

The Artistic and Historical Legacy of a Roadside Cult: Chao Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine

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Abstract

Some roadside monuments are more than memorials. They are evidence of their undiscovered legacy. So, the goal of this study was to find out more about the art behind the cult of worship at roadside memorials, specifically focusing on the Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine created its legacy. The finding revealed that the artworks in the shrine are connected to local myths, tales, myths, and lore, and symbolic representation, remnants of ritual practice, and local religious practices that reflect the narrative and worship of sacred Pu Kham Hua Chang. The artistic works in the vicinity of the shrine indicate that these arts represent the local cult linked to the historical legacy of Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine. This study also created artistic work in QR Code media format to propagate the legacy of the shrine more widely to the borderless world in the future.

Keywords: Roadside cult; Chao Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine; Artistic and historical Legacy

1. Introduction

Cult practice is one of the human devotions that incorporates cultural, social, and psychological behaviors. A social group that is distinguished by distinctive religious, spiritual, or philosophical beliefs and rituals, or by a shared interest in a particular person, thing, or objective, is generally referred to as a "cult" in a pejorative sense. The phrase is more commonly used to describe a group of religious practices that are recognized by society, honor a particular person or persona, and are frequently linked to a particular place. Examples of this usage of the word include mentions of the imperial cult of ancient Rome or the "cult" of a specific Catholic saint. Despite the fact that this "extreme devotion" concept was developed in the 19th century, the literal and original meaning of the word is still in use today in many parts of the world.

Like those nations in the West, roadside memorials in Thailand are frequently erected at the scene of fatal accidents, however they are typically private. Roadside memorials for accident victims that are personalized are uncommon. Scholars (e.g., Johnson, 2012; Cohen, 2013) compared and contrasted roadside memorials that are situated along major routes in northeastern Thailand. The finding revealed that, similar to modern Western roadside memorials, these memorials honor the memory of a person who was violently and unexpectedly slain. However, they differ greatly from Western memorials in that they are permanent shrines where the public can worship and supplicate the spirit of the departed. The popular Thai magico-religious complex frequently incorporates the spirits and their animistic

and religious beliefs. It is interesting that some roadside shrines in Thailand are also sources of artistic inspiration. The legacy of the artworks in the shrines have developed across the time. This study, therefore, investigated how the artistic legacy has developed and how the artworks have connected to the legacy of the shrine. To achieve the research objective, the Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine was purposefully chosen for this study.

The contents of this paper are divided into six sections. The background of the study and the research gap are explained in the first section. The second one presents the literature review of the study and the research questions (RQs). The research methodology is described in the third. The findings of the study are presented in the fourth. The fifth section includes the conclusions, discussion, limits, and implications of the study.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Prior research

2.1.1 Cult and social psychology

Cults have a close relationship with human social psychology. Because everyone wants to be comforted, people turn to other people or things to ease their worries. One sign of the relationship is a roadside cult. It is evident that there are roadside memorials in the nations of Christian heritage in Europe, Australia, and North America, there are roadside memorials such as Australia and USA (Clark & Cheshire, 2004). Several scholars analyzed the discourse of roadside memorials such as Poland's anonymous roadside memorials (Przybylska and Flaga, 2020), roadside water bottles as tangible representations of an Argentinean popular saint's cult (Figgen, 1986, January), historical developments and existing legal regulations, protection of roadside shrines and crosses in Poland (Żak-Kulesza, 2022), inquiries of roadside crosses in Poland as a religious or cultural symbols (Przybylska, 2020) rituals and rhythms at roadside memorials in Poland (Przybylska and Flaga, 2022), forms and the role of roadside memorials in the gdańsk agglomeration (Przybylska, 2020), and simple sprinkling wildflowers on the roadways (Airhart and Falls, 1984).

