

# The semiotic analysis of OTOP Advertisement Poster 2010-2023 Paradigm of Thailand local image development

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## Abstract

The article investigated the OTOP Advertisement Poster (OAP) within the period of 2010-2023 as the local revolution phenomena in Thailand by semiotics analysis. To address the first research question: What factors in OTOP public policy influence media design communication targeted at audiences? and the second research question: How is the value of Thai locality communicated through the OTOP image? From the paradigm of public sector of local image communication, many clues can appear in media that cannot specify visual concepts of certain identities, and design characteristics are broadly mere ideations. Questioning OTOP brand image, semiotic framework select sample from different 3 main events which can be filtrated by 59 samples from 410 namely OTOP City (OC), OTOP Midyear (OMY) and OTOP Silpachep (OSP). The findings revealed 11 signifier categories, which researchers identified as controllable through 6 internal significations, namely; 1) Wisdom- Identity, 2) Spatial- Cognition, 3) Femininity- Ideal, 4) Geographical-Product, 5) Traditional-Monarchy, 6) Modernism-Innovation and external signification 7) Tangible-Value, 8) Fortune-Auspicious, 9) Nourishment, 10) Population, 11) Period Time-Festive. Social reproduction of design language on OAP created the norms consisting 5 different parts listed as: i) Femininity ideal, ii) Realm of decoration, iii) Western signifying the perception of modernity, iv) The researchers view locality as a political reflection and associate it with v) beliefs rooted in tradition and culture. OAP criticism is the social discourse of Thailand's local image design development. Policymakers should consider decentralizing and reorganizing according to the 4D model to lay the foundation of sustainable local development.

**Keywords:** Visual communication design, Semiotics, Visual identity, Local development, OTOP ideal, Thai local image

## Introduction

OTOP is one of the most important local development policies in Thailand. Many local communities, entrepreneurs, and craftsmen are members of the OTOP Institute. Jaiborisudhi (2019) clarified OTOP as the government populism from Ex-prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra. The government launched the program in 2001, drawing inspiration from the Japanese local development initiative called 'One Village, One Product "OVOP". The aims are to develop local products and increase income for the grassroots community. There are 3 key principles: Local yet Global, Self-Reliance Creativity, and Human Resource Development. Schumann (2016) and Son (2012)

identified OVOP administration as a bottom-up approach that supported people mainly in "how to do business". There was a difference from OTOP's top-down policy, which operates with the members on "what to do". In addition, OTOP is supported by the sub-govern departments such as the Office of SME, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Commerce, Department of Export, and other related agencies to support and protect OTOP intellectual wisdom (Akasarakul et al., 2017; Kurokawa, 2012). OTOP is also related to effective marketing and increasing the country's GDP. They are well known as the Thai local wisdom branding. Although the government has

undergone many transitions, OTOP remains the main priority and it was adopted and continuously developed in terms of its vision (Laochockchaikul, 2021; Tanwattana & Korkietpitak, 2012).

However, Suindramedhi (2015) clarified 5 different criteria between OVOP and OTOP basis, namely: i) Entrepreneurship's ambition and commitment, ii) The origination of product in terms of style, material, and imitation, iii) Direct bridging between seller and buyer, whereby most dealings were with brokers iv) Knowledge / financial disciplinary / community movement and v) Government subsidies. In the OTOP context, there is a pool of supporting local entrepreneurs. Suppose their product reaches the standard. They will can exhibit products for sale and promotion at Bangkok or international fairs (Kularbkao, 2016) . The Community Development Department, Ministry of Interior (CDD) organized the grand event. OTOP annual trade fair is symbolic of the local development success of the government. Many local communities came to join this grand event. Organizers initially held the fairs twice a year. Because CDD aims to reduce inequality between local and urban areas, boost domestic demand for local wisdom products, especially with customers in the capital city (CDD, 2025; Tanwattana & Korkietpitak, 2012). Over a decade, OTOP has illustrated the Thai local image through the fair. OTOP visual images directly imprinted codes onto customers' perceptions. OTOP Advertisement Poster (OAP) is key design evidence controlled by CDD. All the Posters are semiotic resources. They communicated the value, attitude, and design paradigm from the government through various of design appearances depending on international or domestic trends or policies.

The problem of OTOP image is the availability of a wide range of products. Driving various local merchandise images with only one communication brand is hard. Most local entrepreneurs try to make a difference with their businesses, but the name is OTOP. At this juncture, the question arises: "How is OTOP significant for local Thai businesses?" Questioning the local image development strategy, is it necessary to be under OTOP branding? or do they need to isolate and create their own identity? The problems affected self-reliance, design innovation, funding strategy, local administration, etc. Focusing on visual communication

design (VCD) in OAP of annual theme fairs. Each fair has to create a graphic advertisement to promote the event. OAP is conveying yearly concepts that reflect visual information to its target audience. Design paradigm analysis is the main issue in this research. One may ask: What truly constitutes the image of OTOP? This question led the author to investigate the signification approach of VCD in OAP from 2010 to 2023 through a systemic semiotic analysis.

## Literature review

Focusing on how OTOP communicated with receivers, most people think of OTOP as a local institute because of the social reproduction of CDD involvement under the same policy. Various firms and scholarly works identified themselves under the name of OTOP. It is easy to embark on and use the name OTOP to communicate with the public, hence gaining the public's trust in terms of its recognized and accepted norms. Thongprasert et al. (2019) examined the visual appearance and identified three criteria by which Thai cultural values are applied to creative commercial use, as illustrated below:

- i) understanding culture
- ii) consumer's requirement
- iii) simplified local identity with Trends.

