ABSTRACT *BOOK*

ไทยศึกษา ๑๓ THAI STUDIES
13th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
CHIANG MAI, 2017

13th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON

THAI STUDIES

GLOBALIZED THAILAND? CONNECTIVITY, CONFLICT, AND CONUNDRUMS OF THAI STUDIES

15-18 JULY 2017 *CHIANG MAI, THAILAND*

The Asia Foundation
Konrad Adenauer Stiftung
JICA
THA

Preface

The 13th International Conference on Thai Studies is organized by Chiang Mai University in collaboration with Chulalongkorn University (CU-SRI), Mahidol University (IPSR), Thammasart University (Thai Khadi Research Institute), and Khon Kaen University (HUSO-KKU). This conference is an academic platform for scholars of Thai society to present ideas, exchange views and engage in debates on Thai Studies. Freedom of expression within the academic context is a core value of this conference.

Chiang Mai University has a long involvement in ICTS. In 1996, it was the host of ICTS 6 and—combined with the celebration of the 700th anniversary of Chiang Mai city—was attended by some 600 participants. ICTS 13 in Chiang Mai promises to be another vibrant and even more interesting conference. The response of Thai scholars—not only from Thailand, but from all around the world—is impressive and enormous, as can be seen from the large numbers of papers presented in the panels and roundtables of this conference. The papers and presentations by established names, young scholars, activists, and students focus on the major themes of the conference: Globalized Thailand? Connectivity, Conflict and Conundrums of Thai Studies. They span over a vast range of diverse topics and issues. By and large, they reflect the current state of knowledge on Thai society, articulated within regional and global systems under Thailand's current political environment. As the conference unfolds over the next four days, it will reveal how Thai people explain the unexplained and how they respond to the criticism of provincialism.

ICTS 13 could not materialized without the collaboration from the institutions previously mentioned and many individual Thai scholars, as well as support from Chiang Mai University (particularly the Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Political Science, Faculty of Fine Art, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Architecture, Center of ASEAN Studies, and RCSD), Thailand Research Fund, Asia Foundation, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, US Embassy, Dutch Embassy, Indian Embassy and JICA. More importantly, the largest contribution to make this conference a success is in the papers and presentations by all the participants themselves. The ICTS 13 organizing committee would like express our deep appreciation for their contributions and support.

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Individual Abstracts

Locally Adapted and Regionally Relevant Climate Change-Adapted Agriculture Practices in Upland Communities in Northern Thailand

Abram Bicksler
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Abstract

In the face of climate change and climate vulnerability, which will disproportionately affect the poor and marginalized, climate-change-adapted agricultural techniques need to be developed to help buffer these communities from the inherent risks they will face. Marginalized upland communities throughout Asia are increasingly facing internal and external pressures, adding to their vulnerability faced by the prospect of climate change. Thankfully, international, national, and local NGOs are heeding this need and responding by researching, verifying, disseminating, and implementing practices with communities in northern Thailand to help buffer these uncertainties. One such example includes work in northern Thailand, where upland farmers have developed, in partnership with a local NGO, climate-adapted agricultural practices which may prove effective in reducing vulnerabilities and risk. This presentation will explore some of these locally-adapted, but regionally-relevant practices that smallholders are utilizing, including agroforestry, soil improvement, conservation agriculture, backyard gardening, and nursery creation that have been both adopted and adapted by several of these communities. It is our hope that this information can contribute to the discourse on appropriate climate-adapted agriculture practices that can reduce risk and improve resilience throughout Southeast Asia.

Writing Tai History: Manuscripts and Cultural Politics of Difference and Identity of the Tai in the North-Central Region of Vietnam

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Abstract

In Vietnam in 2004, various local manuscripts and traditional rituals were actively restored, revived and promoted by the central government for the first time after decades of repression and restriction under the Vietnamese state's policy of "selective cultural preservation" of the (minority) nationalities. Through this policy, the central government aims to promote cultural diversity and create equal opportunities for preserving all ethnic cultures. Even though that was as an aspect of a nation-building process in the context of modernization, it can be argued that in practice that promotion of diversity is an attempt on the part of the state to integrate local culture to the Kinh (Viet) majority culture. However, in promoting cultural revitalization, the central government makes itself unable to totally control local practices and to establish meanings when traditions are reinvented.

In that context, Tai local intellectuals in the North-Central Region of Vietnam have been preserving and restoring their Tai manuscripts, opening Tai language training classes, writing their histories, and revitalizing worships for their city spirit since then. Accordingly, this paper demonstrates the way in which Tai local intellectuals review manuscripts with their wider social relations to write the Tai history that turns the process of Kinh (Viet)-ization to Tai-ization, and creates the cultural rights of ethnic minorities, as well as constructs their ethnic identity. This is a process of creating power exercised by people at the margin from choosing marginality and turning it to be a center of prosperous culture and history.

Still Hung Over?: Hollywood's Decade in Thailand

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Abstract

The classic Hollywood image of Thailand is of course that circulated at the height of the Cold War by the highly successful musical The King and I. But since 2000's movie The Beach Thai images in Hollywood film have gained a new currency, and this momentum has been maintained over the past ten years with such high profile Hollywood productions (and English-language co-productions) as Bangkok Dangerous (2008), Hereafter (2010), The Hangover Part II (2011), The Impossible (2012), and Only God Forgives (2013). These new images—now of a contemporary rather than period Thailand—have arguably to some degree displaced some of the classical Cold War era conceptions.

This presentation will be concerned with taking a look at what are some of the key tropes dominating this new wave of Western representations of Thailand. It will outline the prevalence of certain key themes and imagery pertaining to the Kingdom in such high profile films as those mentioned, and as time allows will also briefly survey some of the lower-budgeted US films set in Thailand over the same period. The main aims will be to tease out the contemporary popular US perceptions of Thailand (as related, for example, to leisure pursuits, the exotic, and danger) while also situating these with respect to current geo-political relations between the two countries.

English, the Discourse of Neo-Liberalism and Language Education Policy: The Case of Thailand

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Abstract

This paper discusses the importance of language ideology and language policy in relation to the status of English in Thailand. It revisits the hegemonic role of the English language that increasingly affects learners, local people, and educators. It also addresses the concept of neo-liberalism that has played a pivotal role in commodifying Thai education, in making it a market. Take the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) phenomenon as an example; the government has invested significant amounts of money in English courses and educational campaigns to prepare its citizens for the upcoming AEC. In theory, it can't be denied that English has become a symbolic capital (Bourdier, 1991). In reality, there is a gap between language practice and policy. But learners can, and do, view English as the language of struggle. English education in Thailand is still far from reaching the goals the government has set. This paper calls for concerned parties to help bridge this gap and perhaps refocus the goals.

Chinese in Laos PDR: When, Why and of What Significance Towards the Mekong Region?

Adison Siemyem

Abstract

Laos PDR is a land locked and very small country with 6 million people. However, Chinese have migrated and increasingly live in the country. Why have they come and who are they? It has been surprising that they have had conflict and confrontation with local people in remote areas in central Laos and around Vientiane. What does Chinese migration represent for both mainland and maritime Southeast Asia?

Digital Inequality and Online Political Mobilization in Thailand

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Abstract

Prior to the May 2014 coup d'état, Thailand's first military putsch to be announced on Twitter and Facebook, the country was embroiled in months of protracted street protests between two adversarial movements: the anti-government People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) and the pro-government United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD). The PDRC was dubbed the 'high-society mob' by the media for their appearance as wealthy protesters who took to the streets 'to take selfies.' The UDD was seen as the 'down-trodden, lower-class daily wage-earners,' who supported the incumbent for its pro-poor policies. Despite the heavy use of social media by both movements, Internet access remained unequal. Studies on the political implications of such 'digital divide' show that the Internet can reinforce structural inequalities instead of reducing them. By comparing the profile of street-level and online movement participants, the study demonstrates that PDRC street protesters were more socio-economically endowed than their peers on Facebook. On the contrary, there was little difference in the socio-economic backgrounds of the UDD online and offline. These findings suggest that Facebook is not an exclusive arena of political engagement for the well-off and has the potential to narrow structural inequalities by providing new avenues for political participation among the less privileged.

Cammadevi – Sita Leader Status of the Ramanya (Mon) Heroic Queen in Vaishnavi Shakti Cult

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Abstract

The Legend of the Mon queen "Jam Thewi" (Cammadevi) is revered as one of the most commonly mentioned mythical histories of "Lan Na" kingdom. Although it depicts the story in pre Lan Na period, estimated to have occurred approximately in the 9th century, historical figures such as Jam Thewi, the aboriginal "Lua" lord "Wilangkha", the Lua Buddhist hermit "Wasuthep" (Vasudev) etc. have been praised as historical sacred figures by Lan Na people until the present day.

In general, most of Lan Na scholars have learnt the existence of the Mon queen and her related stories through available historical documents such as "Cammadevi Vamsa", "Shinakalamalini", and "Tamnarn Mula Sassana", which portray the queen as the daughter and princess of the King of "Lawo" City ("Lawapura") (currently known as "Lopburi" province of present day Thailand). In these stories she travelled to "Hariphunchai", a newly built city built by the hermit "Wasuthep". Other sets of legends depict the queen as a local Mon girl born in the Mon community of Hariphunchai, later adopted by the King of Lawo as a child, and subsequently sent back to rule Hariphunchai kingdom.

The researcher found that the various versions of the Jam Thewi story told by local people somehow coincidentally match the story of the Indian epic of "Ramayana", particularly the connection between the Mon queen and King Rama's queen "Sita". This also marks the traditional Mon culture as praising the female gender significantly, in their roles as societal leaders, same as those female divinities worshiped as the "Shakti" (consort goddesses) of gods by the Hindus.

Re-Defining Thailand's New Media: Challenges in a Crucial Political Turning Point

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Kunnawut Boonreak

Abstract

Thailand is at a crucial turning point as political instability has brought about two coups d'états within the last ten years. Under the military regime, traditional media is fully controlled by a censorship policy of the coup maker, while established media themselves have applied self-censorship to avoid trouble or punishment from the military regime. Under these circumstances, mainstream media is not functioning properly and therefore the crucial role of online independent public media has emerged.

Over the past decade, the number of internet users in Thailand has increased from almost 11 million users in 2006, to 29 million at the end of June 2016. Average usage has increased from mere minutes to several hours a day. These statistics show how the ability of Thais to digitally access information has been greatly enhanced. Consequently, the Thai media landscape has gradually transformed from the traditional platforms of newspapers, TV and radio, to digital platforms that can be accessed easily by computer, tablet or mobile phone.

However, the term 'New Media' is confusingly used among Thais. Is the term 'New Media' referring to content available in digital formats that can be reached via the internet? Are mainstream media who use digital platforms called New Media?

This paper argues that the new media is academically identified base on its identities, not its platforms.

This paper studies the identities and activities of ten leading Thai news agencies with respect to their ideology, content, context, organizational culture and operation. This paper aims to find common identities of Thai new media in order to develop a proper framework, as a tool for defining and identifying the new media in Thailand.

Climate Mitigation Initiatives: Perspectives on the Forest and Global Warming in Two Karen Communities

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Abstract

The continued crisis of global warming has led to an increase in ideas regarding how to decrease greenhouse gases and deforestation. One of these solutions is carbon mitigation initiatives (CMI). These initiatives utilize a market-oriented approach which attempts to decrease carbon outputs from deforestation by placing a price-value on sequestered carbon which can then be sold on an international carbon market. Another goal of these initiatives is to enhance the livelihoods of participating communities. It is important to understand the effectiveness of these new solutions in order to solve global warming and deforestation, increase livelihood enhancement as well as better understand the overall effects on participating communities. The goal of this research is to understand how these initiatives have transformed human-environmental relationships within the two Karen communities of Muang Aang and Huay Hin Lad Nai. Although these two communities have distinct agricultural practices and different relationships to the Thai government, they both have used CMI for their own reasons. For them, CMIs are about strengthening networks and visibility and collecting scientific proof in order to demonstrate to the government and Thai society in general that they live harmoniously with their natural surroundings. In opposition to the carbon trading proposition (which states that people need financial incentives in order to conserve natural resources), these communities do not feel any financial incentive to conserve the forest. Rather, they feel that whether they are able to sell carbon credits or not, their main priority is to dismantle the image of them as 'forest destroyers' and strengthen local and international networks that make them feel more secure against unjust government policy.

Ancestral Mediumship and Ethnic Violence in Southern Thailand

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Abstract

During my fieldwork in Panare (Pattani Province), a friend told me that then Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, known as hater of Muslims due to his degrading words on the victims of the assault of young Malay men in the suppression of the Tak Bai protests, had selected a temple in a Thai village which is widely known for black magic. The monks of this temple were thought to plant the oil of the corpses of children who died a violent death under the doorsteps of the Imam to inflict him with black sorcery.

My friend, a son of a traditional Imam and guru in Panare, who now lives in Hamburg, demonstrates the widespread belief in ancestral spirits, ghosts, and black magic in the area. However, on the other hand, Buddhists and Muslims also share common beliefs and mix Buddhist and Malay-Islamic elements and traditions in the shared spirit possession of Manooraa (Horstmann 2011). Mixed Manooraa troupes still move in the area, entertaining the villagers and inviting the spirits.

This paper will examine how shifts in ritual interaction reflect the wider dynamics of political change of this ritual and how the beliefs in ancestral spirits can be mobilized in symbols of solidarity or competition. The beliefs in these spirits - widely shared between Buddhist and Muslims in the area - illustrate the transformation of ethnic and religious relations in Southern Thailand.

Thai Cult (Not) Difference: (Non)uniqueness of Thai Spirit Medium and the Globalization

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Abstract

The study of spirit mediums in Thailand has largely been done in a typical and traditional approach; that is, the study purely focusing on one subject or "village" location. However, such approach has a tendency to create an oppositional idea of the uniqueness of the Thai spirit mediums that is different from practices elsewhere in the world. This has subsequently fostered, intentionally or unintentionally, the unique discourse of Thai-ness that many Thai studies scholars have criticized. In fact, many elements that the Thai spirit mediums practice display many similarities with the practices in other cultures, for example the English and the American. In this paper, I study a spirit medium from Chiang Mai, Duangchantra, through a comparative perspective. I compared the practices and the rituals of Duangchantra to a famous British spirit medium, Rosemary Altea. While having different cultural backgrounds, both figures share many similarities, especially in the ways they develop their practices, and the social conditions which have made them renowned. To show these differences and similarities, I use the ethnographical information retrieved from my field work in Chiang Mai and the documentary research about Rosemary Altea. The main argument in this comparative analysis is that the two spirit mediums, while living in different cultures and societies and having different techniques in selecting the cultural elements of their own heritages (such as legends, rituals, and services) to construct their practices and cults, both share similar cultural process. The cultural articulation in their practices between magic, science and religion which appeared in many spirit mediums' practices around the world helps to improve the controversies of the unique discourse of the Thai spirit mediums. I hope the cross cultural comparison will shed new light on the emerging and living cults that exist globally.

Monks, Merits and Monasteries: Globalizing Thai Buddhism Abroad

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Abstract

During the past six decades, Thai Buddhism has become known outside Thailand widely due to the infamous legacy of the Vietnam War. The 1950s and 1960s saw the increase in the number of Farangs (primarily soldiers and Volunteers) arriving in

Thailand by manifold, and the 1970s and 1980s witnessed the arrival of Thai people in major countries such as UK and USA (as well as India) in pursuit of education and career. Soon, the Thai Diaspora armed with the skill of Thai cuisine and traditional massage technique further became well-established community in their respective regions. Their religiosity drew the attention of Thai Sangha which led to the arrival of Thai monks, and also the establishment of Thai Buddhist monasteries. Initially required for serving the needs of the Diaspora, usually residing in a small abode, the Thai monks have expanded their horizon to get connected with the non-Thai world. From the time when a Thai monk in US was afraid to be outside his 'temple', in the new Global Age Thai monks and their monasteries are serving the cause of Dharma for the non-Thai. This sea-change has extended Thai Buddhism to local non-Thais through service to the community, the establishment of aranna monastic training for Westerners, and meditation camps for general public. The paper intends to analyze this center-staging of Thai Buddhism as a global Order of Faith.

Unfair Exchange: Contract Farming Termination of Organic Farmers in Nakhon Pathom Province, Thailand

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Abstract

Contract farming is widely accepted and acknowledged as a beneficial agricultural production system. As a result of income security from the price guarantees, farmers earn more money and are able to solve their debt problems; thus their standard of living is better. However, some of the farmers who have joined the contract farming system decided to repeal and terminate their involvement in the system. The purpose of this article is to understand the reasons behind contract farming termination among organic farmers in Nakhon Pathom province. This qualitative study uses in-depth interviews and non-participant observation in the data collecting process, and explains this phenomenon by using Peter M. Blau's Exchange Theory as a framework. The sample of this study includes 6 households of organic farmers in Nakhon Pathom province who have joined and eventually quit the contract farming system. The result shows that the main reason for contract farming termination is that the contract farming system cannot provide the norm of reciprocity among companies, organizations, farmers federations, or even among individual farmers involved in the system. Therefore, the significant conditions that lead to contract farming termination are as follows: 1) the farmers' needs and goals remain unsatisfied 2) the benefits of contract farming are lower than the costs 3) There are other alternatives that offer greater benefits at significantly lower costs available to farmers.

Transformation of the Thai Rice Economy in the Last Two Decades and Its Timing

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Thailand Development Research Institute

Abstract

The presentation will explain different dimensions of transformation of the Thai rice economy that have made it much more efficient both in term of quantity and quality of rice production. These dimensions include the exodus of young rural workers from agriculture, rich and poor farmers, farm mechanization and economies of scale. The timing of changes in the last two decades and the adverse impact on the paddy pledging (or price support) policy will also be highlighted.

The Political-Economy of the Inward Flow of Rupees into Northern Siam

Amnuayvit Thitibordin

Abstract

Teak was the second most important export item in terms of value until the 1920s. However, it was the British companies that dominated the teak industry. Several politico-economic factors had contributed to their control over the teak industry. Access to the Indian rupee was the most important factor. An inward flow of rupees from Moulmein through the caravan merchants had intertwined northern Siam with British India. Additionally, the teak industry helped to increase the circulation and transaction of rupees in this region. A large amount of rupees connected northern Siam with the British economic sphere at a global level. However, the penetration and the quantity of rupees into northern Siam crippled the ability of the Siamese government to control the politico-economic system of the northern region, without the ability to impose baht as legal tender in northern Siam. Siam waited until the end of the First World War. Rupees had dominated northern Siam until railway networks had reached Lampang in 1916 and Chiang Mai in 1922. From that day, the baht supplanted the rupee, both in the teak industry and in everyday life. Furthermore, the British officer assigned to the Royal Forest Department was concurrently replaced by a Siamese officer.

My article will examine five issues on the circulation of the rupee in northern Siam. The first issue concerns the economic connectivity between Moulmein and Chiang Mai, including its development. The second issue concerns the mode of transportation of the rupee. The third issue concerns how the rupee had affected the development of the teak industry. The fourth issue concerns the politico-economic implications of rupees in the relationship between Siam and the teak extraction region. The final issue is an examination of the decline of the rupee, including its consequences.

Buddhist Holy Man Khruba Bunchum and the Appropriation of Buddhism's Legitimate Symbolism by the Changing Myanmar State

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Abstract

Khruba Bunchum, a contemporary Thai monk with a significant Burmese ethnic minority following, rose to fame after being forced to leave Myanmar for his alleged involvement in ethnic politics in 2004. Upon returning to Thailand, and having spent an entire three years of meditation in an isolated cave, he has gained a number of new followers among the wealthy and middle class Thais, as well as Myanmar military elites. In 2014, upon finishing his long period of meditation, he was invited by the former President of Myanmar, Thein Sein, to reside back in the country. He was also given a Burmese identification card and can thus travel in and out of Myanmar freely.

The most recent development in Khruba Bunchum's life after his return to Myanmar was his involvement in Myanmar's changing political landscape. Having met with Aung San Suu Kyi, Myanmar's State Counselor, in July 2016, he has reportedly been consulted with regarding Myanmar's peace and reconciliation with ethnic armed groups in the 21st century.

What is his attraction amongst ethnic minority groups in the northeastern corner of Myanmar? How has the changing Myanmar state appropriated Khruba Bunchum as legitimate Buddhist symbolism, and to what extent is his reputation and sacred power linked to the economic and political advantages of the Myanmar state? This paper analyzes the diverse, transnational community of faith that transformed the practice of worshipping holy men, arguing for a new approach in studying cross-border religious movements that draws upon religious, political and media sources to create a system of meaning.

"Three Tigers Warriors": Malay Muslim Women Revivalists in Pattani

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Abstract

This paper explores the activities and significance of three Malay Muslim women who in the 1990s became known among local Malay Muslim scholars as the "Three Tiger Warriors" (Saam Thahaan Sua) because of their vigorous work to propagate Islamic reformist teachings and practices among Malay-Muslim women of the Pattani area. They did so not through public activism, but rather through low-key educational efforts known as tarbiyah, or "cultivation of knowledge." Working in universities, Islamic boarding schools, and local villages throughout the Pattani area, they promoted greater religious knowledge among local women, while simultaneously supporting a relatively domesticated role for women due to their promotion of contemporary reformist readings of the Islamic texts.

In their tarbiya efforts, the "Three Tiger Warriors" aligned themselves with those reformist Islamic teachers who were teaching that women's importance is primarily as producers of the Muslim community, the ummah. Women should therefore be primarily involved in family and local community affairs and in children's educational matters. In this approach, elevating women's religious knowledge through tarbiyah did not mean teaching them how to read and evaluate religious texts and teachings independently. Rather, it meant indoctrinating local women on how to conform behaviorally to the reformists' norms, with a special focus on the proper ways to care for husbands, children, and the local community. Thus, the "Three Tiger Warriors" promoted essentialist assumptions about gender in Islam even as they worked to elevate women's educational status.

The Manuscripts of Jinakalamalini and Jamadevivamsa : From the Lan Na to Rattanakosin Kingdoms

Anant Laulertvorakul

Abstract

From its content and authors, the two well known Pali Literatures, Jinakalamalini and Jamadevivamsa, were undoubtedly composed in Lan Na Kingdom. Surprisingly, none of the manuscripts of Jinakalamalini are found in Lan Na and the manuscripts of Jamadevivamsa are not as old as those found in Rattanakosin. The oldest manuscripts of Jinakalamalini written in Khom script are made in the Ayudhya period and were copied into various manuscripts, including one written in Mon script in Rattanakosin period. Unlike Jinakalamalini, the oldest manuscript of Jamadevivamsa is the manuscript written in Khom script. Some evidences clearly show that only one of the three manuscripts written in Dhamma script of Jamadevivamsa are copied from Khom manuscript - the other two manuscripts were subsequently copied from it. These reveal that the royal court of Ayudhya and Rattanakosin have an important role not only as ones who preserve the Pali literatures of Lan Na, but to bring back into existence some of the literature of Lan Na.

Electoral Violence in Southern Thailand's Border Provinces

Anders Engvall

Abstract

While there is substantial research on the insurgency in southern Thailand and on electoral violence in the country, little is known about the specific nature of violence during elections and referendums in the conflict affected area. Drawing on the rich empirical information on violence in the southern border provinces in the Deep South Incident Database created by Deep South Watch, this article provides new information on the use of violence to affect electoral outcomes in this restive region. An analysis of insurgent strategy identifies that weakened Thai state legitimacy is the main strategic principle governing actions during elections. Three hypotheses are derived from this: (i) insurgent groups don't have the incentive to interfere in regular elections as that could be interpreted as their acceptance of Thai political processes; (ii) insurgents have reason to interfere in elections where there is a choice between pro and anti state alternatives. The analysis of patterns of violence during elections and referendums since 2004 show that: (i) regular elections do not affect patterns of violence; (ii) there are many cases of elections where candidates supportive of the Thai state are facing those that seek recognition of Malay-Muslim identity, but there are no signs that insurgent groups use violence to promote individual candidates; (iii) insurgents used violence to sway voters against the draft constitution in the 2016 referendum to deal a blow against state legitimacy. The analysis predicts that the perceived success in swaying the outcome of the 2016 referendum may lead to higher levels of violence in future regular elections.

Migrant Cosmologies: River Beings, Possession and Efficacy Along the Mekong

Andrew Johnson

Abstract

Spirit possession has been conceived of as a way of engaging with and embodying the past (Lambek 2002), a reflection on modernity's enchantments and ambiguities (Morris 2000), or as part of a hybrid religious system (Pattana 2005). But what does it mean to live "with" spirits as a certain class of nonhuman being with which humans co-create the world? How are such beings situated as problematic, perhaps distant, but familiar partners in the world? How does this relationship shift along with environmental, social, and economic changes?

In my ethnographic work in Northeastern Thailand, I detail an instance of an alteration in the relationship between humans and their nonhuman (or greater-than-human) others. As massive environmental disruption on the Mekong continues, apace and migrant work assumes a centralized role in the lives of former fishermen and the authority and power of local "river beings" is called into question. Through looking at how the efficacy of river beings is altered or reaffirmed, I examine the link between cosmology, economy and ecology and argue for a "migrant cosmology," one that takes into account both the deeply historical roots of spirit mediumship and millennialism in the region as well as the adaptations to and impacts of dramatic change upon the lives of humans and non-humans alike.

Arabic Diplomatics in Two Siamese Vassal States in the Early 19th Century

Andrew Peacock
University of St Andrews

Abstract

Recent archival research has brought to light two rare documents from early 19th Century Kedah and Terangganu, composed in Arabic. These documents, found in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive in Istanbul and the Torre de Tombo archive in Lisbon, are of interest both for their contents, which reveal the hitherto underappreciated international links of these two Siamese vassal states, but also for their diplomatics, which form the focus of the present letter. In contrast to much other Arabic correspondence from maritime Southeast Asia, the language of the letters is generally elegant and sophisticated, and the awareness of correct protocols of address to the Ottoman sultan in the Kedah letter suggests the Kedah chancery's sophistication. This paper will analyze and compare the diplomatics of the two letters and also consider them in the broader context of Arabic epistolography in Southeast Asia.

Muang Village Houses [Special Lecture]

Andrew Turton
Emeritus Reader

Abstract

This is a study of house building, house ritual and house life of the muang people of the ancient village of Ban Pong, Amphur Mae Sruay, Chiang Rai. This was on the old route to Chengtung and it was related to families in Doi Saket, Chiang Mai. It was mainly conducted in 1968-69 at the end of a long period on transition from muang/lannatai culture to dominant Thai cultural hegemony.

It examines the various stages of building village houses and the accompanying rituals: from choosing house posts in the forest, negotiating with the nagas prior to embedding the posts, to the important ceremony of householders entering the new house.

This is followed by an analysis of various events (calendrical, life-cycle and ad hoc: birth, courtship, marriage, health, death, ancestral spirits, emergencies etc.) and how they impact on the house.

The processes and behaviors are seen as a continuous relationship of obedience, avoidance and control of social, environmental and cosmological powers

The structures and processes are examined in terms of concepts of space, height, orientation and interiority, and more concretely of zones, barriers and thresholds.

The aggregate house culture is especially embodied in everyday practices and speech. Bourdieu's concept 'habitus' is invoked. This is negotiated and altered over time in response to local and external changes in the overarching political economy and cultural hegemony. The concept of ideology is introduced.

The essay concludes with a brief note on comparison within the Thai/Tai speaking region. This and other themes arising need further review.

The Perception and Place of Crime in Chiang Mai

Angunthip Srisuwan
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Abstract

Security is one of the basic needs that promote quality of life in cities, while crime increasing feelings of insecurity. Feelings of insecurity restrict people's movement and form barriers to positive activities, leading to a reduction in well-being. Criminal cases are increasing in seriousness at a conservation area of Chiang Mai. Crime is not prevalent in all places of the city, but the criminal cases tend to present repeatedly at the same locations. Public perception in crime is one aspect of crime control strategy that policy-makers, urban planners and urban designers take into account. The study aims to investigate the perceptive place of crime and origins of fear, in order to understand the characteristics of the cognitive spaces of crime, to bring a sense of safety and its benefits to Chiang Mai residents. This study scope is crime in public spaces; violence, assaults, property damage and thefts. Data is collected from survey and questionnaires. Stratification sampling is taken to city-residents who lived inside a city more than 5 years. The relationship to the reasons for fear is examined by correlation statistics. Afterward, physical setting and the social characteristics of places are overlaid for summary of how the spaces play a role in determining the fear of crime. The result is shown that both of physical setting and social characteristic of places are related to fear of crime at individual level. Furthermore, the fears of crime of individual level of Chiang Mai people are related to fear of crime at neighborhood level.

A Khruba in Intermittent Service to the Siamese: Khruba Pok and the Taming of Chiang Rai

Anthony Irwin
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Abstract

Phra Khru Methangkaranan Thonapannyo, commonly known as "Khruba Pok" by locals, was the abbot of Wat Phra Singh from 1897-1933, and one of the most important figures in Chiang Rai's recent history. His monastic career spanned a period of great transition and turmoil within Chiang Rai; when the local Jao were replaced by Siamese commissioners, Shan rebels advanced on the city, and Christian missionaries began spreading their religion and changing the urban layout of this small town. Khruba Pok was active to varying degrees, and in surprising ways, in all of these events.

Khruba Pok was also involved in two attempts to reform the Chiang Rai sangha. During the first reformation in 1887, Khruba Pok joined together with other high-ranking Chiang Rai monks and the Jao Muang of the city to unify and normalize monastic practice throughout the region. During a second reformation ten years later, however, Khruba Pok found himself on the defensive. With the support of the then Siamese commissioner, a reformer monk from Nan, Khruba Kan, led a faction of orthodox monks against what they deemed to be the lax monastic practice of the Chiang Rai sangha and fingered Khruba Pok as the main culprit. The reform was never fully realized and fifteen years later, Khruba Pok began his tenure as Jao Khana Jangwat, a position he held from 1912 until the time of his passing.

This paper examines these and other events in the life of Khruba Pok to show how he, at times resisted, and at other times embraced, state power. I present the career of Khruba Pok to highlight the fact that while often times lauded as saints, many khruba often have to negotiate with various forms of power as a means of serving their local communities.

Reassembling the Stupa: Temple Renovation and Religious Networks in Chiang Rai, Thailand

Anthony Lovenheim Irwin
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Abstract

When Chiang Rai, Thailand was resettled in 1844, the city and its surrounding territory had been abandoned for forty years. As new communities sprang up over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, people found themselves living among scores of abandoned Buddhist temple sites. Still today, stupa ruins stick up in the verdant river valley like the stumps of great trees, and tumbled piles of bricks punctuate karst cliffs that rise into the surrounding mountains. The presence of this abandoned Buddhist material has been central to the motivations and techniques behind Buddhist construction in Chiang Rai. Many of the active temples throughout the city are built over older sites, and current Buddhist construction often incorporates older material into new structures.

I focus on how the renovation and reconstruction of these spaces facilitate the collective construction of meaningful community networks that include monks, villagers, patrons, and craftspeople. It forwards the indigenous notion that individuals are reborn in certain communities, and/or find themselves patrons of certain temples, in order to serve as stewards of abandoned religious sites that they built during previous rounds of rebirth. Through temple reconstruction, monks, villagers, donors, and craftspeople reify religious networks that span cosmological time and are anchored to specific geographic sites. Instead of focusing on how monks and laypeople collectively create temples, I aim to show how the accepted agency of temple material and space itself operates within indigenous conceptions of what Buddhist communities are, how they come to be, and what their ultimate goals are.

Tracing a Mystery of the Chiang Saen Buddha Image's Halo

Aphichit Sirichai
Lorlanna Publication,

Abstract

The biggest, most revered, and beautiful artifact of the ancient city of Chiang Saen – now displayed in Chiang Saen National Museum – known as the "Great Halo of the Chiang Saen Buddha Image", has somewhat mysterious origins regarding its year and place of discovery as well as identity(ies) of its discoverer(s). The various stories of its origins have grown into a contested history waiting to be explored. Its gigantic size, believed to be the largest discovered to date, has led to speculation of how big the actual Buddha image must have been. Since the rest of the Buddha image cannot be found elsewhere on the soil of Chiang Saen's ancient city, it is believed that the image must have been buried under the riverbed of Mae Kong. When the story's impact on popular imagination was adopted by national administration, members of the parliament tasked the Committee of Religions, Art and Culture to "retrieve the Sunken Buddha image in the River Kong in front of the ancient city of Chiang Saen". A report presented by the Office of Archaeology 6 of Chiang Mai was then examined by the later appointed sub committee established by the major committee to search for factual information. Although the whole operation was assisted by Chiang Saen National Museum – acting as secretarial body supported by several acknowledged printed materials contributed by government bodies – no historic documents mentioning this particular artifact have been found. This incident has led the researcher to hereby prepare a number of old evidence and photographs in order to challenge the authenticity of this particular story.

Siam, Merchants and Rice: Collaborations and Conflicts, 1855-1914

Apicha Chutipongpisit
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Abstract

This presentation will look at the rice trade between Siam and Singapore after the signing of Bowring Treaty between Siam and the British in 1855, up until the mid-1910s. This period witnessed important changes in Siamese rice production, shifting from self-sufficiency to commercial. Singapore emerged as a distribution port of Siamese rice for re-exporting to the intra-regional markets until the First World War.

This period also saw a change in the roles played by western and Chinese traders. Western traders were the first group who participated in rice business. They transformed the traditional ways of rice trade to conducting by firm organization, which dominated during the 1860s-1870s. By the 1880s, Chinese tax farmers and individual traders participated in rice business. They now had to adapt themselves by following western footsteps while retaining their organizational forms of family firm and relying on transnational trade connections with traders based in Singapore. Eventually, the Chinese replaced the British and German firms and dominated Siamese rice trade by the late nineteenth century.

The Siam-Singapore rice trade also was not only the competition between Western and Chinese traders but also business collaborations were established to achieve mutual interests, by setting up trade associations which were beyond kinships, dialects, native-place ties and nationalities. In addition, their business success came from close relationships with German and French consuls who always protected their subjects' interests. The expansion of Siam-Singapore rice trade witnessed the adjustment of Siamese government policies to support foreign traders while they also protected the state interests.

Religiosity as Mediated Space: Mass Meditation in Contemporary Thailand

Apinya Feungfusakul

Abstract

Mass meditation in contemporary Thailand manifests the logic of urban and globalized culture. The paper studies vipassana or insight meditation practices, which have become popular and widely proliferated in almost every part of Thailand. Religiosity is understood as meditated space through three dimensions. First, it meditates the body and mind. Meditation is not merely abstract and mental, but is expressed physically and communicated in a very subtle manner among meditators who observe rules of silence. Advanced meditators are able to sense the heat, turbulence or heavy vibrations emanating from their neighbors in the sitting hall. This leads to the second dimension of mediation, which is the private and mental space of the individual practitioner and the public space. Apart from communicating in silence during the group sitting, during interview hours they report and share their experiences with the teacher. The sharing can also be done through internet with other followers abroad. This communication with the teacher and the emergence of spiritual communities are very crucial for meditators to maintain regular practice in their daily life.

The third dimension is meditation between the universal and the particular. Spiritual development possesses a universal character, though the meditators can use different methods or even come from different religions. However, people from different cultures and religions can interpret their extraordinary mental experiences differently according to their own beliefs.

The paper also analyses vipasssana from the framework of power relations in the context where the weakness of the central sangha authority has given rise to many different new cults and new interpretations of Theravada Buddhism. There have been interesting challenges posed by marginalized magical beliefs which seem to incorporate aspects of vipassana into their practice.

Mother Cobra Spirit Worship: A Study of Belief and Ritual in Urban Bangkok and in the Capitalist World

Apiwat Suthamdee
Bansomdej Chaopraya Rahabhat University

Abstract

This paper aims to examining the narratives, ritual symbols, roles and existence of the Mother Cobra Spirit (Chao Mae Ngu Chong Ang เจ้าแม่งูจงอาง). Data collection methods include document analysis, online data and field research.

The study reveals that there are four typical types of narratives: 1) the revenge of the Mother Cobra, 2) Wishes fulfilled by sacred offerings, 3) Mother Cobra appearing in dreams; and 4) the sacred Mother Cobra. All of these describe the origin of this female serpent spirit and explain her sacredness and her miraculous power. Ritual symbols, both ritual objects and ritual acts, are presented in concrete form based on these narratives. The most distinctive symbolic object shows the Mother Cobra as a powerful spirit, while the most significant symbolic ritual act is that of presenting eggs as a ritual offering; the eggs represent the cobra's offspring. These beliefs and rituals concerning the worship of the Mother Cobra function as a form of spiritual security for urban Bangkok people, who seek assurances in the complicated modern world of capitalism.

Learning from Chinese!: Chinese Migrant Entrepreneurs and Their Tourism-Related Business in Chiang Mai, Thailand

Aranya Siriphon
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Abstract

The increasing numbers of Chinese tourists traveling into Thailand, not only draw attention to individual Thai entrepreneurs and companies with long tourism-related businesses in the Thai locality; many recent Chinese entrepreneurs have also seen new economic opportunities in tourism-related business, and have gradually opened their business ventures in Thailand, particularly in Chiang Mai. This paper explores these Chinese entrepreneurs who have been conducting their small and medium-scaled tourism-related business in Chiang Mai city. The paper attempts to learn who they are and how they conduct their business successfully, seizing business opportunity with the Thai entrepreneurs and companies operating older tourism-related businesses. By using the qualitative research method, this paper contends that the Chinese migrant entrepreneurs are mainly the young and middle-aged Chinese generation, between 25 and 40 years old, who are operating high-growth ventures of small and medium-sized business in tourism in Chiang Mai, where large groups of Chinese tourists enjoy travelling to. To conduct their business competently, they have applied two common strategies; firstly, business diversification; and secondly, Chinese entrepreneurship combined with a new modern style of business management and technological innovation, which is advantageous for profit-seeking business, regardless of whether they are short or long term.

Improving Community - Based Tourism Competitiveness Toward AEC in Chiang Mai Province and Lamphun Province

Archabaramee Maneetrakunthong

Abstract

The objectives of research project "Improving Community - Based Tourism Competitiveness toward AEC in Chiang Mai Province and Lamphun Province" were to study the current situation, competitiveness and problems of community -based tourism in Chiang Mai and Lamphun province. The research also attempted to analyze competitiveness of entrepreneurs in community-based tourism toward AEC and present the guidelines for improving community-based tourism competitiveness in Chiang Mai and Lamphun provinces.

This research tended to understand competitiveness of community-based tourism in Chiang Mai and Lamphun provinces by collecting data through a questionnaire survey with 150 entrepreneurs in community-based tourism, conducting in-depth interviews with 40 stakeholders including studying secondary data, and applying non-participant observation to provide further understanding.

The result has found that there are three major problems of entrepreneurs for community–based tourism: marketing issues, production, and finance and personnel problems. Moreover, the research shows that the entrepreneurs are highly competitive in terms of product and service standards, harmonic blends of local wisdom and products and services, sincerity, customer retention, a safe business location, different types of alliances, and networks. On the other hand, there is further competitiveness in the form of: international public relations, use of computer based information systems, lack of regulatory knowledge of laws and regulations in business and English communication skills.

Guidelines for improving community-based tourism competitiveness in Chiang Mai and Lamphun provinces are to be developed, inclusive of modern management skills and ensuring specific attention is made to cultural differences for delivering appropriate products and services. Importantly, it is suggested that young generations or family members run the business and provide support on information technology and English communication skills.

Being a Fan, It's More Than Watching Football

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Abstract

This article discusses the consumption of Thai football fans, especially Port FC fans and Kwangkrung- "diasporic football fans" of Chiang Rai United FC. Thai football fans not only watch football matches, but also create many activities both inside and outside the stadium; chanting in the stadium, drinking together in the hours before and after match, creating and spreading many online media, etc. These activities fulfill their social demand; powerless men who look for men's space, modernized-men who seek for neo-community, migrants who nostalgia for their "home", and active citizens who want to reconstruct their identities.

Permanent Displacement: Buddhist-Muslim Intimacies and Ethnic Coexistence in a Queer-Feminist Southeast Asian Filmic Archive

Arnika Fuhrmann
Cornell University

Abstract

This paper investigates Buddhist-Muslim intimacies and coexistence in Thailand in order to complicate recent discussions of the relation of religion to gender and sexual freedoms. It is concerned with contributing a new, Southeast Asian perspective to a prominent strain of contemporary criticism that traces the anti-Islam bent of European and U.S. public discourses to biases inherent in liberal thought. Authors such as Saba Mahmood, Jasbir Puar, and Judith Butler have tracked how, under the assumption of Islam's sexual illiberalism, Muslims have been positioned as liberalism's paradigmatic others. Although it builds on these critiques, the paper asks how these logics play out quite differently in a majority Buddhist society and in a modernity that is not understood only as secular. I investigate how contemporary, globally circulating Thai films furnish a radically different approach to multiethnic coexistence, emancipatory sexual politics, the temporalities of modernity, and the domain of the law that is so closely connected to sexual and religious freedoms. I thereby analyze the problem of liberalism in the context of multiply constituted notions of freedom beyond the European and North American contexts. Like Butler, I rely on a claim about temporality, but argue that the plural temporalities of Southeast Asian modernities allow for different relations between minority and majority populations and between notions of gender equality or sexual freedom and religious belonging. The materials analyzed include the Thai films Citizen Juling (Ing Kanjanavanij, et al, 2008), This Area is Under Quarantine (Thunska Pansitthivorakul), The Island Funeral (Pimpaka Towira, 2015), and "The Story" (Nil Paksnavin, 2003) and the Malaysian film "Pang Yau" (Amir Muhammad, 2006).

Five Centuries of 'Khlong Niras Hariphunchai', Its Meaning and Memory

Aroonrut Wichienkeeo
Academy of Moral and Political Science, Office of the Royal Society

Metee Jaisri

Abstract

Khlong Niras Hiriphunchai, a historic northern Thai verse form, was authored in 1517, in the reign of Phra Muang Kaew, the King of Mang Rai dynasty. The written form of this literature was in Lan Na style, 180 chapters in total. It was inscribed on both palm leaf texts and pubsa. The original texts that variously founded in northern Thailand have their similarities and slightly differences. The main structure of this story was about a separation from his love to pilgrim. The making of this pilgrimage was from the town of Chiang Mai, passing through several places along the way, to the town of Lamphun, where the Great Hariphunchai Pagoda is situated. The paper argues that there are little studies of this literary tale. This is partly because of the difficulties of language and historical background, inscribing in this text. Nevertheless, the authors propose that this Niras is still worth for 'literary reading.' The study of this text will bring to us not only an understanding of history and society in Lan Na at that time (of writing). In this paper, the authors will show some readings of its meaning and memory, which reflect in this literary tale. The reading will show that this text is ultimately a historic literature of the great Lan Na civilization.

Symbolic Economy of Ganesh Cult in Chiang Mai

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Abstract

The study explores the symbolic economy of the Ganesh cult and its relation to political, economic and social changes in Chiang Mai. It investigates symbolic production, distribution and consumption processes of sacred objects in Ganesh cult. It is crucial to examine how symbolic meaning is constructed, and how consumers interpret this symbolic meaning and expand it into the economic arena. The research aims to demonstrate the cultural articulation between old tradition of the Ganesh cult and modern society composed with technology and scientific knowledge. In this regard, I employ the concept of "hybridization" to explain how the new form of spirit cult emerged from combination of diverse religion practices. The "singularization of things" also helps to understand ritual practices that add economic and spiritual value to the craft works. The finding reveals that commoditization of sacredness associates with discourse construction and advertisement through various media and new technologies. Modernity supports the flourishing of the Ganesh cult rather than prohibiting its enchantment. The prosperous spirit cult reflects re-enchantment of religion in response to the need of people in the modern era. Engaging in the Ganesh cult, people can construct their new identities to negotiate with the power of the state and globalization.

Socio-Cultural Factors and Attitudes Affecting the Health Status of Tai-Khamti Community: A Study of Tai-Khamti Community in Namsai District , Arunachal Pradesh, India.

Arun Baruah
Rajiv Gandhi University

Abstract

This research paper examines the socio-cultural factors and attitudes that affect the health status of Tai-Khamti community, through the case study of Namsai District (a predominantly rural area) in Arunachal Pradesh State, India. Using cultural, social, environmental and attitudinal factors, the paper explain how these factors have contributed to the low heath status of Tai-Khamti community. The social action and social suffering theories were used to explain possible occurrence of these factors affecting health. The research is a descriptive research and the population of study was selected using random and purposeful sampling techniques, while the simple percentage analytical tool was used for data analysis. The research found that socio-cultural, environmental, and attitudinal factors have a correlation with poor health status in Tai Khamti community and therefore, these factors needs to be addressed to enhance rural health status.

Doing Good and It Will Be Returned: The Notion of Morality and Economy of Friendship Among Thai Women in UK

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Abstract

Most Thai immigrants in Aberdeen, United Kingdom are women who obtained permanent residence through marriage. This paper discusses two topics; first it explores the notion of 'being good' and 'doing good' among Thais in the city of Aberdeen, United Kingdom through everyday life stories among them. Despite having different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds, they share the collective national identity as Thai. The preliminary information presents that 'Nam Jai' or generosity is the prominent notion fuelling social bonds among them. This leads the social obligation and awareness that they should help and support each other. More than emotional support such as listening and giving advice, supports is usually in the form of labor and money. This social obligation is both demanding and has expectation of return, especially in an emotional form of friendship and loyalty. This production of friendship sometimes creates an enmity when one loyally takes the side of her friend, or when one misses the expectation of friendship.

The second topic of this paper is a narrative analysis through the life stories of three women. They have the collective themes of 'Cinderella' and 'a good daughter'. These themes reveal moral reasoning based on the belief that good doing will bring good consequences. Moreover, from these narratives, women construct and empower their 'self'. In this study, the economic power of women plays an important role in the relationship with their family in Thailand and Thai society in the UK.

India-Thailand Political, Economic and Cultural Relations - Challenges and Opportunities

Ashok Sajjanhar
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Abstract

The end of the Cold War opened up fresh opportunities for India to move in the direction of a strategic realignment in its foreign relations. The ASEAN region comprising of rapidly expanding ''tiger'' economies had not figured prominently in India's foreign policy calculus thus far on account of cold war compulsions. ASEAN emerged as one of the priority areas for attention with the institution of the ''Look East'' Policy by PM Narasimha Rao in 1992. Bilateral relations with Thailand are a significant beneficiary of this determination to reach out to South-East Asia, both on account of its geographical proximity (Thailand lies in India's extended

neighborhood – both countries share a maritime boundary in the Andaman Sea) as also because of the fertile ground of historical, cultural and civilizational links going back several millennia. Seventy years since the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations and twenty-five since the initiation of the ''Look East'' Policy which got further reinforced into ''Act East'' by the Modi government

in November, 2014, has seen the bilateral partnership scale fresh heights in several areas of political, economic, social and cultural endeavor. It however continues to be a work in progress with considerable potential, but also with pitfalls existing in further enhancing partnership in strategy security, trade, investments, defense, infrastructure (physical, social, digital, cyber) areas, as

well as augmenting engagement in regional and multilateral fora.

Jaramahagama: Network and Religious Construction Belonging to Traditional Muslim in Three Southern Provinces

Asree Mahama

Abstract

In this paper, I argue that Jaramahagama is a religious space in which traditional Muslim leaders in three Southern provinces (Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat) have collaborated to construct the Central Pattani Mosque. The leader of this network is Baba Isamael Sapanyong, and his religious title is Ulamah. Constructed in this space is a local religious identity that demands strict religious practice, through listening to how to be a good Muslim with thorough knowledge in traditional Islam, and has since become a very popular local Muslim space.

In this paper I analyze a local context using Actor Network Theory/ANT. This space can be seen as conducive to local worshipping and networking, and is further enhanced by its charismatic Muslim leader. Under this local leader, alongside five active participants, the creation of four activities takes place as follows: 1. Reciting kitab jawi (a local religious text); 2. Listening to CD tapes of teaching by local leaders; 3. Joining in the Saturday religious market; and 4. Creating mobile units of religious leaders to respond to local requests. These four types of activity are, in my view, effective technologies in creating and maintaining religious networks. In this newly established network, followers use all four religious technologies to cope with the pressures of modern life and the influence of modern Islamic practices.

Being Left Behind: Traditional Medicine Practice and Un-Belonging

Assunta Hunter
University of Melbourne

Abstract

There are moral dimensions to the acquisition and creation of professional expertise in a rapidly modernizing country and this paper explores how notions of expertise are intimately connected to forms of education and to cultural understandings of knowledge, legitimacy and value. I draw on ethnographic material from research in Thailand that shows how health policies have re-shaped the practice of Thai traditional medicine through university-based education, the licensing of practitioners and the introduction of a scientific rationale for treatment. University education has transformed the status and aspirations of students studying Thai traditional medicine and created tensions within the traditional medicine community about the knowledge base and the status of licensed and unlicensed practitioners.

The regulation of practitioners and the establishment of a state-supported hierarchy of legitimacy and skill that excludes unlicensed Thai traditional medicine practitioners (folk healers), highlights the contradictions and moral tensions inherent in the emergence of expertise in modernity. I examine the moral dimensions of the selective authorization of modern licensed practitioners and the de-legitimation of folk healers whose skills are obtained through apprenticeship, experience and adherence to Buddhist values. Local moral worlds continue to challenge and disrupt modernized approaches to knowledge acquisition established through university education and licensing. The contradictions and moral tensions inherent in professional recognition for one group exemplify the problems associated with medical expertise cultivated through university training that carries with it the status, values and meanings associated with the institutions of modern medicine and education.

Natural Resource Management in Thailand Under the Military Regimes

Atchara Rakyutidharm

Abstract

It's long been in Thailand that the military have an important role in Natural Resource Management (NRM) within different contexts; national security, development and conservation. This paper will explore the history of military governments' and military organizations' roles in NRM through several projects such as dam construction, forest conservation projects and economic development projects, etc. This paper aims to argue that domestic politics is the key factor in conflicts over NRM. This argument challenges the popular analysis of development studies and political economy that emphasize the impacts of supra-state organizations and transnational corporations in NRM. In Thailand, discussions on concepts like 'people's participation', 'property rights and access' and 'NRM decentralization', etc. are meaningless unless the political regime in the country is seriously examined. In other words, advocacy of peoples rights and justice in NRM cannot be fully achieved under the dictatorial political or pseudo democratic system.

Byādhi vs Arokkya: Buddhist Perspectives and Thai Cultural Practices

Atit Pongphanit
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Abstract

In Buddhism, physical suffering (Byādhi) and health (Arokkya), are among the common concerns that have been extensively discussed and interpreted. Like birth, old age, and death, sickness is an inevitable part of life that can produce some degree of suffering. Sickness, particularly in the Thai Buddhist community, is also considered to result from an individual's pervious karma. "Arokhaya parama lapha - Health is the ultimate profit" has become one of many well-known verses in Thai Buddhist society, presenting some positive attitudes towards health.

Nonetheless, sickness, together with old age and death, was undeniably a key factor influencing the Buddha to understand suffering from samsara, the first noble truth leading to his enlightenment.

While the ultimate aim of Buddhism is to be fully enlightened, it is interesting to study Buddhist perceptions on health (that can possibly bring merely ultimate profit) and sickness (that can be used as a key tool to gain enlightenment). This paper aims to study and review literature and popular culture media regarding these issues in Thai society. The writing and Dhamma talks by Ven. Pisal Visalo, one of the most prominent monks whose teachings and work emphasize sickness, palliative care, and death, will be studied to analyze some understandings of sickness and death according to the Buddhist perspectives. Further, in order to understand Thai cultural practices regarding these issues, examples of popular culture will also be studied to see how Buddha's teachings have been transformed into practice in Thai Buddhist society. Particularly, in the case of some incurable conditions, such as cholangiocarcinoma, it is important to develop practical understandings on heath, sickness, and death for individuals to continue in their present-conditional quality of life.

Society of Entrepreneurs": Democracy on the Wave of Movements

Attachak Sattayanurak
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Abstract

Economic changes have transformed the rural areas of Thai society from a "farmer society" to an "entrepreneur society", with economics, social and political structures that are considerably and comprehensively different from the old ones. Understanding these changes in the rural helps lead Thai society to cross over the ceiling of thought about the 'rural' as conceived in the past, as well as enhance the opportunity in searching for the appropriate development guidelines of both economics, social and political aspects.

Identity Transition: An Overview on Tai Khampti Tribe in Arunachal Pradesh, India

B Komow
Arunachal University of Studies

Abstract

The emphasis for societies to understand their own identity by looking or searching for their origin has become a source of concern. Though some have clear written records or oral sources, others are unsure and unclear about their origins. However, due to the impact of globalization, it has become difficult to hold onto their identities and keep them intact. Further, it also forces them to adopt new practices that become a part of their identity and compel them to drift away from the actual practices of their forefathers. The Tai Khampti tribe, considered descendants of the Tais, are also in transition. They have a set of unique traditional practices in social, economic, political and cultural aspects. The Tai Khampti tribe arrived late compared to other tribes of the state. The tribe is considered well organized, systematic and advanced in their education system. Thus, Khamptis as a tribe are ahead of other tribes in many fields though they have a smaller population. Over time, the Tai Khampti tribe have faced the issue of identity and other social barriers to maintain and promote such as their own script and Customary laws. Further, the social and economic problems left them no choice but to accept changes to survive. Problems faced by their youth have so much impact on the Tai Khampti society. The government of India effort 'Act East Policy' could bring the Tai Khamptis closer to the people of Tai descent in Thailand and Myanmar for better understanding and cooperation with improved communication.

The Outstanding Dipani Literary Works of Sirimangala Thera in the 15th Century

Balee Buddharaksa

Abstract

There have been two famous Pali texts in the Commentary style of Ceylon which contain the suffix "-dipani", for clarifying the meaning of Pali word or passage in Pali Scripture: the Paramatthadipani and the Saratthadipani. The Paramatthadipani is the Commentary on Suttantapitaka Khuddakanikaya, written in the 5th century by Dhammapala Thera, the Southern Indian monk of Kancipura. The Saratthadipani is a Vinaya Tika on Buddhaghosa's Samantapasadika, written in the 12th century by Sariputta Thera of Ceylon, containing a valuable account of the Buddhist Sangha (which was divided into eighteen sects at the time of the Third Council). Later, there came the Pali composition of 3 texts in Commentary style with the "-dipani" suffix, written in the 15th century by Sirimangala Thera at Chiang Mai, the Capital of Lan Na kingdom during AD 1417–1425. These are: the Vessantaradipani, the Cakkavaladipani and the Mangalatthadipani.

New and prominent features of Sirimangala's Dipani texts include:

(a) detailed explanations of words and passages;

(b) comparison of information from various texts;

(c) considering and searching for similar or different issues;

(d) use of scripture/source reference in three or four levels of Buddhist scriptures.

Among these, the Mangalatthadipani is the masterpiece, existing in the context of the Dharma topics of Mangalasutta in khuddakapatha – Suttanipata, and from the Commentary Paramatthajotika.

How to Transport Illegal Migrants?: The Route from Mae Sot to Inner Area

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the mobility of illegal Myanmar labor from Mae Sot Districts to the inner area. Qualitative research was conducted using the investigative technique, which includes "spy" and "intelligence". The goal of this study was to identify key mechanisms illegal laborers used for hiding and mobilizing from the border to other parts of Thailand. Data was collected by in-depth interview of illegal laborers and their agents charged under the illegal immigration codes and coupled with illegal immigration case reports by state officers. We adopted triangulation method to process the data before analysis so that it was triple checked and confirmed by the illegal laborers, the agencies, and reports, and method of agreement was created for content analysis.

The study has revealed at least 2 different methods of mobility as follows. 1) The revealing method: illegal laborers were not checked or inspected by state officials because the agencies periodically paid them. 2) The concealing method: agencies did not pay periodic bribery but rather paid immediately if they were checked by state officials.

The second method can be divided into 5 categories including 2.1) hiding in vehicle, 2.2) creating special hidden space in vehicle, 2.3) hiding among goods or produces, 2.4) disguised themselves as Thais, and 2.5) using more than one different method of transportation (e.g., by vehicle and by foot).

These illegal transportation methods forced upon labors were both dangerous and potentially in violation of human rights. This investigation has highlighted that trans-nation laborer mobility in ASEAN society protects only legal laborers. Illegal laborers will be facing dangerous transportation methods and human rights violations so long as the corruption of Thai officials is involved.

It Takes Three to Tango: Governance Barriers to Sustainable Urbanization in Thailand Explored Through the Lens of Green Space Development in Bangkok

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Abstract

Green space, for various reasons, is an increasingly vital resource for cities, and certainly so for cities in tropical monsoon climates in times of climate change. Bangkok, by some measures, lacks green space - and publicly accessible green space in particular. It has been a stated aim of several consecutive city governments to substantially increase the city's amount of public green space, but achievements have been modest at best. Worse still, the few existing areas that are still predominantly green, are under severe pressure of urban development. Apparently there are conditions and forces at work that impede effective conservation of remaining green space and hamper successful production of new (public) green space. This paper explores these conditions and forces from an urban governance perspective and discusses possible ways to break the status quo.

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The Making of Human Rights in Thai Democratization

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Abstract

Human rights ideas and practices have developed alongside the fortunes of Thai democracy over the last three decades. In particular, human rights activists and advocacy groups have played significant roles in introducing and affirming human rights principles, especially as democratization results in more opportunities for claim-making by citizens, which in turn leads to increased recognition of citizenship rights. Despite these developments, however, recent political conflicts have revealed the extent to which human rights and democracy are still very contested concepts to be openly questioned in Thai society. During conflict, human rights ideas are challenged by more deep-rooted concepts like nationalism, patron-client relationships, national security and order. Even more interestingly, some civil society groups that claim to champion human rights have endorsed military intervention and extra-parliamentary politics in order to rid the country of politicians and "money politics", at the cost of civil rights and participatory democracy.

How then should we understand the debate around human rights and democracy that has surfaced in recent political conflicts? What kind of human rights concepts have been constructed during this democratization period? What contentions are there between Thai culture and values, and the concepts of human rights and democracy? By taking these questions into account, this paper examines how ideas of human rights have been shaped and transformed through human rights advocacy groups throughout this democratization period. The paper reviews human rights activism from the mid-1970s up to 2016, and analyses what kind of human rights concepts are being constructed through training programs and organization, the building of human rights institutions and the disseminating of human rights advocacy and literature.

To 'Play' MaMuat in Rural Buriram: A Local Manifestation of Thailand's Possession Complex and Its Recent Transformations in a Khmer-Speaking Community

Benjamin Baumann
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Abstract

It has become common practice to acknowledge the hybrid character of 'Thai religion' by portraying it as a unique configuration of Buddhist, Brahmanist, and animist features. However, the powerful trope of 'Thai Buddhism' continues to haunt analyses of everyday religious practices in contemporary Thailand. The discursively reproduced myth of an all-encompassing 'Thai Buddhism' centers debates on 'Thai religion' while relegating spirit possession, mediumship, and magic to the margins of social life, religious practice, and scholarly discourse within the field of Thai studies. While some of the frequently observed paradoxes of contemporary 'Thai religion' may thus be explained in light of this logo-centrism, the question remains how to explicate the practical meaningfulness of spirit-possession and mediumship as everyday aspects of contemporary 'Thai religion'?

In his recent comparison of Southeast Asian animisms, Kaj Århem identifies a 'possession complex' at the heart of a distinctively Southeast Asian doxa. In this paper I draw on Århem as I reverse the conventional Buddhologist's gaze, and approach localized 'Thai religion' as a manifestation of this possession complex.

Through the analysis of a local spirit cult in rural Buriram Province, I will argue that this reversal allows us to acknowledge the practical meaningfulness of an essentially non-modern folk epistemology that perceives personhood in relational terms. This non-modern conception of personhood rests on a mutuality that links human with non-human beings like spirits and ghosts. Locally, this 'mutuality of being' is established and negotiated in a possession-cult known as mamuad (mae mot). The ritual experts that perform these ceremonies act simultaneously as mediums, shamans, exorcists, healers, and seers and thus blur the boundaries of conventional categories. However, because of spirit possession's doxic character in local language games, they fulfill crucial functions in the reproduction of socio-cultural identities and a localized sense of belonging.

Local History of the Phanom Rung Festival: Contested Meaning of Sanctuary Ownership

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Abstract

The Phanom Rung annual festival in April is the most important activity for local people and the state, represented by the Fine Art Department (FAD) and Buriram provincial office. Before the state has legally occupied the sanctuary area and all activities there, the festival was managed by local groups who lived around the sanctuary, including Bu people. Since 1987, the state has manipulated the new content of the festival until it has become definitively different from the traditional festival and local people no more freely participate in the festival, which is still promoted as a local festival. Thus, Bu people often retell about the traditional Phanom Rung annual festival to claim it as the 'correct' festival and point out the 'mistaken' content of the state festival. However, I found that they do not have any attention to fight for returning to the 'correct' festival or even to claim their rights to manage the festival by themselves. In order to find out why this happened, I focus on Bu people's relationship with the Phanom Rung sanctuary under the FAD management and the influential discourse.

According to my in-depth interviews and participant observation, as anthropological fieldwork from 2011-2013, and subsequent Foucauldian discourse analysis, found that under the influence of the 'Authorized heritage discourse', Bu people yield to FAD's superior knowledge and power which takes their rights for granted. However, under the 'Counter authorized heritage discourse' and the 'Decentralization discourse', they expect the FAD office to respect their local rights. When FAD started a project which has affected their quality of life since 2005, Bu people have protested using civil disobedience. Their retelling of local history is not only for memorizing their previous ownership, but also to authorize their protests.

Act East Policy, India's North East and Thailand: Issues in Economic Integration

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Abstract

The Act East Policy (AEP) of India is being projected as the new economic development strategy for its North Eastern Region (NER). Such a projection is based on the identified cardinal component of economic integration with South East Asia in terms of increased trade, investment, tourism and connectivity. In South East Asia and ASEAN, Thailand happens to be one of the most important neighbors of NER. This paper, through a SWOT analysis, brings out a number of strengths and opportunities of the NER that can facilitate this economic integration. These include, continuum of cultural capital, abundant natural resources, low labor costs, young consumption society, strong community base to reduce information asymmetry and check the rise in inequality, high opportunity for investment in agro processing, hydropower, petrochemicals, IT etc., geographical proximity to Bangladesh, Myanmar and China , upcoming India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway, presence of world class educational institutions, FTA with Thailand and ASEAN and increase labor costs in China. Some of the significant weaknesses and threats to this envisaged economic integration on the NER side includes, high transactions costs because of relatively undefined property rights and tall negotiation costs, sub-optimal intra-regional , inter-regional and inter-country integration in terms of physical and digital connectivity, the habit of rent seeking, governance deficit, non-availability of skilled manpower, information asymmetry with respect to the people and economy of Thailand, institutional rigidities that manifest in the form of demand for inner line permits, outsider-insider syndrome , extortions and inter-tribe ethnic conflicts . From the Thai side, some of the manifested weaknesses and threats are: low awareness about NER and sub-optimal physical and digital connectivity with it. The paper concludes that there is adequate scope for economic integration between NER and Thailand under the AEP framework based on economic and cultural capital rationales.

When Will Mom Come Home? Female Participation in Labor Force and the Changing of Family Member's Well Being

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Abstract

This paper highlights the roles of women in Thai society that has changed as society has evolved. Though widely agreed in the literature of family and feminist studies that housekeeping and homemaking duties traditionally fall in the hands of women, it appears that they could step into assuming other more aggressive roles to create economic and political stability in the household. Even in the agricultural age, wife's roles were not restricted only to being a homemaker but also to lending her helping hands in the field, farmland or barn as well as to take care of the elderly and children at home. However, the development of society in the industrial age drew men, in the first stage, from their home's farm land. The wellbeing of the family members and the production of their home's farmland was left in the care of the wives. Until the later stages of industrial development as industrialization expanded wide and deep, Thai society started to see women take jobs outside the home and some house chores such as child rearing were assisted by non-family members. It is reflected in this paper that women have spent longer times outside the home as society developed, thus changing the ways of household management and, more regrettably, affecting the wellbeing of household members.

Me-Dam-Me-Phi (Traditional Tai-Ahom Ancestor Worship)

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Abstract

Me-Dam-Me-Phi is one of the most important socio-religious festivals, said to have first been celebrated in "Charaido", the first capital of the Ahom Kingdom established by "Chao Lung Siu-Ka-Pha" in 1228 A.D. "Chao Lung Siu-Ka-Pha" is taken to be founder of the Ahom Kingdom in the same way that Lengdon (the God of Heaven) sent his two grandsons, "Khulung" and "Khunlai", to earth to found a state.

"Me-Dam-Me-Phi is still celebrated on the 31st of January every year. The word "Me" means Offerings, "Dam" means ancestors and "Phi" means gods. The Ahom kings used to perform this worship after victory in wars, to ward off any imminent danger and ensure longevity in life. It is celebrated by making various offerings, usually consisting of home-made dishes such as the cooked meat of chicken, pig and duck, as well as whole eggs and cooked rice which is respectfully presented to the ancestors on trays made of small pieces of bamboo, called "Maihang". Local rice wine ("Nam-Lao") is prepared in the home in a traditional manner, and best served as a part of a dish.

During the days of the Ahom kings the ritual was performed by the Ahom priest classes such as the Mohans, Deodhais and Bailungs. They would chant strong Tai mantras following the codes (bidhan) given in the Puthis (books) such as "Phra-lung" and "Banfi". Since the 1950s, "Me-Dam-Me-Phi" has become a public ritual, and during the 1980s it began to attract people of all different communities to come and pray to their ancestors by making offerings and seeking blessings for prosperity and a healthy life, which has caused the government of Assam to declare the day a public holiday.

Urbanization and Agriculture Transformation Challenges in a Tay Ethnic Commune in Vietnam's Northeast Area.

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Abstract

As with many other ethnic groups in Vietnam, the 1986 reform (known as Doi Moi) brought a dramatic change in the economic life of the Tay ethnic people in Vietnam. From a traditional subsistence agriculture, transiting several decades of collectivization, after Doi Moi, the economy of the Tay is still primarily based on agriculture, but has increasingly been focused on crop yields for production and trading in the market. This process has recently been strongly promoted in peri-urban areas which are directly under the influence of urbanization and modernization. While researches on agriculture and livelihood transformation after Doi Moi and under the urbanization process have mainly concentrated on such peri-urban areas in the big lowland cities and on some ethnic minorities, few studies have been conducted in the Tay people's region.

Drawing upon field research from April to September 2016, this paper aims to examine the impact of urbanization on the agricultural practices of the Tay ethnic people in Quang Lang commune, Chi Lang district, Lang Son province. It seeks to understand changes in land use, capital resources, agriculture production and challenges that local people have been facing under such urbanization. Its result indicates that the recent urbanization in the Tay people's region, although on a smaller scale than in big lowland cities, together with other economic and social policies after Doi Moi, has brought many changes in the socioeconomic life of local people. People are more engaged in the market and urban centers for their intensification of agricultural production and diversification of livelihood. However, in this context, their natural capital has become increasingly restricted, and their social capital remains limited. With the increase in market competition the majority of Tay people are slowly adapting to the social change, but some are being left behind.

Football and Provincial Identity in Thailand: The Construction of Chiang Rai Identity

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Abstract

Football has become one of the most popular sports in Thailand. Yet football in Thailand should not only be treated as a sport. Since 2009, Thailand professional football league no longer serves merely as a sporting competition. It serves as a space in which the power relations among actors takes place. The complex interplay of power relations among the provincial power has intensified the process of identity construction in the provincial area. The unique capability of football to institutionalize particular form of identity allows us to comprehend how the club and the fans constructing their identity. Special attention is given to Chiang Rai United Football Club and its fans who located in Chiang Rai Province and Bangkok. The proposed arguments are that the construction of provincial identity is mediated by football club and provincial power; that professional football club provides a space for the fans to exercising their identity politics; and the process of identity construction is being conducted by the football club and the fans.

"Hospitality or Inhospitablity?": A Comparative Study on Online Texts from Homepages of Hotels in Thailand and China from the Perspective of Genre Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis

Bo Liu
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Abstract

For years, the national image of Thailand as a popular destination with a large number of world-class hotels and resorts has been firmly held by many Chinese tourists, especially for many young Chinese tourists who prefer designing their own travel plan through the Internet: simply by surfing the user-friendly online websites with English version of different hotels in Thailand. However, Thai tourists may not have the same user-experience when they make the hotel reservation in China on Internet, probably due to the poor websites and language service for non-Chinese-speaking tourists. Many valuable researches on tourism and hospitality industry in Thailand and China have been conducted from different aspects, like marketing, tourism management and economy policy (Shi, 2013; Xue & Wu, 2016; Wang & Luo, 2013). This study is designed to study the texts from websites of hotels in Thailand and China from the linguistic perspective, often overlooked in previous studies. The "Thai experience" of constructing texts could be a valuable reference for developing hospitality industry and tourism industry in China, especially the language service.

In the light of Genre Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis, this study probes into linguistic features of the online texts from homepages of hotels in Thailand and China with a qualitative analysis of a small corpus. Its outcomes should be valuable and significant as an effective language strategy for establishing and constructing a standard for hospitality industry in China.

Voices of the Victims of Political Violence

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Abstract

This article presents stories of victims of political violence in Thailand between 2008 and 2015. The victims in this study comprise both Yellow Shirts and Red Shirts who were either convicted and incarcerated, or disabled in political violence. These victims have often been overlooked by the public because they are ordinary people and not leaders. The article focuses on three points. First, it recounts the personal backgrounds of the victims and their reasons for deciding to participate in political movements and, in some cases, to stand on the front line. The findings indicate that the victims were not simply ignorant people who had been manipulated into joining the movement. Second, the article describes how the victims conceive of their experiences and, in particular, their sense of facing injustice. Third, it explores the social networks among ordinary people that are supporting these victims as well as the limitations of these networks. Data for the study was gathered through both formal and life-history interviews conducted with 20 informants. The article contributes to providing space for the victims of political violence and illuminates how deeply political violence has affected the lives of both Yellow Shirts and Red Shirts.

Those Strange-Looking Monks in Phra Malai Manuscript Paintings: Voices of the Text

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Abstract

One of the most popular texts written and illustrated on accordion-folded paper manuscripts (samut khoi) is Phra Malai Klon Suat (PMKS), the vernacular version of the story of the magical monk who travelled to hell and heaven. The miniature paintings in these manuscripts depict key scenes from the story as well as pairs of seated monks sometimes with legs crossed and a talabat in their hands, and others in very unusual postures with strange facial expressions. Several Western scholars have offered interpretations of these monk figures based on a number of factors: art historical analysis of the paintings, the opinions of other Western scholars, and their own guesses and assumptions. This paper offers a different interpretation of the monks – one that draws on the writings of Thai scholars, interviews with monks, personal communications with people who have sponsored recitations for their deceased relatives, and my experiences of listening to the text being chanted. In addition, other factors include the historical context of the klon suat genre, specific features of the text, the text's function and usage, and the role of the monks and lay chanters.

Mixing Work with Pleasure: Intimacy and Kinship in the Thai Creative Economy

Bronwyn Isaacs
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Abstract

In this paper I examine the personal and intimate side of the new creative economies as experienced by Thai workers working in advertising and film production in Bangkok. Drawing on 18 months of ethnographic fieldwork, I argue that the intensity of social and physical intimacy in the Bangkok production industry creates new forms of substitute affinity. This new affinity has transformed experiences of both kinship and gender while also competing with traditional family relations for the primary realm of social intimacy. This paper explores how these new forms of social intimacy create economic value locally, and how this value is made mobile within the international marketplace.

The creative and digital industries are a growing segment of the Thai economy. Owing to the relatively highly skilled workforce and low wages, these industries have been successful in attracting international clients in advertising, film, design and web-based enterprises. Recent criticism of the unstable, precarious work conditions that predominate in post-Fordist creative economies have drawn attention to the transformation of the worker into an individual, self-motivated agent. In the altered economies void of unions, strong industry bargaining power or the legal safeguarding of fair wages and work conditions, social and emotional life transform.

This paper employs ethnographic examples to question the extent to which work-based kinship networks create substitute “husbands,” “mothers" and “brothers and sisters” that can displace or at least compete with more traditional family relationships. It argues that in these substitute families—where kinship is integrated with the agency and sociality of creative work—gender and sexuality sometimes operate in unconventional ways, including new physical norms between men and women, the existence of “all female” working families, and greater acceptance of unconventional sexuality and gender roles.

Presenting 'Lanna' Buddhism to Domestic and International Tourists in Chiangmai

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Abstract

In Northern Thailand, commodities deemed 'Lanna,' such as clothing and accessories, as well as intangible performances such as dance and music, are easy to locate. As tourist publications detail the ways tangible and intangible aspects of Lanna culture are 'authentic' ways to experience this unique place, aspects of Lanna culture are increasingly commodified for tourist consumption. One significant part of intangible Lanna culture is specific practices and beliefs of Buddhism in this area. Chiang Mai, in particular, has a number of ways to learn about Lanna Buddhism— participating in rituals, viewing temples, and visiting museums— for both domestic and international tourists. Lanna Buddhism is promoted and marketed from a variety of angles; on the Internet via the Tourism Authority of Thailand's website, in museums such as the Lanna Folklife Museum and the Chiang Mai National Museum, at temples which are considered to have particular 'Lanna' features: Wat Don Kwain, Wat Phantao and Wat Prasat, as well as the weekly 'Lanna Cultural Show' on display at Wat Srisuphan. This paper offers a visual and rhetorical analysis of what 'Lanna' Buddhism means to contemporary purveyors of this product.

