

Three Decades of History and Perspectives of Khon Kaen University's Plastic Surgery

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Plastic surgery consists of two major fields: reconstructive surgery and cosmetic surgery with its roots lie in the reconstruction aspect. In Thailand, the plastic surgery procedures, performed during the initial period, included cleft lip and cleft palate repairs and skin graftings. In 1987, the Plastic Surgery Unit was established in the Department of Surgery, Srinagarind Hospital in Khon Kaen, which is the city in the Center of the northeast Thailand. In 1991, the partnership training of resident in plastic surgery with Siriraj Hospital was established and continued until the present time. All fields of plastic surgery were managed and educated in the Plastic Surgery Unit. Since the first batch of plastic surgery training program in 2009, the unit has many advanced in interdisciplinary management, the management of cleft center, burn center, postgraduate training program, research, community services, and national, regional and international coloration. The future perspectives involve education for 21st century skills, integration of teaching, research and community services, and a focus on evidence-based medicine and benchmarked outcomes are the future perspectives.

Keywords: Khon Kaen University, Plastic surgery, History, Perspectives

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Plastic Surgery

Plastic surgery is defined by Gaspare Tagliacozzi (1545-1597) as the art devoted to repairing congenital or acquired defects⁽¹⁾. The name is derived from the Greek language "Pastikos", meaning to mold or to shape. Plastic surgery is among one of the most important fields in surgical problems, the single most diverse specialty in the medical field, based on principles rather than specific procedures in defined anatomic location⁽²⁾.

Plastic surgery consists of two majors fields: reconstructive surgery and cosmetic surgery. Its roots lie in reconstruction aspects, which are the surgical techniques to reconstruct abnormal structure or deformities to return to normal condition. The reconstruction procedures are used in many aspects, including the craniofacial surgery, microsurgery, nerve surgery, and hand surgery. Craniofacial Surgery, developed by Tessier in 1965⁽³⁾, is the surgery that involves the area of cranium and face, and the cooperation of plastic surgeon and neurosurgeon.

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Microsurgery is a repair of small vessels and nerves by the use of operating microscope and includes the micro vascular free tissue transfer. This has contributed to evolution of plastic surgery in reconstruction of soft tissue and bone, including variety of skin flaps. Cosmetic surgery involves restoring restructures to improve individual's external appearance⁽²⁾.

Plastic Surgery in Thailand

The early history of plastic surgery in Thailand is not exactly known. However, the plastic surgery procedures that were performed during its initial period included cleft lip and cleft palate repairs and skin graftings. In the year 1924, there was a record of Dr. TP Nobel who worked as the Head of the Surgical Department in Siriraj Hospital, Bangkok, the only Medical School in Thailand at that time. He was an Orthopedist but had developed many fields of surgery to teach the medical students. At that time, "cleft lip surgery was performed only in the mild case in order to demonstrate and teach surgical techniques and the results of the improvement that could be provided to the patient for the medical students and other doctors"⁽⁴⁾.

In 1977, the Thai Medical Council accepted the formal training program in plastic surgery in Thailand. The first batches of graduated plastic

surgeons from these formal training programs were from the Ramathibodi Hospital in 1980, and the Siriraj Hospital in 1981. Nowadays, there are many plastic surgery and the Fellowship training programs in Thailand. The Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons of Thailand was formally established on February 22, 1973⁽⁵⁾ and Dr. Lim Khunwisan was the founding president of the society (Fig. 1). There are now about 18-20 new plastic surgeons complete training each year and about 320 active members in the society.

Khon Kaen University Plastic Surgery
The Pre-Plastic Surgery 1986 and Before

Khon Kaen is the city in the Center of the northeast Thailand. In 1970, Dr. Lim Khunwisan, Dr. Thongueb Uttaravichien, Dr. Chuti Niamskul, Dr. Suchat Areemit and Dr. Vanchai Vatanasapt were a pioneer group of surgeons to establish the surgical department in Srinagarind Hospital, Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University (KKU). Subsequently, Dr. Vajarabhongsa Bhudhisawasdi, Dr. Wattana Suphromchak, Dr. Suchai Suntarapa and Dr. Noppadol Thongsophit joined the surgical department. Dr. Thongueb Uttaravichien was the founding head of the surgical department (Fig. 2)⁽⁶⁾. The teaching and services in the department were divided into four sections, including section A1, section A2, section B1 and section B2. Dr. Prayong Taksaphan was the chief of section B2 that included pediatric and plastic surgery units (Fig. 3).