Akasarakul et al. (2017) discuss factors of customer decision when getting attractive OTOP visual information from websites which exhibited social influence, product functionality, and reliability that constitute significant customer decisions in choosing certain OTOP products. In the case of OTOP design representation, Umpawan (2018) mentions that as an interior designer, a robust analysis of community information, and local identity from visual and textual information is systematically applied to the design concepts for the OTOP souvenir center. The designers listed all keywords during the design process, reflecting names of places, objects, mottos, and characteristics of the local geography, which they then finalized for project development. Adding value to the product was acquired from local identity (Sensang et al., 2022) which considered as an innovation practices. This issue was reflected in the character of any OTOP products represented with visual identities of the original location to be a direct reminder of the product's origin. In addition, Kamnungwut and Klentien (2019) describe on

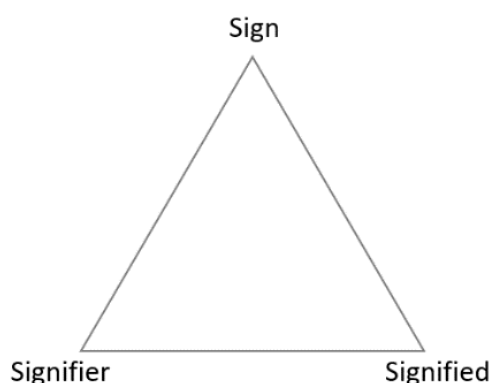
local sub-brand OTOP of web design. In general, the basic expectation is usually related to the use of symbolic local identity, culture, nature, or touristic places for various design communications to be more appealing and attractive to the customer.

Pornprasert (2021) indicated that the quality of the products that they represented in the advertisement media is the main cause of repurchasing the goods. On the other hand, marketers create branding to raise awareness for the advertised products. Most entrepreneurs were not paying much attention to branding image. However, OTOP is the realm of marketing whereby elements of recognition, remarkable, or distinctiveness are important parts parallel to product quality. Product quality and the process of wisdom are the main topics adopted in marketing communication. Grodgangunt et al. (2022), describe the expected character of a community leader with a transparent and honest attribute as the most recommended attitude in upgrading the competitive solution. Brand personality and place are other issues that affect local sub-brand communication. The network cycle structure, entrepreneurs' liberty, sufficiency philosophy, and creativity for product image are the combinations of OTOP upgrading opportunities. Tingtong and Lalaeng (2021), who study innovation for purchasing cognition for OTOP, stated that the freshness, distinctiveness, and originality of goods are essential issues for purchases by local consumers. Digital marketing through social media with attractive content effectively persuades the customers to buy. As mentioned earlier, the researcher concludes that from

the literature on local wisdom, products that business owners associate their products with quality, wisdom, and the personal brand they create.

### Methodology

Semiotics are referred to as a method for investigating the science of signs. It is also well known amongst classical linguistic analysts such as Ferdinand de Saussure, the Swiss Linguist (1857-1913) who found the concept of sign, signifier, signified in semiology for a linguistic study called semiology (Saussure, 2011), and Charles Sanders Pierce (1839- 1914), American semiotic and pragmatic theorist founder who give value of signs as the logic of relativities elaborated that semiotic, consist of 3 components categorized as Representament, Interpretant and Object (Hu et al., 2019), Both were master theorists in this field. In addition, Pierce described another 3 differences about representamen that are parallel to the opinion of Saussure as a "signifier" elaborated as 1) Icon is a resemblance to something that indicates simple understandable items such as photo, map, drawing 2) Index/Indices is a casual connection that refers to them as something such as smoke which indicates there are burning or fire and 3) Symbol is symbolic figures or agreements in social convention for communication such as language, traffic signs or mathematic signs (Pierce, 1991). Nevertheless, the theoretical differences caused researchers to use semiotics as the crucial mechanic and work within the signification structure through complicated contexts to deeply understand the evidence (Hu et al., 2019).



**Figure 1** Ferdinand Saussure / Semiology

**Source:** Saussure, 2011

Barth has continued his work from Saussure; He points out that semiotic is the science of signs (Beasley & Danesi, 2010; Crow, 2022), which relates to many sign categories such as Image, music, gesture, and object as part of a system. In this context, he mentioned some levels of meaning about denotation, which exactly means sign and connotation with hidden meaning of itself (Crow, 2022). Encoding or decoding, denotation or connotation all present relativity in sign meaning, whereby coding is the language system's signification that people must know the rules of those languages. Even if a person understands the system in terms of texts in language, it does not mean that it is only for linguistic boundaries. Danesi (2004) explains that people can transfer texts into music, painting, advertisements, or across any media boundaries. In the commercial Advertisement, many pieces of evidence represent complex communication. Firstly, denotation refers to the surfacing, direct intelligibility of sign meaning and connotation of meaning as the underlying sign meaning itself, and it needs understanding related to interpretation (Beasley & Danesi, 2010). Denesi (2004) states that today's sign systems primarily are contemporary semiotics, where individuals examine meanings through connotative relationships that shape social interpretation. Investigating signs in Advertisement refers to the deconstructed structure of signs to explore sign connectivity in a system called "signification" (Beasley & Danesi, 2010). Scholars have developed linguistic semiology across many disciplines. This development helps us understand how to apply it practically in a broader range of fields. Christian Metz applied semiotics for film study: He applied the structuralism of Ferdinand de Saussure and the Psychoanalytic of Jacques Lacan to the method of sign analysis like language syntactic (Brandão, 2015).

