

Burmese Murals: Patterns Allegory and Aesthetics Presented in Po Win Taung Caves

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Abstract: The research article of Burmese Murals: patterns allegory symbolism an aesthetics presented in Po Win Taung Caves was aimed to study patterns and aesthetics appeared on murals of Po Win Taung Caves in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. The study is a qualitative research with target group in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. Research tools and methodology consist of survey form, observation form, interview form and focus group discussion. Data collection and analysis are processed by concept of elements of art and aesthetic theory, presented in a descriptive analysis approach. Study results found that the mural was presented with demonstration of the most renowned stories, i.e., the presentation of images with Buddha statue. For the composition of art elements, repeated layout as well as the left and right alignment are mostly applied while the second mostly-applied composition, the full-spread layout and landscape orientation. Tempera technique with natural colors is used as the painting method. Warm-tone colors like yellow, red and green are mainly used. The illustration style is 2-dimensional that depicts the feeling by lines and gestures, regardless scale and proportion. The most popular illustrations are Sri Maha Bodhi and the images of Buddha. Aesthetic from the murals is a beauty of shape by combination of visual elements and element of art composition. The most outstanding visual arts were a usage of curves and warm tone colors as the main part which leads to various beautiful shapes. The presentation of Buddhism story related to dharmic principle is valuable for religious studies, art, history and culture. All of these can reflect locality, especially, the mural in Po Win Taung Caves which can be an ideal study for religion and religion dissemination through time and from generation to generation.

Key words: Mural, pattern, aesthetics, Po Win Taung Caves, religion, history

INTRODUCTION

The mural is one of the important art for human livelihood as they know how to scape, scratch or write on a cave wall, since, the prehistoric age which can reflect the thoughts, belief, expression as well as life style of the society. Painting creation is regarded one of the good behaviors of human to convey memories or incidents from the past. Renowned murals or favorable wall paintings were considered as the heritage derived from ancient society. This is why a mural is an important piece of art in each area or the regional part of a particular country. The mural art can depict their customs, culture and tradition which reflect to local and regional identity. In Myanmar, mural art can also show ethic identity and outstanding culture as one of the ASEAN member countries.

Myanmar is one of countries in Southeast Asia which is prosperous in art and culture. Evidences from the past of Myanmar are found in many prehistoric archaeological sites as a result of the country located in an appropriate location for habitation in the prehistoric age. The location consists of mountains, caves, hills, foothills, plains, huge rivers and abundant plains rivers (Chanwatthanakun, 2010, 2011). The distinguished cities of arts and culture in Myanmar which were influenced by Buddhism are Bagan, Mandalay Sagaing, for example. Referring to Sakchai Saising, the prosperity of Buddhism can be seen from the murals in Myanmar. The evidence has been found, since, the prehistoric age. For example, the mural drawings of the Pydalin Cave in Taunggi District of Shan State that consist of images on the wall painted in brown stripes, located at 10-11 ft above the cave wall. The painting

portrays mostly animal images, mostly cows and a carved small signs. It has been studied and determined to probably be in the Neolithic or New Stone Age, around 11,000-1,300 years ago with contemporary prehistoric archeology in Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar and other sources (Saising, 2014).

The discovery of murals in 11th century found that the mural in Myanmar has been influenced by India. Especially the paintings in Bagan, painting, artists specialized in drawing lines. Popular painting technique was to paint the powdered colors on the wall. Most pictures are about the 550 past-lives of the Buddha as well as demonstrate the story of Buddhism in the Ava era in Nguan Yan dynasty: from 13th-16th century. The paintings on the ceiling of the cave consists of murals that demonstrate Buddhist history and flowers that demonstrate the people ways in society: only red and green were used in the painting. Later, at the Kinebung era beginning in 17th century, it was considered as a turning point for the 2-dimensional painting to Western style by adding color dimension: use blue color on the painting. The added color demonstrates enjoyment of lifestyle and period of Kinebung era. In Yadanabone era of Mandalay in 19th century, Western art style began to influence the painting styles. However, the traditional lining styles still remain. In the colonial era, Western-styled painting and modern techniques were brought into use and became a popular contemporary art from 20th century until present. As data shown, mural can represent the period and development of the murals in Myanmar which play a significance role for the study of the mural paintings in Po Win Taung Caves, Sagaing Region, Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Po Win Taung Caves are one of the temples located in Minhla sub-township, Yinmabin township, Yinmabin District, Sagaing Region, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in the Northwest of central Myanmar (from Mandalay). The Po Win Taung caves are sandstone caves on an inactive volcano area for a 1000 years. The volcano consists of approximately 790 small sandstone caves. Most of them are presumed places for meditation. Inside the cave appears a variety of artworks, i.e., painting, sculpture and architecture. The history of temple began to appear, since, the history of Ava Kingdom in parallel with the transition of power from the Bagan period. After the fall of the Bagan Kingdom, Myanmar has split up again, the Ava Dynasty was influenced by the flourishing culture of the late Bagan Kingdom. The evidence shows that there were 2 monks studied at Buddhist University in Ava city in the past as the Po Win Taung Caves in present (Pangnoi, 2010).

Po Win Taung Caves was considered a forgotten temple in the history of Myanmar. Scholars assume that it's just a place where monks stay for a long time, regardless Buddhist value dimension. Until the scholars realize the importance which can be filled in the history of Myanmar and Southeast Asia. At present, Po Win Taung Caves appears as the value art, each cave has beautiful architecture decorated with various carving.

