the pressed powder compact and the decoration with mirrors is specific for some of the parts, resulting in the few number of colored glasses decorated in the ubosot of the Vietnamese-style. As the viewing mirror is not so colorful the decorative mirrors are not as noticeable as the stucco pattern. For the Northeast folk style ubosots, most of the buildings are brick-and-masonry while the gable and the roof decoration are made of wood. For the glasses used in the decoration of Northeast folk style ubosots, spherical mirrors from pressed powder compact are preferably used and some of the specific parts are decorated with such mirrors, resulting in the few number of colored glass decorated in the Northeast folk style ubosots. The viewing mirror is also not, so, colorful it doesn't capture the eyes of the passersby. Study of the art of Esan colored glass is consistent with the study of the Buddhist history of the 80-posture Buddha which also corresponds to the colored glass art decorated in the back of the ubosot of Wat Xieng Thong where a Buddha's posture called "Pang PoedLok" (Opening the World) is a posture which Buddha is on a standing post with a hand hanging down facing out to the front. This connects with the life of Buddha that when Lord Buddha was descended from Daowadueng Heaven, when he looks up, it appears the long way up to the Brahma's world and when he looked down, the long way down to the abyss. When he

looked around, it appears to be the other hundred thousands of other universes endlessly. Because of this both angels and humans could see each other as all of them appear in front of each other. With the power of the Buddha, this is considered to reveal to the world and the universe that there are many other worlds beyond counting or calculation (Mungthanee, 1999).

Beauty of the artisanship in Esan colored glass art in the 4 types of ubosots Rattanakosin style, Lan Chang style, Vietnamese style and Northeast folk style is accorded to the theory of aesthetics in that art can be appreciated and understood by an individual. It can be a feeling and the individual's understanding of the beauty in nature and art which appear in the concept and culture. Buddhist aesthetics are mixed aesthetics not intended to lead to aesthetic experience in the dimension and religious perspective.

## CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the art of Esan color glass is to create works of art for worship. With a variety of styles based on the power of faith, it is an art inspired by imagination in the world of ideals and the art of imagining the ideal to the world of reality.

From the data analysis, it is clear that the beauty of the art of Esan colored glass is based on the theoretical aesthetic principles of the four Esan ubosot that are beautiful in terms of art in terms of elements of arts, principles of art composition in line with the concept of elements of art and the principles of art composition.

**Shape:** A shape is visible in the visual arts as the artist creates a harmonious combination of points, lines, colors, shapes, forms, surfaces, patterns, spaces.

**Content:** Meaning an abstract element or mental structure that conveys a story. In addition, the principles of art composition are to bring the elements of art or the visual elements to re-create aesthetic value, taking into account the structure of art. This is also important to convey the beauty of artistic aesthetics. The main thing to take into account is balance, size and proportion, rhythm or the right position as well as the unity of the relevance of the components, all have a unified characteristic. Unity creates a distinctive appearance, harmonious or minor conflicts but when unified, it has a harmonious balance. The study of symbolism in Esan colored glass: Artisanship and Symbolism in Buddhist architecture found that the concept of symbolism and the use of symbols are related to the reality of nature transmitted through Buddhist teachings. This means the relationship



between humans and animals that is depicted concretely, communicating with people in the same culture and society who define the symbols, so, they learn together. Therefore, to communicate with each other for the meaning of both the concrete and the abstract, the transcendent truth over human perception experience, it is necessary to use a symbol as a medium to link the meaning of the symbol to religion, culture, belief. According to Snodgrass (1992) an academic in in depth meaning of symbolism, symbolism is related to the reality of nature, also corresponds to the religious teachings. Moreover, this also corresponds to a study of Clifford Geertz who links the meaning of symbols to religion and culture.