As for the semiotic use in certain parts of creativity investigation, Mulyawan and Geraghty (2020) mention the signs of visual design from a previous study on the advertising billboards. They focused on studying the target viewers with large alphabetical figures whereby the design stands out dominantly to catch the viewer's attention. Lee (2015) examined the advertisement medium that communicate through signage, which was later analyzed to understand the sign maker's intent. Semiotics critically examines signs—both visual and

textual—to understand the context of signification as operated or communicated by users within a specific community. In the kindergarten creativity classroom meaning-making, Pantaleo (2023) described her experimentation on applied semiotic research when students; the students could develop and represent the visual information by their potential. The student also knows how to choose signs to develop form and shape as sign makers. In this case of meaning, signs-making means the personal creation. Song et al. (2022) explored typographic systems and the text direction of Chinese restaurant signage. They found that it was arousing consumers significantly. However, traditional signage in front of the restaurant has motivated customers' willingness to come to the restaurant. Researchers found that traditional signage affects customers' faithfulness. Moreover, the vertical characteristic signage significantly gave clients experience with traditional and simplified Chinese character systems. Her findings explained how signs are composed in Chinese restaurant, influencing the audience's perceptions.

Plakoyiannaki et al. (2022) discuss media as a medium, stating that signs are in the form of structure and its meaning through the medium. Receivers interpret aesthetic photography based on their experience, with the general public and professionals often expressing different opinions. Additionally, Gordi and Roig (2023) studied semiotics from a graphic design awareness campaign perspective. They found that the effective parts investigated using semiotics were the bridge to create the experience for the target audience: attracting and arousing participants' perception to those signs that relate directly to the audience experiences, likewise as a lane passing through the awareness topics. Ng and Chan (2022) surveyed the signage system on the façade of the Chinatown building via visual tropes. They revealed that internal social movement and external factors influenced the colonization of Caucasians. Discourse on the multi-contextualization of urban architecture has led to the understanding of the concept of Chineseness, paradigm shift, and economic-political context in the field of studies in urban areas. Practically, each building has its sign, such as graphic design, color, and typography, which echoes the urban context. Through the disputed complexity of political medium translation during the opium war exhibition. Liao (2022)

described signs as multimodal in display, not only for reading but for their pragmatic seeing, feeling, and even touching. Displays by professional intention may not necessarily work with linguistic function but by historical evidence instead.

### Data collection

From the perspectives of corpus analysis, according to Son (2012), the OTOP organization is

based on promoting trade fair events. The fairs were successive norms of CDD that possessed the right authority for the OTOP trademark; they are mainly support 3 grand events, namely: OTOP City (OC), OTOP Midyear (OMY), and OTOP Silpachep (OSP), which. above all can be regarded as the greatest fairs. The author investigated OAP 410 samples created since 2010 and filtrated 59 selections, which can be revealed by name events as follows:



**Figure 2** OTOP City 2017, OTOP Midyear 2016, OTOP Silpachep 2018.

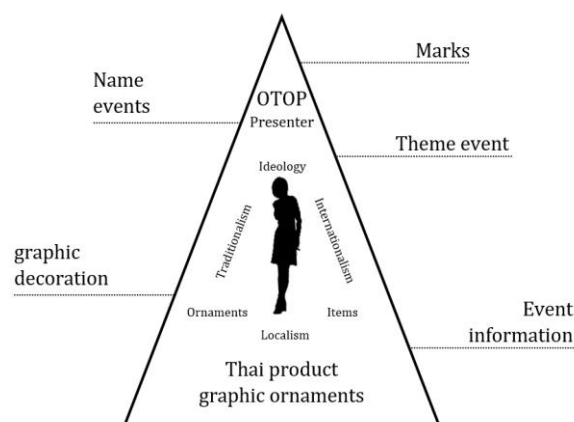
**Source:** edited by Author

(4.1) OTOP City (OC) The event was held for the New Year celebration in December. It aims to develop the knowledge of exhibition skills for local entrepreneurs in line with the target customers in Thailand's capital and suburban areas (CDD, 2022). The OC continually organized the OAP from 2010-2022. The researchers selected 22 samples for investigation in this study.

(4.2) OTOP Midyear (OMY) The event was implemented for the midyear annual grand sale. It aimed to create change, especially in the domestic and

international markets for local entrepreneurs (CDD, 2023a). The OMY from 13 sample selections produced from 2014 to 2022.

(4.3) OTOP Silpachep (OSP) The event was established in response to Queen Sirikit's policy. Event is held annually on 12 August, was organized in line with her effort in preserving and supporting Thai wisdom as her leader of Royal Folk Arts and Craft Centre (CDD, 2023b). The researchers included 24 samples in this OSP, which they created between 2015-2023.