2.1.2 Cult and symbolic representation of artistic works in the location

Artistic creativity and evolution of a shrine has social, cultural, ethnographical, psychological, artistically, and aesthetically implications and complexity through symbolic representation of artworks in the location (Layton, 1991; Flage, 2019; Townsend, 2013; Spuybroek, 2016). Through their artistic creations, scholars (Lo et al., 2018, July; Clarke, 2006; Miotto, 2022) indicated that artists frequently express inner thoughts or spiritual levels related to religious beliefs and creeds/cult through the tangible manifestation of inner feelings in various forms such as sign and symbols. Some examples are Christian art, symbols and signs (Ferguson and Ferguson, 1961), Celtic religious art uses symbols and images (Green, 2003), the contribution of group symbols to strengthening resiliency in children's art (Huss et al., 2012), and symbols and myths in Indian art and culture (Zimmer, 2021). According to the study of Rana (2021), in the animistic beliefs of the Tharus of Dang and Deukhuri, art has symbolic importance. The art's symbolic meanings center on numerous fetishized objects related with the animistic rituals practiced by the Tharus of Dang and the Deukhuri of Terai Nepal. When examined from an artistic standpoint, the items or fetishes that they produce appear to outsiders or those who use the "etic approach" to study cultures as a whole to be simple local ethnic handicrafts. However, when examined using the "emic approach," these artistic works or fetishes have significant symbolic meanings attached to them. This study, which was based on an in-depth field investigation of the two locations, has highlighted the symbolic values that underlie the artistic creativity connected to their animistic practices.

2.1.3 Symbolic significance of cult and social values

The symbolic significance of art also has social values. In a study of Byzantine art's use of ideology, symbolism, and representation by Gelan, (2018). This investigation revealed that an aesthetic theory that was shaped by both the works of the major intellectuals of the period and artistic representations could help to shape societal identity and memory. Additionally, the social values of art indicate transformational passage. Albert and Tan (2021) used spaces, locations, and architectural structures of the Slave House on Gorée Island as well as the context of Black identity as a sacred, spiritual hub for descendants whose ancestors were transported from continental Africa during the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, symbolizing their transformational journey.

Like Byzantine and Black art, Thai art verifies the symbolic significance of art through several local cultural issues such as social psychology and symbolic action theory (Boesch, 2012), Thai village life in the present era (De Young, 1966), Ya Mo, the heroic spirit of Thailand's Buddhism, nationalism, and the Thai character (Nilsen, 2011), the worship of Phaya Narin Songkhram, spirit mediums and altering societal boundaries in northeastern Thailand (Baird, 2014), the sacred geography of fertility in Thailand in case of begging for babies (Whittaker, 2012), and popular Buddhist magic (Taylor, 2014), and predicting the arrival of the Buddha (Sasson, 2015).

No study specifically addresses the discourse of roadside monuments and other constructions like inscriptions, statues, and shrines, particularly the discourse that is ingrained in the local art, which has its own history and legacy. This study therefore aimed to draw insights of artistic legacy of roadside shrine that lies behind the cult of worship.

2.2 Research questions

To achieve the objective of the study, five research questions (RQs) were determined as follows:

RQ 1: How do the Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine change from a roadside location to a place of cultural interactions?

RQ 2: How does the shrine function as a place of worship within the context of roadside cult?

RQ 3: How are the art installations, worship places, and public spaces situated within the shrine setting reproduced in various forms of symbolic representation?

RQ 4: What symbolism do the contemporary art installations at the shrine represent?

RQ 5: What is the inspiration of the artwork at the location inspire modern artistic creativity?

3. Research Method

Research Instruments

Site surveys, observation, interviews, record keeping and the creation of art were some of the methods used to acquire the findings of the study.

Site surveys

The site surveys were conducted to visit the whole area, especially the worship sites where legends from the past of the Chao Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine tie the link to show the legacy of the shrine, especially signs, symbols, and religious activities that made to believe the area of the shrine is a sacred place. The surveys also provided the researcher the chance to speak with the key informants such as monks, local leaders, local people, travelers, and visitors about their beliefs, worship practices, street culture and art installations at the shrine.