Transnational Marriage and the Transfer of Welfare in Rural Transformation of Thailand

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Abstract

There has been a recent global trend in western and developed economies increasingly supporting their aged populations staying outside their countries. This is in order for the recipient to receive welfare services at a minimum cost. Thailand has accommodated this transformation by promoting the long-term staying of oversea tourists. Before this time, the marriage of westerners to rural Thai women was evident, and has since been spurred with this transformation. This paper is interested in transnational marriage, a phenomenon which is seen as a mechanism to transfer welfare across the economies. Based on previous research on transnational marriages of Thai Isan women to foreigners, and supported by research on rural northeast of Thailand in the past ten years by the author, this paper will argue that in the contexts of rapid change, and followed with the transformation of Thailand into a middle income economy, opportunities to improve living standards are opened for both men and women. However, the extent to which women are able to exploit these opportunities rests upon the rights and responsibilities that bind women to their families.

How Social Capital Contributes to the Success of Community-Led Sustainable Agriculture Production and Marketing: Experience from Northern Thailand

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Abstract

Sustainable rural livelihoods are determined by the availability of five key capital assets, namely natural, physical, financial, human and social capitals. In agriculture and natural resource management, most authors relate collective action in natural resource management and farmer's cooperatives to social capital as a key-mobilizing factor strengthening and improving other capitals. It provides productive cooperation and promotes economic growth. The paper aims to explain how social capital is being built up and determine its impact on human capacity, economic benefits and environmental integrity.

Using case study approach we analyze the development of agro-ecologically based farming systems and community-led enterprise in three districts in Mae Hong Son province, which is ranked high on ethnic and cultural diversity. The three cases include production and marketing of agro-forestry systems in Mae Sariang district, organically grown farming systems for food security in Khum Yuam district, and agricultural processing-based rural enterprise in Mueang district. The different performances of the three cases in terms of technological innovation, social entrepreneurship, and networking are partly due to different contextual circumstances; however, the empirical results suggest that social capital, including ethnic and cultural dimensions, through interactive learning, collective action and commitment, as well as local governance, play an important role for strengthening farmer networks and improving community self-reliance. The studies imply that to scale-up sustainable agriculture production and marketing to improve the livelihoods of farmers and their ability to cope with changes, social capital needs to be assessed with respect to ethnicity and cultural identity.

Thai Migration in the Netherlands: From Flexible Cross-Cultural Marriage to the Regime of "Cultural Citizenship"

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Abstract

This paper traces changing migration trajectories of Thai migrants in the Netherlands over the past four decades. It illustrates their livelihood in relation to and in adaptation to the country' politico-economic structures and socio-cultural settings in term of immigration laws and naturalization policies. Brummelhuis (1997) suggests that during the 1980s, cross-cultural marriage was a core method for two main groups--Thai women, and gays and transvestites-- to acquire a legal status and to live in the Netherlands. Several cases, after securing legal residence, could enter sex-work services. Therefore, sex-work and cross-cultural marriage had become complement to each other. This has coincided with the Netherlands's legalization of same-sex marriage, encouraging Thai gay migrants choose to live with their Dutch partners in the Netherlands. At that time, the immigration laws and integration policies were considered more flexible and subsequently opened opportunities for Thai migrants to obtain legal permanent residence and citizenship less effortful. Compared to those migrating after the year of 2006, the Netherlands introduced a more rigid immigration laws and officially a new integration project to apply with migrants who aim to live long-term in the country. Consequently, Thai migrants have been forced to comply with obligation to pass Dutch language and socio-cultural understanding exams as a fundamental step to the naturalization. This is because the Netherlands is among European countries that have amended immigration laws to diminish the number of immigrants in the last decades. This report is also to describe the migration forms of those who migrated before and after 2006, in order to argue that how changing immigration laws and related policies have shaped Thai migration patterns, and migrants' class and backgrounds over the past decades.

Past, Present and Future of Challenges for Small-Scale Fisher Communities in the Andaman Sea

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Prince of Songkla University

K. Kittiwattanawong
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Abstract

This qualitative research focuses on the dynamics of the livelihoods of small-scale fishing communities in the Andaman Sea, and the challenges posed by their future. It gives a historical perspective on issues concerning the interaction of changes and the responses/adaptations of small-scale fishers and external drivers. Research methodology included the interviewing of one hundred and fifty-eight informants from late 2015 to early 2016. It was found that before the 1960s most small-scale fishers could sustain their living from rich coastal resources. After the implementation of the national social and economic development plan, fishing communities were gradually affected by a variety of drastic changes, and heaving impacted by state and market forces. The scale and degree of negative impact on their livelihoods increased in the 2000s. However, with support from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the fishers were organized into local and national levels of small-scale fishers, to empower themselves and negotiate with the authorities. Some level of success is evident in a few cases, as the movements are related to and contextualized in both global and national trends and changes over the past decade. Since 2010, the communities having been facing new critical challenges – climate change, urbanization and globalization. In addition, the communities have to negotiate within the current government political and regulatory framework on fishing, which brought about both positive and negative effects on their livelihoods. The scale and impact of these issues are so vast that both the fishers and local NGOs have severe difficulty in utilizing their existing resources and wisdom to cope with them.

Arenas of Water Justice on Transboundary Rivers: Human Rights and Hydropower Dams on the Salween and Mekong Rivers

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Abstract

In Southeast Asia, major transboundary rivers such as the Mekong River and Salween River are central to the food security, livelihoods and culture of millions of people. On the Mekong River, one mainstream dam – the Xayaburi Dam – is now under construction in Laos by a Thai consortium, principally for electricity export to Thailand, with more mainstream dams planned to follow. Additional projects are also planned for the Salween River's mainstream in Myanmar, also for electricity export to Thailand. How the concept of justice in water governance should be understood and applied to transboundary rivers is increasingly the subject of critical analysis, including with regard to human rights-based approaches, and from a socio-legal perspective.

This paper examines how claims for justice on the Salween and Mekong Rivers around large hydropower dams have been made and framed within "arenas of water justice" in Southeast Asia, with a particular focus on mechanisms for extra-territorial obligations (ETOs) and the role of the Thai National Human Rights Commission and the Administrative Court in Thailand. The research draws upon in-depth interviews and participatory observation with community representatives, civil society groups, NHRIs, government agencies and the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR). It is argued that in recent years, new arenas of transboundary water justice have been produced by these actors, drawing on both hard and soft laws, yet access to justice also faces limitations, including due to the cross-border character of the projects.

Male Peer Groups as the Building Blocks of Masculinities: Patterns of Homosociality and the Heterosexual Sex Industry in Thailand

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Abstract

The activity of visiting female sex workers in Thailand is a historically social event that males do with friends, peers, and business associates. This pattern of homosociality has tied sexual activity and sexual variety to masculinity and normalized the local demand for sex work in Thailand. In the wake of these homosocial norms, this paper will demonstrate how the concept of homosociality plays a role in the maintenance and transformation of hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculinities in Thailand and beyond, especially by actors of political masculinities who serve as power-wielding agents of change. The social structures that define and regulate masculinity affect who can enter and lead institutions such as politics, government, and the military, albeit often in hidden and political ways. This research draws upon empirical research and will contrast the evolving and culturally shifting performances of homosociality among Thai heterosexual men to men of other cultures; it will show that while masculinities function differently in each culture, this type of homosociality currently perpetuates gender inequality in Thailand and reflects societies worldwide. Lastly, this paper will discuss how women experience male homosociality while asserting that homosociality is a factor that can't be ignored when trying to build gender equality.

The Legacy of the Li and Lao: Some Aspects of the De-Taization of a Society over the Longue Duree

Catherine Churchman
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Abstract

In my recent book "The People between the Rivers" I discussed the rise and fall of the Heger II bronze drum culture in the Yunkai Dashan 雲開大山 mountain range in southern China, an upland area south of the Pearl River lying between the present-day cities of Cenxi, Beiliu, Yulin (Eastern Guangxi) and Xinyi (Guangdong). I ended the narrative in the middle of the eighth century CE with the replacement of the autonomous leadership of the meuang-like dong chiefdoms in the region through both conquest and co-option by imperial administrators of the Tang as the chiefdoms were converted into small provinces (zhou). Fragments of language preserved in old texts and the toponyms of the area suggest very strongly that the occupants of this region spoke Tai languages (possibly of the Southwestern branch) at least into the eleventh century. Ming texts record communities of non-Sinitic people referred to as Zhuang and Lang alongside Yao on the outskirts of counties in the region, but by the turn of the twentieth century these groups had disappeared from the Chinese written record of the region altogether. Using a combination of historical geography and linguistics to augment textual sources, this paper aims to uncover the processes that led to the eventual disappearance of Tai peoples as distinct societies over the eighth to nineteenth centuries CE, how features of their language and culture were retained after their disappearance, and how the shape and extent of the former dong chiefdoms continued to influence the shape of Chinese administration in the area. As an example of de-Taization the subject offers a significant contrast to the processes of Taization going on over a similar period further to the south and west.

Research on the Provenance of the Burmese Tradition of Reverse Glass Paintings, from Wat Chong Klang in Mae Hong Son in Former Lan Na

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Abstract

In the hill city of Mae Hong Son along the Thai-Burmese border in northwest Thailand, a unique treasure has been adorning three of the internal walls of Wat Chong Klang: a nineteenth century Shan Buddhist temple. It comprises nearly two hundred individual reverse glass paintings depicting the story of Maha Wetsandon Chadok and the Life of the Buddha: in-situ there since the mid 19th century; when according to local knowledge, the city was created and the temple was erected.

Likewise, locals attribute the provenance of these reverse glass paintings as Mandalay: largely confirmed by more than a hundred brief textual and numeric captions in nineteenth century Burmese style identifying the specific illustrations.

Once very popular, this art form originating from Europe, carefully layering pigment onto clear panes of glass —the backs of which were then made opaque— played a considerable role in the inter-Asian trade: both between Europeans and Asian courts, and between China and India. This paper will present the connectivity engaging Thailand with Burma at the end of the 19th century and will share the result of our research conducted from 2014 to 2016 in Thailand and in Burma, which explored firstly the interactions with Chinese diaspora artisans spreading this tradition throughout South and Southeast Asia for use as religious iconography. And led us, more recently, towards exploring their role within the Dutch East India Company in seeking favor with the Siamese court as early as the Seventeenth Century.

Chatree Gold Mining : A Transnational Corporation's Accumulation by Dispossession and Land-Grabbing

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Abstract

Chartree Gold Mining is the largest gold mining endeavor in Thailand, owned by Akkara Resources Public Company, an affiliate of Australian transnational corporation Kingsgate. For over a decade, the gold mining operation has caused severe health impacts, environmental degradation and land grabbing from local farmers. This article explains the capital accumulation of TNCs and the resultant farmers' land loss by applying the concept of 'accumulation by dispossession'.

The key findings of the study include, firstly, that the TNC established a company held by Thai politicians for securing a concession agreement, but then transferred that agreement to the affiliated company of Kingsgate. The gold mining concession area is on local community land, national preserved forest, community forest, public land, and local public road. However, locals were not adequately informed, and public participation in decision-making process was not conducted in any meaningful way. Even in the national preserved forest, the TNC received permission from the RFD for its mining operation. Such public land-grabbing has caused local farmers to lose their common properties including watershed, public ponds, and even local roads.

The second finding is that, in addition to public lands, the gold mining operation also grabbed lands of local farmers, rendering them landless. They lost their communal lands, which were sources of their food security and resources for their daily life. It was found that some villages eventually collapsed. Farmers migrated and struggled to find new land. Furthermore, over the course of the local community's struggles over rights to public land, farmers have been threatened by the company and state in the form of several lawsuits citing laws, including the Public Assembly Act.

Contradiction, Controversy and Confusion of Lanna History Studies

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Abstract

An effort to study Lanna history in a broad sense has been conducted to isolate Lanna history from the generalized national history. Most of prior studies tended to explain Lanna history through a top-down approach, which was likely to put an emphasis on the Lanna after 2540 B.E.—1997 A.D. The histories described by those prior studies tends to revolve around the monarch as the center of the historicized stories. Those studies tended to relate us as a commoner to the monarch in a way that pinpoints the contribution of the monarch to different cities. Such relation was characterized as the notable points of history. Nevertheless, particular ways of explaining the history was blind to the actual local context and at the end, was not tenable and was unable to explain the "self" of the locals.

The highlighted relation between Lanna and Thai state, on the one hand, seemed to strengthen the monarchical state-center history. Such history cannot address the questions concerning the changes from the ground. As the result, different way to study Lanna history has been invented to liberate from the domination of monarchical state-center history such as the indigenous knowledge, the local philosopher, other different kinds of history or the historicized anecdotes of self of the commoner who compete to own the natural resource.

The centralization Lanna history study tends to direct to the confusion in different approach of Lanna history study which highlights the unequal power relation between groups; or focus on the individual belief which can be categorized into 3 groups including monarchical state-center oriented, localism oriented and local monarchy-oriented explanation which are endowed as the mainstream in Lanna history studies.

Rural Melodramas: Queer Aesthetics and the Fantasies of Development in Northeast Thailand

Chairat Polmuk
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Abstract

This paper investigates the melodramatic rendering of Cold War media and political discourses of development as a mode of queer critique. By incorporating elements of queer aesthetics of excess and theatricality, films such as Apichatpong Weerasethakul's Haunted Houses (2001) and Mingmongkol Sonakul's I-San Special (2002) revisit Cold War politics which are often marked by hypermasculinity due to the prevailing military culture of the period. While many films from the post-1997 economic crisis nostalgically reproduce masculinist stories about urban youth gangsters who rebel against the authoritarian state, the films under review engage with different issues, namely, an urban-rural divide, developmentalism, and fantasies of the good life. These issues reflect anti-communist policy during the Cold War in which rural areas, especially Northeast Thailand or Isan, were targeted by the military government for their involvements with communist activities. Development projects funded by the United States propagated not only anti-communist rhetoric but also fantasies of progress that result in long-lasting repercussions on rural people. Queer aesthetics in the films by Apichatpong Weerasethakul and Mingmongkol Sonakul tackle precisely this domain of fantasy of Cold War politics. Essentially, queer reenactments of radio soap operas and sensational novels flourishing during the Cold War demonstrate how fantasies of development are embodied or "possessed" in the everyday life of Isan people and how they continue to haunt the present.

Life and Networks of Veteran Vintage Clothing Dealers in Jutujak Market, Bangkok, Thailand

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Abstract

Prominent in hundreds of flea market across Thailand, second-hand clothing is now a mainstay of fashion choice both among Thais and foreigners. While a conventional wisdom may be that second-hand clothing is consumed among those with low income, enthusiasm in vintage clothes from mid-to-high-income urban patrons indicates that forces of political economy and global trends play a crucial role in shaping domestic fashion preferences. But Thais are not the only consumers of thrift. Foreigners are also avid shoppers and find Jatujak to be their paradise destination. The market is flooded with those with good taste who are after good fashion thrill, ranging from Americans to Europeans and Japanese, who travel from afar to pursue rare vintage clothing of high quality. Using Jatujak Market, the most well-known weekend market in Asia, as a location of study, this paper seeks to provide explanation for the recent popularization of vintage clothes in Jatujak market as a cultural phenomenon situated at the nexus between the changing landscape of foreign consumer choice, transnational flows of commodities and emergent global aesthetic sensibilities. Attending to the role of merchant networks in mediating consumer needs around the world, this paper aims to understand how vintage clothing traders came to build their network and acquire expert knowledge as well as their utility through a participant-observation account of market in action, in addition to in-depth and informal interviews of merchants and both domestic and foreign consumers.

Access to Rights of Migrant Children in Thailand: The Importance of Social Integration and Roles of Civil Society

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Abstract

This paper focuses on migrant children in Thailand, who were born to cross-border migrants from neighboring countries, and their access to basic rights in terms of access to birth registration, education and health care services. It illustrates the situation of access to rights from fieldwork in 3 study sites; Mae Sot (Tak), Ranong and Chumporn, with the highlight on the importance of social integration and roles of local civil society in improving the situation. In sum, the quantitative survey found that about 73 percent of migrant children born in Thailand in the past 5 years were able to register their birth with the Thai registrar. School enrollment rates of migrant children aged 7 to 15 years old was 83 percent. Of this number, the majority were enrolled at NGO-run learning centers, and only one-fifth were at regular Thai schools. Respecting access to health care and protection is an issue with about three quarters of the children not covered by health insurance schemes. Due to the decline in the magnitude of the country's own labor force, it is no longer possible for Thailand to take cross-border migrants' economic contributions for granted. This paper argues that by using integration policies with efforts to raise awareness, change the mindset, and correct some existing misunderstandings among involved stakeholders towards migrant population, access to basic rights of these migrant children can be improved and Thailand will benefit more in the long term from cross-border migration.

Sport, Urbanization and Local Identity in Thailand

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Abstract

Sport, urbanization and local identity in Thailand.

Rural Transformation and Livelihood Adaptations: A Case Study of Villagers in an "Agricultural Community" in Nakhonprathom, Thailand

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Abstract

This paper studies the aspects, directions, and factors - both individual and structural - related to economic change in rural areas affecting livelihood adaptation of villagers. The research was conducted in an "agricultural community", Ban Kang Klong, which is a village in Nakhonprathom province, not very far from suburbs of Bangkok to the west. The research utilized mixed methods, employing both qualitative and quantitative tools.

The research found that although Ban Kang Klong seems to be an "agricultural community" with varieties of cultivation as well as an active organic farming group which is nationally famous, most villagers make a living with non-agricultural occupations, mostly as labors in industrial factories and as general laborers. Most villagers - both in farming and non-farming sector – have a rather poor economic status and have to face several problems and risks. Each group of people has a different potential of livelihood adaptation to gain a stable position depending on their social and economic backgrounds. At the same time, the state's policies and development projects impacting the village play important role in villagers' potential of adaptation. This finding leads to the suggestion that policies and development projects, which are not limited to promoting agriculture and not clustered around only some groups, as well as paying attention to poor landless laborers, should be very important in promoting stability and sustainability in the economic life of Ban Kang Klong villagers.

Early Gay Dating in Magazines: Public Uncovering of Sexuality and Desires in Gay Men

Chanan Yodhong

Abstract

This paper aims to explore sexualities and sexual preferences, especially of gay men, from dating columns in magazines during the 1970s–1980s, the period of time in which such columns became highly popular. Dating columns in magazines created a new way for all sexes and genders to reveal their sexualities and their sexual desires in the public sphere through printed matters in the 1970s. Thai society in the 1970s, especially after 1973, experienced various social movements and a new expression of freedom by the public. Individuals were able to choose the life partner of their choice, along with expressions of their sexuality. The feeling of freedom of expression prompted individuals to divulge their sexual desire in public spaces, such as in the dating columns of magazines. Early gay dating columns were offered in magazines that were not exclusively for gays, as magazine for gays (especially for gay men) were not popularized until the early 1980s. Regardless of the sexuality, dating columns created and defined sexuality in various registers of ideology, promulgating ideas such as the inability of human beings to live without a mate, the promotion of monogamy in men-love-men couples as a way to help prevent AIDS, the binary opposition in gay sexuality, or hatred and discrimination within LGBTQ society itself.

A Study of the Tai Ahom Traditional Dance Forms and Their Inherent Beliefs.

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Urmimala Duarah
Ban-Ok-Pup-Lik-Mioung-Tai

Abstract

Tradition is the cultural footprint of a civilized nation. The Tai Ahom is one of six western Tai groups who migrated from near present day Yunnan in early 13th century under the leadership of Sukapha, a Tai prince. While their traditions and culture have continued since the days of nature worship, later Tai groups became Theravadi Buddhist around the 14th century.

"Lai Lung Kham" is one of their dance forms to propitiate Po-Phi-Su, the god of nature. Um Pha Deowdhani is another dance cum worship; performed once every twelve years, the priest dances to the tune of the "Klong" and behaves like an Oracle to predict the future.

The most vibrant dance form is the Bihu, similar to Poi Sang Ken of the other Tai groups performed during the spring. The spontaneous rhythm and melodious music is related to Nature and its procreation; as per tradition, female dancers represent Nature while male dancers represent the clouds, whose rain reverberates into agriculture. It is also the most graceful dance related to fertility and the productive power of Nature.

Almost all the Tais of SE Asia perform such dance forms during the spring time reflecting percolation of similar cultural tradition. The author being a professional bihu dancer, a comparative study of various dance forms was done on the basis of field study accompanied by the audio visual recording and live rendering wherever required.

Discrete Continuity in Transnational Religious Flow and Modernization, a Case Study of Thai Diaspora in Copenhagen

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Abstract

This paper reexamines religious belief and its impact on global ethnic flows, which is crucial for Thailand as a Buddhist country. It reveals the entanglements among secularism, religion and modernization through the study of Thai diaspora in the global city of Copenhagen. This paper focus on the ethnographic understanding of the role of a Thai Buddhist temple for Thai diaspora in Copenhagen, and touches upon the question of 'Can religion function as a mechanism to give relief to the diaspora's turbulent life?" and "How do Thai diaspora perceive their religious beliefs in the global mobilization?". We argue that in the context of modernization, there is a discrete continuity of self-identities and perceptions within transnational religious flow. Regarding the relationship between religion and diaspora life, first-generation Thai immigrants and their children in Denmark show an obvious distinction. The methodology in this paper consists of intensive field visits to the Thai temple, aiming to present how a religious institution shape the disciples' view toward migrated life. We also conducted several interviews of Thai individuals, examining how individuals perceive religion and life change. Through qualitative study methods, this paper presents the continuity in transnational religious flows and the friction inside Thai people's view on religion and life course.

Materials as Historical Agency: How Technological Devices Helped Shape the Event of Black May Uprising

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Abstract

The street protest against General Suchinda Kraprayoon's military regime in Bangkok in May 1992, known as Black May, was one of the major political uprisings in Thai history. It was followed by a brutal crackdown which left scores of civilian casualties. Eventually, the regime made way for a return to civilian rule. Many of the protesters were the dressed-up middle class with mobile phones, hence the movement's nickname: "Mobile-phone mob".

This paper argues that technological devices such as mobile phones, pagers, facsimiles, cable televisions transmitting international channels, and video recorders/players played a crucial role in facilitating and influencing the movement. These new technologies, having been recently introduced to the country at that time, were a medium that lay beyond the reach of the state. Mobile phones and pagers enabled information to be passed on quickly, aiding the mob's rapid mobilization. Cable televisions and video recorders allowed footage of the massacre from international news outlets to be circulated, belying the government's narrative that their actions had not resulted in any deaths. The government's inability to stifle these channels of communication was a significant factor in the movement's success. This paper explores this major historical juncture to demonstrate potent agency of technological devices in shaping the course of history.

Shifting Paradigm, Re-Membering the Nation: Phibun's Cultural Mandates and the Rhetorical Re-Invention of Thai Cultural Memory in the 1930s

Chanon Adsanatham
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Abstract

How and what a nation remembers is influenced by and intertwined in networks of power and ideology that come to mold our social consciousness through semiotics that aim to discipline our worldviews and actions. Contemporary Thai cultural memory is no different. It is sustained through signs, broadly defined to include language, visual, space, and gesture. How political signs are used impact what we recall and dismiss, shaping the make up of our cultural memory (Connerton). As a case in point, I propose to analyze the sociopolitical functions of the cultural mandates (rathaniyom) of Phibunsongkram and their effects on Thai cultural memory through the lens of rhetorical studies, a discipline devoted to the critical examination of persuasive practices and their influence on culture.

Drawing upon de Certeau, Foucault, and Connerton, I analyze propaganda and memorandums from the Phibun administration to reveal that rathaniyom was not merely an aim to modernize the nation; it subverted a traditional cultural milieu steeped in aristocratic values—creating a paradigm shift in Thai cultural memory to propel the political interests and authority of the new government. The cultural mandates forced Thais to break away from the past and re-invent a new ethos in keeping with the new political ideology; citizens are gradually disciplined to develop new social mores, values, tastes, and worldviews. Thus, the contemporary understanding and sense of Thai-ness derived from selective memory—a forgetting—that was rhetorically massaged through embodying rathaniyom.

Altogether, my analysis deconstructs the binary between memory and forgetting. I show that forgetting is not an antithesis to remembering but a part of the (re)invention of cultural consciousness and habitus to re-member citizens. This recognition creates a critical intervention to inform our understanding of the relationship between memory, public discourse, and behavior in the making/remaking of identities and consciousness in the Thai "imagined communities".

Remnants of the Tsunami in Takuapa: Material Objects, Affective Remembrances, and Traces of the Wave

Chantal Croteau
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Abstract

On the morning of December 26, 2004, a massive tsunami struck the western coast of Thailand. Powerful enough to carry a large fishing boat more than one kilometer inland, it significantly changed the physical and emotional landscapes of Thailand's Phang Nga province. Drawing on ethnographic data collected in the years of 2015 and 2016, the current paper seeks to make sense of the ways in which the Indian Ocean tsunami is remembered, forgotten, and "unforgotten" within the Takuapa district of Phang Nga (Stewart 1996). Through an analysis of material tsunami remnants found throughout the region, this paper investigates the relationship between objects and tsunami memories. That is, this paper examines how tsunami objects, such as formal memorial structures, old concrete foundations scattered along the coast, and Buddha statues believed to have survived the wave unscratched, maintain, transmit, and, in some ways, generate new memories of the 2004 disaster. Observations of and interactions with these material remnants, participation in tsunami anniversary rituals conducted in the community, and interviews with Takuapa citizens reveal the ways that tsunami objects, as sites of embodied memory, both affect and become affected by members of the Takuapa community.

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Thailand's Crisis of Democracy: A Search for Transformation

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Abstract

A decade has passed since the military coup d'état in 2006, 15 years after the previous coup in 1991, leading to an unprecedented country-wide polarization and intractable political conflict. The military intervention by another coup in 2014 claimed its legitimacy by curbing the conflict and making preparations for a reform toward "true democracy". This paper examines narratives of the crisis with the focus on social and political transformation. With the country recovering from a period of deep internal disagreement, understanding how the crisis is defined and contested by different factions becomes imperative. Instead of debating electoral reform, this paper is more concerned with the complexities of society and democracy in a period of conflict and transformation. In particular, we will focus on emerging debates that may determine the future of Thai democracy, namely; reconciliation, transitional justice, non-violence, inequality and state transformation.

The Influences of Gender Beliefs on the Spatial Hierarchy and Organization of the Tai-Puan Ethnic Vernacular House in Xiangkhouang Province, Lao People's Democratic Republic

Chantanee Chiranthanut

Abstract

Among various Tai ethnic groups, Tai-Puan people have developed an interesting spatial organization style which revolves around their traditional beliefs and values. This paper examines how the Tai-Puan beliefs on social status and gender roles affects the way their residential spaces are organized. That is to say, spaces in Tai-Puan vernacular house are arranged according to their gender hierarchy and the existence of each space always corresponds to their gender-specific functionality as well as signifies certain cultural implications. The perception toward the roles of men heavily shapes the design of the front section of the house. On the other hand, the prominent roles of women as homemakers and caretakers of domestic chores govern the organization of inner spaces and the majority of the back areas of the house. In summary, this paper highlights the influence of gender beliefs on the spatial organization of the Thai-Puan vernacular architecture. The influence of spiritual and gender beliefs on architectural functions have not yet been extensively studied but are critical to the understanding of the formation of the Tai ethnic vernacular architecture from the sociocultural aspect. The idea that sociocultural factors define characteristics of spaces is a basic concept in Tai ethnic vernacular architecture. This research will, therefore, help add on to existing knowledge in this field and facilitate further research about the long-existing, Tai ethnic vernacular architecture that can be commonly found throughout the Southeast Asia region.

Land Grabbing in the Context of Economic Development and Conservation: A Case Study of Border Community, Ubon Ratchathani

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Abstract

This project studies the process of land grabbing that took place amidst the conflict over state policy. The study focused on conditions that are favorable for land grabbing in Thailand and Laos, in Buntharik and Khong Chiam, Ubon Ratchathani. It looked at the actors involved in the conflict and their responses. In addition, community adjustment to the conflict was considered.

This study used qualitative research methods. Documentary research, field data collection, and a literature review were used to explore related concepts including land grabbing, land tenure, access theory. These concepts were applied to explain the phenomena seen in the case study.

The research found that (1) the government agencies and individuals not only played an important role in the land grabbing, but also in capitalist development. However, this situation was complicated by the implementation of government polices that changed over time. (2) Priority should be given to the concept of land grabbing in cases of contestation between the state and the community, called “internal land grabbing”. In both cases, it was reflected that policies designed to designate and protect conservation areas is part of the new form of enclosure under neoliberalism. This internal land grabbing showed power relations among various actors and the ability of different actors to access resources. ‘Community Land Title’ was created to negotiate resource access, and is used as a tool to create alternative and legitimate access to resources, and as a means of fighting against communities labelled "invaders".

From War-Like Pastimes to Civilized Sports: Physical Activities in (Pre)Modern Siam

Charn Panarut
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Abstract

I explain how Siamese men during the pre-modern era were trained to be aggressive in exclusively-male and war-like pastimes (boat racing, elephant round-up, boxing and kite flying) during times without war. I also investigate how the function of these games as warfare occurred in the age of colonization and the emergence of the nation-state. During the pre-modern era, the aggressive masculinity of the pastime served the need for survival of a family, a patron-client group and a kingdom. These pastimes were a sphere for engendering a number of specialists of violence. From the 1820s onward, colonization slowly generated less importance in traditional warfare. The Siamese elite tried to avoid waging a war with British influences in the Malay Peninsula and Burma. The function for elephant round-ups and boat racing in warfare gradually faded in parallel with a decrease of pre-modern warfare in mainland Southeast Asia. Meanwhile, around the turn of the twentieth century, kite fighting and boxing were modified by the Siamese elite to be organized games in order to civilize people's behaviors. The elite supported men to play these organized sports and other modern games in order to make them accept a pacified social order of the absolute monarchy.

Innovative School Health Education Model of Enhance Intergenerational Support Among Elderly: A Case of Thai Rural Family

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Abstract

This study has two major purposes: first, to explore the health education teaching model to enhance attitudes, awareness and knowledge about the elderly and second, to outline the difference in students' attitudes, awareness and knowledge about the elderly before and after the health education program. A quasi-experimental pre-test and post-test (action classroom research) were carried out and the qualitative and quantitative data collected from the participants' responses to the research questions. The participants consisted of thirty-five students in Grade 9 at Chokchai Samakkee School, Nakhon Ratchasima.

The research results show that students' attitudes and awareness towards the elderly before and after participating in the health education program are significantly different at p=0.05. Thus it can be concluded that the health education model is able to improve the students' attitudes, awareness and knowledge of the elderly. Moreover, the students also considered the value of the elderly. Another set of qualitative data was collected from the focus group responses, which explored the students' perceptions toward the elderly after the health education program. This method will be reviewed and analyzed in this essay by using content analysis. The results show that 1 in 3 students indicate that the health education program assisted them to understand changes in the elderly and how to treat and take care of them.

The concept of the elderly care model is made of of three interrelated dimensions: attitudes, awareness, and knowledge. The model consists of five procedures: 1) analysis, 2) design, 3) communicating, 4) being creative, and 5) reflecting. Reflecting on the results of this project could help schools in practice and promote active learning in the classroom.

Remaking State, Market and Community Relations in Practices of Economic Mechanism (REDD+) in Environmental Governance

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Chusak Wittayapak
Chiang Mai University

Abstract

The paper examines the process of state-induced REDD+ as an economic mechanism to enhance forest conservation in the community forest. The research traces how government experts make efforts to gain trust from local community in order to implement the pilot project in its community forest area. It also investigated how the villagers perceive the problem of global climate change in relation to their forest conservation. Simplification of knowledge on global climate change and the role of the forest in carbon sequestration have enabled villagers to understand the REDD+ program. Field research found that some money was been spent in preparation for the pilot project, with villagers who participated in the preparation process paid for their labor. However, villagers who were not involved in the processes have questioned the distribution of the revenue of REDD+, despite no carbon trading having yet occurred. It was shown that financial issues were very sensitive in community-based natural resource management. In fact, the government officials viewed REDD+ as a way of enhancing the knowledge of the villagers in forest conservation with respect to the global climate change crisis, rather than an end simply terms of carbon trading. The state has in practice become a broker in the marketization of the environment, with financial support provided by an international organization.

The Current Situation of Learning Thai Language in GMS: The Case Studies of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam

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Abstract

Thailand has experienced the greatest amount of development by countries in the Greater Mekong sub region since World War II. Due to its geographic location in the middle of the region, Thailand has become the economic center of the region automatically. This has caused it to become a destination for people from CLMV countries who intend to settle in Thailand to find jobs and earn money, and Thai investors have invested in CLMV countries more and more. Thus, Thai has become an important language used by people in this sub region to communicate.

This article attempts to study the Current Situation of Learning Thai Language in GMS. The objectives of the study are as follows: 1) to survey the Thai language curriculum in higher education institutions in the CLMV country at the present. 2) To study the benefits of learning Thai language, in particular those who graduated from Thai language courses from CLMV higher education institutions.

This study was conducted using informal interviews of Thai language instructors and Thai language students in CLMV's higher education institutions. It also collected data from the university's website and related documents. It has found that while learning Thai language has been very popular in the CLMV countries, especially in Cambodia, Myanmar and Vietnam, higher-level teaching is quite rare compared with the market demand; and that those who graduated in Thai language find it easy to get a good job.

Rediscovering the Past from the Future of the Community: The Creation of a Youth Guide Club and the Revival of Local History in Baan Bor Luang, Bor Kluea, Nan

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Abstract

Baan Bor Luang is an old community with a history of producing rock salt for more than 700 years. Located in the northeastern frontier province of Nan with two mountain ranges of Luang Phra Bang and Phee Pan Nam, Bor Luang Village was difficult to access by land-based transportation in the past; therefore, it has been neglected by the government and was a stronghold of communist insurgents in the mid-70s. However, with the expansion of transportation networks into the area with a rich history of salt production and mountainous rainforest, Baan Bor Luang has experienced a growth in the number of visitors and tourism related business development that could eradicate historic remnants of this village. This paper reveals the collaborative work of the university researchers (KMUTT) in the region aiming to stimulate local community members to realize their historical significance by organizing a group of youth who are interested in local history. The process of this research started from creating a network of local scholars, finding young students with talent and interest in local history, training them to search for historical evidence in the village and creating media for exhibiting village story to visitors. The result was an enthusiastic group of young people who can present the history of the village and produce a collection of local narratives and its historic significances. The group also generated significant revenue from tour guide services and raised awareness of Baan Bor Luang's cultural heritage within the community. The young guides of Baan Bor Luang represent the hope for cultural heritage preservation movements in the future. However, there is the question of how the community can cope with the rising number of tourism businesses and the conflicts among members in the community as a consequence of booming tourism business.

An Analysis of Thai Film Culture Transmission in China

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Abstract

Not only does a film contain culture, but it is also an important medium of spreading culture. Thai film, an instrument of Thailand's soft power, has been very popular in China in recent years. Since the suitable expression of Thai cultural elements runs through these films they have rapidly shown a strong attraction and great influence in China.

Firstly, this paper outlines three major stages of Thai film culture transmission in China: the transmission of Thai folk culture; the transmission of Thai pop culture; and China-Thailand communication and cooperation in film culture. It then analyzes strategies adopted to promote the spread of Thai culture in China after the revival of Thai films in the 2000s, that is, to consistently and vigorously stick to the characteristics of Thai national culture, to build multicultural ideas, to accurately hold the latest market's trend, and to open excellent film resources. Next, the paper will briefly elaborate the reasons Thai film culture is willingly accepted by Chinese audiences from the following three aspects: the common and regional culture between China and Thailand; the friendly diplomatic ties between China and Thailand; and the good quality of the Thai films themselves. Finally, severe challenges existing in the Thai film culture transmission will be pointed out, so as to provide more reflection and inspiration for Thailand’s culture transmission in China.

The Creation of Live Event

Chonlathip Poonsirivong
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Abstract

On the 13th of October 2016, Thailand and the world lost a great man, Bhumibol Adulyadej. Thailand is currently in the midst of a one year mourning period, characterized by feelings of sorrow and remorse for the passing of the great. This research aims to study the creation of a live event expressing loyalty toward the king. In particular, it will focus on the idea generation, interpretation and communication of the message “Appreciation of the king”.

"Even though we are in sorrow and tears are in our faces, our beloved Thailand and the monarchy must continue,” stated the prime minister during an appearance broadcast on all television channels. “Do not let the death derail his majesty’s determination to see his kingdom prosper, the people live in blessedness and be kind to each other.”

The framework of this research is divided into 3 parts; production and management, creative and performative communication and design production. The creation of a live event about King and mourning has many factors to consider – not only appropriate expression in Thai ceremony, culture and tradition – but also the emotional state of an audience in a sad and sensitive situation.

The main message of loss is one of thankfulness, respect and deep gratitude toward King Rama IX, through the live event under the name of “The Honor”. The results show that both the Thai and foreign audiences feel a sense of belonging in live events, with even non-Thai participants appreciating with tears and showing their respect toward the King.

Ancestral Beliefs and Spatial Organization of Tai Dam Houses

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Abstract

Tai Dam, or Black Tai, or Lao Song originated in Sip Song Chu Tai, northwestern part of Vietnam. They were seized in Thailand as war prisoners during the Thonburi and Rattanakosin periods. This paper aims to compare the ancestral beliefs and spatial organization of Tai Dam houses in northwest Vietnam and in Ban Mae Prachan Village, Petchaburi Province, Thailand. Tai Dams at Ban Mae Prachan became Buddhists but still practice animism, supernaturalism, and ancestor veneration. Their villages and houses have some similarities and differences from those in northwest Vietnam due to changes in physical, social, and socio-cultural contexts. Besides a village shrine and a graveyard, Ban Mae Prachan also includes a Buddhist monastery. Tai Dams at Ban Mae Prachan dwell as nuclear families where the houses of married sons were constructed surrounding that of their parents. However, Tai Dams in northwest Vietnam traditionally lived in long houses with extended family, with the eldest son of the patrilineal family the leader of the household, and they held ancestor worship once a year. Traditional Tai Dam houses in these two areas had two staircases and entrances, one at the front and the other in the rear. In northwest Vietnam, the one at the front, or gwaan, was reserved for men of the family and male guests, and that at the rear, or chan, was for women and female guests. While at Ban Mae Prachan, one at the gwaan was for guests and the other at the chan was kept for family members. In the later period, houses in Ban Mae Prachan had only a single staircase either outside or inside a house, and a bedroom known as a room for ancestor spirits, where the ancestor and the first erected pillars were kept.

The Tai Khamtis of Arunachal Pradesh: Issues of Religion Cultural Identities

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Abstract

Arunachal Pradesh is home to 26 major tribes and 110 minor tribes. Existing among these tribes are the Tai Khamtis whose lineage can be traced back to south of China. They migrated from Mueang-khamti-luang or Bor-khamti country in the mid eighteenth centuryto the Namsai and the Changlang districts of Arunachal Pradesh. The present paper focusses on the Namsai-Chongkham area. It is worth exploring to what extent the Tai khamtis have maintained their Tai identity and their cultural heritages. In this paper an attempt has been made to discuss the Buddhist practices of the Tai khamtis,. Certain aspects of Buddhist practices will be observed. i.e the Sangkyen festival, the Kathina dana festival, dedication ceremonies, Poi Khamsang festivals and their religious scriptures written in the Khamti script. These help us to understand how the life of Khamti people are shaped by the thoughts of Buddhism. This paper also discusses their social life i.e.the Chowpha political system, the pattern of cultivation and the housing style. The art of capturing wild elephant and using them for domestic purposes are also been discussed. One question is sure to arise as to how this rich heritage has been sustained over time. So we discuss: What are the prominent responses that are observed in the younger generation towards the preservation of their culture? How has this tribe managed to expose its culture to the world outside? What has been the magnitude of this exposition and its impression on the other cultures? What are the ways in which this tribe maintain and strengthen its ties with its Tai brethrens of other nations? All the answers of these questions have been discussed in the body text of the article

Connecting Tai-Kadai Peoples Through Weaving Techniques

Chris Buckley
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Abstract

Textiles produced by Tai-Kadai peoples are widely admired, particularly the spectacular examples with ceremonial and status significance, incorporating silk and other precious materials. Yet there have been few systematic or comparative surveys of Tai-Kadai textiles and techniques, of the type that are routine in the study of languages, for example.

This paper presents the first draft of a survey of Tai-Kadai weaving technologies. I will focus on technique, in particular, loom design, the most conservative part of a weaver's repertoire. Study techniques include mapping and comparative analysis, similar to that used by linguists. These results parallel the findings of linguists in many respects, particularly in terms of diversity. The greatest variety of loom designs used by Tai-Kadai peoples are found in Southwest China, in the same regions where linguistic diversity is greatest. The results also highlight some important technological innovations in Tai-Kadai weaving, particularly in frame design and in patterning systems. In comparison with the looms used by neighboring groups (Miao-Yao, Sino-Tibetan, Austro-Asiatic) I will argue that these innovations are likely to have been Tai-Kadai inventions. One innovation used in recording and applying patterns to cloth was subsequently picked up by other weaving groups and made possible the development of Chinese and European draw looms. These in turn led to the development of the Jacquard loom and its descendants that are now used worldwide.

Land and Class Relations in the Productivist, Post-Productivist and Globalist Thailand

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Abstract

This paper argues that Thai society is socially stratified when it comes to dealing with land problems. Analysis of class relation is still significant and relevant on many social problems and daily life in a variety of social terrains, in particular of problems of the landless people negotiating with state policies on land, forest and environmental governance. The paper extracts empirical evidence from the struggles of two mostly poor rural people movements in the last 40 years. First is community forest movement that culminated in a defunct community forest law. Second is the community land title movement packaged in a campaign for "4 laws for the poor". Plights of the landless people have not gained support from others in Thai society with growing number of middle class people delinking from agricultural land. The paper attempts to draw conclusion on how Thai society reflects itself in the problems of poverty, social and environmental justice in the larger contexts of globalized Thailand.

For and Against Human Rights: The Role of Institutions in Shaping History-Writing

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Abstract

The American historian Lynn Hunt raised the question of whether Human Rights needed a history, or even histories, given the fact that most human rights developments and initiatives are aimed at identifying past atrocities and transgressions, and advocating for a future free from the threats or discriminatory social and political arrangements that facilitated them. Hunt's provocative question was instrumental to her own contributions to the (largely) English-language scholarly debates on the origins of human rights. It is noted for the purpose of drawing out the contrasting landscapes between Eurocentric histories and the emergent history-writing on human rights in Southeast Asia generally, and Thailand in particular.

The paper assesses the institutional conditions in which human rights histories have been and might continue to be written in Thailand. Based upon auto-ethnographic observations and the organizational analysis of two major public institutions, the Princess Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre and Mahidol University, this paper draws attention to the material and ideational constraints that shape scholarly research and writing. Blending first-person accounts with institutional history, this study draws attention to the range of documents and methods that can be used when we foreground the conditions in which histories of controversial ideas and movements, such as human rights, are forged or suppressed.

A Policeman's Magical Thinking

Craig J. Reynolds
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Abstract

This paper is a biographical study of Khun Phantharak Ratchadet (1898-2006), a policeman from the mid-south who hunted down lawbreakers with the liberal use of lethal force. Policemen and the rural masculine types they pursued in the first half of the twentieth century risked injury and death. For protection they armed themselves with guns, knives, and even sharpened farm implements. They wore amulets, inserted charms under the skin, and inscribed their bodies with tattoos to ward off adversity and misfortune.

Defending oneself against injury or death is the physical side of protection. The mental and emotional side involves keeping fear in check with self-belief, and this is the theme I will explore in this paper, parting company with those who focus on commercial Buddhism (phutthaphanit), to explain the sums spent on amulets and charms. Magical thinking, like religion, belongs to the psychosocial dimension of human experience. It deals with human emotion and one's expressive needs. It is tempting to see some beliefs and practices in other cultures as superstitious or irrational, arguing for reason above belief. In fact, the magical thinking we attribute to people in other cultures is little different from how modern people often interpret reality. "Most of us have a 'savage' mentality much of the time," says Richard Shweder. In this case the policeman's repertory of magical practices emboldened him and contributed to the ruthlessness in his character. He acknowledged his savage mentality and cultivated it.

Thai-Japan Cooperation New Era – Dawei and Cluster Linkage Under "Thai Plus One"

Daisuke Matsushima
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Abstract

This report will reveal some particular features about the public and the private partnership of Thailand-Japan economic cooperation in ASEAN under the AEC (ASEAN Economic Community). It especially focuses on the Southern Economic Corridor in which Thailand is regarded as an industrial hub in the Mekong sub-region, in accordance with the Japanese FDI production network. It will be, first of all, observe that the phenomena of "Thai plus One" is being spread in this region and then discuss the background of this phenomena in line with Thai's overcoming the "Middle Income Trap."

This report will secondly review the significance of the Dawei development project, which is now jointly executed by Thailand, Myanmar and Japan on the Western edge of Southern Economic Corridor, which is defined not only as a typical example of the Thai plus One strategy, but also as solving the "industrial missing link" of ASEAN.

This paper will finally assess the progress of the cross-border value-chain as well as cluster linkages in the Mekong sub-region. Alongside the Southern Economic Corridor, it will evaluate how deep the cluster linkage has been expanded and what kind of challenges emerged against connectivity in this region.

This paper will conclude with the meaning of "industrial connectivity" rather than physical connectivity. The Government of Thailand is now also considering both infrastructure development and free trade networks in this region, as for mitigating "transaction costs" in ASEAN. Therefore this paper will also provide some policy recommendations on the future of Thailand as well as future "industrial connectivity" in this region.

This paper will also contribute toward updating the progress of the industrial connectivity in the Southern Economic Corridor from the actual running survey from Dawei in Myanmar to Ma Cau in Vietnam in March, 2017.

The State of Tai Studies Knowledge on Tai Speaking Groups in Assam, India

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Abstract

This research paper attempts to study developments in knowledge in the field of Tai studies on the Tai speaking peoples in Assam, India. It discusses the following four topics:

1) The origin and development of Tai Studies in Assam, through the historical perspective and context of Tai (Thai) studies, and research by the academic world beyond the political movement of Northeast India.

2) Studies on the Tai in Assam by some academic researchers and scholars and their approaches and schools of thought. They study the Tai peoples in Assam with historical, socio-cultural and linguistic aspects, especially Ahom history, whose viewpoints link the study of Ahom to other Tai studies. In this realm of history, the most important work supports the revival movement of Ahom associations in Assam.

3) Because of the role of Tai studies, the Ahom revival movement has strongly encouraged the studies of Tai peoples in Assam. Both the individual and institutional sectors have continued to contribute many research papers and articles in Thai, English and Assamese languages to the present day. International and local conferences are gathering the Tai peoples in Northeast India and other part of Southeast Asia, and South China has participated as well. The paper discusses the associations between regularly issued Assam books and pamphlets on both academic and general matters.

4) According to the Ahom revival movement, the Tai-Thai peoples in Assam realized their ethnic identity was connected to Tai-Thai peoples long ago. The work of Tai people in Assam tend to have a socio-political flavor and purpose. It could be said that the Tai Ahoms in Assam regarded Thai people and Thailand in a positive light, which showed unexpected results as to the historical awareness that has continued until the present day.

Social Inclusion and Social Exclusion in the Ethnic Pgaz K' Nyau (Karen Sgaw) Community

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Abstract

This paper examines social inclusion and social exclusion in an ethnic Pgaz K' Nyau (Karen Sgaw) community in Northern Thailand after it has become increasingly integrated into development activities and the modern market economy. It aims to explore the negotiation and adaptation processes of the Pgaz K' Nyau people within their community when some of their group members improve their economic situation and become "investors". The study traces back the development history in one of the Pgaz K' Nyau villages, Mea Hong Son Province, from the present to 1957, when a group of missionaries first introduced modern knowledge and income-generating activities into the community. The study found that in this process of knowledge transference, villagers who converted to Christianity first were included. However, after the Thai Government took over and continued the missionaries' services, various development projects have created social differentiation processes among the Pgaz K' Nyau. Villagers with Thai language skills were able to obtain leadership positions, to possess more land, and to benefit more from development projects than others. Land use patterns changed dramatically which resulted in the emergence of a new social economic class called "Se Hko" (rich), while the villages were excluded. At the same time, the Se Khos are trying to conceal their economic status and to blend in the group in order to maintain their belonging to the Pgaz K' Nyau community.

Violence and Politicians: The Rise and Fall of 'Wadah'

Daungyewa Utarasint

Abstract

This paper wishes to explore the beginning of 'Wadah', the only religion and ethnicity based faction that has emerged in the Thai political history. I aim to examine how the group had risen to popularity and what had prompted them to their downfall. The outbreak of violence in 2004 that had erupted in the area of the three southernmost provinces had critically undermined the creditability of 'Wadah', who were the incumbent politicians at the time. Consequently, it caused the incumbent politicians to lose their MP seats in the next round of the national election. I conceptualized 'violence' into two categories: 'massive violence'; and 'chronic daily violence'. I argue that chronic daily violence and massive violence undermine politicians' power in their own constituency. The bigger the magnitude of violence occurs, the more likelihood incumbent politicians from incumbent government coalition will be defected by their electorate in the next general election. Consequently, if the incumbents do not take any public reaction to respond to the massive violence, the electorate would defect the incumbents in the next round of election.

Dynamics of Trade between India and Thailand and India's Act East Policy

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Abstract

India's bilateral relations with Thailand are rooted in history, age-old social and cultural interactions and extensive people to people contacts. The economies of India and Thailand are increasingly integrated through trade and investment flows. The share of India's imports from Thailand was 1.4 percent and the share of India's exports to Thailand was 1.2 per cent in 2015. During 2011-15 the annual growth in value terms of India's imports from Thailand was 3 per cent against her exports to Thailand of 2 per cent. India's 'Act East' policy has been complemented by Thailand's 'Look West' policy in bringing the two economies more integrated. Both countries cooperate closely in ASEAN, the East Asia Summit and BIMSTEC, and also through the Mekong Ganga Cooperation, Asia Cooperation Dialogue and Indian Ocean Rim Association. The objectives of the present paper are threefold: to examine the relationship between the foreign trade and GDP of (i) India and (ii) Thailand, to investigate the impact of trade openness on economic growth (in terms of GDP) for both Thailand and India, and to study the prospects of fostering trade in the backdrop of India's Act East policy. The paper uses both time series and panel data models. Linear, stable and long-run relationship exists between (a) exports of India (to Thailand) and GDP of India, (b) imports of India (from Thailand) and GDP of India, and (c) exports of Thailand (to India) and GDP of Thailand. It is found that trade openness has a significant impact on the GDP of both the countries. India's Act East Policy is playing a major role in increasing the trade relations between the two. The paper looks into the rationale for the shift from India's Look East Policy to her Act East Policy and the implications of this shift.

Contradictions in Emotion Worlds Among Entrepreneurial Akha in the Thai Border Regions

Deborah Tooker
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Abstract

Pinkaew's paper argues that "neoliberalizing border enterprise… (includes) the turning of the "uneducated" rural communities into (an) entrepreneurial population", something that leads to "accumulation by dispossession". My paper will address the contradictions that appear in emotion worlds among rural Akha in the Northern Thai border region as a result of these transformations. While entrepreneurial gains are positively valued, there is an associated loss of collective identity. The literature on neoliberalism and rising market economies predicts the development of an individual subjectivity with consumerist desires which privatizes and commoditizes dimensions of social life such as the 'self' (Rofel) and emotional interiority. However, duty to the collective/family remains in tension with new individualized forms of emotional expression. There is a resistance to the autonomous individual (with an elaborately developed emotional interiority) that is linked to local codes of moral-spirituality, and that creates the contradictions in this new reality. Field research was conducted among Akha in Thailand in 2015 and 2016.

Siam Made in France

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Abstract

In the existing historiography of Southeast Asia, many prominent historians have prompted efforts to place Southeast Asia in the historical periodization of 'early modern period'. The 'early modern period' is read as a period that led to increasing cross-cultural encounters and exchanges of people and ideas. It is with these explorations by the protagonists of overseas trade, cross-cultural exchanges and empire- trading companies that stimulated the way we understand the global history of the early modern world. We do have evidence of dynamic indigenous and European exchanges of knowledge yet there has been limited engagement with the place of Southeast Asia in the global context. This paper will attempt to study the intellectual history of Southeast Asia in the early modern period with a particular interest in Siam and how their images, ideas and identity was produced in seventeenth-century French discourse. This will be introduced by the study of a French Jesuit missionary named Guy Tachard who can be seen as a representative of these discourses. The main question to be answered in this paper is whether and to what extent there is a distinct French discourse on Siam and to what extent the discourse is a result of the ways knowledge was collected, curated, protected and utilized by the agencies of the non-corporate groups like the missionaries and the non-European voices/ Thai agencies that was circulated in the French academic circles.

Tamnan Mulasasana : A Social Literature of the Two Mon States, Lavo and Hariphunchai

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to study Lavo and Hariphunchai society in Camdevi Period from Tamnanmoonsadsana literature. Data was collected through documentary study. The results of this study reveal that Lopburi was an ancient city situated between the bank of Chao Phraya river since Dvaravati civilization. There are many historical similarities between Lavo and Hariphunchai. According to the literature interpretation, it can be said that Camdevi was an enlightened Queen who established Lavo and Hariphunchai as important to the kingdom. She developed Lavo and Hariphunchai as the military, political and economic center at that time.

An Analysis of the Nature of Disparities in Educational Attainment in Thailand

Dilaka Lathapipat

Abstract

This paper will cover four basic topics: The historical trends in inequality, student performance disparities in standardized assessments, factors underlying low student performance and high learner outcome inequality (with special emphasis on the small school problem). Finally, policy suggestions are made for reducing inequality in student outcomes in Thailand.

The Siamese Volunteers of the First World War: An Experience of a "Bureaucratic Bourgeoisie" in Europe (1917 – 1920)

Din Buadaeng
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Abstract

After the declaration of war with the Central powers on the 22nd July 1917, the Siamese elites, in response to the request of the Allies, sent supporting troops including drivers, pilots and doctors. On the 30th July 1918, 1,280 Siamese soldiers arrived by ship at the old port of Marseille, in the south of France. They were volunteers, mostly from the "bourgeoisie" in the hierarchical bureaucracy that had developed at the end of the 19th century. Most were civilians with only a couple of months of basic military training before arriving in France. Once in France, the Siamese troops were further separated into groups and sent to different schools of aviation and driving before going to the front. In the end, most did not have a chance to go to battle since the war ended only a couple of months after their arrival. The Siamese troops participated in the victory marches in Paris, London and Brussels in 1919 before returning to Siam. Three Siamese representatives were also present at the Peace Conference, making Siam one of the founding countries of the League of Nations.

The experience of the Siamese soldiers in Europe will be the main focus of this paper. The few memoirs written by the soldiers provide an important insight into the soldiers' worldview, aspirations, and expectations which may or may not differ from those of the Siamese and French authorities. The sources from the French military archives also provide significant details about the soldiers' everyday lives, such as aspects of food and accommodation. Moreover, cultural conflicts can be clearly seen, especially from the French perspective: "sensitivity," "self-loving," and "excessive pride" of the Siamese troops caused many misunderstandings with the French authorities.

South Thailand Conflict: A Result of Colonial Hangover and Crisis of Thai Governance

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Abstract

Throughout the history of the post-colonial world, we can find that most places were settled whimsically by the colonial powers, according to their own border interests. As a result, some majoritarians became minority communities in their own ancestral geographical areas, and those newly formed minority communities were generally coming under the control of oppressive majoritarian rule. These minority communities did not accept this rule cordially and sometimes, after failing to create their own controlled power structures in peaceful ways, attempted to create them through separatist movements.

This is what happened with the Malay Muslims of Satun, Songkhla, Yala, Narathiwat and Pattani of Southern Thailand. In the beginning of the 19th century, these areas were known as the 'Malaya', a greater part of the present Malay Archipelago. But after the British occupation of that region, for the sake of their own interests, they accepted Siam's capricious demands and offered those areas to them without honoring the Malay Muslim's voice.

The Malay-Muslims never accepted this decision and protested, but Bangkok suppressed these movements through the use of power without attempting to resolve them through peaceful political solutions or negotiations. As a result, those Malay people were forced to opt for direct conflict with the Thai central government.

In my view, that southern conflict in Thailand cannot be generalized with the other separatist or terrorist outbreaks of the World, as it must instead be seen as a hangover of colonial practices and the crisis of Thai political system and governance, so it can only be resolved through negotiations under proper democratic governance.

The Concepts and Working Processes for Replicate the Lan Na Tripitaka Manuscripts

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Abstract

The Tipitaka is the most important scripture for Thervada Buddhism that records the teachings of the Lord Buddha. It has been revised several times by the World Buddhist Councils (saṅgāyana). In Lan Na, known as the northern part of present-day Thailand, the Tipitaka manuscripts have been replicated by Lan Na Sangha Councils several times. They are recorded using either Pali language or translated from Pali into the vernacular Lan Na language. Hence it appears that there are many concepts, such as for making great merit, and different ways of carrying out the working process for replicating the Lan Na Tipitaka manuscripts.

In the past, a thorough revision of the Tipitaka was initiated by King Tilokarat with the revised text inscribed on palm-leaf in A.D.1477. Kings, members of the royal family, wealthy persons and supreme monks also embarked on the replication of the Lan Na Tipitaka. Kanchana Arannavasi Mahathera, a supreme monk who lived in Phrae Province, for example, replicated the Lan Na Tipitaka (Pali, Pali and translated text, and Lan Na text) in the 1830s. More recently, Pradhammangalachariya (Thong Sirimanghalo) replicated the Lan Na Tipitaka – the Lan Na-Thai vernacular text and the Pali original – by inscribing it on palm-leaf; it was finally printed as a book in A.D.1978 and 1997. These Tipitaka written in Lan Na script were replicated in the zeal to accumulate religious merit and to preserve the identity of the great Lan Na civilization. The main features of the working process include 1) initiators 2) supporters and donors 3) team work 3) manuscripts 4) budget and 5) period of the project. The last stage of the replication process includes both palm-leaf manuscripts and the printed book.

Divination and Diva-Nation: Parallels in Supernatural Mediumship and Cross-Gender Idol Performance

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Abstract

What makes a convincing ritual performance? How is a medium's efficacy evaluated by devotees and fans? In this paper, I juxtapose cross-gender performances in spirit mediumship with K-pop cover dance. I argue that in both cases, precision in the physical movement of the body is essential to the appreciation of ritualized performances.

The Mekong region, including Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam, are known for cross-gender practices in spirit mediumship. Ritual specialists are required to channel, and thus perform, both male and female spirits. Increasingly, males who are feminine, but not necessarily transgender women, are dominating ritual practices, as they are considered to be more open to external influence and more convincing in playing both male and female roles. That is, the embodied mimesis of a spirit is the proof of possession. Fidelity to a deity's recitations and movements is thus critical to the audience's belief and appreciation.

In the contemporary period, spirit mediumship is expanding rather than receding in popularity. This may be a consequence of feelings of insecurity generated by rapid changes in social, political, and economic processes. At the same time, new cultural productions are also developing. K-pop cover dance, or the copying of dance moves to K-pop songs, has recently gained popularity among young people in the region. The criteria for evaluating this practice is whether fidelity to the pop stars being covered. Interestingly, the practice is also dominated by feminine males. Additionally, some coverers speak about their practice as performing as their idols, just as mediums are possessed by spirits. Juxtaposing these two arenas opens up new ways of thinking about the performance of deities and idols.

Equity Learning for Ethnic Groups

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Abstract

Language is important for learners to communicate and learn and for teachers to develop the learners' educational goals. Language communication competency while instructing affects the learners' learning ability, especially for ethnic groups who do not use Thai language in daily life. Due to their limited grasp of Thai language, instruction in Thai national language in government schools hinders their equitable ability to learn.

This study is the first step in a research focus on a specific type of instruction by teachers who teach ethnic groups. It attempts to find and appropriate process and type of instruction that is consistent with the equity context of them by qualitative research. Information was gathered by observation of and in-depth interviews of teachers, school administrators, learners and the community in a small Chiang Rai province government school, in the border area with the Republic of Laos, where Khmu ethnic group learners who use Khmu language to communicate in daily life. The community also needs learners to conserve and sustain the Khmu language.

It is found that school curriculum is based on the core standard curriculum and only Thai national language and instruction styles for regular learners were used in teaching. The instruction styles used in this school creates barriers and a lack of equity in learning for ethnic group learners. Therefore, ethnic group schools need to an improved school curriculum that is appropriate and convenient for their context. The instructional model should be based on a variety of differences between individuals, with educational equality, and adapted for ethnic groups, regardless of limitations found by learners to learn Thai language. Language and communication should promote and facilitate learning capacity in order to create an equity of learning for ethnic group learners.

Buddhasenaka: Motifs and Relationship to Lanna Culture

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Abstract

This research aims to study motifs of Lanna literature named Buddhasenaka in which its literature plot is similar to Rotthasena Jakata in the Pannasa Jataka known as Nang Sip Song (the twelve sisters) or Phra Rot Meri. According to the most reliable Buddhasenaka, the constitution text transliterated by Musikanukhroa, Wiboonwan was used in this study. The study implies that there are three motifs playing an important role. Protagonist, Antagonist and helper are the first known motif called character. Object is appeared as the second motif in the protagonist's journey and adventure, while the last one is related to event. Action of characters and events emphasize on karma cycle and gratefulness. Furthermore, it also reveals social values and notions of Lanna culture.

Buddhist Morality in Monastic Development Activism in Northeast Thailand

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Abstract

The 'development monk' movement began in the 1960s as individual monks contesting state development practices in favor of those that adhere more closely to Buddhist teachings. Throughout the 1980s and 90s, development monks began forming networks and collaborating with neolocalist NGOs and activists in an effort to assert local autonomy and identity in the face of state development policy. However, since the creation of the "People's Constitution" and the passage of the National Decentralization Act in the late 1990s, which led to the Thai government adopting the language and symbols of localism in its development strategies, there has been a large-scale withdrawal of NGO support from monastic development practice and an increase in monastic collaboration with government entities. There has been a corresponding shift in the practices of development monks from those that target economic and environmental policies to those that attempt to rein in 'vice,' such as drinking and gambling. With the recent coup, this trend has only accelerated as exemplified by the nation-wide "Villagers who Adhere to the Five Buddhist Precepts" project. This project is headed by the National Office of Buddhism under the jurisdiction of the NCPO in collaboration with development monks, and works to solve national economic and environmental problems by correcting 'immoral' behavior at the village community level.

I argue that this collaborative shift from working with neolocalist NGOs to almost exclusively working alongside government entities has resulted in a drastic shift in focus from the systematic moral failings of development practices, policies, and ideology to the creation of 'moral communities' from which material development will naturally spring. This, in turn, portrays the failure to develop with moral failings at the village level while ignoring the larger system-level problems of which these 'moral failings' may be more symptom than cause.

Study and Development of Grand Social Platform

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Abstract

Thai society has faced a series of vicious cycles of political conflicts and coup d'états over the past four decades since October 1973. The core of such political conflicts are reflected by a "Win-Lose" nature. The key question is how we can cut off these protracted cycles in the society. In other words, how can we establish stability and continuity for democratic government? The political contentions and polarization deeply reflect the legacies of Thai political society such as patron-client culture, centralization in government, economic disparity and diverse historical backgrounds of different regions in the country. The political conflicts are not only at the short-term political interest or concrete level, but also at structural and cultural level. In the aspect of political culture, the focus would be the conflict over values between conservative/traditionalist value and modern/democratic value. This paper is, therefore, proposing the "Grand Social Platform" which is an open process or platform convening all inclusive stakeholders who have different views to discuss and deliberate on issues that could lead to discursive shift towards shared values and create the new social contract which contribute to transcendence and transformation of conflict to reconciliation. It will present the findings from deliberative platforms on ongoing national strategic plan and reform process in different regions and reflection of Grand Social Platform approach as a part of Deliberative Democracy.

Social Healing Factors and Process That Lead to Reconciliation and Forgiveness

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Abstract

Since 2006, Thailand has been entrapped in political conflict and political violence which have not only resulted in different episodes of loss of lives, injuries, damages and prosecutions, but it has also led deep mistrust and polarization in the society. Therefore, it is necessary to study factors and process on social healing which could contribute to reconciliation and forgiveness in the society within the context of relationships between victims of political violence or political injustice and perpetrators. This paper will present preliminary findings of ongoing research on Social Healing Factors and Contribution towards Reconciliation. It will address four key questions: 1) what are factors which lead to healing of victims in violent political conflict?; 2) what kind of factors and process can be identified that victims could transcend their hatred, fear and mistrust towards perpetrators into understanding?; 3) does such healing of victims and social healing contribute towards reconciliation?; 4) what are the factors and processes to cultivate social healing processes at large and how this process will be applied? This paper proposes that healing and dealing with the past at both personal and societal level is one of the key factors that can contribute to reconciliation in the society; however, it has been limited and overlooked by the state authorities. The research employs qualitative and action-research methodology through interviews and focus-group discussions with identified victims, perpetrators and concerned people in healing and reconciliation process in political conflict. The findings in this paper will be involved around their experiences on primary wounds of political violence and injustice such as violation of victims' human rights, harms to victims' person, lack of acknowledgement of victims' suffering, culture of impunity and harm to the person of wrongdoer, as well as secondary wounds such as memories, emotions, judgments and actions.

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'Diviners', 'Fortune Tellers', 'Spirit Mediums' and Other 'Teachers': Problematic Categories for the Study of Changing Forms of Religiosity in Contemporary Thai Buddhism

Edoardo Siani
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Abstract

This presentation explores the problems that arise from employing "traditional" emic, as well as conventional sociological categories, for the study of changing forms of religiosity in contemporary Thai Buddhism. The presentation assesses and compares the usefulness of both approaches; on one side bringing attention to the ways in which Thai 'unorthodox' figures of religious authority creatively employ and modify 'traditional' emic categories in order to serve their interests, and, on the other, by exploring the limitations of employing conventional sociological categories to the study of diverse and highly dynamic social phenomena.

Bodies within Bodies: Embodiment, Disease and Healthcare in Thailand

Edoardo Siani
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Abstract

This paper explores the relationship between disease and healthcare in contemporary Thailand from the theoretical standpoint of embodiment. Bringing together the theory of embodiment, theory of sovereignty and theory of cosmology of the Southeast Asian region, it offers an interpretative lens for approaching the study of the meanings that are attached to cholangiocarcinoma (bile duct cancer) and its treatment in the Isan region. As a preliminary attempt to put this approach into practice, this paper also examines materials from campaigns that promote awareness of the incidence of cholangiocarcinoma and of the role of healthcare experts in Isan from this theoretical point of view.

Islam and Secular Education in Thailand's Upper South: Global and Local Connectivities

Edwin Zehner
Walailak University

Abstract

Thailand's Islamic Education systems have received increasing attention in recent decades. Much of this work has focused on educational institutions among the Malayu-speaking populations of Thailand's so-called "Deep South" (Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, and southern Songkla provinces). Much less attention has been given to educational systems serving the Thai-speaking Muslims of Thailand's upper south, including provinces such as Phatthalung, northern Songkla, Nakhon Si Thammarat, and Surat Thani. Furthermore, the existing literature on both Deep South and Upper South has focused mostly on the explicitly "Islamic" parts of the curricula studied by Thailand's Muslims, and less on the "secular" subjects that are often equally important to Muslim parents and community leaders.

This paper addresses these gaps by exploring secular educational methodologies, and attitudes toward secular education, as encountered in an interconnected set of Muslim communities in Thailand's upper south. In these communities, as in the Malay-majority communities studied by others, Muslim families draw on three kinds of educational institutions: "Islamic private schools" (government-recognized schools that teach both Islamic and secular subjects); government schools (often educating Muslim-majority students in areas of mixed religious residence), and private ponoh (pondoks) that provide exclusively Islamic education, on a more informal basis, often on weekends and evenings.

Because the "Malay ethnic nationalism" element of Deep South Muslim studies does not apply in the communities studied for this paper, the author expects significantly different themes and issues to emerge. The primary focus of this preliminary research report will be on the purposes of secular education in the minds of Muslim parents and community leaders, the role of domestic and international connectivities in the formation of curricula and teachers, and the manner in which all of that affects the participants' self-perceptions as community members who are simultaneously Muslim and "Thai" in a context of global interconnectedness.

Expert on South-West Chinese Ethnic Textiles and Dress

Eric Boudot

Abstract

This paper is based on 20 years of field research dedicated to the study of archaic brocade looms, traditional weaving technologies and patterns from more than twenty ethnic groups living in the mountains of Southwest China. The 2015 publication, The Roots of Asian Weaving, with co-author Chris Buckley, was the result.

Following the book's publication, I received enthusiastic interest from designers who wanted to either reproduce the textiles illustrated or have their own designs created using these traditional techniques. My meeting with textile designer Magali-An Berthon at the first QSMT Symposium was fundamental to responding to these requests as she is both a trained textile designer for luxury brands such as Kenzo, and a passionate researcher of traditional weaving techniques (e.g. she has worked on textile documentaries in South-East Asia, and North and Sub-Saharan Africa). We started working together on new designs inspired by traditional brocades in June 2015, developing samples with weavers from different ethnic groups located in Southwest China. My presentation will describe the creative process and challenges involved in choosing traditional patterns and creating new ones, along with finding the appropriate yarns and natural dyes and working with the local weavers. This project is particularly complex. It demands time, patience, dedication, and respect toward the weavers and their schedules. The new artisanal brocades that have resulted are luxurious fabrics that aim to revive and refresh these ancestral Southwest Chinese traditions to the benefit of the producers.

Transnational Relationships, Farang Men, and Rural Transformation

Eric C. Thompson
National University of Singapore

Abstract

Transnationalism and globalization are most often associated with urban-oriented cosmopolitanism and interconnected "global cities," such as Bangkok, Singapore, Berlin, London and the like. Rural society is under erasure, in Derrida's sense (On Grammatology), in most considerations of globalization and transnational relationships. Yet the reality of rural Thailand and elsewhere is that rural society is deeply integrated into the emergent globalism of the past several decades, from transnational migration (e.g. of Thai laborers from places like Isan to places like Singapore and Dubai), to effects of international trade agreements on agricultural economies (e.g. the much debated Trans-Pacific Partnership or TPP), to the establishment of intimate relationships between disparately situated rural subjects (such as farang-Isan or Japanese-Filipino marriages). The current paper focuses on this last set of interactions, to highlight the ways in which farang men and their relationships with Isan women are transforming rural Isan society, from economic stimulus, to reproducing kinship relationships, to influencing patterns of sociability in rural Isan. In particular, the paper considers the effects of an influx of farang men on the traditional smallholder economy of the Isan region and the ways in which their presence not only transforms that economy but also supports its persistence.

National Cosmopolitanism as Regional Religious Identity: Bangkok Professional Spirit Mediums and the Local Articulation of Thai Urban Mass Religiosity

Erick White
Cornell University

Abstract

As a primate city, Bangkok has exerted an oversized influence on and dominance over political, economic, social and cultural developments within Thailand. Bangkok has served as a privileged nexus within national circuits of transportation, communication, education and media consumption. The Bangkok metropolitan region has also been crucial in centrally structuring rural-urban relations, national-provincial imaginaries, and transnational and global influences. As a result, Bangkok exists as a unique socio-cultural spatial formation, which is relatively distinct from the Central region surrounding it.

This uniqueness extends to Bangkok's religious cultures, including its local subculture of professional spirit mediums. The religious meanings, social forms, and performative styles prevalent among Bangkok professional spirit mediums reflects the hyper urbanism, commercialism, multiculturalism, and cosmopolitanism that fundamentally defines cultural life within the metropolis. Ritual and everyday life within this subculture, therefore, embodies that particular mélange of local cultural forms and social institutions that are prominently, even uniquely, on display within Bangkok's urban society, public culture and religious settings. These elements include: globalized religiosity, transnational mobility and circulation, self-consciously ethnic and sectarian spirituality, mass public ritual spectacle, media and commercial savvy, class and educational privilege, Brahmanical esotericism, and Chakri royal and aristocratic aesthetics and ideology.

Through the selective analysis of a series of key ritual events, this paper will argue that the subculture of Bangkok professional spirit mediums constitutes a relatively distinct regional and local form of spirit possession within contemporary Thailand. By exploring how the various elements of Bangkok's metropolitan religious field are reproduced with localized distinction within the subculture, I will examine how spirit mediums in the capital envision themselves as uniquely modern, civilized, advanced and authoritative, particularly vis-a-vis other regional, provincial or ethnic varieties of spirit possession also found within Thailand.

The Political Origins of State Formation in Thailand

Erik Kuhonta
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Abstract

What explains the contemporary institutional configurations of the Thai state? In this paper, I argue that the origins of the Thai state can be explained through a path-dependent framework that examines the political origins of state building and how these origins affected subsequent efforts to build the state. In the late 19th century, King Chulalongkorn began the process of state building by centralizing the bureaucracy and the army. This led to a more centralized state apparatus, but not a significantly more effective state in terms of its capacity to implement policy from the center. This is because patrimonialism was deeply embedded in the state. Further initiatives for state building, especially during the period of Sarit Thanarat, did make some headway in terms of movement toward a more rational-legal bureaucracy, but like the late 19th century, patrimonialism remained a key aspect of state building. This pattern of patrimonialism within the state was also evident during the Thaksin period.

Golden Epistles and Letters with Seals: A Note on Siamese Royal Letters to China in a Time of Dynastic Change in the Late 18th Century

Erika Masuda
Independent Scholar

Abstract

In this paper, I focus on the style and function of Siamese royal letters sent to China and messages written on them, in a time of dynastic change from the time of King Taksin to that of Rama I (r. 1782-1809) by utilizing both Siamese and Chinese documents. This preliminary examination may help shed light on a particular aspect of the Siamese dynastic change following the destruction of Ayutthaya; it also offers the key to understanding Siam's indigenous diplomatic practice and the values behind it prior to the advent of Western diplomacy, to which little attention has been given by former studies.