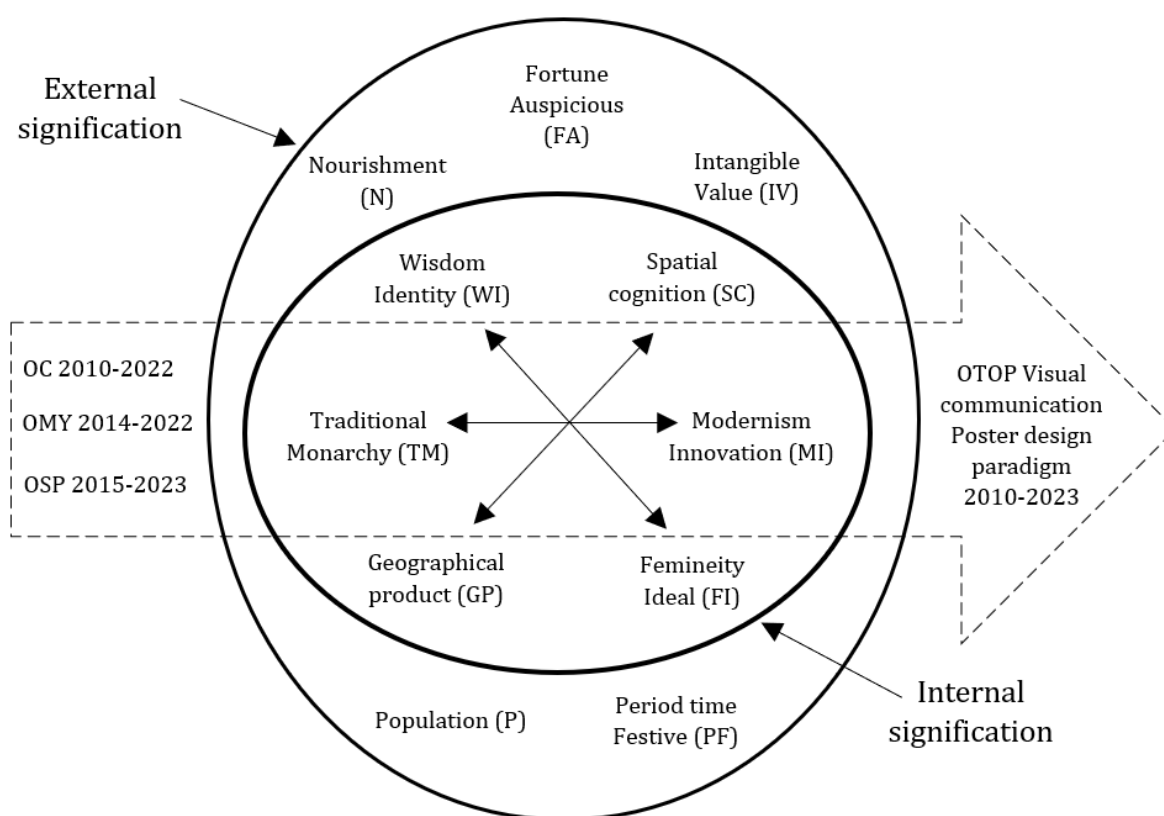
**Figure 3** OAP graphic composition

**Source:** edit by Author

### Syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis

This paper investigated the structural aspects of OAP signification during 2010- 2023 by syntagmatic and paradigmatic relation analysis. The examination was done on the signs structure of visual texts and textual texts within the semantic structure. Signifiers and signified inside OAP were examined by focusing on signs' horizontal and vertical interrelation. The author analyzed the complexity of components. There are two figurative relationships between Syntagms (X) and Paradigm (Y), which are two-axis relations of design signification (Adeniji & Olalere, 2019). Additionally, the relation of signs in a structure sequence exists which has its function in the signification. At the same time paradigmatic relations can be substituted by another one and replaced by position in structure (Daneeviae & Mirjana, 1999). Syntagmatic relation is displaying the

semantic function itself by group or category. However, paradigmatic relationships are substitutions within the semantic function of the sign system by structure (Manokaran & Shyi, 2021). The sign system structure combines visual and textual images of OAP. The researchers found the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations to be more flexible. There are no syntax boundaries like a linguistic system. In addition, design semiotic analysis considers two axes (X and Y) of signification, such as the horizontal relation by syntax and paradigm that exhibited vertical relationship, whereby Ramachandran (2005) mentioned that syntagmatic and Paradigmatic analysis method would provide an in-depth interrelation of sign system. The rigor data analysis can display group of OAP design ideations.