Observation

In order to comprehend the worship practices, this observation aimed to better grasp the practices and beliefs to draw insights of artistic legacy of roadside shrine which engages with individuals and groups of individuals and fosters beliefs in supernatural forces and the afterlife that enhances the legacy of the shrine.

Interviews

Some significant informants were questioned in order to gain additional insights of artistic legacy of roadside shrine and clarity of the data gathered from the observation. The topics of interviews focused on stories, legends, beliefs, identity of the shrine in the worship area.

Recording keeping

Recordkeeping had a variety of objectives. In order to allow the use of additional instruments for data elicitation, accurate data was captured for content validity check (site surveys, observations, and interviews). The results from these instruments were compared for a reliability assessment. Comparing the results of the document analysis with the reliability of this data allowed for further evaluation. They all provided solid evidence that could be utilized to draw inferences of the symbols of various art forms at the shrine.

Creation of QR code-inspired art work

The purpose of this creation was to artwork was made to illustrate the symbolic identity of the shrine.

Data Analysis and Validity Check

The conclusions of the study were reached by transcribing, interpreting, comparing, and analyzing the qualitative data obtained from the aforementioned research tools. To produce valid study results, the researcher followed these guidelines. Above all, the distinct data elicitation devices were intended to provide consistent data in order to guarantee reliable outcomes. The conclusions of this study relied on the opinions, experiences, skills, and knowledge of the key informants in order to assure transferable outcomes.

4. Results of the Study

The results of the study are presented in responses to the research questions.

4.1 The Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine as roadside landmark

In response to RQ 1 (How does the Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine transition from a roadside location to a place of cultural interactions?), the results were drawn from document analysis, interviews, and site surveys and can briefly show the history of the shrine's transition from ancient to modern. The brief history could be illustrated photographically, as shown in Figure 2.



(a) The ancient shrine (b) The Thai army routes to war (c) The present shrine

Figure 2 *History of the Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine*

Figure 2 presents a brief history of the Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine from the old days to the present. Previously, the ancient shrine in (a) was a small shrine standing alone in a forest on a hill. It was located on the Thai army's route to war in Laos. On those days, Thai army used elephants as vehicles as shown in (b). The isolated shrine in a forest in (a) has now developed into a modern building like a monastery on the Mitrphph Road, the most important transportation route that connected two countries, Thailand and Lao, as the route was in the old days. The shrine was surrounded by hundreds of vehicles. Thousands of visitors, not only Thais but also Laos, who stop by for various reasons (mostly to worship), transform the shrine from a roadside location into a place of cultural interactions, where visitors participate in cultural and religious activities based on their beliefs. The route is evidence of the legacy of the relationship between Thailand and Lao, while the shrine becomes a socially public space where visitors express their own appreciation and viewpoints towards the shrine, its legacy, and various activities in the place, including social, cultural, and ethnic relations between Thailand and Lao. The various activities in the place are shown in **Figure 3**.



(a) Pu Kham Hua Chang figure (b) The sacred object rental (c) Religious ceremony
And donation boxes shops within the location



(d) Almshouse (e) Children's playground (f) Arrangement of objects of worship
Figure 3 *Activities in the Pu Kam Hua Chang Shrine*

Figure 3 shows the Pu Kam Hua Chang Shrine's many activities. People of all ages can participate in a range of events at the site, commencing with the worship of the Pu Kham Hua Chang statue, donation boxes as in (a), and visit to the rental stores for sacred objects situated in the areas as in (b). On auspicious occasions, they may participate in religious ceremony as in (c). Almshouses provide free meals for their visitors as in (d). At playgrounds in the neighborhood in (e), kids can play with modern toys as their parents, grandparents and relatives worship Pu Kam Hua Chang using elephant miniatures as in (f). These specific spaces such as almshouse areas, sacred object rental areas, and play areas are a method for

transforming a sacred location into a public one. Travelers are not merely passing through. There are stopovers that interact with local residents and communities. In a sense, the shrine becomes a new landmark.