Operational Process of a Non-State Initiated Payment for Environmental Service Pilot Project in Pong Khrai Village, Mae Sa Watershed, Northern Thailand

Eza King
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Abstract

This research aims to contribute to the understanding of market-based natural resource governance projects and their potential usefulness as a conservation tool to restore and conserve watershed forestlands in Northern Thailand. The research studies the case of the AURA PES (Payment for Ecosystem Services) project, where a bottled mineral water company, Aura, has made payments to a local community for efforts to reforest a plot of land upland from the source of their bottled water. This research identifies new expertise or understandings that result from the AURA PES project and what each stakeholder expects for the outcomes. It also examines if the project exasperates or helps alleviate contesting claims to authority over forestland stewardship. It is guided by the following research questions:

1) What was the operational process of the AURA PES project and how are actors in this project negotiating for their own benefit?

2) What new environmental expertise resulted from the project and how were they promoted?

3) How has the AURA PES project influenced local perceptions of territoriality or impacted any existing territorial conflicts?

The research finds that the motivations of the diverse actors involved vary greatly from climate change mitigation at the international level of the United States Agency for International Development that initiated the project, to enhanced reputation of corporate responsibility for the Aura company, to perceptions of an improved water supply at the local community level. New expertise provided in tree planting techniques and the participation of an already conservation oriented community prove to be essential for the outcome of the project. While the motivations for participation and expectations for outcomes are different for each of the actors, they align in such a way that the project has been successfully implemented and expanded.

The Analysis of Chinese Tourists with the Social Action Theory

Fang Weina
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Abstract

With further development of reformation and opening the door to the outside world, the people's living standard has gradually improved. Tourism in China, though still a popular activity, is still developing, which presents many problems due to the fact that China has the largest number of outbound tourists in the world. In order to look at these phenomena objectively, this paper aims to study travel behaviors during different periods of Chinese history.

This paper is divided into three main sections. First, a survey of ancient China's tourism. Second, the development and changes of tourism in modern China (1840-1949). Third, the problems in modern Chinese tourism's development. According to these analyses, tourism as a kind of social activity is closely related to the ideological values of a particular historical period. Therefore, the analysis of Chinese tourists, as the main body of tourism activities, could not be separated from the specific cultural background and historical context in which they lived.

Buddhology, History and Literature in the Epigraphy of Lan Na (Fourteenth to the Seventeenth Century AD)

François Lagirarde
École française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO)

Abstract

The corpus of inscriptions of northern Thailand, published in recent years, allows relatively easy access to a considerable amount of information. This has been well explored by historians, but still somewhat neglected by the historians focusing on Buddhist literature.

Although some major texts attributed to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries AD largely dominate ancient literature, none or very few manuscripts of these distant epochs has survived. The center of gravity of manuscript culture is in the nineteenth century, while that of inscriptions is more around the sixteenth. The reading of these inscriptions therefore makes it possible to ensure the validity, if not of facts, at least of acts of speech or language during more remote period. This brings us close to to instances and situations that supported them or conceived them.

The inscriptions of Lanna evoke both the history of the "books" as objects, the stories they contain and the subjects they deal with. They inform us by operating as a system of references, vast but laconic, connected to a state of culture at a given time. Inscriptions generally use two types of expression – explaining and quoting – related to actuality (the "necessity" of installing an inscription in a precise place) and to tradition (the vast pre-inherited text or doxa). This paper will thus examine several different topics, such as the narrative of the imaginary travels of the Buddha, and the predictions concerning his relics (basic texts of which we have the "full" version). It will also cover borrowings from canonical texts, as well as all the information on the life of texts and manuscripts that is potentially recorded.

The paper will conclude by stressing the duel-value of the inscriptions themselves, as giving insight into communication and performance – and illustrating it with specific examples.

Dynamics of Thai Textile Production

Gary Suwannarat

Abstract

This paper examines the changing value of cotton and silk textiles and garments in domestic and international trade going back several decades. It also examines the relative importance of locally produced versus imported silk and cotton fiber, and changes in the weaving workforce and in textile design in response to external factors. National statistics are augmented by information from a sample of medium and high-end and producers.

Internet Censorship and Self-Censorship in Thailand: User Perceptions and Practices

Gennie Gebhart
Electronic Frontier Foundation

Abstract

Thailand's Internet censorship regime poses threats not only to users' access to information, but also to their ability to safely create and disseminate content. Through bilingual data from 229 online surveys and 12 in-depth interviews, this research shows that while users are generally able to circumvent censorship online, they have risky circumvention tool selection strategies, may inaccurately distinguish blocking actors and face unresolved threats on social media. These perceptions and practices play out in the context of complex user perceptions of the censored Internet and its development over time. These findings inform a concrete discussion about risks users may face in the Thai digital environment, recommendations to build plausible deniability into social media platforms, and other opportunities for future research and action.

Thailand and the 'Other Thailand' (A Tale of Two Cities): The Evolution of Inequality in Thailand [Honorary Lecture]

Gerald Fry
University of Minnesota

Abstract

The paper provides an interdisciplinary historical overview of the evolution of inequality in Thailand. It begins with a description of the pre-modern sakdina (feudalistic) system, drawing on the important work of M.R. Akin Rabibhadana. Then there is an analysis of emic indigenous Thai language terms related to inequality and social stratification.

Then the focus shifts to the modern era. First, various genres of inequality are identified such as wealth, income, educational, regional, and gender disparities. Wealth inequalities are clearly the most dramatic and deeply rooted. Second using the Gini coefficient, the trend in inequality over time is noted. There have been steady declines in inequality over time since 1992. Factors are examined which have contributed to both Thai equality and social mobility such as the establishment of open universities and the educational equivalency programs of the Department of Non-Formal Education.

Two cases studies are examined, one reflecting equality (the private city of Muang Thong Thani) and one demonstrating inequality (the remote Northeast, Isan).

With respect to the latter disadvantaged area, a circular theory is postulated involving inequality leading to migration, that leading to cosmopolitanism, and then inequality again, based on Keyes's extensive research on Isan.

There is then an analysis of gender equity issues. Overall, the gender inequalities are less than others and Thai women have made some impressive gains. Several case studies of the dramatic social mobility of Isan women are shared.

The overview concludes by stating that Thailand must reduce its serious inequalities to move toward quality education for all. Without addressing this issue effectively, Thailand will remain in a quagmire of "the middle income trap".

Thai Regional Educational Disparities: An Explanatory Interdisciplinary Model

Gerald Fry
University of Minnesota

Hui Bi

Rosarin Apahung
Pathumthani University

Abstract

Growing inequality is a pervasive problem and burning issue across the globe (Chomsky 2017; Hickman 2016, p. 11; Smith 1982). Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of the OECD, notes that inequality levels in OECD countries are at an all-time high (OECD 2015). There are many dimensions of inequality. Those of most concern relate to disparities in income, wealth, and education and lack of intergenerational social mobility and elite circulation (Clark 2015). There are also inequalities at the global, national, meso, and micro levels. With respect to disparities in wealth in Thailand, a 2012 NESDB study indicates that 0.1% own nearly 46.5% of the nation's assets (Nation 2014; NESDB 2014).

In this chapter, the focus is on regional educational disparities. Unfortunately, there are limited studies in this area because of constraints related to finding appropriate disaggregated data. The Australian economist Peter Warr argues that we often neglect or ignore the important meso (regional level) (Mann 2011; Warr and Ng 1986). The United Nations actually established in 1971 a special center focusing on regional development to study these kinds of issues. It is the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD) located in Nagoya, Japan. Donald Holsinger and his students have done some excellent work looking at regional and local educational disparities in Cambodia and Vietnam (Holsinger and Jacob 2008; Rew 2008).

Endangered Lingo-Cultural Identity of the Tais: An Understanding the Case of Tai Ahom in Northeast India

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Abstract

Cultural crisis is accentuated together with the increasing acceptance of the concept of modernity. The modern culture reaching into the life sphere of marginal unprivileged groups of society claims the 'new' technique as guarantee for 'development'. However, modern culture means capitalistic innovation leading to the strengthening of individual solution and a weakening of traditional institutions. The developmental innovations which are assessed as 'modern' do exert direct or indirect influences on social structure without being steered by the traditional institutions, whose guidance capacity and cultural validity are undermined leading to a critical state of crisis of traditional ethnic identity. The 'Ahoms', an ethnic offshoot of the Shan Tai family, established a new kingdom in the Brahmaputra valley of present Assam, a state of India in the late thirteenth century AD. They were free from religious inhibition and caste prejudices; and prepared to 'receive' whatever they found suitable for them. The Ahom had tremendous qualities of adaptability which they showed in intermingling with the Aryan culture in that part of India. While adopting Hindu beliefs, they retained their religious rites and customs which their priestly class jealously guarded in a bid to maintain distinct Ahom identity. But now, under the influence of the industrialized western culture particularly on the younger generation of the Ahom, many aspects of the traditional Ahom culture have been heavily influenced by interaction with global culture. The imported technology, trade and foreign values have radically altered the traditional way of life of the Ahom. In view of this, the present paper endeavors to examine the question of Tai-Ahom identity in Northeast India.

War as Membership: International Society and Thailand's Participation in World War I

Greg Raymond
Australian National University

Abstract

International relations scholars and historians have long debated the reasons for Siam's maintenance of formal political independence during the colonial period. While territorial concessions and intra-Great Power agreements are recognized as important, attention is beginning to be paid to the solidarist and normative aspects of Siam's diplomacy. In this paper I will argue that Siam's stance in World War I, firstly as a neutral nation, and then as a belligerent, allowed it to demonstrate mastery of European conventions of war. In line with the predictions of the English School theory of international relations, this increased Siam's status in international society. This allowed Thailand to participate in the Paris Peace Conference, providing Thailand with a better position for its campaign to rid itself of extraterritorial legal provisions and unequal treaties. Thailand's rules-based and normative participation in World War I also offered the maximum opportunity to benefit from the advent of the new liberalism in international affairs then emerging, especially through the ideas of United States President Woodrow Wilson. I argue that Siam's use of its military force as a passport of sovereignty, a membership card of the family of nations, have had important long-term implications for its understanding of the role of military force in its international relations.

Finding a Solid Rice Bowl

Gregory Gullette

Sayamon Singto

Abstract

Thailand's decentralization policies have sought to increase urbanization and development in provinces outside Bangkok, while increasing regional autonomy through the devolution of decision-making powers to localities. Provincial and district government offices increasingly issue regulations and formulate local development strategies, which draw on concepts in sustainability studies and build from governance structures that index livelihood rights and market opportunities. Yet, despite such policy changes, urban sprawl has created environmental degradation and natural resource competition among different stakeholders within transitional rural-urban spaces. Furthermore, urban expansion has encumbered agrarian families' abilities to fully provision the household.

This paper examines how agrarian families in the northeastern (Isaan) region understand state development and urban encroachment and how these families reconfigure livelihood strategies and labor mobilities under conditions of changing socio-political and environmental conditions. Further, ethnographic data also reveal that families and individuals presented complex agendas for pursuing labor migration as a livelihood strategy. Aside from structural issues that encumber agrarian households' abilities to expand production or increase investment in primary sectors, considerations on migration and exiting agrarian work also indexed culturally constructed labor hierarchies and aspirations for modernity. Ethnographic and landsat data presented underscore the fact that while using 'rural' and 'urban' dyadic models may provide simple conceptual clarity, such frameworks ignore the complex social lives, power dynamics, and cultural hierarchies that exist along rural-urban continuums.

By intersecting literatures in the emergent 'mobilities turn' paradigm with urban political ecology, this paper is able to more fully explore households' economic, environmental, and socio-political positions within urbanizing spaces and their differing and relative capacities to respond to new realities in securing stable livelihoods. A primary focus is to understand how changing ecological conditions and broader shifts in socio-political systems that valorize certain economies engender 'permanently temporary' and 'continually circular' migration among agrarian households in Southeast Asia.

Living in the Moment： Buddhist Practice and the Form of Atomic Social Body in Thai Middle Class

Haoqun Gong
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Abstract

This paper tries to use the concept of social body to analyze Buddhist practices of the Thai urban middle class. Aulino develops the concept of the "social body" as a metaphorical representation of hierarchical relationships in Thailand, as well as the physical embodiment of social, religious, and political structures. She argues that these values challenge normative ideals of distributive justice and validates unequal power and resource distribution. Borrowing the concept of social body from Aulino, however, this paper puts forward a new question: what does it mean if people advocate equality beyond hierarchy, individuality beyond collectivity, or look for relief in this life instead of merit (bun) for the next life? Based on fieldwork in Bangkok, this research describes the key issues in urban people's Buddhist practice: what is suffering, where is suffering from and how to escape from the suffering. "Living in the moment" has become the slogan: on the individual level, it means that relief in this life has replaced merit in the next life; on the social level, it means individual relief is the basis of and is superior to social relief because suffering does not emerge from the outside world but only from the inner world of the heart. This paper shows that Buddhist practice is corresponding to atomic social body: society is composed of homogenous individuals, and the individual relief leads to social harmony. The concept of atomic social body represents the emptily equality among individuals, denial of the social roots of suffering, and denial of the necessity of social change, and reflects the moral and political dilemma of Thai middle class.

Changes in Building Materials and House Styles Among Tai-Khun

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Tanskanun Pranom

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Abstract

In Thailand, various ethnic groups have been building diverging forms of the house according to their own culture for a long time. Moreover, the house has been built under the influence of climate and the ecological environment. It allows people to make use of various resources as building materials and as a result, build various forms of housing. Commonly, bamboo, wood, grass, and leaf of the palm have been used in many ways as posts, beams, flooring, walls, and roofs.

However, in Thailand, the economy has gradually recovered since the end of what is called the Asian Financial Crisis of the last century, and today we can see anywhere in Thailand that the housing form has impressively changed through the use of industrial products such as brick, RC, steel, and slate. New materials are commonly used in construction in both cities and remote villages today. Stilts, or raised floor form of the house, has been transformed into one-storied, ground floor housing.

This article aims to show the changing processes of building materials, based on intensive research in Ban Ton Haen Noi, a Tai-Khun village of Chiang Mai. We also show how these changes in materials cause, in some examples, changes in inhabitant's everyday lives. We will also analyze what has not changed in housing even after installing new materials.

The Tai Tipitaka Project: A Giant Leap Towards Tai Unity

Hemanta Kumar Gogoi
Society for Tai Ahom Resurgence (STAR)

Labonya Baruah Gogoi
Society for Tai Ahom Resurgence

Abstract

Globalization has converted this world in to a big village. The advent of the internet and social websites has made it possible for people of the same ethnicity, separated by geographical or political reasons for centuries, to communicate and reunite, and the Tai people are one of the best examples of this transition.

In August 2015, we received an email with a copy of a press release where it was stated that His Majesty the King of Thailand Bhumibol Adulyadej, Rama IX, was expressing his interest to translate and transliterate the Pali version of the Holy Tipitaka to all the Tai languages of Northeast India (including Tai Ahom and Tai Khamti) under the guidance of the World Tipitaka Foundation (WTF มูลนิธิพระไตรปิฎกสากล). It was a part of the King's larger project of transliteration, translation and digitalization of the Holy Tipitaka to all the major languages of the world, and a boost to the languishing Tai languages of Northeast India. During the process of transliteration and translation of the Holy Tipitaka the scholars of India not only unearthed many unexplored vistas of their languages but also developed a common bond with other languages and people like the Thais and Shans as well as with their neighboring Tai communities.

This paper recounts the procedures, technicalities, problems/solutions and outcome of the Tai Tipitaka project with special reference to the Tai Ahom version of the Holy Tipitaka. The Thai scholars of Thailand did a wonderful job in upgrading the Tai languages of Northeast India to an all acceptable new digital stage with the development of additional fonts at par with the Pali-Thai phonetics equivalent to other Tai languages of Southeast Asia.

Tai Ahom Tradition and Culture Vis-a-Vis Thai Culture; an In-depth Analysis

Hironmoni Borgohain Gogoi
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Abstract

The Study is an attempt to understand some of the basic Tai traits and traditions interweaved in the lives of the Tai Ahom people in Assam, India and trying to relate them to the Thai culture which forms the essence of life in Thailand.

The Tai Ahoms living in India and the Thais living in Thailand and all other Tai communities are the inheritors of the ancient Tai Culture and Civilization which could make an impress on world civilization almost five thousand years ago and persists till date.

Because of migration to different parts of the world, occasioned by varied factors, they have been influenced by various social, cultural and religious factors in their new places of habitation - wherein they had adapted and assimilated themselves. Though they still carry with them their Tai cultural legacies, which are deeply embedded in their psyche and their way of life, they are not very aware of the underlying cultural and philosophical significances.

Therefore, studies which attempt to identify and probe into these basic traits appear to be an urgent necessity for Tai/ Thai culture to be rediscovered, interpreted, understood, and analyzed to keep them alive, vibrant, and universal for contribution to the world of knowledge.

The Methodology will be the Qualitative Approach and focus basically on the Primary Sources like religious rituals of birth, death, marriage, work culture, monuments, music and dance, manuscripts, interviews etc. Secondary sources include authoritative books, critical articles.

Some of the salient findings are the understanding of the 'Humanism' inherent or interweaved into their culture, philosophy, way of life, and social relationships. It was this humanism that could set them apart from many other communities of the world where varied social discrimination existed.

Uncovering this humanism would throw greater light on Tai/Thai Studies and Culture.

The Paperwork Done by the Siamese Government During the Reign of King Rama III: A Case of Documents Used in the Process of Receiving Tax-in-Kind

Hiroshi Kawaguchi
Aichi University

Abstract

It has been noted that during the Rattanakosin Period in Siam, as well as during the Konbaung Dynasty in Burma, the central administration tended to grow more literate, as well as more dependent on routines. While I have previously examined the processes used to deal with documents exchanged between the Siamese government and provincial officials during this period, actual paperwork, especially written communication within the Central Government, warrants further consideration. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to examine the paperwork process followed by the government during the reign of King Rama III (1824–51), using documents that relate to the receipt of tax-in-kind (suai) sent from the provinces as examples.

From the 1820s onwards, the Bangkok government increasingly imposed tax-in-kind on the provinces, especially northeastern Thailand. This was one reason why more documents entered circulation, not just between the government and provincial officials, but also between governmental agencies. Provincial authorities under the jurisdiction of the Mahatthai ministry sent tax as well as reports to their superiors, while Mahatthai officials forwarded tax and another kind of document to a variety of departments referred to as Phrakhlang. After weighing these tax enclosures, departments informed the Mahatthai of the taxed amount by subsequently returning receipts.

The aim of this paper is to examine the extrinsic elements and textual formats of documents used in this process, the officials that dealt with them, and relationships between them and tax records. By understanding them, we can elucidate the routines of day-to-day work, administrative communication between governmental agencies, and the development of archives.

Who Should Be Considered "Indigenous"? a Survey of Ethnic Groups in Northern Thailand

Ian Baird

Prasit Leepreecha
Chiang Mai University

Urai Urai Yangcheepsutjarit

Abstract

On May 22, 2014 the Thai military successful organized a coup d'état, and discarded the previous constitution. In early 2015 a new draft constitution for Thailand was prepared by a military-appointed committee. Although that draft was eventually rejected by the military, and a second draft was prepared that was eventually approved through a referendum organized in August 2016, the earlier draft represented an exciting moment for activist intellectuals from various ethnic minority groups in Thailand, as article 83 of the draft, for the first time in the history of Thailand, recognized the existence and the need to protect the rights of "Indigenous Peoples" (referred to as chon pheunmuang in the draft). This potentially historic moment prompted us to conduct interviews in 2015-2016 with people belonging to four different ethnic groups and living mainly in Chiang Mai Province, northern Thailand: the Hmong, Lisu, Lua and Khon Muang, in order to determine their understandings of who should be considered "Indigenous Peoples", and what rights they think should to given to those designated as being Indigenous. Those interviewed included close to equal numbers of men and women; people of different age groups; and inhabitants of urban areas, and those from rural areas living in communities with representatives involved in Indigenous Peoples networks, and those from rural communities not involved in those networks. The findings indicate that presently there is considerable variation amongst people from all different ethnic groups interviewed regarding what they think the meaning of the term "Indigenous Peoples" is; who they think should be considered indigenous; and what rights they think those defined as being indigenous should be entitled to. The study makes it clear that there is still not a widely understood and shared understanding of the concept of indigeneity in Thailand.

Japanese Rolling Stock on Thai Railways: From Steam Locomotives to Shinkansen?

Ichiro Kakizaki
Yokohama City University

Abstract

This presentation aims to analyze the role of Japanese rolling stock on Thai Railways. There were three waves of importing Japanese rolling stock into Thailand. The first wave was the influx of Japanese rolling stock in the 1930s and 1940s, especially steam locomotives and freight wagons, for both civilian and military purposes. The second wave was the import of Japanese rolling stock for the rehabilitation and modernization of State Railways of Thailand (SRT) during the latter half of the 20th century. The third wave was the first import of electric multiple units (EMUs) for Bangkok's urban railway, or the Purple line, in the 2010s, and the import of EMUs for both urban railways and high-speed railways will follow.

The Japanese rolling stock on Thai railways contributed to the rehabilitation and modernization of SRT while Thailand used to be an important market for Japanese rolling stock manufacturers. However, as Japanese rolling stock has been losing its competitiveness in terms of cost, its leading role in the traditional SRT lines as well as in the urban railways, came to be challenged by other countries' rolling stock . On the other hand, Thailand still needs the import of railway systems as a package, including rolling stock, signal and power system, operation system, and marketing, to develop its new railway system including urban railways and high-speed railways. Therefore, Japan should change its policy from the export of rolling stock to the export of railway systems, and aim to participate in the railway operations business in Thailand.

Dynamics of Religious Practice and Socio-Economic Activities Among the Protestant Karen in Northern Thailand

Ikuko Tazaki
Shin Buddhist Comprehensive Research Institute, Otani University

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Abstract

This paper will investigate dynamics of religious practice and socio-economic activities among the Protestant Karen in Northern Thailand - who engage in intensive strawberry cash cropping - from anthropological point of view. Most previous studies' discussions concerning minority conversion to Christianity in Southeast Asia relate to ethnic boundaries or metaphysical dimensions. However recent studies on the anthropology of Christianity describe crucial changes of converts' daily lives and transforming society itself. I shall focus on 1) Karen's changing ethics on labor, and 2) their expanding concepts of reciprocity and charity, to show transformation of their daily lives long after their conversion. Firstly, I examine the ethics of labor, describing how different domains including church activities, subsistence activities, domestic duties and leadership relate to Christianity. Secondly, I examine how the meaning of 'ma chu'' (help/support) has expanded from face to face reciprocal exchange to charity or service without return. Such charity is aimed towards the church or community, under the strong influence of Christianity, I throw light on how it becomes the ethic of their daily lives. Using the term 'ma chu' also emphasizes solidarity and implies an inward development in their own community that may be termed 'involution'. Describing relationship between Christian practices and socio-economic activities, I reconsider the tendency in previous studies to emphasize the de-socialized rational modern Christian individual. While Christianity may underlie the onset of economic rationality, I demonstrate how it also has a role in formulating, in this case, a normative orientation towards inward development of the community.

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Representation of Ethnic Identity Thorough Spatial Conservation of the House and the Dwelling in Northern Thailand

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Pranom Tanskanun
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Surasawasdi Sooksawasdi
Faculty of Fine Arts, Chiang Mai University

Yusuke Hara
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Abstract

Tourism today has become an important industry, especially in developing countries, where tourism development equates to community development. In Thailand, as in other Southeast Asian countries where cultural diversity is high, the tourist industry has been operating for a long time. The tourism authority was established in 1959 in Thailand with the aim of attracting foreign investment to tourism investments. After Sukhothai and Ayutthaya were given world heritage status, domestic tourism increased considerably. Recently a new type of tourism, ecotourism, has emerged and become popular, adding to the diversity of tourism in both purpose and content. Ecotourism is generally developed at the community level and requires a relatively small investment compared to the conventional large-scale tourism controlled mostly by outside agents.

This article examines the current situation of using traditional housing and dwelling culture to develop a tourism resource in Ban Ton Haen Noi (hereinafter THN), a Tai-Khun village of Chiang Mai. The village, established around 300 years ago by migrants from the former Burma, is enterprising small-scale tourism by providing homestay services that give tourists an experience of life in the village. After conducting intensive research using interviews, participant observations, and drawings of the houses, it was concluded that the villagers were able to preserve their culture not only for tourism purposes but also to maintain their relationship with their original lands in Burma and to promote a revival of the ethnic identity they had lost during integration.

In such contexts, the use of the culture is an alternative method for developing the society. In addition, it gives the residents the opportunity to maintain their ethnic identity by utilizing their traditional housing culture.

Simultaneous Possessions: Space, Place and Time in Northern Thai Spirit Mediumship

Irene Stengs
Meertens Institute

Abstract

Drawing on fieldwork in the context of my research on the veneration for King Chulalongkorn (1996-1998), this presentation addresses the issues of simultaneity and (local) history in spirit medium sessions in greater Chiang Mai. In larger spiritual events, "jok khruu" ceremonies in particular, simultaneous possessions take place among both the hosting spirit medium and other attending guest mediums. For example, during the various sessions of the jok khruu ceremonies organized by a medium known for receiving the spirit of King Chulalongkorn, the participating mediums were simultaneously possessed, in different settings, by royal spirits, monks and tutelary spirits from a local mythical past.

The self-evidence of these settings for those present - mediums and audiences alike - demonstrates a notable malleability of time, which allows for the opening up of a surreal space where imaginaries from the spheres of politics, history and religion become visible and tangible presences. In this space people may find solutions for everyday problems, anxieties and desires.

Surrealist artists (including Breton, Dali, Ernst) stressed the intrinsic value of certain activities of the human mind – such as dreams, trance and visions – as a door to a broader reality. As dreams, trance and visions are at the basis of all possession-related practices and experiences, and examining such instances of surrealism allows scholars to explore spirit medium sessions as life-world making practices rather than as a way of dealing with a given reality. Other phenomena to include in this approach are the spiritual directives people, including monks, receive in dreams or visions to engage in a specific charity, to construct a specific temple building or to have a specific statue made. Here, a distinctive Lanna identity materializes through the use of local materials and crafts.

The Chinese Rabbit Seller and Other Tales of the Ordinary: Exploring the Borders of Thainess Through Traditional Mural Painting

Irving Johnson
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Abstract

For a long time, mural artists have painted regal scenes of important Buddhist and literary narratives on the walls of temples and other buildings throughout the Thai Buddhist world. Interspersed among these formal portrayals of religiosity and power are the everyday stories of common men and women. Many of these characters are unnamed and have histories that are as uncertain as their painters. In this paper, I explore the lively visuality of the people who inhabit the sidelines of Thai mural art. In particular, I discuss my own work as a Thai mural painter at a temple in Singapore and how the seemingly unimportant images of the locals are a rich site for thinking and theorizing the meanings of Thai identity beyond the modern nation state. Termed the 'dregs' (kaak) of the mural, these fascinating but much overlooked scenes and images are a lens through which large and small histories project themselves. The images provide multiple readings on what artists attempt to communicate through their images in a genre where artistic signatures are absent and personal names ephemeral. This paper allows for a rethinking of Thai mural painting from outside the center – beyond Thailand and the formal discourses of didactic images and art history.

Dynamism of Belief in Thaen: A Comparative Study of Black Tai Belief in Thailand, Laos PDR. and Vietnam

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Abstract

Thaen (God of the Sky) is an important supernatural belief of the Black Tai (Tai Dam) people. In the past, Thaen a belief that contributed to interrelationships among the Black Tai ethnic group. The belief was reflected in rituals and traditions in the context of space, time and socio-cultural context. However, today, belief in Thaen has shifted due to various current socio-cultural factors.

This paper aims to explore the dynamics of Black Tai folklore concerning Thaen, by comparing the persistence of the belief and practice in the culture of Black Tai ethnic groups in three countries - Thailand, Laos PDR. and Vietnam.

The result of this study indicates that the dynamics of the belief in Thaen in Thailand, Laos PDR., and Vietnam share three common characteristics: (1.) “perception dynamism” which refers to the the changing perceptions, imagination and identity of Thaen, (2.) “concept dynamism” which refers to changing ideas and practices toward Thaen, and (3.) “form dynamism” which refers to the changing ways and channels of presentation and practice concerning Thaen.

Factors influencing the dynamics of belief in Thaen include (1.) the changing of the socio-cultural mainstream, (2.) localization, (3.) changes resulting from external cultural and religious beliefs, (4.) changes based on the concept of invented tradition (5.) changes under the trend of ethnic tourism; and (6.) the adaptation of Thaen’s image under contemporary artistic conditions, and the newly given meaning in contemporary society in the three countries.

Spirit in the Fabric: The Lao Heritage Textile Collection.

Jacinta Brown
Ock Pop Tok Weaving Enterprise

Abstract

The Lao Peoples Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) has a long history of textiles, created by peoples who are as distinctive as their works, many of whom span geographical borders. The patterns and designs are as diverse as the people themselves, and although the unique traditional textile practices are threatened due to cultural changes and poverty, Lao textiles remain an essential element of Lao culture and identity today. The Lao Heritage Textile Collection at Ock Pop Tok Weaving Enterprise in Luang Prabang, is a growing archive of over 1000 pieces, borne from a collection created in response to the rapid loss of Lao textiles from the country. The directors, Veomanee Duangdala and Joanna Smith, together with Cultural Material Conservator Jacinta Brown, seek to preserve the cultural history of the Lao through their textiles. As a unique resource in Laos, the archive is a platform to preserve and increase understanding of Lao textile culture, the intrinsic stories, the skills needed to create them, and the cultural groups that they belong to, at a local, regional and international level. It is hoped that through collaboration and further research, the collection can contribute to the greater dialogue on textiles and cultural understanding in South-east Asia, and particularly with Thailand.

This paper will introduce the Lao Heritage Textile Collection and its current status as a significant archive of Lao textiles, and give context for why this collection is an imperative element for the conservation of Lao textile culture. This paper will also showcase some examples of the beauty and diversity of Lao textiles, and their purpose within communities, which extends from the everyday to the celebratory and the spiritual, from the historic to the modern.

The Ancestors Don't Live in Hell: On Distinct Modes of Understanding Among Hmong Christians in Thailand

Jacob Hickman
Brigham Young University

Abstract

Conversion to Christianity is more pervasive among highland ethnic minority groups in Thailand. One reason for this may be the relatively pluralistic ontology of highland groups. This pluralism also helps to understand the integration of seemingly discrete healing traditions (Hickman 2007). However, when Hmong convert to Christianity, what precisely does this conversion entail, both psychologically and culturally? Conversion provides a particularly apt social context for examining the relationship between belief and interiority. In order to examine this relationship, one must take into account how belief is situated among forms of knowing in any particular ethnoepistemology. In this paper, I critically examine a Hmong model of belief as distinct from ontological and metaphysical claims about the nature of reality. I provide several examples where Hmong converted to Christianity or a new Hmong millenarian movement, making some degree of break with the past. However, I argue that the nature of this break needs to be understood in a broader ethnoepistemological context in which 'belief' constitutes more of a professed commitment to one tradition, without denying the ontological groundedness of other traditions. Hmong commonly employed what can perhaps best be described as "eschatological compounding"—an ontologically plural understanding of the ultimate fate of the soul, allowing for the possibility that one's soul could end up in heaven, hell, the ancestral village, or become a wandering spirit. As a mere profession of commitment to one set of ritual practices and their particular calculated outcomes (e.g., heaven or hell), 'belief' ought to be distinguished from 'ontology' in this framework. Distinguishing between these distinct modes of understanding can help us better understand how modernist religions like Christianity interact with pluralist ontologies that are so common in the Northern Thai highlands.

Proud to Be Thai: The Puzzling Absence of Ethnicity-Based Political Cleavages in Thailand

Jacob Ricks
Singapore Management University

Abstract

Despite the veneer of a homogenous state-approved Thai ethnicity, Thailand is actually home to a heterogeneous population. Only about one-third of the country's inhabitants speak the national language as their mother tongue, and measures of ethnic fractionalization place Thailand in the medium-high range. Since 2000, political party lines appear to correspond roughly to ethnic lines, with the Thai Rak Thai party and its subsequent incarnations finding strength among Isan and Lanna voters while the Democrat Party continues to dominate among Central Thais and their Southern counterparts. Despite this, we see very little mobilization along ethnic cleavages. Why? I argue that ethnic mobilization remains minimal because there has been a large-scale public adoption of the government-approved Thai identity. Even among those who are most disadvantaged by the adoption of the identity, support is still strong for "Thai"-ness. Most inhabitants of Thailand continue to espouse the mantra that to be Thai is superior to being labelled as an alternate ethnic group. I demonstrate this through the application of large-scale survey data as well as secondary and anecdotal evidence drawn from interviews and discussions with Isan and Lanna inhabitants who identify as Thai.

A Golden and a Silver Letter - Comparative Study of Two Mid-Eighteenth Century Items of Burmese Diplomatic Correspondence

Jacques Leider
Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient

Abstract

The paper will examine extrinsic and intrinsic elements of two items of diplomatic exchange to identify a criteria of authenticity of Burmese royal correspondence. The National Palace Museum of Taiwan (Gugong, Taipeh) holds a Burmese tributary message on a silver leaf of the Qianlong reign that purports to be a message from the Burmese king to the mother of the Emperor.

The historical contextualization of the message, datable to around 1750, has led to the conclusion that the message was not sent by the king's chancellery. The author will investigate formal elements to support this conclusion, and compare the mode of drafting of the silver letter, with the text of the golden letter sent by King Alaungmintaya to King George II of Great Britain in 1756 (the original letter is kept in the special collections of the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Bibliothek in Hanover, Germany). The paper will further include a critical review of the recension of diplomatic documents in the royal Burmese chronicles and their relevance for the study of pre-modern Southeast Asian diplomacy.

The Absolute Monarchy and the Development of the Alcohol Industry in Early Twentieth-Century Thailand

James A. Warren
Mahidol University International College

Abstract

During the nineteenth century, the production and distribution of alcoholic beverages in Siam was in the hands of Chinese tax farmers and Western entrepreneurs. While the Thai state derived considerable revenues from both the tax imposed on spirits and the customs duties on imported alcohol, a perceived increase in alcohol consumption and public drunkenness became a cause of great concern for the government. However, its attempts to control the alcohol trade were severely restricted by limits on the kingdom's fiscal and judicial sovereignty imposed by unequal treaties with the Western imperial powers. Although the government managed to implement some regulatory measures, such as the promulgation of an excise law in 1889, and assumed responsibility for the collection of alcohol taxes in 1909, the production and distribution of alcoholic drinks remained in the hands of Chinese entrepreneurs and Western businesses. Control of the alcohol industry in Thailand was thus deeply intertwined with concerns about national sovereignty and security. This paper will focus on the absolute monarchy's efforts to develop the alcohol industry in the early twentieth century. In particular, it will examine how the Excise Department assumed direct control over the Bang Yi Khan distillery in Bangkok in 1927 in order to experiment with different production methods and how the government sought to nurture Thai businesses through the granting of distillery concessions in the provinces. In doing so, this paper will offer new perspectives on the longstanding debate over the role and impact of the Thai state in the country's industrialization.

Historical Linguistics, History and Anthropology: Competing or Supporting Approaches in Tai Studies ?

James Chamberlain
Research Institute for Educational Science

Abstract

Recent research on ethnic Tai groups that attempt to trace the routes by which Tai peoples, languages and cultures have traveled to reach their present locations have tended to rely more and more on linguistic evidence. For example, papers by Baker (2002) and Evans (2013, 2014) have relied heavily on linguistic phylogenetic classification and family trees as the foundation of their works, coupled with indigenous histories and mythologies that in turn have relied upon knowledge of local languages for their translation and interpretation. At the same time, historical linguistics, which attaches names to languages and proto-languages, albeit for heuristic purposes, is often accused of essentialism and becomes the target of those more concerned with identity politics than with descriptive ethnography. Utilizing the map of Baker and its revision by Evans as a starting point, this paper attempts to evaluate approaches for reconstructing the Tai (and Kra-Dai) past and to suggest workable combinations that can perhaps prove fruitful.

Buddhism, Nomadism and the Making of New Religio-Political Places

James Taylor
University of Adelaide

Abstract

Resistance is in movement, mobility, and what may be referred to as "nomadism" (in the post-modern sense). This is an “errant” journeying in its various forms relating to the religiosity of everyday life. This paper will look at the convergence of traditional theology in transition with a deconstructive and subversive new a/theology. Buddhism in Thailand, increasingly marginalized and privatized, has reached a point where encounters inside and outside have shaken the foundations of civic religion and its conventions. Thai Buddhism is in a continued state of reflection with its own shadow, its own imagining, as is wider society of which it is an integral part. It is to the borderlands that we must look to for the transformations to come.

The Expression of Vice-Regal Power and Prestige Through Official Documents - a Survey of the Archival Record

Jan R. Dressler
University of Hamburg

Abstract

Between 1782 and 1885, six princes of the Chakri Dynasty occupied the exalted office of the so called "Second King" or viceroy (maha uparacha). Spearheading an independent hierarchy of courtiers and administrative bodies shaped on the model of the major kings´ court, Siamese viceroys traditionally wielded legal powers second only to those of the major kings, whom they were supposed to support in the administration of the country, and eventually succeed. Different departments and chancellery offices attached to the viceroys´ establishment not only dealt with administrative issues falling into the sole purview of these deputies, but also participated in conducting governmental affairs under the shared responsibility of both monarchs. This paper examines the status of viceroys as well as their particular role in the kingdom's administration as expressed in and through the official documents generated by vice-regal chancelleries in their work.

By employing the methods of diplomatics in surveying records gathered from a variety of Thai and European collections, this presentation seeks to direct scholarly attention beyond the analysis of singular historical events towards a better understanding of the regular functioning of the pre-modern state. Based on the study of characteristic features of administrative texts regularly encountered in official documents, a tentative classification of pre-modern Siamese text and document types shall be proposed. Illustrative specimen will help demonstrate the value of the diplomatic approach for the study of the Siamese state and its history in general.

A Note on a Thai (Ayutthaya) Version of Sang Sinchai

Jana Ignunma
British Library, Asian and African Studies

Abstract

The corpus of the Paññāsa Jātaka is usually associated and best known in Lan Na, however, the motifs and storylines of many such Jātaka stories found their way into the literary cultures of neighboring Tai peoples. Based on the Suvaṇṇasaṅkha Jātaka, the Lao of Vientiane created their own version known as Sang Sinsai, reportedly written down for the first time in Lao language by Pāngkham, a Lao writer/scribe thought to have lived in the 16th century. The Lao version has become popular mainly thanks to the research and publications of Maha Sila Viravong, and Outhine and Douangdeuane Bounyavon,

A Thai version of the Suvannasankha Jātaka motif with the title Sang Thǭng is well known all over Thailand and has been published in prose and as juvenile literature numerous times since the 1920s. A drama version of Sang Thǭng was created by King Rama II at the beginning of the 19th century. Less popular is another Thai version of the same Jātaka called Sang Sinchai.

In the 1960s, a fragmented manuscript in folding book format containing the Thai text of Sang Sinchai was discovered at the British Museum and transferred to the British Library in 1973. The content of this manuscript that can safely be dated before 1796 is a replication from an earlier manuscript that was destroyed during the sack of Ayutthaya in 1767.

First, I will investigate the provenance of the British Library's Sang Sinchai manuscript and how it found its way to England. I will also look at the content of this manuscript, in particular the storyline, characters and style of the text. Last but not least, I will share some thoughts on the circumstances of the creation of this manuscript and the possible motivations of the scribe who remains anonymous.

Symbolic Interactionism in Creating Women's Self : A Case Study of "Cougar" Woman in Heterosexual Age-Gap Relationship

Jantanee Kanto
Chiang Mai University

Abstract

In the post-modern era, the concept of the construction of women's self and identity has been changed. A lot of arguments say that no one constructs women but themselves, or even that women don't have one dimensional identity about being a female only, but their identity is composed of other social factors. In the past decades, age-gap relationships in which the woman is significantly older than the man has become more common and acceptable in international media and in the popular culture of Thailand. There is also a slang term created to describe this kind of heterosexual relationship, called Cougar/Cub Relationship. Interestingly, a woman in Cougar/Cub Relationship is labeled and stigmatized as a sexual predator or a fun lover rather than an individual looking for true love. The reasons are that their gender roles challenge the cultural norms and their sexuality is considered to be improper. Therefore, this article aims to understand the interpretation of Cougar/Cub Relationship on how a woman identifies herself and how she negotiates with society. The main theory that the author uses to analyze the example phenomenon is symbolic interactionism since the essential feature of the self is a reflexive phenomenon. Reflexivity enables humans to act toward themselves as objects, or to reflect on themselves, argue with themselves, evaluate themselves, etc. The theories can explain how people share activities in building emotional bonds, marriage and family relationships which are based on negotiated meanings.

How Gender Equality Belongs to Us All? - Lesson Learned from Empowerment Based Work with Thai Grass Root Women

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Abstract

This article is a narrative study of Thai grassroots women's groups, whose work is supported by the women's health and gender equality program under the Gender Study Association. Between 2013 – 2016, the author worked closely with the program as the main internal evaluator, and facilitated the lesson learning process. This study explores factors relating to empowerment which supports the women movement and provides inter-sectoral participation, and made a valuable different. Samples women's groups are selected from two main issues affecting the women; (1) Gender Based Violence: indigenous women's groups, southern Muslim women's group, policewomen's group, women from One Stop Crisis Center (OSCC) under the Ministry of Health, women from the Bangkok Mass Transit Authority (BMTA) and (2) Unintended Pregnancy: women's groups from Songkla and Amnat Charoen Province. As a result, five empowerment based working procedures are recommended: (1) Understanding the "Anti-Oppression Spiritual-Based Feminism" concept (2) Resurrection of internal power (3) Understanding the social and cultural structures that cause gender based violence (4) Result-Based Project Cycle Management design with power sharing among stakeholders and (5) Co-Design of Monitoring and Evaluation Processes.

Building up of Community-Based Social Enterprises for "Green" Fisheries Products in Southern Thailand: A Further Step for Strengthening Small-Scale Fishing Community Organizations?

Jawanit Kittitornkool
Prince of Songkla University

Wichitta Uttamamunee
Chiang Mai University

Jarunee Chiayvareesajja
Chiang Mai University

Abstract

This paper explores the long-term viability and benefit of market-oriented approaches to supporting sustainable fishing among small-scale fisheries in Southern Thailand. Over the last few decades a number of small-scale fishing communities in Southern Thailand have been actively organized to protect and rehabilitate their coastal resources. Their achievements were evident as fisheries catches increased. Thereafter, some fisher organizations put great effort into improving their income, as well as sustaining their conservation activities by selling their environmentally- and consumer-friendly catches through alternative supply chains. These chains excluded local traders, who have long been the key connection between the fishers and the market. Non governmental organizations (NGOs), their long standing allies, have played a leading role in collaboratively building up community-based social enterprises for marketing "green" seafood to urban middle-class consumers who have health and environmental concerns. There are three social enterprise projects with different approaches working in four southern provinces : Songkhla, Phatthalung, Nakohn Si Thammarat and Satun. This paper will focus on the extent to which the different fishing community organizations can obtain higher incomes through these approaches, and use dividends from the business to support their conservation activities. It also focuses on multiple factors related to the specific successes and challenges of the projects. The research method includes unstructured and semi-structured interviews with project staff, core-team members of community organizations and fishing households in the target area.

A Long and Winding Path of Mono-Cropping Rubber Small-Holders in Southern Thailand Towards Rubber Agro-Forestry Systems: Potential and Challenges

Jawinit Kittitornkool,
Prince of Songkla University

Pakamart Thongkam
Chiang Mai University

Sara Bumrungsrit

Abstract

Over the last few decades the implementation of national development policies in Thailand has significantly increased the expansion of monocropping rubber plots both in the southern region, and across the country. This brought about severe effects on the livelihoods of monocropping rubber small-holders - about 90 % of rubber plot owners with less than 2.5 hectares in Thailand, especially in the last decade. In addition to the economic crises caused by mere financial dependence on rubber yields, the rubber small-holders also faced environmental degradation in their rubber plots due to monocropping and chemical use. Consequently, in the last few decades an increasing number of academic institutions and civil society organizations have actively promoted Rubber Agro-Forestry System (RAFS) as an alternative solution to enhance resilience for sustainable agriculture and food security in the 21st century, as well placing them in line with the principle of economic self-sufficient highlighted by the Thai government. In 2014 the Office of the Rubber Replanting Aid Fund (ORRAF) changed its policy of limiting planting to not less than thirty trees per rai in rubber plots, to provide funds for RAFS in rubber farms. Nevertheless, it is questionable to what extent rubber small-holding households with specific limitations in terms of economic pressures, land ownership and household labor would be able to transform their monocropping rubber farms into RAFS. This research aims to identify the multi-layer and multi-actor governance practices, involving personal, local, governmental, and private sector actors, facilitating and obstructing the RAFS transformation of one-hundred monocropping rubber small-holders in Songkhla Province, after learning about RAFS through a series of RAFS promoting workshops. The research methodology is mainly based on unstructured and semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions with the target group.

The Research Linking Culture Through People and the Relationship between Religion Art and Development: The Study of Vishnu Statues in Thailand

Jeerawan Sangpetch
Visual Arts Department, Chulalongkorn University

Abstract

Vishnu Cult is one of the most popular forms of Hinduism in India that worships Vishnu as the supreme god, and their temples and statues were often founded along ancient trade routes and can illustrate cultural relationships from India to Southeast Asia.

The objective of the research is to study the Vishnu statues in Thailand before the 14th century. This research considers Vishnu statues located in three areas:

Group 1 East and Northeast; Sri Mahosot, Prachinburi province, Si Thep Petchabun province

This group illustrates some aspects of their own typical style and are related to Group 3, especially on the western coast of Thailand which shows influences from Southern India.

Group 2 Central and Western; Lopburi province, Suphan Buri province, Pong Tuk district Kanchanaburi province

This group was found along the Chaopraya river trade route in central Thailand and is still an important point of local spirits in Suphan Buri province.

Group 3: Eastern coast of Southern Thailand: Surat Thani province, Nakorn Si Thammarat province and western coast of Southern Thailand: Phangnga province

This group was assumed to be the earliest group of Vishnu in Thailand, especially in the eastern coast which relates to the early styles from the southern Indian tradition, and has influenced the art styles in the Group 1 especially in Sri Mahosot, Prachinburi province.

The Vishnu cult was absorbed by other religions and also has linkages to the monarchy in Thailand right up until the present.

Transgender Characters: A Closer Look at Thai Novelists' Perceptions

Jenjit Gasigitamrong
University of California

Abstract

The purposes of this study were to investigate how transgender characters are portrayed in novels and to examine how authors express their opinion regarding sex-change surgery and its effects on the characters as well as people around them. Two novels – the Third Path and the Fallen Leaf - were selected to be used in this study because of their similarities in plot and the time they were published. The obvious difference between the two novels is the authors; one is a transgender who has gone through a sex-change surgery, while the other is straight. This rendered the two novels appropriate for a comparative investigation. Based on language analysis, LGBTQ psychology, queer theory, and feminist theory, the results of an analysis revealed that although there were similarities in the depiction of the two protagonists, differences in their behaviors and attitudes were also portrayed. With regards to sex-change surgery, both authors made it clear that it was not meant for everyone.

Unpacking the Narrative of Educational Failure: Thailand in the Standardized Testing Era

Jennifer Goodman
Chulalongkorn University

Abstract

This paper assesses one of the mechanisms which the Thai state uses to apoliticize and rationalize educational reform—standardized national exams. The National Institute of Educational Testing Services, or NIETS, uses standardized exams to show that Thai students are "falling behind." This narrative of failure extends from relative time periods (last year students were more capable than this year's) and geographically, both within the country and internationally, within ASEAN and globally. Thai education is consistently found lacking, and this necessitates increased focus on accountability, a global trend that means increased centralized bureaucratic control of teachers and schools. In this paper I will scrutinize the data that is used to produce a narrative of Thai students' diminishing capacity, which in turn becomes evidence to justify and support continuous emergency-style educational reform.

The Moral Psychology of Globalization in Northern Thailand

Jessica Mckenzie
California State University

Abstract

Over the past two decades, anthropologists, geographers, sociologists, and economists have contributed immensely to our understanding of the macro-level processes of globalization by describing the structure and content of changes that are deemed, or attributed to, "globalization" (e.g., Allen & Hamnett, 1995; Appadurai, 1996; Ganjanapan, 2003; Giddens, 2000; Inda & Rosaldo, 2008; Lewellen, 2002; Sassen, 1998; Sen, 1999; Shangquan, 2000; Robertson, 1992). Psychological investigations of the micro-level implications of globalization, however, have lagged behind (McKenzie, 2015, in press). This paper draws from my fieldwork in northern Thailand to illustrate the moral psychological implications of globalization in this cultural context. My research involves interviews and ethnography in the urban city of Chiang Mai and in a rural village 35 kilometers from Chiang Mai. Over the course of one year I conducted participant observation in school, home, and community contexts, and interviewed 80 adolescents and parents, evenly divided across urban and rural communities. Interviews were analyzed using the cultural-developmental approach to moral reasoning (Jensen, 2008, 2011), which examines use of the Ethics of Community (focus on the social self), Autonomy (focus on the individual self), and Divinity (focus on the spiritual self) across age groups and cultural communities. The three ethics are further differentiated into a total of 44 sub-ethics (Jensen, 2015). This paper focuses on three sets of interview findings, including: degree and primacy of ethic use, ethical co-occurrence, and sub-ethic use. Across findings, an urban-rural and urban adolescent-parent gap in conceptions of the moral self emerged. Drawing from ethnographic data to interpret these findings, I argue that moral development has been rendered increasingly complex in urban Thai contexts as the number of moral worlds that youth navigate is multiplied by virtue of globalization-related processes.

Dam and Politics: Rethinking the Protest Against Pak Mun Dam in Northeast Thailand

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Abstract

For nearly 20 years the struggle against the establishment of Pak Mun Dam has had a great social impact and been symbolic of social movements in Thailand. Anthropological discussion of "ontological turn" in recent years aims to respond to major social issues in the contemporary real world. It advocates political propositions on the basis of ontological differences. The Pak Mun Dam protest movement unquestionably fits this paradigm shift.

This study is based on the ethnographic investigation of the resistance against the Pak Mun Dam in the northeast of Thailand. By incorporating the dam as an entity into my research scope, I explore in depth the relationship between the dam and social movements. An interventional anthropological investigation of social movement combined with ontological political thinking as well as a thing-politics perspective allow us to rethink the Pak Mun anti-dam protest and to explore possible modes of knowledge production.

I discover that the villagers of Pak Mun were able to invoke various traditional resources of the community and external forces when they faced the invasion of the national "development plan", and they took initiative to play games with the government using "local" (ontological) political discourses, which provides innovative intellectual resources for the citizen politics.

Customer Knowledge Management: Connecting Chinese Tourists to the Destination of Thailand

Jing Fu
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Abstract

This paper takes a holistic view at the changing needs of new Chinese tourists, specifically their views towards Thailand, which has been a primary destination for Chinese outbound tourists. The research adopted a perspective from customer knowledge management, investigating a deeper understanding of the knowledge about, from and for the new Chinese tourists. An online survey in the Chinese language was conducted with a qualitative and quantitative nature. The research findings help to build a strategic understanding for the Thailand tourism authority to prepare itself towards becoming a more active player in the Chinese tourism outbound market.

Spatial Formation of a Refugee Camp in the Thailand-Burma Borderland

Jiraporn Laocharoenwong
University of Amsterdam

Abstract

Refugee camps are invented spaces typically used to physically segregate a group of unwanted people from a state's citizens for a short period of time. However, refugee camps in Africa and Asia have existed for many decades. In conceptualizing refugee camps, some scholars have argued that these camps grow and develop through time and exhibit features similar to urban marginal spaces such as ghettos and slums. While it is useful to draw from concepts in urban studies, these often focus on how particular (urban/camp) structures shape the lives of the people, highlighting aspects of isolation and stigmatization, while the perspective of camp inhabitants interacting with the unique space of the camp remains under explored. Drawing from nine months of ethnographic data obtained in Mae La refugee camp along the Thailand-Burma border, this paper illustrates how refugees continually interpret, negotiate and re-create camp/displacement space to make their living and how they rebuild their lives while remaining in exile. The camp is simultaneously seen as a safety net and transitory place, a ritual space, an opportunity for education, as an economic sphere in connection with the border area in which it is embedded, and as a home. Refugees assign different meanings to camp space to suit their social worlds, which are not always marginal in their perspectives.

Perception of Thai History Through Monuments and Shrines: Case Study of King Taksin the Great.

Jirathorn Chartsiri
Mahidol University

Abstract

Thonburi period is the period of fifteen years between Ayutthaya and Rattanakosin (Bangkok) and has only one king which is King Taksin. King Taksin for Thai people is a hero who helped Thai gained sovereignty from Burma after the fall of Ayutthaya. His story as a brave soldier who gathered Thai people and fought the Burmese, built a new kingdom, and ended up betrayed by his soldier who became the founder of the present dynasty captured the hearts of Thais. Therefore, he became the symbol of bravery and freedom. There are several plays, songs and books that dedicated to him. However, what can be found throughout Thailand is the monuments and shrines of King Taksin. Wherever the Chronicle of Thonburi mentioned the places that had been visited by King Taksin or not exactly mentioned but presumed – The monument or the shrine were built in order to pay respect to the King, and also to gained attention from the public as a place to visit since it is a historical place. It is interesting that Thai people, who are not academic, interested in history and attempted to assimilate local history into mainstream history. Other than that they also created a story that has nothing to do with the Royal Chronicle of Thonburi or other sources but more like the legend or the locality myth. And despite little research by Thai academics on the Thonburi history, little is known to be involved with the perception of Thai people.

The Emerging Local Museum and Its Meaning Through Local People

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Abstract

This article presents the interpretation of how emerging local museum settings in Thailand have been formed by the local people on the context of globalization (B.E.2530 - present). The keywords of "Stakeholder", "Place" and "Things" were identified to support the interpretation. Thailand's local museum management of the documentaries and literature of local museums were collected from the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre (Public Organization) database which have correspondingly been analyzed into descriptions. The result of the study indicated that the ideas of building local museums were influenced by trends of globalization. Throughout 30 years, local museums in Thailand have been affected by six major factors including 1) city transformation, 2) local community impact, 3) object discovery in local areas, 4) community icons, 5) local community intra-relationship, and 6) values of antiques found in the local area. These factors led to the local awareness needed to preserve local identity, and to use the local museum as a symbolic tool to interpret their sense of belonging and pride to both the local people and the visitors. Moreover, the early development of local private museums had single individuals or a small number of "stakeholders" in the local museum. "Place" is identified by building or location of building. "Things" denote the collection of museum objects. Since then, local museums have been more identified and participated in from various Stakeholders in the community. "Stakeholder" will be responsible for participatory management of the locals, "Place" will be representing the local area and "Things" will be given its importance to the ways of life, society, culture, local wisdom, environment, etc.

The Existence of Local Museum in Thailand: A Case Study of 14 Local Museums in Central Region

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Abstract

A local museum serves the role of creating a sense of consciousness, a sense of pride and a sense of belonging to locals that could be the main component of strengthening a sense of community. Nevertheless, the situation of local museums in Thailand have suffered due to the lack of attention and preservation by the locals. Based on these situations, this research proposes to study the current situation of local museums in Thailand, focusing on museum management. The researcher explored all related documentaries of museums in Thailand taken from the databases of the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre (Public Organization), along with surveys of 14 museums hosted by the local communities. Observation and interviews were used in data collection methods and a conceptual management is used as data analysis technique. The result revealed that the presence of the 14 surveyed local museums depend in their management upon; local participation, continuing activities and events of museum operation, and a cooperative working network, requiring various supports ranging from education, budgets from government sectors, etc. Educational activities based on the local museums were planned to raise awareness of the locals and the interest of visitors, in order to create their sense of belonging to the community and the museum. For the interpretation of meaning and content of the museum, accurate information, a sequence of exhibition as well as a presentation technique should be able to understand easily and benefit to others.

From Highland Tomatoes to Lowland Markets: Highland Agriculture Restructuring and Power in Thailand Tomatoes Commodity Network

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Abstract

This research is a sociological and anthropological study that aims: 1) to explain the transformation of highland agriculture society, particularly in Hot-Omkoi District, Chiang Mai Province, Thailand, after the expansion of cultivated areas for commercial tomatoes in Chiang Mai Province; and 2) to differentiate the role and power of the many actors involved, from the planting process to lowland markets.

In the methodology of this study, in order to explain the changing of highland agriculture, the researcher selected Na Fon village, Hot District, Chiang Mai Province, as a study area, as the farmlands of this village have been widely replaced by tomato production since the 1980s. Furthermore, this village also has been become to the collection and distribution of tomatoes to lowland markets for more than 20 years. Data was gathered and analyzed in many ways, such as from historical documents, related researches and interviews with Lua in Na Fon village. In the process of differentiating the role and power of actors in the tomato commodity network, the researcher employs multi-sited research and applies the commodity network approach to differentiate power among various actors.

This study has found that the extension of commercial tomatoes in Na Fon Village since the 1980s has caused land and labor restructuring. Most of Lua Na Fon farmers focus entirely on tomato planting and convert their own highland production from subsistence upland rice to commercial tomatoes. Several farmers transform themselves into entrepreneur farmers who work as highland farmers and tomato traders. Moreover, they also take pains to relate to other actors for additional benefits. In addition, this study has found that the tomato commodity network has been involved with several actors with different roles and powers, such as seed and seedling companies, farmers, entrepreneur farmers, local transport companies and lowland market traders.

Constructing and Socializing Sexual Knowledge of Thai State Through Thai Classical Music in Early Rattankosin Era

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Abstract

This article explains the construction and socializing of sexual knowledge in Thai state in Early Rattanakosin era (from the beginning of the Kingdom in 1782 A.D. up to the end of King Rama IV in 1868 A.D.). It is based on an idea that sexual knowledge has been constructed and circulated in the lyrics of Thai Classical songs (Pleng Thao and Pleng Thab). As such, this article mainly focuses on masculinity, femininity and sexual relationships between different sexual identities found in Thai Classical songs. According to Michel Foucault, archaeology of knowledge is a research methodology to reveal a network of knowledge and power of institutions, including Thai state, that produces and circulates its own knowledge of sexuality. Consequently, the audiences who were exposed to Thai Classical songs during the beginning of Rattakosin kingdom up to Rama V's reign, have been able to learn and understand the ways of the world, what the world is and how they should relate to it.

Besides this, audiences who assimilate and adopt the embedded perspectives and behaviors presented in Thai Classical songs unconsciously behave according to them in their real world. Due to this Thai state has employed these songs functionally, as an individual's reference of knowledge and understandings towards sex, sexuality and sexual expressions. However, since previous social constructs differ from the Thai modern era it is important to investigate and understand the network of knowledge and the power of Thai institutions regarding sexuality, which have circulated throughout the Thai Classical songs in the early Rattanakosin era of Thailand.

Synergy: The Mechanics of Material Culture in Thai Buddhism

Joe Rotheray
University of Leeds

Abstract

Over 2013, Wat Doi Kham in Chiang Mai province transformed itself from a quiet hilltop monastery into one of Thailand's most popular sites of apotropaic pilgrimage and domestic tourism. It did this through the promotion of a small Buddha statuette named Pra Jao Thun Jai, who is said to answer supplications in exchange for garlands of fresh jasmine. The complex internal mythology of Doi Kham refers not only to this image, but also the historical Mon queen Jamathewi, her twin sons, the Lawa king Wilangka, and Pu Sae Ya Sae: the spirits of two former cannibals charged to protect the local community. These subjects and many others are present at the site in the form of multiple shrines and statues, in addition to spectacular piles of jasmine. Justin McDaniel (2011) suggested a set of 'axioms' that inform popular Thai Buddhist art and practice, including that of 'abundance'. This paper seeks to comprehensively explain the function of 'abundance' as a visual category at Doi Kham, in addition to the presentational logic that informs the site's composition, through the concept of synergy. Synergy refers to the techniques and flexible mechanics that inform the assembly of 'units' containing multiple 'components', such as yantra diagrams, amulets, images, shrines, and monastic space itself. With reference to some introductory examples, interviews, site evaluation and the monastery's self-presentation in media, the paper explains Doi Kham's synergistic unit and gives further commentary on the contemporary direction of apotropaic material culture and space in Thai Buddhism.

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The Ethnic Gap in Poverty and Inequality Policy in Thailand: A New Dataset on Ethnic Inequalities in Education, Health, and Other Areas of Human Achievement

John Draper
Khon Kaen University

Joel Selway
Brigham Young University

Abstract

Past literature has demonstrated significant levels of socio-economic inequality in Thailand. Much of this research has been along individual or geographic lines. In this article, we examine inequality along ethnic group lines, compiling data from several sources to provide estimates of horizontal (between-group) inequality along numerous sectors, including health, education, employment, income, housing & living environment, transport and communication, family and community life, and participation. In addition to describing how Thailand's major ethnic groups fare in each sector, we compare inequality amongst sectors to determine areas in which the country performs better or worse. Then, demonstrating an "ethnic gap" in current Thai public policies concerning poverty and inequality, we overview a significant literature that suggests that Thailand's overall policy strategy is incomplete without a focus on ethnic-based policy planning mechanisms. We recommend the Thai state adopt ethnic-based planning mechanisms (ethnodevelopment) and reduce societal racism and that political parties address structural inequalities by ethnicity, for instance through promoting social democracy.

Spatial Economic Initiatives in Thailand

John Walsh
Shinawatra University

Abstract

In common with other mainland Southeast Asian countries, Thailand has historically been dominated by a primate city, Bangkok, in which all principal economic, social, political, religious and monarchical institutions have been concentrated. Awareness of the problems that this concentration has caused has been recognized in developmental plans since the 1950s, when efforts at decentralization were first introduced. Assisted by improvements in transportation infrastructure made during the Cold War period, initiatives such as the creation of the Northern Region Industrial Estate have been intended to develop other parts of the country to modify migration flows and reduce income inequalities which have become more marked through the years. The Board of Investment has been instrumental in offering incentives to foreign and domestic investors in industrial estates to the north of Bangkok in Pathum Thani and Ayutthaya, where good roads link the places of production with the markets of the capital and the main port of Laem Chabang. Currently, the border special economic zone policy aims, insofar as its objectives have been coherently stated, to promote development in border regions which can take advantage of cross-border trade and investment. In these efforts, success has usually been achieved when public sector agencies have provided what private sector interests wanted and this is likely to continue in the future. This paper explores the various economic spatial initiatives that have taken place in the country and attempts to analyze when and where these have been successful and what lessons failures have been able to provide.

Land Ethnography: Reading the Land, Translating the Social, Transcribing the Economic

Jonathan Rigg
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Abstract

This paper takes land as the starting point for tracking and understanding agrarian change in Thailand. I call this 'land ethnography'. Taking a handful of land parcels across three sites in the Northeast, the paper sees these parcels and their use, sale and transfer as reflective of wider changes in economy and society. This provides an alternative point of entry for rural research, different from that which tracks either commodities or value, or individuals or households. It permits the land as a non-human actor to be placed center stage, and in this way draws out the entanglements of environment, society and economy, and places this in wider historical context.

(Re)mediating Ritual in Southeast Asia

Jovan Maud
Goettingen University

Abstract

Buddhist ritual practices in Southeast Asia have always involved the mediation of the sacred through diverse material forms, including relics, texts, images, amulets, and places. Such forms rarely stand alone but are combined in various ways. It is therefore useful to think of ritual forms not as discrete objects but as layered assemblages, reworkings of sacred potency constituted through a range of "media". In contemporary Southeast Asia, such reworkings involve a variety of new media, where ritual images and practices are re-presented in digital forms and online contexts. Facebook and other social media are increasingly used as sites in which sacred images, formulas and other sources of potency are circulated and incorporated into ritual practice. But while the digitalization of ritual forms and practices would appear to be an example of "the novel and emergent", I question this assumption by drawing on the media studies concept of "remediation" (Bolter & Grusin 2000), the process by which new media achieve their cultural significance through incorporation of prior media forms. The concept of remediation challenges what Bolter & Grusin call the "modernist myth of the new" — which assumes that new technologies are essentially disruptive, impacting on the social field as external agents. Instead, they focus on how new media forms incorporate, transform and are transformed by existing media forms and practices. Drawing on "netnographic" examples from Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore, this paper argues that the concept of remediation can be productively applied to ritual and the question of its "newness". New mediations of the sacred build upon existing ones, which are themselves already complexly layered remediations. We are left not with a modernist choice between rupture and continuity, the new and tradition, but rather an understanding of how the new draws its life, its energy from what has come before.

"Wherever You Go, There You… Aren't?" Mind and Self in Thai Buddhist Theories of Mental Health

Julia Cassaniti
Washington State University

Abstract

In 1994 Jon Kabat-Zinn's popular book, Wherever You Go, There You Are, sparked a growing global interest in the concept of mindfulness, and it has shown no signs of abating any time soon. In Thailand mindfulness has long been a well-known concept, as understood through the Pali term sati, where it has circulated in and out of the Thai Buddhist monastery. It has also long been associated with mental health: in a well-known pop song about a man in a psychiatric hospital, Carabao sings, "It's not that I'm a bad person, it's that my sati is no good!" With mindfulness' global rise, even more attention in Thailand has been placed on the connection between mindfulness and mental health. Psychiatric hospitals and clinics are increasingly incorporating it into their repertoire of training techniques. But while much of the internationally driven, scientific research on mindfulness stands to help an increasingly wide range of patients, there is also a great deal that remains unknown about how mindfulness works, and what is left out when it is taken up and redistributed in different social environments.

One aspect of mindfulness that may look different in some Thai contexts, compared with how it has come to be understood in its global form, is what the mind and self looks like when it is considered 'full' with sati'. Based on two-years research carried out among 200 participants in Thailand, and 400 more in Burma and Sri Lanka, I discuss concepts relating to the person who practices mindfulness and Buddhist conceptions of non-self, and the paper pays attention to local ideas about khwan, the 'spirits of the person' that are thought to become scattered when one is mentally unwell. I hope to show that perhaps the "You" that one finds may differ "wherever you go."

Retracing the Shared Culture: Tai Aitons of Assam and Tai Luang of Maehongson

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Wanlaya Namtham
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Abstract

Tai population in India is mostly confined to the states of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. The various groups comprising Tai people are the Ahoms, Khamtis. Phakes, Khamyangs, Aitons and the Turungs. The Aitons came to Assam from Mong Mao kingdom of Myanmar and entered Ahom kingdom during the later part of the eighteenth century and lived near the Khamti people. In the time of colonial period in Assam they moved to Dhansiri valley. Due to the oppression in their homeland lead to the migration to India. They brought Tai cultural element along with their migration. On the other hand, during 12th century, the Tai Luang people migrated through a ripple state of instable living amidst wars from Shan state to Maehongson of northern Thailand. However, the great migration happened during the colonial period in 19th century. At that time, the British developed a kind of forest industry and hugely invested in the Maehongson area. They needed workers and the shift of Tai Luang workers from Shan state was greatly initiated.

In spite of all their vicissitudes they still maintain many Tai cultural traits of their homeland. Keeping the same place of origin in mind, the paper tries to highlight the shared culture of both the groups inhabited in different locations in two different countries. The main aim of the study is to observe the similarities in the tradition of agriculture, festival, food culture and material culture through public memory, oral tradition as well as written tradition.

'The Poor Millionaire': A Case Study of Moral and Manners in 1950s Thailand

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Abstract

This paper discusses the popular serialized novel Setthi anatha [The Poor Millionaire], written by Santa Thevarak in the early 1950s, and compares it with the movie version made in 1956. Whilst critics dismissed 'The Poor Millionaire' as simply one of Santa's romantic tales, the story actually addressed an important social issue of the time: the desire for and anxieties arising from rapid social mobility. Specifically, the ideas of modern manners and material culture presented in Setthi anatha can be traced back to Santa's other writing, a Thai etiquette manual based on the American textbook, Kritsana son nong: Naenam marayat thi ngam haeng araya samai [Kritsana's Instructions to Her Younger Sister: An Introduction to the Fine manners of the Civilized Period]. Using an interpretive approach, the paper addresses the novel and the movie thematically, with reference to Kritsana son nong. It explores the connection between issues such as social mobility, meritocracy, manners and material objects. The paper represents findings from the preliminary stage of an ongoing research whose aim is to form a body of knowledge on the relationship between material culture, history of manners and the modernization of everyday life in Thailand.

Meaning of Xerostomia in Popular View

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Abstract

Xerostomia is an oral health issue widely found among the elderly, those receiving radiotherapy treatment for head and neck cancer and others with non-communicable diseases. It leads to the possibility of oral disease and can be harmful to daily life.

On being diagnosed with an indication of this symptom, patients receive similar medical treatment which usually conflicts with their expectations, as the condition of dryness in one's mouth is a matter of personal perception. So, it is intriguing to explore the view of these patients, as well as their self-explanation of this illness.

This descriptive research relied on in-depth interviews to study the definition of xerostomia as it occurs in one's body. Ten interviewees were recruited from two major groups of xerostomia patients in Mae Tha Hospital, Lamphun province; these groups comprised those who found the disease themselves, and those who were diagnosed during a medical examination. Those in this sample group had different personal characteristics of xerostomia. The data was collected between May to December, 2016.

The research found that xerostomia results in annoyance to daily living. According to its definition, there are five relative aspects: normality, aging, loss , signs of life threatening disease and indications of changes in bodily health over a period of time. These aspects derive from the interpretation based on the processing of data gained from personal experience of one's own body as well as the explanation from medical staff. Also patients themselves seek treatments that suit specific definitions, including modern medical treatment, traditional medicine or self-regulation of life style.

The findings suggested that medical staff may have to pay more attention to the patients' individual views, for a deeper understanding on how each patient suffers and more openness to their personal interpretation which may be different from the conventional medical approach.

Digital Humanities Research Approach for Organizing the Contents on Ethnic Groups in Thailand

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Abstract

Thailand is a country made up of diverse ethnic groups. Knowledge of ethnicity is important not only for research, but also to gain a better understanding of the background, culture, belief systems, and way of life of people. In most countries, issues of ethnic groups have been of critical concern to the government in relation to national security and harmony. In order to study ethnic groups, the scholarly community needs effective tools to gain access to the digitized information that is available in databases around the web. This research, therefore, aims at utilizing the digital humanities research approach to organize knowledge relating to ethnic groups in Thailand, in order to develop schemes and tools for information access and retrieval. This study uses qualitative research methods by conducting a content analysis of relevant information and resources. The knowledge structure of ethnic groups was constructed using the knowledge classification theory, and then evaluated by experts in ethnology via structured interviews. This article presents an example of the results that derive from the application of the digital humanities research approach in the organization of knowledge relating to Thai ethnic groups. The results are knowledge structures and ontology that can be used as tools to retrieve information on ethnic groups in Thailand.

The Negotiation of Alienation in Bangkok's Everyday Life: Myth and Spiritual Power Through Sculpture in Public Sphere

Kamol Phaosavasdi

Abstract

This presentation is based on data and findings from a qualitative research entitled "Developments of Principles to Introduce Sculpture to Public in Bangkok." The research was conducted in Bangkok, based on document research, interviews with private patronage, artists, and public policy makers, fieldwork, and observations of monuments in Bangkok between 2013-2014. "The Negotiation of Alienation in Bangkok's Everyday Life: Myth and Spiritual Power through Sculpture in Public Sphere" will re-examine the previous research from a global context of the study of Thailand. It will scan the concept of public sphere in relation to the introduction of "sculptures" to Thai society, which began in the reign of King Rama V onwards. Moreover, this presentation will also demonstrate how the alienated concepts of public sphere and "sculpture" were negotiated in Bangkok's everyday life. It will also demonstrate that myth and spiritual power in Thai society serve as invisible agents that nullify the degree of alienation in sculpture in the public sphere. This supports the main argument of the study that myth efficiently and politically accustom the alienated objects in Thai society at large, as they reinforce members of society to share meanings and negotiate personal and collective interest with art objects in the public sphere.

The Lue in America

Kang Nan Shan
Yunnan Buddhist Association

Abstract

Social construction of a Lue immigrant community in the United States of America, since the 1980s.

Shared-Cultural Heritage in Ritual-Performances: A Comparative Study between Southern Thai Nora and Malay Mak Yong

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Abstract

This paper is an analysis of two well-known ritual-performances, the Southern Thai Nora in Thailand and the Malay Mak Yong in Malaysia. Both function as 'folk theater' for entertainment and as 'ritual' for healing an unknown illness. The ritual-performances are also known as 'Nora-Roong-Khruu' and 'Main Puteri angin Mak Yong'.

The focus of this research include elements of the myth's origin, story, dance movements, characters, and costume. The researcher concludes that even though the Southern Thai Nora is shaped by the concept of 'Thai-ness' that links Central Thai and Southern Thai identity, while the Malay Mak Yong represents the 'Malay-ness' of Kelantanese, Central Malay and Islamic cultural influences, they do have similarities that are embedded in the performance's structure. Analysis of both performances exposes 'the shared-cultural heritages' that bind Southern Thai, Siam and Malay cultures even before the arrival of the influences of Buddhism and Islam. The performances interacted and were appreciated by local people even before national boundaries in the region were drawn.

To expand on the theory and establish the relevance of this study, dance anthropology, performing arts theories and folklore studies have been applied together with participatory fieldwork in Southern Thailand and Kelantan state in Malaysia.

Is Tourism the (Only) Best 'Choice' for Community Rehabilitation and Development?