Fig. 1 Dr. Lim Khunwisan, the founding president of the Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons of Thailand.

The preliminary staff training in plastic surgical field included Dr. Chuti Niamskul training in plastic surgery in the Siriraj Hospital, Dr. Prayong Taksaphan in the Chulalongkorn Hospital, Dr. Ronachai Komthong in the United Kingdom, and Dr. Narong Punyahotra trained in microsurgery.

The 1st Decade: Establishment, the First Generation of Staff, Partnership Plastic Surgery Training Program & Royal Volunteer Project 1987-1996

In 1987, the Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery unit was established and Dr. Vanchai Vatanasapt as the first Chief of Plastic and Reconstructive unit during 1987-1991. Dr. Prayong Taksaphan was then the chief of Plastic Surgery Unit from 1991-1994 (Fig. 4).



Fig. 2 Dr. Thongueb Uttaravichien, the founding head of KKU surgical department.



Fig. 3 The staff and residents of Department of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University.

The plastic surgery training program in KKU began with Dr. Surasak Maengsombat (Fig. 5), plastic surgeon from the Siriraj Hospital who gave an advice during the beginning period of KKU Plastic surgery. In the year 1991, the partnership training of resident in plastic surgery with the Siriraj Hospital was established and has continued until the present time.

Dr. Prayong Taksaphan and Dr. Ronachai Komthong received the Thai Board of Plastic Surgery in 1989 and 1991. Dr. Bowornsilp Chowchuen trained in the Ramathibodi Hospital and received the Thai Board of Plastic Surgery in 1993 and has been the chief of Plastic Surgery Unit from 1994 to present. Plastic



Fig. 4 Dr. Vanchai Vattanasapt, the first Chief of Plastic and Reconstructive unit during 1987-1991 and Dr. Prayong Taksaphan. The chief of Plastic Surgery Unit from 1991-1994.



Fig. 5 Dr. Surasak Muangsombat, the mentor of KKU plastic surgery.

Surgery Staffs in the Ramathibodi Hospital during 1991-1993 were Dr. Prakob Thongphiew, Dr. Vivat Visuthikosol, Dr. Termsak Navykarn, Dr. Arthi Kruavit, Dr. Vichai Srimuninnimit and Dr. Narong Punyahotra (Fig. 6).

During the year 1987-2004, the staffs of KKU plastic surgery unit work as volunteer surgeons in the Royal volunteer project to operate cleft lip and cleft palate in Sakon Nakhon province (Fig. 7).

In 1988, Dr. Bowornsilp Chowchuen received the scholarship from the British Council to attend the Plastic, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery in the Canniesburn Hospital, Glasgow, United Kingdom (with David S. Soutar, Dr. Khursheed Moos and Dr. Amir El-Attar) and subsequently in 1991 he received the scholarship from Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst



Fig. 6 Staffs of the Plastic Surgery unit (Dr. Prakob Thongphiew, Dr. Vivat Visuthikosol, Dr. Termsak Navykarn, Dr. Arthi Kruavit, Dr. Vichai Srimuninnimit and Dr. Narong Punyahotra) and residents in the Ramathibodi Hospital during the year 1991-1993.



Fig. 7 The Royal volunteer project to operate cleft lip and cleft palate in Sakon Nakhon province.

(DAAD) to attend Plastic, Hand and Reconstructive Microsurgery in the Oststadt Hospital, Hannover, Germany (with Dr. Alfred Burger) and in 1996, he attended the Burn Center in the University of California San Diego (UCSD) Medical Center (with Dr. John F. Hansbrough).