As there are various activities in the area, how does the shrine function as a place of worship within the context of roadside cult? The next topic is the results of RQ 2.

4.2 The shrine within the context of roadside cult

Cults and human psychology are closely related. Travelers seek out other people or things to allay their fears of road accidents. Pu Kham Hua Chang, a roadside ancestral spirit of the grandfather Kham, can serve as a psychological and morale booster. Every day, hundreds of travelers, both Thais and Laos, stop by the place to allay their concerns about their road safety. This can be traced back to the time to the stories and historical legends of the place. The roadside cult was originated from the animistic beliefs of Pu Kham Hua Chang. The beliefs influenced the local people and tied to their lives and communities. They practiced cult activities to worship the spirit of Pu Kham Hua Chang and seek comfort from the spirit as their morale booster. Later, the beliefs made the place become sacred. The stories and historical legends of this sacred place spread around along the Mitrphph Road from Thailand to Lao and became popular because everyone wanted to be comforted. These animistic beliefs at Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine gained popularity quickly partly because they are based on the locals' reverence for ancestral spirits like the ancestral spirits of Pu Ya as shown in Figure 4.



Figure 4 *the shrine of ancestral spirits of Pu Ya*

Figure 4 illustrates the shrine of the ancestral spirits of Pu Ya. The locals believe that these ancestral spirits of Pu Ya protect the holy area, towns, and cities, and uphold society's capacity for peace and harmony.

Currently, thousands of locals and visitors, both Thais and Laos, come to this Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine every day as shown in **Figure 4**.



Figure 4 *War elephant miniatures of worship*

Figure 4 illustrates war elephant miniatures of worship. These miniatures are objects of worship to Pu Kham Hua Chang. These elephant miniatures of worship are memorials of war elephants in the legends of Thai army's routes to war in Laos. At least 50,000 sculptures of multi-colored elephants with different shapes and sizes were arranged over more than 800 meters, installed and inspired by the beliefs and faith of the villagers and people traveling along the Mitraph Road through the creation of the discourse "Elephant on the Hundred Corpse Curves." These elephants are evidence of the worshiper who seek out objects to allay their worries of road accidents.

History, stories, and visions resulted in belief activities and rituals using a variety of cultural invention methods with interactions in the humanities and social sciences, in various forms based on the needs of different classes of people. Because human beings have faith in intangible existences, individuals have space in their minds. This imaginary space, or mental space, brings confidence and expresses itself in the form of beliefs and faiths, which produce mental power and drive creativity and unity. As are the basis for wisdom; beliefs are concrete symbols that solidify religious practices. Wisdom is a mechanism for creating identity in society through tactics. Local people's installed arts were determined based on the characteristics of natural physical space and the worship area in order to negotiate with the worship area and obtain what people begged from the Pu Kham Hua Chang and other holy objects in the area as shown in the results of RQ 3 (How are the art installations, worship places, and public spaces situated within the shrine setting reproduced in various forms of symbolic representation?) in the next part.

4.3 Symbolic representation of the shrine

4.3.1 Landscape

Symbolically, the Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine's landscape and surroundings, including the trees, hills, and rocks, serve as crucial building blocks for a sacred location. Such regions were historically considered to be ceremonial zones, which are equivalent to sacred spaces, with the elements of the "sacred world." In order to capture the story through stories and legends from the community's past and tie it all together to reveal the identity of the community, one must record the story, which includes birth, death, happiness, and pain. The community's ideas and identity will be developed as a sacred area, and it will engage with the neighborhood until it is integrated into the community's environment, fostering a belief in demons and the afterlife and becoming known as the "sacred world" by the human spirit. Previously, the region was a communal forest where locals could collect wood products to be put to use in life and in accordance with the local environment, with rocks arranged in a line that resembles the features of an elephant's head or body. Including

establishing a distinct elephant-related identity for the region. The region was subsequently given that name by the people.