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Abstract

Economic and societal conditions, and recent changes make many communities in Thailand face changes in occupation and life. Suburban communities in particular face loneliness and sluggishness. With this problem, renovation and development of communities ensue. Many communities have changed their image to be the "tourism community", the result of which is generally perceived as either failure or success. According to this phenomenon, the author would like to present a story through a case study of Pak Nam Prasae Community, Klaeng District, Rayong Province. The author had an opportunity to conduct a participatory action research with collaboration, with the objective of supporting the knowledge body leading the community out of loneliness and sluggishness and to creation of tourism activities. Nowadays, this community has become a popular tourist attraction, which is promoted as part of the national tourism by Tourism Authority of Thailand. The author would like to present both sides of the development through the tool called "tourism" which was employed as a new approach to maintain, renovate and develop the community. Even though in the initial stage promotion and support from external networks were important, the most important thing is the cost of aspects that support the community to insist, improve and connect to new networks by itself. On the other hand, the community will have to face new different issues and challenges, such as the terms of management and share of benefit gained in return from the use local resources. Drawing from these sources we will determine whether "tourism" is the best tool for development, an important issue that the community has to consider.

สตรีไทย: Phibun's Cultural Mandates and the New Thai Womanhood

Kanjana Thepboriruk
Northern Illinois University

Abstract

On the eve of World War II, military dictator Plaek Phibunsongkhram began an ambitious campaign to remake Siam into Thailand. The modernizing campaign centered around the twelve mandates issued between June 1939 and January 1942. The Department of Public Relations also published several supplemental treatises as a part of the Mandate media blitz.

This study examines the ways the Phibunsongkhram regime defined the modern Thai woman and her role in modern Thai state.

This study examines four publications that addressed Thai women:

1. The Prime Minister's Plea – for our Thai sisters

2. The Prime Minister's Plea to our Thai sisters On the Matter of Wearing Hats

3. Ways to Wear Hats for Thai Ladies, part 1 and 2

4. Guidelines on Ways to Dress for Ladies, part 1 and 2

The four texts showed several features that are characteristic of how the Phibunsongkhram propaganda machine communicated to the public; features that were also used by nationalist and fascist regimes during the same era. Though the text directly addressed Thai women, the language was highly formal, using the highest register available for lexical items. The language was also entirely non-inclusive, containing no instances of 'we' in any of the publications, despite one of the 'voices' being female. The lack of inclusion in the language contradicted the message of cooperation and participation otherwise found in the four texts.

Patriotism for the new modern Thai woman was external, to be manifested sartorially and physically in Phibun's Thailand. This new definition of Thai womanhood was contested, as evident by the pleading tone of the texts and the repetitive reiteration of the same few points directed at those who oppose the new ideals.

Emotional Geographies of Resource Access, Control and Conflict in the Mekong Region

Kanokwan Manorom
Ubon Ratchathani University

Abstract

The paper is drawn from a concept of emotional geographies and from Farhana Sultana's (2011) work on "Suffering for water, suffering from water: Emotional geographies of resource, access and conflict". The author argues that embodied emotions constitute a relationship based on interactions between environment and gender subjectivities on a daily basis. In the Mekong region, women have faced more difficulties in their lives since large dams have developed in the Mekong countries. These impacts have widened the gap between gender, and have marginalized women and other minorities to the extent that they are further impoverished and suffering. Women suffer the impacts of displacement and the loss of livelihoods such as fish. Embodied emotional geographies of places, peoples and resources are fundamentally grounded through resource struggles and resource conflicts. The theme is useful to understand women and their resource struggles in Thailand.

Political Economy and Land Governance at the Borders of Isan, Thailand

Kanokwan Manorom
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Abstract

The borders of Isan are perceived as spaces for potential trading, rich resources and sites of cross border economic and social development. With this, land is a key potential resource that has been increasingly taken over and controlled over the past 10 years. In some areas land conflict is a common phenomenon. Factors affecting land control include: borderland development, crop booms, national security and cross-border trade. Actors involved in borderland control come from many groups, including local villagers from within and outside the areas, local and outside traders, government agencies, politicians and local authorities. This paper studies land resources along the borders of Isan through the lens of political economy. This lens allows us to conceptualize the history, current situation and dynamics of land use, land struggle, land conflict and land control along the Isan frontier, in the context of the changes brought about through Mekong development and integration.

Cross-Cultural Networks and the Rise of Intermarriage: A Case Study of Pa Pae Laveue Village, Mae Sariang District, Mae Hong Son Province, Thailand

Kanokwan Somsirivarangkool
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Abstract

Interethnic and Interreligious marriages are commonplace, but they are actually complex and require a contextual approach in understanding their nature. This paper proposes a study of the intermarriage phenomena as cross-cultural space, in order to understand how ethnic identity and religious identity are selected to fulfill and maintain relationships in family and community. High rates of intermarriage between Laveue (Lua) people with Catholic Sgaw Karen and with Buddhist Northern Thai (Tai Yuan) people are observed in Pa Pae village by utilizing an anthropological kinship survey and interviewing people in typical cases of intermarriage. By developing an analysis beyond the historical closeness and ethnic intimacy, this paper suggests that religious identity has become a cross-cultural network.. This is relevant to the process of ethnic identification through the management of cultural resources in everyday life, rather than simply through ethnic origin.

Khâm Són Christang : A Witness of the French Missionaries'' Knowledge of Thai Language During the Ayutthaya Era of Siam (Thailand)

Kantaphong Chitkla
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Abstract

French missionaries of the Missions Etrangères de Paris arrived in Siam during King Narai's reign (1656-1688). They introduced there a new educational system, establishing schools. Their essential aim, however, was the spread of the Catholic faith. While working on the archives of the Missions Etrangères in Paris, we have noticed that these missionaries devoted themselves to the study of the Siamese language. Mgr Laneau, Apostolic Vicar in Siam, composed a teaching manual of the Siamese language and a dictionary. Although his dictionary has disappeared, his works on catechism had presented that he was expert in Thai language. The other document remains and proves the mastery of the Siamese language by these missionaries: "Khâm Són Christang", published in 1796. It is a Roman Catechism, in which Siamese language is Romanized.

In this Roman Catechism, we can see the use of many Siamese words borrowed from the Pali, Sanskrit and Khmer languages, which were used in the poems of the Ayutthaya Era such as phrôm (Brahma), lôkbphiphop (Earth), qhantha (Groups of personality), anisong (Result of merit), and phiphacsa (Judgment). Moreover, a "royal vocabulary" exists in the Siamese language to speak to the king or with him, still used today, It is used in this Catechism to talk about God, such as phra hu'ru'thai (Heart) and sadet (Come or Go). Furthermore, the Catechism used P.O. (His Majesty), when referring to God, as He is the most powerful entity, according to the Catholic faith. Should we consider that French missionaries had the opportunity to study the classical Thai literature with the elites of the royal court? We also wish to evoke the influence that the romanization used in this Catechism may have had upon the pronunciation systems proposed in Mgr Pallegoix and Mgr Vey's dictionaries of the Siamese language (19th century).

Knowledge Organization of I-San Proverbs (Pha-Ya) for Semantic Retrieval

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Krongkaew Kingsawat
Khon Kaen University

Sompetch Junlabuddee
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Abstract

Pha-ya is an Isan proverb which originates in their religious belief systems. It is a form of traditional verbal literature widely known in the northeast of Thailand. Pha-ya has been used by local scholars to deliver messages of wisdom to people to teach the community morals and ethics. Because Pha-ya is local wisdom and is tacit knowledge using a local dialect, it is rarely found in formal resources, is normally unrecorded, and is now gradually disappearing. This study, therefore, aims to use digital humanities research to collect, preserve, disseminate and retrieve knowledge on Pha-ya using semantics technology. The research process is comprised of three phases: 1) content analysis of relevant information and resources, and collecting knowledge from local scholars, 2) organization of knowledge on Pha-ya using knowledge classification theory, and 3) development of an ontology on Pha-ya for semantic retrieval. In all phases, the knowledge structure and ontology of Pha-ya were evaluated and approved by experts of Isan literature, and an ontology was developed using structured interviews. The results of this research revealed that the scope and knowledge organization of Pha-ya can be divided into 6 classes, 15 sub-classes, and 39 divisions. The next stage of this research is to develop the ontology of Pha-Ya for the semantic retrieval system.

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Articulating Human Rights in Thailand in the 1970's

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Abstract

The Thai state's failure to meet international human rights obligations is frequently explained through the particularity of the Thai state, expressed as Thai style democracy or Asian values. The counter-voices to such ideas are often omitted in the explanation and we are left with a single-sided history focusing on state practice.

It has been suggested that human rights saw a global breakthrough in the 1970's. Human rights was no longer only an ideal in the international community of nation-states, but instead became a political tool to be used by citizens and global solidarity networks. Thailand was not detached from this international turn. This paper shows that human rights language has been used in a broad sense by a variety of groups on the political spectrum, with some of them aligning against the military authoritarian regime of the 1970s.

This paper further suggests that human rights should be treated as an emancipatory language. Such language is performative and puts people in contestation with the state at the center stage of Thai human rights history. The possibilities for human rights as a truly emancipatory project are, however, limited by inherent caveats in the human rights regime where the nation-state stands as the ultimate duty bearer. This paper aims to contribute to a perennial question for students of human rights in Thailand: When the state fails to respond to human rights obligations, how are rights-claims to be addressed, and to whom? Even though human rights are antagonistic, performed through resistance, and related to the international solidarity movement, people have to respond to certain political regimes, and forces of nationalism. The articulation of human rights in Thailand in the 1970s is a good example for global human rights studies of the possibilities that are born in response to such limitations.

Political Power of Photography: The Materiality of 14 and 6 October.

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Abstract

This paper presents a study of the role that the photography of 14th October 1973 and 6th October 1976 played in the political mobilization around the two events. It is well known that in official archives only limited versions of the events can be found. Therefore, we must turn to alternative repositories (private homes, non-state organizations, as well as universities and libraries outside of Thailand) to find the anticipated nuances in the history of the two events. This paper shows how narrations of the two events have been formed in magazines, newspapers, and books using the photographs. It suggests that the archives and the published photographs become agents in themselves that draw in people to engage in a political legacy. Academics and activists who, for various reasons, have reproduced these photographs, tend to treat them as evidence of historical events. However, the people engaging with the photographs become heirs, not only to a cause but to the materiality of the October events. This paper shows that political power in photography is connected to reproduction, dissemination, and the places where they can be found or lost.

The Active Role of Local Actors in Heritage Conservation Projects for Safeguarding the Living City. a Reflection from Paris and Quito.

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Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD)

Pijika Pumketkao

Abstract

Since the 1960s, in most western countries, the stream of ideas of political philosophy has coincided with different kinds of procedures for involving citizens in the political decision-making process. These schemes are mostly granted in Europe by local or governmental authorities, but can also result, particularly in Latin America (Brazil, Venezuela, Ecuador, etc.) from a strong pressure from grass roots and social movement. This movement aims at institutionalizing the participation of "ordinary" citizens in heritage conservation projects. The devices associated with this movement can take other forms than the simple designation of elected representatives. This could be achieved by tools to involve citizens in the discussion of local political affairs such as neighborhood committees, planning workshops, participatory planning tools, participatory budgeting.

Our presentation examines the role of local actors (municipalities, academics, inhabitants…) involved in heritage conservation projects and the tools of citizen's participation through two cases studies : Quito and Paris. These examples of urban intervention in the living cities give us the opportunity to think about the potential conflicts related to the use of public space and some ways to implement consensus decisions. This allow us to discuss the issue of heritage conservation in Chiang Mai context.

Public Space

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Abstract

Buddhism is a Thai way of life which combines the three different studies of Tri Sikkha - virtue (Sīla Sikkhā), mind (Citta Sikkhā), and wisdom (Paññā Sikkhā) - to consider surroundings and adapt to situations. In order to be a Thai public spaces, its relationships, connections and interrelationships commonly depend both on Tri Sikkha and the Law of Dependent Origination (Paticcasamuppada). For example, each Thai village has a "heart" (Jai Ban) as a sacred component, where people gather together to pray and make offerings, as well as using it as a recreational space analogous to parks in Western countries.

In the past, the creation of Thai public space followed 3 steps in accordance with Tri Sikkha. Without this philosophy, Thai public space is only a space, without spirit, built more like a Western casual space than with Paññā Sikkhā. Nowadays, Western studies of public spaces (such as plaza, park, and river promenades) are approaching Tri Sikkha, the polar opposite of their way of thinking. As found in the analysis of many public space studies, Western public space is attempting to adjust itself to blend with Tri Sikkha and Paticcasamuppada. These studies show that they are trying to catch their local spirits and find out the suitability of their current situation.

As long as Thai public spaces were created from an unselfish and clean mind, true to Thai enlightenment, it is absolutely in line with Tri Sikkha. The author has found evidence of junctions where the Tri Sikkha of Thai public space has been lost, and it can be claimed that it was lost by the cloning of the images of Western public space, which they had been authorized to believe was better. In order to improve Thai public space, Tri Sikkha and Paticcasamuppada must be reactivated among indigenous Thai.

Naga and the Tai: Global Influences and Local Dynamics in Cultural Production and Reproduction in Architecture and Textiles

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Abstract

Through material culture study regarding the beliefs of Naga and the Tai, this paper describes the interactions between global influences or exogenous factors, and local dynamics, or endogenous aspects, in the process of cultural production and reproduction in architecture and textiles. Based on Buddhism influenced by Hindu mythology, Naga (Sanskrit: serpent), is a member of a class of mythical semi divine beings, half human and half snake, often beneficial to humans. In cosmological model the naga are water symbol and also associated with natural sources of water such as rain, oceans, rivers, lakes, streams, and wells. The beliefs of Naga in their spiritual power to protect ones from evils and to create fertility and prosperity have been manifested in everyday cultural practices through rituals and various forms of material culture such as literature, artifacts, textiles and architecture, thus expressing a unique cultural identity of the Tai.

Historically, due to trade, wars, and political conflicts, various ethnic sub-groups of the Tai, such as Tai Lu, Tai Dam, Tai Daeng, Phu Tai, and Shan or Tai Yai etc., some voluntarily and others involuntarily, migrated from their home origins to seek new homes throughout the northern part of Southeast Asia, including Thailand. Since the imposition of national borders in 1820s, the ties with family members and relatives back in their old homes had been weakened, and in many cases, ceased to exist. At present, the process of deterritorialization of nations influenced by the global economy through trade, capital flows, and communications gives rise to the emergence of regional entities, i.e. ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). With the increasingly borderless region, the global cultural economy factors influence local dynamics in the need to emphasize their local autonomy with a sense of ethnic solidarity through cultural reinterpretation and the reconstruction of their cultural identity.

The State of Methodical Knowledge: A Report on the Uses and Abuses of Contemporary Theories and Concepts in Thai Studies

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Abstract

During 1980s, the Thai academic world experienced a period of rapid change, starting from the impact of the Chulalongkorn Political Economy Group to the new doctoral graduates who were previously student activists in 1973-1976. This change not only brought new approaches to Thai scholars, but it also reflected the intellectual atmosphere in the Western intellectual world. In particular, that of the English speaking world, where concepts of globalization and culture gradually took form. The changes subsequently entailed new theoretical frameworks to the state of Thai studies. For this reason, this paper attempts to overview the state of methodical knowledge by raising two main arguments. First and foremost, a production of knowledge has resulted from the import of Western theories and concepts, directly following international academic tends as well as subjects of studies. Secondly, contemporary theoretical approaches not only provide a new understanding of Thai society in various aspects, but it must also give rise to a theoretical development and a conceptual formation. The paper also surveys the uses and abuses of methodical knowledge in the past three decades by thematically dividing them into three aspects: the self-affirmation of Thai society, the centrality of the margin, and the novelty of cultural reality. Each contains conceptual keywords as following: identity and difference, self and the other, displacement and diasporas, urbanism and so forth.

Grant Evans, Anthropologist-Historian of Laos

Kathryn Sweet

Peter Cox

Abstract

The paper remembers the life of Grant Evans, the foremost anthropologist and historian to work on Laos in recent decades. It presents a celebration of Grant's life, friendship, scholarship and intellectual contribution to Laos and Lao Studies. It examines Grant as a young man in Australia, and as an international researcher negotiating the labyrinth of the Lao PDR bureaucracy while he was a professional scholar in Australia and Hong Kong. It draws insights from his early pre-Laos writing for alternative publications like The Digger and Intervention, and identifies core beliefs and character traits that stood him in good stead in his later years in the Lao PDR and the region.

The paper also examines Grant's more widely-known academic work and his occasional forays into the world of development consultancy in the light of the multiple restrictions placed on humanities scholarship in the Lao PDR and other one-party states in the region. Grant claimed it was luck that caused the Lao Ministry of Foreign Affairs to approve his PhD fieldwork in the mid-1980s. In the same vein, it was perhaps bad luck that ended his official Lao visa in the 2000s, following the publication of the Lao-language version of A Short History of Laos. Grant negotiated the rocky terrain of humanities scholarship in Laos with humor and skill, a point sometimes lost on those outside Laos. A group of New Mandala followers attacked Grant's research methodology shortly before his death, seemingly unaware that humanities research in neighboring Laos is conducted under a different set of constraints, and unwilling to entertain the idea that Thailand and its politics could look different from the other side of the Mekong. In true form, Grant enjoyed the controversy.

The Authoritarian Personality in Thailand

Katja Rangsivek
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Abstract

The concept of the authoritarian personality was developed in the 1950s by Adorno, amongst others, in an attempt to explain the psychological root of prejudices: in particular, the anti-Semitism that led to the success of Fascism in Germany. Characteristics of an authoritarian personality are such as conventionalism, submission to authority, aggression towards rule breakers and over-emphasization of the ego. As such, the authoritarian personality often supports authoritarian political regimes and societies in which a high number of people display an authoritarian personality tend to adopt authoritarian forms of government. Here the authoritarian personality of Thai university lecturers will be discussed. University lecturers are a fraction of the middle class that has been shown to have a tendency for authoritarianism. Using data collected through participant observation, qualitative interviews and a modified California F-scale test with 20 lecturers from different faculties it will be argued that Thai lecturers do have an authoritarian personality. This is rigorously enforced with co-workers and students and any challenges to the suppressive environment at the university are met with malicious rumor, aggression and shaming of the challenger to achieve compliance. Given this oppressive culture at Thai universities it is unlikely that university graduates who form the bulk of the middle class will be encouraged to embrace democratic values or critical thinking. This has to be understood as one of the obstacles that Thailand is facing on its way to both democracy and academic excellence.

The Confrontation between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party of China in Thailand, 1945 – 1952

Katsuyuki Takahashi
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Abstract

This paper explores the conflict between the Kuomintang (KMT) and the Communist Party of China (CPC) in Bangkok after the Second World War, shedding light on the Chinese protection policy of the Chinese Embassy in Thailand. Since China won the Second World War, Chinese political activists became active in Thailand, which collaborated with Japan. It was remarked upon in Chinese newspapers, schools, and various associations. In the documents on the side of the People's Republic of China (PRC) there are many discourses that the Chinese Embassy under the KMT government had suppressed the Chinese who supported CPC in cooperation with the Thai government. The Chinese Civil War occurred in China between the KMT and the CPC in 1946. This war also influenced the Chinese in Thailand. Due to the coup in 1947, the civil government was toppled and the anti-communist junta government launched. It caused difficulty in the political activities of CPC supporters. After the establishment of the PRC in 1949, pro-CPC's Chinese became active, but the Thai government control over the Chinese also grew strict. In 1952, the Thai government revived the anti-communist act. The CPC's newspaper ceased publication and activists returned to China. Based on the official documents of the Republic of China (ROC) and Chinese newspapers issued in Bangkok, I examined how the Chinese Embassy protected the Chinese from the unfair treatment of the Thai government, and then, if it distinguished the KMT supporters from the CPC supporters. By doing so, we can recognize the relationship between the KMT and the CPC in Thailand.

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Contextualizing Trans-Border Intimacy in the Thai-Malaysian Borderland

Kazue Takamura
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Abstract

This paper seeks to advance an ethnography of trans-border intimacy that has evolved in the Thai-Malaysian borderland. Recent scholarship of trans-border intimacy highlights both the opportunities and vulnerabilities experienced by migrant women. My paper aims to engage with the current discussion of trans-border intimacy by providing specific contextual variables that shape the distinct mobility and immobility of migrant women. I will pay particular attention to both socio-economic mobility and legal precariousness that are experienced by low-income Thai migrant women who develop non-marital and temporary intimate relations with middle-income Malaysian Chinese men. Although these migrant women obtain certain tangible resources that are channeled through trans-border intimacy, the temporary nature of relations fundamentally exacerbates the legal vulnerability and immobility of Thai migrant women. I argue that both economic opportunities and legal precariousness of Thai migrant women are produced by the hidden confluence between informal mobility exercised by the local border community and legal immobility produced by the state.

Reconfiguring Lan Na Religiosity: Interconnectedness of Religious Actors Through Spirit Possession in Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand

Kazuo Fukuura
Toin University of Yokohama

Abstract

In historical Chiang Mai, the center of the Lan Na Kingdom from the end of the Thirteenth Century until the beginning of the Twentieth Century, spirit worship, spirit mediumship, and Theravada Buddhism were major traditions of spirituality, together forming a loosely configured religious system. Though one hundred years have passed since its integration into the Kingdom of Siam, the city's traditional religiosity still persists among the local people.

This paper will explore two recent historical developments. First, since the end of the Twentieth Century, ethnographic scholarship has discussed the resurgence of matrilineal spirit cults and spirit mediumship in Northern Thailand. While these two cults accompany spirit possession, they have basically been practiced independently. However, recent observations indicate that parts of these two types of major collective spirit possession rituals in Chiang Mai have tended to merge with each other into one totality. In fact, more and more mediums consider these two cults as indispensable elements which represent the religious tradition of Chiang Mai. The recent popularity of the annual "three kings ritual" and the formation of an assembly of spirit mediums illustrate such a viewpoint.

Second, there are some indications that the importance of the above-mentioned traditional religiosity of the city has become more important for religious actors. In fact, recent observations about the relationship between spirit mediumship and Theravada Buddhism indicate that not only mediums but also some monks recognize the historical importance of spirit belief in Chiang Mai. By examining these two developments, this paper explores the heterogeneous and multifaceted relationships among the religious practitioners of spirit worship, spirit mediumship and Theravada Buddhism in contemporary Northern Thailand.

Undermining Resilience? Urban Development, State Policy, and Vulnerability to Climate Change in Bangkok

Keith Bettinger

Abstract

Bangkok, which accounts for approximately 80% of the total urbanized area in Thailand, is a classic primate city. As such it is a center of investment and constant redevelopment, with entire neighborhoods sometimes being moved/demolished to make room for high-rise complexes and transportation infrastructure. Modernization projects in Bangkok have been a priority for the ruling junta, which has taken measures to streamline environmental impact assessment protocols and to silence opposition voices. At the same time, the city has proven to be vulnerable to extreme events, including devastating floods in 2011 and a severe water shortage in 2016. These stressors are likely to become more frequent and severe in the future as a result of climate change. This confluence of state intervention in safeguards, rapid development, and changing climate create tremendous potential for maladaptation as well as increasing the vulnerability of marginal groups in the city. This paper will examine the state's relationship with processes of urban development through the lens of vulnerability to extreme events and climate change, utilizing a framework of urban political ecology to analyze how these forces may shape urban vulnerability in the future.

The Thai Senior Generations Under Transition: Increasing Urbanization and Environmental Uncertainty in an Industrial Peri-Urban District and an Emerging Touristic Town

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Surichai Wungaeo
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Abstract

Literature on the vulnerability of senior populations has usually focused on their physical limitations in dealing with extreme events. This paper provides an additional perspective by addressing their livelihood resilience to the dual socio-economic and environmental transitions - from the rural to the urban as well as from certainty to uncertainty. Among those critical areas indicated in the literature deserving of greater attention during such transitions are peri-urban areas and emerging cities.

The paper thus addresses the issue by drawing on two case studies; Ladkrabang district - a Bangkok peri-urban area, and Khuek Khak municipality - an emerging tourist town in Phang Nga Province. Both cases are exposed to environmental and socio-economic dynamics. Located on a floodplain faced with uncertain rainfall, Ladkrabang district becomes an area serving the infrastructures of industrialization and globalization, resulting in changes to both the physical and socio-economic environment. Khuek Khak municipality, on the other hand, is a coastal town exposed to intensifying coastal hazards, and is under increasing pressure from development in the tourism industry with a consistent influx of tourists, hotels, tourist-related services and migrant laborers.

From the combined dynamic drivers, the older generations who depend on traditional, semi-subsistence livelihoods in these two identical cases face significant transformations in their living sphere. Although rooted in different contexts, it is likely that they share some common patterns of livelihood challenges. This paper thus comparatively explores their livelihood resilience under complex structural and environmental dynamics during both crisis and non-crisis situations. It discusses their changing livelihood assets (e.g. natural, physical, and human capital), adaptive capacity, and the issue of dignity. While traditional Thai culture gives significant value to the elderly, the paper demonstrates the extent to which policy and practice deals with older populations.

Changing Society and Buddhist Monks' Health

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Abstract

In Thailand, Buddhist monks have a very close relationship with Thai people because the monks are from their locality; they have been and still are part of their community. The community is an informal support source for Buddhist monks as they are generally dependent on it for the necessities of life, such as food, clothing, lodging and medication. However, a changing society in Thailand has been affecting the lifestyle and behavior of monks. This qualitative study was designed to explain how this changing society has affected the health of the Buddhist monks in San Sai Mahawong sub-district, Saraphi district, Chiang Mai province. The results revealed that the changing society has forced people in the Sansai Mahawong community to go to urban cities in order to find jobs.

Consequently, the traditional pattern of preparing food to give to Buddhist monks is tending to break up, and the relatives of the Buddhist monks are their main means of support. Buddhist monks are now receiving food which is either relatively easy to prepare or commercially available from local shops. There is also a trend for Buddhist monks to be physically inactive because lay people have been bringing food offerings to them at the Temple. To counter the problems associated with the lack of exercise, increasing physical activity among Buddhist monks using physical devices was recommended. However, this idea was unpopular with lay people who refused to accept the principle due to issues of decorum. Therefore, the changing society may have a negative impact on Buddhist monks' health especially in so far as they are the victims of non-communicable diseases.

Effects of Behavioral Changes on Cardiovascular Risk Reduction in Chiang Mai and Lamphun Provinces

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Abstract

Health promotion and disease prevention programs focus on keeping people healthy. Health promotion engages and empowers individuals and communities to engage in healthy behaviors, and make changes that reduce the risk of developing chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease. This paper discusses research undertaken as part of a community-based service project established by the Faculty of Associated Medical Services at Chiang Mai University, and explores options for alternative approaches to health promotion. The discussion is presented in the context of a review of the international literature on health promotion and the effectiveness of various approaches. Health data (2009-2014) demonstrated the increasing percentage of people who had high blood cholesterol in Chiang Mai and Lamphun provinces. By retesting subjects, data indicated that health promotion by only annual health checkup did not make people healthy. As an alternative to simply presenting people with data on health status, the current study aimed to investigate the effects of an intensive intervention program on behavioral changes for cardiovascular risk reduction. One hundred and sixty-one subjects from Chiang Mai and Lamphun provinces who had high blood cholesterol were selected. The subjects received a 6-month intervention program including group sessions that focused on nutrition and exercise. Blood lipid levels and Framingham Risk Score (FRS) were analyzed before and after 6-month intervention program. After intervention, the anthropometric results showed that body mass index, waist/hip ratio and FRS were significantly decreased. In addition, small dense LDL-cholesterol (sdLDL-C) level was significantly decreased ($p<0.05$) while HDL-C was significantly increased ($p<0.05$). However, total cholesterol, triglyceride and LDL-C levels were not significantly changed. We found that most participants had good dietary and exercise behavior. Thus, constantly increasing physical activity with a good dietary behavior could decrease sdLDL-C and increase HDL-C, leading to a reduction in risk for cardiovascular disease.

Negotiating Transnational Entrepreneurship and Cultural Diplomacy: a Conceptual Paper

Kian Cheng Lee
Chiang Mai University

Abstract

This conceptual paper articulates a research project that seeks to explore and promote the interconnectivity between transnational entrepreneurship and cultural diplomacy through a situated and practical effort to harness PRC Chinese transnational entrepreneurs' multi-faceted contribution in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Against a backdrop of increasing protectionism adopted by the United States of America and a lackluster global economy, there is a growing need for innovation and value-added services in Thailand. With the rise of PRC Chinese transnational entrepreneurship in Chiang Mai, this research project takes a departure from the "flight" or "fight" approach. On the contrary, this bottom-up action-oriented qualitative research seeks to facilitate experiential knowledge transfer through interactive forums between PRC Chinese transnational entrepreneurs and Thai interested actors from both state and non-state agencies. To the PRC transnational entrepreneurs, this positive-sum game research provides a platform, where they can envisage themselves as cultural diplomats, with far-ranging implications for Sino-Thai bilateral relations. At the epistemological dimension, this endeavor seeks to provide new roadmaps in forging cultural diplomatic relations through transnational entrepreneurship. From the methodological perspective, this qualitative research project provides a grounded theoretical approach through an interventional but spontaneous facilitation style. In addition to academic contribution, the significance of this practical project lies in both immediate and long term socio-economic impacts for Thailand, which can also serve as a testbed for other cross-disciplinary initiatives as a means to encourage development.

Urban-Rural Differences in Educational Achievement in Thailand

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Abstract

Major educational achievement gaps are common in most countries. This paper will examine the nature and extent of the urban-rural gap in educational attainment in Thailand. Then it will explain factors accounting for these differences. Finally, the paper will offer policy options for reducing these differences.

The Poetics of Destructions: Demolitions of Iconic Modernist Buildings in Bangkok

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Abstract

Whereas the creations of modern architecture in Siam and Thailand were extensively examined, the demolitions of these structures did not seem to capture a similar level of intellectual attention. Since the dawn of the new millennium, however, not only had several academic publications provided alternative narratives against the Euro-centric view on the history of modern architecture as deviations from Modernism in the West, but also incorporated studies on the destructions of some iconic Modernist buildings in Bangkok, including the ones commissioned by the People's Party (or Khana Ratsadon).

Fostered by the abovementioned developments, this research presented a critical inquiry on the obliteration of three prominent public Modernist structures in the capital city, encompassing two main scholarly foci. Via discourse and semiological analyses, the investigations revealed that the demolition of Chaloemthai Theater in 1989 and the Supreme Court Building in 2013 resulted from collaborative efforts by the conservative elites in eradicating the cultural legacies of the People's Party. In contrast, the destruction of the Department of Public Relations Headquarters in 1992 exemplified a bloody struggle by ordinary citizens in overthrowing a military regime, which became entrenched in the collective memories of many Thais.

By utilizing the politics of representation and discourse of Thainess as a mode of problematization, the upcoming discussions illustrated that there was nothing intrinsic to associations between modern architecture and political ideologies. Modernist structures did not contain any form of power by themselves. They were, in fact, employed by the state as a strategic device to assert, legitimize, and maintain power via allusions to ideologies and construction of the Thai identity. Yet, through a discursive mode of significations, the symbolism and iconography of those edifices could also serve interests for which they were not originally intended, as shown by the changes of meanings leading to their demolitions.

Cultural Tourism Competitiveness in Lan Na Civilization Route

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Archabaramee Maneetrakunthong

Sansanee Krajangchom

Abstract

Lan Na cultural tourism has been a top interest for both domestic visitors and foreigners. Moreover, various tourist destinations in the upper northern part of Thailand possess potentially outstanding Lan Na reflections of Lan Na identity. Thus, there is an urgent need to build the knowledge marketing these attractions, as well building capacity in cultural tourism management for tourism entrepreneurs.

This study focused on tourist behaviors, the industry's potential and the marketing competitiveness of tourism entrepreneurs in the upper northern part of Thailand. It found that the behavior of Thai tourists and foreigners was different depends upon internal and external factors, which influenced their decision to partake in cultural tourism. The purposes of tourists were relaxation and recreation, and learning and understanding different cultures. Temples and historical places were the top places to visit. Tasting local food was among the most favorite activity. It also found that entrepreneurs had a high level of competitiveness in terms of product standards, product quality and service. Staff were adequate and possessed basic knowledge which was comparable between competitors. However, a lack of public relations experience was a key and needs to be developed

Suggestions for Lan Na cultural tourism entrepreneurs are to develop their knowledge and ability in management, marketing and language. Furthermore, innovative tourism development, business creativity, and networks on cultural tourism management are also very vital. In addition, this sector needs leaders to drive the market and establish an information center where they can exchange knowledge, and more importantly access support from the government and locals that facilitate Lan Na cultural tourism.

Forms and Spatial Organization of Lue Vernacular Dwelling Houses in Selected Villages in Yunnan of China, Shan State of Myanmar, and Phongsali of Lao PDR

Kreangkrai Kirdsiri

Thanick Muenkhamwang

Chanthanom Soukhaseum

Abstract

This study aims to figure out the vernacular dwelling houses of Lue, the ethnic group who speaks Dai and who have been settling scattered in the upper Mekong sub-region in the main lands of Southeast Asia. In the past, the area of their settlement was a part of Xishuangbanna, but it was then separated by border demarcation, which brought about differences in terms of living contexts, including political, social, and cultural aspects.

Such background leads to the research question and assumptions about the similarities, differences, and correlation of the dwelling houses of the locals who used to live communally, but who were then separated. In other words, the existing conditions and evidences can reflect the consistency and changes in Yunnan of China, Shan State of Myanmar, and Phongsali of Lao PDR. Forms, morphology, transformation, and spatial organization are the focuses of this study.

Tamnan Mulasasana: a Comparative Reading between Wat Suandok and Wat Padaeng Manuscripts

Krirk Akarachinores
Chiang Mai University

Abstract

Tamnan Mulasasana, Lan Na Idiom, is the literature of the bhikkhu in Suan Dok Sector, written by Phra Buddha Pagan and Phra Buddhayana. It has been recorded as a chronicle of the religion in Lan Na since early to middle Mang Rai Dynasty.

Meanwhile, Phra Ratana Panya Thera of the Bhikkhu of Singhale (or Pa Daeng) Sector, wrote their own idiom "Mulasasana" in Pali language called "Jinakala Mali Pakorn". It contains less content than the Suan Dok Sector. Because of the limitation of prosody in composing poetry in Bali, "Mulasasana" has the potential to portray more.

The Fine Arts Department has translated, edited and summarized "Mulasasana" by cutting out all Pali language, diminishing the aesthetics and artistry of the literature as a result. Asst. Prof. Bumrung Rawin retranslated and reinterpreted "Mulasasana" by keeping the "Lan Na Idiom" in 1996 (from the text of the 4 original manuscripts) for the 700th Anniversary of Chiang Mai. He tried to adhere strictly to both the conception and Lan Na expression. He also added footnotes to complete translate and explain the meaning of the Pali.

The content in "Mulasasana" is divided into 3 sectors.

First Part: mention of the Desire and the last life of the Lord Buddha, reciting the Tipitaka and religion in the reign of King Asoka the Great.

Second Part: depiction of the history of Haripunchai (accent Cham Devi's life), and Pingarat state (Chiang Mai of Mang Rai dynasty), which was given the same amount of content as "Tamnan Puen Muang Chiang Mai".

In the religious domain there are several important issues, such as the Discipline in the Indian and Lanka, The Inheritance Buddhist in Lan Na Thai, both from Muang Pan (Mon) and the new Sector Pa Daeng from Lanka.

Qing China's View of the Sipsongpanna in the 1720s and 1730s

Kumiko Kato
Nagoya University

Abstract

This study discusses Qing China's views of Sipsongpanna – a Tai state – and its neighbors in the 1720s and 1730s by analyzing how Qing China dealt with these smaller polities. Sipsongpanna was located at the southernmost part of present-day Yunnan Province of People's Republic of China, bordering Myanmar and Laos. Sipsongpanna had paid tribute to Chinese dynasties since the end of the fourteenth century, and to Burmese dynasties since the latter half of the sixteenth century. Sipsongpanna consisted of approximately thirty principalities or autonomous political units called 'moeng (muang)', and the lord of Moeng Cheng Hung (Muang Chiang Rung) also held the position of supreme ruler of all of Sipsongpanna, receiving official titles by both the Chinese and Burmese dynasties. The Chinese title was Cheli Xuanwei Shi, the head of a Chinese office named Cheli Xuanwei Si.

In the year 1729 (Yongzheng 7), the Qing Dynasty established Pu'er Fu in the northern part of Sipsongpanna, as well as Simao Ting under Pu'er Fu in 1735 (Yongzheng 13). Cheli Xuanwei Si and most of the moengs of Sipsongpanna belonged to Simao Ting. These events have been discussed mostly in terms of policies of E'ertai, the governor-general of Yunnan and Guizhou. On the other hand, the period when the events took place have been regarded as important in the history of Pu'er tea. More and more Han traders advanced into the Tea Hills in Sipsongpanna to obtain Pu'er tea. This caused strife between the Han traders and the hill peoples in the area, who ultimately rose in rebellion. In this presentation, I will put these viewpoints together to examine how the Qing regarded Sipsongpanna politically and economically, and how the Chinese court's behavior toward Sipsongpanna changed as its understanding of the physical environment and social contexts of the region increased.

Religion and Identity Among the Tai Khamyang's of Assam.

Kuntal Sarma
Gauhati University

Abstract

The paper aims at exploring the relationship between religion and identity with regards to the Tai Khamyang community of Assam. The Khamyangs belong to the greater Tai community scattered all over South East Asia. They are one of the six Tai communities of Assam. The Tai Khamyangs migrated from Burma to Assam in the mid 18th century. They are Theravada Buddhists and located in Jorhat, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts of Assam. The Khamyangs are a microscopic minority with a population of about 6500(approximately) yet they have been able to preserve and sustain their religion and culture to some extent though they have assimilated and inherited the traits of the local population to a great extent. Considerable assimilation is visible among the other Tai communities as well, resulting in a sense of identity crisis among the younger generation. The Tai Ahoms for example accepted Hinduism and Hindu rituals and customs slowly overshadowed the Tai rituals and customs. There has been a sense of revivalism cropping up among the Tai's of Assam since the past few decades. The Tai Khamyangs are also engaged in reviving their socio-cultural practices and trying to assert their identity. Religion i.e. Buddhism in case of the Khamyangs played a major role in making the Tai-Khamayangs conscious about their identity. Efforts are being made not only to revive the rituals and customs associated with Buddhism but revivalism of indigenous Tai customs and practices as a whole. The paper aims at finding the relationship between Buddhism and Khamyang identity with regards to the Tai Khamyang community of Assam.

''Materialism Must Die.” a Case Study of Binary Opposition Used in Narrative Discourse in a Thai Social Sciences Classroom

Kunthida Rungruengkiat
King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi

Pornapit Darasawang

Abstract

This paper examines the binary opposition techniques used in the narrative discourse of a social science class in a public school in North East Thailand. Our analysis is grounded in P.W. Thorndyke's story Grammar framework, Teun van Dijk's critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework and Claude Lévi-Strauss' binary opposition theory. The findings reveal linguistic techniques used by the subject teacher to tell two stories embedded with ideologies on materialism versus Buddhist moral standards and practices. The paper also discusses how Thai national identity is constructed through classroom discourse with the focus on how Buddhism has played a vital role in shaping the national identity through formal education.

Sleeping Pills: From Medical to Social Explanation

Kusarin Karahong
Chiang Mai University

Puckwipa Suwannaprom

Yongyuth Ruanta

Abstract

This study aims to understand the explanation for the use of sleeping pills within a rural area of the Northern part of Thailand, through observing the behavior of the patients of a small-scale hospital in Omkoi district, Chiang Mai province. The idea comes from the possibility that medical staff and clients may share a different or a similar interpretation regarding this usage. This qualitative research employed an interview and the interviewer's observations and records as the implements to gain an explanation for the phenomenon of taking sleeping pills and the reasons for the symptoms of insomnia and the demand for sleeping pills among the population. The sampling group came from the method of purpose sampling. This study aimed to understand the view of the hospital's patients and non-professionals on their consumption of sleeping pills. Artur Khlienman's explanatory theory model was applied here to analyze the difference between views, thinking methods and learning experiences of the clients and those of the medical staff. This helped to find the proper strategies in solving the problem of irrational and inappropriate consumption of this medication. The study results found that insomnia is a personal issue, coming mostly from the background of family and personal problems, especially from alcohol and narcotics addiction among family members, as well as that of economic issues within a household. These issues resulted in stress and insomnia, leading to the request for sleeping pills and subsequently to addiction. Although solving all related problems is impossible, this can change the view of medical staff on this matter, and offer guidelines for the screening of those with potential risk to insomnia in its early stage, before developing to more serious problems, such as depression and suicide attempts. This study also encourages community members' to become aware and concerned about this problem.

German Migrants in Pattaya: Negotiating Cross-Cultural Marriage, Family and Relationships in Thailand

Kwanchanok Jaisuekun
Mahidol University

Sirijit Sunanta

Abstract

This study examines the link between transnational marriages and German migration to Pattaya, Thailand. An estimated number of 7,000-8,000 German nationals, a vast majority of whom are males of advanced age, have settled in Pattaya with their Thai partners. Instead of women from less affluent countries migrating as brides to more economically advanced countries, these German men have decided to resettle in Thailand as husbands and sometimes fathers to Thai nationals. Their migration stories do not always follow the stereotype of German men coming to Thailand alone looking to meet available Thai women. Some German migrants moved to Thailand with Thai partners they had met elsewhere while others did not intend to seek relationships with Thai women when they arrived in Thailand but ended up appealed to and partnering with local women they met by chance. Although the experiences of these cross-cultural relationships are quite diverse, they point out the vital role Thai women play in the German migration to Pattaya. The opportunity to meet and settle down with Thai women, most of the time much younger than themselves, fulfill older male migrants' quest for the desired masculinity and sexual relations not available to them in their home countries. Without age discrimination in forming new relationships and family life, the men enjoy active sex lives, marriage companionship and the role of family providers. However, cross-cultural families and marriages are also a space of tension and negotiation, especially between German men and their Thai wives' families. We found that a number of German migrants intentionally choose to settle down in Pattaya, a tourist contact zone, instead of relocating to their Thai partners' communities in the Northeast region, in order to lead a life of their choice at a distance from their Thai in-laws.

Constructing a Buddha-Land Across Thai-Myanmar Border: A Case of U Thuzana Karen Charismatic Monk

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Abstract

The paper describes the movement of U Thuzana, a revered Karen monk who is patron of the Democratic Karen Benevolent (previously known as Buddhist) Army (DKBA), which was set up in a mutiny against the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) in the Thailand-Myanmar borderland since 1994. The monk has actively constructed a 'Buddha Land,' which has the monastic center at MyiangGyiNgu in the Karen State of Myanmar and which is covering many parts of the state and across the border to the North and West of Thailand. His movement involves construction of pagodas and monasteries, establishment of moral communities, and the organization of Buddhist ceremonies for Karen migrants in Thailand. Moral communities have clearly demarcated territory as members are vegetarian, strictly following Buddhist precepts and devoting themselves to the Buddha-land construction. Crossing at the unofficial border gate, and moving and living in Thailand without proper documents is possible in this case because of three things: first, the monk's movement is supposed to be religious and thus, not to be limited by principles of national sovereignty; second, the religious activities are increasingly held in private factories or shops, many of which employ Karen migrants; and third, U Thuzana's defendants and supporters are well-off and powerful and thus have vast networks which can help defend the illicit movement. It is this paper's argument that, in the present situation and in the particular context of the Thai-Myanmar borderland, religious flows across the border are facilitated by migrants who increasingly request the monk's visit and blessing, by the flows of information, convenient transportation and by capitalist networks.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Inequity: High Risk, High Rent and High Loss of Marginalized Groups in Thailand

Kwanpracha Chiangchaisakulthai
Center of Just Society Network

Cholnapa Anukul
Center of Just Society Network

Abstract

Measuring the progress of work in social inequity reduction requires the ability to monitor and evaluate, which depends on the availability of reliable and valid data for the whole population. In Thailand, the critical invisibility of marginalized people has caused the absence and underrepresentation of their records. Hence, most social inequality research lacks quantitative data and is frequently interpreted as non-evidence based research. This study explores the social science concept of inequity in the Thai context. Anand Kanjanapan has introduced 3 aspects which reinforce inequity: (1) High Risk as the main characteristic of marginalized groups (2) High Rent as the general situation, which marginalized people experience; and (3) High Loss demonstrates the invisibility of those marginalized populations. Based on these three aspects, the author applies a comparative perspective with the available quantitative data, in which High Risk, High Rent and High Loss can be demonstrated. Both selected data of homeless and informal workers populations are analyzed. Subsequently, with the combination of this comparative data based on these "3 High" aspects, the paper will discuss how inequity or social inequality can be measured.

Chinese Language Study and Language Ideology of Ethnic Students in Thailand – Laos Border School

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Abstract

Language is a system of knowledge that is used to preserve the culture and identity of people in society and in interpersonal communication within society. Migration and changes in globalization affect changes in the language use of the local people. This article was written to study the language use and the reason for choosing to study Chinese language of ethnic high school students in border area of Thailand – Lao PDR. I examine education policy, education curriculum, related documents, field trips, interviews and Kathlyn Woolard's Concept of Language Ideology. This article aims to understand the factors in Chinese language learning of ethnic students and the linguistic crisis of ethnic people, especially in Thailand – Lao PDR border: an area characterized by migration, border trading and the Special Economic Zone. Ethnic students with variety of language diversity choose to study Chinese for career opportunities. This tends to make students under-appreciative of the importance and preservation of their own native language. Government policy is encouraged to treat localities but the ideology of students that wish to study other languages may not conform in purpose and in action. The change of language use and linguistic crisis in the context of the Thailand – Lao PDR border results in the fading of local language and culture. These aspects of local language need to be realized because the loss of language means the loss of local wisdom. The ways to deal with these crises are presented in this article.

Smiles and Tears of Returnees- Chinese Students in Thailand

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Abstract

The paper is set in the context of the internationalization of education in Thailand. In this context, more Chinese students now choose to study in Thailand. After finishing school, either their lives undergo great earth shattering changes, or they struggle with a new life full of frustrations. The aims of the paper, based on interviews with 4 returnees from Chengdu University who once studied in Thailand, are to explore (1) how those returnees' experience in Thai higher education has contributed to their after-school life; (2) new opportunities and challenges returnees face after they leave school. Literature review combined with in-depth interviews is used in this paper to find out the significance of studying abroad in Thailand.

The King of Siam's Edition of the Buddhist Scriptures : The Beginnings of a Thai Buddhist Studies Collection at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Other American Libraries

Larry Ashmun
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Abstract

In 1895, King Chulalongkorn sent copies of the newly revised Tripitaka to many libraries around the world. This included 49 libraries in the U.S., ranging from the Library of Congress to academic and public libraries. Among these was the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Unbeknownst at the time, the arrival of the 39-volume set - commonly referred to as the "The King of Siam's Edition of the Buddhist Scriptures" - marked the origins of Thai Buddhist studies at Wisconsin, and undoubtedly for many of the other 48 American libraries as well. Online checking of their catalogs indicates that around 20 still list having "The King of Siam's Edition".

For Wisconsin, subsequent donations of more Buddhist scriptures by Siam, in the 1920s through to 1931, created the foundation on which later generations of scholars and students - both at the University and from elsewhere - would study Buddhism, both in the Siamese/Thai context as well as comparatively. The University's Thai Buddhist studies program currently thrives under the direction of Professor Anne Hansen.

Overall, between 1895 and 1931, the Siamese government donated a large quantity of other Pali texts to over 230 libraries worldwide. Foremost among these was the 1893 revision of the Tripitaka done by King Chulalongkorn and Prince Wachirayan, then the Supreme Patriarch of the Siamese sangha. This edition of the Tripitaka, done in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of Rama V's reign, is notable in its lack of books which were, at the time, seen to be full of superstitions or folk practices, such as the Jatakas. Wisconsin's subsequent donations included volumes of the "Milindapanha", for example, and other canonical works, sent in honor of the memory of significant Siamese personages, and these are gift-plated accordingly.

The Influence of Chinese Classical Novels on Thailand -- a Case Study of the Romance of the Three Kingdoms

Lei Mou
Chengdu University

Hong Zhou

Abstract

The Romance of the Three Kingdoms (known as Samkok in Thailand) is the most well-known Chinese classical novel overseas. The first version of "Samkok" was translated by the great Thai poet Shopiye Paco and his team more than 200 years ago. Since then, various versions of the The Romance of the Three Kingdoms have been translated or revised into Thai stories to meet the readers' preferences.

In China, the original novel, The Three Kingdoms, is considered to be a guide that taught people to be loyal. However, because of the massive military strategies and wisdom introduced in the later Romance of the Three Kingdoms, this novel is much more respected, and has spread widely into business, political and education sectors. This research explores the influence of the communication of The Romance of the Three Kingdoms in Thai society, which explains and contributes to links of culture and literature between Thailand and China.

Being 'Lifestyle Migrants' and Beyond: Understanding Gendered Migration Among Japanese Women of the "Lost Generation" and "Bubble Generation" in Thailand

Leng Leng Thang
National University of Singapore

Mika Tokyota

Abstract

Although Japanese expatriates sent by their companies still dominate the Japanese community in Southeast Asia, in recent decades we are observing increasing diversity within the Japanese communities. This is especially so for Thailand, which registers the largest Japanese population among the Southeast Asian countries (more than 67000 in 2016 according to MOFA). This paper focuses on the Japanese women who moved to live and work in Thailand. Parallel with the "feminization" trend prevalent in Japanese contemporary migration, Japanese women who moved to Thailand show diversity in age groups and motivations in migration. The literature on gendered migration of Japanese commonly refer to Japanese women as part of "lifestyle migrants" whose desire in "seeking selves" dominate their motivation to out-migrate. In this paper, we adopt the concept of 'generation units' developed by Mannheim to sketch out the differences there may be among the women from the different 'generation units'. In particular, we focus on the narrative of two different "generation units" – women from the "lost generation" (age 25-35) and the "bubble generation" (age 35-45), taking into consideration the complex intersection between the macro socio-economic process of intra-Asia regionalization and the individuals' migration inspirations and strategies in the attempt to expand the current understanding of Japanese contemporary gendered migration. The case of Japanese women in Thailand will further provide a critical understanding on the significance as well as the limits of the existing frameworks of "lifestyle migration" and the like in advancing our knowledge on gender and transnational mobility.

Border and Channel: An Anthropological Study on the Node of Kunming-Bangkok International Road: The Border Villages of Mohan and Boten between China and Laos

Lingfei Zhu

Wei Ma

Abstract

The village of Mohan in China and its neighboring village of Boten in Laos are separated by the national boundary, but now connected by the Kunming-Bangkok International Road. In the process of historical development, as a form of 'interruption' and 'difference', the characteristic of the border between Mohan and Boten has shifted from vague to hidden and gradual to prominent; while the road through Mohan and Boten, as a means of 'connection' and 'linkage' has different meanings on several levels including social culture, international politics and global economics. Both as the border villages and the node of the road, Mohan and Boten were destined to be established to ports with the purpose of being a medium for trade. The construction and use of the Kunming-Bangkok International Road has totally transformed the location type of Mohan and Boten into an important point in the international network. The anthropological study of national borders, international channels and the nodes of global networks will drive us to redefine the concept of 'center'.

ĀNisaṃsa: The Neglected Manuscripts

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Abstract

Ānisaṃsa or “anisong” manuscripts are omnipresent in Tai, Thai and Khmer monasteries. However, their importance has been overlooked by academics in fields ranging from philology to anthropology. The question begging to be asked is: Why?

This presentation will first describe the landscape of “anisong” literature, stressing its geographical extension and topical scope. Then, a short review of academic works on the "anisong" will follow.

Finally, the paper will present a perspective upon the reasons why this large field of Buddhist literature has been neglected as a subject of academic research. Other than technical, they perhaps include those both ideological and unexpressed, given that the “anisong” are based upon principles of “good works” which do not conform to the western “protestant” conceptualization of Buddhism.

Climate Change in the Borderlands: Vulnerability and Adaptation of Agricultural Communities

Louise Rose
Charles Sturt University

Abstract

Communities in the borderlands of upland mainland Southeast Asia, including within the north and north east of Thailand, are vulnerable to climate change. The small farmers, who are the region's predominant agriculturalists, depend upon plots of two or three hectares or less. Relative poverty, environmental fragility and economic transformation increase the vulnerability of these farmers.

Regional transformation is rapid and widespread. Roads and air traffic now crisscross the region. Produce is transported to distant markets. Population is increasing, and many younger people are travelling away to work while active farmers are getting older. Fallows are being reduced and permanent plantings are replacing rotational systems. Concurrently, there are observations of changes, consistent with climate change projections for the region – hotter days and warmer nights, less cold days, more intense dry seasons and longer dry spells during the wet season.

Like their counterparts across the world, the region's farmers have frequently grown patches of multiple species in several vertical layers, integrated with some livestock, scattered around villages and close to home sites. These patches have been widely used, over time, to experiment with, and incorporate, different species of forests and grasslands into household economies. They provide nutritional benefit to the household, small scale economic exchange and a buffer against single crop failure.

This paper reviews climate change impacts on this type of agriculture in this region. It finds that mixed species, multi layered agriculture has the potential to support both climate change adaptation and mitigation. If, however, emissions of greenhouse gases continue at current rates, the viability of many of these patches will be threatened. Adaptation support for farmers is needed if these patches are to continue to contribute to food security and nutrition, and provide environmental services. National and international focus on this type of adaptation is, however, lacking.

Malay Muslims Integration in Upper Southern Provinces: the Role of Thai Government and Civil Society

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Prince of Songkla University

Abstract

In liberal political discourse in the modern world, accommodating ethnic and racial diversity is a major challenge in the nation-building process. Multiculturalism arises within contemporary liberal egalitarianism, but it is at the same time in tension with and a critique of some classical liberal ideas. Multiculturalism is supported because it incorporates ethnic and national minorities' rights and supports their cultural identity. Due to longstanding conflict in the southernmost Thai provinces, various data suggests that many Malay Muslims have, in recent years, migrated to upper-southern provinces. In this context, internal migration occurred mainly for economic as well as security reasons. Consequently, in some provinces demographics are changing. In the near future, it may create new problems among Thai society. The main purpose of this article how is to examine how the Thai government accommodates internal migration, especially in the upper-southern provinces. In order to develop a multicultural society, the Thai government should nurture minority issues in various ways. Aside from the government, Thai civil society, in particular academics and NGO's, have addressed the issue from their own perspective. Still, there is no comprehensive approach on how to deal with this issue. Without such an approach, Thai society will face severe problems over the next decade due to a lack of cultural and political assimilation.

Thai (Malaysian) Diaspora in the Northern Malaysia Region: Hybrid Communities Living in the Thai Malay Border Zones

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University of Malaya

Rosenun Chesof
University of Malaya

Abstract

The northern Malaysia-southern Thailand border zone is a region of vibrancy and diversity. It is a transnational zone of various communities operating in a truly plural fashion. Located within this realm of two worlds, the Thai and Malay, are the Thai/Siam communities living on the Malaysian side of the border. While citizenship dictates their loyalty to Malaysia, Thais living in the upper part of northern Malaysia are "culturally Thai". They are mostly Thai speaking and followers of Buddhism, yet they live among neighborhoods' that are predominantly Malay and Muslim. How do they negotiate and demonstrate their identities? How do they "become" Malaysian while "being" Thai? What are the lived realities of these communities – otherwise called orang Siyam (by the locals) that reflects their identity, and sense of belonging. The paper argues that cultural and national identities need not necessarily be exclusive, and that people living in transborder zones are adaptable to both thick and thin (Schendel, 2016)* aspects of their connectivity in relation to the shifts in their history.

* Willem van Schendel (2015). 'Spatial Moments: Chittagong in Four Scenes' in Tagliacozzo et. al (ed). Asia Inside Out: Connected Places. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. pp. 98-127

Karen's Livelihood Practices and State's Power

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Abstract

This article describes the livelihood of a Karen settlement in the Kang Krachan National Park located close to the Thai-Myanmar border. People from this community practice shifting cultivation in the watershed area of the Bang-Gloy River. In 1996 the Thai state saw the Karen as a threat to the natural resources of the area and wanted to remove them from the forest. It wanted the Karen community to be settled in one place and prohibited them from practicing shifting cultivation in the manner they are used to. Their usual economic activities were curtailed by these policies which compelled them to return to their original lands and live in the forest again. The article asserts that the Karen here do not reject the Thai state and neither are they fleeing from it. Instead it is argued that the Thai state has neglected to extend their development policies to them in a manner supportive of their livelihood.

Negotiating Sex, Desire and Intimacy of Lao Migrant Women in Transnational Commercial Sex in Thai-Lao Border

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Abstract

Thai-Lao border zones along the Mekong River in northeast Thailand have long been demonstrated to be places of sexual discovery and heterosexual encounters between Thai men and Lao women. This situation regards to intense and continuous flows of Lao women to the commercial sex industry in Thailand. However, the previous study of Lao migrant women in prostitution in Thai context is still limited. The earlier work focuses mostly on sex trafficking in women, and various types of violence in commercial sex while the issue on sexuality, emotion and intimate relations of Lao migrant women in transnational commercial sex is rarely studied.

This article studies how Lao migrant women deal with multiple forms of power relations based on gender, sexuality, racial/ethnicity, and class in commercial sex so that they could negotiate their sexual identity and intimate relations in the border space. I apply feminist perspectives and use ethnographic fieldwork to collect information from the experiences of Lao migrant women sex workers engaging in commercial sex in Thailand's northeast border, neighboring Laos, between 2014-2015. This contends that despite of the strict control of Thai state over commercial sex with anti-trafficking policy and politics of sexuality in cross-border commercial sex in Thailand, Lao migrant women sex workers seek strategies to negotiate their sexuality and intimacy through marketization of their body and desire. By saying this, they classify their intimate relations and create multiple identities so that they can reduce stigmatization and at the same time pursue their life goals under globalization of culture and economy.

Study on Ancient East-West Cultural Corridor

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Abstract

A principle of the project 'East-West Cultural Corridor (EWCC)' is to explore the historical dynamics of cultural exchanges in Thailand and medieval land-based communication networks in the Thai-Myanmar trans-border region, ancient roads related with Angkor, and northeastern Thailand along the Mekong river basin from the Dvaravati to Ayutthaya period. An aim of the study is to carry out not only bibliographical research but also collating evidence in field surveys including the GIS-based analyses to consider the previous hypotheses and already obtained archaeological site data of Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos (totally around 15,000).

According to the result of such mapping, an individual estimated network for the Dvaravati, Angkor, Sukhothai, and Ayutthaya periods is shown together with geological aspect analysis which is investigated by geologists. A characteristic of cultural relationships historically on political, religious, and economic basis between countries in mainland Southeast Asia emerges from the view point of which Thailand is situated in the center of the mainland. The historical dynamics of cultural exchanges and their impacts in Thailand can be clearly identified in relationship to mainland Southeast Asia. This consideration leads and advances the study of cultural impacts and changes from the centered Thailand to mainland Southeast Asia. The importance of international collaborative research across mainland Southeast Asia and related scholarship is recognized.

Medicinal Plants & Traditional Knowledge of Adi and Khamti Tribe of Arunachal Pradesh

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Abstract

In rural communities, medicinal plants play an integral source of easily available remedies within healthcare systems. The various tribal communities of Arunachal Pradesh use different herbal plant components for the treatment of diseases. This study was conducted to the Adi and Khamti communities of Arunachal Pradesh and their traditional knowledge of herbal plants. The study consisted of extensive personal interviews with the villagers and medicine men, with assisting information on the local area. Locations included Monofai, Nongtaw of Namsai District, Lohitpur, Kharelang of Tezu, Ngopok, Passighat, in East Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh, India. We recorded the traditional use of a number of medicinal plant species in different taxonomic groups used for a variety of diseases and ailments. The chemical features of these herbal plants were also investigated. It was found that local people of different communities tend to use similar plants to treat a number of ailments including; malaria, jaundice, urological problems, dermatological disorders, pain, respiratory disorder and gastro-intestinal disorders. The highest number of medicinal plants was reported from the Adi community and followed by Khamti community.

Thailand and ASEAN Regulation of Pathogen Flow: What Can Be Done to Make Cattle Trade Safer?

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Terdsak Yano

Muhadi Sugiono
Universitas Gadjah Mada

Abstract

This paper considers the movement of animals as a means for the possible spread of disease, and hence the potential for a collaborative regulation. This case study is built on trade in live animals across the Thai border. Existence of such trade is seen to reflect trade opportunities already available within the ASEAN, but ones that can be enhanced to facilitate greater safety for the countries involved. We acknowledge that the government has limits in reaching out and regulating an entire supply chain, but observation in the field shows a willingness to cooperate in the improvement of food safety, including even rebel controlled territory. It gives us hope that the ASEAN community can work out its own food safety regulation - and such an undertaking would sustain and strengthen the community. The possibility of Indonesia importing beef cattle from Thailand, which is fattened by Myanmar import, and trade facilitation measures are being seriously considered.

The Language Use Among Ethnic Minorities Students: Where Lao Is Not Always the Best

Manynooch Faming
Chinese University of Hong Kong

Abstract

The theoretical framework on state's influences over inter-ethnic relations and anthropologist ethics appeared in many pieces of Grant Evans's works. Specifically speaking, they are the Lao Peasant under Socialism, "Ethnic Change in the Highlands of Laos," "the Apprentice Ethnographers: Vietnam and the Study of Lao minorities," "The Anthropological Imagination and Asia". These are the inspirations and references to my study on education for ethnic minorities in Laos. That is, idealistically, national education is to provide students with knowledge that helps them survive in the world both inside and outside their homes and communities. In many cases the delivery of national education works very well resulting in development and growth of the individuals' performances and mobility. On the other hand, there are also cases where national education fails to achieve its purpose. In these situations, the governments tend to hold a strong sentiment of nationalism and are intolerant of ideological differences among its peoples (i.e., ethnic minorities) within the same political border. Thus their focus is on integration and homogenization or, in the Lao case, 'Laoization.' In this presentation, I will demonstrate how the Lao government provides national education for its ethnic minority population, particularly its youth and how the students respond to the government's effort through a case study of language use among students at two boarding schools in Oudomxai and Khammouan.

How Did Villagers Become Preservers of the World Heritage? the Case Study of Ban Chiang Archaeological Site

Marie Nakamura
National Museum of Ethnology

Abstract

The Ban Chiang archaeological site is located in Udonthani province, Northeast Thailand. It is a prehistoric settlement with funerary areas whose discovery in 1966 was a sensational event for archaeologists. Since then Ban Chiang has become very famous, and its discovery has had a big influence on villagers' life even now. In 1992, the academic and historic value of the site increased when it was registered as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

Much research has reported on the value of this site from an archaeological point of view, but its ethnographic value has not yet been recognized. For this reason, I have carried out fieldwork research in this area since 2015 to observe the change in society and life-history of local people since its discovery in 1966.

Around 1970, merchants of antique items were buying and selling them for high prices. Villagers were looking for archaeological remains, digging in their household area and selling them. Remains became very popular among the high class people of Thailand such as government officials and the aristocracy, as well as among Japanese, European and American collectors.

In the present day, villagers preserve the Ban Chiang Archaeological Site, participating in the World Heritage Festival, and working at Ban Chiang National Museum, souvenir shops, etc. They are proud to live in their village.

In this presentation I would like to introduce the change in the villagers' attitude over the last 40 years that has led to them becoming preservers of the World Heritage site, and think about how and why this has been so, by discussing data obtained from interviews conducted with them.

Conceptualizing Yoga as a Complementary Therapeutic Tool in Healing Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Thailand

Mark Felix
Mahidol University

Abstract

Thailand is a transit point for children trafficked for sexual purposes from Lao PDR, China, Cambodia and Myanmar as well as a supplier of children who are victimized sexually. Yoga, in past academic literature, proved to be efficacious as a complementary treatment of depression, anxiety disorders and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) – outcomes common among victims of child sexual abuse. Based on these past findings, this concept paper proposes re-conceptualizing Yoga as a complementary therapeutic tool for managing the trauma of children victimized by sexual abuse. Yoga is conceptualized as a combination of Asana (postures), Pranayama (breathing) and Dhyana (meditation) and acts in a complementary capacity to counseling and appropriate medication for child victims of sexual abuse. In this conceptualization, Yoga is utilized as a tool that can facilitate the healing process as well as being utilized as a behavior management tool of victims of child sexual abuse.

This conceptualization is rooted in the concepts of health social science, where the focus is neither on the biological/virology aspect nor the public health aspect of an illness. Rather, the focus is on the human aspect of providing tools to manage and combat the source or outcomes of illness and disease by understanding the. It is in this perspective that Yoga as a therapeutic tool for healing child victims of sexual abuse will be proposed, and within the appropriate context, studied, researched and applied as a healing tool in the future. It is the hope of the author to add Yoga as a therapeutic tool to the available complementary therapies in Thailand.

The Urban as Methodology: Critical Urban Pedagogy Around Chiang Mai

Mark Heng

Abstract

In this paper, I posit that Thai urban universities may better connect the city and countryside by working with rural communities, helping them navigate networks of useful resources in the city. They can do this through an approach that I term 'critical urban pedagogy', which builds upon the methodological praxes of critical pedagogy, participatory action research, and experimental learning. I theorize that through this approach they can learn how to think and/or act in 'urban' ways without necessarily being made more 'urban', which seeks to benefit the community as much as, if not more than, the university. I therefore aim to explore the role of critical urban pedagogy beyond the city in framing a practice-based understanding of the urban.

My first objective is to understand how urban universities may relay their knowledge of the 'urban' to rural communities, by considering the 'urban' as methodology. My second objective is to understand how the latter may speak back to the former, by considering what urban universities can learn from engaging with rural communities. I explicate my argument through a case study of critical urban pedagogy that is taking place around Chiang Mai, by drawing on the experiences of faculty members, graduate students, and community members, and assessing the impacts of such collaboration on its participants. Doing so highlights the strengths and weaknesses of critical urban pedagogy, and underscores how it fails to decentre the 'urban' as a developmental reference frame. In privileging 'urban' ways of thinking and acting over 'rural' ones, it falls short of undoing the power relations that still allow urban actors to dominate rural ones. University researchers may wish to explore what it means to adopt 'rural' methods to work better with community members, who may not appreciate the point of 'urban' methods, and empower them further.

Enflamed Livelihoods: An Urban Political Ecology of Tourism and the Haze Crisis in Northern Thailand

Mary Mostafanezhad
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Abstract

In May of 2016 the Haze Free Thailand Campaign was launched in a collaborative and ongoing effort to ameliorate the haze crisis in northern Thailand. In this presentation I examine how urban tourism practitioners interpret the impact of the haze on their livelihoods, as well as their perceptions of its causes, implications and solutions. Additionally, I consider how urban tourism practitioners reimagine the interdependency of their livelihoods with rural agriculturalists who are widely blamed as culprits of haze production in the region. Thus, I examine the relationship between, on the one hand, the role of tourism in environmental discourse and governance, and on the other, the political ecology of urban-rural relations in order to explore how the "geo" is "graphed" through tourism and a range of place- and space-making processes and ideas (Sparke 2007). Drawing on discourse analysis of popular media reports on the haze as well as qualitative interviews with urban tourism practitioners in Chiang Mai, I argue that geopolitical imaginaries of urban-rural relations are remapped through growing attention to the impact of the haze on the tourism industry. This paper contributes to emerging research on urban political ecology and the environmental geopolitics of tourism in northern Thailand.

Predicaments of Ritual: Lisu in Thailand and Their Pragmatic Endeavor to Resurgent Vernacular Practices

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Abstract

This paper aims to examine endeavors to resurgent vernacular ritual practices in pragmatic ways in accordance with the reality among Lisu people in Thailand, especially those who practice ancestor veneration. Owing to drastic social changes they have been experiencing, most of the ethnic minorities in Thailand are presently facing predicaments in observing their rituals based on local beliefs. This is particularly the case with the people who neither have their own orthography nor an effective method in disseminating it. At the same time, however, each ethnic group has its own specific situation concerning difficulties in preserving "the old ways". Lisu are no exception to this, and they have shown a keen interest in pragmatic ways to deal with this issue. Among Lisu people the following five factors seem to be urgent: 1) How to archive orally inherited rituals with a common orthography, 2) How to pass on ritual knowledge to younger generation through cultural events and daily practices, 3) How to reinforce domestic and international Lisu networks to inoculate Lisuness ever further, 4) How to cope with high monetary-expenses each ritual requires, especially for animal sacrifices, 5) How to incorporate Christian Lisu people, who are relative minorities in terms of population, to cultural commonalities as Lisu. Detailed features of each factor will be discussed through author's own experiences as an anthropologist both in hosting merit-making rituals in several Lisu villages since 1990s and in associating with Lisu people to recover cultural dignity among the youth over a decade.

Narrative Analysis of Forest Burning in Chiang Mai Province: Man-Made Disaster or the Way of Life

Masayuki Nishida
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Abstract

In Northern Thailand, Khon Mueang (lowland dwellers), and ethnic minorities have long utilized forest resources in mountainous areas. However, their livelihood in the forest has been impacted upon by state policies. The mountain dwellers' use of forests, particularly forest burning, is perceived as an illegal activity by lowland Thais. Additionally, with a growing interest in disaster management, forest burning is now considered a major disaster. This study is designed to examine the narratives of forest burning between Khon Mueang in Chiang Mai, and those who live in mountainous areas, in the context of disaster management. From the modern narratives of disaster management adopted by Khon Mueang, forest burning is associated with a growing concern about public health and hygiene in Chiang Mai. Khon Mueang's local knowledge and narratives of indigenous livelihood also serve as a counter discourse against forest burning. However, the situation surrounding forest burning is more complex than it may appear. In the city of Chiang Mai, forest burning has been denounced as a disaster that threatens public health, forest resources and even the unity of the nation in Khon Mueang's narrative - seen in anti-forest fire and anti-haze campaigns. In response, the mountain dwellers try to justify their traditional practice of forest burning by utilizing not only their indigenous knowledge to create a counter discourse against Khon Mueang's stigmatizing narratives, but also scientific knowledge accumulated in their daily lives. This study indicates that forest burning has now entered into a public debates featuring contesting claims to various knowledge.

The State of the Peace Dialogue in Thailand's Deep South

Matt Wheeler
International Crisis Group

Abstract

The introduction of an official peace-dialogue process in February 2013 raised hopes that the insurgency in southernmost Thailand might move toward a peaceful resolution. But under two different Thai governments, dialogue between Bangkok and Malay-Muslim militants has foundered. The conflict persists in a damaging but tolerable stalemate, in which both the state and militants view hostilities as preferable to compromise. The paper examines the course of dialogue since 2013 under civilian and military governments in Bangkok and factors inhibiting successful confidence-building and negotiations, particularly the militants' disunity and parochialism and the National Council for Peace and Order's reluctance to countenance international mediation or devolution of political power. Drawing on interviews with officials and militants, the paper argues that the structure of the process, including the role of Malaysia as facilitator, must be adjusted for talks to progress. The paper also examines political will as a determining factor; although capacity constraints and technical problems pose challenges to a fruitful peace dialogue, they are a less immediate obstacle than the conflict parties' lack of determination to negotiate a settlement.

'Phe-Tin-Kai' (Chicken Bone Divination) the Traditional Prediction System of the Tai Ahoms.

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Abstract

The Ahom are the descendants of the ethnic Tai people residing at present in Assam in the north-eastern part of India. The Ahoms had a glorious history of reigning for almost 600 years in Assam leaving behind a legacy of their rich traditions, religious practices and rituals in the form of manuscripts which have been passed on from one generation to another.

In this paper, I attempt to explore and analyze the traditional prediction system in the manuscript 'Phe-Tin-Kai' (Chicken bone divination).

The Ahoms believed that astronomical and natural changes created impacts upon individuals as well as the society. The Ahom priests observed the movements of the sun, the moon, the stars, planets, comets, constellations etc. and made astronomical calculations based on the relative positions of these heavenly bodies. These astronomical data were then written down on the manuscripts like the Lit-Lak-Ni, Lak-ni-Kham, Lak-Ni-Rai-Ju-Dai, Lik-Ka-Na, Sang-Han etc. Till date by calculating these manuscripts Ahom priests make predictions of the future with prescriptions of rituals to overcome the misfortunes. Besides, these the Phe-Lung-Phe-Ban, Phe-Noi, Phe-Jok-Jang, Ban-Seng, Ban-seng-Noi etc, were used to foretell fortunes or misfortunes of men and the society at large along with remedies mentioned therein. The traditional practices can also be found in the 'Ahom Buranji'(Ahom Chronicle) where predictions made by using chicken bones has been beautifully illustrated. And the three priestly clans of Ahoms still continue practice it. This is all very interesting which I further aim to discuss in detail in my paper.

Transnational Intimacy in Isan: Western Men's Experiences of Spousal and Kin Relations in Northeast Thailand

Megan Lafferty

Abstract

This research examines the migration of western men into Thailand, focusing on men in transnational intimate relationships in the northeastern region of Isan. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork, this paper looks at intimate and kin relations of western men who settle near their Thai partner's family. The focus on counter-paradigmatic migration provides fresh insights into the ways we think about power and intimacy in transnational marriage and migration. After settling in Isan, how does power shift within intimate and kin relationships, and how do couples negotiate different cultural understandings of kinship obligations and sense of personhood? I found that while men's initial experiences in Thailand focused around their individual masculine identities, over time, their identity shifted to become linked in web of kin and social dependency. Upon moving to Isan, their social locations shifted, as they were identified not only as husbands, but also son-in-laws (kheuy farang). Adjusting to the role of kheuy farang could create tension and misunderstanding between spouses and kin as men encountered new sets of kinship obligations and had to negotiate financial support and commitment. Men from western societies bring different expectations of filial obligations and family relations, so frictions often emerged around the couple's financial responsibilities and roles. The initial increase in status western men experienced in Thailand was weakened in a context of local hierarchies due to their identity as a perpetual foreigner. They relied on their partners to guide them through social relations and depended on them as translators of culture and language.