**Figure 4** The 11 Groups of signifiers: Syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis OAP 2010-2023

**Source:** Author

**Table 1** OAP Syntagmatic and Paradigmatic data analysis (frequency), txt = Textual image, vis = Visual image

| Event Cat.           | Internal Relation        |    |        |     |        |     |        |     |        |     |        |     | External Relation |     |       |     |        |     |        |     |       |     |        |     |
|----------------------|--------------------------|----|--------|-----|--------|-----|--------|-----|--------|-----|--------|-----|-------------------|-----|-------|-----|--------|-----|--------|-----|-------|-----|--------|-----|
|                      | Signification Categories |    | SC (I) |     | GP (I) |     | FI (I) |     | WI (I) |     | TM (I) |     | MI (I)            |     | N (X) |     | PF (X) |     | FA (X) |     | P (X) |     | IV (X) |     |
|                      |                          |    | year   | txt | vis    | txt | vis    | vis | txt    | vis | txt    | vis | txt               | vis | txt   | vis | txt    | vis | txt    | vis | txt   | vis | txt    | vis |
| OTOP MIDYEAR (OMY)   | 2014                     | 1  | 0      | 1   | 1      | 2   | 1      | 0   | 0      | 4   | 0      | 3   | 0                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0     | 0   | 2      |     |
|                      | 2015                     | 2  | 0      | 6   | 2      | 1   | 0      | 1   | 0      | 6   | 2      | 2   | 1                 | 0   | 1     | 1   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0     | 7   |        |     |
|                      | 2016                     | 1  | 0      | 4   | 1      | 1   | 2      | 0   | 0      | 8   | 0      | 2   | 0                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 1   | 1     | 2   |        |     |
|                      | 2017                     | 3  | 3      | 1   | 0      | 1   | 1      | 0   | 0      | 7   | 4      | 4   | 0                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 1      | 1   | 1      | 1   | 1     | 5   |        |     |
|                      | 2018                     | 2  | 0      | 4   | 2      | 1   | 6      | 0   | 0      | 9   | 0      | 2   | 1                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 1      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0     | 4   |        |     |
|                      | 2019                     | 3  | 0      | 1   | 2      | 2   | 4      | 0   | 0      | 4   | 2      | 4   | 0                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 1      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0     | 3   |        |     |
|                      | 2021                     | 2  | 0      | 1   | 2      | 0   | 1      | 1   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 3   | 1                 | 1   | 0     | 0   | 1      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0     | 1   |        |     |
|                      | 2022                     | 1  | 0      | 2   | 1      | 1   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 4   | 0      | 4   | 0                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0     | 3   |        |     |
| OTOP CITY (OC)       | 2010                     | 0  | 0      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 1   | 0      | 1   | 0                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0     | 0   |        |     |
|                      | 2013                     | 1  | 4      | 1   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 4   | 0                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0     | 1   |        |     |
|                      | 2014                     | 0  | 0      | 6   | 5      | 1   | 1      | 0   | 0      | 1   | 0      | 6   | 0                 | 2   | 3     | 0   | 0      | 1   | 1      | 1   | 1     | 4   |        |     |
|                      | 2015                     | 1  | 0      | 0   | 4      | 1   | 1      | 0   | 0      | 2   | 2      | 3   | 0                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0     | 1   |        |     |
|                      | 2016                     | 2  | 0      | 4   | 1      | 1   | 1      | 0   | 1      | 7   | 0      | 2   | 1                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0     | 5   |        |     |
|                      | 2017                     | 2  | 0      | 4   | 2      | 1   | 2      | 0   | 0      | 4   | 0      | 6   | 1                 | 0   | 1     | 1   | 1      | 1   | 1      | 1   | 1     | 11  |        |     |
|                      | 2018                     | 5  | 0      | 17  | 2      | 1   | 1      | 1   | 0      | 5   | 0      | 8   | 3                 | 0   | 1     | 1   | 1      | 1   | 1      | 1   | 1     | 12  |        |     |
|                      | 2019                     | 2  | 1      | 3   | 4      | 1   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 7   | 0      | 9   | 0                 | 0   | 2     | 0   | 0      | 1   | 1      | 1   | 1     | 5   |        |     |
|                      | 2020                     | 0  | 0      | 1   | 5      | 1   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 7   | 0      | 12  | 0                 | 0   | 3     | 3   | 2      | 2   | 2      | 2   | 2     | 4   |        |     |
|                      | 2022                     | 0  | 0      | 0   | 8      | 1   | 2      | 0   | 0      | 2   | 0      | 11  | 0                 | 0   | 0     | 2   | 1      | 1   | 1      | 1   | 1     | 4   |        |     |
| OTOP SILPACHEP (OSP) | 2015                     | 5  | 0      | 5   | 4      | 1   | 1      | 0   | 1      | 9   | 0      | 1   | 0                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0     | 7   |        |     |
|                      | 2017                     | 3  | 0      | 4   | 2      | 1   | 1      | 0   | 1      | 6   | 0      | 1   | 1                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 1      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0     | 12  |        |     |
|                      | 2018                     | 3  | 0      | 4   | 2      | 1   | 1      | 0   | 1      | 11  | 0      | 0   | 1                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 2      | 1   | 1      | 1   | 1     | 7   |        |     |
|                      | 2019                     | 6  | 0      | 12  | 5      | 1   | 2      | 1   | 1      | 5   | 2      | 4   | 2                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 0      | 2   | 2      | 2   | 2     | 9   |        |     |
|                      | 2020                     | 2  | 0      | 0   | 4      | 1   | 1      | 0   | 2      | 4   | 0      | 3   | 0                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 1      | 1   | 1      | 1   | 1     | 4   |        |     |
|                      | 2021                     | 2  | 0      | 6   | 2      | 1   | 0      | 0   | 1      | 3   | 8      | 10  | 0                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0      | 0   | 0     | 2   |        |     |
|                      | 2022                     | 1  | 0      | 1   | 4      | 1   | 1      | 1   | 2      | 4   | 0      | 4   | 0                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 0      | 1   | 1      | 1   | 1     | 4   |        |     |
|                      | 2023                     | 1  | 0      | 2   | 1      | 1   | 2      | 0   | 2      | 5   | 1      | 3   | 0                 | 0   | 0     | 0   | 1      | 1   | 1      | 1   | 1     | 5   |        |     |
|                      |                          | 51 | 8      | 90  | 66     | 25  | 32     | 5   | 12     | 125 | 21     | 112 | 12                | 3   | 11    | 17  | 15     | 15  | 15     | 15  | 124   |     |        |     |
|                      |                          | 59 |        | 156 |        | 25  |        | 37  |        | 137 |        | 133 |                   | 15  |       | 11  |        | 17  |        | 15  |       | 124 |        |     |

The corpus analysis found that the intangible structure contained a group of signifiers of the OAP paradigm. Figure 4 illustrates the groups of signifiers inside the OAP syntagmatic relation. The author performed the denotative and connotative analysis from visual and textual texts of the 59 OAP and investigated how the cycle of signifiers works by syntax. The result from the semiotic analysis found that there were 11 syntagmatic relation groups, which can be classified into 6 internal interrelations as follows: 1) Wisdom-Identity (WI), 2) Spatial-Cognition (SC), 3) Femininity-Ideal (FI), 4) Geographical-Product (GP), 5) Traditional-Monarchy (TM), 6) Modernism-Innovation (MI), while others are external interrelations namely: 7) Intangible-Value (IV), 8) Fortune-Auspicious (FA), 9) Nourishment (N), 10) Population (P), 11) Period Time-Festive. Groups, by definition, are arranged and interact with others close to the syntax system (Maneenetra, 2015). However, they are more flexible in signification

(Benjadol, 2014) when interacting with others' signs or stand-alone. Each signified also changes by context. In the case of paradigmatic relation, the author analyzed OAP by yearly sequence. Over the decade, all evidence illustrate a scenario of OTOP Thailand's local image development paradigm, as presented in the corpus in Table 1.