Religions generally use a lot of symbols. Symbols are often associated with institutions in society. It is evident that religion is not only often used as a basis of faith, it is also used to represent the meaning of things. The importance of religion is then reflected in the symbolic work of colored glass art that reflects the symbolism in Buddhism in this study which are paintings illustrating Buddha's life, Buddha statue of different postures, Tribhumigatha (The Three Worlds), Chulamani Chedi, lotus the Sun, decorated in various parts of the ubosot such as gable, wall, door arch, window arch, etc. These images all convey Buddhist meaning including the reflection of the myths, folk tales, customs, local culture and ethnicity that reflect the inheritance from generation to generation and becoming a religious foundation, traditions and culture as well as ethnicity.

For the study of symbolism in religion, symbolism is generally used and is often associated with institutions in society. It is evident that religion is often used as a basis for belief, religion is also used to represent the meaning of things. The importance of religion is the reflected symbolically, in the art work of colored glass decoration that reflects the symbolism in Buddhism. In this research, symbolism includes paintings illustrating Buddha's life, Buddha statue of different postures, Tribhumigatha (The Three Worlds), Chulamani Chedi, lotus, the Sun, decorated in various parts of the ubosot such as gable, wall, door arch, window arch, etc. These images all convey Buddhist meaning. The study of symbolism that links to faiths and ethnicity is related to the reality of nature transmitted through religious teachings which means the relationship between humans, animals and the nature which meaning appears to be concretely conveyed by communicating with people in society of the same culture who define the symbols, so, they learn together. Therefore, to communicate with each other, for the meaning of both the concrete and the abstract, the transcendent truth over human perception experience, it is necessary to use a

symbol as a medium to link the meaning of the symbol to religion, culture, belief. The study of symbolism here is consistent with a study "Naga Art of Luang Prabang: Design, Symbolism and Definition as the World Heritage". The Naga art represents the faith in the symbolism of two main elements: the belief and the naga symbol which can be described in 3 dimensions ethnicity, God of Earth and water and the dimension of religious servants as well as social, cultural and economic meanings (Sriruksa, 2015). This corresponds to "Buddhist Symbolism in the Monasteries of Luang Prabang". Buddhist art that can be found at the monasteries are all symbols of the life and death, the heaven and hell and the Buddha as well as the ornamental symbols of Sumeru and the cosmic landscape that make a monastery an ideal world of a cosmic complex landscape, from the ground to the roof (Kitisakon, 2014). This also corresponds to "Changes of Symbolism in Decorative Sculpture in Ubosots and Viharas of Luang Prabang" by accessing the basic history of the 16 temples, ubosots and viharas to study the history, current conditions, style of the religious sculpture including the factors contributing changes. That study found that the symbolism, the pattern of ornamental decorations in the ubosots and the viharas can be classified in 4 periods and 3 factors contributing changes, namely, history, social, cultural and artistic influences from other cultures (Sangsurin, 2014). According to concepts of aesthetics of Immanuel Kant, who has an influence on the Western Romantic paintings, this concept of beauty is actual in Kant himself that leads to the theory of genius the potential for creative work of the artist (Maleetipawan, 2008).

## **SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the research results of "Esan colored glass: Artisanry and Symbolism in Buddhist architecture" concepts and opinions are found in this study and recommended for those interested in the study of architectural works appearing in Buddhist architecture. This research focuses on the analysis of Esan colored glass art appearing in Buddhist architecture according to 4 architectural styles which are the artisanry in Esan colored glass art in the ubosots of Rattanakosin style, Lan Chang-style, Vietnamese style and local style. The information achieved is based on the architectural model. For the selection of target area, there are many more ubosots that have a very important and interesting point but have not been studied yet. The researcher hopes that the information provided in this research will be of good basis for preliminary analysis for those who want to further study. There should be a study about time period of the development of the artisanry in colored glass art

and comparative architectural styles in order to understand the similarities and differences between the craftsmanship of each period of time. There should be knowledge about the art of colored glass and symbolism given to the youth to maintain religion and to conserve the ancient ubosots in good condition. Knowledge, understanding and awareness of the conservation of ancient ubosots should be given to the people in the community, so, they understand about importance of ancient architecture and historical value of the community. Relevant agencies should study to find ways to preserve the ancient and restore ubosots in good conditions; creating community engagement. Further research on Thailand's artisanship of colored glass art should be conducted to find the artistic relationship in the country.

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