Phi Pob, Ritual, and Trauma

Megan Sinnott
Georgia State University

Abstract

In Northeast Thailand, malevolent possessing spirits called "phi bop" inhabit human hosts; their victims are understood to be susceptible to such possession because of purported weakness of spirit or violation of ritual/spiritual codes of behaviors. Bop possessions have long existed in Thailand, yet the recent explosion of YouTube videos documenting bop possession and its ritual exorcism reveal a resurgence of interest in the phenomenon. Bop "hosts" are commonly understood to be those individuals who practice "black magic" and who are outsiders in some form in relation to the local community, usually due to non-normative behavior. Such sociological explanations exist alongside psychological ones that attribute possession to various psychological states, such as repression. This paper seeks to expand on such explanations by exploring the experience of bop possession itself by deploying an ontological framework in which the experience is not reducible to a representation or manifestation of a secondary phenomenon. Specifically, through interviews with two bop victims, this paper argues that the traumatic nature of bop possession and its ritual exorcism reveal the limits of language/the symbolic to capture this human encounter with spiritual horror.

Protesting Tourism Development in Protected Areas: The Chiang Mai Cable Car

Megan Youdelis
York University

Abstract

Since the 2014 coup, the Thai military has been demonstrating their strength and authority by demolishing several private tourist resorts deemed to be encroaching on park land across the country. While private actors are barred from developing in parks, newly formed quasi-private state agencies such as the Pingkanakorn Development Agency (PDA) in Chiang Mai have been granted a license to propose and potentially construct tourism offerings in protected areas. This paper explores the tensions, new alliances and exclusions involved in the Chiang Mai cable car controversy; a proposal to strengthen urban-rural linkages via a cable car from the Chiang Mai Night Safari to Doi Pui, a Hmong village at the top of Doi Suthep mountain in Doi Suthep-Pui National Park. This heated controversy brought together politicians, the PDA, Doi Suthep-Pui national park staff, environmental and civil society groups, journalists, academics, red truck drivers, tourism promoters, local community members, monks, and Hmong villagers in interesting and uneasy ways. I trace the strategies and tools employed by both proponents and opponents to enroll allies and the implications of the project for the stakeholders involved. Ultimately, the paper identifies the political and economic pressures that resulted in the project being shelved for the third time since the 1980s. I also discuss how differing conceptions of the 'urban' and the 'rural' formed part of the arguments for or against construction.

An Analysis of Chinese Translating Public Signs at Chiang Mai International Airport: From the Perspective of Cross-Cultural Communication Theory

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Abstract

With the economic and cultural exchanges between Chiang Mai and China becoming more frequent in recent years, and with the number of Chinese tourists in particular being on the rise, the use of Chinese public signs in public places is becoming more and more popular. Chiang Mai International Airport is one of the most important public places in Chiang Mai where Chinese public signs are widely used. However, with the Chinese language being a second foreign language in Thailand, the progress of Chinese language teaching is in a stage of development. Furthermore, translation of public signs is not easy for translators due to differences in culture and tradition. Accordingly, the translation of Chinese public signs at Chiang Mai International Airport face a number of problems.

The theory applied to support this study is theory of Cross-cultural Communication. The data for this study was collected through investigation of the translation of Chinese public signs at Chiang Mai International Airport. The discussion of this study mainly focused on the analysis of the meanings and functions of the public signs. Finally, some suggestions are made for the analysis and research of existing problems.

Lanna Textiles: Historical and Cultural Ties: Past and Present

Methaporn Singhanan
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Abstract

In the 19th century Chiang Mai was a key center of trade in the Lanna region and participated in maritime trade with the western world. As a center for collecting, exporting and importing goods, trade brought with it new and influential commodities and cultures.

Lanna wealth was displayed in the attire of aristocrats and the ruling class indicated taste and status by demonstrating an appreciation of luxurious materials, fine cutting and sewing and impressive decorative skills of master craftspeople. The exquisite style and design of Lanna textiles and clothing was influenced by neighboring royal courts and by trade, diplomatic relations and intermarriage.

Traditional Lanna textiles are still worn in Northern Thailand. Lanna girls wear traditional tube skirts (phasin) when they go to the temple and for important ceremonial occasions. Lanna textile shops, retail outlets and gallery spaces sell various types of Lanna textiles, both cotton and silk. These exist in the Mueang district of Chiang Mai, in Waroros Market, Tha Phae Road, on Nimmanhaemin Road, Charoenrat Road, Watgate and in a Lanna boutique in Robinson Department Store. There are other outlets in Mae Cham, San Kampang and Chom Thong, famous weaving areas for at least one hundred years. Textile shops and factories in San Kampang and Chom Thong district also sell Lanna cottons and silks by the yard. This is evidence of a vibrant trade in Lanna textiles serving the local market and the tourist trade. Chiang Mai also has an active textile culture centered around museums. The most well-known are the Bank of Thailand Textile Museum, the Lanna Folklife Museum, Ban Rai Pai Ngarm Cotton Studio and the Hiltribe Museum. Private studios and galleries contribute to the overall success of this trade.

Reframing the Boundaries of Indigenism: State-Based Ontologies and Assertions of Distinction and Compatibility in Thailand's Indigenous Peoples Movement

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Abstract

In this paper I discuss the concept of indigeneity as it has been localized in post-2000 Thailand by an expanding coalition of oppressed minorities pursuing state recognition as Indigenous peoples (IPs). I consider the claim that their status as IPs came into being in conjunction with the establishment of the modern Thai state and the ensuing processes of colonization leading to their marginalization as the internal 'other'. This ontological meshing of indigeneity and the state reflects the problematic nature in Thailand of indigenous claims to the occupation of the same territory from time immemorial. Rather, the Thai state has long perceived of these yet to be recognized IPs as sojourners and illegal migrants. As a result, IPs in Thailand have simultaneously asserted their distinctiveness as IPs and compatibility with the Thai nation. I further discuss the IP movement's aspirations and anticipations of the possible futures of indigeneity in Thailand, especially given the state's ambivalence with respect to their pursuit of legal-political recognition as IPs. This example offers a view into some of the possible futures of the ever shifting category of indigeneity.

Managing Water Pollution in Thailand Comprehensive, Cost-Effective and Possible

Michael Shafer
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Abstract

Thailand has a serious and rapidly growing water pollution crisis. Large quantities of contaminants already pollute public waterways and the food chain; still larger quantities lie in wait in the soil, landfills, storm drains, industrial and construction sites, housing estates and small businesses. Many believe that the best regulatory model for managing this crisis is a centralized, professional, national bureaucratic one such as the American Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In Thailand, such a model would be a costly, human resource consuming failure.

This paper will propose a two-tiered, decentralized, water pollution management system (1) constructed on existing government lines to minimize investment in bureaucracy building and manpower training, and (2) organized to address each of Thailand's three water pollution problems: large-scale industrial pollution; sewage pollution, and "poor man's pollution". The central organization will prepare policy and regulations and provide technical assistance to all. It will oversee large potential polluters (whose facilities are easily identified, monitored and regulated) and coordinate with other ministries to alleviate the national problem of sewage dumping into rivers and streams (beginning with the largest, easily regulated urban centers). Regulatory enforcement at the district level and below will fall to local authorities who will receive directions about which regulations to prioritize and how to enforce them. The proposal recognizes that these officials alone can oversee sources of Thailand's third, most decentralized, least tractable source of water pollution, so-called "poor man's pollution", from pesticides, household chemicals, waste oil and hydraulic fluid from mechanics' shops, etc.

Inscriptions of the Lan Na and Lan Xang Kingdoms: Data for a New Approach of a Cross-Boarder History

Michel Lorrillard
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Abstract

The history of the Lan Xang Kingdom was closely linked to that of the Lanna Kingdom, especially between the second half of the 15th century and the middle of the 16th century, when the Buddhist civilization of the northern Thai people reached its pinnacle. The epigraphic corpora largely testify to the relations between the two political-cultural areas: they show, in their form and in their content, obvious and numerous borrowings – mostly towards regions downstream of the Mekong. But the analysis of these two corpus also reveals important differences which prevent confusion, even when the geographical origin of the inscriptions, be it on steles or on other objects such as Buddha images, was not memorized. Within the present-day Lao territory, it is even possible to identify the area where Lanna culture has long been dominant. A comprehensive approach to the epigraphic sources of Northern Thailand and Laos, therefore provides precious data to the body of knowledge on the regional history of the Thai-Lao people.

Cross-Cultural Differences and Cultural Stereotypes in Tourism --- Chinese Tourists in Thailand

Ming Huang
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Abstract

Stereotypes exist everywhere, and tourism is no exception. Thailand has been one of the most popular destinations for Chinese tourists, and thanks to Chinese visitors, tourism in Thailand has become the single biggest source of growth in the Thai economy. The tourism industry in Thailand is also faced with an increasing number of travelers from all over the world, with different cultural backgrounds as well. As a result, greater cross-cultural awareness, understanding and acceptance of cultural differences is needed in the tourism industry. The paper mainly explores the cultural differences between Thai people and Chinese tourists in a tourism context, and examines some stereotypes of Chinese tourists held by Thai people. As stereotypes range from highly favorable to highly unfavorable, this paper focuses on some negative perceptions Thai people hold towards Chinese tourists and discusses the negative effects of stereotyping in cultural understanding and some suggestions to reduce stereotypes in cross-cultural communication.

Transboundary Environmental Governance and Hydropower Development on the Mekong River's Mainstream: Spaces of Contestation, Participation, and Dialogue in Thailand

Ming Li Yong
The University of Sydney

Abstract

The decision of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) government to unilaterally proceed with the construction of hydropower dams on the mainstream of the Lower Mekong River has alarmed its neighbors due to a lack of study into potential harmful impacts to livelihoods and food security across the Lower Mekong Basin (LMB), comprising Thailand, Lao PDR, Cambodia, and Vietnam. While these hydropower dam projects must undergo the intergovernmental Mekong River Commission's (MRC) regional procedures of Prior Consultation with other LMB countries, these procedures have overall failed to secure an agreement amongst LMB nation-states on how to proceed with them. This study aims to examine how state-civil society relations have been (re)configured around this issue of mainstream hydropower dams on the Mekong River. While the MRC's regional procedures and the Thai government's vested interests in the Xayaburi Dam have been heavily criticized by Thai and regional civil society, this study challenges the perception that state and civil society actors necessarily work in opposition to one another, and posits that the lines between the two are occasionally blurred. This will be done through the examination of the processes, successes, failures, and contradictions that arise from the implementation of regional decision-making procedures in Thailand and its associated spaces of contestation, participation, and dialogue. Such an examination may reveal practices and configurations within these decision-making processes that may contribute towards a more inclusive and just space of governance in the Mekong Region.

The History of the Chinese Identity in the Thai Literature

Minli Tang
Sichuan Provincial Research Institute of Thai Studies

Abstract

Since ancient times, China and Thailand have shared a close relationship and frequent contacts between the governments and the public gave rise to a popular saying - "Chinese and Thai live under the same shelter". Since the unification and establishment of Thailand in the 13th century, China has kept in close communication with Thailand through the exchange of political envoys, economical exchange of goods, cultural learning and the following of good examples. Literally three different cultural communicating stages can be found throughout the history of China and Thailand's diplomatic relationship. The first stage is Chinese culture being entirely admired and popularized by Thai and Siam, who payed tributes to China. The second stage occurred during the period when Chinese immigrated to Thailand and brought their Chinese culture, which caused the admiration held by the Thais to begin to break down. The Chinese incorporated with local Thai people, and the Thais began to inspect the similarities and difference of Chinese and Thai cultures. The third stage started in present times, when China and Thailand renewed a diplomatic relationship. The hot trend of Chinese studies "blew a tornado" around Thailand. What's more, Chinese travelers' behaviors changed the impression held by Thais.

Urban and Peri-Urban Land Conflict and Governance in Thailand

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Abstract

This paper provides a state of knowledge review of urban and peri-urban land conflict and governance in Thailand. It aims to explore arguments and knowledge gaps of urban and peri-urban land issues and to reveal the process of land exclusion, land formalization and land grabbing in urban and peri-urban areas. Current conflicts and instances include the case of Mahakan Fort, the last remaining community settled closed to the old city 'Rattanakosin' in Bangkok where the original people are being forcibly moved out by a development project of the government which contends that the community cannot living with the historical site, and the case of forced eviction of local slum communities because of double-track railway construction in Khon Kaen province. To understand these and similar phenomena conceptually as well as through case-by-case accounts, this paper investigates the policy, legal, institutional and stakeholder background to issues of urban and peri-urban dispossession, conflict and governance.

Religious Environ of the Tai Aitons of Assam

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Abstract

North East India can be regarded as a living Anthropological museum which is well reflected by the distinct aboriginal tribal communities inhabiting in this region. It is also a homeland to six major Tai communities having diverse socio-cultural traits. The Tai Aitons are a small section of the greater Tai group that traces its origin from Upper region of Sinduin River in Burma and migrated to Assam in the later part of the 18th century. With a meagre population of about 3000, they basically reside in Golaghat and Sibsagar district of Assam. The Aitons are pile dwellers and their society is patriarchal. Agriculture is their mainstay and rice is their principal crop. They profess Hinayana form of Buddhism and considerable influence of Buddhism is visible among the Tai-Aaiton society. The Buddha Vihar, i.e., the village level prayer house is constructed in the central place of their village. It serves as an important institution of social control. The Buddhist monks hold an important place in their socio-cultural life. Throughout their long stay in Assam, the Aiton people have witnessed the process of assimilation. Glimpses of cultural traits of the native Assamese people is clearly visible in many aspects of their socio – cultural life and to some extend in religious life. The current paper aims at describing the religious environ of the Tai- Aitons with special reference to the Buddhist monks along with their importance in the Tai Aiton society.

On Love Songs and Memories of Phayao

Montra Pongnil
University of Phayao

Abstract

Phayao has embodied itself in different entities over the years, both by self-creation and, more so, by perceptions from outside. This paper is a study on how it has been perceived by 'outsiders' and in turn created as much by the 'insiders'. The process of its embodiment, 'real' as well as 'imagined', were noticeably commensurate in relation with Bangkok-induced development. In the period of three decades, (1957-1987) Phayao has been transformed and perceived in various ways, e.g., nostalgia-betokened town, nature-hypnotizing place, resourceful province, culture-bound way of life of the misty North, even the land of prostitution, debt-ridden region, etc.

This paper's methodology, distancing itself from conventional approaches in social science, is to employ discourse analysis and memory studies. It will take the relationship of Phayao and the center as the point of departure, it then will try to decipher the (explicit as well as implicit) meanings of song lyrics composed during the above-stated period. Hopefully the analysis can gain insights about the contingent relations between the 'tangible' (and made) Phayao and the intangible (and imagined) Phayao.

People's Politics in Thailand: Lessons of Civil Society Movement Practices in Community and Deliberative Democracy

Montri Kunphoommarl
Faulty of Social Sciences, Naresuan University

Sirinapa Kunphoommarl

Abstract

This paper aims to explore community and deliberative democracy practices through studying the roles of civil society movement in Thai context, and applying it to the theoretical framework of local and deliberative democracy worldwide. Although Thailand has embarked upon democratization since 1932, the problems of inactive civil society participation, political conflicts and lacks of political consciousness in terms of understanding the concept of democracy and democratic practices among the general population are still clearly seen today. However, the role of civil society movement on bottom-up democratic organizations has been promoted under Thai constitution since 1997 ("People's Constitution"), encouraging people's active roles in politics by democratic means. During the last two decades, many changes on people's politics issues have appeared in new constitutions. Various governments and independent academic organizations, especially King Prajadhipok's Institution and Political Development Council have still supported the concept of "people's politics" by introducing community and deliberative democracy programs. These programs aim to encourage people to become more actively involved in politics, not only in the election process, but also in public policy formulations. This study will examine the civil society roles in promoting "community democracy process" and "deliberative dialogue practices" towards democratization. My study will focus on people's politics from 1997 constitution and will review the roles of civil society experience which will be investigated on the strengths and weakness of those activities related to democratization movement.

The Anticipatory Childhood: Language Socialization of Burmese Migrant Children and Imaginings of a Thai National Future

Moodjalin Sudcharoen
University of Chicago / Chulalongkorn University

Abstract

In Samutsakhon, Thailand, children of migrant workers from Burma are increasingly integrated into state schools with the assistance of local NGOs and the business sector. This educational project creates tensions since Thai formal schooling is not designed for a student population with diverse backgrounds, high mobility, and uncertain futures. Government schools are often said to play a key role in crafting national subjects who will subscribe to nationalist ideologies. In this study, I ask: How do local public schools manage to place these children into the formal schooling system despite many hurdles in relation to their uncertain futures mobility, and diversity? How do the day-to-day practices of these institutions stand in tension with a typical representation of Thailand as a nation perpetually attempting to constitute itself as a culturally, ethnically, and linguistically homogenous state? How are the "foreign" bodies of the children evaluated and transformed with respect to expectations of the children's possible becomings?

To understand the politics of migrant childhood, I view language and communication as part and parcel of the socialization process in schools. Tracing everyday interactions, mobilizations of semiotic resources, and verbal reflections on migrant education projects, I will consider the way in which children's identities and becomings are negotiated, especially through understandings of the language and schooling of childhood. In this particular ethnographic site, language is both a problematic and valuable object integral to the valuations of children's future migration trajectories, potential upward mobilities, as well as to their relationships with schools and the larger Thai society.

Textiles and Ethical Issues: Rolling over from Museum Collection to Household Use

Mrinmoy Das

Abstract

Textiles, one of the basic needs of mankind, have undergone several changes over the years. Textiles have played a major role in human civilization and have remained an integral part of humanity throughout centuries. After settling down from its very basic purposes, textiles, nowadays are the most common vehicle representing the visual identity of culture. With its growing demand and popularity, textiles as a product has become a global phenomenon and textile products are made all over the world under increasingly competitive and unethical conditions, posing a threat towards various aspects involved. Exploring the ethical issues related in producing a textile piece, the paper attempts to understand the symbolic meaning of textiles against the cultural backdrop on one hand and questions the use and significance of the textiles with replicated motifs and patterns imported from outside to meet the needs of the competitive market, on the other hand. Furthermore, it will study textiles from the point of a museum collection followed by a comparative analysis of the same type of textile when used as a domestic product. The textiles selected for the research topic are from Assam, the north-eastern state of India. The paper attempts to understand textiles as a historical document where the motifs when taken as symbols, give an idea of the structural character of the textiles.

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Reforming Society Through Religious Reform and Revival: On the Self-Perceptions and Objectives of Southern Thailand's Salafi Movements

Muhammad Ilyas Yahprung

Abstract

One of the most influential and controversial Muslim movements of early twenty-first century Thailand is the self-styled "Salafist" movement associated with Shaykh Dr. Ismail Lutfi (b. 1950) and other contemporary advocates. The Salafist movement based in Thailand's Patani region sees itself as historically and intellectually situated in two sets of reform movements. The first is the series of Patani-area Islamic reform movements associated with such notable leaders as Shaykh Davud al-Fatani (1769-1847); Shaykh Ahmad al-Fatani (1859-1908); and Haji Sulong (1895-1954), all of whom continue to be revered today.

The second line of reform on which Thailand's contemporary Salafists draw is the Salafi movements originating in the Middle East. This approach to reform rejects local interpretive traditions (such as the Shafi'i School of Law (fiq) that had previously prevailed in southern Thailand and much of the Indian Ocean rim) in favor of direct access to and reinterpretation of the Quran and the hadith.

Instead of stating this stance explicitly, the new Salafists claim to be purifying local Islam from practices said to be remnants of the Hindu-Buddhism that prevailed in the Patani area prior to Islam's arrival more than 600 years ago. The new Salafists also argue that Patani's present state of economic and educational backwardness is a result of the local Muslims' departure from the ways and practices of the al salaf al Salih (the pious forefathers), that is, the Prophet and his Companions.

It is most important, however, to understand the manner in which the latest Salafist reforms have proceeded, and the primary objectives that Thailand's Salafists have pursued, namely, the reforming of Aqidah (creed) and the reviving of the oneness of the ummah (ummah wahidah). The bulk of this paper will focus on explaining these concepts and detailing the ways that these two goals have been pursued.

Fixed Border", Flexible Identity: Contesting Ideas of Belonging in the Borderlands

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Abstract

In Thailand, the intricate ethnic minorities' classification system is coupled with complicated procedures for obtaining citizenship and is responsible for the existence of stateless and "invisible" people, especially in the border areas. This paper investigates the regime of citizenship with a particular focus on the border politics of identification card application and its implications for people living in the border zones of Thailand and Burma/Myanmar in terms of local livelihoods and relations to the nation-state. It unravels local authorities' practices and citizenship conceptions, which complicate both national and post-national citizenship theories in explaining the struggle for belonging for borderland ethnic people within and beyond. This situation is a challenge for national development as well as for regional integration, which implies increased mobility and harmonization of legal systems among ASEAN members.

Siam's Port: The Spatial Enclave of Socio-Political Exchange

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Abstract

The paper examines relationships between the socio-political issues of Siam and Western countries, and the subsequent built environment that took place in Siam in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. By studying some particular architectural typologies introduced by the West located in the Euro-American quarter in Bangkok, the possible political and social explanations are revealed. On the other hand, built environment can also be understood by investigating the society and situations in which they exist. The different institutions brought by Great Britain and Denmark are, therefore, raised as examples of these relationships in order to compare ones from the most powerful country in Southeast Asia during the colonial period, Great Britain, and ones from the smaller Western country, Denmark. In the period of colonialism, Siam had to deal with the powers and influences of the West in order to maintain her independence. To balance the power from different sources, and at the same time to develop herself equivalent to the advanced western countries, Siam picked and chose some advancements including architectural typologies from the West. On the contrary, the western countries deliberately brought specific ones to Siam for their own purposes. The particular area on the south side of Bangkok connecting to the port was consequently not only a place for international trade, but also an area of socio-political and cultural exchange.

The Study for Health Care System Along the China-ASEAN International Transportation Corridor

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Abstract

In recent years, with globalization and regionalization development, as well as the implementation of China's "One Belt and One Road" project, the international transportation corridors in areas of China-ASEAN - such as the Mekong River, Kunming-Bangkok superhighway, and the Thailand to China high-speed railway planned for the future - play an ever more important role. These corridors not only improve economic development and increase migration, but also result in an unprecedented health care service absent crisis that is based on deep social and cultural influences in the areas along the corridors. This study tries to explore the possibility of establishing a cross border health care system among China, Laos and Thailand.

In building the health care system the following 3 perspectives will be taken into consideration. First is to investigate health needs of people along the corridors. Second is to find out a method of cooperation in the health care system of different countries. Third is find the support of political cooperation, such as finding relevant international policy and law.

The function of the health care system in this study will cover basic medical care service, health propaganda and basic preventive services. It also needs to provide the service of primary screening of disease during mass unexpected public health events. The quantitative and qualitative methods will be taken to investigate the above information and the main research finding will be compared with other existing cross border health care system in Europe and North America.

Changing Practices, Changing Selves

Nancy Eberhardt
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Abstract

Considerable attention has been paid to the psychological stresses experienced by those living in urban areas of Thailand – especially as they have manifested new forms of religious activity or new social movements, which have become popular with large segments of the middle class. But equally momentous, if less dramatic, changes are also taking place in the Thai countryside by farmers and others who live in circumstances that are distinctly different from their urban counterparts.

In this paper, I consider ideas and practices related to religion ideas and practice. What impact do these various practices have on people's subjectivity and understanding of what it means to be a person? In this paper, I explore both traditional approaches and recent changes in Buddhist practice in Mae Hong Son province near the Thai-Burma border, and mental health in a part of Thailand (Mae Hong Son province) that is still predominantly rural and that has enjoyed a certain amount of autonomy from Bangkok. The region is also, however, increasingly cosmopolitan, thanks to its position on the border and its developing tourist industry, as well as its rapid economic development. Traditional techniques for dealing with illness, stress, and other worries are now supplemented by new products and opportunities, as well as new anxieties. How do local people assimilate and choose among these, and what connection do they have to Buddhism in neighboring Burma? This paper raises questions on how best to interpret their significance.

Impact of Theravada Buddhism in the Traditional Beliefs of Tai Khamti of Arunachal Pradesh, India

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Abstract

The Khamti, or Tai-Khamti as they are also known, are a sub-group of the Shan people found in the Sagaing division Hkamti district in northern Burma as well as Namsai district of Arunachal Pradesh, India. The Khamti who inhabit the region around the Tengapani basin were descendants of Shan migrants who came during the 18th century from the Bor-Khamti region, a mountainous valley of the Irrawaddy. The Khamti are a small tribe within the Namsai district, but they are relevant in that they are culturally far advanced and have many special characteristics in comparison to other tribes of the state.

They can hardly be called a "hills tribe", as they live entirely in the plain areas near Nao-Dihing and Tengapani rivers. Out of 28 major tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, the Khamtis and the Monpas are the only tribes, which have their own sound literature.

The Tai Khamti of Arunachal Pradesh profess the Theravada school of Buddhism. The oldest form of Buddhism, Therevada arose in India during the time of the historical Buddha and spread throughout south East Asia. Side by side with the canonical Buddhist beliefs, the Khamti of Arunachal Pradesh also practice belief in phi (sprits) and various gods. The cultural and social traditions, as well as religious beliefs, of the Tai Khamti revolve in and around the phi, while the teachings of Theravada Buddhism have influenced almost every extent of religious practice.

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Higher Education Access for Hill Tribes in the Globalized Thai Education

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Abstract

Hill tribes are one of the most well known ethnic groups in Thailand. In the early years, they were nationally propagandized while their language and cultures were subsequently and largely studied. Still, research and discourses on their higher education are very minimal or limited; although studies indicate that the benefits of higher education positively accrue to individuals, society, and nations.

The manifestation of globalization and neoliberalism in Thailand imposes many challenges for hill tribe people including the issue of accessibility in post-secondary education. Based on critical race theory, this paper examines Thai governments' policy on higher education for hill tribes since the reform of higher education, named autonomous university, has been implemented. The paper also looks at what such globalized and neoliberalized education reform means to hill tribe youths in term of their access. Drawing upon policy documents and archives, the preliminary analysis indicates that higher education policy for hill tribes are hardly developed. When it comes to higher education, ethic backgrounds of hill tribe students are unconsidered or "removed". The reform along with the increasing globalized and neoliberalized system of Thai higher education impose several drawbacks and challenges on hill tribe youths. This paper argues that color blind-based higher education policies assuming hill tribe students are "all Thai" overlooks ethnic circumstances impacting their access to higher education. Higher education accessibility for hill tribes would be continued and even widened in the globalized Thai education unless their ethnicity is taken into account.

Making Singapore Home: The Importance of Isan Food to Migrants from Rural Thailand

Nanrawee Kitiarsa

Abstract

To most Singaporeans, Golden Mile Complex (GMC) is Little Thailand. Upon entering the complex, one can smell the moo-kata stalls, hear chattering in various Thai dialects and see signs written in the Thai script. To Isan migrants, these features demarcate GMC as their space. During their only off-day of the week, GMC serves as an ideal space for them to gather and recreate the Isan meals that they used to have back home. In Singapore, their food practices are influenced by the space they are in as Isan food is no longer readily available. By examining different spaces in Singapore and the food practices that are carried out in them, it is possible to understand the Isan culture and values that have transcended international borders, just like the food practices have. Through an understanding of how Isan food brings the Isan migrant community together, we can appreciate the way Isan migrants help each other alleviate their longing for home and remain motivated for the coming workweek.

The Localism in the Area of Local Education

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Abstract

Localism has been formed partly as a result of local needs in order to free itself from a pressure of centralized power. This concept has then been transmitted to the area of education. A localized curriculum was being developed in a number of local schools, known as “Chiang Mai Muang Ngam" (or "The Beautiful City of Chiang Mai"), as a part of school curriculum intended to create pride in the learner’s identity as a Chiang Mai native. Therefore, it was interesting to study further to answer what exactly localism in the “Chiang Mai Muang Ngam” curriculum was, in the time of current international culturism.

This article, “The Localism in the Area of Local Education,” aims to present the awareness and identity of Chiang Mai natives being created in the curriculum, “Chiang Mai Muang Ngam”. The researcher has studied and analyzed content of the 2015 “Chiang Mai Muang Ngam” curriculums for grade 4-6 to demonstrate how it presented the creating of awareness and identity of Chiang Mai native issues. In analyzing the content, the concept of “Localism” was used as an analysis framework.

The study result demonstrated that the awareness instilled in the learners was a “local cultural monopoly”; it reveals power contention over defining an absolute meaning of the real “Native”. As well, the reproduction of cultural pressure that the Chiang Mai locals themselves used against their minorities. While the Chiang Mai locals have been trying to free themselves from the central region’s oppression, they are treating their minorities the same way.

Reflexive Reconciliation of the Deformative Body: A Dramaturgical Approach on Buddhist Concept in Creation of Contemporary Dance for Mass Media

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Abstract

A music video for the enlightening music (Dharma-Gita-Bhavana) entiled “Til the Last Breath” (ตราบลมหายใจสุดท้าย) is created to virtualize and visualize the Concept of “Ashubha-Karma-Dan” (อสุภกรรมฐาน) in Buddhist Teaching, highlighting the self-reflexiveness towards de-beautifying condition of human body uncertainty. A dancing piece or a physical body movement was brought into play, featuring in the music video. The concept was concordantly mirrored and substituted into choreography of the body movement in the music video piece. The purpose of this study is to apply dramaturgical analysis to explore the connection between the concepts, the music lyrics and the expression through the physical movement. In line with this, the study found that the body movement piece was depicting the didactic concept and music lyrics, by playing dramatically with the tormenting, torturing transgressive-ness proceeding inside the body. The uncertainty-ness was expressed as abjection-affection with degenerating body and with symbolism in performing elements.

Zoning and Its Negation

Napong Rugkhapan
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Abstract

My paper concerns the use of zoning in the historic preservation of 'Rattanakosin', Bangkok's historic district. As an important instrument in urban planning, zoning determines an appropriate, optimal land use distribution. In principle, it seeks to prevent an 'incompatible' land use, e.g. an industrial activity in an otherwise residential area. For historic preservation, zoning is often invoked to protect sites and buildings of historical value. For example, a height limit is imposed in order to prevent an overly tall development, thus protecting the view of the landscape. Or, a certain color scheme is encouraged in order to curate the tone of the district. A street setback may be stipulated in order to determine how much a given building can protrude into the street.

In essence, zoning negates what it considers to be inappropriate, incompatible, and undesirable for a certain place.

While such negation appears to be 'technical concerns' (e.g. height, size, activity), it can have social, political dimensions. Often viewed as a professional, technical knowledge in Thailand, urban planning in general and zoning in particular rarely receives a critical evaluation into its underlying assumption, its ideological content. Instead, it proceeds to employ legal powers to regulate the urban environment. Departing from the view of zoning as a technical intervention, my proposed research is interested in the broader ideology of such intervention, and in the ways in which zoning is employed to negate local practices native to the landscape of Bangkok. The practices that I will use to illuminate my analysis are dissent, contiguity, and protrusion. I ask three questions. First, how does zoning seek to disable political dissent? Second, how does zoning seek to break down the contiguity of traditional shop houses? Third, how does zoning prevent protruding waterside settlement?

Learning @ Home: The Voice of a Homeschool Mother

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Abstract

The rhythm of individual life in learning, and the needs and aptitudes of learners, has been more varied than Thailand's mainstream education could respond to. Homeschooling was another alternative in which parents in Thailand were interested. This year, the number of parents who registered for homeschooling increased from about 64.01% last year, and I homeschooled my own children too. This research explores the learning process of Thai's homeschool learners through Self-Directed Learning theoretical framework to answer the key question "No school but gain knowledge" by using Autoethnography as the instrument to pass on the life narratives from my experience to children's natural learning process, a social phenomenon closely related to alternative education in Thai society. The results of the study were concluded as follows: The learning process of Thai's homeschool learners started by staying in an environment that contributed to learning. It made them felt happy, safe from both inside and outside which encouraged the learners to be curious by natural learning. Therefore, the learners tried to get answers by planning, practicing, and evaluating themselves which led them to improve their next learning process. Their learning was filled with enjoyment and meaning. This process could be integrated and applied in learner's natural learning process in Thailand for Formal Education, Non-formal Education, and Informal Education.

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The Concentration of Authoritarianism and Politics of Uncertainty in Thailand

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Abstract

This paper argues that Thai politics has been dominated by the junta since the 2014 coup. The political system has become the new professional authoritarianism, in terms of Alfred Stepan (1973) argument that the junta has the active roles of political, economic, and social development. These situations can be clearly seen in various policies, from the new 2017 constitution using guided democracy, to the victory for the junta in the 2016 referendum to many mega state-led economic projects entitled "Pracharath", based on a form of corporatism to develop the grassroots economy to employ the 12 values of Thai society in the module of primary school. It demonstrates that the government does not only monopolize political entities, but also centralizes the economy and society.

The most important situation of 2016 was the passing of King RAMA IX on October 13th after 70 years as head of state. Consequences of the Thai king's death have had political impacts in the Thai democratization process. It first created rage and fear in the Thai people, but this has shifted from mourning into witch-hunting. Then, the Junta government has used the mourning of people as political legitimacy to silence political society, insisting that the time was a depressing period, not for criticizing government performance. Even with Thailand's new 2017 constitution, it does not help solving the politics of uncertainty in the country. It is rather seen as a critical juncture of Thailand, which can lead either to a longer authoritarian regime, or the breakdown of the whole political system.

Redressing Transboundary Environmental Injustice at the Dawei Special Economic Zone and Roadlink Project

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Abstract

In late 2010, Myanmar's military junta government signed a contract with Thailand's Italian-Thai Development Public Co. Ltd. (ITD) to build the Dawei Special Economic Zone (DSEZ), located on the Andaman coast in Tanintharyi Region of Southeastern Myanmar, and connected to Thailand via a 138 kilometer "roadlink" project. As the environmental and social implications of a project of such scale became apparent, affected communities and civil society groups in Myanmar and Thailand organized to challenge it. They deployed various strategies, ranging from public protest, to opposing the project in the media and raising a complaint with the Thai National Human Rights Commission. Ultimately the state-private sector alliance weakened as the government's confidence in ITD waned, and the project was transformed into a Government-to-Government project between Myanmar, Thailand and Japan, and is currently under construction in a significantly scaled-back form.

For the Thai government and the associated Thai companies pursuing the project, the DSEZ is an important "spatial fix" strategy to alleviate declining profitability in Thailand's economy and address social opposition to the country's further industrialization. In this paper we map out the elite reconfigurations and state-society relations that have evolved since 2008 in relation to the DSEZ. We focus in particular on the role of community groups and civil society, and how they have navigated their new political spaces that have emerged in Myanmar, including their emerging ability to hold transboundary investments and its associated local elites accountable.

Cultural Revival Seen Through the Case of the Sea Peoples in Southern Thailand

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Abstract

If we compare "Chao Lay" or Sea Peoples of southern Thailand with the groups known as "Chao Khao" or "Hill Tribes" in northern and western Thailand in terms of popularity, then Chao Lay are much less popular or lesser known, as they became "visible" to the general Thai public only after the tsunami of 2004. Although Chao Lay have been in the news from the time of the great coastal disaster until the present, the public are still confused about the ethnic groups of Moken, Moklen, and Urak Lawoi. The serious effort in Chao Lay cultural revival started after the tsunami with support from outside agencies and individuals who observed rapid changes in livelihoods and loss of culture. In this case, cultural revival is not a reaction against ethnic nationalism or state assimilation. On the contrary, many Chao Lay who have been looked down upon gradually internalized this constructed label of inferiority and would like to escape the trap of being "Chao Lay". They would prefer to be recognized and not differentiated from other local Thai. Thus the name "Thai Mai" (New Thai) has been welcome and then used officially to represent Chao Lay, especially Moklen and Urak Lawoi who have settled down and have sent children to local schools since 1980s. After the tsunami, Chao Lay became better known and the endonym has been widely used ever since. Using the ethnonym of Moken, Moklen, and Urak Lawoi have made the ethnic identification possible. This presentation analyzes cultural revival seen through the case of Chao Lay. The notion of "culture" has been extended and the "ethnicity" expanded beyond the ancestral-centered ties of primodialism.

"We, the Sea People": Claiming Indigenous and Community Rights Through Pan-"Chao Lay" Movement

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Abstract

The Chao Lay are an ethnic population in Thailand who received wider attention only after the Asian tsunami in 2004, despite having resided throughout the coasts and islands of the Andaman Sea for well over 300 years. The contemporary development of coastal areas and promotion of marine tourism in Thailand has ignored local communities, resulting in many groups facing threats of land insecurity, eviction, the restriction of marine and forest livelihoods, and the gradual loss of language and cultural traditions. The predicament of the Chao Lay has received only occasional attention from the state policy sector, with the most progressive attention taking the form of a Cabinet Resolution in June 2010 which focused on the "Revitalization of Chao Lay Culture." Consequently, leaders and representatives of different Chao Lay communities formed the "Chao Lay Network", with support from certain civil society groups, academic institutions, and public organizations. In the same year the network began celebrating their "Chao Lay Annual Reunion Day." Different local Chao Lay communities have hosted the celebration since that time in the interest of consolidating the network and voicing their collective plight and concerns. A few years later, the "Chao Lay Network" joined the national-level "Network of Indigenous Peoples in Thailand" in pushing for indigenous rights. This paper traces and analyzes the development and expansion of the Chao Lay Network, as its members have worked to claim indigenous and community rights in Thailand.

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Article 44 and the Thai Military Regime

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Abstract

Since the military took power in 2014, the coup government has exercised power with little restraint. This is contrasted with previous coup governments in recent years. In addition to the use of coercive tactics, the government has keenly relied on the use of] 'Article 44' to solve many of its problems. Article 44 is a catch-all clause in the 2014 interim constitution, which states that in cases of emergency and national security, the head of the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) shall have the power to act or to override bureaucratic processes as he sees fit. Under the Article, all subsequent actions and those performing such orders shall be protected under the constitution. We argue that Article 44 plays a vital role in maintaining the legitimacy of the military regime, since it provides short-term solutions for the government. Decisiveness and producing quick results are essential for the longevity of the coup government. To date, the government has used the Article on 139 occasions. Given the importance of Article 44, this paper will analyze the use of Article 44 and attempt to explain the government's reliance on this Article. The excessive use of Article 44 reveals the deep-rooted problems within the Thai bureaucratic system. Without significant structural changes to the Thai bureaucratic system, future elected governments will likely continue to struggle in maintaining their democratic rule.

The Karen Quest for Environmental Justice at Klity Creek

Nathan Porath
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Abstract

At the turn of the millennium a small Karen village situated in one of the world's Natural Heritage Reserve of Thailand sought redress for environmental injustices in the courts of law against a mining company that contaminated their local stream and their bodies with lead. The villagers were also dissatisfied with the pharmacological intervention given to them. With the help of NGOs, they launched a protest against the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH), demanding that their illnesses be recognized as related to lead pollution. They also demanded that chelation therapy be given to all villagers contaminated with lead. With public support they also took the lead company and the Department of Pollution Control to court. However, they were only able to gain access to justice with the help of NGOs that served them as a support group during a period when Thailand was experiencing a period of democratic, civic and environmental awakening. The NGOs who made common cause with the Karen villagers helped them enter the 'environmental justice frame' and 'ecological citizenry' was extended to them. This paper focuses on the events during the protest within the context of NGO support and the role of civic activism in framing the issue of illness.

An Analysis of the Roles and Status of the Character "Rottasen" in the Story of Rottasen Jataka Tale from Pannasa Jataka

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyze the status and role of the character "Rottasen" in the story of "Rottasen Jataka Tale" by Pannasa Jataka. The story of Ratasen appears in Pannasa Jataka from Lanna Jataka literature, not in Phra Tripitaka. The story was written by a monk during the Lanna Period. The conceptual framework consists of the role and status of the character.

The findings have revealed that 4 main roles and status of the character "Rottasen" from the story of Rottasen or "Rottasen Jataka Tale" are displayed. First, the most notable feature is the role and status of the Bodhisattva. Consistent with the main theme of the story of Bodhisattva, the author would like to create "Rottasen Jataka Tale", like the story of Jataka Tale in Buddhist literature. There are other roles and status which are the son who has high standard of morality regarding gratitude, the role and status of the husband of Princess Kangree, and lastly the role and status of the king.

Green Agendas and Land Relations in Thailand: The State of Knowledge (2001 Onwards)

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Abstract

This paper outlines the state of knowledge on land relations in Thailand with regards to green agendas by exploring the processes within which relevant powers intersect (Hall, Hirsch and Li,2011). A well-organized state of knowledge on relevant topics in Thailand dates back to 2000 (see Anan Ganjanapan (ed) 2000), despite the growing concern of stakeholders, particularly at policy levels, towards offset activities, and an incessant expansion of land-based or 'terrestrial' climate change mitigation domestically and transnationally. This paper shows that after 2000 a group of studies on 'green agenda'–based land issues in Thailand follows a conventional 'environmentalism' focus on policy, management and efficiency (e.g. Kanokwan et al 2016;Barbier 2011) whereas an ever-expanding 'political ecology' group of studies investigates eco-knowledge (e.g. Leblond 2014), eco-governmentality (e.g. Forsyth and Walker 2008), spatialities (e.g. Roth 2008; Vandergeest 2011), and everyday politics (e.g. Puttipong and Achara 2013). These studies reveal the processes driving changes in land relations such as the regularization of access to land through community forest schemes (Surin 2011), the spatial expansion to conserve forest and meet the 'offset' ends (Northern Development Foundation, 2012), the arrival of energy crops that see the conversion of land uses (GRAIN, 2013),the conversion of land to serve eco-tourism (Rungrawee, 2012), and the movement of collectivities against 'green' projects at the expense of other land users (Nattakant, forthcoming). Reviewing these processes, this paper addresses challenges for studies on land relations including (a) how to overcome a 'green grab' narrative portrayed in existing descriptive reports and rethink 'green grab' in terms of who wins and who loses,(b) how to address the cases in which Thailand's green agenda proponents engage in transboundary environmental justice, and (c) how to identify power configurations that engender 'green-oriented' contradictory agendas, rules and enforcement procedures.

Neo-Kruba" : Image and Self-Presentation as "A Product of Belief

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to study the construction of image and the self-presentation of monks who call "Neo-Kruba" one of "the products of belief". The results of the study revealed that the construction of "Neo-Kruba"'s image is not only relevant to the image of Kru-ba Sriwichai, but also consistent with the needs and basic belief of the society. At the same time, they have been promoting themselves through biography books, biography music, TV programs or social media. As a result, the "Neo-Kruba" are in spotlight and have become faithful.

Digital Humanities Research Approach for Folksongs Studies

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Abstract

Digital humanities is a cross-disciplinary approach, bringing together a network of people who teach and research in a wide range of disciplines including information studies, computer science, and the arts and humanities. Digital Humanities interprets the cultural and social impact of new media and information technologies, and creates and applies these technologies to interrogate cultural, social, historical, and philological questions.

Ontology as a tool for knowledge representation has been studied and applied in the context of many fields, such as information science, knowledge engineering, artificial intelligence, and digital libraries. Ontology engineering in the digital humanities aims at building a formal representation of the knowledge domain and creating a common understanding of the structure of information in the domain among people and software agents. In this article, we discuss the advantages of using the approach of digital humanities research to the scholarly community, by giving a view on how semantic ontology and advanced information technology can enhance research on the study of folksongs in the GMS.

Being Thai? Being Global?: Motivations for Thai Teachers to Be 'Globalized'

Nattavud Pimpa
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology

Abstract

Similar to all nations, Thai education has been embracing increasing international diversity. Although it is not clearly reported in Thai educational literature, more fundamental difficulties in balancing local and international perspectives in educational policy and practice can be expected in the current Thai educational system. Thai teachers are expected to be aware of 'global' situations while teaching the 'local' Thai wisdom. It is, thus, crucial to comprehend ways to work with the Thai teachers on the internationalization of education in Thailand.

This paper explores factor motivating Thai teachers to be involved in the international education activities. The author collected quantitative and qualitative data from 225 Thai secondary school teachers who participated at the teacher training program on ASEAN and Australian education organized by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 2013 and 2014. The author analyses the experiences of Thai teachers working in the international education project to illustrate and further illuminate what is known about teacher immediacy, cross-cultural literacy, and professional development. This study confirms that to motivate Thai teachers to engage in international education, schools and policy makers will need to (1) inform teachers that international activity is part of the Thai educational system, (2) promote various teaching and learning activities so that teachers and students can engage with international counterparts, and (3) provide on-going support to enhance international engagement in learning and teaching.

Unlocking Gender Potential: A Comparative Study of Women in the Mining Community in Thailand and Lao PDR

Nattavud Pimpa
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Timothy Moore
University of Melbourne

Abstract

Management literature refers to unspoken roles and arrangements that govern workplace and community structure as well as gender dynamics. These elements of organizational culture are subjective yet powerful. They have the potential to limit women's opportunities in various aspects. A number of studies in gender and management have revealed the role of gender, sexuality, and power in shaping the experience for women.

This study pursues this line of investigation to further address the gap in our understanding of the impact of organizational and community settings on women's experience in the mining community and industry in Thailand and Lao PDR. Women in the local community in both countries can be affected by various actions and activities by various stakeholders in the mining industry. A number of women, who live in the community, also work in various roles in this male-dominated international industry. The on-going issue is equality among men and women in mining industry. Traditionally, work area and space for women in the international mining industry include food preparation, cleaning, and office administration (Tallichet, 2000). To further understand gender-specific roles of women in the Thai and Lao mining community, we interviewed 45 women residing in Pijit, Thailand, and 53 women from Savannakhet, Lao PDR.

Findings from this study confirm that Thai women remain skeptical about roles and gender issues in the mining industry. A comparative aspect between Thailand and Lao PDR shows that women in the mining community aspire for equity among people of all backgrounds (gender, education, age, and location) to work in this industry. Thai women may perceive employment opportunities as a means to re-migrate to live with family. They also relate issues on economic empowerment from mining industry to political participation by women in Thailand.

Chinese Tourists' Purchasing Behavior of Thai Souvenirs in Chiang Mai

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Chulalongkorn University

Punthumadee Katawandee

Abstract

Chiang Mai has seen a surge in Chinese tourist arrivals. While Chiang Mai offers diverse tourist activities, shopping for local souvenirs remains an integral part of the tourist experience. As authenticity plays an important role in tourists' souvenir purchase, it would be useful to analyze how important is authenticity in the eyes of the Chinese tourists. The objectives of the study were, therefore, two-fold a) to explore souvenir purchase behavior of Chinese visitors to Chiang Mai and b) to determine how authenticity of local souvenirs affect the purchase behavior. An on-site questionnaire survey was used to collect data. 100 Chinese tourists from Republic of China (ROC) who have purchased souvenirs in Chiang Mai were the sample of the study. The results revealed that most of the respondents like to buy food/snack products and herbal products as a souvenir from Chiang Mai. Word-of-mouth and social media were cited as the source of information and influenced purchasing decision. With regards to the dimensions of authenticity evaluated, the most important attributes were quality commitment and credibility, followed by heritage and style persistence, originality, sacredness, and purity. Scarceness was rated as the least important attribute by Chinese respondents when purchasing souvenirs.

Considering the Usage of 'Inappropriateness' in Commentaries Surrounding Contemporary Art in the Buddhist Context

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Abstract

Creativity has become a main concept in contemporary art. A large number of works exhibit a diversity of styles and concepts springing from continuous evolution driven by the social upheavals of current events. The intertwinement of western academic principles with eastern philosophies continuously affects the development of the contemporary art in Thailand, with many art pieces taking Buddhist philosophies, forms, or concepts as inspirations appearing in the form of Thai contemporary art.

Certain groups often employ the word 'inappropriate' as negative criticism of an art piece, especially towards contemporary art work that criticizes Buddhism in Thailand, whether the work be displayed in the curation of exhibitions, in print, or even internet commentary. This generates great social interest as well as skepticism towards the art piece, both in its form as well as the conceptualization behind it.

This essay attempts to consider the definition of value and appropriateness-inappropriateness in the targeted works of art involving Buddhism, especially within the Contemporary Art scene. The author studied numerous factors which include, but were not limited to, Buddhist art, general meaning, form, category and features of contemporary art with Buddhist motif and reviews and criticisms on the works of art. Research is conducted through the study of academic documents, semi-academic documents, works of art and pertinent literature in order to have a better understanding of its framework, criteria and standardized means of measurement used by the critics in evaluating an art work both traditionally and contemporarily, of which holds a direct influence on the direction and progression of Thailand's contemporary art.

Conflicting Values, Empty Memories: Contradictions between Western Archival Values and Thai Social Values

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Abstract

This paper firstly investigates the struggles of archival management in Thailand today – for example, deficiencies in records transfer from government departments to the National Archives of Thailand and the persistent lack of archives awareness in Thai society. Problems in modern Thai archives both in acquisition and access lead to empty archives and incomplete historical memory.

The study focuses on the concept of value, which is essential in archival studies, as well as observes Thai social values according to Thai studies and sociology literature. The findings indicate that the conflicts are rooted deeply in the cultural level since the modern recordkeeping and archival systems are productions of the Western world adopted in Siam in the modernization period during King Rama V's reign. Some values supported by Western archival systems are not compatible and are even against some local values, resulting in the decline of the recordkeeping system after the end of absolute monarchy. In contrast, the traditional Thai recordkeeping system is more supportive of Thai values.

The paper also discusses one of the most significant factors that impacts archival management: Thai perceptions on history and historiography. The dominant view of Thai history emphasizes centralized and high history in the form of the chronicle, which is history that is distant from ordinary people's lives. While Western historical schools like von Ranke's rely on evidence (e.g. archival documents) based on truth, traditional Thai historiography has a different and more subjective approach – for example, recording history in the form of chronicles and myths. To overcome inefficiency in archival access and the lack of archival use in Thailand, Thai society needs to seek archival value that fits in its context.

Thai Buddhist Tourism in Myanmar: Buddhist Leisure and Its Impact on Contemporary Thai Nationalism

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Abstract

Thais commonly view the Burmese as an archenemy because of the antagonistic representation of Burma in the Thai normative nationalist historiography. However, efforts to encourage Thai tourism to Myanmar have led to new alternative positive portrayals of the Burmese. This paper on nationalism and tourism focuses on the impact of religious tourism to Myanmar in changing the Thai nationalist ideology. Applying frameworks from the studies of nationalism in everyday practices and tourist and pilgrimage performance, this paper asks: 1. how are the constructions of tourists' expectations involved in re-imagining the image of Myanmar?; 2. how is academic knowledge on the history of Thailand and Myanmar involved in the constructions of tourist expectations?; 3. how do the processes of touring and pilgrimage create and change the tourists' understandings of Myanmar?; and 4. how is national identity and ideology being compromised and utilized in creating and managing the trips? Through these questions, this paper explores the dynamic between the actors in the religious tourism context as well as between Thai national ideology and other mindsets including Buddhism, consumerism, and intellectualism in challenging Thai nationalism in the tourism context.

Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding in the Southernmost Provinces of Thailand

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Abstract

This paper discusses the definition of the transitional justice and peace building, looking at the differences between the theory and the practice in the field. The paper also explains a characteristic of transitional justice under the violence conflict. A case study of the southernmost provinces is an obvious case to discuss on the transitional justice in Thailand. The questions of this study are; what is the transitional justice in the violence incidents in the southernmost provinces of Thailand and the transitional justice is on the conflict transformation process or is it lead to conflict transformation.

Classifying Characters of Bangkok Commercial Districts in the Mid-Nineteenth Century

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Abstract

This research aims to classify the characters of Bangkok commercial districts in the mid-nineteenth century by finding associations between activity intensity and urban physical elements of nine commercial districts of the city. According to studies of both Thai and foreign scholars, Bangkok changed considerably after construction of its first road in 1861, when shop houses constructed along the roads led to the emergence of new commercial districts.

Before 1861 there were some commercial areas near the river and canals which, in the early Rattanakosin period (1782 – 1851), were considered a major transportation system of the city; but unlike commercial activity post-1861, these districts had few buildings used for commercial purposes.

This research uses information from three data sources (Bangkok post office household records in 1883, the Bangkok map from 1887 and other related studies) to identify district boundaries and measure the research variables of commercial activity and urban physical elements. These variables were plotted into charts to find the association between them, and the result shows roads were a major physical element associated with the increase of activity in commercial districts, especially the districts that existed before 1861. Two additional elements and one factor were associated with the increase in commercial activities: location to the city wall, number of local casinos, and age of the districts.

The commercial districts can be categorized into three groups: 1) pre-1861 commercial districts with the highest activity, due to their location having a lot of road access; 2) post-1861 commercial districts located along the roads; and 3) pre-1861 commercial districts with low activity due to their location having little road access.

Temple and Community Relations in a Shan Community

Nicola Tannenbaum
Lehigh University

Abstract

When people write about temples, they tend to focus on the monastic community that resides within it. However, I am interested in the temple and community relations in the Shan community of Thongmakhsan in northwestern Thailand. I became curious about this during my dissertation research when I learned that the only time a monk stayed at the temple was during the rains retreat. Although now there is usually at least one monk residing at the temple, the community's temple committee remains responsible for administering temple funds, building programs, and temple maintenance. I first discuss the temple, the community, and the temple committee that manages the relationships between the community and its temple. I then describe two events that highlight the role of the temple committee as a liaison between monks and laypeople. I next discuss the temple management to suggest that, although they are under-recognized, temple committees play an active and important role in the religious life of communities. Temple committees illustrate the important role intermediaries and liaisons play in mediating relationships between people with different amounts of power. I then examine the literature on temple committees in other parts of Thailand and briefly discuss their role in Burma. Finally, I argue that we need to pay attention to local ethnographic details to better understand the region.

From Wounded to Collective Social Memories of Phutai Ethnic in the Local State Development Process

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Abstract

This article is concerned with wounded memories of Phutai ethnic of a village in Renunakorn District, Nakorn Phnom Province, following the armed suppression of communism by the state authority. This violent event caused severe hurting which has been unable to eradicate. This memory has created villagers and the state as enemies. However, at present this memory has been reinvented and become a collective social memory of Phutai. The empirical study employed a qualitative approach, using in-depth interviews of village leaders, local government staff, state authorities and local politicians. This paper argues that the wounds of the past were employed by villagers to negotiate with the state. The negotiation was put into practice through narrating the memory in the ceremony of the First Gun Fire Day that took place on the 7th August each year. Through this process the meaning of 'communist village' has been changed into a historical village. The change of meaning has also coincided with the state promotion of local tourism. The support of the state in this process has resulted in legitimizing the memory, that the memory is accepted to be told and integrated into historical text books of local schools. This process has eventually created a collective social memory that helps to reconcile different political and ideological fractions at the local level. This collective social memory also plays a part in restructuring relationships between the state and local people.

The Values of Fon Phi Ceremonies to Socio-Culture Chiang Mai Province

Niran Phakdee
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Abstract

Though science and technology is moving forward quickly, belief in spirits and spiritual activities, especially the Fon Phi performance, still exists. This belief also plays an important role in the socio-cultural ways of living in Chiang Mai province. This research aims to study values of the Fon Phi ceremony towards people's belief and their ways of living.

The Ethnomusicological Methodology focusing on the field study method was made during the Fon Phi ceremony by studying facts about the ceremony's music band, doing context study and studying the relationship of the Fon Phi ceremony, and analyzing the data evolved in the value of Fon Phi to socio-cultural Chiang Mai province. The data collecting in this qualitative research was made by observation, participatory observation, and informal interview and checked by the triangular method. The data was analyzed under the theory of tree of values. The finding indicated that the values of Fon Phi ceremonies to community were: the community strength, the local wisdom transmission, the ethics cultivation through the community socialization, the community stability, the family culture-root awareness, and the community development in community economy. The study revealed that the Fon Phi ceremony helped promoting the community to be aware of their belief and the values of Fon Phi ceremony which should be reserved in socio-cultural Chiang Mai province.

Reflection on Thai Yunnan Project at ANU

Niti Pawakapan
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Abstract

In 1991, I went to the department of anthropology at the Research School of Pacific Studies, ANU, to begin my Ph.D. under Gehan Wijeyewardene's supervision. In my talk, I will focus on my experience with his effort to establish the Thai-Yunnan Project and its newsletters. I will cover several topics, both academic and political, that Gehan tried to raise our concerns, for example, national borders in the mainland Southeast Asia, cross-border movements, national and ethnic identities, state-ethnic relations, citizenship, and mobility. These topics would later become the focuses of his Ph.D. students, such as Andrew Walker and myself.

Public Images and Intimacy: The Underground Cinema Apichatpong Weerasethakul

Noah Viernes
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Abstract

Apichatpong Weerasethakul's "Primitive" exhibition (Jim Thompson House, December 1, 2011 – February 29, 2012) and the more recent "The Serenity of Madness" retrospective (Maiiam Contemporary Art Museum, 4 July – 10 September 2016) showcase the possibilities of art as a political statement in a climate of strictly regulated public images. At the level of the nation, several Thai scholars (Pandit Chanrojanakit 2011) address the relevance of such exhibitions to the critical junctures of Thai politics. Apichatpong assembles a visual archive of the present, which incorporates the camera documentation of both still images and video art to transcend "the video public sphere" (David Joselit 2000), as a critical memory that will mean different things in different viewing contexts. This paper connects Apichatpong's gallery exhibitions, especially "Photophobia" (2013) and "Fireworks (archives)" (2014) to his most recent feature film, Cemetery of Splendour (2015), to locate a community of spectators who will see these works as translating the violence of political division and the boundaries of interpersonal communication. The paper finds that Apichatpong's earlier suggestion to work "underground" when the state constrains access to a public sphere opens the possibility of an "emancipated community" alongside its darker analogue of disappearance.

Cultural Revival Among People Living in the Phu Phan Forest in Northeast Thailand

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Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

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Abstract

This paper deals with cultural revival, which has evolved through the Inpaeng Network of people who live in the Phu Phan forest in northeast Thailand. The network has an activity center in the Kaloeng village in Sakon Nakhon province, and it carries out various activities that include agroforestry as its main project, processing fruits and herbs, education, and a mutual aid fund. In the late 1980s, one young man came to the village to study the ethnic culture of Kaloeng. This occasion became a springboard for villagers to talk about their culture and discuss the forest degradation of Phu Phan, and this led to the building of the Inpaeng Network. Today, the members include people from not only Kaloeng but also Phu Thai, So, Lao, Isan, and other ethnic groups. The members' identities are based on the sense of being together with the Phu Phan forest rather than a particular ethnicity.

I focused especially on the Inpaeng Network's activities that are related to local healthcare culture or folk medicine. In the broader social and political context, Thai traditional medicine and folk medicine have been revived and promoted either officially or privately since the 1990s. Through the development process, folk healers' groups emerged across the country, and the group that is based on the Inpaeng Network is one of the most prominent and successful groups. In this paper, I show distinctive features of the folk medicine revival movement through the Inpaeng Network and examine its potential and difficulties.

The Status of Research on Inequality in Thailand over Fifty Years

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Abstract

It is a widely held view, among economists, that the overall distribution of income or the general extent of inequality is not a true point of concern. The emphasis should be on eliminating poverty and the concern with what is happening at the bottom of the income scale. The analysis of poverty, and by extension of inequality, relies on what may be called the 'income poverty paradigm'. In this paradigm, Francois Bourguignon explains that poor are defined by their standard of living expressed in some money metric, typically income or consumption expenditure per capita, falling short of an arbitrary predetermined level, the 'poverty line'. The extent of poverty is then measured by the proportion of people in the population below this line, possibly combined with the average distance they are from it and inequality among them. This paper explores researches on income inequality in Thailand during the period 1970 until 2016 based mainly on the income poverty paradigm and its extension. The points of discussion include its achievements and its major uses on Thai inequality literatures as well as policy recommendations on poverty and inequality reduction. To some extent, eradicating poverty simply through income redistribution policy may not be enough to eliminate the feeling of poverty, or may even worsen the situation. It is argued in some ways that we move from this paradigm to another, based on a broader concept i.e. poverty of opportunities, poverty of endowments, or social inclusion.

From Hunting and Gathering to Farming Society: King Mongkut University of Technology Thonburi and Its Role in Supporting the Resettlement of the Mlabri Hill Tribe Community

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Nipon Jeenkawkam

Worrasit Tantinipankul
King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi / RMUTL-KMUTT Collaborative Center for Royal Project Foundation and Academic Activities

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Abstract

The Mlabri were historically a nomadic ethnic group who lived in the forests of Nan and Phrae Provinces of Thailand. Commonly known in Thai as "Phee Thong Lueang," the Mlabri relocated their settlement when the leaves in their roofs turned yellow. As a result of a hundred years of deforestation in northern Thailand and the establishment of national forests in the 1960s, the Mlabri tribes were prohibited from continuing their hunting and gathering practice. They were forced out of the forest, heavily exploited as poor farming laborers, and dehumanized by other tribes and lowland people. In 2008, because of limited land, a group of young Mlabri relocated from Baan Huay Hom, Rong Kwang District in Phrae Province to the area set up by Phufah Phatthana Center under the Royal Patronage of Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn in Bor Kluea District, Nan Province. King Mongkut University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT) was asked to work with the Mlabri group to improve their quality of life. This research paper focuses on how KMUTT's faculties, students, and researchers have gradually engaged with the Mlabri in replacing their hunting and gathering practices by introducing modern cultivation with more sustainable methods. Through this project the university has sought to create and foster: 1) a partnership with community: 2) a symbiotic relationship between humans and nature and 3) a community of life-long learning. The aim of the project is to support the Mlabri in developing their self-sufficient living conditions in modern society, while also still preserving their pride in their indigenous identities and cultural heritage.

Dynamics of Civil Society Movement in Northeast Thailand after a Coup D'état in 2014

Noriyuki Suzuki
University of the Ryukyus

Abstract

This paper is the result of research on the process of village civil society (prachakhom) movement as the basis for the emergence of civil society and development in Thailand's northeastern region. In the twenty-first century, discussion of the issue of civil society (prachasangkhom) and people's participation began to develop in Thailand. In my previous research, the prachakhom was concluded as the foundation of the formation process for civil society. Prachakhom as a gathering of people has been an integral part of Thai society.

My previous research examined the ongoing interdependent processes of both macro (nation) and micro (village) civil society using a case-study undertaken in two villages in Northern Thailand. Two forms of civil society are theoretically defined and examined in this paper. The first form, 'grass-roots' civil society, was formed by the villager's own initiative. The second form, 'top-down' civil society, was created in the village through the government's initiative.

This paper focuses on dynamics of civil society in the two villages after a coup d'état in 2014. Before the coup d'état, Thai politics in national level had conflict between government and anti-government movements, which led to conflict into the village level. The conflict , due to the difference of political views among villagers, affected formation of civil society (prachakhom). After the coup d'état, controlling of political movements by the NCPO attempted to restore peace and stop the national political conflict. This paper tries to examine how dynamics after the coup in 2014 affected strongness and formation of civil society (prachakhom) in the villages. Result of survey data collected in 2015 indicates that there was no political conflict in the villages, but the conflict in the consciousness level has still continued and affected strongness and formation of civil society in the villages significantly.

Official Thai Documents about Thai Muslims in Saudi Arabia, 1939-1966

Numan Hayimasae

Abstract

Thai and Thai-Malay Muslims, especially from what is now Southern Thailand, were already contacting Saudi Arabia, particularly Mecca, as early as the 17th century. However, up until the early twentieth century, their journeys and perhaps documentation dealt more with the British governments in Malaya rather than the Siamese or Thai governments, since southern Thai-Malay pilgrims took the journey to Mecca through the British-controlled ports in Penang and Singapore.

Official Thai documents concerning Thai Muslims in Mecca only began to appear in the late 1930s, around two decades after Patani was formally integrated into the provinces of Thailand, and just a few years after the creation of the Saudi Arabian government. The information found in the documents from that period is very crucial since it provides an overall picture of the lives of the Thai Muslims in Mecca. Furthermore, many Muslim Thai citizens who took schooling in the area of Mecca during that period later played crucial roles in Thai Muslim society, particularly in the development of modern Islamic education systems.

Thai government documents concerning the period 1939-1966 provide information on assistance to Thai Hajj pilgrims in Mecca; general information on the lives of Thai citizens in Mecca; and information more specifically on the education of Thai Muslim citizens in Mecca. Furthermore, the documents provide some insight on the evolving perspectives of Saudi Arabia and its neighbors concerning society, economy, and politics. Most significantly, the Thai government, especially the Ministries of the Interior and Foreign Affairs, had given a lot of attention to monitoring the exact number, jobs, positions, and functions of the Thai citizens in Mecca. These citizens were mostly Malay Muslims from the South of Thailand and the two Ministries wished to ensure that they would not be involved in the politics of separatism.

When Politics Meets Football: The New Era for Thai Football

Nuttakorn Vititanon
School of Law, Mae Fah Luang University

Abstract

When Politics Meets Football: The New Era for Thai Football

Political Economy of Chiang Mai: With an Emphasis on China's Rising Influence

Nuttakorn Vititanon
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Abstract

Ever since the great success of the Chinese film "Lost in Thailand," released in 2012, Chiang Mai has become an important destination form Mainland Chinese tourists. The number of Chinese tourists and flights from China have drastically increased. In addition, since the coup d'état in Thailand in May 2014, the Thai government has chosen to turn to China, which has brought investments to Chiang Mai leading to growth in the tourist business, real estate projects, shipping, and agricultural sector. Of course, Chiang Mai has gained both positive and negative effects in various ways.

This paper will investigate the political and economic situations of this province, by focusing on the growth of tourism from China and Chinese investments, especially major ones - for example, the Tube Trek Water Park Project, the Tulou Restaurant Project, and many large condominium projects, etc. Then, the paper will explore how the Chinese economic factors have played a role in the political economy of Chiang Mai. The author hopes to put forward some preliminary remarks on the role of the Chinese economic factors in an overall picture of Chiang Mai development over the past 5 years.

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GLOBALIZED THAILAND? CONNECTIVITY, CONFLICTS and CONUNDRUMS OF THAI STUDIES
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Notes on the Tai-Ization of Khmu People in Northern Laos

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Abstract

Most of the studies concerning the Mon-Khmer speaking groups in the Tai world have stressed their political, economical and cultural subordination to the Tai populations. They also have predicted the complete assimilation of these peoples by their lowland neighbors. This article uses ethnographic data collected since 1994 in northern Laos to reassess the modalities of the 'tai-ization' process and to understand why, after so many years of Tai cultural and political influences, distinct identities are still perpetuating themselves. For Grant Evans, who conducted fieldwork in Tai-Dam and Sing Moon (Ksing Mul) villages at the end of the 1980s, the answer lies in the fundamentally dualistic character of Tai-ization, which both favors assimilation but also tends to perpetuate interethnic boundaries. I will here insist on the fact that Tai-ization does not imply only the influence of the Tai on the highland peoples' way of life but also how the latter adapt themselves to this influence with their own cultural resources. Tai-ization is an inclusive and therefore ambivalent process which can lead both to the assimilation of some highlanders and simultaneously to the emergence of new identity markers, myths or categories, which transform and structure interethnic relationships.

Thai-Centric Education and National Identity: Decolonizing the Siamese Colonial Discourse in the Social Studies Curriculum

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Abstract

After the junta came to power in May 2014, the military government started exercising their nation-centric hegemony through educational policies and curriculum planning. Contemporary curriculum reform is employed as a mechanism for maintaining the status quo of the elite group who have long held privileged positions among the Thais. Thai-centric ideology is still vivid in the minds of the majority of Thai people, who have been dominated by this overarching ideology since the end of the 1950s. Since then, the ideology has functioned as an obstacle to prevent Thai people from adapting to the rapid and critical changes in both Thai and global societies.

More importantly, this ideology has been so consistently cultivated in society, through the formal educational system, that it came to be seen as the truth that influences the way the Thais think and reflect the everyday reality in Thailand. Looking through the social studies curriculum, it becomes the centerpiece of public schools' efforts to cultivate younger generations into the concept of "Thainess". However, Thainess becomes inevitably hybridized to certain extents in the era of globalization. By looking into the contemporary context of education, from the socio-political dimensions of curriculum and cultural studies, I argue that if educationalists are to educate young Thais for global citizenship in today's pluralistic society, the social studies curriculum must go beyond the Siamese colonization of knowledge construction, and also provides pedagogical spaces of the experiences, knowledge, and perspectives of diverse people in Thai society.

Growing Alternative Organic Food and Cultural Consumption in Urban Chiang Mai Society

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Abstract

Consumption is a primary necessity of daily life. It acts as a conduct of everyday life choices and poses as a great concern to the health and political choices that influence the whole food chain. Industrialized mass food production is mainly responsible for the polluted food chain and ecological imbalances. This has created inequity and serves as the prime cause of illness within a society. In large urban center of Chiang Mai province, diverse values and sub-cultures coexist and evolve. This paper will demonstrate how this emergence of green, clean-eating and networks are likely to serve the new growing needs of consumers. It will seek to understand how many actors and contributing forces function as alternative organic markets are obviously expanding by area, location and frequency. This growth brings the area of choice of consumption and new practices of eating in Chiang Mai to great attention and conversation. Moreover, this paper will attempt to provide an explanation of how the consumption and other activities associated with organic culture have emerged in the urban Chiang Mai context. How does this emergence reflect the search for alternatives and new tastes for consumption among the Chiang Mai community? A micro-scaled analysis will be utilized in order to understand these new trends of food culture in Chiang Mai.

Old Lan Na/New Lan Na: A Review of Lan Na Studies for Breaking Through Localism Entrapment

Orapin Soiyana

Abstract

In past times, Lan Na history and its cultural territory was not confined simply within the Northern Thai region as perceived today. This Lan Na area covered Tai regions which cut across the nation state boundaries from northern Thailand to the borderland areas of Laos, Myanmar and China. These Tai peoples, the majority groups in La Na, have long continued and developed their history and civilization, interacting with indigenous peoples and other ethnic groups to distinguish themselves even from other Tai speaking peoples in other regions. The study of Tai people in these borderlands began during European colonial regimes, and continued into the period of Nation State formation and the post Nation State era. This paper attempts to review the state of knowledge on Tai Studies in this Lan Na culture area, also known as Lan Na Studies. It argues that a problem in Lan Na Studies is that this sub-area of Thai Studies repeatedly researches the same unchanged topics. More than that, many works are entrapped in localism. This is partly because recent works done by local scholars rarely discuss their work with Lan Na Studies done by international scholars. This paper proposes that a solution, which challenges to Lan Na Studies scholars, is to get away from the trap of localism and to create a space for communication and dialogue between local scholars and international scholars. There is also the need to expand the boundary of Lan Na Studies to beyond Northern Thailand.

The Border Trade with Thai and China Affects to Shan's Decision on Signing Ceasefire and Peacebuilding Process.

Oratai Soparat
Chulalongkorn University

Abstract

Shan State is the second largest producer of opium in the world, and opium production covers the majority of its territory; moreover, it is also exporting rubber, wood and jade to Thailand and China as prime customers and distributors. According to its economic growth Shan state wishes to be autonomous rather than under the Union of Myanmar's harness. Myanmar government, however, who wishes to resolve the problem of its legitimacy, intends to unite all ethnic groups by proposing a ceasefire agreement which would allow it to penetrate and increase its ability to control illicit trades.

This paper's research question is: will Thai and China trade affect the Shan State's decision to sign the ceasefire agreement and embrace the peace process with Myanmar government? Its hypothesis is that Shan state may use the economic growth incurred from Thai-Shan border trade as political leverage to achieve its political goal of autonomy which may prolong the peace talks and undermine the Myanmar government's linkage.

The paper aims to analyze by employing the framework of "the Linkage and Leverage" by Stephen Levinsky and Lucan Way. The Linkage concept explains how and why weaker countries are vulnerable to external pressure and intervention. In Myanmar's case, the border trade is the main external pressure, resulting in Shan economic growth which may be counterproductive to the peace process. The Leverage concept also concentrates the possibility to turn a country to fully fledged democratization, particularly if some countries comprise of weaker political institutions, such as the Constitution of Burma. Hence, it is possible to protract the decision making process of Shan State to sign a ceasefire agreement, if Shan State's economies are increasing with the support of border trade.

Similarity and Difference of the Tai-Kern Vernacular Houses: Chiang Mai and Kengtung

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Abstract

This research article emphasizes the similarities and differences in the Tai-Kern vernacular houses between Chiang Mai, Thailand, and Kengtung, Myanmar, which stresses the way of life and the environment. The sites for comparative study were selected in Sansai, Doisaket and Sanpatong Districts of Chiang Mai, together with Yanglaw and Kardfah District in Kengtung. Triangulating data from documentary research, field surveys and in-depth interviews are adapted for analysis and synthesis in the conclusion. It was found that the Tai-Kern in both places applied their traditional irrigation system on sloping terrains to their agricultural way of living, which reflected on the villages physical plan, and also clearly influenced the spatial organization of public and private space in the community. Grouping of houses defined their kinship system. Waterways are still the priority of settlements of Tai-Kern Kengtung, while Tai-Kern in Chiang Mai preferred roads. The housing forms of both places are different but almost similar in the spatial organization of the housing plan. The usage of local materials still exists in both places. Sustainable quality of the housing is more present in Kengtung than in Chiang Mai, because they still have the traditional way of living which highly respects and protects their natural environment.

Pakkam' Cultural Practice and Traditional Management of the Space in Communities in Banthad Mountains of Southern Thailand

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Thaksin University

Pornpan Khemakhunasai
Thaksin University

Abstract

The objective of this research was to study the meaning of 'Pakkam', a cultural practice to show property ownership in the public space, and traditional resource management by communities in the Banthad mountains (a provincial boundary between Phattalung and Trang Province). Data was gathered through observation, interviews and group discussion with nine families. The results reveal that the practice of 'Pakkam' is a sign of preemption right of private property, common property and public property, and relatives or people in the communities accepted this practice as their cultural rules. 'Pakkam' was followed and reproduced by successors of five-generation families: great-great grandparents, great-grandparents, grandparents, parents and children. 'Pakkam' also managed the space related to rare or favored properties. If interpreted as a prohibited mark, it could be used effectively to prevent conflicts over the space. However, in the context of modern society, the stronger the level of private land occupancy, the more 'Pakkam' (cultural practice to show property ownership in the public space) will be reproduced.

