

Thoracic Surgery and The Thai Journal of Surgery: 40-year-old Friendship

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The thoracic surgery started its journey in Thailand more than 70 years ago. Initially, most of the cases are pulmonary, pleural, mediastinal, and esophageal diseases. With supports from international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), several thoracic surgeons and anesthetists came from the United States of America (US) to team up with Thai thoracic surgeons and anesthetists started the thoracic surgical serviced in several hospital such as Siriraj Hospital, Chulalongkorn Hospital and Nonthaburi Chest Hospital (currently, Central Chest Institute of Thailand, CCIT)^{1,2}. Before 2500 B.E. the cardiac operation was firstly performed.

After year 2500 B.E., more Thai doctors and surgeons went for further training in thoracic surgery abroad, mostly US and the United Kingdom (UK). They came back and introduced modern thoracic surgery to Thailand. The cardiac operations using cardiopulmonary bypass (using the heart-lung machine) have been performed since 2503 B.E. starting with simple cardiac operations, closure of atrial septal defect for example. At that time, Thailand was one of the leaders in thoracic surgery in Asia.

With more thoracic surgeons trained from western countries coming back, the thoracic surgery expanded from the medical service activity to other areas especially

education/ training and research. To mark the launch of the Thai Journal of Surgery (TJS), the thoracic surgeons (Sakiyalak P, Gherunpongs C, Sriyoschart S, Prachuabmoh K) published their experience in this field with a case series report of coronary artery-cardiac chamber fistula³. After this landmark published article, there were articles from thoracic surgeons around the country published in this journal almost every volume for many years. However, most of the published works were case series reports.

Along with the progression of the research and scientific works, there was a huge step of the thoracic surgery development when the thoracic surgery training curriculum was established. The first thoracic surgical training began in the year 2526 B.E. at Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital⁴.

With more thoracic surgeons went for further training abroad, the thoracic surgery in Thailand has been improving in every area mainly adult cardiac, congenital cardiac, aortic, and thoracic fields. Soon after minimally invasive surgery had been introduced in Thailand around thirty years ago, minimally invasive coronary and valve surgery, endovascular repair and video-assisted thoracic procedures were started. Once again, we are now one of the leaders in minimally invasive surgery in Asia. So, the submitted articles have been accepted and published in

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several key international journals. While, recently, there has been increasing number of general surgery articles submitted and published. These explain why there has been no thoracic article in the Thai Journal of Surgery for more than twenty years.

Interestingly, not only Thai doctors submitted their works to TJS, but there were also many foreign surgeons did so. And among these surgeons, there were some of the world-famous thoracic surgeons as well. Donald B Effler⁵ who was one of the pioneers in open heart surgery presented his experience in mechanical valve complications in 2540 B.E. Naruke T⁶ who was the world authority in lung cancer, raised the attention for early detection of lung cancer in the same year.

Thoracic surgery in Thailand has grown up alongside with the Thai Journal of Surgery for 40 years. With widespread of innovative surgical techniques, novel surgical managements, and knowledge sharing strategies, we, the thoracic surgeons, are looking forwards to seeing the continuing and sustainable development of TJS, for the benefits of thoracic surgery as well as other surgical specialty.

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