## Results

Visual appearance in OAP design is phenomenon, considered into design messages as elements, compositions, codes and styles (Meredith & Jamer, 2017). Corpus from this study is the social reproductivity of localness in Thai contexts. The Author deconstructed and reassembled semantic data and analyzed discursive interrelation to show OTOP's design notion of how they constructed visual communication media. We can understand image of OTOP identity through 5 sub-contexts as:



**Figure 5** The femininity ideal of OAP

**Source:** edited by Author

### Femininity ideal

Femininity ideal is viewed within these 3 criteria as follow:

a) Celebrities in traditional apparel (a): Several occasions uses traditional costume in OAP for example during OC 2016, OMY 2017; 2018, OSP 2017; 2018, traditional femininity value was being delivered such as preciousness, majestic apparel and politeness (Phakdeephasook, 2009). The visual language used shows the myth of traditionalism was the most overwhelming OTOP language in graphic advertisement. However, the **appearance** did not **represent** anything related to the localised knowledge. In the other hand, the evidence signifying served as centric cultural appearance which connotes a meaning

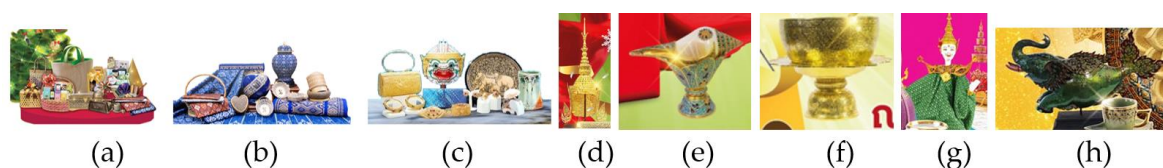
that the woman with formal traditional style is one valued as an OTOP communication strategy

b) Localism Appearance (b): The evidence clearly shows elements related to local material information, such as weaving, natural fabrics and colors, folk patterns, and local decorative ornaments, which appear in the apparels used. In term of local issue, visual of young local talents normally comes with bright energetic parallel to elites with local formal appearance is problematic in style definition. Presenter's type is often in contradiction with localism in ideal femininity. The question that arises is which of these images represents the flavor of OAP in the context of localism.

c) Modernity in OTOP context (c): This issue can be reflected to the cognition of bureaucracy on how to

represent value of Thai woman in modern society (Singhakowinta, 2014). In this aspect, they convey the meaning of self-reliance and the luxurious women in town. In this context, the researchers crystallized various samples using elegant long dresses and modern looks, along with sub-elements such as shopping bags or gift boxes, to portray women as individuals who can care of themselves. This is femininity capitalism idea in Thai context. They are reflected Top-down policy in

OAP. The femineity is medium for communicate the idea of OTOP. The existence of hidden agenda whereby it is no longer a pure advertisement about local community but it has some conceal political agenda and bureaucratic power, hence bringing us to carry out understanding on control the society to conforms with what value of local wisdom created by OTOP which shall continue as normal every year.



**Figure 6** The delicacy, complex decorative ornament appearance in OC, OMY, and OSP

Source: edited by Author

### Realm of decoration

This aspect is related to the reflection of the traditionalist base. Most of the attractive elements constitute traditional elements. They are traditional fine crafts displayed on the poster plane. For instance, traditional motifs, porcelain, traditional performance masks, gold brass, apparel, puppets, or high-technique weaving fabric while emphasizing the use of OAP represented fine craftsmanship branding. The question of what was established in developing OTOP initially was way back to the grassroots: to create jobs from local wisdom and increase income for the community. Hence, in terms of reality and practicality, contradictions exist. From the view of OAP discourse, people cognition in society were convinced to imagine OTOP as a traditional high-skill craft or technique with more innovation and wisdom from the locals. Figure 6 shows the most signifiers used from OC, OMY, and OSP until

nowadays that show interrelation of Geographical-Product (GP), Wisdom-Identity (WI), and especially Traditional-Monarchy (TM). Most product graphics are a combination of traditional and local appearance on high or technique of craftsmanship, e. g. , gold accessories, gold niello-ware, celadon, or traditional silk fabric. All signs exhibited were indicated by the typical signifying objects inside the OAP structure. which spoke out loud on the role of contemporary, traditional culture that transfers and directs bureaucratic design aesthetically. Additionally, they used many specific symbols like blue as Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's representation, many delicate traditional craft products, and a traditional graphic background. For over a decade, the state has promoted the myth of local sustainability or grassroots development as a norm of the state's conservative philosophy.



**Figure 7** The Westernism and modernization signification in OAP

Source: edited by Author

### Western is a symbol of modernity

The graphic of Western elements in Figure 7. is a crucial statement of OAP value. On some occasions, composers use them as modernity clues in OAP composition. It helps OAP communicate directly with the audience about modernity in design media. Historically, the value of Westernism in the Thai paradigm started in AD. 1876, whereby the effect emerged from the colonization period (Maneenetra, 2015). The problem faced by the chief elite was to create a new hybrid of culture that represents the acceptance of Western culture while still conserving the original Thai culture which labeled it as a civilization. Indeed,

westernism from the perspective of the outer shell is symbolic of the modern Thai context. Modernization from the state perspective means taking, adapting, mixing, and matching western culture to Thai culture, which is synonymous with the term “cut and paste method” in current days. In the case of westernism in OAP, the one might call the method ‘Thai style.’ Designers used visual texts such as the Eiffel Tower, the Statue of Liberty, the Opera House, an airplane, a gift box, snowflakes, a red ribbon, and textual phrases like ‘best local to global’ and ‘world-class marketplace’ for graphic purposes.



**Figure 8** Local signification in OAP

**Source:** edited by author

### Locality is a political reflection

Figure 8 shows that OTOP prioritizes local representation. Nevertheless, creators use them for different purposes. Firstly, the message must be original and local. Designers used local symbols as graphic elements in OAP visual texts. The domestic target audience can detect and comprehend which object was made by certain communities or where the communities came from. The local contents are one part of OTOP communication mechanisms. This reflection appears in policy and in the way the public sector operates in practice (Arunwarakorn et al., 2017). In this way, they fulfilled the intent of the OTOP policy, which was established to support and preserve local wisdom. For instance, woven bamboo called “Kratip” was a little basket (a) used as a food container for sticky rice by the northeastern people, usually to bring out for lunchtime during working time in the rice field. Alternatively, the original wisdom of the seagrass weaving handbag (b) was developed from mats or local containers used in

daily life. It is used by local people from southern Thailand, known as “Krajud”. Today’s Krajud innovations reflect a growing demand for urbanism, as seen in its design and multi-purpose functions. The same case applies to the airy bamboo container called “Chalom” and rattan basket. (c) Designers applied a new combination of embroidered costume, modifying the traditional apparel of the indigenous Hmong hill tribe from the northern states of Thailand. This issue marks a turning point that the author needs to discuss further. (d) The digital fabric pattern or bamboo weaving (e) pattern is used for background decoration. Unfortunately, the representation of local elements—especially the product itself—appeared only as a subtopic rather than as the main content supporting pyramid base. Nonetheless, from Figure 9, it was observed that there was a local paradigm shift between OAP in 2018 and 2023. The graphic signification revealed that CDD conveyed locality by incorporating casual contemporary imagery in the presenter apparel.