From Bureaucratic Polity to Neo-Pluralism and Institutionalism: The Politics of Thai Higher Education

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Abstract

This article aims to understand the Thai higher education in its political terms. Taking theoretical approaches from academic studies of the Thai political system, the Thai higher education can be respectively viewed, from the past to the present, through the lens of 'bureaucratic polity', 'neo-pluralism' and 'institutionalism'. The linkage between theories of Thai politics and the higher education system can be used as a basis for understanding conditions in the Thai higher education context. First, it argues that the 'bureaucratic polity' remains powerful in explaining the country's higher education system throughout history. Despite the efforts of oppositional forces, the period saw the imposition of a 'top-down' model, where state authority took complete control of universities. Then, it examines the contemporary period, in which the location of authority shifted as a result of political and socio-economic changes in the country's wider context. This period witnessed the rising fragmentation of other interest groups outside the bureaucracy. These situations can be best explained through 'neo-pluralist' and 'institutionalist' approaches. Finally, it concludes that the Thai higher education is an arena of conflicts and consensus of key related forces within the system. In its current condition, there are as yet no signs of any long-term beneficial effects serving the wider public interest.

Non-Democratized States' Programs and the People on Thai-Burmese Border

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Abstract

Nowadays, Salween borderlands are becoming the border landscapes in the age of state/capital governing. Both the Burmese and Thai states have been terrorizing the people living in the Salween borderlands, mostly ethnic minorities, in order to maintain their sovereign power. In the meantime, they have responded to economic regionalization, in association with the transnational dam investors, by imposing Salween dam projects on the Salween borderlands. However, these processes of state territorialization embedded in frontier capitalism, lag far behind the democratic state of application. These bring the contradictory outcomes that lead to state violence. This paper argues that states' programs, such as the Salween dam construction projects, are manipulated by state/capital in the situation of non-democracy on the Salween borderlands. The paper will provide an ethnographic study to explain sophisticated technology of frontier capitalism, and analyze militarized threats and violence on the borderlands that have become part of everyday life for the border people.

Reflections on Building Urban Climate Resilience in Thailand

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Abstract

Urbanization both contributes to global climate change and creates new patterns of vulnerability. Increasingly, the global debate on urbanization and climate change is framed in terms of building resilience – a term that is itself often confusing and contested. This paper reflects on eight years' experience working with secondary cities across Thailand and building networks of local, state and non-state actors under urban climate resilience projects. The paper draws out key lessons that have wider theoretical and practical implications. Most significantly the paper highlights the fundamental governance challenges around urbanization in Thailand and how these contribute to the creation and distribution of vulnerabilities. Critically, failures in land use planning and competition between those local interests looking to benefit from land development, are compounded by weak environmental regulatory frameworks, and lack of public participation. Moreover, urbanization in Thailand is increasingly a regional story with the most rapid change occurring at regional transport intersections. The governance challenges are thus multi-scale and increasingly complex.

Rationing Is Sharing: Coping with Scarcity During World War II in Thailand

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Abstract

After 1941, Thailand became a so-called stock economy: available goods consisted of those already in the country, whatever Japan sent, and domestic production. None of these sources of additional goods contributed much to pre-war supplies. In December 1941, merchants held relatively few goods because they had depended on a constant flow of imports. Japan did not send much to Thailand, and as the war continued its contribution dwindled even further. Nor did domestic Thai production do much to make up for pre-war imports. Given the resulting stock economy, this paper explores how the government tried to counter scarcity and the problems it faced.

Officials battled scarcity in two main ways: rationing, and regulating the flow and price of goods. These methods faced a series of challenges: firstly, Thailand's stock of goods was so limited that no amount of rationing and regulation could alleviate the scarcity; secondly, most of these products were in the hands of the private sector and not the government. Nationalism and the necessity of equal distribution of goods set the wartime administration directly against merchants, who were usually in possession of stocks of imported commodities. Once in possession of the products, officials also had to find the right balance between firm control of commodities and allowing market forces to ensure supply met demand. Failure to achieve this equilibrium brought about the final obstacle: the administration had to battle the black market and corruption at the local level, which was almost impossible to eradicate, as the system depended on a variety of small independent traders. This paper argues that these problems within the administrative mechanism obstructed effective rationing and price controls.

In the larger historical context, this experience reflects how the government allocated resources to and prioritized certain industries in post-war Thailand.

Visualizing Resistance: The Art of Resistance in Public Sphere after 2014 Coup

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Abstract

Prior to the 2014 Coup, there were certain areas that had been used by pro-democratic movements as a protest site; for example, the ground of Bangkok Art and Cultural Center (BACC), public parks, BTS' skywalk area. But shortly before coup, most of the public sites banned political gathering. It was clear that the public gathering after the coup was almost impossible because the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) suppressed any protest against it. However, there were signs of resistance against NCPO. The artistic and cultural practices were used to convey the protest messages to the Thai public. This article discusses how contemporary art strategies have been used as a form of political resistance, on the one hand. On the other hand, it highlights how many Thai artists have become more conservative and complied with the junta power, by both acting like a form of self-censorship and serving as a form of self-proclamation. Thus, such a political dichotomy reveals that contemporary artists are highly divided.

Imagining the Future of Incoming China-Thai Railway: The Study of Land Use Planning Nearby Nong Khai Railway Station

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Abstract

The "Belt and Road" initiative is the ambitious strategy by the Republic of China to develop infrastructure links across Europe, Asia, and Southeast Asia. In particular, the Sino–Thai railway route is considered as an important foundation for the subsequent interconnectivity among China, Thailand, and other Southeast Asia countries. Recently much of the discussion at the state level focuses on construction cost, geopolitics, and economic growth forecasts, however at the peoples level, the railway has a different meaning to locals' memories and the imagination of their future. The purpose of this presentation is to go beyond an analysis of state power and development "from above" in the Thai-Sino railway project and attempts to understand the railway's meaning to the locals, social value and land "from below" by recovering the railway's history from the memories and life histories of its users. The stories of the border station between Thai-Laos, the Nong Khai Railways Station, will be used as a case study. The memories of local people about railway and land-using around the station will be presented and analyzed in order to understand the local experience of railway development while showing that the concepts of time, space and local value about their future may differ from the central government's plan.

From Village Textile to Cultural Commodity: Dynamism of Indigo-Dyed Textile in Sakon Nakhon Province

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Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University

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Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University

Abstract

This paper studies the dynamics of indigo-dyed textile production in Sakon Nakhon Province. Today, indigo-dyed textile and cloth has become a cultural product that has brought a large amount of annual income for people in many communities.

The study focuses on the group of villagers who make indigo-dyed cloth in Ban Nong Khrong, Ban Don Kloy, Ban Na Dee, Ban Kham Kha and Ban Oun Dong in Sakon Nakhon province. In the past, people used local wisdom and scientific knowledge to produce indigo-dyed textiles. The process started with planting the indigo, then included harvesting the indigo, fermenting the indigo, dyeing cotton with indigo water and weaving the textile by local technology using a loom. The textile reflects a way which is close to nature. It also reflects people's indigenous beliefs and Buddhism. In the past, indigo-dyed textiles were used in the household.

However, at present, indigo-dyed textile and cloth has become well-known as a cultural product of Sakon Nakhon province, with significant economic value. As a result, the weavers produce a large amount of product to serve the demand of the market, resulting in changing dynamics in indigo-dyed cloth production as new patterns and designs are created to keep up with fashion trends. Also, there is a transformation of indigo-dyed textiles into new forms and functions. In addition, with government, private sector and stakeholder influence, the meaning of indigo dyed cloth has changed. The cloth has been upgraded to be the province's and Thailand's cultural product, shifting from a localized product to being part of globalized industry. Thus, indigo-dyed cultural products have become a significant cultural and economic commodity of Sakon Nakhon province, so much so that the province has launched a policy of being the "indigo-dyed city."

'Jo' Beliefs of Thai Southerners: Creation of Sign and Its Reproduction in a Modern Context

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Thaksin University

Pornpan Khemakhunasai
Thaksin University

Abstract

This article focuses on studying 'Jo', a visual image to represent superstitious beliefs of Thai southerners regarding creation of sign and its reproduction. Field research was employed to collect the data from the lower southern part of Thailand using observation and in-depth interview. The in-depth interview was conducted with research samples from 3 groups, 'Jo' owners, 'Jo' ritual practitioners and 'Jo' experts. The research findings revealed that 'Jo' signified the private property right. The negative effects of this action were different depending on created conditions and coding of 'Jo' owners. To create 'Jo', the owner must consider relation of features, materials, black magic, necromancy, rites and stories telling about supernatural power of each type of 'Jo'. Agricultural communities have been transmitting and reproducing 'Jo' beliefs for at least 5 generations; therefore, 'Jo' is still a magical signifier protecting private property right in the society, in which law does not take effect.

Trade and Mutual Dependence Across Ethnic Boundaries: A Case Study of the Bank of the Bang Nara River, Narathiwat Province in Southern Thailand

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Thaksin University

Pornpan Khemakhunasai
Thaksin University

Abstract

This article is aimed at studying a relationship model and relationship management via trade and mutual dependence of people living along Bang Nara River of Narathiwat District. The data was collected through the use of observations and interviews of the second, third and fourth generations in order to understand dynamics of relationships among ethnic groups. It was found that trading condition was a factor to determine forms of ethnic groups and their relations. For the relationship management, Malay-Muslim fisherfolks clearly determined their own identities by calling themselves 'Nayu', while the Chinese were called 'Jeenor' and the Thai were called 'Seeyae'. A group of 'Nayu' barely adjusted themselves compared to a group of Chinese who already had tactics to adapt their own ethnic identities for benefits. Therefore, they possessed better dynamics in adjustment than other groups. The Thai living in suburbs moved to urban areas to work in the Chinese shops. Local Malay language was used to communicate in trading negotiation, so they became 'more familiar with each other'. Changes in ethnicities occurred at individual levels, but 'Nayu' won't change to 'Jeenor' or 'Seeyae'. Though limitations of economics and types of trades led to relationship building opportunities among ethnic groups, they still maintained their own ethnic identities.

Writing the Play Chui Chai Saneha: Using Structure to Deliver the Main Message

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Abstract

The play Chui Chai Saneha, performed at Democrazy Studio in July 2012, won the Best Original Play award at IATC Thailand Dance and Theatre Review 2013 held by the International Association of Theatre Critics-Thailand Center (IATC-TC). This article is about the process of writing this non-linear play, and how it conveys its main message to the audience through its structure.

As a playwright, I use this play as practical research to explore the possibility of playing with structure, and to find out how non-linear structure can deliver its main message to the audience. While writing Chui Chai Saneha, I have also sought to determine effective ways to interweave three plot lines, which tell the stories of three groups of people from three different periods of time, together with the Thai traditional character "Sita" from Ramakien - the Thai version of Ramayana, seen as a hallmark of Thai literature, which was presented through traditional dance movement. There are several sources by which I have been inspired to write this play: "Legend of Lovers' Coffins", a true story of Thai gay lovers in the 1940s who committed suicide because of love; the song "Saneha", memorable to Thai people for 60 years; and the real lives of several young gay people in contemporary society. The play tells the story of seven characters, six male homosexuals and one woman, some of whom decide to end their lives due to broken relationships, while others survive. The structure of the play, which was not chronological, was expected to play a major part as the element to convey its main message: "Love can be either constructive or destructive; it is the choice of each person to choose for one's life."

"Ship, Train, and Car": The Materiality of Journey and Its Politics in the Literary Travel Writing of Prince Arkartdamkeung,

Pasoot Lasuka
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Abstract

Travel writing on the West has played a major role in constructing and maintaining civilizing discourses in Thai society. Many studies have shown that such discourses are invoked specifically through the expressions and images of Western locales within the literature. However, what has often been overlooked is the aspect of "travel", which is the main literary element of the genre, and the significance of the means and the physical conditions of the journey, such as the vehicle, and the travelling path. In this paper, I demonstrate how studying Thai literary travel writing, by focusing on the "materiality" of travel, helps reveal a new socio-cultural aspect of Thai travel writing about the West in connection with changes in Thai society and the world. To illustrate, I examine the materiality of travel in "The Circus of Life" (Lakhorn Haeng Chiwit, 1929) of Prince Arkartdamkeung Rapheephat. The book is about the prince's own experience, told through a fictional character, Wisut Suphalak Na Ayutthaya, while he was travelling and living abroad, mainly in England, France, and the United States. In the book, Wisut encounters many critical situations and comes to understand a life philosophy, while he travels in passenger ships, train, rented and personal cars. In the paper, I show that these vehicles, and the technologies that make them, are the main narrative elements that allow Wisut's journey to the West to happen. They also affect the actions, the thoughts, and the worldview of the protagonist and the overall represented meanings of the book, including the ideological notion of a "civilized West". Lastly, I situate this finding within the larger socio-historical context of the global development of transportation technology to show how the narrative in the book responds to the ideas of mobility and civilization.

A Review of Research on Online Social Media Culture in Thailand

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Abstract

It has been more than 20 years since social media on the Internet began to play a significant role in transforming many cultural forms in Thai society. Today, communication, business transactions, the production of arts and creative innovations, the exercising of political rights and power, and development of many other cultural forms, relies greatly on and has largely been possible due to the advance of Internet technology and online social media. Academics from the Humanities and Social Sciences have been attentive to this change, and despite the field being relatively new, a handful of Thai society-related studies have been conducted on human interactions, culture, and society on the online social media platform.

This paper presentation will outline the on-going attempt of scholars from the Humanities and Social Sciences to critically understand the way in which humans and their cultures relating to Thai society developed on the online social media platforms. The historical background of the change in the Internet technology, which allows the emergence of online social media, will be discussed, followed by a review of studies from the two umbrella disciplines, Humanities and Social Science. It will cover these particular topics: the language and communication of humans, historiography and memory, social formation, the exercise of political power, social movements, and the regulation of the space by the state. Finally, the presentation will identify some of the limitations of these studies and discuss the areas of research necessary to catch up with the change in the platform of technology.

The Transnational Narrative: A Tool for Establishing the Phu Tai Transnational Ethnic Community

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Abstract

This paper explores the construction of the transnational Phu Tai community. The paper attempts to present a result, which is different from the academic ideas of Charles F. Keyes, who explained the ethnic separation after the emergence of nation-states through the heteroglossic discourse.

The phenomenon of Phu Tai congregations is explored as a case study, while ethnography is employed as the research methodology. A multi-sited data collection is applied to collect primary data at 1) the Sixth Phu Tai World Day in Sakon Nakorn Province, 2) the Seventh Phu Tai World Day in Yasothon Province, 3) the Third International Phu Tai Day in Kalasin Province, and 4) the International Yao Festival in Kalasin Province, in order to present the transnational ethnic group congregations. In addition, this paper presents a construction of the ethnic narrative, which is used as an effective tool in connecting the transnational Phu Tai communities both in Thailand and beyond.

Interdependence as a Condition of Relationship Stability: German-Thai Marriages in Germany

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Abstract

German-Thai marriages originate from particular circumstances through various ways, such as where:: a) The initiation of a marriage develops through an unusual path, namely through agencies, private arrangements or meeting as holiday acquaintances. b) Spouses marry out of incongruent motives: males predominantly out of the desire for an intimate relationship and partnership, and females generally for practical reasons, e.g. the acquirement of a residence resp. work permit, or as an exit out of prostitution. c) The phase of becoming acquainted with each other is usually of quite a short duration, ranging from one day up to a few months. These circumstances leave doubt as to whether such relationships can last long.

The findings of studies on the marriage migration of Thai women to Germany and German-Thai marriages (1989-90, 1994-97, 2009), and information collected during counseling, reveal that a number of couples have lived together for more than 30 years. The satisfaction of both partners, the central condition for the durability of matrimony, exists if mutual exchanges take place. This exchange relationship brings both spouses to depend on each other. This paper will discuss the interdependence between Thai women and their German husbands in Germany, its development and how it contributes to a constant relationship between spouses.

The Formation of Thai Communities in Asian Countries

Pataya Ruenkaew

Abstract

Studies on Thai communities outside Thailand are in their initial phase. Though more than three decades have passed since Thais have emigrated to and settled down in many destination countries, scholars scarcely regard the Thai community abroad as a research topic. This may be so because they still adhere to the conventional concept of community that is restricted to a collectivity in a specific locality with clear boundaries and they consider migration as if it is a static event, a phenomenon that ends with the entry into the receiving country. But migration is a dynamic process that can produce consequential events e.g. the formation of a community.

The findings of the study on Thais and the formation of Thai communities in Singapore, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Japan (2014-2015) indicate that there are three types of migration from Thailand to these countries, namely labor migration and migration for marriage and for education. Thus, the main Thai groups there consist of laborers (expatriates, skilled, semi and unskilled), spouses and students. Migrant's life and situation is dynamic, it changes as time passes, and so does the social status they gain. While some Thai women in Japan, mainly the spouses, could change their status to be skilled laborers, others became entrepreneurs. In Vietnam, Thai expatriates married local women and became settlers, etc.

Furthermore, an individual does not stand alone but interacts with co-migrants and forms a subset of the groups in the receiving country. There can be many subsets in one group of migrants. Thai communities originate in chain migration in which persons knowing each other prior to migration settle abroad in geographical proximity, e. g. in a certain city. This paper will discuss the process of the formation of Thai communities in these Asian countries and will It will examine,whether,and if so, in which way Thai communities outside Thailand emerge, and what their components and characteristics are.

Transnational Marriages, Thai Men and Masculine Anxiety

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Abstract

The study on transnational marriages trends to focus on the women and men engaged in this relationship. Most studies on Thai women-Western men marriages explore women's motivations, experiences and their practices in realizing their desire to initiate and maintain this transnational relationship. The emergent works also examine inspirations, involvements and experiences of men in these marriages. Yet, transnational marriages involve two groups of men; those who engage in this marital relation and those who do not, but who influence and are affected by such marriages. The latter group of men relate to women under transnational marriage in different ways; some are ex-husbands; others are their fathers or sons. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork in the northeast region of Isan, this paper focuses on these local men, to explore how women's choice for a marital relationship outside of marrying locally is perceived, including the reactions of local men, and how this chance has generated 'masculine anxiety,' altered masculine ideals and influenced gender relations in Isan communities where these marriages are embedded.

'คุณธรรมจริยธรรมไทย' (Thai Morals and Manners): A Historical Perspective

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Abstract

In Norbert Elias' classic work The Civilizing Process, he argues that a crucial period in the history of manners occurs with the rise of the bourgeoisie and its interaction with the courtly class. Over time a process takes place which sees the "bourgeoisation" of courtly society and "courtization" of bourgeois society. Can we apply Elias' model, taken from Western Europe, to better understand the history of morality and manners in Thailand? In the Thai case a modern bourgeoisie begins to form at the end of the nineteenth century. A period of "revolution" begins from the 1910s to the beginning of the Cold War, when the government as well as middle class writers and intellectuals promoted new, progressive, and international models of social conduct. With the onset of the Cold War, however, a period of reaction set in, which deepened following Sarit's coups of 1957 and 1958. Courtly models of behavior enjoyed a revival and were heavily promoted, particularly in the education system. This paper will argue that this revival of courtly forms of behavior can be attributed to the weakness of the Thai bourgeoisie due to its special, split character, comprising a bureaucratic elite which historically served the monarchy, and a commercial class with Chinese origins whose position in Thailand for much of the twentieth century was chronically insecure. If we accept this argument then "manners" in Thailand can be understood not as an intrinsic element of Thai identity, but the product of a long process of interaction and compromise between the bourgeois and courtly elements in Thai society.

What Did Siamese Read?: An Expansion of Reading Rooms and Books Donation in Siam During 1910-1932

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Abstract

This article aims to examine an expansion of reading rooms in Siam during 1910-1932 and how books donated by Siamese elites shaped people's perception. Main questions of the article are, who donated/ provided books to reading rooms in Siam and what types of books were donated around that time? These issues will raise some useful understanding about how Siamese commoners' perceptions were formed by reading the same set of books published by the state. According to an interesting issue suggested by Benedict Anderson about shaping 'imagined community' and nation state through print media, this essay purposes to investigate 'government gazette' (raat-cha-git-jaa). The government gazette is a useful historical evidence for Thai studies as it provides details about economics, politics, and social issues throughout Siam, and later Thailand, to be exacted; in this case, statistics of the growth of reading rooms, lists of donated books and names of people who donated books and related with an establishment of reading rooms. During the reign of King Rama 6th and King Rama 7th, one important thing is a compulsory elementary education act was issued in 1921 and Siam education was accelerated from then on as well as the number of people who could basically read and write. Although a lot of academic works have studied these issues based on an emergence of a compulsory elementary education act and its effects, it cannot fulfill an image of Siamese commoners' perceptions without the question 'what did they actually read?' Thus, this essay is going to argue that donated books in reading rooms throughout Siam in the reign of king Rama 6th and 7th can shed some lights on Siamese commoners' lives and how their ideas were formed by the state.

The Role of Security Forces in Thailand's Deep South Counter-Insurgency

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Napisa Waitoolkiat

Abstract

This study looks at the role of Thai state security forces in the Deep South across history until early 2017. These forces include the army, navy, police and paramilitaries and have been tasked with enforcing Thai state policy toward the Deep South since the centralization of power by the Siamese monarchy over this region in 1902. After the 2014 coup, the junta initiated a policy of using both repression and negotiations with insurgent groups to achieve its aims in the Deep South. In 2016 the junta informally and incrementally withdrew from these negotiations. Meanwhile violence has soared. The study argues that Thai security forces' preference for a hardline policy in the Deep South has resulted in a vicious cycle of tension and violence between security officials and local Malay-Muslims which has effectively destroyed peace efforts in the region. Nevertheless, any durable peace will need to satisfy military perceptions of security. Yet exactly how has the role of security forces evolved in the Deep South and what have been important turning points in southern security policy? What has been the policy of the ruling National Council for Peace and Order military junta toward the Deep South? How do Thai security officials currently perceive notions of security, peace and justice in the Deep South as well as participating in dialogue with insurgents? What is the likelihood of the Thai junta becoming more pragmatic regarding the Deep South in the near future? This study examines these questions.

Religious and Secular Spaces of Exception in the Golden Triangle and Beyond

Paul T. Cohen

Abstract

In the so-called 'Golden Triangle', where the borders of Thailand, Laos and Myanmar intersect, a grandiose and gaudy casino zone in Laos, opened by a Chinese company in 2009, stands in stark contrast to Wat Phra That Donrueang. The temple was created earlier just a few miles upriver in Burma on the Mekong by the famous charismatic monk Khruba Bunchum, as the center of a 'Buddha kingdom' – a moral community envisioned as a counter to the 'immoral territory' (daen atham) of the drugs and arms trafficking of this region. Other Buddhist sacred enclaves have been established in Myanmar and northern Thailand (for example, Khruba Wong's 'holy land' [daen saksit] of Wat Prathat Huai Tom in Lamphun).

The Golden Kapok casino zone (also called the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone) and the Golden Boten City casino zone at the Lao/China border have acquired reputations consistent with Khruba Bunchum's Buddhist revivalist conception of immorality. Lyttleton (Intimate Economies of Development, 2014) has described them as 'permissive zones' that encourage 'freedom to transgress and live out fantasies' (through gambling, drugs, and sex). However, while these Buddhist and casino zones do in many respects lie at the polar extremes of the moral spectrum I argue that there are some significant similarities. Both are spaces of exception in that the state has surrendered sovereignty to the zones in varying degrees. Furthermore, Nyiri argues ('Enclaves of development…' CSSH 54 (3), 2012) that the two casino zones are characterized by 'two powerful and conflicting discourses', that is, 'the discourse of social and economic freedom and the discourse of modernization' with its 'fantastic visions of progress borrowed from the Chinese state'. In short, both Buddhist and casino zones have utopian dimensions – the one of secular utopianism and the other of religious utopianism.

The Empowerment of Pang Daeng Youth's Identity Through the Applied Theatre Process of Makhampom Theatre Troop in Chieng Dao District

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Abstract

For two decades, Dara-ang people or Pang Daeng community people now live in Chieng Dao district, Chieng Mai province, have struggled through political and economical changes around them. As other stateless people in Thailand, Pang Daeng community people have also been repressed by the Thai state authority through the discourse of deforestation in their own land. With help and collaboration form several private cooperation for local development such as Makhampom Theatre troop, now they are settled in their Baan Mankhong project in Chieng Dao district. However, the identity of Pang Daeng youth is related to the dynamics of neo-liberalism age, which places an importance on their right as according to the notion of the politics of identity.

This paper is the study of how Makhampom Theatre troop has used applied theatre as a cultural process with the identity of Pang Daeng youth for almost ten years in order to make changes in both personal and community levels. Applied theatre is a creation of social space process which enhances the capability of changes in Pang Daeng youth. Also the applied theatre is a cultural emancipation process of Paulo Freire's notion which emphasizes on self-criticism as related to hidden power and social structure in order to free oneself from repressive and abstract systems.

The applied theatre process of Makhampom Theatre troop includes working with their local artists in the community as to revive the community with a cultural capital, researching for several issues in the community then developing them to community theatre pieces performed both in Pang Daeng community and to the public outside with a forum dialogue after the performance, and training community youths with acrobatic skills then developing it to an acrobatic theatre for public audiences in Makhampom Living Theatre space.

Urban Development in Secondary City, a Case Study from Khon Kaen Municipality, Thailand

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Abstract

The emergence of secondary cities is related to the rapid pace of urbanization. This global phenomenon can be found in many geographical regions. However, there is no clear definition of secondary cities and there are only a few studies examining the context of secondary cities. This paper therefore aims to develop knowledge and understanding of secondary cities, to bridge the gap of urban development between physical development and urban governance, and to address the challenges of urbanization. In Thailand, many cities are growing in areas including economic size, spatial development, and population - for example, city center in Chiang Mai province, Khon Kaen, Nakhonratchasima, Udonthani province, and Hat Yai city in Songkhla province. Moreover, ASEAN cooperation brings these cities opportunities and prosperity. However, these cities in Thailand have fewer capacities for planning, urban management, and economic growth. This paper investigates Khon Kaen as a case study of secondary cities in Thailand which are struggling to raise the capital for providing infrastructure to attract the investment, create dynamic economies, and improve urban management for vibrant communities.

The paper will employ a mixed method, Participatory Action Research for examining urban development in Khon Kaen. Primary and secondary data will be collected and analyzed focusing upon urbanization and urban governance issues. Focus group and workshop are employed to comprehend the various views of involvement from academics, urban development professionals, and the officers in local authorities.

The outcomes of this study will provide an important contribution to knowledge about secondary cities and the development of guidance for the better development of secondary cities in Thailand.

State of Knowledge on Lan Na Studies: A View from Art Historical and Archaeological Knowledge

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Abstract

The two decades since the 700th anniversary of the founding Chiang Mai has seen enthusiastic research in the new knowledge of "Lan Na Studies". In particular, "The date of birth of Chiang Mai" should be conclusively determined. The resolution at that time was that it should be taken as April 12, but in 2016 on the 720th anniversary of Chiang Mai, the date was recalculated, and replaced by April 19. Movements have also been made to verify the etymology of specific names, analyze the alphabetical meaning of key words, and codify small tonal differences (such as "Lānna - Lanna" – "Lānna" being officially recognized in the Royal Gazette in 1997). Confusions in naming such as "Phraya Mung Rai – Por Khun Meng Rai", "Phraya Ngam Muang - Por Khun Ngam Muang" as well as "Phraya Ram- Por Khun Ramkhamhaeng", have been long debated and remain contested.

Although most scholars accept Phraya Mung Rai, Phraya Ngam Muang and Phraya Ram as correct, the government remains wedded to the discourse "Sukhothai is the first capital of Thailand" governed by the Father & Son regime. The field of "Lan Na Studies" has grown to encompass not only to historical dimensions but a range of diverse sciences, including but not limited to; economics, sociology, ethnology, anthropology, architecture, geology, archeology, arts, culture, traditional customs and tourism.

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Globalization and the Contradictions of Gender Development in Thailand

Peter Bell
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Abstract

This paper addresses the continued bifurcation of women's' situations: a successful middle and professional class contrasted with the continuing reliance on low paid females worker in export-oriented manufacturing, sexual services, and unpaid rural work. This has been complicated by illegal immigration and trafficking. As Jasmine Chia has observed: women do not suffer de jure restrictions to mobility, education, and labor force participation. What women in Thailand suffer is a lack of de facto access to power: a cultural disempowerment that is in part a result of sexual imperialism, state policies, and gender-specific socialization.

The data in this paper derives from recent official statistics and field work on the borders of Cambodia and Burma.

Dynamic Cultures of Transgenderism in Thai Spirit Mediumship: Queer Studies Perspectives on Thai Religious Studies

Peter Jackson
Australian National University

Abstract

An increasing number of researchers have reported the expanding roles of gay men and transgender kathoeys in new spirit medium cults in Thailand. In this paper, I critically engage the current literature and report the results of interviews with gay- and kathoey-identified spirit mediums in Bangkok, to reflect on how rapidly changing patterns of ritual practice are intersecting and influencing equally dynamic cultures of queer gender and sexuality in Thailand. I argue that bringing queer studies analyses of new gay and kathoey cultures and identities into conversation with religious studies accounts of new forms, spirit possession ritual can enhance and expand both of these fields of study, which to date have remained largely separate and non-communicating academic domains.

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Review of Studies of Gender and Sexual Diversity in Thailand in Thai and International Academic Publications

Peter Jackson
Australian National University

Narupon Duangwises
Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre

Abstract

This paper reviews Thai and international research on homosexuality and transgenderism in Thailand published from the 1950s to the 2010s. The review surveys and investigates both Thai- and English-language research publications – including journal articles, monographs, and book chapters – that deal with the many forms of gender/sex diversity in Thailand. Our reading and interpretation of the Thai and international research is guided by the analytical methods of critical queer and trans studies, which understand minority genders and sexualities as parts of the overall gender/sex system. We found that early studies of queer cultures by Thai scholars were dominated by now-abandoned western biomedical, sexological, and psychological paradigms that problematized and stigmatized homosexuals and transgenders as perverted (wiparit, phit-phet) and sexually deviant (biang-ben thang-phet). Subsequently, in the early 2000s, a newer generation of Thai researchers critiqued the earlier biomedical scientific paradigm that pathologized queer people and instead studied gender and sexual diversity in terms of cultural and sociological understandings of sexual minority status, gender/sex identity, and lifestyles. Most recently, Thai research has explored diverse understandings of phet-withi (sexuality), with many Thai studies arguing for the cultural and human rights of gay, kathoey, tom-dee-les and transmale gender and sexual minorities. In contrast to the focus of Thai research, English-language studies by non-Thai scholars have explored the cultural and historical specificity of Thai discourses of gender and sexuality (phet) and their differences from Western conceptions of sex, gender, and sexuality. In conclusion, this review considers the influence of different transnational forms of queer studies and knowledge that have been followed by successive generations of Thai scholars and also assesses the factors that variously restrict and support Thai queer studies research today.

The Reality of Eviction

Peter Vail
National University of Singapore

Abstract

In a provocative 2008 article entitled 'Northern Thailand's Specter of Eviction', Andrew Walker and Nicholas Farrelly argue that the threat of eviction faced by upland minorities from their agricultural lands is overplayed, and that, under analysis, such a threat proves more 'specter' than reality. This paper revisits their argument in light of the extensive evictions that have occurred since 2014 under the auspices of NCPO order 64. Specifically, I examine the rather stark case of a Dara'ang village in Chiang Dao, evicted from much of its farmland in 2016. On the basis of this case, I argue, in a preliminary way, two things. First, that the way to examine the notion of a 'specter of eviction' is not by simply considering the aggregate of cases across northern Thailand, but to instead focus on the historically situated experiences of particular villages and households; and second, by taking that approach, understanding (contra Walker and Farrelly) that what proves illusory is not the threat of eviction, but the stability of land tenureship in upland contexts.

Modern Slavery in Thai Fisheries: Critical Review of Literature, Key Ideas, and the Slavery Frame

Peter Vandergeest
York University

Abstract

This paper provides a critical analysis of publications on the topic of modern day slavery within the fisheries sector in Thailand. Non-academic research has been particularly important in this field, so our review will incorporate reports by non-government organizations, government and intergovernmental organizations, and the media, in addition to those of academics. The first part of this review will outline what the literature tells us about the recent history of labor in the fisheries industry. It situates the increasing use of migrant workers within broader political and economic trends, in which an increasing number of migrant workers are taking up work that is highly demanding and less than free. A shift to migrant workers has been particularly important for the fisheries – facilitated the difficult and dangerous nature of the work – and takes place in spaces that are difficult to monitor, for both states and other groups such as NGOs and seafood buyers. The low status, low income, dangerous, demanding nature of this work has sometimes made it difficult for the industry to recruit workers, leading some boat owners/captains to recruit or retain workers through deception and force. The lack of labor market freedom has also been facilitated by government restrictions on migrant workers in fisheries. The second part of the paper assesses how academic, NGO, inter-governmental, and media authors understand slavery and forced labor. We outline the advantages and problems of a slavery framework; consider how authors diagnose of the cause of these practices; and their proposed solutions.

Slavery Scandals and Capitalist Relations in Southeast Asian Fisheries

Peter Vandergeest
York University

Melissa Marschke
University of Ottawa

Abstract

Over the past year, scandals around so-called slave labor in the industrial fishing sector in Southeast Asia have highlighted not only the connections between Northern buyers and Southern labor practices, but also the relative lack of research on fisheries labor in Asia and the Global South. This paper will outline the historical and contemporary ecological and social transformations that have culminated in practices that involve sometimes extreme abuse of migrant workers in the Thai fisheries sector, as well as how this abuse exploded into an international scandal. This scandal has provoked action by corporate seafood buyers and importing governments to try to eliminate so-called slavery in the fisheries sector in Thailand. The government in Thailand has invoked Article 44 and put the navy in charge of organizing a new regular regime for fisheries and fisheries workers—unprecedented actions that ironically may have led to beneficial outcomes for some workers. We will also explore the question of slavery and capitalism, through a discussion of how boundaries are drawn between what different actors consider to be slavery or unfree labor on one hand, and 'free labor' on the other hand.

A Review of Russian Academic Literature on Overseas Chinese in Thailand in the 20th Century

Petr Moskalev
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Abstract

Overseas Chinese make up a considerable ethnic minority in the Kingdom of Thailand. People of Chinese descent have been coming to Thailand to settle for centuries and contacts between the Chinese and the Thai have been long and fruitful.

A few representatives of the Overseas Chinese community in Thailand have become successful entrepreneurs during the 20th century and have contributed to the economic growth of the country. Some of them have become prominent figures in Thailand's national political life, as well as in the international relations within the region of Southeast Asia. Equally important is the role of the Overseas Chinese community in the development of bilateral relations between China and Thailand.

Several prominent scholars in Thailand, in China and in many other countries around the world have previously focused their attention on the various issues concerning the Overseas Chinese community in Thailand. Unfortunately, works of many scholars, who have written about these issues in Russian language, still largely remain unknown to the international society of scholars focusing on Thai Studies. Most of these works have never been translated into any other languages and have never been published outside of Russia.

The proposed paper is aimed at providing a general review of some of the most prominent Russian language academic works concerning the Overseas Chinese community in Thailand during the 20th century. There have been a few scholars who have written in Russian about Overseas Chinese in Thai Society, and whose findings in this fields and ideas could be of interest to the international academic community. Among the works to be reviewed would be studies by such authors as N.A. Simoniya, G.F. Kim, G. I. Levinson, G.I. Chufrin, A. G. Larin and other notable Russian scholars.

Tamnan Phra Kaew Don Tao and the Cursed City: A Collective Memory in Lampang

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Abstract

Tamnan Phra Kaew Don Tao is the story of Don Tao Lord Buddha's birth. The protagonist of this legend was Suchada and the text was written to support the righteousness of the Don Tao Lord Buddha, and contains strong links to the history of Lampang City. The story has had many successive retellings and iterations, interwoven within the shared cultural memory of Lampang. Within this cultural memory is the perception of "A cursed city", reinforced by the people of Lampang seeing adverse events in the city. Lampang is not as economically developed as it might have become, nor has it taken the role it might have taken as regional epicenter in upper northern Thailand. Gratitude for the condition that caused the shared memory of "A cursed city" was put forward as a description of those conditions. Moreover, having abolished the curse, it is more a reintroduction and reinforcement of the existence of the shared memory.

Collaborating Micro-Level Stakeholders to Child-Centered Climate Change Adaptation: A Pathway to Climate Change Governance in Northern Thailand

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Abstract

Children are one of the most vulnerable groups to climate change related disasters. Although many stakeholders at national, regional and local scales have already attempted in physical and non-physical terms to deal with climate change and variability to marginalized people including children, some are still skeptical whether or not children are able to participate in climate change adaptation. This study, thus, explored several mechanisms among related stakeholders in the application of knowledge and attitude transfer among children, teachers, villagers and local authorities in building child-centered climate change adaptation in practice, under different socio-spatial contexts of four villages in upper northern Thailand (Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai Provinces). It was obviously discovered that micro-level stakeholders in the community (parents, teachers, and local headmen) are certainly influential in directing children's practices in climate change adaptation because of legitimacy of authority and intimate social bonds, despite the fact that those people (especially parents and local headmen) could only partially communicate effective knowledge and appropriate attitudes for adaptation among children. Besides, the antagonism between mainstream scientific knowledge and local ethnic beliefs was surveyed in children's mindsets, while they tended to rely on the mainstream with little application for taking action in local situations. Although all stakeholders informed that the promotion of climate change knowledge to the children was significant, and the child's knowledge and mindset was practicable, child-centered climate change adaptation was not encouraged properly due to poor horizontal and vertical communication and collaboration across stakeholders, as well as the lacking presence of self-organizing capacity. It is therefore a vantage point to establish and liberate more platforms for micro-level stakeholder to reconcile and work with children, which might be lead to long-term adaptation with governance from below.

Political Polarization of the Community Radio and the Meaning of Democracy

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Abstract

Political polarization has often been seen negatively by Thai state. However, this may only be the state's political agenda aimed to protect status quo. The transformation of community radio for community's rights into a political community radio after the coup in 2006 proves that it is a pathway to democracy. This paper analyses the contents and programs of community radio in the context of Thai polarized politics after 2006, as well as the audience's reception.

The group of RAK-CHIANG MAI'51 community radio, FM 92.5, try to construct the meaning or social reality of Democracy through radio programs. This group has emphasized obvious notions about the key principle of Democracy that "the heart of Democracy is the vote of people, therefore, only the party who get majority vote from the people has the right to be sovereign." In conclusion, the construction of meaning for Democracy of RAK-CHIANG MAI'51 tended to believe in the power of majority vote. Furthermore, the community radio of RAK-CHIANG MAI'51 constructed both symbolic and subjective reality for democracy in two points. Firstly, the construction of symbolic reality consisted of two main concepts and one hidden concept: 1) the real democracy was "eatable/edible-democracy" and the people were powerful, 2) the real democracy should be the constitutional monarchy, only symbolic, and 3) the hidden concept for the liberation of Siam Lan-na State. Secondly, the construction of subjective reality consisted of two main concepts: 1) the construction of reality for one-dimensional democracy which regards only majority vote but overlooks minority right, and 2) the construction of reality for political imagined-community in three issues: loyalty to their political party, people's power of negotiation, and the continuously constructed unity of RAK-CHIANG MAI'51 in both sender (DJ) and receiver (listener)

Where Are We at with Tai Buddhist Manuscripts?: Preliminary Research on Their Textual Archaeology and Cultural Revival in Thailand and Elsewhere

Phibul Choompolpraisal
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Abstract

Through political diplomacy, legal and illegal trading, missionaries' missions and tourism, Tai Buddhist manuscripts have been highly mobile over the last 300 years. They were sent to several important archives around the world, including the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, the United States of America, Japan, Lao, Sri Lanka and elsewhere. My talk aims to provide an up-to-date account of work on Tai Buddhist manuscripts in these places with an emphasis on that of work in Thailand by various organizations and scholars. I shall explore some of the main features, such as titles, contents, scripts and languages, that are shared amongst available Tai Buddhist manuscripts in different locations. I shall also examine the benefits of applying digital and database technologies to conservation work on Buddhist manuscripts in Thailand and elsewhere, and how such technologies enable researchers to identify manuscripts of the same titles or contents in different locations around the world. In the case of manuscript work in Thailand, my examination shall include a discussion of attempts to revive manuscript cultures as living traditions beyond texts in various Buddhist communities. I shall conclude my talk with an analysis of human, social, psychological, cultural and technological factors which could become obstacles to the progress of work and research on Tai Buddhist manuscripts.

Old Practices and New Norms: The Case of Thailand

Phiippo Maranzana De Filippis
National Chengchi University

Abstract

On the night of 19 September, 2006, the army rolled tanks through the center of Bangkok. The seizure carried out by the military to overthrow the Thaksin government was supported not only by royalists, but also, surprisingly, by a large section of the Thai civil society. The event per se was nothing new to Thailand, nevertheless the 2006 coup d'état was in many respects quite different from the previous ones. First, it happened after fifteen years of democratic rule; secondly, it deposed a democratically elected government with an overwhelming majority in parliament, led by a single party and its popular leader (a unique example in Thai history); thirdly, it was supported by a strange mix of the civil society which brought together upper, medium and lower strata of an otherwise strictly class-divided society. Analyses suggest that this coup was brought about by the breaking of untold norms of long-established institutions that work underneath the democratic façade. Taking the clue from the 2006 overthrow, this paper has attempted to explore the workings of power building and power distribution in Thailand, and the relationship between old and new institutions and how they have managed to accommodate to each other successfully or less so. Two rival mechanisms for allocating power have been at work in the kingdom, one foreign (the façade) one local (the substance). Apparently, the former has served to maintain the image of a modern country, the latter to preserve the power of the ruling elites, but over time under the pressure of civil society and a new generation of political leaders the construction has become unstable, leading to more frequent interventions to prevent it from crashing down.

Does Size Matter? the Place of Land in Smallholder Persistence

Philip Hirsch
University of Sydney

Abstract

The conundrum of smallholder persistence in Thailand can in part be explained by the ambiguity of what is meant by "small" and what is meant by "holding". In the more agrarian rural past, rural wealth and poverty were often measured by the amount of land held by a farming household. Of course, this was never a simple measure of land area. Regional differences in land quality and farming systems meant that relativities were more significant within regions than between them, as the number of rai constituting a large farm in northern Thailand would have made for a tiny holding in Isan, for example. Similarly, tenure systems have long put a premium on titled private land and discounted the value of untitled public land. These differences still matter, but with the partial de-agrarianisation of rural society and de-localization of rural livelihoods in Thailand, there are many other complicating factors in defining smallholding. In the majority of rural households, land is the basis for only a part of the family economy, so scale may relate to many factors other than land. Furthermore, consolidation of farms may occur without consolidation of landholdings, for example through leasing arrangements. Contract farming and mechanization bring capital inputs whose scale contribution to production may outweigh that of land per se. This paper considers these and other complexities in terms of the changing meanings of land in rural livelihoods, the connections between agricultural and non-agricultural, local and non-local sources of income, and the question of whether smallness of holding should be considered only or mainly in terms of land.

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Movement, Countermovement and Regionalization of Capital in Thailand's Land Relations

Philip Hirsch
University of Sydney

Abstract

This paper explores the paradox of a country with a key regional role in land accumulation and dispossession through cross-border land-based investments, yet one within whose own borders there are significant limits to fully capitalized land relations. The paper commences with a political-economic history of land titling and the progressive capitalization of private land in terms of investment in agricultural production, land as a commodity and land as a financial asset, showing how Thailand has established the World Bank "model" for smallholder-based property rights in land. Nevertheless, Thailand's experience also shows the limits of land capitalization that lie behind the paradox of a highly unequal rural society growing on the basis of a still largely smallholder-based agriculture, and how counter-movements in various guises have placed limits on large-scale accumulation through dispossession on such land. The paper then considers the evolving role of capital on public land occupied by or distributed to smallholders, particularly in land reform areas, and the debates and dilemmas of "turning land into capital". Partly in response to limits on accumulation within Thailand's own domestic periphery, the final part of the paper discusses the role of cross-border investments by Thai capital in land-intensive ventures in plantations, contract farming and hydropower in neighboring countries.

Discourses, Power, and Communication about Thai Theravada Bhikkhunis

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Abstract

The prominent characteristic of Theravada Buddhism is to conserve the original Buddha's teaching against all impurities. No Buddha's disciplinary rule should be changed, and no new ones should be introduced. However, under the male-dominated Thai Theravada monastery, the interpretation of the Buddha's teaching has been done only by bhikkhus (male monks).

It has been recognized that the Buddhist philosophy emphasize the equality of human beings under the laws of nature. Everyone is capable of attaining the Buddha's teaching and the state of nirvana, regardless of gender. Although the Buddha stated that Buddhism must be patronized by the fourfold Buddhists: namely 'bhikkhus', bhikkhunis (female monks), laymen and laywomen, only bhikkhu orders have been established legitimately in Thai Theravada society.

There are at least two attempts to restore Theravada bhikkhuni's ordination in Thailand. The first attempt was recorded in 1928, initiated by a former governor, Narin Phasit, who attempted to ordain his two daughters. The attempt failed but ignited the dispute about the legitimacy of the revival of Theravada bhikkhunis in Siam. The controversy again erupted fervently in 2001 when Chatsumarn Kabilsingh, former Associate Professor of religion, went for her ordination in Sri Lanka and claimed to be the first Theravada bhikkhuni of Thailand. The gradual growth of bhikkhuni orders has questioned whether the legitimacy of ordaining bhukkhuni would still be only in the hand of the monastery.

This preliminary document analysis will apply the concept of Michel Foucault's discourse, in which connects discourses with power, to show the differences of the power of the discourses and its mechanism of those two attempts.

Muang Noi in History: Evidence from a Palm Leaf Document

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Abstract

Muang Noi is an ancient city, more than 500 years old. Nowadays it stands in Pai, Mae Hong Son Province, as the satellite city of Lanna. Despite being a small town nestled in a valley far from Chiang Mai, it was important to Chiang Mai and the king as well as the royalty of the monarch because it was a city used to quarantine ex-kings or royal family. During the late 21st century, it appears that the Lan Na king in Chiang Mai exiled his son to Muang Noi.

But with the relationship of the royal family and the deeply powerful, even though deported and disarmed by the king, Muang Noi still displays the symbol of his masterly presence through various buildings which differ from other small districts nearby.

In particular, there remain many large ruins of ancient sites - at least 30 archaeological sites with a number of ornaments made of gold and gems. This represents the importance of Muang Noi as well.

Ethnic Revival: Tai Dam (Black Tai) Ethnicity in the Procedure for Networking Across Boundaries

Pichet Saiphan
Thammasat University

Abstract

This article presents the ethnic revival of Tai Dam (Black Tai) in Thailand with the idea of ethnic boundary. In the old days of Siam, Tai Dam peoples who were relocated from Laos were recognized and classified as another group of Laos, wherein the place they were moved together with the Laos people from Lao region. This has shaped their ethnic label in Thailand as "Lao Song", subsequently having been perceived themselves as "Phu Lao", literally Lao people.

In the contemporary period, significantly since the 1970s and the beginning of their establishing of ethnic organization has recalled the group by themselves as "Thai Song Dam" (Thai in Black), which shifted them from Lao to becoming Thai. In the meantime, the local-cultural movement during that period awoke their ethnic cognizance as "Tai Dam". The organization and the people revived their ethnicity which re-constructed their ethnic consciousness between being "Thai" people and being "Tai" Dam ethnicity.

Consequently, they founded many organizations in each area, beginning from regrouping in their neighborhood, connecting where they were located in Thailand and trying to link their relationship and historical background to another Tai Dam Group in Laos and Vietnam, and Tai Dam global communities. The ideas of primordialism, and circumstantial factors in their networking. brought them to break out of their ethnic boundary and reconstruct the Tai Dam ethnicity in the contemporary world.

Balancing Health and Disease Perceptions for Sustainable Health Development: The Case of Liver Fluke and Cholangiocarcinoma in Northeastern Thailand

Pierre Echaubard

John F. Smith

Abstract

High liver fluke infection rates persist in Northeastern Thailand, despite decades of public health interventions. Multiple complex socio-cultural and ecological factors associated with local communities' "wetland livelihoods" underlie their apparent preference for raw cyprinid fish consumption and subsequent infection. The lack of appreciation of this complexity, including dismissal of different worldviews and health perceptions between rural communities and researchers and practitioners implementing interventions, have resulted in relatively limited successes in sustainably altering traditional dietary habits to interrupt transmission. This is further complicated by ongoing, possibly accelerating socio-economic development and transition from subsistence to cash economy with risk pattern changes and associated health problems. Raw fish consumption behavior is a remnant of traditional Isaan practices and a disappearing landmark possibly associated with a disrupted sense of cultural coherence/identity. Although a "risky" behavior (i.e. from a biomedical perspective), raw fish consumption is associated with cultural identity and social capital contributing to communities' cohesiveness as well as individual resilience and psychosocial health.

In this paper we review recent evidence illustrating the significance of socio-cultural and ecological factors influencing infection and disease risk. We show that although significant improvements have been achieved towards liver fluke infection control, several key barriers and challenges remain including lack of authentic engagement with local communities to understand the local culture and their broader health perceptions and well-being concerns. We then describe an integrative research rationale based on transdisciplinarity pointing to the need 1) to enhance collaborative research and education at the interface between health and social sciences, 2) to develop protocols for community engagement at all levels drawing on community participatory approaches in which the community, and local knowledge is at least as equally valued to outside experts, and 3) the needs to develop robust and integrative processes and outcomes for monitoring and evaluation tools.

Human Rights Language in Democratic Struggles after 2006 Coup in Thailand

Pimsiri Petchnamrob

Abstract

Thailand has been riding the wave of the global trend in the human rights regime since the 1970s, with more institutionalized systems and greater involvement of different stakeholders over the past two decades. Human Rights language has recently been utilized more and more in the context of social justice struggles regarding economic, social and cultural rights. In the 1990s, the language of social movement in Thailand was formulated around the influence of the emergence of new social movements around the world. Similarly, these languages against neoliberalism were used by new social movements worldwide in 1990s. The use of human rights language has been obviously included in the struggles for economic, social and cultural rights.

In the civil and political rights sphere, however, it seems like the language of human rights has not been utilized to the same extent it has been in economic, social and cultural rights. After the coup in 2006 until today, the language of democratic struggles in protests or demonstrations are more concentrated around the issue of restoration of democracy and political representation. This paper explores why protesters or protest leaders might not consider human rights language as a powerful tool in their democratic struggles, and how the human rights community in Thailand might be achieve greater engagement with different groups at both local and national levels in their fight for democracy.

More Than a Medium: Construction of Faculty of Engineering, Prince of Songkla University

Pinai Sirikiatikul
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Abstract

Construction is generally seen as a labor-intensive activity, associated more with practical, rather than theoretical, aspects of building. This paper, however, argues that not only can intellectual dimensions of an architectural work be drawn from the construction process, but constructional 'theory' can also be developed. In the context of setting up a new university in southern Thailand, later named as Prince of Songkla University, this paper looks at the construction of its first major building, the Faculty of Engineering [FE] - completed in 1970 and designed by an unlicensed architect, Arun Sriwong, and an independent engineer, Rachot Kanjanavanit. The requirement for a space large enough to contain engineering teaching facilities, and its positioning in rural Thailand, where any access to advanced building technology remained limited, resulted in the development of a particular type of construction. The use of precast concrete elements onsite made the structure of the FE technically and economically possible.

This presentation focuses both on the daring aspect of the structure: the system of modular concrete domes covering the entire lot of 24,000 square meters; and on a simplified method of onsite concrete casting. The method of using a bamboo mattress and earthen mould to facilitate the casting process was designed not only to suit local conditions, but also to offer complete flexibility in operation at a relatively low cost, unhampered by the restraints of factory-based mass production. Drawing upon construction documents and anecdotes related to the building of the FE, and upon first-hand analysis of the architecture, this research explores how, in the context of 1960s southern Thailand, a seemingly 'modern' system of construction was modified to synchronize with traditional modes of building. The findings will contribute to a better understanding of the discourse on modern Thai architecture.

Translation Booms of Chinese Novel Romance of Three Kingdoms in Thailand: A Sociology Perspective

Ping Li
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Abstract

Throughout the history of Thailand there have been three noteworthy translation booms of the Chinese novel Romance of Three Kingdoms: first in Rama I of Bangkok Dynasty, second in Rama V of Bangkok Dynasty to Rama VII of Bangkok Dynasty, and third in Rama IX of Bangkok Dynasty. The first boom was marked by the birth of Samkok, the first Tai translation; the second boom was known mainly for its increasing number of re-translations; and the third boom was remembered for its focus and excellence in re-translations and translation research products. This paper will apply Piere Bourdieu's Field of Cultural Production theory into translation study, making descriptions and analysis about the correlation between translation products and their social field of production. It is concluded that translation products of Romance of Three Kingdoms are of great importance to promote people to people communication between Thailand and China past, present and future. Moreover, translation products should be regarded as reflections of social changes and are therefore useful in helping scholars to interpret from a sociology perspective a dynamic society in a historical period.

China's Rise and the Transformation of Borders in the Mekong Region

Pinkaew Laungaramsri
Chiang Mai University

Abstract

Grant Evan's book "Where China Meets Southeast Asia" has been one of a small number of contributions to have seriously approached issues on the borderlands between China and mainland Southeast Asia. One of the major contributions of this collection of field studies in the border region is the attempt to understand how border experiences, as well as the process of bordering, has changed since the early 1990s. This was the era when traditional political borders were reshaped by the policies promoting regionalization through the creation of economic corridors. Various Chinese-local interactions are explored in this book, with emphasis placed on the variety of responses to border transformations, through mobility and network building.

My paper is based on recent research and examines the role of China and the new wave of Chinese investments and forms of involvement that are transforming the borderlands of the Mekong Region in the 2010s. In its path to establish a transnational market society that spills across the region, China, in collaboration with Southeast Asian states, has not only put the old frontier into an end, but also turned various borderlands into neoliberalized spaces, where Chinese market forces both sustains a civilizing mission and regulates local lives along the border. New state apparatus such as zoning technologies (in the form of special economic zones) and the state-sponsored "going out policy" has facilitated the influx of Chinese capital and led to a new generation of Chinese migrants into the borderlands. It is this new regime of Chinese-led development and its uncertain trajectory that has come to characterize the contemporary Mekong border, a decade after the discussions of Grant Evans in "Where China Meets Southeast Asia".

Governing by Paper: How Bureaucratic Documents Transform Borders and the Migrant Labor

Pinkaew Luangaramsri
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Abstract

The relationship between border and bureaucracy has not been paid much attention in border studies. While the recent trend in the anthropology of border attempts to redefine border's spatio-temporality with the emphasis on border practices and transformation, state and border-crossing populations remain the key actors in the making of the border regime. This paper attempts to move away from the duality of state-border dwellers' relationship by investigating the politic of mediation operating at the border. It argues that bureaucratic documentation, especially in the form of identification papers, has been a significant bureaucratic tool that not only define and classify border-crossing migrants, but also shape the way the border is (re)made and transformed. While the primary aim of the bureaucratic document is to serve the state's objective of border control that restricts mobility of migrant labor, the production and movement of documentation has often created extra-state industries such as extortion, bribery and brokerage. Throughout the past decades, the chaotic document regime that oscillated back and forth under the different forces of the neoliberal and national security logics has turned the border of Thailand into a confusing textual border where different kinds of paper documents are produced, circulated, manipulated, and utilized. Making sense of the disarray of the document regime and negotiating the fluidity of document traffic are thus the fundamental tools for survival and social mobility among migrant workers at the Thai border.

Mukdahan Land Uses and How Land Should Be Used: Lesson Learned from Mukdahan SEZ Initiative

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Abstract

Mukdahan Special Economic Zone (SEZ) was formally announced in 2014, with the the zone including three Mukdahan districts; Muang, Wanyai, and Don Tan. This area was initially designed to facilitate wide-ranging economic activity, including tourism, logistics, and agricultural and industrial products such as electrical appliances and electronics. It was purported to also function as a key distribution and trading center in the region.

Among many activities, land expropriation is the first task undertaken by investors, seeking long term occupancy and sustainable economic activity. However, the development of this SEZ is not particularly advanced, with only a few investors interested in investing in the zone. Moreover, the government's land management policies have impacted the livelihoods of the local people. Do local people really want the SEZ? Is the land suitable for industrial development? Does national policy correspond with local policy and needs? These questions around the SEZ initiative are inevitably raised. It is noticeable that policies pursued in some districts oppose the intentions of the SEZ. For Mukdahan, it may not be necessary to pursue the SEZ, and instead they they can use their land to create sustainable development in other ways.

This paper presents the current land use patterns in the Mukdahan SEZ, and identifies problems in this land use as a result of these policies. Some options for rethinking how the land in this zone should be used is put forth, with a need to create a more sustainable economic solution for the local population.

Unfree Labor in Payap Circle: The Background of Construction in Colonial Siam after Emancipation

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Abstract

This article aims to study the hidden agenda in the rise of abolition of slavery and corvée labor (phrai) in 1905. In Payap Circle, the northern territory of Siam, the abolition had a purpose of transforming power from the local authorities to the absolute monarchy in Bangkok. The idea was to free corvée labor, the peasants, allowing them to become "free laborers", as stipulated in the new labor law in 1900. However, there was still a gap in the law that they might be recruited in construction and maintenance jobs for public interest, such as government offices, canals and roads, which revealed that the peasants were not as free as they should be. The Siamese state used them as a free, unpaid abundant resource to construct and build physical spaces instead of using the budget from taxes for construction in the local area.

Coup D'état and Spirit Medium Phenomenon in Thailand

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Abstract

In 2014, the military of Thailand overthrew the Government in a Coup d'état. Subsequently, the number of spirit mediums in Thai society has increased; evidence on social media and television, particularly in urban areas. Interestingly, some spirit mediums were possessed by Thai literature characters. Some spirit mediums were possessed by the spirits of Thai kings, Hindu gods/goddesses and local guardians. Yet, the phenomenon is widely criticized in society. This research examines two main issues: firstly, why spirit mediums have been more popular since the coup; secondly, why national heroes are able to possess as spirit mediums.

I argue that the increasing number of spirit mediums in Thailand since the coup is due to the fact that Thais lack confidence in the new government and are feeling insecure in their lives. Therefore, Hindu gods and guardian spirits are worshipped because they have the power to protect people's fates. Simultaneously, many people want to engage spirit mediums to predict winning lottery numbers to get rich.

Regarding the second issue, since the 1940's, ultra-nationalist history was encouraged. The national heroes have become more sacred and widespread; their biographies were published and were built to be monuments. In this way, all heroes transform from myth to reality, and become national ancestors. Every hero has particular characters, for example, King Rama V is represented as a symbol of wealth and modernity. People venerate him because they desire money and advantage. Meanwhile, King Naresuan is represented as a symbol of military and masculinity. People worship him because they desire power.

Finally, the phenomenon of spirit mediumship in Thailand relates significantly to political, social and economic crises and reflects a lack of reliance on the state by the Thai people.

L'wa or Lavue: Their History within the Context of Lanna History

Pipad Krajaejun
Faculty of Liberal Arts, Thammasat University

Akarin Pongpandecha

Abstract

In the mountainous area of northern Thailand there are two main groups of people who speak the Paluangic language: L'wa and Lavue, or Lawa. Both are indigenous people who lived before Tais migrated into this area around the 13th-14th century. Despite the fact that these ethnic groups have lived alongside Tai people, less oral history and archaeological work about L'wa and Lavue have been studied. Since 2013, I have conducted a project to study the history and archaeology of L'wa and Lavue people in Mae Hong Son and Chiang Mai in 6 districts. This paper has two main aims: first, to examine the relationship of history between L'wa and Lavue by the study of oral history, historical documents, and archaeological survey by using an ethnohistorical approach; secondly, to argue the problems of historical space or memory space in Lanna history.

The result of the study show that the story of Khun Luang Wilangkha could be defined as the grand narrative of most L'wa and Lavue, while some villages share the story of legendary chieftains (samang) with others, eg. Ban Bo Luang and Ban Papae; which could be defined as a micro-narrative. In some mountains such as Ban Papae archaeological evidence of their worship as sacred was discovered. This belief might associate with the burial sites on mountains at Omkoi.

Lastly, although they have their own history and evidence, there is not much space for L'wa or Lavue in Lanna historiography because most of the modern histories about them were written from Tai/Lanna's chronicle or annals, and the power of writing history was particularly in the hands of Tai. However, recently, L'wa and Lavue have written their own histories and built monuments to legendary heroes because they want to create their own historical space.

"Development" and Its Discourse in Action: The Roles of the Military, of the Development Agencies and of the Marginalized People Along the Northern Thai State Border

Pipat Manakit
University of Phayao

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to reveal the ideologies underlying "development" by means of fieldwork among the Hmong and Yao ethnic groups residing along the northern border of Thailand, from Amphoe Toeng (เทิง) in Chiang Rai to Amphoe Pong (ปง) in Phayao. Similar to other popular/academic catchwords, e.g. democracy, community, the meaning of "development" has become loaded with ideology. It has been modified by time and space. At the initial phase of what is known as the age of development, it conveyed the introduction and the improvement of road communication, electrification, education, health care, etc. However, in the areas considered to be sensitive to national security, development has become a contestation of different political ideologies. The military, the development agencies and the people themselves have tried to exert their respective perspectives. The anti-communist notion of the military and the pro-democracy vein of development have different regards for each other. The development in the areas in question therefore is a battleground of different, and conflicting ideologies. Its meaning has therefore metamorphosed and multiplied to the point of being an elusive term.

Siam Cement: Modern Construction Materials and the Transformation of Architecture in Siam, 1900 – 1945

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the correlation between the development in the construction and building materials industry, and the transformation of architecture in Thailand during the first half of the 20th century. The domestic production of construction and building materials to reduce imports, modern architectural aesthetics, and the perpetual struggle to be modern and Thai, were some of the key aspects of the process identified here. Using archival, as well as architectural data, this paper suggests an alternative way of reading modern Thai architecture through both materials and modes of construction.

Globalized World, Modern Khruba (Venerable Monk) and the Construction of Network in Thai Buddhist Society

Pisith Nasee
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Abstract

A large group of devotees, which are mainly characterized by their constitution as networks, testify to the charismatic leadership of modern khruba in the north of Thailand. Here, the word "network" implies communication or flows of information and objects, passed and shared through certain linkages. I suggest here that the use of the network concept is important to understand the relationships between people, between information and people, and between people and objects within khruba's religious networks. This paper aims to examine networks of modern khruba which are viewed as a critical part of the ongoing process to construct khruba charisma. I shall focus on the roles of various agents, human and non-human like objects (sacred-magic) and stories of the sacredness of khruba as linkages in the networks. Networks of three modern khruba are investigated through in-depth interviews and participatory observation to represent the heterogeneity and fluidity of the networks in the modern Thai society where formal organization, specific teaching, common ideology and membership are no longer relevant. This characteristic endorses the status of modern khruba as charismatic monks to the world, who can respond to the globalized world and its capitalist desires. This article employs Castells' theory of network society, popular Buddhism, and charisma as well as taking a qualitative approach. Data were collected during 2015-2016 as part of my Ph.D. dissertation at Chiang Mai University, Thailand.

The Images of Malay/Malaya Presented in Thai Nirat Literature (1858-1989)

Pitchayada Mekhirunsiri
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Abstract

Since the end of King Mongkut's period (King Rama 4), from around 1857 – 1868 until 1989, there was much Thai Nirat literature written by Thai writers who travelled to Malaya/Malaysia. In their writings, they make observations of the Malay people and the country.

The contents of this Nirat literature presented both positive and negative images of Malaya/Malaysia, by the Thai during that period. The positive images were generally about development and infrastructures, whereas the negative images were about its people, culture and the (lack) of freedom of the country. It is also seen that the images or the perspectives of Malaya/Malaysia that were presented in the literature were related to both Siam /Thailand's and Malaya/Malaysia's historical, cultural and social contexts during that time.

This paper will discuss some of these images of Malaya and its people as seen by Thai writers, who came from both the elite and common classes. It will elicit information of Malay/Malaysia through a few selected Nirat literature covering the period of study. This will provide an understanding of the Siamese/Thai people's point of view and perceptions about their close neighbor and its people, especially since both of these countries had cordial political and social relations, both currently and in the past. The paper will examine ideas of identity and nationalism as reflected through the images presented in the writings, and provide insights into Siam/Thai perceptions' of "the other", who is in close proximity to the country.

Smart Cities in Thailand and North East India: Reflections on Ambiguous Policy-Making

Piyaboot Sumettikoon
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Abstract

What Thai and Indian governments have in common about formulating urban spaces into smart cities is the intention to increase economic growth and create physical infrastructure for the information age. This paper attempts to philosophize the concepts of smart cities both from Indian and Thai policy perspectives, then compare the concepts to the original idea of smart cities from IBM, and Melbourne. The general concept of a smart city talks about using technology to improve urban space and increase quality of life such as working space, payment, citizenship, entertainment etc. The emergence of a smart city aims to facilitate those who are doing business in the IT sector, especially digital nomads. In addition, the number of co-working space is then directly related to the effectiveness of the term 'smart city', but the number of co-working spaces should not only be used to define an authenticated smart city. However, it is seen that cities which already have a number of co-working spaces are targeted by so-called policy-making in both areas. In that case, there is nothing to be done in actuality since those cities are, by the definition of policy, already smart. On the other hand, places like IBM and Melbourne focus on city development through management and policies. They make the city council recognize the need to integrate information technologies into their urban management strategies, which then leads to economic opportunities. So, it can be said, policies regarding smart cities in Thailand and north-east India are vague. Notably, in the case of Thailand, we can see that policy simply follows the necessity of being a tourist attraction, be it in Chiang Mai or Phuket. These policies distance themselves from the authentic understanding of a smart city.

Thailand in India's Initiatives for ASEAN Connectivity

Piyanat Soikham
University of St Andrews

Abstract

Considering its strategic connectivity with Southeast Asia, India could barely deny the geographical important of Thailand. Despite no land contiguity, India and Thailand have become each other's maritime neighbors who share the Andaman Sea boundary. More importantly, Thailand's location facilitates in India an enhancement of connectivity with ASEAN members. This paper emphasizes the initiatives of India's foreign policy and development projects towards Thailand, especially after the Look East (1992) and Act East (2014) Policies. The megaprojects that generate meaningful impact between the two countries include (a) the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, (b) the ASEAN Car Rally of which Thailand connects the mainland and maritime Southeast Asia with India, (c) the Mekong India Economic Corridor Development and Dawei Port project that links India's industrial corridor to the Greater Mekong Sub region via Thailand (as the transiting point for commercialization/trading), (d) the hub of air and rail transportation that connects Indian and Thai and ASEAN people, and (e) the Port Blair-Phuket Twinning Cities Project that stimulates maritime neighborhood cooperation. Further, India's multilateral platforms with Thailand such as BIMSTEC, MGCs, MAUSAM and Sagar Mala projects have by far strengthened its connectivity with ASEAN. These initiatives are a result of India's reconsidering of its eastern neighbors, growing its economy, and balancing its power with China and other external powers. It concludes that the role played by Thailand in enhancing ASEAN-India connectivity has transformed Thailand into India's strategic hub for land route connections, a rail route passage, air connectivity, and old aged maritime relations.

Life in a Monochrome: Materialization of the Emotions in Thai Society

Piyarat Panlee
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Abstract

Symbols are not new to Thai political movement. The street protests, known as color code street protest, have become the 'normal' scene in Thailand since the year 2006. Not only does the political division into yellow and red have an important significance in the Thai political movement, but 'things' have become part of the political symbolism as well. In the wake of King Bhumbiol Adulaydej's death, while black reigns over the nation as it has begun its official year of mourning, the division turns out to be black and non-black. This interesting cultural phenomenon is widespread thanks to the sharing of images through smart phones and the internet.

By using 'things' as a key material to capture these political-cultural phenomena, this paper will explore how material culture is embodied within the political field, and represents daily forms of political conflicts. The meaning people give to things through their production and consumption is part of the meaning they give to their lives. Moreover, 'things' can convey not only meaning, but can also be related to reminiscence and current mood such as love, pain, humor and anger, something that crosses barriers of language and circumstance.

This paper attempts to explore the materialization of emotion in a hyper-connected world when the 'participation of the politics' not only happened in the 'real world' but also in an unreal world, such as social networking sites. Based on an empirical study, this paper seeks to illustrate on how technologies such as smart phone, application and search engine play big parts of this new form of cyber participation in Thai politics. Moreover, it proposes that by using the combination of materiality and connectivity it can bring an in-depth understanding of what has happened in Thai society.

Narrative, Space, and Monumentality of the Naga Mythscape in the Northern Thai Cultural Landscapes

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Abstract

In northern Thailand, a thousand-year old myth tells of the naga, which came to destroy the town known as Yonok after its ruler became unrighteous. Despite this divine retribution, the people of the town chose to rebuild. Local chronicles and written documents show that people in the region continue to practice and believe in the myth today, which is used as a way to understand the changing landscapes. Naga is seen as the guardian of the land: especially of waterways, rivers, lands, mountains and rain. It is also seen as the creator and protector of rivers, lands, villages and towns. The naga narrative is common in the region and occasionally gives people the agency to act. This paper argues that the naga myth is an agentive source for people to initiate action and performance. The naga myth is also seen as a source of knowledge for people to negotiate personal and communal space within the larger cosmological space, in order to maintain and legitimize their communal customs. The myth is also used as referential knowledge by the people to modify physical landscapes, or what this paper will call "mythscape." The mythscape is a way in which people have learned to understand and interact with the surrounding environment. Mythscape is also a tool by which people act and reimagine community space as communal monumentality, and identity.

Cultural Relationship in Early Periods of Mainland Southeast Asia: Case Study in Thailand

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Abstract

The study of archaeological data which constitute cultures in each period done is by synthesizing, evaluating, and interpreting newly gathered information from archaeological research which was conducted to observe and explain the factors and impacts of cultural changes in the upper areas of Southern and Central Thailand. Cultural dynamics from early periods show there exists evidence of human habitation in Thailand until before the 13th C.E, gathered from archaeological excavations providing concrete evidence indicating culture changes and social transformations. Such changes resulted from several circumstantial factors. For example, influences from external culture and internal adaptations among local people within the study area. The change led further to new form of social development distinct from the culture that had existed previously. Furthermore, it is beneficial for us to look at subsistence patterns from a different period in more connected ways, and understand them more clearly than before.

Thai Pharmacists and Their Role in Consumer Protection for Social Healing

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Puckwipa Suwannaprom
Faculty of Pharmacy, Chiang Mai University

Ratanaporn Awiphan

Abstract

The integration of consumer protection practice as a part of the whole system of community health affairs is not only limited to the matter of legal obligation, and the provision of sufficient explanations in medicinal product labelling - as is commonly understood by the public - but which also includes the direct exposure by pharmacists to the general population (the consumers and direct impact receivers).

The procedure in handling this issue must be related to the social and cultural context of the general public. Therefore, the solving of this issue must be designed together with the community, by means of seeking and developing its potential on the grounds of the integration between the community's own knowledge and the pharmacists' scientific one. Moreover, the management of knowledge must result in true learning and awareness among community members toward the issue, as well as sustainable measures and practices.

The pharmacists who want to become consumer rights advocates need skills and expertise from various disciplines, including pharmaceutical science, social science and humanities. Besides serious practice and skill development to conduct this kind of project, the participating pharmacists have to be adaptable: they should not place the focus on themselves as the single knowledge source, but also absorb the existing community knowledge, and integrate both knowledge sources in order to construct a new set of community norms and practices. By realizing that the significance of their own values and others' are equal, the role of pharmacists in the circle of consumer protection will become elevated and more meaningful, resulting in the true achievement of a successful community health system.

Thai Youth and Professional Soccer in Thailand Since 2009

Pongsakorn Saguansak
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Abstract

The modern sport of Soccer is a way to display local and national identities, and discourse on modernity. Focusing on Thai youth and professional soccer which has been formed and developed since 2009, this paper will do an ethnography of soccer training and its practice in the daily life of Thai youth, showing how this 'popular sport' is reflected on dynamism of class structure, and how this modern sport event forms and transforms Thai male masculinity in Thailand today.

Chiang Mai 4.0 - Citizens 0.4: The Last Stronghold of Lanna

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Abstract

The paper identifies and analyzes the rapid urban development in Chiang Mai City in various aspects over the past 3 decades. Over this period, the number of tourists, students, migrants, houses, shops, factories, restaurants, banks, dormitories, guesthouses, hotels, and condominiums, etc., have increased. It can be considered "development" or progress, but development or progress for whom? Another aspect that will be explored is the impact of these developments on the quality of life of Chiang Mai residents. What are the requirements for a citizen 4.0? How have the people of Chiang Mai become the citizens? Have they passed the test? How can one understand the Lanna identities and how have they been sustained and carried on by the younger generations?