Some cave is decorated with carved stone at the front to be a beautiful arch and sculpture decorated at the front, inside the cave has pierced through to several caves. Each cave has a number of Buddha statues in various postures and a number of paintings on the wall. As appeared inside the cave wall and above the cave wall, the paintings were drawn by various beautiful colors, mainly a story of Buddhism such as the past life of Buddha, Buddha history, the Buddha legend with concise narration below the painting. The paintings were found to be painted in late 17th-18th century during the late Kinebung period which is the most prosperous period, referring to Chew (2005), a study of the Po Win Taung Caves Temple in central Myanmar: sculpture, architecture and murals, the study found that these cut stone caves were contained with a variety of fine arts which make a beautiful cave temple. It was decorated on the top and bottom of the cave arch. Some arches were placed with a human or animal statue beside the cave. Inside the cave there are many statues of Buddha in a variety of posture such as meditation, standing, laying more than 100 postures decorated with color painting depict traditional customs such as the past lives of 28 Buddhas painting, Buddha history and a major mural in Po Win Taung Caves built in the second period of Ava around 16th-18th century called "Nyaung Yan" which began in the reign of King Nyaung Yan (1597-1605). The art of "Nyaung Yan" is inspired by various cultures such as China, India, Portugal, Thailand, Muslim and Europe. It represents the relationship of villager's beliefs in Theravada Buddhism.

Research objective: To study the mural patterns and aesthetics appeared in Po Win Taung Caves of Myanmar.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study of Burmese Murals: patterns allegory symbolism and aesthetics presented in Po Win Taung Caves was qualitative research, the researcher has designed research methodology used for conducting research as follows.

Target group: In this study, the researchers divided the target into 2 groups: the target group was the mural that appeared in 35 caves of Po Win Taung. The caves contain paintings depict the past lives of Buddhas, the history of Gautama Buddha, the story of Vessantara and the three worlds. The audience target consists of a knowledgeable group and related groups as follows: the knowledgeable group is a person who study the murals directly, possesses knowledge in history, pattern and aesthetics appear in the mural of Po Win Taung Caves, i.e., Myanmar historian, skilled artists in mural and sculpture, Myanmar art scholars, Thai Buddhist scholars include related groups: person who related in general research, problem and current conditions of murals in Po Win Taung Caves, i.e., village head, village wisdom and the abbot of Po Win Taung.

Research period: The researcher defined duration of the study for 1 year and 6 months. The 6 months for a preparation period: study paper and relevant research, contact relevant authorities and collect necessary data, 6 months for data collection to select the target group and interview, 3 months for evaluate and analysis data to analyze and classify data from field study for writing research, 3 months for writing research, publication, presentation and editing for graduation.

Tools and data collection: The researcher used tools to conduct research as follows. Survey form: the survey use primary data; the scope is explored geographical sites, physical, social, cultural and community contexts inside and outside the Po Win Taung Caves.

Participation observation form: observe by attending to examine the mural and related community activities. Non-participation observation: observe inside and outside the environment of Po Win Taung Caves, observe the society, culture and community using videos recording, voice recording and note-taking in various data related to the study of murals.

Structure interviews: with related groups related to Po Win Taung Caves and murals. Unstructured interviews: use in-depth interviews with no limited answers with the knowledgeable group for a variety of information and aspects, covering the issues of background and history, current situations, patterns and aesthetics in Po Win Taung Caves murals.

Group discussion: to be used when having difficulties in collecting data, suspicious issues to assist the researcher to study and observe the community behaviors

to evaluate an in-depth attitude to study pattern and aesthetics of the murals that appeared in Po Win Taung Caves of Myanmar.

Data collection: Researcher has collected data that corresponds with research objectives in order to be able to answer the research question as defined by data collection methodology. The data collection methodology is the study of documents in government offices, education institutes, dissertations, internet, people and an individual and field data collection using survey, observation interviews and group discussion.

Scrutinizing data and analysis of data: The research was conducted in accordance with research objectives and concept of research. This research is qualitative research with descriptive analysis. Data analysis is not based on statistics as evidence, yet used for information support only. Field data by using non-participant observation, structure interview, unstructure interview, group discussion are integrated analysis of relevant data from secondary sources. The researcher conducted a preliminary study, therefore, the researcher plays an important role in analysis and fine solutions to follow the objectives of this research.

Data analysis presentation: Presentation of the analyzed results with descriptive explanations, photos and lines including charts or tables, to present a summary of knowledge about the history, current situation, patterns and aesthetics that appear in the murals in Po Win Taung Caves of Myanmar. After that, study results will be presented to public in a research paper, articles and academic posters as well as presentations at national and international conferences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the survey of Po Win Taung Cave, murals were found in the 35 caves from total 790 caves, due to fragmentation and destruction of some caves, resulting in impossible entries. The data is from a survey conducted in 2016 where researchers have visited the field to collect mural data in 35 caves. Each mural is quite clear and a bit blurred as of the cave conditions. Some murals can be analyzed partially and some cave contents are similar and different. Researcher has chosen to study the murals with complete conditions and unique for pattern and aesthetic analysis.

Po Win Taung Cave murals patterns: Po Win Taung Cave mural patterns consist of story presentation pattern, composition, painting style and the appeared painting pattern.

Story presentation: Story presentation consists of series presentation, single scene presentation and story presentation with Buddha illustration. The series presentation is connected scenes, sequences by selected the important incidents to show the events as appears in the story. The main characters is considered as outstanding players in each episode. The single scene presentation uses only one scene and one episode to be depicted full-size of a cave wall with important selected incidents in the Buddhism history. For story presentation with Buddha illustration, the presentation is an illustration of the Buddha to make contents more complete. The most popular illustration is Sri Maha Bodhi. All the 3 patterns are similar in style of presentation in Buddha temple sanctuary which present an illustration of Buddha's in enlightenment as background of the Buddha statue as well as series presentation, single-scene presentation.