**Figure 9** Paradigm transition comparison in OMY 2018 and 2023

**Source:** edited by Author

### Beliefs from mythology reflection

Many ornaments were labeled as Fortune - Auspicious (FA) with Intangible- Value (IV) . which relate to the root of this nation, both visual and textual texts that were hidden in signification overviews. This issue relates to the traditional culture from the perspectives of religious and monarchy matters. In the Thai context, the monarchy institution is parallel to the existential Godly institution. Divinity covers every part of society. The representation of this sub- context is strongly found within the context of traditional appearance, delicate golden apparel, complexity of decoration or the shinning or the glittering things that connote this kind of ornament, which is only fit for the king and aristocrats and unsuitable for normal people's consumption. At this juncture, this point can be connected to the signifying graphic inside general OAP, which was found in Figure 9 (a) OMY 2018 as stipulated below: the woman wearing gold, delicate traditional costume and accessories is considered pious, majestic, angelic, and high class. Those women adorned in an elegant golden backdrop surrounding the bodies seemed to have a holy radius spread around them, making the model look like a holy angel alongside the scenic atmosphere, reminding the viewers of the holy place of heaven or supernatural thing. To emphasize the gold color, glittering ornament, or delicate decoration in OAP, it is important to remind the viewers that it originates from traditional heritage elements. The author compared the above scenario with another casual image in Figure 9 (b) OMY 2023. However, the graphic design composition has simplified traditional signifiers,

retaining only select elements such as glowing symbolic objects, shiny or glittering accents around the presenter, and backgrounds that convey additional meaning. This serves as a reminder that cultural symbols continue to be used repeatedly today, whether intentionally or not.

### Discussion and conclusion

Firstly, the author would conclude that the existing policy is impractical for local design. Public sectors should implement power decentralization, foster cooperation among local governments, academic institutions, and marketers or entrepreneurs, and promote self-reliance as part of a long-term strategy. It is proposed that the authority should reconstruct the 3 personnel categories namely:

a) Coordinator that obtains and shares information between the public sectors and local entrepreneurs about funding, training, trading information, etc.

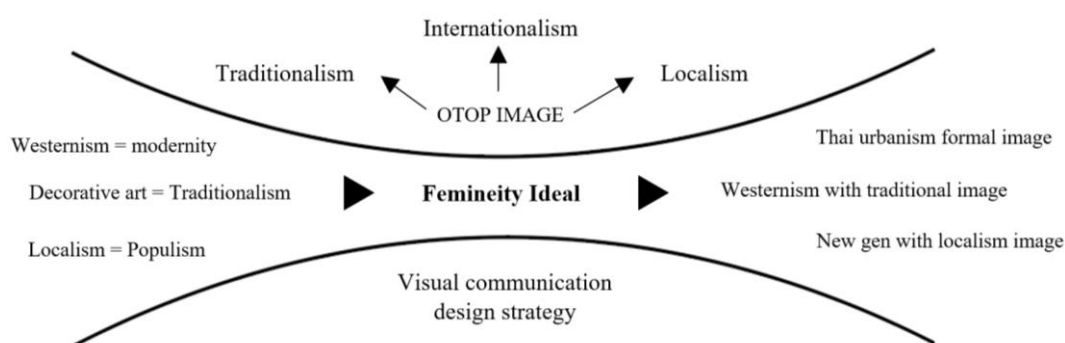
b) Design experts who have the potential to analyze development factors and creatively improve them. People in this category should be designers or local academics in the field.

c) Leader who has the responsibility to manage and develop the community. Secondly, the author stresses that traditionalist aesthetics relates to a conservative culture. In the Thai contexts, organizations or companies frequently use the symbolism of God, superstition, or luck to anchor mental and fortune (Patpong, 2009) . This study refers to CDD as a representative sample that holds value. Although CDD did not use supernatural symbols to communicate directly, the way logotype, pattern, and graphic

ornament was created is closely related to this reflection. Therefore, it is necessary to reform the traditional tangible and intangible appearance since these tools are becoming more accessible in contemporary communication.

Thirdly, OAP design usually comprises 4 design texts: text of the presenter, text of the visual product, text of visual festive, and textual information including logotype, phrase, and design info. CDD uses this

graphic logic to imprint messages on its target audience. This logic also appears in general public sector media, such as temples, municipalities, annual provincial events. Styles also differed from global trends, maximalism, and work orderly besides political adherence. Design aesthetic appreciates detailed beautification of decoration that left a remarkable and unique “Thai public sectors style”.