Impact of Agricultural Land Expansion, Household Debt and Greenhouse Gas Emission in Northern Thailand

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Faculty of Engineering, Chiang Mai University

Pongtip Thiengburanathum
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Abstract

The ten provinces of Northern Thailand (Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Mae Hong Sorn, Lampang, Lampun, Prae, Nan, Payao, Kampandpet, and Tak) cover an area of 110,867.5 square kilometers. The two major sources of income in this region are industry (19.6%) and agriculture (19.3%). The shift from subsistence cultivation to cash crops in this region has caused the converted forest area to become agricultural land. Based on geographical information from the year 2002 to 2007, 4,347.86 square kilometers of forest land had been converted into maize plantation area. This has resulted in 60.3 million tons of CO2e of greenhouse gas emission from land use changes and deforestation. This can be considered significant as total greenhouse gas emissions in Thailand in 2010 was 345.4 million tons of CO2e, meaning it constituted 17.47% of national greenhouse gas emissions. However, the farmers in the region have not performed better economically, and the survey has shown that maize farmers are in debt. The average household debt is 100,000 Thai Baht per year. However, from asocial perspective shifting cultivation from rice for the family to cash crops, especially maize, had enabled a new mechanism for the farmers in the highlands to gain access to capital. The farmers gained additional purchasing power and hence shifted their society from isolate communities with limited access, to well connected societies that have better road access as well as better communication. The cost of household debt may be higher for each family, but it has had a much higher environmental cost nationally and globally due to the greenhouse gas emissions from land use change and deforestation.

The Influences of Thai Divination on Present Cambodian Fortune-Telling Practice

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Abstract

During the Khmer Rouge period, the knowledge and practices of Khmer divination and astrology were hugely affected. Today, Khmer divination and astrology is being revitalized with diverse forms becoming embedded in people's everyday lives in both rural and urban areas, including Phnom Penh. With the re-emergence of numerological fortune-telling, and as result of the loss of local manuscripts and experienced practitioners during the war, Khmer practitioners are now turning to Thai numerological books, such as "Patithin Neung Roi Pee" (100-year calendar), "Tamra Phrommachati" and "Tamra Plu Luang" as resources on divinatory practice. In this paper, I aim to answer the following questions: "To what extent does Thai divination and astrology influence Cambodian numerology techniques?" and "How do Cambodian fortune-tellers in present day Cambodia interpret numerological techniques that derive from their Thai counterparts?"

Structural Vector Autoregressive Analysis of Monetary Policy in Thailand

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Abstract

This paper highlights the importance of monetary policy transmission mechanism in Thailand since the 1997 financial crisis and then undertakes an empirical investigation of Thailand monetary policy. This study makes effort to investigate two aspects of monetary transmission mechanism, namely the channels of monetary policy and the effects of monetary policy shocks on key macroeconomic variables. To address these issues, the paper specifies structural vector autoregressive (SVAR) models and estimates them using quarterly data from 1997q3 to 2014q4. The identifying restriction used in this paper is both recursive and non-recursive structure with some modification. The overall result suggests that the SVAR with non-recursive structure seems to more appropriately identify a monetary policy shock than those with recursive structure, although both suffer from some empirical puzzles. The main finding shows that interest rate and monetary aggregate have played the dominant channels of monetary transmission mechanism in Thailand, while an exchange rate channel is decreasingly significant. In addition, Thailand economy is somewhat exposed to the foreign sector especially the U.S. monetary policy. The results also reveal the linkage and influence of U.S monetary policy on Thailand monetary policy. The empirical findings are then used to provide Bank of Thailand (BOT) with insight into identifying the important monetary policy transmission channels. It would help the BOT to implement an effective monetary policy for achieving price stability through the appropriate monetary channels.

Reading Through the Ahom Manuscripts to the Making of a Digitized Ahom Dictionary. an Attempt to Restore the Rich Socio Cultural Heritage of the Ahoms.

Poppy Gogoi
Chulalongkorn University

Abstract

For more than 600 years the Tai Ahoms were the longest ruling community in Assam, north east India. The Ahoms migrated to Assam crossing the Patkai hills from the kingdom Mueng Mau Lung, presently half in China and half in Myanmar. The Ahom language is no longer in use but the Ahoms did leave behind a huge resource of information on their language and culture in the form of manuscripts.

I, being a member of the Ahom community, had the privilege to work on an Ahom manuscript preservation project funded by the British Library, archiving and digitizing the manuscripts under the guidance of Dr. Stephen Morey. In this paper, I aim to present both the wide range of topics these manuscripts deal with and the current work that I am involved in - i.e., translation of the manuscripts, and the creation of an online/offline Ahom dictionary. Each word in this dictionary will link to manuscript images so people can look up the originals. This work will be further continued, with the creation of a user friendly mobile dictionary application.

This is a big project and guidance, support and help is appreciated and needed. This paper further endeavors to present our ideas on how understanding of the language, along with the help of the dictionary, can be assistance to the Ahom community, which struggling hard in the revival of its language and culture.

Crafting Identity Through Difference: The Struggle for Recognition of Northeast Indian and Thai Youths Through Pop Culture

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Abstract

[None supplied]

Land Exclusion and Dispossession from SEZ Policies in the Greater Mekong Subregion: Comparative Studies between Thailand and Neighboring Countries

Pornpana Kuaycharoen
Land Watch Thai

Phurinat Chotiwan
Kamphaeng Phet Rajabhat University

Suebsakun Kitnukorn

Tiwat Dumkaew

Abstract

This paper provides a state of knowledge review on processes of exclusion and dispossession arising from Special Economic Zone (SEZ) policies in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS). It draws on case studies in China, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar in order to compare the processes of land exclusion and land dispossession in those countries with the case of Thailand under the context of a neo-liberal economic development strategy in which these countries have employed SEZs to foster trade and the free flow of capital. The main research questions are, (1) how villagers were excluded and dispossessed from land by the state and private investors in each country; (2) how such exclusion and dispossession is shaped by economic and political conditions. The research uses secondary literature to review the following: (1) literature and data regarding land exclusion and dispossession from SEZ policy and development; (2) geographical contexts of land use and the change of land rights regimes; (3) relevant actors including national institutions such as state, investors and civil society and international institutions such as international financing institutions, international assistance organizations and so on.

Contesting Legitimacy on Land Access and Double Movement in SEZs: Case Study in Tak, Chiang Rai and Trad Province.

Pornpana Kuaycharoen
Land Watch Thai

Phurinat Chotiwan
Kamphaeng Phet Rajabhat University

Tiwat Dumkaew

Abstract

The exclusion of smallholders from access to land under Thailand's new Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Policy by dispossession of villagers in favor of capitalists/investors appears to be a clear case of accumulation by dispossession. Such a process is a part of establishing SEZ Projects in Thailand, and it has involved various actors related to this issue such as policy makers, NGOs, small-scale farmers, landless villagers etc. In this paper, the exclusion process in land access is considered as exclusion's double edge in the complex power relations between those actors. This paper aims to study (1) the change of the land right regime since the emerging of borderland SEZs development policy in 1997 to present (2) the strategies on land dispossession and exclusion by State and capital in SEZ projects (3) the impact from land acquisition of the State and (4) the interaction among those interest groups concerned with SEZ projects. The research studies include three areas in Tak, Chiang Rai and Trad provinces and the data are collected from both documents (government policies, laws and official announcements) and field work by in-depth interviews.

The Allusion of Thai Literatures and Tales in Contemporary Nirat: Continuity and Creation

Porntep Tochayangkoon

Abstract

An allusion to Thai literatures and tales has continuously related to the process of Thai literatures creation in particular the one called “Nirat”. The poets has employed the allusion as one of literary techniques playing significant role to convey message, create emotion, expand content as well as link the co-experience of authors and the readers’ which does not only show the profundity of the written works but also reflects the authors and the readers’ wisdom and the popularity of alluded literatures and tales. Classical Nirats often allude to characters’ far-away depicted in another literatures or tales for the purpose of linking the poet’s longing for love and to emphasize that their sorrow is much more than those characters’. In this study, 7 selected contemporary Nirats, namely “Lam Nam Phu Kra Dung and Bangkok Keaw Kam Suan” by Angkarn Kanlayanapong, “Mai Het Ruam Samai” by Paiboon Wongtes, “Ma Kan Klouy” and “Klon Klom Lok” by Paiwarin Khao-ngam, “Khlong Nirat Mae Moh” by Kongpob Ruensiri and “Haujai Hong Thee Ha” by Angkarn Chanthathip were studied.

The study reveals that the contemporary Nirats refer to characters, events, scenes and main context as well as composing style and comparison of other stories. The study also reveals a notable remark that the objective of the allusion to Thai literatures and tales employed in contemporary Nirats is more distinct and various than classical Nirats; the poets refers to texts and another events which do not relate to characters’ far-away to expand Narats’ content as well as share experience and emotion playing prominent role in conveying the poets’ attitude and criticism of society. It can be said that contemporary Nirats inherit the allusion technique employed in classical Nirats but they adapt it to be appropriate to contemporary poetry's objective and mission.

Multifarious Functions of the Influence of the Others: Reversed Gender Roles in Suratnari

Porranee Singpliam
Waseda University

Abstract

During the interwar years in the twentieth century Thais identity was very much affected by both internal and external political cataclysms. Ideologies and values that are transculturated into the society alter the way the Thais perceive themselves and the Others. This ongoing research paper sets out to examine one particular novel from the seventies written by M.L. Boonlua Debyasuvarn titled "Suratnari" (1972). Because of the crucial temporality of the time, "[h]istory books do not tell us what people's emotions were - that is the work of novels" (Kepner, 2013, p. xix). "Suratnari" depicts the reversal of gender roles in an imagined country, Surat, especially for women, who no longer have "designated agency" (McClintock, 1997, p. 98), but rather as hybrid and transcultural subjects who embody the traditional and modern values. Suratnari, I argue, reverberates the social reality of the seventies and it is pivotal because we can see the multiplicity of functions of colonial thoughts that are being manipulated in this novel. The analysis of the novel then resonates and points out the "semi-colonial, crypto colonial or in part auto-colonial" (Thongchai, 2014, p. xvi) nature of Siam/Thailand. Suratnari discloses the functions of colonial thoughts and values in Surat where the inexorable presence and imagined Others are always brought into consideration. Altogether, Suratnari as a utopian novel manifests woman as the spectacle of the nation (McClintock, 1997) where they both: (1) sacrifice for "the larger social struggle" (Sinnott, 2016, p. 15) and (2) embody "nationalism as fetish spectacle" McClintock, 1997, p. 101). The analysis of Suratnari echoes the empowerment of women's' roles and the reversed gender normativity and shows that women are a militant and impassioned agency - an antithesis to the belligerent political structure at the time - who work towards the betterment of the nation.

A Comparative Study of the Design, Patterns and Dying of the Textiles of the Tai Groups of North East India with Other SE Asian Tai Groups

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Chandra Kanta Phukan
Ban-Ok-Pup-Lik-Mioung-TaiNamrup, Dibrugarh

Abstract

The origin of the Tais (meaning free) has been conjectured to be in the Kiulung mountains, north of Setchuan and south of Shensi, in China proper. Over the last two millennia, due to various reasons, the Tai people migrated southwards, distributed in the entirety of SE Asia with different ethnic identities but with a common cultural root. During the last eight hundred years there was western migration of some Tai people resulting six Tai groups in North East India. Like language and food habits, the type of textiles woven and used by a particular community residing in a certain geographical location is a good indicator of the civilization, culture and sense of aesthetic of the people. Using the textile design, patterns of motifs, dying and weaving methods as a source of ethno-cultural identity, a comparative study of the textiles of these western Tais with those of SE Asian Tais are described. On analysis it was observed that there is a remarkable similarity in all aspects of design, patterns of motifs, as well as dying and weaving technology and end use of the textiles among the Tais of NE India with those of their SE Asian cousins. This corroborates the hypothesis that there is cultural continuation, with minor local variation, among the western and SE Asian Tai groups; not only in terms of language, food habits, rural housing, use of bamboo, gender equality and anthropological features, but also in their ethnic textiles with innate beauty, skills and distinctive sense of aesthetic. There is good scope for further studies for understanding this mosaic of cultural cohesion among the Tais distributed in the entirety of SE Asia.

Deciphering State Violence in Thailand (The 1950s to the Present): Legitimization and Discursive Practices

Prajak Kongkirati

Abstract

Essentially state is defined as the organization that successfully controls the legitimate use of coercive force. The legitimization of state violence is thus a critical topic to understand the operation of the state. Nevertheless, this topic has been understudied by scholars in Thai studies. This paper aims to investigate the way the Thai state makes an attempt to justify its use of force against its own citizen throughout modern history from the Field Marshall Sarit Thanarat era to the present. The better understanding of the inner logic, process, practice as well as limits of the legitimization of state violence is significant to an attempt to end pattern of state violence in Thailand. The discourse of official nationalism- nation, religion, and king- seems to be repeatedly employed in time of crisis to silence the dissenting voice and legitimize the ensuing use of force by the state in violently suppressing the dissident. Moreover, a large number of Thai people subscribed to the official discourse, paving the way for the violent acts of state and facilitate and cultivate the culture of impunity. For many Thais, it seems to be legitimate or even a duty for the state to deploy violence to protect their beloved and worshiped entities. The noble acts of preventing the disintegration of "fatherland" in Thai body politics do not tolerate non-compliance. During the "period of transition," the reflection on the use of force by Thai state authorities and its legitimation is timely.

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Demographic Transition in Thailand

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Abstract

This paper reviews demographic changes in Thailand beginning from the early Ratanakosin Era to the present. It discusses four stages of demographic transition in Thailand. It elucidates that the first stage of population change can be traced back to the distant past history of Siam when a natural population growth rate was owning to a high birth rate and a fluctuating death rate. The second stage was characterized by the first demographic transition when mortality was declining for the first time, which is approximated in the year 1910 or the year of first census. The third stage was observed after the period of the widest gap between birth and death rates during 1960s and 1970s, when fertility among Thai people started declining since the1980s. Then, the fourth stage which is recent and current started when both birth and death rates dropped to a low level, causing the natural population growth rate to became low again. This stage resulted in an ageing society as of the 2000s. The analysis in this paper provides background information to help us see the scenario of population growth in Thailand in the future, which should be the basis of analysis.

Thai Cadets in European Military Academies in the Early Twentieth Century-Interwar Period: The Preliminary Results of Their Experiences and Models for Thai Military Organization

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Abstract

As a result of the humiliation of the Franco-Siamese crisis in 1893, the government of Siam (renamed Thailand in 1939) increasingly sent many of their young cadets on missions to certain countries in Europe, namely England, France, Prussia, and so forth, to acquire knowledge of Western military science and organization for modernization and the survival of Siam as an independent state. These cadets included princes, the sons of Rama V, and ordinary people who earned scholarships from his royal highness to study abroad. These cadets' influence and impact on Thai politics were widely explored and deliberated by many academic works and studies. However, their experiences during their studies in Europe and congruence to models for Thai military organization is understudied and there is still room to explore. This study suggests that experience in Europe was one of the significant factors affecting these cadets' political decisions later on, which consequently led to the reformation of Thai military organization. In doing so, this study focuses on Thai cadets who graduated from France and Prussia as these were the only European countries allowing Thai cadets to study at the officer level. The findings suggest that Prussian and French models drastically influenced the plans for national army reformation and strategic practices, particularly after the 1932 Revolution. Thus, exploring experiences in Europe will provide better understandings of Thai military during the early stages of its formation and subsequently on Thai politics.

An Empirical Study into the Socio-Economic and Human Development Status Among the Tai-Ahoms, Tai-Khamyangs, Tai-Phakes and Tai-Turungs in Assam, India

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Abstract

The Tai is a generic term used to denote a branch of the Mongoloid population of Asia, also known by different appellation in different countries of South East Asia, viz., Shan in Myanmar, Thai in Thailand, Tay-Thai in Vietnam, Tai-Ahoms, Tai-Khampti, Tai-Turung, Tai-Phake, Tai-Khamyang and Tai-Iton in India, etc. The Tai-Ahoms of Assam is one of the sub-branches of the greater Tai race. They ruled Assam for about six hundred years, in the state of Assam, from 1228 AD to 1826 AD until losing power to British administration by the Yandaboo treaty between the king of Burma and East India Company (where interestingly, neither Ahom king nor any of his delegates took part). Thus, the Tai-Ahoms had a glorious past in the history of the Assam, yet lost its power suddenly and under a mysterious circumstance. Further, this is the community that had stopped the valiant Mughals from entering South East Asia. Five other Tai communities, viz., Tai-Khampti, Tai-Turung, Tai-Phake, Tai-Khamyang and Tai-Iton are also found in Assam with very few numbers. This paper is an attempt at studying the socio-economic and human development status among the four Tai sub-branches, viz., the Tai-Ahoms, Tai-Phake, Tai-Khamyang and Tai-Turung, out of the six sub-branches found in the state of Assam, India. The backdrop of the study is that although the Tai-Ahoms ruled the state continuously for about 600 years, today their socio-economic and human development status is not at all satisfactory. Similar is the fate for the other sub-branches of the Tai people of the state. This paper is further an attempt at locating the Tai people of Assam to the rest of the Tai people within South East Asia.

Mobility Turn and Its Dialogue with Migration Studies

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Abstract

Mobility has been integral to human daily lives in the twenty-first century. The world is on the move. People, objects, capitals and information movements create new temporal and spatial contexts for other social relations. Both large-scale and local mobilities bring about more complex and dynamic transformations. A new approach to the study of mobilities has been emerging across social sciences. This paper offers a theoretical overview of what is called "mobility turn" (Hannam et al., 2006; Sheller and Urry, 2006) and the way it talks to migration studies. The mobility research addresses the attention to the combined movement of people, objects and information in all of their complex relational dynamics (Sheller, 2011). The system of mobility then involves the complicated relations between mobility, immobility, mooring and dwelling. This article investigates its dialogues with sedentarist assumptions underlying contemporary social sciences and its critiques of overemphasis on flows.

Mobility turn synthesizes social and spatial theories, emphasizing both practices of movement and meaning and politics associated to (im)mobilities. The emerging mobility research brings together social, spatial and cultural concerns across academic disciplines, infusing each with a relational ontology of the co-constitution of subjects, spaces and meanings. It further encompasses research on the spatial mobility of humans and non-humans, the flow of images and information and the physical facilities that can enable or impede transnational travel and communication. Finally, this paper explores how the new mobility paradigm has recently reshaped migration studies towards wider frameworks, in terms of new research issues, theoretical concepts and innovative methodologies.

Rahu Symbol in Thai Art: Transmission and Application of Rahu Belief in Contemporary Thai Society

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Abstract

The paper aims to study Thai beliefs regarding the symbol of the God Rahu in Thai art, and to analyze the transmission and application of Rahu symbolism in contemporary Thai society.

In the past, Thai beliefs regarding Rahu derived from Hindu and Buddhist mythology. In traditional Thai art, the Rahu symbol is portrayed with only his face swallowing the sun or the moon, and is often seen at the upper part of the entrance gate to the chapel (uposot), or the pagoda as a protective function.

Interestingly, It is observed that there is an application of Rahu symbolism in contemporary Thai society. It is found that the sculpture of Rahu's body, rather than his face, has become more popular. The size of Rahu's body tends to be rather large with black skin and his face swallowing the sun or the moon. In the present day, the Rahu symbol has been newly created in several other forms such as posters, magic cloths and amulets.

Such newly created art forms of Rahu are due to the new interpretation and new meaning of the Rahu symbol. Firstly, Rahu has been interpreted as the symbol of a God, to ward off bad luck. Secondly, Rahu is interpreted as the symbol of fortune. Therefore, if one worships Rahu, he will gain wealth and fortune. Lastly, Rahu is also interpreted as the symbol of transition, so when worshipping Rahu, one will get through a transitional period with safety and security. All of these new meanings of the Rahu symbol provide more mental and spiritual security for people who worship Rahu.

The newly given meanings of Rahu symbolism, and the various other art forms, provide evidence for the enduring symbolic value of the God Rahu in present day Thailand.

Civilizing Across Borders: Hmong Protestant Evangelization in Upper Mainland Southeast Asia

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Abstract

Christian evangelism has been initiated and operated by Western missionaries to highland ethnic minorities in Upper Mainland Southeast Asia since the colonial period. Ethnic people gradually became Christians and evangelized their own ethnic members. The Hmong, an ethnic group that is scattered in this region, and other Western countries after Laos became a Communist country in 1975, is a good example. Since the early 1990s, Hmong Protestant pastors in both Thailand and the United States of America played increasingly essential roles in converting their own ethnic members in Laos, Vietnam and China, despite the government of those Communist countries strictly controlling foreign missionaries' evangelization. Based on my ethnographic fieldwork across the borders of Thailand to Laos, Vietnam and China, during the past few years, I argue that the Protestant evangelization among the Hmong ethnic group in Upper Mainland Southeast Asia signifies the civilization that Hmong Protestant pastors from Thailand and the United States of America brought to their own ethnic members who live in these less developed countries. Furthermore, although governments of those Communist countries strictly control the evangelism of foreign missionaries, Hmong Protestant pastors in Thailand and the United States of America have found their own mechanisms to evangelize Hmong people in those countries.

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The Network of Indigenous Peoples and Rights Movements in Thailand

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Abstract

This article argues that while relevant state agencies do not recognize the existence of Indigenous peoples (IPs) in Thailand, at the grassroots level IPs have nevertheless established their own network and organized various IP related activities during the past decade. As a result of these activities IPs in Thailand have become increasingly aware of and motivated to make claims for their basic rights as IPs. The "Network of Indigenous Peoples in Thailand" (NIPT) was first established in 2007. As of 2007, moreover, IPs in Thailand have come together each year in August to celebrate the World's Indigenous Peoples Day. A series of IP related meetings, seminars, workshops and cultural celebrations have also take place locally and nationally since that time. In this paper I employ Deleuze's concept of assemblage to analyze the IP movement in Thailand. I argue that as a result of their roughly decade long period of participation in the IP network, members of the network have become increasingly aware of and motivated to make claims for their basic rights as IPs. However, different members have adopted different avenues in staking claims for their rights as IPs. Finally, in spite of these developments within the movement, the relevant state agencies in Thailand neither acknowledge the existence of IPs in Thailand nor afford them the rights that they are claiming as IPs. This is spite of the fact that the state has ratified several international conventions and declarations pertaining to IPs in and beyond Thailand.

The Silver Guardian Demon of the Jungle: Materiality and Modern Buddhism in the Suppression of the Shan Rebellion in Thailand, 1900s-1920s

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Abstract

A few years after the Shan rebellion was suppressed by the Siamese army in 1902, the youthful crown prince Vajiravudh made an official visit to the Northern Administration, where the rebellion had taken place. The trip took three months, and required a lot of strength from the prince, who until then had little experience in governing. The prince had to spend multiple nights in the thick jungle area where the Rebellion had taken place and during one of these nights he had a nightmare. The prince dreamt of many different threats to his life, but that he was protected by Thao Hirunphanasun (lit. The Silver Guardian Demon of the Jungle). Soon afterwards he ordered the statue of the guardian demon to be made and this deity has since been placed in the Phayathai Palace, Bangkok. This was an ambiguous episode in the history of Thai Buddhism. The crown prince, who had spent nine years of his education in Britain and travelled through Europe, acted somewhat contradictory to the modern form of Buddhism that he would be championing as the next King of Thailand.

What were the factors that made the crown prince "invent" a deity which had no Buddhist origin? This paper shows that there is a need to reconsider the relationships between Buddhism and the power of the absolute monarchy in the making of the modern Thailand.

Rainfall Record Archive: Hydrographical Knowledge from the Reign of King Rama IV – V

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Abstract

Rainfall records in Thailand were created by the Supreme Patriarch Krom Pra Pavares Variyalongkong, who was the abbot of Wat Bowornnivet Viharn and the 8th Supreme Patriarch of Thailand between 1809 – 1892. He was one of the students of King Rama IV at the time of his Majesty's ordination, and as a result, he enlarged his vision to increase the scientific rigour of the records above the previous era. His rainfall record archive: Hydrographical knowledge from the reign of King Rama IV – V recorded the level of rainfall in each month for 45 years from 1855 to 1890. This period is recognized as Thailand's largest rainfall data and is considered the standard due to it's use of the metric system. Additionally, "unusually hard rainfall" and other natural phenomena were also recorded. For example, red muddy water, eclipses and epidemic diseases were accounted for. Therefore, this archive is considered a significant historical record containing changes in the weather and Thai society during the reign of King Rama IV – V.

The Origin Myth of Nora: A Comparative Study of Southern Thailand and Malaysian Versions

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Abstract

The paper aims to study the various versions of the origin myth of Nora (both Nora performance and ritual) which are found throughout the southern provinces of Thailand, and also in Malaysia. A folkloristic approach will be used in the comparative analysis of the selected thirteen versions of the Nora myth, e.g., motifs, types of tales, theory of tale transmission.

Preliminary study found that versions of the origin myth of Nora can be categorized into 4 types of tales. First, the Nang Nuan Samlee types of tale concerns her life story and her son who is an origin of Nora ; second, Srimala types of tale show that Srimala is an origin of Nora; third, Thepsinghorn types of tale indicate that a man named Thepsinghorn is an origin of Nora; and fourth, Thepsinghorn-Srimala tale type, in this tale type, Thepsinghorn and Srimala are a husband and wife who are an origin of Nora. All the four tale types are found in southern Thailand, while only the Srimala tale type is found in Malaysia. Regarding the motif analysis, the distinctive motifs often found in the Nora myth are: the motif of devada as a helper, the motif of the protagonist floating on a raft, the motif of hiding oneself, and the motif of receiving a reward which is related to becoming a Nora. As for the transmission of the stories, it is primarily hypothesized that the origin myth of Nora originated around the Songkhla Lake and then was disseminated to other areas. When the story was transmitted to other areas, the details were adjusted to fit the local environment, while the substance and the distinctive motifs were maintained.

Civilian Affairs Projects as the Thai Military's Political Endeavour

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Abstract

Experts of Thailand have recognized that Thailand's two latest coup d'états were the orchestrated works of the anti-democratic alliance of conservative elites against the rise of electoral politics. The monarchy is the bedrock of the alliance while the military is the least popular with the weakest political legitimacy, especially after the violent crackdown of the popular uprising in May 1992. Its power lies in its use of force only. A coup d'état is the main interference of the military in politics. A call for the military to withdraw from politics, thus, means to restore an elected government. Such a view implies that the Thai military has had no significant role in the socio-political sphere. This may explain why most studies of the Thai military tend to focus on factionalism within the armed forces, conflict among military cliques and classes and conflict between elected governments and military leaders. As a result, the military's engagement in socio-political arena or civilian affairs gains little attention.

This paper argues that the Thai military has been involved in a wide range of civilian affairs projects since the counter-insurgency period. Even after the demise of communism, this role has expanded further to cover the areas of natural resource management, rural development, combating drug trafficking, mass mobilization, and promoting democracy and the subsistence economy. Many of these activities have been under the supervision of the notorious Internal Security Operation Command (ISOC). Its nationwide apparatus has become a measure to undermine electoral politics. The primary objective of this paper is to examine the military's claims of legitimacy to be involved in civilian projects. This will shed light on the military's continuing efforts to maintain its power and influence in Thai society in the post-Cold War period.

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Paddy Raft: Resilience Practice of Thai's Farmer to Flood and Drought

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Chantra Tongcumpou

Suthirat Kittipongvises

Tansiphorn Janhom

Abstract

Rice production in Thailand represents a significant portion of the Thai economy and labor force. Traditional knowledge of Thai farmers has been constructed and embodied from the practice of predecessors for generations. The current situation of climate change and natural disasters in Thailand, including flood and drought, has obviously affected agricultural production. Therefore, this research aims to study local knowledge and Thai agricultural practices that will be beneficial in climate change adaptation and disaster resilience. This research is an empirical study using primary data from in-depth interview, field surveys, participatory observation and practice, and empirical evidence.

The paddy raft was created due to extreme flooding in Thailand 2011; it was innovated by a farmer who managed to achieve normal rice cultivation while facing flooding and drought, showing the value of local knowledge. The paddy raft can be grown throughout the year without the need to rest soil or plow stubble, and typically takes a shorter period than typical rice cultivation. It can be grown in any water level; tolerating either flooding or drought; wherever its root can get natural nutrients from the river. This practice could be a means of survival when crisis occurs because the river is common property and inappropriate for privately benefit.

Developing the knowledge of the paddy raft can be discussed as a practice to achieve local resilience, following the definition of 'resilience' by IPCC, 2007 - the ability of social or ecological systems to absorb disturbances, while retaining the same basic structure and ways of functioning, featuring the capacity for self-organization and the capacity to adapt to stresses and changes. The paddy raft is a new way to achieve rice cultivation when facing unpredictable situations, and is an example of resilience in the agricultural sector when faced with the climate change and disaster.

Comparative Study of Ahom and Other Tai Culture of SE Asia and South China

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Abstract

Ahoms are a Tai ethnic group living in the Assam region of India. Ahom, a group of Tai Mao of old Tai Kingdom Mung Mao Lung, migrated the upper Brahmaputra valley during first half of 13th century and settled there and ruled the Brahmaputra valley up to 1828 A.D. Ahoms had brought Tai culture prevalent in old Mung Mao and upper Irrawaddy, Nu Jiang river valley around 10th to 13th century. It is seen that Ahoms Tai culture elements are almost similar to the pre-Buddhist Tai culture of SE Asia and South China, which they carried along with their migration. For example, burial grounds of deceased are seen among Ahom and other Non-Buddhist Tais of South China. Ahoms creation myth seems to be older and similar to that of Donglan and Central China and related to that of Han Chinese. Ancestor worship is common among Ahom and Non-Buddhist Tais of South China. Again Ahoms culture – like belief of heaven 'Mung Phi-Thaen and lord of heaven Lengdon – are similar to that of Tais of Mung Mao, Sipsongpanna and Shan states, though Tai Mao and Tai Lu are Buddhist. Pha Tuo Sing Frong Hum – first ancestor god of Ahom is like the Buluotuo of Zhuang which is regarded as first ancestors of Zhuang People. Likewise, Ahom language shows similarities to language of Zhuang, Thai, Shan, Tai Mao, Tai Lu etc. Many folk tales of Ahom are similar to that of Shan, Lao, Thai, Tai Lu, Zhuang etc. The comparative study among Ahom and Tais of SE Asia and South China would certainly unfurl many old pre-Buddhist Tai culture as a whole and this paper deals with such common aspects among Tais.

The Space of Minorities and the Racialized Boundary: The Study of a Burmese Migrant Labor Society in Mahachai, Thailand

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Abstract

Thailand is a key destination for immigrants from Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos. These immigrants have mainly come to Thailand to find good places to work so as to provide themselves and their families with a better life. However, moving to a new country does not always provide all of the opportunities immigrants expect. There is a boundary between the immigrants and local people that impacts their work and their social lives. We can usefully consider that boundaries between the immigrants and local people are racialized boundaries. This type of boundary between immigrant workers and local people reflects feelings of fear, xenophobia and different forms of racism. Many local people think that immigrant workers are dangerous; and that they create many problems for society. Accordingly, local people create social boundaries between themselves and immigrants.

The notion of racism and racialized boundaries not only leads to conflicts between identities, but also affects understandings regarding landscapes in society. Places and landscapes can be changed by the subjects who inhabit those spaces. In the case of immigrant workers, they have been transforming the landscape in order to create their own places, and this process is affected by discrimination from local people. This research attempts to find out whether the immigrants feel more comfortable within the landscapes that they are transforming. Can this landscape creating process help them feel more of a sense of belonging to the places they are staying? Does the changing of the landscape minimize the problem of racism? If it does not, what are the results of this change? The study uses ethnography as a method. Burmese laborers in Mahachai, the largest Burmese community in Thailand, are interviewed and observed for the study.

Community Relations of the Oxford Buddha Vihāra, England

Pyi Phyo Kyaw
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Abstract

Buddhist temples in the West play a crucial role in preserving Buddhism and Buddhist culture among immigrant communities. This is because they provide social spaces and act as learning centers for these communities. Moreover, temples in the West normally receive support from and cater for specific ethnic communities. For example, Burmese temple have support from and cater to the Burmese Buddhist community; while Thai temples support the local Thai community. Oxford Buddha Vihāra (OBV) has been successful in capturing the attention of diverse immigrant communities as well as that of Western Buddhist converts. OBV was founded in 2004 by Dr. Ven. Khammai Dhammāsami, who is an ethnic Shan monk from Shan State, Burma. Although OBV was founded by a Shan monk, it has an extensive reach, drawing support from immigrant communities of different ethnic groups in the United Kingdom, such as Shan, Burmese, Thai, and Sri Lankan. In this paper, I explore different factors that have contributed to its transnational outreach; and to what extent, if any, there are cultural, social and personal tensions among these diverse communities, and how these tensions are negotiated.

A Comparison on Animal Proverbs between Chinese and the Thai Language

Qianxia Zhang
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Abstract

The study of women's social status has been an important topic among gender studies around the world. Both China and Thailand belong to Asian countries and for thousands of years, cultures between these two countries have interacted with and infiltrated each other, so China and Thailand have much in common in the aspects of customs, living habits, etc. The development of women's status in these two counties have similarities as well as their own characteristics. This paper aims to analyze the characteristics and differences of women's status between these two countries through the analysis of the two languages and analyses the reasons for these differences.

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Vernacular Development and Thai Social Relations Under the Socialist Market Economy in Northwest Vietnam

Quan Ha Viet
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Abstract

Despite numerous state poverty reduction and development policies, ethnic minority communities in Vietnam are still known as the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in the country. They face difficulties in both accessing basic services such as education and healthcare, and in benefitting from the socio-economic transformation under the market economy. In this paper, based on long-term ethnographic research in the northwest of Vietnam, I illustrate an alternative to the official development model for Vietnam that ethnic minority Thai people use to adaptively, locally and traditionally implement state policy to cope with the challenges that occur due to the current market oriented economy of Vietnam. Calling this a 'vernacular development model', I find that even though the official development policy under the current market-socialist model of Vietnam has failed to support the people it is meant to support, the northwest Thai people have been able to establish and exercise their unofficial agency hand in hand with the Vietnamese state system, especially in the implementation process of state development policy.

This paper finds that the northwest Thai vernacular development model is not only local, customary, fluid and adaptive. It is also how northwest Thai enterprise is made possible, trust is built between state and people, favors are rewarded among their community, and state development resources redistributed to achieve a measure of local security. Thus I argue that, although the development model of Vietnam under the socialist market economy is strongly promoted by the Vietnamese state as a formal and uniform ideology, it is being deflected and implemented informally as vernacular development models by local actors and forces.

Tea, Ritual Consumption and Social Relationships of De'ang People in Southwest China

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Abstract

Nicholas Tapp's reflections on fieldwork among the Hmong/Miao highlight the importance of understanding social relationships of ethnic peoples in their border livelihood between China and Southeast Asia. Influenced by Tapp's approach, on the basis of the author's fieldwork among the De'ang people, a group of Mon-Khmer speakers mainly scattering on the border areas between China and Myanmar, this paper explored how the De'ang constructed their social relationships with themselves and with other ethnic people in their border livelihood by analyzing their consumption of tea in their ritual activities, and argues that the De'ang's ritual consumption of tea actually reflects a local response to resource usages in the border areas. This can help to think and rethink the complexity of sociality of resource in the border livelihood.

Syndromes and Cinema: Doctors and Dis-Ease in the Filmmaking of Apichatpong Weerasethakul

Rachel Harrison
School of Oriental and African Studies

Leon Redler

Abstract

Arguably Thailand's most internationally recognized filmmaker, Apichatpong Weerasethakul has won numerous accolades and awards, among them the Palme d'Or at Cannes in 2010 for his full-length feature Uncle Boonmee Recalls His Past Lives. The narrative is centered on Boonmee, an elderly man dying of kidney disease. But Uncle Boonmee is not the only one of Apichatpong's works to deal with the question of health, hospitals and the power dynamics of doctor/patient relationships. Himself the son of doctor parents in the Northeastern Thai province of Khon Kaen, Apichatpong's work frequently includes scenes of doctor/patient encounters, the discussion of disease, the manifestations of disease, and the stories people tell in relation to their health and well being. Inspired by his parents' biography, Apichatpong's Syndromes and a Century (2006) is set in two contrasting hospital locations, the first in the rural Northeast. Similarly, his most recent film – Cemetery of Splendour (2015) – is set entirely in Khon Kaen. This paper takes inspiration from Apichatpong's work to investigate the context of healthcare concerns that pertain to the question of liver fluke infestation that is rife in Isan and attributed to result of raw fish consumption.

Study on Ethnic Socio-Cultural Identity Projection Through Traditional Textiles Among Tais of Assam, India

Rajashree Phukon
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Abstract

Tais are the people of Mongoloid origin from South East Asia who settled on the Bank of Brahmaputra valley of NE India. They have been grouped as Tai Ahom, Tai Phake, Tai Khampti, Tai Khamying, Tai Aiton, Tai Nora & Tai Turung.

Aims of this paper are: (1) current studies on historical back ground of Tais (2) issues of cultural assimilation among Tais (3) specific aim to focus on Textiles tradition of Tai Phake in the light of ethnic socio cultural identity projection.

Descriptive method has been adopted with simple random sampling along with structured questionnaire for primary data collection from 75 respondents from the Namphake village of Dibrugarh District, Assam, India and supported by secondary data.

Hand loom textiles woven by Tai-Phake women of NE India for their traditional attire which has vast similarity with Thai culture of Thailand. The 'Chin' a female garment use to cover the lower part of the body from waist down to ankles. 'Nangwat' a cloth for married women to wrap over chin for covering the breast; Pha-fek-hang, same as 'Nangwat', is used for grown up girls. Pha-fek mai or Pha-mai is used as a wrapper by men and women while entering the Vihar (Buddhist temple), and has important significance in socio-religious occasions. 'Pha-nung' a men's apparel used to cover the lower part of the body from waist down to the ankles. 'Thung', a shoulder bag, is an indispensable part of Phake men's dress etc. The textiles of Tai-Phake have distinctive ethnic characteristics. where checked and stripes are arranged in a harmonious pattern to produce conspicuous designs with their indigenous loin loom. Traditionally they use both cotton and silk yarns in their textiles production. Wearing traditional dress during ceremony and function as well as in village is compulsory to maintain their cultural identity.

Isan Becoming and Bildungsroman in Kampoon Boontawee's Look Isan (A Child of the Northeast)

Ramp Prasansak
Ubon Ratchathani University

Abstract

This paper examines Kampoon Boontawee's Look Isan (A Child of the Northeast), which recounts the story of a boy growing up in a drought-plagued village in the Northeast of Thailand in the 1930s. Employing the notion of world literature drawing on world systems theory and Bakhtin's concept of bildungsroman, it reads the Thai classic novel as a postcolonial Isan bildungsroman. While the novel's meticulous ethnographic details allow the author to reaffirm Isan cultural values long denigrated by the Siamese colonial lords, its 'coming-of-age' narrative serves as a vehicle by which the author imagines a new way of becoming Isan in the world. This paper argues that the telos of the narrative is characterized by a bourgeois aspiration in that through the protagonist's formation it projects the Isan subject's desire to become a merchant engaging in foreign trade. The cultivation of a bourgeois self and desire is discerned through the novel's emphasis on the importance of literacy and knowledge that culminates in a song recitation by the protagonist at the end. The song's reference to the Chinese junks indicates that the new Isan subjectivity the novel seeks to construct is modeled after the Siamese/Chinese bourgeoisie of the early Bangkok era who benefited from the emergence of maritime merchant capitalism.

Dr John Girling's ŒUvres: Reconsidering Democracy and Development in Thailand

Rapin Quinn
Australian Catholic University

Abstract

The paper aims to pay a tribute to Dr John Girling's celebrated life and scholarship. It will provide an overview of his substantial body of work, focusing on issues concerning democracy and development in Thailand rather than security and international relations. The overview includes his major contributions to development theories and debates on the 'grand theories' of capital and power; democracy, capitalism and corruption; social movement; political and social change in both developed and developing countries. While determining to assist those unprivileged and unfortunate, he strongly opposed the dogmatism of any theory and idea by having them countervailed with empirical research in a synthesized and even-handed manner. Without the evenhandedness of such balance, he was afraid that each hostile camp would 'seek unprofitably to destroy the other' while diverting 'attention from the pressing problem of the relationship between theory and content.' In attempting to address this concern, he proposed an avant-garde scholarship, especially in his last book to encourage those engaging in social sciences to explore and enhance its explanatory power so as to comprehensively understand emotionally-charged beliefs which are playing a vital role in human motivation and behavior in social change at present. This should be done, following his 'pacifiste' with the view to providing new critical insights into the understanding of social problems and the use and abuse of any academic discipline.

Responses of Karen Community to State-Mediated Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) in Watershed Forest

Rapipun Maoyot
Chiang Mai University

Chusak Wittayapak
Chiang Mai University

Abstract

The paper aims to analyze the responses of the ethnic Karen living in the watershed forest to PES initiatives, mediated by the government agency in collaboration with the Provincial Waterworks Authority as a buyer. The research provides an account of traditional practices of Karen in watershed forest conservation and their relationship to the watershed forest conservation unit in the area. The presence of the ethnic Lisu in the area and their troubled relationship with Karen and forest officials has enhanced the close relationship between Karen villagers and forest officials. The geographical location of the Karen village situated at the headwater of the local stream made it a perfect choice to implement PES. The operation of PES was well received by the villagers because the activities yielded direct results in fulfilling the needs of villagers in watershed services, including water, forest and soil conservation. Nonetheless, they were concerned of the sustainability of the program and the management of the money. Villagers were cautious about financial incentives which might lead to conflict and the undermining of traditional cooperative practices.

Ambivalence to Quality: Thai Universities' Reception to Global Education Policy

Rattana Lao
Pridi Banomyong International College

Abstract

This paper will analyze Thailand's positioning in global education policy, particularly quality assessment in higher education. Theoretically, it is situated in the broader attempt to understand the complex interplay between global forces and local adaptation. Within the policy borrowing and lending framework, this paper develops an argument that there exists a "culture of borrowing". Rather than driven by political or economic pressure to "borrow" best practices, it is possible that countries' thirst for globalization is rooted in a cultural aspiration for modernity. Historically, Thailand has always had an appetite for western norms and policy models. In fact, the Thai quest for "modernity" or to follow "global trends" serve as the ends, almost in and of itself. Rested on the post colonial concept of "ambivalence", countries are "attracted" to the allure of westernization, colonization and in this case globalization, and "repulse" to them all at once – inserting traces of rejection to claim "idiosyncrasy" and "uniqueness" (Takayama and Apple). Thailand's adoption of quality assessment in higher education illustrates just that. While policy elites have been eager to follow global trends at all costs, they introduced the Buddhist concepts of "amicable assessment" to tone down the "western style" assessment. While policymakers embrace the notion of "university rankings" and "international league tables", nationalistic sentiment persisted and called for greater attention to "local needs/wisdom." Reception and rejection of modernity occurs at multiple levels, creating contradictory discourses and resulting in conflicted and convoluted implementation. The contradictory reception of global influences serves to illustrate the complexity in translating global education policy, and the importance of historical legacy, socio-logic and context (Steiner-Khamsi, 2014). Thailand serves as a case of a developing country who was not "officially" colonized but has self-volunteered to follow global policy with the highest enthusiasm with a continuous sense of doubt.

The Journey of Nang Sip Song (The Twelve Sisters) or Phra Rot Meri in South East Asia: from Folktale to Regional Tale and Modern Ritualistic Belief

Rattanaphon Chuenka

Abstract

This article aims to study the diffusion of the folktale Nang Sip Song (the Twelve Sisters) or Phra Rot Meri in South East Asia. The research was conducted mainly through the study of relevant documents and previous research, as well as through fieldwork and data collection, which was carried out in five areas. The areas are as follows: 1) Mong Nai, Shan State of Myanmar; 2) Luang Prabang, Laos; 3) Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia; 4) Ban Mung, Phitsanulok, Thailand; and 5) Phanat Nikhom, Chonburi, Thailand. Analyses were then made on the data to show the tale's contribution to the communities in the aforementioned areas.

The result showed that Nang Sip Song is a shared ethnic folktale among the Tai peoples and several countries in South East Asia. Nang Sip Song is also a 'regional' tale that explains regions in Thailand where the tale is still transmitted, such as Chachoengsao, Prachin Buri, and Phatthalung. There were also shrines built in Mong Nai and in Phanat Nikhom to worship the eponymous Nang Sip Song and Phra Rot, the protagonist of the tale, which reflects the close tie between the regional ritualistic belief and its literary root.

As such, Nang Sip Song plays an important role as a 'regional tale' that explains the name origins of particular places in each region, an 'ethnic tale' that reflects the identity of each ethnic community, and as a 'sacred tale' of which the characters become the spiritual pillars that unite the people in such communities together.

The Dynamics of Tai Vernacular Architecture in Northeast India

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Chaowalid Saicharoent
Chiang Mai University

Abstract

This paper explores the dynamics of vernacular architecture in a multicultural context. In particular, it investigates the dynamics of vernacular architecture of the Tai ethnic group, who migrated from Northern Myanmar to Northeast India during the 13th to 20th centuries. This study conducted a qualitative survey of Tai cultural landscape in the Brahmaputra River Valley in terms of its physical, social and cultural characteristics of the settlements, villages and houses. The findings revealed that most Tai settlements have maintained some characteristics of the Tai peasantry landscape that are deeply rooted in Southeast Asia, including the settlement patterns, spatial forms and relations among villages and houses. Some common minor adaptations have occurred, due to assimilation with Indian culture, including the adoption of house form, the use of local materials and the applied construction technology. Temporal changes are evident; the settlements from earlier periods of migration have undergone more profound changes, while later settlements have retained their traditional characteristics. This paper pinpoints the impact of cultural assimilation on vernacular architecture, thereby providing an example of resilience and change of vernacular architecture in a multicultural context.

Urbanization and Built Cultural Heritage in Chiang Mai, Thailand

Rebecca Bicksler
Chiang Mai University

Poon Thiengburanathum
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Abstract

Asian cities are experiencing urbanization at a faster rate than other regions of the world, and this unprecedented growth is creating many changes to the built and cultural environment. Built Cultural Heritage specifically refers to the physical environment that expresses the way we live, such as building types, street formation, land use, and land subdivision. This presentation addresses the limitations of historic preservation in Thailand, and how a soft systems methodology might better serve urban conservation efforts. A systems approach to urban conservation may include methods for exploratory research to understand the underlying framework for how decisions are made and how we can reduce risk and vulnerability and increase resilience of built cultural heritage. I will discuss methods for defining neighborhood identity, and present a GIS-based evaluation tool aimed at improving decision-making and continued monitoring and evaluation of urban conservation in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Beyond the Prasat: Northern Thai Funeral Arts and Connection to a Lanna Past

Rebecca Hall
Independent Scholar

Abstract

The significance of funerals as a means for embracing impermanence and ensuring the safe transition of a loved one is well known. Funeral arts support that function by giving physical form to Buddhist ideals and visions of heavenly rebirth. This holds true in Northern Thailand, yet the enduring role of "prasat sop" and "nok hatsadiling" structures in Northern Thai cremations is also directly linked to their association with Lanna culture. This paper explores the connection between funeral arts and Northern Thai identity, with specific attention given to the cremation structures of both laity and monks in the Chiang Mai area. I take a closer look at these unique forms through a discussion of their aesthetic presentation and symbolic meaning together with excerpts from interviews about their function and meaning. I argue that their connection to a Lanna past and continued contemporary use is an important but overlooked way to highlight the enduring legacy of a unique Northern Thai tradition.

India-Thailand Cultural Connectivity: Embedded Through History, Language, Diaspora and Religion

Reena Marwah
Centre for Study of Developing Societies

Abstract

India and Thailand are celebrating this year seventy years of diplomatic relations. However, the civilizational and cultural bond has endured through a thousand years and these unique links are visible through history, language and religion. The single most significant cultural contribution of India, is 'Buddhism'. Propagated in Thailand in the 3rd Century B.C. by Buddhist monks sent by King Asoka, Theravada Buddhism was adopted as the state religion of Thailand and has been embraced by the Thai people. Presently 58,000,000 Thais, which comprises 94% of the total Thai populace, adheres to Buddhism. The belief of the Thai people that the king is a reincarnation of the Hindu deity Vishnu was adopted from Indian tradition. Hindu elements are reflected in Thai architecture, arts, sculpture, dance, drama and literature. The Thai language incorporates Pali and Sanskrit influences. The ceremonies of Coronation of Thai kings are also influenced by the Hindu religion. Prior to India's partition, several Punjabi families migrated from Gujranwala now in Pakistan) to Thailand. During the period 1942 to 1945, a number of Indians joined the Indian National Army in Malaya to fight for India's independence. Some among them gradually moved to Thailand and other South East Asian countries. Thus, people from India have been settled there for more than 3 -4 generations.

The paper is focused on several aspects of India's cultural linkages with Thailand. The first section of the paper studies the historical links; the second and third sections focus on the influence of language and religion respectively bringing in the role of the Indian diaspora as well. The paper concludes with recommendations on further strengthening India-Thailand cultural relations in the present.

Special Orthographic Features in Ancient Tai Manuscripts

Renoo Wichasin

Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the origins and special orthographic features that appear in ancient Tai manuscripts, and which differ from conventional spellings. The diverse Tai scripts can be divided into three groups. The first group might be called "Shan scripts" and comprises the scripts of the Tai Yai, Tai Nüa, Tai Ahom, Tai Khamti, Tai Aiton and Tai Khamyang. The second group consists of diverse variants of the Dhamma script (tua aksòn tham), namely the Lan Na, Lao, Lü, and Khün Dhamma scripts. Finally, the third group is made up of the Thai, Lao, Tai Dam and Tai Khao scripts.

The orthography of the Shan and Dhamma scripts developed from the ancient Mon script and therefore inherited various particular spelling features from Mon. However, many words are written in an idiosyncratic manner devised by the Tai themselves, thus reflecting their wisdom and their desire to create their own particular scripts suitable for recording texts in their vernacular. The peoples using Shan scripts, such as the Tai Yai in Thailand, Burma (Myanmar), China and India, use various special orthographic features which they have shared since ancient times. This clearly indicates that these features were developed even before the spread of these ethnic groups to their present-day areas of settlement.

The Dhamma script is not only used by the Lan Na Tai, Lao, Lü and Khün, but also by certain Buddhized non-Tai ethnic groups, such as the Lua and the Palaung, who produce texts written in the Dhamma script which originated in Lan Na before it spread to the eastern Shan areas, Laos and Sipsòng Panna. Thus, the Dhamma script cultural domain comprises a vast area covering the Mekong and Salween river basins.

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A Swamp of Cobras: Competing Rationalities of Capital and Ecology in Urbanizing Thailand

Richard Friend
University of York

Abstract

Across Asia, as urbanization expands and intensifies, a similar pattern has emerged of targeting low-lying floodplain land that is highly vulnerable to climate-related shocks and crises. This is not simply a matter of a lack of data, information or understanding. Despite well-documented vulnerabilities and risks whether from science or common knowledge, vulnerable space is becoming the site of dramatic urban investment.

Drawing on the experience of urbanizing Thailand, this paper seeks to provide a theoretical, and historically grounded perspective. This paper argues that underpinning this phenomenon is a fundamental clash of rationalities between the internal logic of capital accumulation that drives urbanization and land use change in Thailand, and the needs of ecology and natural hydrology. The greatest returns from land speculation are derived from investment in low value land that is most often flood-prone, agricultural or wetland areas. There is an unavoidably political dimension, with local and national political power tied to investment in land, and associated large-scale infrastructure projects. Addressing urban vulnerability and risk can thus be seen as a challenge of governance.

An Analysis on Religious and Cultural Similarities of the Thais' of Thailand and Tais' of North East India: With Special Reference to Tai Khampti of Namsai District, Arunachal Pradesh

Rima Sharma
Rajiv Gandhi University

Supriti Bose

Rasami Thamoung

Priti Sharma

Ngunphang Tongluk

Abstract

The Thai are people of Mongoloid origin who inhabit large tracts of South East Asia. They are extremely wide-spread, with the majority of Thai people living in Thailand. Thais can also be found in some regions of other Asian countries such as China, Taiwan, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Vietnam and India. A number of Thai groups are also found in North eastern Indian States of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, who are known as Ahom, Turung, Aiton, Khampti, Khamyang and Phake. Recent studies suggested that there is a common cultural heritage among the Tai groups. The Thais' are predominantly Theravada Buddhist and strongly identify their ethnic identity with their religious practices. This paper tries to explore and analyze the religious and cultural similarities between Tai community of North East India and Thai of Thailand with special reference to Tai Khampti tribe of Namsai District of Arunachal Pradesh in India. An attempt has also been made to find out the impact of globalization, western culture and other religions on the Tais of North East India with the help of various primary and secondary sources. The study reveals that Khampti and Thai people have a great resemblance, with religious and cultural similarities. It has also been observed that the Tais of North East India have mixed culture which covers traditional Thai Culture and modern global culture. For the long-term mutual benefit of Arunachal Pradesh and Thailand, this must be explored and studied by forming expert groups from both sides to work in areas of tourism, trade, commerce, religion and culture.

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Thailand's Bleak Prospects for Social Democracy

Robert Dayley
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Abstract

Thailand's unending constitutional reconfigurations and persistent failures to consolidate democracy render Thai society's democratic future in doubt. In spite of its champions, liberal democracy has struggled mightily to root itself in Thailand due to a host of factors – factors which do not occupy the subject of this paper. Rather, this paper examines the prospects of social democracy as an alternative form of democracy for Thailand. This paper argues that socio-political and historical conditions in Thailand do not favor the development of social democracy any more than they have liberal democracy. Whether conceived as a political agenda or a system of political economy, social democracy is an unlikely path for democratic development in Thailand. Using an evidence-based theoretical approach developed by scholars of social democracy, the paper contrasts Thailand to countries outside of Europe where social democracy has indeed evolved. In particular, it argues that the single key factor of success in these countries – class compromise – not only arrived earlier than the penetration of global capitalism in these countries (unlike Thailand), but also that Thailand's prospects for class compromise remain bleak for other reasons. Comparative analysis reveals that countries with successful social democratic movements can capably transcend the worst effects of clientism, militarism, populism, and ethnic nationalism and did so under the leadership of historically strong, center-left movements and parties. Such a combination of factors is not observable in Thailand's historical trajectory and does not exist in its current polity. Moreover, where successful social democratic movements outside of Europe employ developmental state control over trade, capital, and industry, Thailand's more laissez-faire approach has fostered weak labor mobilization, informal sector dependence, and a political class tolerant of inequality.

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Climate Change and the Resilient Subject of Thailand's 2011 Floods

Robert Farnan
Chiang Mai University

Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between global climate change, critical infrastructure (CI) protection, and the resilient subject in the context of the 2011 Thailand floods. The doctrine of resilience associated with complex emergencies, such as droughts, earthquakes or floods, has received substantial attention in critical debates around CI protection and urban planning but has seldom been analyzed as a security practice generative of forms of socio-political 'responsibility'. While the Critical Security Studies and International Political Sociology literature has discussed CI and the constitution of threatened ('at risk') populations from the perspective of biopolitics, the thrust of this paper eschews this tendency by focusing instead on how the resilient subject of climate change in Thailand is entangled in governmental processes of neoliberal securitization. Focusing on the floods in Bangkok, this paper considers how the environmental impacts of climate change – namely coastal erosion, protracted drought, and severe flooding – are exacerbated by socio-material factors and unevenly distributed across the city's urban milieu. As this paper demonstrates, the CI associated with global climate change is intimately related to the neoliberal politics of security underwriting Thailand's most vulnerable communities. This is particularly the case insofar as CI is conceived as a sociotechnical assemblage fundamental to these communities' self-organization and Bangkok's governmental logic of resilience.

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Communities and Forests in Thailand and Papua New Guinea: Different Tenure, Similar Challenges.

Robert Fisher
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Abstract

Literature about communities and forests in Asia and Melanesia often stresses the fact that forests in Asia are almost entirely under various form of state tenure, whereas forests in Melanesia are community-owned under customary tenure regimes. This is a crucial distinction. However, in practice the politics of the relationships between the state and communities are remarkably similar and this is not adequately recognized.

This paper takes the cases of Thailand and Papua New Guinea and explores the interactions between state agencies and local people with regard to forests. It argues that the history of the community forestry movement in Thailand clearly demonstrates the reluctance of forest authorities to recognize meaningful community rights to forests. In Papua New Guinea, where 97% of land is under customary tenure (clan ownership), most forests are owned by clans. Despite this, any rights to harvest timber for commercial use are controlled by the Forest Authority and law and policy overwhelmingly favors large-scale commercial exploitation over small-scale community-based operations.

Thus, the paper argues that, despite opposing tenure arrangements, the underlying power and political ecology lead to similar limitations to effective local rights to forests. In conclusion the paper will relate these findings to broader international patterns.

Thai Students in China

Robert Zhao
Liberal Arts College, Chongqing University

Abstract

China and Thailand are both ancient civilizations with a long history and deep traditional friendship, and the two peoples have maintained close contacts. The cooperation between China and Thailand in recent years and other related issues has frequently appeared in newspapers. With political and economic exchanges between China and Thailand increasing, more and more international students go back and forth between the two countries. The students can be considered an important bridge between them. This passage observes the overseas students coming from Thailand and analyses their life based on the students in ChongQing University. It also tries to comprehensively analyze the students and discover the similarities and differences between China and Thailand by taking a questionnaire, making surveys, doing interviews and so on. On the one hand, it studies the changes of the relations between China and Thailand in recent years, and on the other hand, prospects the cooperation between China and Thailand. It also makes an effort to restore respect between the two countries, and enhance understanding between the two peoples. It is hoped that this passage can provide some practical reference to the exchanges between China and Thailand in education and promote win-win cooperation between them.

Interpretation Tools and Views of Heritage: Sukhothai, Ayutthaya and Phra Pathom Chedi.

Roberto Gozzoli
Mahidol University

Abstract

The words "interpretation" and "natural/cultural heritage" have been in vogue for the last half century. As Tilden was the actual “founder” of modern interpretation, he emphasized the need of interpretation as stimulation of someone’s curiosity to learn deeply after having visited a cultural site.

Therefore, the simple reception of information is excluded from such a process, but information is still the main level within Thai heritage sites. This paper aims to put together information material from three different sites: Sukhothai, Ayutthaya and Phra Pathom Chedi in Nakhon Pathom. The three sites share a common motive: the fact of being “capitals” of Thai culture. For Sukhothai and Ayutthaya, the political and historical imagery makes them as the previous political capitals before Krungthep/Bangkok. Phra Pathom Chedi was the first site of penetration of Buddhism into Suvarnabhumi, as arrival point of King Asoke’s missionaries.

As it will be discussed in the paper, the various interpretation tools offer a monolithic view: for Sukhothai and Ayutthaya, the grandiosity of the monument, as well as the actual origins, if known, are the usual information given. The attention to the monumental aspect is against any alternative interpretations, such as the analysis of the urban fabric for Sukhothai, or the importance of different cultures in the last centuries for Ayutthaya. For Phra Pathom Chedi and Nakhon Pathom in general, the fact of being possibly the capital of the mythical Suvarnabhumi overshadows any alternative interpretations of sites and ruins.

As no alternative view are given, the interest over the cultural aspect of the sites result quite shallow, as a survey run at the site of Phra Pathom Chedi demonstrates.

Male Toasting, Girl Power: Drinking, Modernity, and Gender Regimes Among the Tai Lue of Sipsong Panna

Roger Casas
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Abstract

After the end of Maoist collectivism and following the final triumph of a 'capitalism with Chinese characteristics,' Sipsong Panna, a formerly semi-independent Tai Lue principality in the south of Yunnan Province, has integrated into national and regional economic circuits, becoming a key hub in the thriving cross-border trade China maintains with mainland Southeast Asian countries. Concurrently, the economic context of this small frontier area is dominated by Han Chinese guanxi, relational business networks established and reproduced through culturally specific rituals of feasting and gift-giving (Osburg 2013). Importantly, the role of women in these rituals appears to be that of passive, commodified objects to be sexually consumed by men (Zheng 2012).To the extent that these patterns of consumption and sociality have become dominant in the rural and urban worlds of Sipsong Panna, they are to be accounted as another layer in the configuration of Tai Lue gender orders.

Using Nick Tapp's insights on the vicissitudes of the modern self, this paper reflects on the interplay between mainstream forms of leisure and male bonding dominant in China, and traditional gender regimes in Sipsong Panna. Exploring gendered interactions in different contexts such as karaoke rooms and restaurants, it looks particularly at the role that alcohol consumption plays in the negotiation of individual and group identities. In which ways do Tai Lue socializing patterns adapt to, assimilate or transform Han Chinese forms of feasting and entertainment? How may local women manipulate to their advantage the cultural specificity of male-dominated guanxi? While taking account of little-explored traditions of female drinking among Tai peoples, this paper offers an ethnographically informed approach to contemporary transforming gender regimes in Sipsong Panna, questioning long-held views of ethnic minorities as subaltern, and highlighting women's potential to develop their own, vernacularized forms of economic engagement in this border area.

How "Common" Is the Community of Common Destiny?: Chinese Influence in Thailand

Romyen Kosaikanont
Mae Fah Luang University

Abstract

The term "Community of Common Destiny" has been used to explain the attempt of China to create unique relations with other countries especially China's neighboring countries, Southeast Asia and others amidst the backdrop of an increasing skepticism of the effectiveness of current global governance. In 2012, President Xi Jinping delivered the inaugural address about China's Dream of rejuvenation of China, prioritizing domestic stability and unity while seeking ways to ensure a peaceful rise. China has adopted Zhou Enlai's five principles of peaceful coexistence in creating relationships with its neighboring countries and others. Xi Jinping has, on many occasions, emphasized the importance of the relationships with its neighbors as the key to China's development. In realizing China's Dream, the Community of Common Destiny is being presented as the guiding principle of China's diplomacy with neighboring countries. This paper investigates the rise of China in Thailand by exploring the foreign direct investment of China in the past decade. The paper examines current Thai development policy, focusing on a 20-year vision and the engagement of Thai and Chinese governments in creating the common destiny. The paper questions the commonality in both countries' destiny, on their separate paths to development.

Media and the Expanding Political Awareness Among Southern Thai Women Since 2006 to 2014

Rotjaret Narongrach
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Abstract

After the couple political rally ousted the government and led to the coup for the decade, both the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) and the People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) owned powerful satellite TV channels. That the PAD held ASTV, and the PDRC held BlueskyTV to disseminate their political ideas and live broadcasting assembly 24 hours a day was unprecedented. Additionally, they also had official social media and websites to spread their news and information. They used media to inspire and persuade people to attend and donate. A notable feature of both the PAD and PDRC protests was the presence of a vast number of women from the Southern provinces of Thailand, especially with women who had not ever been interested in politics. By field study, it was found that most of the women attended the rallies because they watched rallies' satellite TV channels. This paper focuses on the content and uses of media particularly satellite TV, Facebook, and rallies' websites during the protests (1) to inform and mobilize (actual and potential) followers and supporters, and (2) to sustain the protests. Of particular interest to the author is the expansion of political awareness among women from the Southern provinces.

Rule of Law Is Considered as a Necessary Tool to Bring Equality in Water Usage to All People

Royol Chitradon
Hydro and Agro Informatics Institute

Abstract

Annual average rainfall of Thailand is 1,467 mm. which consists of 1,188 mm. in rainy season and 279 mm. in drought season. Geographically, Thailand is located in rainfall zone, therefore the average rainfall is higher than the world's. In addition, Thailand has over 240,000 square kilometers of agricultural area composing of 20 percent is in irrigated area, and 80 percent in rainfed area. Despite, Thailand have many large scale dams which have a capacity of 70 billion cubic meters but cannot reserve water at its full capacity due to the rainfall shifting to the downstream area. As a result, Thailand frequently faced flood and drought problems, especially facing flood-drought problem within the same area. Moreover, water issues such as wastewater, ineffective water usage and augmentation in water demand for consumption becomes more significant.

Even though, there are 35 national agencies, 16 provincial water resource management centers, and other local administrative organizations that responsible for water resource management, Thailand water resource management still encounters many problems such as malfunction organization, overlapping in policy and planning, misallocate of budgeting, fragmented and inaccessible information, etc. At present, there are 36 Acts and more than 2,000 Secondary Laws relating to water resource management, but lack of basic law.

"Basic law" in the context of water resource management is essential mechanism to carry forward successful cooperation among agencies, communities and people and also to achieve sustainable development goals. The execution of basic law will systematically reorganize and enhance water resource management process with the consideration of duties and areas of operation (forest area, irrigated area, rainfed area, cities, waterways and coastal area). It will also support the operation of the organization and enhance working process of both Top-Down and Bottom–Up management.

Making Gods: Ganesa in Contemporary Bangkok

Ruchi Agarwal
Mahidol University International College

Abstract

Ganesa has long been known to people in Thailand but increasingly evident are his cults flourishing in Bangkok, acquiring new roles and functions in the process. Long regarded as a patron of fine arts, Ganesa now serves in a number of other capacities. For some he is a 'fixer', a deity of last resort that can help devotees to overcome obstacles in their business transactions and daily lives. Within the local transgender community he is also a protector, a 'love god' of good fortune.

Not surprisingly, the growing popularity of the deity is reflected in a rapidly expanding trade in Ganesa images and icons, displayed in shopping mall exhibitions in a variety of forms, colors, shapes, and sizes. They are readily available at most of Bangkok's major retail outlets and also traded via social media online.

In this paper I attempt to explore this phenomenon, both by examining some of the shifting belief practices associated with Ganesa locally and by looking at how these shifts are reflected in the evolving trade in Ganesa iconography and imagery. Considering both together, I hope to show that Ganesa is presently the focal point for a number of separate cults, each with its own unique approach to the deity, his powers and his representation.

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Reclaiming Their Land Through Local Legends

Rungsima Kullapat
Carolina Asia Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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Abstract

This paper focusses on the local Northeast Thai Pachit Oraphim legend through oral literature and manuscripts. Interdisciplinary research forms the basis for this paper. Stith Thompson (1946), claimed, "The local legend often explains the existence of some hill or cliff or tells why a certain river meanders over the landscape. There are similar stories explaining the origins and characteristics of various animals and plants, the stars, and mankind ".

Naftali Kadmond (1997) said "Local people, as geographers in their homeland, explained the geography of landscape by naming their own places or discovering that the place had been named before their migration". The results supports this concept. This study revealed that all of the sites named in the Pachit-Oraphim legend are living sites or named places. Places named in the legend can still be located in the study areas of Nakhon Ratchasima and Buriram provinces in Northeast Thailand. Towns, streets, and monuments are named after the legend.

This shows the interconnection of heritage, identity, and place naming. However, for greater understanding we have to use oral literature, written memoirs, and manuscripts to give the semantic meaning to place names. A strong voice from a representative of local people said "This is our land. We want to tell our legends by ourselves. We need to preserve our heritage for the next generation,". This head of Nang Or (Oraphim) Village fights for his villagers to be seen as legitimate Pachit-Oraphim storytellers, instead of the Thai Fine Art Department's "true story of archaeology".

The Revival of a 98-Year-Old Movie Theater: Sala Chalerm Thani

Rungsima Kullapat
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Abstract

This paper reports on a feasibility study to revitalize and restore the Sala Chalerm Thani, or Nang Loeng, Movie Theatre, a 98-year-old wooden movie theater in Bangkok in the oldest district of Bangkok. The Sala Chalerm Thani is one of the strongest and most unique wooden structures in Thailand. This study established the constraints and opportunities for developing the Sala Chalerm Thani into a living museum, encouraging knowledge of the Thai Film Industry and its architecture. Research was interdisciplinary, including historical surveys, documents, in-depth interviews, and domestic and international visits to comparable structures and rehabilitation efforts. The Sala Chalerm Thani compares with three movie theater restorations in America: the Empire (1912), a 104-year-old wooden theater in Block Island, Rhode Island; the Lucas (1921), a 96-year-old palace in Savannah, Georgia; and the Carolina (1926), a 90-year-old palace in Durham, North Carolina.

Documents show that Payon Pattanakorn opened the "Nang Loeng Movie Theater" 18 December 1918. The Nang Loeng district was founded during Bangkok's establishment by King Rama I. The Nang Loeng Theater was taken over by United Cinema Co., Ltd., สหศีนิมา จำกัด, owned by King Rama VII, in 1932, and the name became Sala Chalerm Thani. The Crown Property Bureau rented the theater to private companies until 1993.

This project has resulted in beginning a process of revitalization and restoration. The Living Museum is the next step, presenting a movie theater during the initial period of its existence. Adjusting the landscape and restoring, decorating, and interpreting the Sala Chalerm Thani are urgently required. In addition, a master plan for preservation, including local community participation and tourism, is essential for national, regional, and global knowledge about the Thai film industry.

The Da'wa Movement in Pai Town

Ryoko Nishii

Abstract

On the streets of Pai, a town in Northern Thailand, women dressed in full black veils zip their scooters around backpackers and wandering Chinese tourists. These tourists started arriving two years ago because of the attention provided by a locally-filmed TV drama, and their interest in hill tribes such as the Tai Yai and Lisu. Pai also attracts artists from all over the country. A resident painter gushed about the different people co-existing peacefully in Pai, something that does not appear to be new. One Thai Buddhist living in Pai after retiring from the U.S. told me of Pai's history as a trading nexus for hill tribes and Chinese Muslims.

Muslims in Pai are almost all of Chinese descent, and most engage in the Da'wa movement. Da'wa's education system for Muslims in Pai is unique in that it consists primarily of home schooling, with hired teachers or volunteers teaching subjects including English, Arabic and mathematics. 67-year-old Ko Tui brought the Da'wa movement to Pai, is responsible for its Islamic schooling, and is also Imam (religious leader) of the Pai Mosque. He first attended Da'wa aged 27 with Haji Yusof of Mae Sot, who was instrumental in introducing the Da'wa movement to Thailand.

The Da'wa routine currently involves visiting Pai Muslims on Wednesday afternoons, and visiting Muslims outside Pai on Thursday afternoons. Active Da'wa members are mainly young, with 15 to 20 people around 30-40 years old, and only two people in their 50s. They undertake three-day journeys every month to the Northern parts of Thailand. I interviewed one of Pai's most devout members who described himself before encountering the movement as a 'hippie' who drank alcohol and neglected the five daily prayers. His life-changing experiences are an interesting case study in analyzing the nature of the Da'wa movement.

Cultural Oppression in the Multi-Ethnic School

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Abstract

This study draws attention to cultural oppression in school settings in the peripheral area. In a culturally hegemonized nation such as Thailand, one of the major challenging issues for ethnically and marginally diverse schools in the border areas is establishing and maintaining cultural and social equity in education. This study examines the particular types of cultural oppression that appear in schools, means to involve in cultural oppression, and ways in which such oppression consequently affects daily interactions of students from different ethnic groups. The study was conducted at a medium-size public school located in an ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse community in the Thai-Laos border in Chiang Rai province. In addition to northern Thai students, this school also historically serves various ethnic students including Hmong, Mien, Akha, Lahu, and Yunnamese. Based on qualitative inquiry, this study conducts in-depth interviews with the school principle, teachers, and students. The researcher also conducts direct observations in classroom setting and after-school activities.

The primary analysis indicates that cultural oppression is manifested in school curriculum, school structure, pedagogy, teachers, and students. Three different forms of cultural oppression are identified: individual, institutional, and cultural group. This study argues that school structure, pedagogy, and school environments highly based on monoculturalism don't only allow teachers from mainstream background to reinforce their privileged culture over the cultures of ethnic students, but it also internalizes their ethnic students to reproduce ethnocentric monoculturalism. It makes a group of ethnic students that has a larger number in the school to culturally stratify and marginalize fellows from other ethnic groups. The implications of the study for school administrators and teachers in ethnically deserve school settings will be identified and elaborated to create inclusive school.

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Transcending Karen's Cultural Barrier; for Promotions of Effective Backyard-Poultry System on Mountainous Area

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Abstract

The article explains necessary factors, which facilitate a promotion of medium-scale farming of backyard-poultry in high mountainous areas. It argues that not only an effective learning process brought about this success case, but a set of facilitating factors also assisted the cultural barrier transcend.

This is a case study of a Karen couple who joined our 'local change agents training programme' for raising 'Thai indigenous chicken breed.' in medium-scale farming. The program was carried out at the Khun Hauy Pong Watershed Management Station, Mae Tuen, Omkoi, Chiang Mai Province, from February 2012 - January 2015. The team applied tailor-made training which integrated simplified farming techniques, scientific learning processes and basic biology. The most significant change rose, amidst the training programme, when all of the hens laid infertile eggs that was regarded as cursing behavior. Three months after they found out, the Karen realized that the true cause must be the rooster's sperm. In addition, if they decided to sacrifice all the hens, they would lose a whole farm. The ways in which the change agents weighed rival reasons among ritual belief economic value and scientific thinking may sometimes break traditional pattern. Chicken is raised as a main sacrificial animal in Karen's way of life. "Decision not to kill the cursing chickens" was made on many occasions if other reasons show sufficient weight against the belief.

A cross-investigation lead to a conclusion that necessary facilitating factors must be present for the cultural barrier transcending to happen. They are 1) Ownership of the chicken and accountability 2) Location and Territory 3) Perception of Value to the chicken 4) Role model from within the culture.

Khuang Luang Wiang Kaew (The Old Palace of Chiang Mai) a Trace from Archeological Site

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Abstract

In the northern area of an old map of Chiang Mai, a historical document produced in the reign of King Rama V of the Rattanakosin period, the name "Wiang Kaew" appears within a designated boundary. Most "Lan Na" scholars believe that “Wiang Kaew” is the name of the palace of Lan Na kings, dating back to the reign of King "Mang Rai" the Great, the first king of Chiang Mai and founder of the Lan Na kingdom. "Tamnan Peun Muang Chiang Mai" (the Vernacular Legend of Chiang Mai), one of the most important historical documents of Lan Na kingdom, mentions that the palace of King Mang Rai is situated to the Southwest of the "Chiang Man" temple. Analysis of historical information, in conjunction with the geographic position of Wiang Kaew on the old map, has led to the belief that it could have been the royal palace of Lan Na kingdom.

Although there has not been a solid conclusion to the origin of this term, there is evidence that "Wiang Kaew" was initially used in the reign of King "Kawilla", of the renaissance Lan Na period, around the same time as the early Rattanakosin period.