4.3.2 Historical tale

On the marching routes in the past, the region around Chao Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine reportedly once served as a path for marching troops and taking a respite from hostilities, according to historical tales, folklore, and traditions. When Vientiane's monarch, Chao Anuwong, considered regaining independence from Thailand during that time The background of such tales during the rule of King Rama 3 The present abbot of Wat Pu Kham Hua Chang, Phra Kru Siriwat Thawornthammo revealed this as follows:

"Kaew Krang Thong, a military elephant that belonged to heroine figure Ya Mo's sister, once fell into a very deep marsh. Troops attempting to their best to get the elephant out of the marsh, but it was unsuccessful. In the end, it was necessary to let the elephant drown, and to remember it, a statue of a crouching elephant named "Kâw kradingshxng" was erected in front of the temple, which was given the name "Wat Pa Kham Hua Chang," and featured a standing Buddha statue in the blessing position in front of the elephant" [Interview with key informant]

The statue of the crouching elephant, "Kâw kradingshxng" as shown in the **Figure 5**.



Figure 5 *Buddha statue and the crouching elephant*

Figure 5 depicts a statue of Buddha in a blessing position and the statue of the crouching elephant, "Kâw kradingshxng", in the vicinity of Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine. The statues exhibit significant historical phenomena in beliefs and rites, the path of moving and resting from conflicts, and the nation of Thailand through sayings, lore, and visions through the use of components such as symbol placement, integration of Buddhist ideas, ghosts, and debate over worship spaces in the sacred location of Pu Kham Hua Chang.

The Buddha statue in the posture of giving blessings was invented to create a place of worship to become sacred. The hidden power connotation of sacred space possession in Buddhist form is a representation that shows through a sculpture of a crouching elephant in a crouching pose paying respects in front of the Buddha image in the blessing posture. The Buddha image in the posture of Nak Prok which are statues of worship objects derived from votive offerings. The Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine is a sacred space between the Buddhists and the ghosts associated with social space.

Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine worship area has been invented, created, and recreated a new meaning in the dimension of belief and faith. The place has been transformed and become a public space, which is linked to the social space that has an inseparable relationship in the modern era (e.g., public and worship spaces) as shown in the next topic. The area has become public pilgrimage locations, family vacation spots, tourist attractions, and visitor resting areas. This reflects through the contemporary art installations at the shrine as shown in the results of RQ 4 (What symbolism do the contemporary art installations at the shrine represent?) in the next part.

4.4 Symbols of the contemporary art installations

The phenomena of the shrine area reflect the symbols of the hidden meanings of beliefs and rituals in the form of Buddha, Brahman, and other beliefs, which demonstrate the dynamics of the cultural movement of local communities in the past and present with the creation of new meanings and directions in contemporary socio-cultural conditions through time. Due to the fact that the shrine is a sacred location, it leads to the process of establishing an identity and cultural identity. Through the interaction of villagers and groups of travelers, pilgrims on The Mitraph Road, and the social spaces of people of various cultures and beliefs as shown in Figure 6.



(a) Sangkachai Buddha (b) Brahmins shrine (c) Ganesha (d) Reverend Grandfather Tuad



(e) Buddha in the Naga posture (f) The face and figure of Kham Hua Chang



(e) Guan Yin Bodhisattva (f) Reverend Grandfather Tuad

Figure 6 *Symbolic representation of various beliefs*

Figure 6 shows a symbolic representation of various beliefs. Symbolically, these sculptures are integral in the form of Buddha, Brahmin, and spirits with traditional and new local cultural dynamics, which lead to the power of belief and faith and invite people to interact with the worship space. In the process of becoming a public space in the modern era, all people have a connection to the social space.

The area has become public pilgrimage locations, family vacation spots, tourist attractions, and visitor resting areas as shown in the contemporary art installations in Figure 7.