Many aspects of plastic surgery were treated in the unit, including basic principles of plastic surgery, wound care and scar management⁽⁷⁻⁹⁾(Fig. 8), burns^(10,11) (Fig. 9), maxillofacial injuries^(12,13) craniofacial and cleft



Fig. 8 A patient presented with severe scar contracture at the neck and shoulder, treated by parascapular free flap and latissimus dorsi musculocutaneous flap.



Fig. 9 The previous burn room at 3C ward (1999-2003) and the present Burn Center (2003-present) in the Srinagarind Hospital.



Fig. 10 A woman presented with frontoethmoidal encephalomeningocele (FEEM) and was treated with craniofacial reconstruction.

surgery⁽¹⁴⁻²²⁾ (Fig. 10, 11), head and neck cancer and reconstruction⁽²³⁻²⁸⁾, microvascular surgery and free tissue transfer (including multiple free flaps)^(29,30) (Fig. 12-17), breast reconstruction⁽³¹⁾ (Fig. 18), hand surgery (Fig. 19), lower extremity reconstruction (Fig. 20) and reconstruction of genitalia (Fig. 21).

The 2nd Decade: Collaboration, the 2nd Generation Staff, Interdisciplinary team Care and Center Development 2007-2016

The KKU plastic surgery appointed two plastic surgeons, Dr. Palakorn Surakunprapha, graduated from the Siriraj hospital in 1999 and



Fig. 11 A girl presented with congenital melanocytic nevi (CMN) and was treated with cervicofacial flap reconstruction.



Fig. 12 A woman presented with extensive lower lip defects from the resection of lower lip cancer and then reconstruction with modified bilateral neurovascular cheek flap (MBNC).



Fig. 13 The radial forearm free flap is a good choice for intraoral reconstruction. It can be used with palmaris longus tendon, as osteocutaneous flap, bi-paddle skin flap and primarily closed of the donor defects.



Fig. 14 The scalp reconstruction following extensive tumor resection with latissimus dorsi musculocutaneous free flap and subsequently with radial forearm free flap.



Fig. 15 The reconstruction of the skull base and orbit with rectus abdominis musculocutaneous free flap.



Fig. 16 The reconstruction of extensive orbitomaxillary defect after tumor resection with latissimus dorsi musculocutaneous free flap.

Dr. Kamonwan Jenvitthesuk in 2003 (Fig. 22).

The Cleft Center

The Tawanchai Center (under the Tawanchai



Fig. 17 A tripple microvascular free flap (two radial forearm free flaps and one osteocutaneous fibular free flap) was used as one stage reconstruction of extensive intraoral and neck defects.

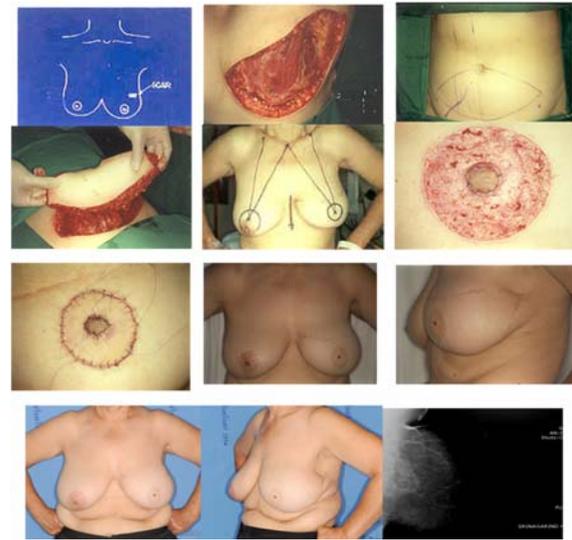


Fig. 18 The free Transverse rectus abdominis musculocutaneous (TRAM) flap for immediate breast and nipple areolar complex reconstruction with 25 year-follow-up and mammogram imaging.



Fig. 19 The surgical reconstruction of polydactyly.