Composition: The composition of the murals in Po Win Taung Cave can be categorized in six types: full spread layout, landscape orientation, repeated layout, left-right alignment, circle radial composition, partition orientation. Full spread layout composition, the muralist likes to draw various shapes until fully spread and individually, landscape orientation, the artist draws a story that is linked to each episode continuously and painting is arranged horizontally in square space until the end of other side of the wall, there are 2 types of repeated layout, i.e., one episode of one story in the same cave. The same composition is repeatedly placed by several painting such as painting in the cave number 102, the story of the Bodhisattva sitting in the castle has 23 paintings, the story of leaving the palace for ordination has 23 paintings, the story of tonsure has 23 paintings and enlightenment stories has 23 paintings as well as repeated composition, there are paintings of the Buddha sitting on the throne, the paintings were arranged at the same row. The composition in Po Win Taung Cave mural has linked to beliefs in the past lives of Buddhas. The artist usually arranges this way of composition since the Bagan era, left-right alignment, composition of the images are equally portrayed from the left to the right side. The artist composed the painting on the left and right sides with the same sizes. For example, the cave number 100, the painting of the Buddha's enlightenment consist of the attitude of subduing Mara sitting on the throne at the center of painting. The two sides of the painting were illustrated

with balanced shape and proportion as well as flowers and Sri Maha Bodhi including the circle frame patterns which are preferred in drawing related to Buddhism in Po Win Taung Caves for almost every cave, circle radial composition is typically applied for the ceiling paintings. The circle radius is a balance spread out around the broad such as the painting at the cave number 015 with overlapping circles at the center of painting from small circles and then scale up. Followed by the pattern like lotus petals overlapping each other in a multi-layer and spread out to the edge or from small to large sizes, respectively. Most of these compositions appear on the ceiling at the top-center of the Buddha image, representing infinite radius of enlightenment, partition orientation, two types are applied. Separated story in each episode with a large straight line and separated space inside a painting with small curves. For this type of composition, the artist normally paints each episode to connect continuously as well as uses a line as a boundary for each scene with large and clear straight lines and serrated lines. And the lines used to divide the area of each part is small two-color curve or caused by using different colors. The direction of curve depends on the division of space in the different parts as able to notice in 6 types of composition that is outstanding composition in Po Win Taung Caves.

Painting techniques: Tempera is the technique used for the paintings at the Po Win Taung Caves. Warm color tones are mainly used including yellow, red, green, blue, black and white which yellow is used as the primary color for the painting before the red color. The bright-green color is used at the background while white and black are used to store details and bold the drawing lines. However, drawings at some of the other places use black and green in the background. Later on, the red color was used in the background as well but most of them use yellow and blue. If it is a human image painting, black is used in the background. For floral patterns, white, black and yellow colors from powdered pastel are used. But for the patterns of vegetables, creatures, colors from minerals are mainly used, i.e., Tama Hsei (substances like gum or lacquer from the *Rondeletiatinctoria* tree). The lacquer from other trees such as Nim Neem or *Melia indica* of which the gum colors are made from is used in the Bagan era as well. For color combination, the red-yellow color is made from a mixture of powdered cinnabar and mercury sulfide or from soil that appears black and red or almost brown in color. Main colors to be used are yellow and red. Vines can give green color as seen from the ceiling of the cave number 102. Yellow color is made from arsenic processed with carbon and nitrogen, producing light-yellow color. When

mixed with green, it causes light-green color. White is obtained from clay or lime, black from charcoal and this color is for clothing coloring. Blue can be obtained from copper sulfide; it was used in the Ava era and considered as the primary color used in painting. The procedures and methods of painting are as follows.

Procedures and painting methods for a mural painting in Po Win Taung Caves include; Step 1, prepare the workspace, clean the surface of the wall by rubbing the wall until it becomes as smooth as possible. Step 2, then apply plastering or coating with adhesive primer to make sure of the flat and smooth surface. Step 3, wait for the surface to dry and begin the image outlining as desired. Step 4, paint in the colors as appeared in the assigned image. Step 5, paint in details by bolding the drawing lines to give more contrast to the painting. This kind of painting technique is found in India, Sri Lanka and Thailand where muralists have conveyed their drawing styles as follows. Two-dimensional drawing; the muralists have conveyed the two-dimensional drawing in the width-and-length perspective, disappearing the third dimension. Moreover, it gives importance to the use of outlines and colors to form shapes. The shapes and outlines that appear in the mural are preferably bolded, showing the skills and expertise of the artists the the Ava period. It also allows the paintings to look alive without shadows and light rendered. Drawing with lines and gestures; muralists prefer to convey the story of their paintings for the audiences to understand in the easiest ways. Expression of the character's emotions is an important part the muralists must convey to the audiences of their paintings including as well the murals in the Po Win Taung Caves. Every artist prefers to convey a story that expresses emotions and gestures of the characters, using the lines that make up the desired shape to show the motions and movements of the character without any shadows and light applied as well. Painting regardless of scale and proportion; for a painting irrespective of the actual proportions. Mural artists at the Po Win Taung Caves prefer to feature the highlight or interesting part of the story with other supplementary components, regardless the scale and proportion of the image. Even if it doesn't look realistic, the story is interesting. The overall painting looks connected by the scale and proportion, capturing the viewer's eyes. This is a great ability of the artist to organize images and storytelling.

Characters in the painted images: Character images appeared in the various mural paintings in the Po Win Taung Caves consists of images of human, immortal, creature, building and vehicle, tree and flower as well as various patterns, detailed as follows.

Human images are illustrated as human-like consisting of eight types: the images of King, Queen, Bodhisattva, Buddha and monks, angels and brahmas, noblemen, concubines and general people. The 8 human images, look similar in shape, configuration and proportions that express humanity including the characteristics of the human body that portray male and female including the angels and brahmas. The differences are dresses that indicate the classes such as the images of the kings, the queens and the Bodhisattva of which special characteristics of dresses differ from those of the noblemen, concubines and general people. For the images of the Buddha and the monks, the dresses look like robes that express monkhood. The image placements are also different such as for the images of the kings, the queens, the Bodhisattva, the image of Buddha and monks, placement of the images is in a palace, on a pedestal, on a sedan with a beautiful decoration. The images of angels and brahmas are partially visible in the sky while images of the noblemen, the concubines and general people are placed lower in tiers. Moreover, the gesture that expresses humbleness to the kings or other gestures assigned by the muralists is a great way to get to know who the persons are in the image. This is a great way to communicate with the audiences.

