SHADOWS OF PAGODA: PINHOLE CAMERA EFFECTS AND ANCIENT LOCAL WISDOM SEEN IN NORTHERN REGION OF THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

The pinhole camera effect is an interesting phenomenon in vision mechanics. The existence of pinhole camera effect at some specific places is very interesting. In northern Thailand, there are discoveries of pinhole camera effects at many holy pagodas and becomes the local interesting attraction. The existence might reflect the local wisdoms of the ancient local people in northern region of Thailand.

KEY WORDS: Pinhole, Camera, Shadow, Pagoda.

INTRODUCTION

The pinhole camera effect is an interesting phenomenon in vision mechanics. The existence of pinhole camera effect at some specific places is very interesting. In northern Thailand, there are discoveries of pinhole camera effects at many holy pagodas and becomes the local interesting attraction. The existence might reflect the local wisdoms of the ancient local people in northern region of Thailand.

CASE STUDIES

There are some specific Buddhist pagodas in some provinces (especially for Lampang, Chiangmai, Phayao and Uttaradit) in northern region of Thailand that the pinhole camera phenomena can be observed. The observation can be done at a specific building in each mentioned pagoda. On the day time, when the building is closed and became dark, there will a reflected shadow of external pagoda structure at the floor. Sometimes, the shadow is inverted to the actual structure. Sometimes, there are more than 1 reflected shadows and the shadow might have color.

DISCUSSION

Vision is mainly affected by pathway of light. Sometimes, the pathway of light is unusual. The pinhole effect is an interesting observation. The described pinhole effect seen in many ancient famous pagodas in norther region of Thailand is very interesting. Although there are thousands of Buddhist pagodas in Thailand, the existence of this specific phenomenon occurs at a small area in northern region of Thailand. It is no doubt that this can reflect the local wisdom of the ancient local engineers and architects who constructed those pagoda. The use of pinhole effect might help the monk who meditated in the closed dark building to see externally without need of electricity. The appearance of the shadow picture is various and this is due to several factors.

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As noted by Wittenberg, “Because of the small aperture size, some of the optical advantages of the pinhole are offset by diffraction effects [1].”

At present, the sites with pinhole effects are not only the holy places but also famous tourist attractions. The specifically study on the rooted wisdoms on designing of the structure is merit and the assessment by vision mechanics might give use some new hidden insight. Indeed, this is not the only one local wisdom relating to the Buddhism in this area. The other good example is the construction of Buddha image inside Buddha image [2].

Figure 1. Picture showing some famous shadows due to pinhole camera effect in Thailand.
CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None

REFERENCES
