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MISS THAILAND CONTESTS

ANGKARET BOONTONGLUAN : PROCESS OF CHANGES OF WOMEN'S BODY IMAGE OF BEAUTY IN THE THAI SOCIETY : A CASE STUDY OF MISS THAILAND CONTESTS. THESIS ADVISOR : ASSO.PROF. AMARA PONGSAPICH, Ph.D. 123 pp. ISBN 974-636-714-5.

The aim of this research is to study the process of changes of women's body image of beauty in the Thai society, factors influencing such change and the impact caused by such changes.

Data are gathered from secondary sources such as research papers, and other publications. Primary sources include interviews of people involving in beauty contests such as contests panel members, beauty-aides and past beauty queens.

It is found that : women's body image of beauty in Thai society changes with time, and can be divided into three different periods. The first period was from 1934 to 1954 when beauty contests were organized as a form of entertainment to celebrate Constitution Day. The second period was from 1964 to 1972 when beauty contests were organized to promote tourism and foreign exchange. The last period was from 1984 to 1994 when the emphasis was put on international standard of beauty because of globalization and international exchange of commodity.

Factors influencing changes in perception of body image are two folds : (1) the influence of standards of beauty based on past and present beauty contest standards, publicity of Miss Thailand beauty contests and social activities of Miss Thailand and the popularization of other beauty competitions across the country. (2) standards of beauty in Thai society influenced by trend setters who are related to competition organizers, general public, fashion designers and advertising media. Use of female bodies for advertising lead women into believing that a beautiful woman must have a good figure and be willing to expose herself. A long-term impact on changes towards value of beauty of women.

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