Immortal images are portrayed as the half-human and half-animal in the Himmaphan forest including 4 types of the devil images, the images of Mara, Kinnaree and Kinnon, Garuda and the images of jinns in the underworld. To clarify, the appearance of Mara is divided into 3 types, i.e., Mara of large body with canines, Mara of large body but has a human-look and Mara with an ugly look. The different characteristics of the Mara's image clearly to be seen is the bigger body than the human image. Mara with canines dresses in sarong and loincloth, holding a skull-handle cane, wearing no shirts, white cloth on both sides of shoulders, head covered, wearing earrings and bracelets. Images of the Mara are typically portrayed as standing on a stone on the ground against the sky having a huge body like a giant as the artists normally illustrate evils and ugliness. When noticing the Mara's images, appearances, gestures and dresses are different from Kinnaree and Kinnon that have a beautiful look. The upper body component is the human body while the lower, a bird; having flat and small rounded faces, arched eyebrows, big eyes, cheeks bulging-out, long necks, hair in a high-bun, long arms with beautifully slender curves, always dancing to music performances. For the positioning, Kinnaree and Kinnon are typically positioned on an empty space that depicts the characteristics of the ground in Himmaphan forest. For the image of Garuda, the shape and proportion of Garuda is similar to human,

except for the mouth, the mouth of a bird having two arms as a human but has two wings like a bird. The lower part is a bird of which tail consists of a long feather and the tail, hairy with two legs like the bird's legs; a headdress is worn, earrings for jewelry, wearing a shirt decorated with beautiful decorations. The wings and tail are also decorated. The placement of the image appears at the top of the cave walls, different from the images of jinns in the underworld of which the position of the images appears at the bottom of all images. The jinn images are depicted in horrible manners with a strange face, hairy body, twisted face, physical gestures express great pains. For the dresses, jinns wear no clothes, naked; only some of the groups have a single breechcloth, some do not wear anything. These images of the immortals and inhuman beings are derived from the imagination of the artists, so that, they become different from the normal human image. The muralists also want to create a strange and unnatural pattern. In most cases, artists preferably draw human upper-bodies to attach with the lower-bodies of the two-toe creatures, making out an unseen and strange character.

Animal images are divided into 2 categories: animals in nature and imaginary creatures. Natural animals include elephants, horses, birds, deer, monkeys, fishes, crocodiles and turtles which the muralists portray as animals in a natural way they live in the wild with nature of each species of which movements look delicate and beautiful such as horses or elephants that appear as white elephants white big elephants that are typically portrayed as looking or moving forward. Most of the artists draw the images only at the sides of the creatures as horses and elephants in the paintings are vehicles of the Bodhisattva, thus, they are portrayed in a unique way different from birds, deer, monkeys, fishes, crocodiles and turtles which are the supplementary images of the animals in the picture, completing the painting with realistic contents. The imaginary creatures include the images of hong (swans), singha (lions), naga (mythical snakes) and peacocks that are more special than the animals in nature as they are mythical creatures in Himmaphan forest. The artists then has conveyed these legendary creatures as a distinctive and more beautiful looks than the natural animal images such as the images of swans and peacocks that are characterized by gestures that look very elegant. They may look like a bird but in a more special way swans look more delicately beautiful than birds. The muralists have paid more attention to the details of the outlines to illustrate a graceful look. For the images of lions, the artists conveyed an elegant look with dignity. Character of the lions appears in a large proportion with fierce look, awful and sharp nail-tips, white body with clear dots. The

green neck is with serrated-shaped hair, standing in a crouching gesture with a lotus in the mouth to show humility for the Buddha. The positioning of the lion images appear lower than the Buddha. There are three types for the naga images images of 8 nagas, images of 7-headed naga and images of a single naga. The naga's body look like the shape of a snake, skin covered with scales which could be an imagery image created by the artists using the line-bolding techniques to portray a pattern of scales to the naga skin. The body appears white and green, crest curls upward, similar to the all drawn nagas. The naga image is portrayed both as a single coiled naga and circular intertwining nagas in an octagon frame. Each of them holds its tail with a flower in its mouth. The positioning of the naga images appear in the upper part of the ceiling to illustrate the story of the Buddha.

Building and vehicle images are of 4 categories: palace, city arch and clock tower, city walls and Royal vehicle, i.e., the palace image appears in two types a palace with a frontal Royal umbrella and the one with no royal umbrella. The palace shape can be seen in three parts: the base, the palace's facade and the roofs overlapping in the back. The appearance of the roof is a single layer, two-tier and three-tier. The palace image placement appears at the beginning of the painted image which is the beginning of the story of the Bodhisattva and the Bodhisattva's father, the mother, sitting in the palace where can be seen clearly. Images of the arch and the clock tower. This consists of two parts: the first one is a clock tower or a time-telling tower that appears on the top of the arch where the second part is the city's arch below. The positioning generally appears in the center of the painting in which the muralist clearly features the shape of the arch, the city and the clock tower that appears large and has a height from the base to the top of the painting. The wall image is a layer of white brick wall, appearing at the only one point of the painted image. For the positioning, the wall image customarily appears at the top and back of the image and the Royal vehicle image is available in two types with and without a horse harness which consists of 5 parts: the wheel base, the carriage, the roofing part, the parts connected to horses and the vehicle tail with Kanok pattern. The position of the horse-drawn royal vehicle stand is unique and the whole structure can be seen from the lower base to the top of the image which is the image of a royal umbrella. All of these buildings images have been portrayed as an integral part of the narrative history to complete the whole background of the story.