(a) Plaster and wooden figures as offerings in various forms



(b) Takian goddess tree (c) legendary god Naga's car



(d) Contemporary movie figures: Bumblebee the robot, Captain America, and the Hulk

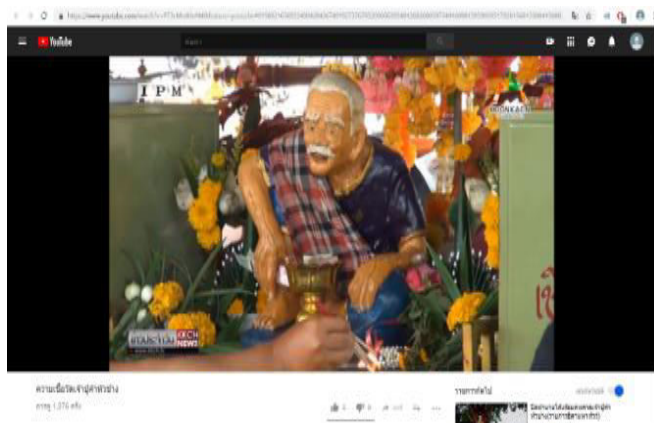
Figure 7 Contemporary art installations

Figure 7 depicts contemporary art installations as objects of worship in various forms. The majority of the objects to worship the spirits that people bring as offerings are statues of elephants. At the same time, there will be new worship objects to fill in the area of Chao Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine all the time because people's beliefs have never disappeared from Thai society and continue to exist. The symbolic meanings behind the objects of offering represent the needs of rural society (namely plaster and wooden figures in various forms, Takian goddess tree, and legendary god Naga's car) and those of the modern one (namely Bumblebee the robot, Captain America, and the Hulk). The practice of placing contemporary sculptures in the area of Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine is the integration of contemporary cultural meaning that creates the beauty of art. As a result, travelers do more than just pass through; there are also stopovers, interacting with local people and local areas where each point of local people with the local area who wish to find a landmark in a way that respected the sacred area by using art installations in the form of villagers that connect with stories from the past through present conditions.

The Chao Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine has its history and legacy limited to local northeastern of Thailand. How can the artistic, cultural, social, and historical legacy of Chao Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine be communicated to other regions of Thailand and the world and passed on to the next generations? QR CODE, which best serves the purpose of this study, was chosen for creativity. The result of the attempt is shown in the next section to answer RQ 5 (What was the result of the Chao Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine's QR code-inspired artistic creativity?)

4.5 The QR code-inspired artistic creativity

In today's era, technology 4.0 is essential as a path to connect to the virtual world so called "social networking", a communication channel, or access to products. In this world, online shopping and even accessing information is accessible at one's fingertips. Below are the results of QR code-inspired artistic creativity as shown in Figure 8.



(a) the Chao Pu Kham Hua Chang figure (left) and the QR code-inspired work (right)



(b) Reverend Grandfather Tuad statue (left) and the QR code-inspired work (right)



(c) Brahmins shrine (left) and the QR code-inspired work (right)



(d) Ganesha (left) and the QR code-inspired work (right)



(e) Takian goddess tree (left) and the QR code-inspired work (right)



(f) Legendary god Naga's car (left) and the QR code-inspired work (right)



(g) Bumblebee the robot (left) and the QR code-inspired work (right)

Figure 8 Contemporary art installations and QR code-inspired artistic works

Figure 8 depicts objects of worship in the area of Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine as inspirations of QR code-inspired works. Some of the works are the Chao Pu Kham Hua Chang figure, reverend Grandfather Tuad statue, Brahmins shrine, Ganesha, Takian goddess tree, Legendary god Naga's car, Bumblebee the robot. These QR code symbols in communication media interactions are critical to the evolution of the shrine.