Royal Granted Project) was established through collaborative work and as the first centre with a comprehensive interdisciplinary team for the treatment of clefts in Thailand⁽³²⁻³⁵⁾. Guidelines for long term management and follow-up of cleft lip and cleft palate (CLP) has been developed in conjunction with regular meetings in the clinic. The coordinator function with interdisciplinary team management and regular cleft clinic meetings are the most important aspect in cleft management. The interdisciplinary protocol and integrated team management were developed^(32,36).



Fig. 20 The lower extremity reconstruction with split thickness skin grafts (STSG) after tumor resection.



Fig. 21 The one stage reconstruction of hypospadias using preputial flap.



Fig. 22 Dr. Palakorn Surakunprapha and Dr. Kamonwan Jenvitheesuk.

Dr. Jeffrey L Marsh, Dr. Samuel M Noordhoff, Dr. Harold McComb and Dr. Philip KT Chen are plastic surgeons

who contribute to cleft care development of the Cleft Center.

The Tawanchai project

The “Tawanchai Project” was initiated in 2002 as a special honor to the 48th birthday of Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, and intended to assist development of cleft lip and palate care in Thailand including these four activities: Khon Kaen University Cleft Lip-Palate and Craniofacial Center, Self Help and Family Support Group for Cleft Lip-Palate, Tawanchai Foundation, Workshops for Self Help and Family Support Group and Development of Community Based Team for Cleft Lip-Palate Care. The community-based model was then established. The ceremony opening of the Tawanchai Center and the Tawanchai Foundation was held in 2005 and 2010 (Fig. 23).

The KKU plastic surgery developed collaboration with the Plastic Surgery Unit in UW-Madison in 2005, the Reconstructive Science Unit of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) in Malaysia in 2007 and followed with the Plastic Surgery Unit and Lao PDR and Myanmar. The Tawanchai Center developed collaborative work in services and training of doctors and other health care professionals with many hospitals in Lao PDR during 2003-present (Fig. 24). Dr. Keutmy Khansoulivong and Dr. Khamphai Phimpaphanh established the plastic surgery unit in the Mahosot Hospital, Vientiane, Lao PDR in 2013.

TICPC 2003, Khon Kaen University, December 2003

In December 2003, The Tawanchai Center established the international meeting entitled “The First Thai International Congress on Interdisciplinary Care for Cleft Lip and Palate 2003 (TICPC2003)” which leads interdisciplinary cleft care, cleft center management and international collaboration (Fig. 25).

The 3rd Decade: Standardization, Resident Training, Research, Benchmarking & Social Contribution 2007-2016

In 2009, KKU plastic surgery appointed the first batch residents with five-year training program and two batches of plastic surgeons who graduated in 2014 and 2015. In 2015, Dr. Pattama Panyavong graduated from the Chulalongkorn Hospital and Dr. Kengkart Winaikosol was appointed as the KKU plastic surgery staff (Fig. 26).

The plastic surgery and neurosurgery unit (Dr. Chaiwit Thanapaisal) made collaboration in cleft



Fig. 23 The ceremony opening of the Tawanchai Center and the Tawanchai Foundation.



Fig. 24 The Collaborative work of the Tawanchai with hospitals in Lao PDR.



Fig. 25 The First Thai International Congress on Interdisciplinary Care for Cleft Lip and Palate 2003 (TICPC2003).



Fig. 26 The KKU plastic surgery residents and the first two batches of plastic surgeons.

lip-palate and craniofacial care with hospitals in Myanmar in 2013. Dr. Bowornslip Chowchuen took a role as National Delegate of International Confederation for Plastic Reconstructive & Aesthetic Surgery (IPRAS), Founding Member of Asian Wound healing

Association (AWHA) and member of the ASEAN Congress of Plastic Surgery. In the year 2015, the KKU plastic surgery unit succeeded in bidding to organize the Asian Pacific Cleft Lip-Palate and Craniofacial Congress in Khon Kaen in 2019. Many initiatives have been set including comprehensive care programs, the cadaveric, microsurgical and live demonstration workshops in plastic surgery training, a fellowship program, research and international collaboration.