Tree and flower images that appear in the mural paintings in Po Win Taung Caves can be classified into 4

types of images such as the images of the Sri Maha Bodhi, Shala tree, lotus flower and other tree images. The image of the Sri Maha Bodhi is most preferable among the artists as the tree has many different and unique shapes than any other trees as it is a very important Buddhist tree at the time of the Buddha's enlightenment. Therefore, the muralists usually give a special illustration to the tree, so, it looks different and beautiful. The shape of the Sri Maha Bodhi comes into two types with and without an image frame. The placement typically appears behind the image of the Buddha in the enlightenment or appears behind the Buddha statues in the attitude of subduing Mara in the various caves. The image of the Shala is portrayed as a tree with a large trunk, curved into different parts with several small branches overlapping each others. Branches look delicately thin and curled to the tree leaves. The parts between the branches are decorated with designs to create a beautiful look. The shape of the leaves look sheer, delicate and swaying, different from the Sri Maha Bodhi. The placement of the Shala tree is on the wall at the side of the Buddha's head as well as at the foot of the Buddha to illustrate the events of the Maha Parinirvana of the Buddha. Lotus images consist of both of budding and blooming lotus flowers. The artist features the lotus shape clearly by bolding the outlines. There are 2 positions for the lotus image positioning appears according to the storytelling of that particular scene and appears in the space in various parts all over the painting to complete the story for the painted image. Other tree images are different illustrated according to the artist's imagination, this results in the various shapes and patterns as well as the uses of color lines to create unseen characteristics. For example, tree images with a single trunk, group of trees, bouquets, curve-shaped and oval-shaped or fan-shaped leaves. Image placement depends on the story contents to present the story in the best way and to enhance the atmosphere in the picture to be more beautiful. Therefore, images of the trees and flowers are painted in the different parts of the image according to the story in each scene determined by the artist to connect to the important places in the story.

Pattern images can be divided into 2 types: natural and geometric patterns and geometric patterns, i.e., the natural and geometric patterns are created by natural shapes in the nature such as flowers, foliage, vines, etc., combined with geometric patterns, causing a beautiful pattern according to the artist's imagination. The artist usually assigned this pattern to be a component of the image or to frame the image. This pattern consists of flower petals in a circular shape, a square or an octagonal frame in a large flower petal shape and in a small geometric shape. Most of them are drawn in a repetitive manner

using the same color, lines, sizes and shapes, illustrating a design of repetitive patterns, making the image more beautiful and prominent. Geometric shapes are created by the mixed use of straight lines, curved lines and wavy lines. The artists usually designed geometric patterns to use as a picture frame or to decorate the picture as well. It is also used as a dividing line of story content in each episode painted in a large area or between each wall to separate each episode of the story from each other. The pattern of each frame is differently colored. For the positioning of the two patterns, the muralist usually paint at the end zone of the story in each side of the wall to enhance the contrast and beautiful images.

The aesthetics of mural paintings in Po Win Taung Caves is the beauty that appears in the wall murals. Muralists have conveyed the invaluable beauty in the paintings to tell the allegory through a mural painting as a media with techniques in a specific, very beautiful and interesting styles. To study the aesthetics of the mural in Po Win Taung Caves, the researcher uses the Chalood Nimsamer's Elemental art concept and the theory of Aesthetics in the aesthetic analysis which consist of the beauty of the patterns that appear in the image and the content value as follows.

Aesthetics of patterns that appear in the image: Aesthetics of patterns that appear in the murals of Po Win Taung Caves can be resulted by the harmonious combination between the visual elements and the arrangement of art elements. This is in accordance with Nimsamer (2010), who said that art has two important components: the human creation part, e.g., the structure of the object visible or perceivable by senses and the expression part which is the result of the material structure. These elements are namely form or physical elements and content or abstract elements used to create a beautiful painting. The beauty of the patterns that appear in the murals include the beauty in the human images, the beauty in the immortal images, the beauty in the animals images, the beauty in the buildings and vehicles images, the beauty in the trees and flowers images and the beauty in the patterns. The beauty in the human image is e.g., the images of King, Queen, Bodhisattva, Buddha and monks, angels and brahmas, noblemen, concubines and general people. The aesthetics are resulted by the use of visual elements that consists of dot, line, color, shape, form and space in a unique way. In particular, the use of lines and colors which are consider the main art elements in the human image, resulting in a beautiful pattern. With the curves in the creation, the pattern of human images looks soft, swaying and graceful in appearance. The motion of the gesture determines the

direction of the patterns according to the imagination of the artist who illustrates the images of human to be in accordance with the narration of the story. The use of colors is an important part that create an interesting atmosphere to the human images as the color can divide the area of the human shape to look beautiful and clear including the colors of the costumes that express the emotions and differences of the characters, indicating what event the images want to convey. For instance, the images of Buddha when getting ordained when pursuing enlightenment in which the costume varies according to the story. The use of dots is just a component of the dress, jewelry, to give a beautiful decoration for the human images. However, it depends on the layout and the compositions that lead to harmony in the paintings as well as the use of dot, line, color, shape, form and space that all play a contribution to the beautiful layout, corresponding with the story in each episode the muralist wants to convey to the audiences. This results in the human images to be portrayed in the way that clearly differ from other periods. The beauty in the images of the immortals the image of the Mara, Kinnaree image, Garuda and images of jinns in the underworld is considered aesthetics caused by the visual elements as well. For instance, the use of dots that shape a pattern to the costume of Mara in the images of Kinnaree and Garuda. Lines created by dots can create beauty in the form, especially, curved lines can make it feel soft, swaying with the motions of the Kinnaree images. The use of colors is an important part to enhance an outstanding image. The uses of space enhance the atmosphere, particularly for the jinn images that look more interesting. For the beauty in animal images, i.e., elephants, horses, birds, fishes and crocodiles, swans, lions, nagas, deer and peacocks, the aesthetics of the animals images are the beauty of the visual elements derived from the combination of lines, shapes, patterns and colors that the muralist has conveyed, so, the beauty of the composition can be clearly seen. Distinction of the animal patterns and the gestures is also part that helps to make each animal look gorgeous. For example, an elephant image in a gesture of stepping forward is well-expressed by the use of colors, lines, shapes and patterns that are harmonious in unity, resulting in a truly beautiful look. The images of buildings and vehicles depict the palace, the arch and the clock tower, the city wall, the royal vehicle images. The aesthetics of these architectural patterns that appear in each of the murals looks almost the same for every image because these are images of the royal residence which the artist typically depicts a clear and visible image by uses of colors, lines, patterns to create beauty. Line-bolding and color highlighting are used to paint the palace images. For