5. Conclusion and discussion

5.1 Conclusion

The Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine area reflects the power of belief and faith in Buddhism, Brahmin, and ghosts. The meanings linked to rural society and modern society. The physical space has evolved over time. Through the interaction between people and space, there are various forms of activities. There is a spatial power negotiation that connects to the social space by travelers. With a tactic to successfully negotiate with the sacred Grandfather Kham Hua Chang, the people bring offerings such as elephant sculptures, other sculptures, and robots. The Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine area has become a special public and social space for local residents and commuters to get together. In summary, the Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine helps us understand the meaning of the dimension of the worship area together with public space, which reproduces the beliefs and rituals of local people and visitors (namely travelers, pilgrims, and tourists), giving new meaning in various dimensions. Those people have created their own space. As a place of worship, public space superimposed together has meanings reflecting Buddhist, Brahmanic, ghost beliefs, and contemporary public culture. These meanings can be inspiration of QR code work which can help communicate insights of artistic legacy of roadside Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine that lies behind the cult of worship to the world.

5.2 Discussion

Like in prior research (Clark & Cheshire, 2004; Przybylska and Flaga, 2020; Figen, 1986, January; Żak-Kulesza, 2022; Przybylska, 2020; Przybylska and Flaga, 2022; Przybylska, 2020; Airhart and Falls, 1984) that roadside establishments are memorials of travel and transportation. However, the Chao Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine in this present study is more than a roadside memorial. It is evidence of historical legacy of the Thai army's route to war in Laos and the relationship between these two countries. The route has now developed into the Mitraph Road and the small isolated shrine in a forest on a hill has developed into a modern building like a monastery on a highway from Thailand to Lao. The development has also turned small local objects of worship represent the local people's cult based on animistic beliefs into a variety of objects, figures, statues, and buildings as offerings of worship. These offerings are artistic works like the prior study (e.g., Layton, 1991; Flage, 2019; Townsend, 2013; Spuybroek, 2016) that artistic works in roadside memorials represent symbolic representation of cult and religious beliefs.

The artistic works in this present study communicates artists' inner thoughts or spiritual levels associated to their religious beliefs and creeds/cults through the physical manifestation of inner feelings in a variety of ways such as sign, symbol, and ritual activities. This finding is consistent with those of prior study (Lo et al., 2018, July; Clarke, 2006; Miotto, 2022). Unlike the prior study which represents other religion and cultures such as Christianity (Ferguson and Ferguson, 1961), Celtic religion (Green, 2003), Indian art and culture (Zimmer, 2021), this study focuses on Buddhism, Brahmin, and animistic beliefs. These symbolic arts posse have social values. Like the studies by Gelan, (2018) and Albert and Tan (2021) that artistic works could shape memory and societal identity, the artistic works in this present study shape the historical legacy of Thailand and Lao through a range of regional cultural topics, such as social psychology and symbolic action theory (Boesch, 2012). The historical legacy is in the northeastern people's memory like the chivalrous spirit of Ya Mo which reflects nationalism, and Thai identity (Nilsen, 2011) and Thailand's Phaya Narin Songkhram devotion (Baird, 2014). As Buddhism is Thailand's national religion, there are several Buddhist representations in this present study. Unlike prior study that forecasts the arrival of Buddha (Sasson, 2015) and Buddhist magic (Taylor, 2014), the presentation of Buddha in this study is related to the historical legacy of the shrine. The most important is the

statue of Buddha in a blessing position and the statue of the crouching elephant, “Kâw kradingthxng”.

5.3 Implication of the study

Since there is no study that has directly addressed the discourse of roadside memorials in Thailand, this study especially studied the discourse embedded in the local art in the vicinity of the Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine, which has its own history and legacy with the goal of gleaning the insights into the creative legacy of the roadside shrine that underlies the religion of worship and present the insights in the form QR code artistic works. This form of artistic works could be considered innovative. In addition, this innovation helps spread the memory and historical legacy of the shrine more widespread in the future.

5.4 Suggestions for future inquiry

This study was limited to the Pu Kham Hua Chang Shrine only, future should study other roadside shrines in Thailand and compare all shrines. This will draw insights of historical legacy of the shrines which will also lead to the appreciative understanding of the Thai cults more profoundly.

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