The field of plastic surgery includes basic plastic surgery and related subjects, flaps and grafts, microsurgery, implants & biomaterials, plastic surgery of the integument, head and neck, upper extremity and hand surgery, trunk and breasts, lower extremity and the genitourinary system, practice of plastic surgery, craniofacial anomalies craniomaxillary surgery, craniofacial surgery, microsurgery, burns and aesthetic surgery. The comprehensive management involves community-based care, evidence-based medicine and health-service research in plastic surgery⁽³⁷⁾ and the 21st century learning skills will be the direction of the plastic surgery program. The plastic surgery and innovation in medicine may include innovation and research, innovation and plastic surgery, composite tissue otransplantation, collaboration, documentation, data gathering and regulation⁽³⁸⁾.

What is already known on this topic ?

Plastic surgery was defined and consists of 2 majors fields: reconstructive surgery and cosmetic surgery.

What this study adds ?

This study presents the history, challenges and perspective of the university plastic surgery unit in the northeast of Thailand. Many initiatives including patients care, educational program and researches are presented with current and future perspectives.

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Potential conflicts of interest

None.

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3 ทศวรรษของประวัติและมุมมองด้านต่างๆของสัตยศาสตร์ตกแต่ง มหาวิทยาลัยขอนแก่น

บรรลือภ์ เชาวน์ชื่น

สาขาสัตยศาสตร์ตกแต่งประกอบด้วย 2 ด้าน ที่สำคัญคือ สัตยกรรมเสริมสร้างและสัตยกรรมเสริมสวยโดยมีรากฐานอยู่ที่ด้านสัตยกรรมเสริมสร้าง ในประเทศไทยสัตยกรรมตกแต่งในระยะเริ่มแรกเป็นการผ่าตัดปากแหว่งเพดานโหว่และการปลูกถ่ายผิวหนัง ในปี พ.ศ. 2530 ได้มีการก่อตั้งหน่วย สัตยศาสตร์ตกแต่งและเสริมสร้างขึ้น ในภาควิชาสัตยศาสตร์ โรงพยาบาลศรีนครินทร์ มหาวิทยาลัยขอนแก่นในจังหวัดขอนแก่น ซึ่งเป็นศูนย์กลางของภาคตะวันออกเฉียงเหนือ ในปี พ.ศ. 2534 โดยความร่วมมือกับหน่วยสัตยศาสตร์ตกแต่ง คณะแพทยศาสตร์ศิริราชพยาบาล ได้มีการฝึกอบรมรวมของแพทย์ประจำบ้านสัตยศาสตร์ตกแต่ง และมีการดำเนินการต่อเนื่องมาจนถึงปัจจุบัน ทุกๆ ด้าน ของสัตยศาสตร์ตกแต่งได้มีการดูแลรักษาและฝึกอบรม ในหน่วยสัตยศาสตร์ตกแต่ง การฝึกอบรมแพทย์ประจำบ้านรุ่นแรกของสาขาเริ่มต้นเมื่อปี พ.ศ. 2552 และหลังจากนั้นได้มีความก้าวหน้าขึ้นเป็นอย่างมาก ทั้งในด้านของการจัดการทีมสหวิทยาการ การจัดการศูนย์การดูแลผู้ป่วยปากแหว่งเพดานโหว่และพิการทางศีรษะและใบหน้า ศูนย์การดูแลผู้ป่วยบาดเจ็บไฟไหม้ร้อนลวก การฝึกอบรมทั้งระดับก่อนและหลังปริญญา การบริการชุมชนและความร่วมมือทั้งในระดับประเทศภูมิภาคและนานาชาติ การจัดการศึกษา เพื่อทักษะในศตวรรษที่ 21 การบูรณาการการศึกษาการวิจัยและบริการชุมชน การมุ่งเน้นการแพทย์ที่ใช้หลักฐานเชิงประจักษ์และการเทียบเคียงผลลัพธ์ การรักษาเป็นมุมมองในอนาคตของสาขาวิชา