the drawn lines, the artist usually uses a combination of straight lines, vertical lines, horizontal lines and curves which are the pattern of using the lines to constitute the architecture to convey stability and strengths which are typically conveyed from the style of architecture in the period. The prominence of the palace is from its large scale, covering most of the areas in the painting. This is for the beauty and realism that most of the artists usually illustrate for the positioning to convey the grandeur and extraordinary architecture than general architectural images. One special thing that contributes to building aesthetics is the complexity in the drawn patterns, illustrating the front part as an superimposed image and the rear part overlaps, resulting in another aspect of beauty. For the aesthetics in the trees and flowers images the image of Sri Maha Bodhi, the image of Shala tree, lotus flowers and other plants. Aesthetics derived from the use of lines, colors, shapes and patterns result in beauty. The artist chooses simple visual elements to convey the the tree images for audiences to understand easily. The beauty originated by local sense, using just a few pieces of equipment can create a wonderful painting. For the use of the lines to give a pattern for the Bhodi tree, curves can clearly portray the patterns of the trunk and leaves; colors that can portray the different patterns for the leaves and the trunk as well. The combination of these elements adds beauty to the pattern of the tree. Space determination also contributes to a more beautiful image as the artist tries to convey the pattern of trees into the image, despite the limited space but the muralist can have all the plants and flowers painted altogether in both big and small sizes in the given areas. Most of the trees and flowers are painted in the image to add more of aesthetics as well as the contents related to the storylines in the image. The use of the colors and lines to create shapes is not very different. The beauty in the pattern images consists of natural patterns mixed with geometric patterns and geometric patterns. The beauty of the patterns is the uses of dots, lines, colors and patterns. These visual elements are brought to use by muralists to portray beauty using small dots to color and create curved lines, straight lines and coiled lines which the artist usually uses to draw a boundary area of the image and the patterns in a continuing aspect. The serrated lines pattern can form up a pattern of seamlessly repeated triangles used to decorate the image. The beauty of the lines can make the symbol pattern more prominent. The use of red and green colors causes conflict but not that much because of the mixture of black which can lower the contrast of the complementary colors. Geometric pattern placement causes repeated rhythms as well as scale and size portrayed by the small and large patterns blended in

each other, resulting in beautiful patterns that appear clearly on the surface of the ceiling. Balance layout of the image of which the radius in the middle spreads out from tiny lotus petals to larger shapes overlapping in layers are beautiful in repetition, resulting in the harmony in the symbol pattern as well.

Content values: The content values are illustrated by the sense of beauty for both internal and external contents, according to Chalood Nimsamer. Internal content created by the artistic patterns, apart from giving aesthetic feelings for audiences, it also enhances the power and depth of the external content causing the viewer to fully sense the emotional feelings from the beauty of the internal content and the virtue of the external content. The beauty in the contents from the story that apparently appears in the mural paintings of the Po Win Taung Caves is the story of Buddhism, especially, the story appeared in the picture of which the muralist has selected only the important and interesting parts of the contents to illustrate as a media for the viewer to get the idea and understand easily, although, they have a little experience but when the audiences see the image, they can access the meaning and understand the content that the artist has shown. Preferable story for the paintings is the history of all the Buddhas, the history of Gautama Buddha, allegory of the Bodhisattva, the three worlds including the symbols of Buddhism. The beauty that appears, artists have conveyed the beauty of both patterns and contents. The value of the mural paintings is a great thing; an allegory of dharma which should be interpreted or deciphered to find the meanings of those images, especially, the meanings that the mural painters have portrayed the Buddhist doctrines to the minds of the audiences, so, the murals are considerably valuable for the study of the story in Buddhism.

The value of the contents of the murals in Po Win Taung Caves appears the invaluable contents of 4 stories: the history of all the Buddhas. The story of Gautama Buddha which appears in six episodes life in the palace, the leaving for ordination, the tonsure moment, the Mara's temptation, the Buddha's enlightenment and the Maha Parinirvana. The story of Vessantara and the three worlds of which 2 worlds are portrayed the underworld and the Story of Phra Malai. The content of the story is valuable and beautiful in itself, i.e., the history of all the Buddhas that portrays the beauty of the livings of all of the Buddhas who have a strong compassion for everyone. The story of Gautama Buddha when living at the palace is considered a way of life that is valuable with kindness to all people. The ordination is the path for the liberation from all suffering and all the good conduct is

valuable for every human being. The tonsure moment depicts a life that is committed to a determined goal. The Mara's temptation part conveys the great victory by defeating all the evil, winning yourself, refraining from evil and doing good deeds. The enlightenment part is a life of beauty from the discovery of the truth and the Maha Parinirvana is the value of life, even if it is gone from this world but the goodness stays. The story of Vessantara depicts the passion for generosity perfection to purely give to others, to give without limits, the greatest giving of all. The three worlds depicts the story of the underworld which may look evil but in the bad, there is also a good thing. Hell can be the path that leads to goodness, just refrain from evil and do good, this can be a result of the torturing and scary images in the underworld that the artists portray. The story of Phra Malai is also about doing good deeds and refraining the bad as well. The black images are considered demerits while the white images, merits. Therefore, the goodness of the contents in the story is consistent with the doctrine of Buddhism that focuses on Nirvana, teaching people to do good and refrain from evils. The expression through a mural is worth for the minds of the conveyors or the artists themselves as well as the audiences including the values for art education that can be further studied in the creation of pieces of art. For historical value, a mural painting is an important source of learning in the art history of Myanmar as the muralists have conveyed the art and culture of each period into the mural that should be great for study. The murals are also of good cultural values, a true reflection of the glorious nationality. Particularly, the murals in Po Win Taung Caves are considered as a role model for further study and the dissemination of Buddhism. No matter how long it will last, the beautiful stories are still portrayed from generation to generation, to be able to see the development of murals in different periods of time successively.