**Figure 10** Thai local image discourse of OAP development in 2010-2023

**Source:** Author (2024)

Fourthly, OAP usually changes by yearly contexts. At this time of this writing, in January 2025, the “soft power” is mentioned. They also have a social archive that reflects political evidence. Thai femininity is

usually tool to convey the ideals of OTOP. From Figure 10, they oppositely applied visual elements styles, which is critical discourse and possible to use as Thai-local VCD by 3 strategies as follows:



**Figure 11** Reconstruction of West and East

**Source:** edited by Author

1) **Westernism with traditional image:** From Figure 11, the contrast combination was the integration of Caucasian models with traditional Thai costumes. Ethnicity has created value for the revised traditionalism to modernity. Caucasians with traditional costumes are considered a shortcut to acceptance from a CDD

perspective. The classic Thai method of turning traditional subjects into international subjects has strongly affected advertisements. The mix-and-match method is similar to the Siam civilization paradigm in 1876- 1896 which still has reproductivity in a social context. Models are posing with dignifying straight and

s-curve (a and d), in respect with the hand raise signifying “Sawasdee” (b), neat picking hand (c), or joining hand (e). All signifiers convey Thai dignity, gentle and good manners or social ethics of traditional

Thai women. Thai preciousness, delicacy, and elegant traditionalism are strong images that can be recomposed with any different ethnicity to create new attractions.



**Figure 12** Thai race with an urban formal appearance

**Source:** edited by Author

2) Thai urban formal image: This represents ethnic identity internationally. From figure 12, the image shows how modern looks is OTOP creation. However, the urban styles with minimal dressing are outer shells. A visual element remains in the local content, such as local fabric like silk, eastern color, or simplified

decoration. Urbanism image discourse is the pragmatic way of concurrently mixing modernness and localness with not too modern but not too old. In this case, they occupied a middle ground, displaying non-identified or mixed styles that require emphasis in a practical manner.



**Figure 13** Young generation with an informal, casual appearance

**Source:** edited by Author

3) New generation with localism image: This type is a practical for OAP nowadays. From Figure 13, the messages through the presenter fall in the younger generation and casual way who has a bright, energetic appearance. It might be another solution for local image policy that's proper with region identity development. The core idea is to simplify for everyday use.

Fifthly, visual display mainly involves decorative arts. The complication of current visual elements in most events needs to be revisualized and redirected for OTOP and more specific graphic styles. In addition, the “OTOP image” might be a problem. Thai people know the term “OTOP” as a temporary market where they sell cheap products. It seems that any OTOP advertisements have gotten less attention from participants. OAP means that the media has to inform the date and time of the

event. OTOP organizations should crystalize how to express design identity to clarify the development direction.

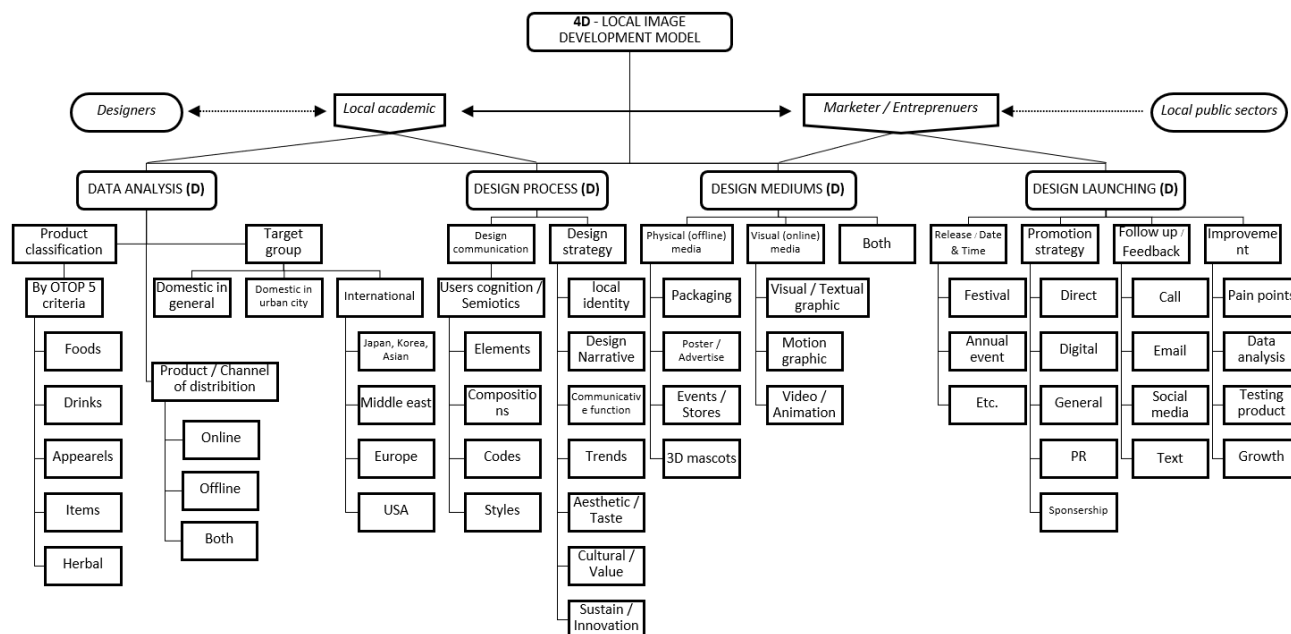
### Suggestion

In terms of development strategy, the author suggests the “4D” Local Image Development Model, which helps local people and supports self-sufficiency philosophy to be looked into in Figure 14 as follows:

(1) Subdivision development strategy is a consideration since OTOP is an organization, not a local brand. OTOP is a national organization has local essence in its foundation. Local administration should take the role of being the main supporter of their community.

(2) VCD is one key success for local image development. CDD, in the case of headquarters should systematically create a strategy for local community development. The system will help entrepreneurs

enhance their identity to be a better way to design communication styles, and the process should be in long-term development by the local academics and co-operate with design experts.



**Figure 14** 4D - Local image development model

**Source:** Author

(3) Academics and entrepreneurs are key persons in the 4D model. They have to work, design, exchange, and develop the visual and textual character with support from the designers and local public sectors. Follow the 4 steps: 1. Data analysis: to classify product and target group 2. Design process: divide in communication styles and strategy 3. Design medium: Choose the right medium for the product or community character. 4. Design launching: representing the design image systematically.

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