The mural patterns in Po Win Taung Caves in Sagaing Region, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, consists of the characteristics of story presentation, characteristics of the layout in the art elements and characteristics of painting techniques. For the appeared images which are similar to the mural paintings in Thai temples, i.e., there are 3 types of story presentations: series presentation, single-scene presentation and story presentation with Buddha illustration. Mural paintings in Thailand are also the same that there are also presentation of artworks, preferably the scenes of Enlightenment in the background of the Buddha statue, a single-scene presentation on one-sided wall, a series of scenes from the Buddha's life continuing presentation, according to

the story contents. For the art elements composition, there are 6 types of layout: full spread layout, landscape orientation, repeated layout, left and right alignment, circle radial composition, partition orientation. For the painting technique found in mural paintings in Po Win Taung Caves in the Ava period, the tempera technique is used in painting. Colors that appear are in six colors including yellow, red, green, blue, black and white. The distinctive colors are yellow, red and green. Referring to Prayura Uluchadha with reference to Nor Na Paknam, tempera technique is mostly applied in the Thai mural painting. The tempera consists of colored pigments mixed with glutinous material, using white color as a mix to adjust the color processing. The tempera has been widely used as painting method, since, the ancient time. The writing style is divided into 3 types: 2-dimensional drawing, drawing with lines and gestures, painting regardless of scale and proportion. Characteristics of the images are divided into 6 categories: human images include the images of King, Queen, Bodhisattva, Buddha and monks, angels and brahmas, noblemen, concubine and general people. The immortal images consist of the Mara, Kinnaree and Kinnon, Garuda and jinns in the underworld. Animal images are divided into animals in nature and imaginary creatures. Natural animals include elephant, horse, bird, fish, crocodile while imaginary creatures consists of lion, naga, deer, peacock. Image of buildings and vehicles include palace, arch, clock tower, city wall and royal vehicle. Flowers and trees images consist of Sri Maha Bodhi, Shala tree, Lotus flowers and other plants and patterns include natural patterns mixed with geometric patterns and geometric patterns. Prayura Uluchadha also said that for mural painting, the portrayed images are usually structured with images of people, animals and large-scale architectures. Muralists typically sketch the images of people or animals by giving a characteristic of a dancing character in traditional Thai drawing style of which it is necessary to use lines to depict the gesture of people or elephants to have a harmonious character that is considered the heart of the idealistic painting. For the six types of images, the most common images found are Sri Maha Bodhi and the images of Buddha of which scene that depicts the enlightenment is the most known. This is in line with Pinyowanichaka (1985), who discusses characteristics in the Thai murals that consist of 6 types of images: human, the immortal, animal, building, landscape and patterns as well.

Aesthetics in mural paintings in Po Win Taung Caves in Sagaing Region, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, consist of aesthetics in patterns and aesthetic in content value. These two aspects of beauty are the

result of sensory perception in accordance with the concept of Baumgarten's theory of aesthetics that the aesthetic is said to occur from the sense of perception or sensory perception. It is a conceptual knowledge which beauty is judged by reasoning. From the appeared murals in Po Win Taung Caves which are prominent both in the shape that the artist has conveyed through the elements of art and layout of the artwork, the shapes and forms go in line with the contents very well. In other words, the beauty of the shape is the harmonious combination between visual elements and the artistic principles the composition of art elements that contribute to a beautiful painting. Referring to Nimsamer (2010), there are two important components in art: the element created by human, e.g., the visible object structure or sensory recognition and the expression that is a result of the particular material structure. The other element is called physical element and abstract contents or elements. These are used media to depict a beautiful image. The beauty of the murals that appear is: beauty in the human image, beauty in the immortal image, beauty in the animal images, beauty in the buildings and vehicles images, beauty in the trees and flowers images and beauty in the patterns. Uses of the visual elements that consist of dots, lines, color, shape, form and space is very outstanding, especially the use of lines and colors, considered the main element that makes the shape look beautiful. By using the curves, shape and form that look soft, swaying and graceful in appearance are portrayed. The relationship of the layout is beautiful and in line with the story. Referring to Rotbun (1990), there is no fixed rules for the the composition of the art elements. It may be organized by content or one-sided composition. It is a composition of visual art elements such as line, color, shape, form, space, volume, rhythm, surface characteristics, contrastive characteristics and perfection in accordance with story of each episode conveyed from the artist's emotions and feelings. For the content values, there are four scenes depicted: the history of all the Buddhas, the History of Gautama Buddha of which 6 episodes are portrayed consisting of the life in palace, the leaving for ordination, the tonsure moment, the Mara's temptation, the Buddha's enlightenment and the Maha Parinirvana, the story of Vessantara and the Three Worlds featuring 2 worlds the underworld and the story of Phra Malai. The content is worthwhile and beautiful in itself. The virtue of the contents is consistent with the doctrine of Buddhism that focuses on Nirvana, teach people to do good and refrain from evils. The expression through a mural is worth for the minds of the conveyors or the artists themselves as well as the audiences including the values for art education, historical values and cultural values, reflecting

a glorious nationality. Referring to Maneechot (1986), mural painting has been widely known, since, ancient times in various periods. Most of the depicted stories are about Buddhism, literature, reflecting the way of life, dresses and historical events. Because of this, murals are valuable in the aspects of painted art, historical and archaeological heritage, beliefs which are considered the important cultural heritage. Particularly, the murals in Po Win Taung Caves are considered as a model for further study and the dissemination of Buddhism. No matter how long it will last, the beautiful stories are still portrayed from generation to generation.

Summary: The study of the mural patterns in Po Win Taung Caves in Sagaing Region, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, consists of the characteristics of story presentation, characteristics of the layout in the art elements and characteristics of painting techniques. For the appeared images, i.e., there are 3 types of story presentations: series presentation, single-scene presentation and story presentation with Buddha illustration. The 3 presentation techniques have been very widely practiced for the mural paintings in Po Win Taung Caves. The presentation technique most found in the 35 caves of Po Win Taung is the story presentation with Buddha illustration. The next one is the presentation of a single scene which is found in 8 caves and the last one is the series of events presentation, found in 4 caves. This indicates the most well-known techniques for the paintings in the Ava period. For the art elements composition, there are 6 types of layout: full spread layout, landscape orientation, repeated layout, left and right alignment, circle radial composition partition orientation. For the 6 most popular layouts, the repeated layout and the left-right alignment techniques are considerably outstanding. For the mural painting techniques used in Po Win Taung Caves in the Ava period, the tempera technique was widely used. The color tone mainly used in the painting is the warm color tones. The appeared colors come in six colors: yellow, red, green, blue, black and white. The dominant colors are yellow, red and green. The method of painting is divided into 5 steps: prepare the surface of the wall, plaster or adhesive primer, when the surface dries, start the outlining, apply the light color first then coat with dark colors and bold the outlines and complete in the details. The writing style is divided into 3 types: 2-dimensional drawing, drawing with lines and gestures, painting regardless of scale and proportion. Characteristics of the images are divided into 6 categories: human images include the images of King, Queen, Bodhisattva, Buddha and monks, angels and brahmas, noblemen, concubine and general people. The immortal

images consists of the Mara, Kinnaree and Kinnon, Garuda and jinns in the underworld. Animal images are divided into animals in nature and imaginary creatures. Natural animals include elephant, horse, bird, fish, crocodile while imaginary creatures consists of lion, naga, deer, peacock. Image of buildings and vehicles include palace, arch, clock tower, city wall and royal vehicle. Flowers and trees images consist of Sri Maha Bodhi, Shala tree, lotus flowers and other plants and patterns include natural patterns mixed with geometric patterns and geometric patterns. From the six types of images, the images that are the most commonly found are Sri Maha Bodhi and the Buddha image, of which depicting the Buddha's enlightenment is mostly preferred.

Aesthetics in mural paintings in Po Win Taung Caves in Sagaing Region, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, consist of aesthetics in patterns and aesthetic in content value, i.e., the beauty of the patterns is the harmonious combination between visual elements and artistic principles or the elements of art as the media to create a beautiful painting. The beauty of the appeared murals is: beauty in the human image, beauty in the immortal image, beauty in the animal images, beauty in the buildings and vehicles images, beauty in the trees and flowers images and beauty in the patterns. Uses of the visual elements that consist of dots, lines, color, shape, form and space is very outstanding, especially the use of lines and colors, considered the main element that makes the shape look beautiful. By using the curves, shape and form that look soft, swaying and graceful in appearance are portrayed. The relationship of the layout is beautiful and in line with the story of each episode the artists conveyed from emotions and feelings. The content values are found in 4 aspects: the history of all the Buddhas, the history of Gautama Buddha of which 6 episodes are portrayed consisting of the life in palace, the leaving for ordination, the tonsure moment, the Mara's temptation, the Buddha's enlightenment and the Maha Parinirvana, the story of Vessantara and the three worlds featuring 2 worlds the underworld and the story of Phra Malai. The content of the story is valuable and beautiful in itself, i.e., the history of all the Buddhas that portrays the beauty of the livings of all of the Buddhas who have a strong compassion for everyone. The story of Gautama Buddha when living at the palace is considered a way of life that is valuable with kindness to all people. The ordination is the path for the liberation from all suffering and all the good conduct is valuable for every human being. The tonsure moment depicts a life that is committed to a determined goal. The Mara's temptation part conveys the great victory by defeating all the evil, winning yourself, refraining from evil and doing good deeds. The

enlightenment part is a life of beauty from the discovery of the truth and the Maha Parinirvana is the value of life, even if it is gone from this world but the goodness stays. The story of Vessantara depicts the passion for generosity perfection to purely give to others, to give without limits, the greatest giving of all. The three worlds depicts the story of the underworld which may look evil but in the bad, there is also a good thing. Hell can be the path that leads to goodness, just refrain from evil and do good. The black images are considered demerits while the white images, merits. Therefore, the goodness of the contents in the story is consistent with the doctrine of Buddhism that focuses on Nirvana, teaching people to do good and refrain from evils. The expression through a mural is worth for the minds of the conveyors or the artists themselves as well as the audiences including the values for art education, historical values and cultural values, reflecting a glorious nationality. Particularly, the murals in Po Win Taung Caves are considered a role model for further study and the dissemination of Buddhism. No matter how long it will last, the beautiful stories are still portrayed from generation to generation.

CONCLUSION

The study of Burmese mural in aspects of patterns and aesthetics found that it's important for mural in Po Win Taung Caves as a historical learning resource of Myanmar. However, an in-depth study in pattern and aesthetics are still kept away from the public. This study will be useful for further study of the art of Myanmar. The background and importance of this study is a motivation

that leads to the research of Burmese Murals: patterns allegory symbolism and aesthetics presented in Po Win Taung Caves. This study will be a guideline for the conservation and succession of art to the next generation.

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