From its mention on the old map, Wiang Kaew was situated in the north part of the city. Its configuration of Wiang Kaew looked like an alphabetical “T” which laid horizontally to the left. The area was divided into 2 parts; the eastern part and the western part, whereas the western part was also divided into northern and the southern parts .

Empirical Truth and the Presentation of Tai-Thai Identity Through Folklore in Contemporary Society

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Abstract

The paper aims at examining how Tai-Thai identity is presented through cultural activities, e.g., local traditions, historical light and sound performances or even Tai-Thai periodical TV series in contemporary Thai society. The paper argues that the Tai-Thai identity that is presented today through "cultural signs" tends to be "more concretely presented" due to the influence of the idea that empirical truth equates to absolute truth.

From preliminary research, it is found that today "material folklore" is more frequently used for demonstrating and expressing Tai-Thai ethnic's identity than in the old days, since folk objects are considered to be "easy to notice." In addition, it is also observed that almost all cultural details, which appear as "visual art", are often copied from old photographs as references in order to make the performances "more correct" in accordance with the historical truth.

Through Their Eyes: The Deep-South Conditions from the Insiders' Point of View

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Abstract

The incident at Takbai, Narathiwas province, and the "transformation of violence" (Srisompob 0000) that followed, contributed significantly to an explosion of research in southern Thailand. During the past decade, the Deep South has become one a privileged location, and a site where institutional resources have supported the research endeavors of interested scholars. Roughly speaking, more than 600 researches about people and culture in the southernmost provinces of Thailand have been produced, though only a few of them are published for public consumption. Interestingly, violence and fearful situations contribute to the increase in the number of graduate students and researchers, from without and particularly from within the conflict zone. Research issues include, among others, violence and security infrastructure, ethnicity and ethnic identity, religiosity and secularism, law and human rights as well as 'traditional' social institutions such as family, gender role, and education. This project reviews recent social scientific scholarship that has been conducted in and about the Deep South.

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Problematizing the Military Regime in the Politics of Hyper-Royalist Conservation and Rural Development in Nan Province

Sakkarin Na Nan
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Abstract

By taking the idea of the democratic d'état into the light, this paper investigates a conflict of forest conservation among the Lua ethnic villagers, the local governmental officials, and the Thai military. Based on the preliminary research, it was found that Thailand's upland villagers face difficulties in relation to forest conservation. Meanwhile there was a complex integration of upland villagers into the hyper-royalist rural development projects. Some violent consequences have been addressed. Seven villagers and later, three members of the Tambon Administrative Organization were charged by National Park officials and were expected to be prosecuted in 2016. I problematize the ignorance of hyper-royalist conservationist organizations in the Phid Tong Lang Pra network in dealing with such a conflict, in contrast to their active interventions aimed turn the villagers away from feed corn shifting cultivation to paddy rice terraces in the upland areas of Northern Thailand.

Boom Crops and Land Relations: Reviewing Concepts, Conflicts and Challenges for Thailand's Future Land Studies

Sakkarin Na Nan
Faculty of Business Administration and Liberal Arts, Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna

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Abstract

This paper aims to review the recent so-called "boom crop" phenomenon in relation to the complexity of land relations and governance in the context of Thailand's political economy. The paper explores recent debates of scholars concerned with land issues and seeks to further develop a specific framework for Thailand's crop boom analysis with land-related questions. The roles of actors (eg. state, corporations, NGOs, farmer groups) and the power of their processes to control the property regimes and access to land will be addressed. Although this paper emphasizes the case of Thailand, the author will take the regionalized and globalized context into account. This includes the changing land policy of Thailand under the military regime influencing the neoliberal environment and hence conditionally re-configuring the boom, crop expansion (eg. corn, rubber, coffee, fast-growing trees), changing livelihoods of small-scale farmers and their agency in socio-environmental politics.

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Queering Shan Masculinity and Migration in the Boy Massage Shops

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Abstract

This paper explores the interface between queerness and migration, challenging masculinity assumptions and sexual perceptions of Shan male migrants in Chiang Mai through the critical framework of body politics and the translation of global queering. The research situates queer migration within transborder processes of globalization, capitalism and unequal development in the Thailand-Myanmar border region, and rethinks the role of migration in constructing heterogeneous sexual identities, communities, politics, and practices in the context of the commercial gay sex scene in Chiang Mai that is dominated by numerous "boy massage" shops. This paper examines how sexuality shapes Shan migration processes and experiences of social status, citizenship, ethnic nationalism, and sexualities by considering how the body of the Shan migrant is masculinized and romanticized among Thai gay men both from Chiang Mai and Bangkok. As a primitivized ethnic group without homosexuality, Shan bodies are rendered heteronormatively masculine and hence desirable to Thai gay men. Finally, this paper argues that "queer complicities" uphold regimes of inequality in various parts of the world by identifying Shan men as "queer" rather than focusing on their marginalized status as sexualized migrant sex workers.

Ahom Aristocracy in the Nineteenth Century: An Overview

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Abstract

The Treaty of Yandabo, which ended the first Anglo Burmese war in 1826, sealed the fate of the independent Ahom kingdom – founded in 1228 in the easternmost region of present day Assam – and converted it into a principality of the British government. Initially, no alliance or negotiation was made with the Ahom royal family for the installation of a native prince to the throne of Assam, as they did in many other parts of India. The British introduced new policies that suited their colonial rule, adversely affecting the socio-economic and political status of the Ahoms. The British deprived the Ahom of every opportunity and privilege they previously enjoyed by dint of their social status. Introduction of new revenue systems, English education, abolition of slavery, and fallout from anti-British movements were the factors which worsened the conditions of Ahom aristocracy. Socially, after losing their kingdom, the Ahoms began to be treated as outcastes and untouchables by the upper castes of the existing Assamese society. This social discrimination together with the ill treatment meted out to them compounded the grievances of the Ahoms. Deprived of all socio-economic and political power, the Ahoms organized themselves into a united community on the basis of their cultural identity by highlighting their ethno-political relationships with Tai brethren living in Southeast Asia. In their endeavor to recovering past glory and maintain distinct ethnic identity, they started a movement in the later part of nineteenth century to unite their community on the basis of ethno-cultural traits. In this paper an attempt has been made to discuss in short the condition of the Ahom aristocracy and the growth of Ahom political movement during the nineteenth century.

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Influencing Factors Towards Thai Adolescents' Decision Making on Contraceptive Use: Preliminary Results

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Sari Andajani

Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop

Abstract

Adolescent pregnancy has been a critical public health problem in Thailand since 2008. Contraceptive methods become a medical strategy to prevent unplanned pregnancies. Studies illustrate that contraceptive use rate among sexually active Thai adolescents, compared to adults, is relatively low. Studies also show that decisions on contraceptive use could be influenced by several factors. However, little is known what influences Thai adolescents' decision about contraceptive use. This qualitative study aims to explore influencing factors.

The researchers purposively recruited 38 adolescents aged 15–19 years from two schools in an urban area of Khon Kaen. Of 38 participants, 29 participated in five single-gender discussion groups. Discussion group participants were subsequently invited to in-depth interviews, and 11 of them responded. Other nine participants were in in-depth interviews but did not join group discussions. Data collection was partially facilitated by a local youth advisory group. Thematic analysis was used to interpret the data.

Preliminary findings illustrate that fear associated with pregnancy steered young people to choose to use some kind of contraceptive method. Their fears originated from fear of negative consequences of pregnancy on parents; fear of physical and socio-economic difficulties to self; and fear of being unable to fulfil cultural expectations as the first female child in the family. Fears of HIV/AIDs and side effects of contraceptive pills led some sexually active participants to favor condoms. Female negotiation skills and seniority of the female in a relationship were likely to affect the decision to adopt condoms. Interestingly for one female participant, complicating factors consisted of cohabitation, male preference for contraceptive methods, and an allergy to hormone pills.

Based on preliminary results, numerous factors could influence Thai adolescents to choose certain kinds of contraceptive methods. To tackle sexual and reproductive health problems including adolescent pregnancy, these complex influencing factors should be considered thoroughly.

The Lesson from World Heritage Town of Luang Prabang to Chiang Mai's Tentative List of Future World Heritage: Case Study of Renovation of Tourist Accommodation

Sansanee Krajangchom

Sudarat Auttarat

Abstract

The objectives of this study were to 1) study the process of accommodation for tourists under the rules of the world heritage town of The United Nations; and 2) propose guidelines in knowledge and understanding of the creation of Chiang Mai's population to prepare as a world heritage city. The study procedures included studying the typing process of tourist accommodation and rules on renovating tourist accommodation, as well as analyzing and visualizing the lessons learned in processing tourist accommodation in Luang Prabang. The results found that Luang Prabang city has been a cultural center since ancient times. In terms of the renovation of houses for accommodation purposes, Luang Prabang applicants must adhere to the government rules which themselves abide by the rules of the world heritage town. Entrepreneurs have to accept the higher cost of renovating houses for accommodation purposes because local materials are expensive and in the case of local Lao housing materials, often rare. Furthermore, these renovations have to replicate original Lao house architecture.

Politics of the Location: The Location of Politics Building Modernity with Chiang Mai's Educational Institution Buildings between 1867 - 1915

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Abstract

In this research, four significant factors - the city's educational, commercial, political and infrastructural developments - are identified as the leading forces that encouraged the development of Modernism in Chiang Mai, Thailand. This paper expands the critical perspective on the factor of educational development, in particular focusing on how location, vision and political aspects became interrelated.

The investigation begins with two leading schools of the city; the Prince Royal's College (established in 1905 at the present location) and Yupparaj Wittayalai School (established in 1906 and moved to the present location in 1915). Both of these schools were established at almost the same time, yet with entirely different visions. One was based on the Christian mission of American Presbyterians led by Rev. Daniel McGilvary and Mrs. Sophia McGilvary in 1867, while another was based on the royal intention, which aimed to establish a local school where Thai language was primarily taught in order to produce good Thai-speaking officers to serve in the Siam government at that time. Interestingly, the names of the two schools came from King Rama VI (who was the Prince of Siam at the time), and the two names can both be translated as "The Prince".

From both physical and historical aspects, in relations to the modern development of Chiang Mai, the locations from which the two schools were established allows us to consider them through the notions of center-periphery, insider-outsider, locals-strangers, or alternatively as a defensive mechanism of the city. Politics of the Location: the Location of Politics aims to open up the possibility of how Chiang Mai's history can be re-conceptualized, in particular in the period of the so-called Modernity of Chiang Mai.

Institutional Talk and Social Hierarchy in Health Care Provider-Patient Interactions in Thailand's Northeast: A Linguistic Perspective

Saowanee Alexander
Ubon Ratchathani University

Abstract

Thailand's impoverished Northeast has been the center of scholarly attention in recent years for various reasons ranging from political conflict, economic hardship, to health concerns. The region, known as Isan, is home to the world's largest number of patients of the fatal liver fluke-induced cholangiocarcinoma (Banchob and Chawalit, 2008). Liver flukes are commonly found in certain types of freshwater fish which Isan locals consume raw as delicacies. Healthcare workers battling the disease often attribute its spread to such consuming behavior and thus campaign vigorously to discourage Isan people from eating the dishes. The campaign needs effective communication where linguistic interaction is a crucial component. However, little is known about interactions between stakeholders, especially between health care workers and members of the public. To start, the paper explores interactions between health care workers and patients at public hospitals in the Northeast in order to characterize the nature of institutional talk (Heritage, 2005). The observations are discussed in terms of Thailand's hierarchical society, power imbalances, politeness, and resistance, which may help to understand the success or failure of public health campaigns against the disease.

Returning Happiness to Thailand?: Speech Acts in General Prayuth Chan-Ocha's Nationally Televised Addresses

Saowanee Alexander
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Abstract

Thailand's May 2014 military coup took place, as the coup makers claimed, to restore peace and order and return "Happiness to Thai people". Since then military-appointed Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha has been addressing the nation nearly every Friday on a broad array of topics ranging from the junta government policy and its implementation to criticisms of political opponents. These televised addresses are approximately 1-hour long and contain around 4000-5000 words. The program itself is dubbed "khuen khwam suk hai khon nai chat" [Returning Happiness to the People in the Nation]. The question remains, however, whether the linguistic elements in what General Prayuth "says" in these addresses support the junta's rhetoric of bringing "happiness" back to the country. Following speech act theory (Searle, 1969; Bach & Harnish, 1979), which argues that language is essentially a social action, the paper examines 50 addresses randomly selected from a total of approximately 100 addresses over the past 2.5 years under the military rule. This corpus is analyzed for the distribution of different types of speech acts (for example, threat, apology, compliment, and complaint) and their functions in the junta's discourses in the Thai socio-political order. The findings are discussed with respect to the junta's identity shaped by its leader's language use in public.

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Rights to Human Dignity and Non-Discrimination in the Courts Under the 1997, 2006 and 2007 Constitutions

Sarah Bishop
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Abstract

In 1997 the Thai Constitution incorporated, for the first time, the principles of human dignity and non-discrimination, as well as recognizing the rights of persons to raise constitutional rights in court cases. This paper will consider how these changes, inspired by foreign models, were engaged in Thailand. In particular, it will explore instances in which the often closely linked and interchangeable principles of human dignity and non-discrimination were similarly and differently raised before and interpreted by Thai courts between 1997 and 2014 under the 1997, 2006 and 2007 Thai constitutions. It will do this primarily through consideration of Constitutional Court judgments (both orders and full decisions) and publicly accessible judgments of the Supreme Administrative Court and Supreme Court of Justice. The analysis will reveal that both principles were raised by a wide range of litigants, including those from marginalized and disadvantaged groups but also those from more powerful societal groups and even by corporate entities. It will also reveal that although courts often made strong statements on the importance of the principles, in applying them they often displayed biases and limited understandings in many ways similar to those also shown by constitutional drafters during constitution drafting processes, and that overall they were more likely to rely on the principles of human dignity and non-discrimination to issue decisions when they were invoked by already powerful societal groups than when they were invoked by marginalized groups. Even so, it will show that in a small number of instances courts did issue decisions which furthered rights of marginalized groups, at times drawing on international human rights standards to do so.

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Outline of Karenic Founder's Cult Systems in 'Zomia'

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Abstract

This paper examines how a part of Karenic Founder's Cult systems called "Blaw Khoh" involves a primordial religious system and acts as a metaphor of thing-place-time-person. I show that the system serves as a complementary part of 'Zomia', a concept popularized by J.C. Scott, in that it hypothesizes an explanation for what happens in recent political crises in Thailand by marking the development of a proto-kingship ideology.

"Blaw Khoh" combines two words. "Blaw" means 'common ritual building' and "Khoh" means 'leader' - a typical leader in Karen Sgaw pronunciation. Supported by eight fields of data regarding twelve newly-founded "Blaw" among a Karenic community founded recently in Northern Thailand, the data show that both primordal cultural schemata and civic 'space' consensus organizes the social structure system along three axes: origin, change, and dismissal/revival as a hidden ideology exclusive in the entourage boundary.

The paper also explicates the "Blaw Khoh" system in broad terms of a 'Founder's Cult' system, in seven stages starting from no leader ("Htof Gi Chau Miz"), general shrine leader ("Hi Khoh"), large shrine leader ("Dare Khoh"), public hall leader ("Blaw Khoh"), proto-kingship ("Main Long"or "Bu Khoh"). The two that follow are non-Karen: palace leader devarãja cult, and the present hyper-devarãja. Distinguishing these stages allow us to discern the broad picture and hidden characteristics along each evolutionary stage.

Six aspects of these seven leader types are representative of boundary power, the number of households in responsibility, representative of objects and architectures, representative as personification, "Circle" boundary of responsibility, and lastly the collective of hidden ideologies from "procreative model", "primordial civic sphere", "nonverbal pragmatism", "embodied charismatic power", and consequently "hyper-personality cult".

By examining these Karen categories, we can expand the explanatory power of 'Zomia' from its focus on peripheral geographical boundaries to political and ideology boundaries.

Sandonta Ancestor Worship : From Family Ritual to Provincial Tradition of Surin Province

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Abstract

This paper aims to study the dynamism of the Sandonta (ancestor worship) ritual. This ritual is normally arranged within family's in the Thai-Khmer ethnic group. Recently, it has become a new tradition in Surin province held by the Surin provincial administrative organization. Data was collected over the period 2012-2016 from two events. First, the Bun Sandonta (งานบุญแซนโฎนตา), a family ritual, was held at the Thai-Khmer community at Pruekian Village, Nokmueang Sub-district, Mueang District, Surin province. Secondly, the "Sandonta ancestor worship Tradition" (ประเพณีแซนโฎนตาบูชาบรรพบุรุษ) was held by the Surin provincial administrators. Participant observation in the ritual and in-depth interviews with village headmen, community leaders, ritual performers, villagers, and tourists were conducted in both areas.

The study indicates that Bun Sandonta in the village is held during the Full Moon of the 10th lunar month, until the first day of the waxing moon of the 11th lunar month, and consists of 9 sequential rites which are animistic worship, paying gratitude to ancestors, and Buddhistic rites. Whereas the Sandonta tradition held by provincial administrators shows an attempt to keep certain traditional rites, the core of the ritual has shifted from worshipping familial ancestors to worshipping the spirit of Surin province's founder.

It should be observed that the name of the ritual has been changed from "Bun Sandonta" to "Sandonta Ancestor Worship Tradition." This, in a way, reduces the sacredness of the ritual in line with the more more casual atmosphere of the festival. The tradition intends to attract more people to attend, so includes more information concerning the Sandonta ritual. Ritual food is provided in an exhibition, and entertainment activities are also included. The tradition is open for people from all ethnic groups, and also provides Surin province with the opportunity to present their identity to tourists.

Blurred Borders and Identities of Thai-Japanese Children

Sari Kayoko Ishii

Abstract

This research focuses on the gap between idea of a distinction between "Thai migrants" and "Native residents" in Japan, and the ambiguous reality.

An analysis was made of Japanese-Thai mixed children. Target children were categorized into three groups in this research: (1) children of Japanese-Thai intermarriages, who were born and raised in Japan; (2) children born of their mother's first marriage in Thailand, later adopted by their Japanese stepfather after their mother's second marriage, and thereafter emigrated to Japan; (3) children of Japanese nationals who were raised in Thailand during their infancy, and who later "return migrated" to Japan after several years.

Based on interviews of with children and their families, it was concluded that the distinctions between "Thai migrants" and "Japanese locals" were blurred, in terms of nationality, identity and identification.

The Meaning of 'Ploo' in Motherhood Transitional Ritual in Malay Society in Satun Province.

Saroh Wattana
Thaksin University

Pornpan Khemakhunasai
Thaksin University

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to study the meaning of 'ploo' in motherhood transitional ritual in Malay community in Satun Province. The data was collected using in-depth interview of 31 key informants consisting of Tok Bidan - women who had been through the rituals and were preparing to be a mother with a group of men as husbands.

Malay people believe that ‘ploo’ is a ritual plant, related to women over three phases: preparation during pregnancy to have the baby; the first to seventh days after birth; and the first forty days after birth. 'Ploo' has a meaningful relationship with many women and children for six reasons: 1) its ancestral origin's authority of knowledge; 2) as an expression of gratitude to ancestors who helped with an easy and secure birth; 3) as medicinal plants used to treat symptoms of the mother and baby; 4) for predicting the sex of the baby before birth; 5) for predicting whether the birth will be easy or difficult; 6) as a shield and protector for pregnant women and their babies. Hence it is still the key to building a complete family in Malay society.

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Maternal Health Seeking Behavior of Three Tai Groups of North East India

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Abstract

Women's reproductive and maternal health is the most important factor of a healthy society and considered to be the most important indicator of the development of any nation. The Tai women of North East India, in addition to their personal activities, also bear all domestic and agricultural activities.

One of the most valuable contributions Tai women can give to their respective households is the reproductive role. Pregnancy and, consequently, reproduction are considered by them to be a natural phenomenon. They are very rich in indigenous traditional ethnomedical knowledge for healing varied maternal health problems, including the use of indigenous herbal drugs based on locally available plants and animals. Health behavior and status is also determined by the practice of taboo and superstitious belief.

The women of Tai communities still depend on indigenous treatments and consider magico-religious ceremonies for treating illness to be important. Expectant mother are not usually provided with special food during their pregnancies, but they observe certain taboos. They believe that in addition to biological causes, actions of supernatural power, the evil eye, and ancestral spirits are causes of disease. Conception is believed to be a blessing from God. In most cases regular medical checkup and the taking of medicines during pregnancy is ignored.

The present paper focuses on some of the traditional cultural practices of the Ahom, Khamti, and Phake, three major Tai-speaking groups of North East India. Data has been collected from different villages, predominantly inhabited by the Assam and Arunachal, to collect a representative sample from the selected groups. Data was collected through intensive interview and case study method.

The Interpretation Process 'King's Teaching' to Live Performance 'Sufficiency Philosophy = Minimalism?' a Performance Study Under a Current Urban Thai Cultural Context (Sufficiency the Minimal (2017) : A Live Performance Research Case Study)

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Abstract

Could live performance be a tool for representing King Rama IX 's sufficiency philosophy? In my opinion, the King's idea shares some concepts with ideas of minimalism in the western world. The specific questions to address are, what are the motivations for Thai people in this era, especially those in Bangkok, deciding to follow this 'king's path of happiness', and are there any contradictions or difficulties to comprehending this philosophy? Most understand the H.M. King Rama IX (Bhumibol Adulyadej) 's teaching about a theory of 'Sufficiency Economic philosophy'. On the other hand, the word 'sufficiency', could also be interpreted as 'a way of living' to achieve happiness as well according to the king's speech on the date of 4th December 1998. As I am a performance and theatre practitioner, I believe that live performance is one tool of communication to disseminate the significance of King Rama IX's theory to audiences, by making it to be easy to comprehend. The story of a young Thai woman from Bangkok, who desires to explore the path to happiness in Sufficiency The Minimal (2017) has become the researcher's latest creative work. Through the main character that I have created, this research will present how this character could be a symbolic for representing madness and anxiety in urban people's minds. This research article stresses the concerns and awareness among people in the world about this 'globalized thought', and claims that live performance could be one of the communication tool among others (such as film and television) that can represent this cultural context in Thai society.

Cultural Resources Management of the Street Culture: A Study of Promoting and Preserving Crafts in the Night Walking Street Market in Chiang Mai Province, Thailand

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Abstract

In the context of tourism, along with the trend of night markets in Chiang Mai, crafts and local handmade products are undoubtedly valued; they are consumed at a high rate compared to other products. As a consequence, Chiang Mai Municipality has been promoting Chiang Mai Night Walking Street Market as "the street culture" in the interest of maintaining and presenting Lanna culture. The aims of this paper are to examine the processes of cultural resource management as well as its impact on crafts and handmade products in the street culture. This study is being formed on an ethnographic study, which is a pilot study conducted in August 2014 and from August to October 2015. The objects of the stated pilot study are to survey, observe, participate, and interview in order to collect general information and data analysis. As a result, the local government made strict rules to regulate this area, especially the promotion and preservation of crafts. Therefore, the effective rules and regulations help reorganize the management system and the crafts of OTOP products that are sold on the Night Walking Street Market, which advantages the promotion, presentation, and preservation of cultural resources in Chiang Mai Province.

Land Use and Community Right : Social Inclusion and Inequity Exclusion of Indigenous People and Rural Farmers in Thailand

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Abstract

This paper shows how the process of economic transition is changing community structure in Thailand. Land use in no-deed or protected areas creates conflicts among stakeholders. This study tries to explore the situation of land use and conflict regarding community rights. The social inclusion and exclusion process, which affects ethnic people including rural farmers, are demonstrated as well. In this paper, a mixed-method approach of interviews, focus groups and questionnaires were performed among three indigenous communities in Thailand. Various levels of law enforcement agencies, including state authorities, civil society, individuals and the local community play active roles in land use in no-deed areas or protected areas. The narratives from the people who are related with these issues, both directly or indirectly, provide our understanding about, how vulnerable people were included as well as excluded. Finally, this paper analyzes the socio-economic and cultural structure, policies and global trends, which cause inequalities within the local land-dependent communities.

Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing: Key Concepts in the Creation in Knowledge of Social Studies to Develop Citizenship.

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Abstract

The social studies course is one that is particularly important. For that reason, A study aimed at improving the performance of the students can learn to live in society. And live happily with others. You can take that knowledge to deploy to the social conditions change appropriately balanced and sustainable, also focuses on the students with many different skills and social skills. Thinking skills Decision Making Skills And problem-solving skills The course is aimed at developing the students that the students are good citizens of society. From the family level to the general management studies, social studies is important in the development of many features of the students to be good citizens. Realistic with charity Creativity, determination on the merits Bring knowledge to life with joy. Using techniques from science, technology, science, social sciences and humanities to deploy. Living to the environment, both natural and social happily. Therefore, learning in social studies. The current call Learning Social Studies Religion and Culture It is a learning experience that will help build up the students to understand. Deep thoughts And capable of fully as well. Equip to suit the age and maturity of the students. Keep learners engaged manage their own learning. Develop and expand their own ideas of what they have learned.

Bringing Learning by creating the concept of listening, speaking, reading, writing, social studies course in the subject. Is one way to help students have a better understanding of the idea can be thought of synthesis that can achieve the purpose of managing learning, this article focuses on the teaching of the subject, social studies, religion and culture. The importance of bringing in listening, speaking, reading and writing to deploy to achieve the aim of teaching the next

White Eel and Virtuous Widow in Lost City: Archiving Northern Thai Folklore of Natural Disasters

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Abstract

Upper Northern Thailand has a rich tradition of folklore related to disasters in the valleys and the highlands. Despite this, there is a paucity of literature on the topic.. Across the region there are a number of tales about the lost city, which contains recurring motifs of breaking food taboos, sunken cities and lone survivors. Despite some minor differences, they share a similar storyline with three distinct characters; an unusual creature, sinful people and a virtuous survivor. An unusually large fish was caught and eaten by all the people except for a widow. That night, the city, struck by a disaster, disappeared along with all but the widow. After a strong earthquake hit Shan State of Myanmar on March 24, 2011, a similar tale circulated among Burmese migrants in Chiang Saen. Related folklore was collected through archival research in Northern Thai chronicles and interviews with informants in Chiang Saen. This research also reports local organizations' efforts to preserve disaster-lore for future generations. Folklore preserves local memories of disasters in a locally relevant manner for a longer period than modern prevention plans estimate. Therefore, it can be used to prevent the local population from being lured into complacency about the risk of disasters, which the development of modern anti-disaster technology ironically creates.

Integration and Fragment of Japanese Communities in Thailand

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Abstract

This study aims to facilitate the formation process for a communication tool for minority communities by examining the characteristics of Japanese media in Thailand.

In Thailand's Japanese society, which has expanded rapidly since 1990, the number of people who cannot speak English as well as Thai has increased. Many of them have lived in Thailand without joining the "Japanese Association in Thailand" which is a mutual aid organization of Japanese people.

Currently, there are many shops and hospitals that can exchange only in Japanese, mainly in the Sukhumvit area of Bangkok. Even an elderly person entering by a long stay visa can live a life only in Japanese.

How do they get the necessary information for living in Thailand? This study looks into how Japanese communities in Thailand are changed through different types of media, such as free papers, paid magazines, and online media. The Japanese media issued in Thailand sometimes had the function of integrating the Japanese community and the function of dividing the Japanese community at the same time.

This study is based on a fieldwork from 1999 to 2016. Few works in the area of Japanese community studies have focused on free papers in the study of Japanese communities abroad. The use and patterns of publication of Japanese media materials abroad point to the increasing division among people in Japanese communities.

Cultural Continuity and Ethnic Dress in the Southeast Asian Massif, 1999-2016

Serena Lee
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Abstract

In the Southeast Asian Massif, over a hundred ethnic communities maintain distinctive group outfits, expressing their identity and pride as members of specific clans. Unlike the cosmopolitan/western-style clothing universally worn in the globalized world, surprising twists in clothing trends in this little-known region, which spans the frontiers of several Asian countries, refute the idea that clothing evolution is a fixed continuum leading from ethnic to cosmopolitan dress and the inevitable assimilation into the majority.

Based on multiple field studies conducted from 1999-2016 in the remote highlands of northern Vietnam, southwest China, and Myanmar, this paper discusses the ethnic dress and "meeting of cultures" among neighboring clans and related subgroups. In some Vietnamese villages, all females wear their handcrafted ethnic outfit daily. Propelled by imported yarns, fabric, trims, and ornamentation, Hani, Dai, Zhuang and Yi women in Yuanyang, Yunnan, China, wear modern, stylish versions of their group dress, while Yao Lanten women incorporate cosmopolitan-style athletic shoes with their traditional striking headdress and fringed coatdress. The cultural pride of the Hmong/Miao in Vietnam and Yunnan, China inspires an entire industry of mass-produced ethnic outfits specifically designed for particular subgroups. After 200 years away from China, the Buyi in Vietnam have adopted the neighboring Nung's attire, but now seek revival of their ancestral dress. As these cultures evolve, ethnic dress nurtures a sense of self and place, bonds communities through generations and across national boundaries, and speaks of the amazing versatility and resilience of kinship and the human spirit.

Syahid - Martyrs in Patani

Shintaro Hara
Independent Scholar

Abstract

Since the eruption of the latest wave of violence in the southernmost provinces of Thailand, unofficially called Patani, more than 6000 people have been killed; many of them from the local population. For the members of the non-government armed groups and their supporters, this conflict is a sacred war (jihad), hence there has been a wide range of discussions in terms of the theoretical justification of the struggle based on jihadism. This paper doesn't examine the interpretation of the conflict per se, but focuses on its outcomes, i.e. the interpretation of deaths by local Muslims. Like other concepts in Islam, the concept of "syahid" has been absorbed and interpreted by the local people according to the specific context. The purpose of the study is to identify the concept of syahid among the local Malay Muslim people; how "syahidness" or martyrdom is authorized in Patani society and; by who or which organization, and how the local society perceive it, by mainly resorting to the in-depth, semi-structured interviews of the local Malay Muslim people in Patani.

Chinese Tourists' Expectation of Destination Information for Travelling in Thailand

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Sichuan Provincial Research Institute of Thai Studies

Ming Huang
Sichuan Provincial Research Institute of Thai Studies

Abstract

Chinese tourists have become the largest travel groups in Thailand. Due to the popularity of using social media at destinations, the tourist experience is no longer bounded by the physical limits of the destination. However, for Chinese tourists, destination information of Thailand in social media was not provided fully to satisfy tourists. The paper aims to explore the factors influencing the Chinese tourists travel behaviors in Thailand and identify a theoretical model of tourist expectation of destination information to satisfy the Chinese tourists. This study adopts both qualitative and quantitative methods to explain tourist travel behavior and identify information categories for tourist search by using social media when organizing vacation trips. Survey and interview were conducted on respondents from Chengdu, China to search information sources in trip planning for Thailand.

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The Eternal Primitive Society in Northern Thailand: Reproduction of Discourse on the Mlabri Hunter-Gatherers and Its Impacts

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to explore how the academic, public and official discourses on the Mlabri, known as the only hunter-gatherers in northern Thailand, have been reproduced, and to analysis how the discourses impact on the current situation surrounding them.

Almost two decades have passed since the nomadic hunter-gatherers, who are broadly known among Thais as phi tong lueang (spirits of the yellow leaves), started a sedentary life under the name of patthana (development). The local authorities have initiated various development programs targeting the Mlabri from each other's position. Thus the circumstance the Mlabri live in is dramatically changed, not only materially but also socially and culturally.

Through my own fieldwork among the Mlabri I have found that numerous discourses, which have been repeatedly reproduced by scholars, the public and the officials in different time and place, are clearly and partially affecting the situation surrounding the Mlabri. What makes the thing even more interesting is that the discourses are essentially based on the assumption that "the Mlabri are primitive", while the usage is varied; for example, the local authorities appeal for the need to develop them on this ground and the local tour industry emphasizes it to attract tourists. Given these circumstances, it can be said that the situation surrounding the Mlabri becomes so complicated because it induces a double bind situation to them and keeps them in as if they are "the eternal primitive society".

This paper, therefore, will explore what kinds of the discourses have been reproduced and analysis their impacts on the current situation the Mlabri live in.

Analyzing the Context of Lanna-Ism

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Abstract

This paper discusses the Khon Muang, referred to as the multi-ethnic category of Tai ethnicity in northern Thailand, and their social movement, called "Lanna-ism". Khon Muang identity is attributed to the Lanna Kingdom, the ancient capital of Northern Thailand during 13th century (now known as Chiang Mai). Kraisri Nimmanhaeminda, one of most prominent scholars of northern Thai studies in the last half century, has asserted the identity of Khon Muang since the 1960's. However, there is still no official consensus on the categorization of Khon Muang. That is why intellectuals of northern Thailand tend to appeal Khon Muang identity as one commonality for mobilizing local people, despite lack of a precise conceptual definition. This movement is also different from the ordinary nationalism because it historically lacks the strong discrimination or oppression from majority. To reveal context of Lanna-ism, this paper focuses on dynamics of Khon Muang-ness and the transformation of local autonomy movement to ethno-nationalism.

From the mid 1980's,Thailand experienced the rise of localism. It strengthened the local identity and further contributed to the sense of Lanna-ism. When the new constitution emphasized on decentralization was established in 1997, Khon Muang, under the over-centralization of Thai governance, tended to be empowered, but unfortunately several years later such prospects came to an end. Additionally, many works about Khon Muang (e.g. Tanet 1993; Sarassawadee 1996) were published, resulting in the revival of old local heroes. In 2001, Thaksin Shinawatra emerged as the first Khon Muang who was nominated to be the Prime Minister of Thailand.

Decentralization was a political agenda that has shaped the localism and has brought the sense of localism to ethno-nationalism. This processes has reflected the phenomena of the current Lanna-ism through local history, local heroes, and local politics.

Anisong Manuscripts on the Bun Phavet Festival in Laos: Studying the Relationship between Manuscripts and Sermons

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Abstract

Anisong sermons describing meritorious rewards derived from attending the annual Bun Phavet chanting festivals (Thai: Thet Mahachat) are also performed during the rituals. As for religious contents, anisong sermons are different from Bun Phavet chanting itself; Bun Phavet chanting recites the story of Vessantara (Thai: Phra Wetsandòn), while anisong sermons explain meritorious incentives that the participants gain by joining the chanting rituals. As the texts of anisong sermons are not long, less time is spent listening to them than the Bun Phavet chantings.

My corpus comprises ten manuscripts containing texts of anisong (meritorious benefits) derived from attending Bun Phavet chantings; six were found in Luang Prabang, two are from Luang Namtha province, and two are kept in Paris. My approach focuses on paratexts such as colophons, on the production process, on the usage and storage of manuscripts to reveal the relationship between manuscripts and the anisong sermons.

Beside the manuscript studies in accordance with rituals, textual analysis is also applied to trace the relationships. Different texts were written with different styles which are definitely significant evidences to reveal cultural perspectives.

Accordingly, the research concurrently applies manuscript analysis, ritual analysis, and textual analysis to study the relationships between anisong manuscripts and sermons.

The study aims at addressing the following research questions: Beside serving as writing supports, what do the manuscripts manifest attributions of anisong sermons in Bun Phavet chanting festivals? To what extent are wishes expressed in colophons relevant to the festivals or to anisong sermons within the festivals? Why are writing supports of anisong manuscripts different and what are the different materials relevant to anisong sermons? As for the textual analysis, what are different texts associated with the cultures of anisong sermons?

Exporting Thai Mindfulness Internationally (การถ่ายทอดวิธีการสร้างสติแบบไทยไปสู่นานาชาติ)

Simon Johnson
Australian Asian Associates and ILO Country Office for Indonesia

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Abstract

This paper explores how the Thai Sangha has exported its various mindfulness meditation approaches to the world. It analyses the current Thai social attitudes to spirituality and its application to a global Western audience seeking to deal with contemporary global economic and daily challenges. The focus of analysis is Vipassana, Insight or Dynamic meditation rather than Samadhi meditation or seated meditation, as the author believes such forms of meditation have more applicability to a Western audience seeking spiritual satisfaction and mindfulness.

This is a longitudinal ethnographic study conducted over almost 30 years. Field work has taken place as a Thai Theravada ordained novice monk and a fully precepted ordained monk. A large number of meditation retreats have been attended both in Thailand and abroad to assess the extent of this Thai contemporary religious export. The past meditation experiences of the author provide the historical context which grounds current focus on the approach of an enlightened abbot in Krabi who is an older proponent of the Luangpor Teean school. This paper extends the Masters research of (Pookgaman: 2007) who compared Dynamic meditation of Luangpor Teean to Mahasati Burmese Vipassana meditation by providing more long term empirical evidence.

The Challenge of Studying 'Invisible' Subjects: Tai Lue Cross-Border Traders in the Yunnan-Laos-Thailand Borderland

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Abstract

Before leaving for my doctoral fieldwork, I had proposed a rethink of the scholarship for Southeast Asian borderland peoples by foregrounding transnational social relations of Tai Lue cross-border traders in the borderlands of Yunnan, northern Laos and northern Thailand. Early in my fieldwork, however, encounters with literature and scholars made me gradually realize that there was, at least academically, no own conceptual space for 'Tai Lue cross-border traders'. In this paper, I will demonstrate how a highly compartmentalized landscape of academic and 'local' knowledge in the domains of Tai Lue (Studies) and cross-border trade has rendered my potential research subjects irrelevant or even non-existent.

When trying to break away from this epistemological grid, Tai Lue cross-border traders eventually became 'visible' to me in a Tai Lue village in northern Thailand. Rather inconspicuous within the mapped landscapes of Tai Lue ethnicity and transnational GMS and ASEAN connectivity, but central for small-scale fruit trade to Laos and China, this village functioned as an entry point for exploring further trade dynamics within different settings of this broader tri-national borderland economy, extending to a wide range of commodities, ethnicities and nationalities. Drawing on those, I will critically reflect on my initial research approach still largely relying on an 'ethnic lens' and outline through which other layers cross-border traders navigate mentally, rhetorically and physically these borderlands. Paying closer attention to their actual 'transnational mental maps' might enrich significantly our understanding of Southeast Asian borderlands – by transgressing overly ethnically or spatially conceived regional representations.

A Tale of Two Hybrid Regimes: a Study of Cabinets and Parliaments in Indonesia and Thailand

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Abstract

This article applies the concept of hybrid regimes to evaluate the state of political transition in Indonesia and Thailand and to identify institutional factors contributing to the resilience of hybrid regimes through an examination of social profiles, the roles and functions of cabinets and parliaments as well as the design of constitutions. The article finds that members of the cabinets and parliaments of the two countries are very exclusive and elitist, composed mainly of three major groups: professional politicians, bureaucrats, and businesspersons. Although political parties in both countries tend to establish coalitions to profit from state patronage, Indonesia's multiparty presidentialism so far has allowed the cabinet to discharge its policy agendas, while multiparty coalition government in Thailand tends to be fragile and unsustainable. In terms of constitutional remodeling, Indonesia's institutional rearrangements seem to help sustain popular involvement and provide momentum for fostering democracy. Quite the contrary, Thailand's constitutional re-engineering provides many provisions to disempower the cabinet and parliament. Based on these findings, this article views that Indonesia's transformation from a hybrid regime towards democratization has begun, but Thailand will be more likely to remain in the hybrid regime category.

Development of Model and Management of Long-Term Care for Older People with Chronic Illness in an Urban Community of Muang District of Chiang Mai Province, Thailand

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Abstract

The global challenge of an aged population is the rapid growth of the state of dependency. Chronic illness and normal aging changes cause dependency among older persons. Community and family play major roles in caring for dependent elders. It is necessary to develop appropriate long term care by focusing on community participation in order to fulfill needs and resolve both health and social problems comprehensively. This research aims at developing a long-term care model in an urban community of Chiang Mai Province, Northern Thailand.

Participatory action research was conducted in three main phases: 1) an initial situational analysis using focus groups, community meetings, in-depth interviews 2) collaborative developing long-term care model 3) model implementation. Research participants were nurses working in a Health Promoting Hospital, personnel responsible for elderly care of a Sub-district Administrative Office, the Head of Senior Citizen Club, and the Head of a community.

The collaboratively developed long-term care model consisted of: 1) a referral system to ensure that the care plan was continued from hospital to home, 2) a community-based rehabilitation center established to enhance access to better quality care and, 3) technology-assisted home care and home health care guidelines for health volunteers and health personnel to maximize quality of care services. The management system was initiated and included 1) organizational restructuring of both health promoting hospital and local administrative office 2) availability of human, material and budget resources.

Health services and social services should both be involved in long-term care. This long term care model might not be appropriate with all communities, so it should be modified to fit with each community. For success, capacity of family members and volunteers should be strengthened to improve both knowledge and skills continuously. Networking and community services are key success factors in long-term care of the elderly.

Burmese Labors Make Good Thai Economy(?): A Case Study from the Borderlands of Northern Thailand

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Abstract

This paper studies the impacts on the society and economy of the upper-northern region of Thailand, caused by the employment of Burmese laborers. More than four hundred people involved in the employment and living in the area where these Burmese employees reside were interviewed. The results of the study show that there are both positive and negative impacts.

The positive impact is an increase in the mixture of the two dominant cultures, the Thai and the Burmese. This leads to people learning and adapting to co-exist mutually without violence, through shared religious beliefs and cultural codes. The negative effects derived from the employment were criminal problems - theft, drug problems, prostitution and illegal employment. These problems have led to a higher rate of expenditure by the state on public health and the resolution of environmental problems. Moreover, the rate of unemployment of the Thai workers in the local area has increased, while also receiving less welfare and fair wages. Given these effects, this paper conclude that, despite the negative impact, Burmese laborers have been necessary for the current Thai economy, as they have more endurance in high-risk and low-skill jobs, in which Thais in the northern region have often neglected.

Access to Social Services: A Case Study of the Elderly Poor in Southern Thailand

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Abstract

Successive Thai governments have put great efforts into poverty reduction with good results, but despite this, Thailand's poverty has persisted at a significant 10.9% in 2013. The problems faced by the poor are multidimensional - although income poverty is crucial, it is other dimensions stated in the Multidimensional Poverty Index that have the greater impacts. For Thailand, a long and healthy life and a standard of living are in dire need of improvement. As access to social services plays a fundamental role in improving the health and other quality of life indices of the poor, this paper describes a study of barriers to access government services, especially health care, by the elderly poor in two southern provinces of Satun and Phatthalung - with Satun representing Thai Muslims and Phatthalung represents Thai Buddhists. These include the social exclusion and lack of public transport services for the elderly as well as their own disabilities.

The comparative study of the two ethnic groups are meant to assess if cultural differences, especially religious factors, have significant effects on the access to health and social services as well as other social activities. Policy recommendations will be put forward to help improve the living standard of the poor as well as to reduce the inequality between Bangkok and the regions of Thailand. The research methodology used is qualitative approach, namely focus groups discussions, in-depth interviews and participatory observation. The samples are divided into two groups: the first group being elderly poor, classified by sex, age range, religion and residence; the second group being the responsible government officials and policy makers. Content analysis is used to identify the barriers and ways to improve the accessibility to social services that will improve the lives of the elderly poor.

The Return of the Oppressed: Rethinking and Retracing the Queer Power of Ween in Thai College Communities

Sirithorn Siriwan

Kitt Wongarsa

Abstract

In every state of life, one is required to identify him/herself as an individual or a group member to express identity and existence in a certain community and society. At Chiang Mai University, there is Ween, an independent student association that recruits male college students who regard themselves as transgender (Kra Tei) to conduct activities, including a welcoming ceremony, a Queen beauty pageant, and "Ween Show." All of these relate to the quest and rite of passage of transgender students to become real Ween who can openly dress in female school uniform despite normative heterosocial discourses in Thai society in which Ween is regarded as a marginalized body; and their oppressed queerness is marked by a lack of agency. However, a question has been raised whether in the course of voicing Ween's agency, the association becomes another dominant group exercising surveillance among their peers and other college communities while hazing is ritualized and performed to create sisterhood and friendship. To explain this phenomenon, a hermeneutic approach has been employed to interpret and explicate Ween performances and gendered performativity. This research thus investigates the concept of constructions of power and the clash and repetition of queer oppression among Thai college students. When Ween members transfer the oppression to the new group members (freshmen), the desire for power is repeatedly replaced by another (new) form of dominance to maintain the structure of the seniority system.

Free Magazine: A Successful Business Model Transformation of Print Industry in Thailand

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Abstract

While the print magazine industry is in decline, free print magazines in Thailand have flourished and shown a very noticeable growth. Literature on this subject, in both western and Thai research databases, are limited almost to the point of non-existence. In western countries very few print magazine publishers have adopted a free print magazine business model. Thailand, meanwhile, has more than 45 well established free magazines available in highly populated strategic locations, comparatively high considering the number of surviving print magazines in the Thai market in 2016 - down to 300 titles, from 500 in 2013 (Ygingyong, 2016).

Unlike most print magazines, freebies seem to be more acceptable among readers even though they are using a traditional business income base (e.g. having advertisement as the main source of income). Free magazine publishers are responsible for major circulation and printing (ThaiPublica.org, 2016) while the industry's overall revenue has declined from 61.1 to 4.2 billion from 2006 and 2015 (The Nielsen Company (Thailand) Ltd.,: MarketingOops, 2016).

This paper aims to discover the new business model of this emerging market, as well as to forecast whether it is the sustainable survival method for the print magazine publishing industry in Thailand. Qualitative primary data will be collected and analyzed through survey and interviews with free magazine publishers' executives, academics, industry leaders and/or those highly experienced in the field. Secondary data will be revised through academic literature, journal and in-depth overview of the publishing industry.

Buddha Images of the King Bhumibol Aulyadej's Period: The Art Pattern

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to study the art pattern of Buddha images built in the King Bhumibol Adulyadej's period. This research found that most Buddha images were built based on the favorable royal of King Bhumibol Adulyadej. The features of the Buddha images that were built in the King Bhumibol Adulyadej's period were similar to Buddha images that were built in the Sukhothai era, with some differences in features. The bodies of the Buddha images were slim, elegant, and realistic portrayals of the human form, and the faces manifested countenance. These features were combined with the Buddha images in idealism that were built in the Sukhothai era, and the Buddha images in realistic that were built in the previous Kings' eras. Therefore, the Buddha images that were built based on the favorable royal of King Bhumibol Adulyadej were the identity Buddha images.

The Cultural Influence of Sipsong Panna on Thailand Since the 1980s: The Case of the Lue Literary Work Kham Khap Lanka Sip Hua

Sirui Dao
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Abstract

This paper studies Sipsong Panna's cultural influence on Thailand, especially the Northern Thailand, since the 1980s, taking the reception of the Lue literary work Kham Khap Lanka Sip Hua as an example. After being revised on plot and language, this text, a localized rhythmic variation of the Indian epic Ramayana, is published in 1981 and 1983 in two volumes. The 1980s witnessed the reopening of Sipsong Panna to the outside world. Since then, Thai writings on Sipsong Panna reemerged. Books published in China are introduced to Thailand, among which is this literary text. This paper discusses the reception of this text from three dimensions. The first is academic reception and misreading, especially the comparison with Ramakien, and Charoen Malarochana (Mala Khamchan)'s research on the New Tai Lue script and the language in the text. The second is its influence on Mala Khamchan's novel Chao Chan Phom Hom, Nirat Phra That Inkhwaen, on the aspects of inter-textuality and language. The third is its adaptation into the drama Lanka Sip Ho, being discussed from the aspects of deconstruction and ethnic identity. Conclusions of this study are listed as follows: Firstly, international circumstance of the 1980s and its content of Ramayana resulted in the circulation of this text in Thailand. Secondly, the receptions of Sipsong Panna's texts and cultures in Thailand mostly depend on books published in China and on information provided by Chinese informants, so the misreadings in the Chinese context are easily transmitted into Thailand. Last but not least, the literature and culture of Sipsong Panna have been playing a significant role in the cultural revival and reconstruction of Northern Thailand, as well as in the cultural identity construction of the Lue people in Thailand, since the 1980s.

Reflections on NDC and National Climate Change Master Plan to the Local Climate Actions: A Case of Thailand's Municipality

Sittisak Sugsaisakon
Environment Development and Sustainability, Hulalongkorn University

Suthirat Kittipongvises

Abstract

Reflecting the statement "reducing the concentration of greenhouse gas (GHGs) in the atmosphere is possibly achievable if the right policies are put in place", the local government sphere became the new agenda after COP21 in Paris. The main purpose of this paper is to explore the frame alignment of two types on climate change mitigation policy, namely the Intended National Determined Contribution (INDC) and National Climate Change Master Plan, on local municipalities in Thailand. The study contributes a connection between these two national plans and the implementation of local climate change mitigation, drawing particular attention to ongoing activities and related plans. Considering the above aspects, at the bottom level it is observed that most Thai local governments do not have a clear picture of policy implementation to address climate change and its impacts. Additionally, it can be seen that climate mitigation is typically framed as an energy saving policy which is applied based mainly on the national energy policy. However, locally, climate change mitigation policy has never been prioritized. They, in the meanwhile, have suffered from institutional inertia related to the climate change agenda. Also, those two main national climate change policies do not mention local support and implementation, which could make it difficult to reach the national target as communicated in the INDC. For Thailand to reach its GHGs emission target, the National Climate Change Master Plan needs to draw particular attention to the local level. A project-based approach may have an impact on the mitigation of GHGs rather than market-based approach in the local context. All related stakeholders (i.e. national and local government, private sector and civil society) should systematically design their engagement strategies and actions to lower GHGs emissions in their community, which would definitely benefit them in the long run.

13th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THAI STUDIES
GLOBALIZED THAILAND? CONNECTIVITY, CONFLICTS and CONUNDRUMS OF THAI STUDIES
15-18 JULY 2017, CHIANG MAI, THAILAND

Cold War Social Sciences and the Invention of the Chinese in Thailand: Knowledge, Conflict, and Authority

Sittithep Eaksittipong
Chiang Mai University

Abstract

Exploring the moment when the two classic works on the Chinese in Thailand produced by G. William Skinner and Richard J. Coughlin emerged, this paper reveals how the construction of knowledge on the Chinese in Thailand contributed to American construction of knowledge on Thailand as a whole and how "Skinner's assimilation paradigm" established its authority in both Thai and international academia in the context of Cold War. Simultaneously, it also sheds some light on the close relations between social sciences and Cold War politics in Thailand and Southeast Asia.

Delving into the moment when Thai studies was formed in the 1950s, this paper reveals that the construction of knowledge on the Chinese in Thailand served as a tool reinforcing the pioneer American Thailand specialists' production of knowledge on Thai society. Portrayed as "the other" to Thai society by Skinner and Coughlin, the Chinese served as an analogy that justified and made American construction of knowledge on Thai people and society academically palpable and vice versa. At the same time, the knowledge that they produced were used as a basis to form and justify American and Thai policies toward the Chinese.

As a novel academic subject, research on the Chinese in Thailand was opened to contestation and competition to claim authority over it. Driven by personal conflict and academic disagreement, Skinner and Coughlin competed to claim the truth over the Chinese in Thailand in order to establish their respective work as the authoritative one. The competition leading to the marginalization of Coughlin's work in academia for decades was a defining moment for the production of knowledge on the Chinese in Thailand.

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From Migration to Mobility: A Case Study on Thai Immigration to Australia

Soimart Rungmanee
Thammasat University

Abstract

This paper discusses the transformative characteristics of Thai immigration to Australia. It is based on documents on Thai immigration to Australia, and on regulations and socio-economic contexts that facilitate migration. Prior to the 1970s, the number of Thai migrants that came to Australia were very small. They were either married to Australians or were former students. The number of migrants in Australia grew significantly when the Immigration Restriction Act was repealed in 1973 and Australia accepted many refugees from Indochina for settlement. Included in this group were non-Thais born inside Thailand that later became counted as part of the Thailand-born population in Australian census. Until the 2000s, the Thai population in Australia approximately doubled in size. Majority of them obtained temporary visa aiming to work, travel and study in Australia. This paper argues that migration theories which focus on internal and international movement are limited to understand the recent complex human movements. The paper will draw on the current mobility patterns and will focus on power, regulations and infrastructure that allow people to move or stay. The paper will also give example stories of the Thai migrants in terms of their different motivations and experiences in Australia.

Chiang Mai at the 60th Anniversary of the Zodiac Cycle: Its Past, Present and Future

Somchot Ongsakul
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Abstract

Development of the Communities in Chiang Mai City is a historical study on the Past, Present and Future of the City of Chiang Mai. With special emphasis on the development of Communities prior to and during the implementation of the National Economic and Social Development Plan, when Chiang Mai was being considered for registration as a World Heritage site.

It also studies the future, based on data regarding trends predicting forthcoming situations in Chiang Mai, when it will complete its 60th Anniversary of the Zodiac Cycle in B.E. 2561 (A.D. 2028), by means of the historical method. The results are as follows:

Part I: Development of Chiang Mai Communities, Prior to the National Economic and Social Plan

Part II: Chiang Mai: The City which is under consideration to be registered as World Heritage

Part III: The Next Zodiac Cycle in Chiang Mai in 2028

The next Zodiac cycle in Chiang Mai, in B.E. 2571 (A.D. 2028), is the new hope for the new generation of the 700th and 720th year. The revival of the historical city will need another 12 years to refill its historical resources, by the communication and control of all things made by modern technologies - the “slow movement with an ever livelier and fast media society”.

The Nan Salt: Its Politics and Historical Development

Somjate Wimolkasem
Specialist of Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration

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Abstract

Nan is a city with large amount of rock rich in "salt". It is located in the area of Bo Ban Bo Kluea Tai, Bo Kluea District, Nan Province, about 80 kilometers from Mueang District, and about 700 meters above sea level. The people in this community are the "Lua" , who continue the strict performance of mysterious ancient rituals concerned with digging salt from the ponds.

Due to its rarity in the past, salt was a precious and valuable commodity. The salt sources of Nan became the target of various regions such as Lanna Kingdom in the reign of King Tilokaraja, who led an army to capture Nan for its salt, and the soldiers of King Boromtrai Lakanat from Ayutthaya (even though Ayutthaya is very near the sea). Recently, however, with the invention of the process of using sea bales to make salt has made it much less valuable; thus, Nan salt has been very important to Southeast Asia right from the prehistoric period, through Suvarnabhumi, Dvaravati, Sukhothai, and Lanna, until today.

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The Politics of De-Wetlandization in a Semi-Urban Area: A Case Study of Ubon Ratchathani Province

Sommai Chinnak
National University of Singapore

Kanjana Chinnak
National University of Singapore

Abstract

Wetland areas in Thailand, or “floodplain forests”, are spread around the country and are referred to by different regional names. In the northeast such areas are called "pa bung pa tam" and are known to sustain subsistence livelihood for local populations. However, with the dramatic economic expansion in northeastern Thailand, the value of land has skyrocketed. Urban sprawl has spread into semi-urban areas including wetland areas. Although almost all wetland areas are technically open access--common property which local people can utilize, we found that influential capitalist groups have tried to privatize wetland areas through a process of ‘de-wetlandization’, especially in areas with unclear land titles. This phenomenon not only deprives local people of their resources for their livelihood, but has also spurred tensions between local people and the capitalist or influential groups.

This study focuses on the ‘de-wetlandization’ of the semi-urban areas situated in Warinchamrap District in Ubon Ratchathani province. We first summarize the status of the semi-urban areas chosen for our study, and then examine the different ways of ‘de-wetlandization’ occurs. We then consider the impacts on land tenure and resource rights, focusing on the interplay between local people and the capitalist or influential groups to uncover the strategies deployed by relevant stakeholders.

Collaborative Land Use Planning in Wat Ket Area, Chiang Mai City, Northern Thailand

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Robert Fisher
School of Geosciences, University of Sydney

Sidhinat Prabudhanitisarn

Abstract

Traditional urban planning in Thailand is a top down approach that relies mainly on decisions from the central government. Due to a knowledge gap in urban planning between government and local residents, such a method seems not to be effective for urban planning in a small and unique area like Wat Ket. Land use zoning in the Wat Ket area was designated by the responsible agency as commercial zone, with less consideration of geographical, social and cultural aspects. As a result, the productive land decreased while the residential and commercial areas increased, leading to land use conflicts and other related problems. This paper describes how an alternative collaborative approach to urban land use planning was applied by stakeholders in Wat Ket. It also briefly describes how land use mapping from aerial photos and GIS was used by the collaborative teams in the planning process. The paper argues that the official centrally planned approach to urban planning promoted by the government in Thailand is not suitable to small areas with an existing mix of residential and other land uses. As such it contributes to the growing international focus on collaborative planning.

A Review on the Zhuang Studies: Making Self of the Past and Present

Somrak Chaisingkananont
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Abstract

This paper aims at reviewing the state of knowledge within Zhuang studies in China and international circles. Studies on the Zhuang – Tai-speaking people who have been recognized officially as the largest of the 55 minority nationalities of the PRC – are quite new. The paper is to give a brief historical sketch of the development in Zhuang scholarship.

The paper also touches on the role of Zhuang scholars as "creators" and "manipulators" of identities. Scholars of Zhuang studies had to convert from a Marxist ethnology, which focused on social evolution and class struggles, to a nativist ethnography of ethnic assertion. Zhuang scholars tried to write Zhuang culture and their long-glorious history back into the time and space of the Chinese nation. Recently, the bounding of new regional identities like GMS, China-ASEAN and 'One Belt, One Road' has affected the scholarly discourse of new Zhuang ethnic identities. The topics and direction of Zhuang studies have also changed, stimulated by new economic policies of China toward Southeast Asian countries. A growing body of ethnological knowledge in tandem with the changing context of China and international relations demonstrates that a notion of ethnicity had been intentionally adopted as cultural politics within the new nation-building process.

History in Muang Noi, the Romance of Three Kingdoms

Somrit Luechai
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Abstract

The presence of "Muang Noi " (presently at Pai district, Mae Hong Son Province), as the exile city of the monarchs of the Lan Na, is the result of the hegemony between two groups of noble class; first at the Kong River (Salween) and second from the Kok River Basin.

This conflict appears little by little from the early years of Lan Na Dynasty, but was more prominent in later years (around the end of the 21st century). Especially after the death of the strong King “Tilokaraja”, the Lan Na royal court was forced under the control of two aristocratic groups with 3 regions; Lan Chang, Ayutthaya and Burma. Burma is the most Important variable.

It is noteworthy that the punishment of kings or nobles at Lan Na royal court prefers to use the term “exile” than "execution". The researcher hypothesizes whether the Lan Na derive this influence from China's concept or not. Otherwise, it is a result of bargaining between the two benefiting groups of nobles.

However, the presence of "Muang Noi" in Lan Na history at least shows that the group of "Kong River” had the most powerful dominance over the others.

Above all, the study of “Muang Noi” history is not only to reveal the unforgettable history, but also it point to new issues regarding Lan Na history as well.

Not limited to the king or noble class, this scenario also studies deeply the way of life of ordinary people and the surrounding country.

Displaced Thai in the North" : A Community of Active Citizen Without Citizenship

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Abstract

The Thai state is a member of AEC (ASEAN Economic Community) which tries to integrate people in Southeast Asia to be ASEAN citizens. However, there exists a group in a small region of Thai state's boundary, who have still have not had any citizenship or rights granted. This paper has investigated the Tai Lue and Tai Yuan people who lack citizenship, known as "Displaced Thai in the North" (กลุ่มไทยพลัดถิ่นภาคเหนือ). Through the approach of the "community of practice" and a concept of "citizenship", the study finds that the "Displaced Thai in the North" are a community of those who have struggled for the legal citizenship rights through their practices of social and cultural citizenship. This community of practice has a shared experience of suffering from their lack of citizenship. Together, members have learned and practiced through various activities in order to express their rights and duties; to empower themselves; to do services to the society and the country; and to build the network to facilitate their activities which aim to achieve their goal and to solve the problem in their daily living. Through these practices, this group has become the "community". I argued that despite lacking citizenship, members of "Displaced Thai in the North" still prove themselves as "active citizens without citizenship".

Accountability Beyond the State: Extra Territorial Obligations in the Case of the Koh Kong Sugar Industry Concession, Cambodia

Sriprapha Petcharamesree

Michelle D'cruz

Carl Middleton
Center for Social Development Studies, Chulalongkorn University

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Abstract

The Koh Kong Sugarcane Concession is an economic land concession in Cambodia, which was first jointly-owned and developed by a Thai company in cooperation with a Taiwanese investor, and a Cambodian senator. Approved in 2006, over 450 households from three villages were dispossessed of approximately 5,000 hectares of upland "chamkar" land. The communities, with support from civil society, have pursued numerous avenues for seeking justice, including direct protest, the Cambodian court system, communication with the companies, redress through the Thai National Human Rights Commission (TNHRC), the UK court system, and a multi-stakeholder initiative on sugarcane.

In this paper, we view the Koh Kong case through the conceptual lens of socio-legalism, and in particular that of Harold Koh's transnational legal process, to examine how human rights norms are interpreted, diffused and internalized beyond traditional legal structures. The Koh Kong case was the first major extra-territorial obligation (ETOs) investigation of the TNHRC, and is the particular focus of our paper. The paper draws on fieldwork in Koh Kong, and interviews with those involved in the Thai TNHRC case. Despite seeking justice in many innovative ways, the affected communities have not yet received fair compensation nor the return of their land. We argue that this case has been an important one for furthering the norms for Thailand's ETOs. However, further consolidation and institutionalization is required before it could be said that Thailand acknowledges its ETOs, with civil society in Thailand and neighboring countries required to take prominent role.

Sufficiency Economy Philosophy: The Real Meaning in Social Studies

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Abstract

In order to study the focus of teaching the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy in social studies (following Thailand's current secondary level Educational Curriculum, in accordance with the policies of Thailand 4.0), the researcher analyzed the syllabus and made classroom observations of both state and private schools in Chiang Mai. The results were compared with the royal speeches and ideas initiated by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. It was found that the teaching of the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy emphasized the definition and the principle of 3 Rings 2 Conditions, as well as the contents of New Theory approaches for agriculture practices. However, learners in the present society come from varied family backgrounds, not only from agriculture-based families, and the theory's principle is the adjustment from self-reliance to unity in groups or cooperatives in proper contexts of Thai ways of life. This results in a lack of integrated learning in all parts of Thai society to support themselves adequately according to the theory's core principles. Thus, the information from this study will be proposed to all parties involved in revising the syllabus of social studies for the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy in the future.

The Methodological Issues in Survey Research to Consider the Identity Formations and Settings of Violent Conflict in the Deep South of Thailand

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Abstract

Research methodology has been developed in order to find reality in a complex world. Survey research techniques have been developed to bring about reason and seek truth in society. But there are controversial issues in conducting survey research in the dynamic situation of Thai society. This paper attempts to find and solve some critical issues in survey research that have evolved in trying to study causes and contexts of violent conflict in the Deep South of Thailand. Based on the comparative study of three survey research projects during 2015 and 2016 conducted in the southernmost provinces of Thailand, the paper has found some issues that relate to methods of studying socio-cultural groundwork that has led to protracted conflict. As the issues that lead to controversy about survey research methodology have been raised, the three studies have developed survey research procedures and standards of survey research design that is relevant to the local context. Some interesting considerations have been found on identity formation, the Malay-Muslim identification and local language use. Other related findings are also analyzed to show that survey research methodology is still a useful and reliable academic tool to study the dynamic situation, in order to find solutions in this region of conflict.

State Censorship of Thai Cinema: Right of Expression or Enemy of the State

Sudarat Musikawong

Malinee Khumsupa
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Abstract

State censorship of Thai cinema coincided with the early importation of cinematic practices in the early 1930s. What is new today is that the tenor of censorship has become expansive, as it can be seen in the social contents which represent political and state oppositions of many independent digital cinemas, for example "My Teacher Eats Biscuits" (Khon graab maa,1997), "Syndromes and a Century" (Saeng sattawat, 2006), "Insects in the Backyard" (2010), "Shakespeare Must Die" (2012), and "This Area is Under Quarantine" (2013). When the new Cinema Act (2008) was issued, it was not only to give the power to the state to ban films, but also to install a rating system with the top tiers of restriction of the ages 18+ and 20+. The coupling of banning and punitive rating systems in Thai cinema has ultimately affected the works of many independent filmmakers who are, later on, unwilling to compromise their content. If we look at the shades of censorship, there are self-censorship by filmmakers and producers themselves, the unofficial limited screening by exhibition/theater venues, the rating system restriction on audience's accessibility, the power of the official Censor Board censorship, and, lastly, the banning of film. This paper examines how the mechanism of censorship in Thailand has become expansive in both official and unofficial realms. Specifically, the increasing ambiguity and blurring of what it means to be "too political," what are thought to constitute threats to national security and territory, the monarchy, and social value, by focusing on the practices of censorship, the Censor Board committee, and regulation enforcement through the examination of case studies.

Behaviors of Tourists Who Lived in Neighboring Provinces Affecting Educational Tourism in Pathum Thani, Thailand.

Sujittra Chaijan
Thai Khadi Research Institute, Thammasat University

Abstract

Determining the suggestions for the development of educational tourism in Pathum Thani required research focused on the behaviors of tourists who lived in the neighboring provinces that are providing educational tourism to Pathum Thani. This research aimed to study the perception, attitude and behavior of the tourists living in neighboring provinces. The survey research used the questionnaire with the non-probability of tourists living in Bangkok, Nonthaburi Province and Ayutthaya Province with 400 samples size at a confidence level of 95 percent. The main attractions for suitable tourism to Educational Tourism in Pathum Thani Province was the museums. In the past five years, more than half of tourist had visited museums in the country, on average about three times/year, due to the route are passes from other tourist attractions, more than half not having received information about the museum in Pathum Thani. This suggests television may play a key role in disseminating information likely to draw tourists to the museum in future. In addition, this study found that the differences in education level influenced attitudes regarding educational tourism. The attitude about educational tourism was higher, travel behavior for learning was also with a statistical significance at the 0.05 level.

Locating the Urban in the Rural: A Political Ecology of Agrotourism in Northeastern Thailand

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Micah Fisher
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS)

Abstract

Agrotourism is widely advocated as an ideal policy instrument for sustainable rural development, especially in developing countries dependent on agriculture as a way of life. It is seen as having multiple benefits, such as helping to improve regional economies, preserve rural societies and agricultural landscapes, and improve farmer quality of life. In Thailand, agro-tourism has been officially promoted since 1999 as a way to generate employment and enhance rural economies. This research examines the influence of political and economic factors related to agrotourism across the urban-rural interface, which are rapidly reshaping landscapes and rural subjects in Northeastern Thailand. The research takes place in two comparative sites at well-known agrotourism destinations in mountainous areas. These two sites, Wang Nam Khaio district in Nakhon Ratchasima province and Phu Ruea district in Loei province, have become important destinations for urban visitors to experience agricultural landscapes and enjoy an idealized rural lifestyle. The several million baht per year generated from agrotourism in both of these districts largely goes to outsiders, especially wealthier urban investors from provincial centers and Bangkok. These outsiders, in turn, continue to buy land in select landscapes and expand tourism business opportunities in the form of resorts, hotels, and large scale agricultural farms, and include destinations such as vineyards, wineries, and mushroom farms. Findings of this research show that agrotourism is being reconstituted in new ways that express an indelibly interconnected urban-rural political ecology.

Politic and Aesthetic Juxtaposition: Thai Historical-Politic Memories Through Tradition-Based Contemporary Musical Performances

Sukanya Sompiboon
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Abstract

The Lakon Rong Ruam Samai (contemporary musical play), which was created by Pradit Prasatthong, the Thailand's first Silapathorn Award Winner (2004), presents a combination between the traditional Lakon Rong form, the western musical play, and social issues. The productions portray historic-politic themes, particularly the living moments of the significant persons of Thailand's socio-politic-economic movements. Discussion on this paper mainly focuses on the juxtaposition between the tradition-based contemporary musical play and the stories of the common people, which helped greatly to shape Thai society in regards to democracy, freedom, human rights and equality. This paper first identifies the frameworks of tradition-based contemporary musical plays which were utilized in all productions. I then discuss the creation process in the text, rehearsal, and performance techniques, in order to demonstrate how the production crafted a piece in terms of theatre hybridization between traditional form and social issue content.

These productions, which I joined as an actress, were performed between 2006 and 2016. Namely, "Banthuek Isara" (The Memorandum of Freeman), portrayed the personal moments and struggles of late writer and journalist Sri Burapha; "Plengrak 2475" (Retro Love Story in the Revolutionary Time the Musical), presented some brave-heart moments of Poonsuk Banomyong; and "Mangkorn Salad Gled" (Dragon's Heart the Musical), the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of Puey Ungphakorn's birth. These musical productions aim to create a modern style of theatre that entertains and develops society, rather than serving as a government propaganda tool. They also provoke audiences to think while being entertained.

Water Governance Reform in Thailand: Is It (Im)possible to Implement and Succeed?

Sukit Kanjina
Chiang Mai University

Abstract

During the past year or so, an effort has been made to pass Thailand's first water law. Two water bills are now in the promulgation process. This paper examines provisions of the two water bills on river basins and their management, and attempts to project their implementation. To this end, a concept of collaborative governance and experiences in implementing a current river basin management framework were applied.

Provisions on river basin management in the two water bills are similar in principle to those currently regulating the 25 river basins in the country, where representatives from central government agencies concerned, local government organizations (LGOs) and water user organizations (WUOs) as well as local experts have been appointed as members of the river basin

committee (RBC) for respective river basins. Passive participation, particularly from members representing public agencies, is a major weakness in this setup, as there is no incentive or strong mandate compelling them to take part. With similar provisions, this situation is likely to persist in the new RBC framework.

In order to implement the new RBC framework successfully, emphasis should be placed on the sub-river basin level, as each sub-river basin is likely to be located within a provincial boundary, thus availing more options for creating incentives for active participation through provincial and local administration. A focus on this level also would allow representatives of the LGOs and

WUOs to play active roles in managing water resources in their 'local' area, while the RBC remains an apex body for a particular river basin, which may cover several provinces.

Running Hot : Humanitarian Histories and Critical Subject in Ambulance Work

Sumonmarn Singha
Mahidol University

Abstract

Thailand has been facing a deepening human rights crisis since the coup d'état in May, 2014. The authorities have made little progress in ensuring accountability for the many deaths and injuries from political conflict in 2010. This article analyzes the social-spatial knowledge practices that have emerged in the controversy over medical mission in Thailand. I examine the impact of primary emergency medical services (EMS) in Thai society during the current phase of authoritarianism by the Military regime. I also examine four domains in particular: medical relief, psychosocial humanitarianism, gender-bases intervention and security sector support. I draw on interviews emergency aid workers as well as participant observation regarding emergency medical missions, to critique these trends. The data analyzed derives from an on-going ethnographic study begun in Bangkok from 2014-2016. More specifically, my data suggests that a potential politicization of morality inherent to both organization and volunteer level of a short-term emergency medical missions. The main purpose of this research is revealed the linkages between these fours domains and how EMS volunteers maintain contemporary emergency care worker subjectivity under humanitarian governance and security management In turn, this article illustrates that understanding contemporary regimes of urban governance necessitates attending to the entangled relationship between militarization, securitization, and humanitarianism. This study will contribute to knowledge for those who are interested in medical humanitarianism, conflict and violence studies and urban development policy.

Lannaness in Literature of Northern Thai Writers

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Abstract

This article aimed at searching for and analyzing types of Lannaness in the Literature of Northern Thai Writers through Althusser's conception of Ideology study. The Ideology found in the Literature of Northern Thai Writers is Political Ideology, called Lannaism Ideology. Literature of Northern Thai Writers has produced text by Lannaism Ideology that constructs Lannaness by the literary work by creating Lannaness characteristics, Lanna language, Lanna scene, wisdom, people in history, Buddhism, the otherness discourse of other ethnic groups, and connection to the central. The aim was to create a position for a Lanna under centralized nationalism.

Discourse of Teen Mom in Thailand and Comparison Study Through Films in Teen Mom Issue

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Abstract

According to a report by the World Health Organization (WHO) on the rate of teen pregnancies worldwide, "teen mom" seems to be a global problem. Thailand, a patriarchal country, was ranked 2nd in Asia for the number of women under 20 years old giving birth (World Health Organization Report 2013). Although government organizations have launched many policies aimed at decreasing these numbers the statistics are still stable or increasing. It is also important to focus on the "stigmatization" of teen motherhood in Thailand caused by collective discourse and social constructs created by adults and persons in authority in each era.

Since, according to Mitchel Foucault (Kamjohn Luiyaphong, 2010,) human identity is not permanently structured, but passive from the power of society and continuously changed, the stigma against teen pregnancies in Thailand could be changed to construct a better discourse, identity and reality for teen mothers. Media is one of the tools for discourse creation and the social construction of reality.

The objectives of this study are to understand this issue and find a better solution for the issue of teen pregnancy in Thailand through media. This study is a qualitative research using textual analysis from documents and 3 films which focused on the issue of teen pregnancy (1. Jenny, Juno (2005), South Korean Film; 2. Juno (2007), United States of America Film; 3. Love, Not Yet (2011), Thailand Film). Narration theory, discourse analysis, and social construction of reality theory are the base of analysis for the frame of this study.

Ancestral House and Belief System as Keys to Maintain and Sustain the Liveliness of Chiang Mai Historic City

Supawut Boonmahathanakorn

Samart Suwannarat

Praewpon Sukutsathian

Ajirapa Pradit

Abstract

This paper aims to re-identify value and role of ancestral house system or "Baan Khao" for heritage management of city in the contemporary context. By the depth of understanding gained from this paper on how ancestral house system have been functioning culturally and spiritually to maintain the spatial characteristic of the city together with its socio-culture, we hope this study can be helpful for the establishment of heritage management planning and related legal tools for as the living historic city.

Through the participatory mapping, surveying and interview, as well as conducting a dialogue with local people, as the working methods on fieldwork; the meaning of ancestral house has been re-discovered in today context on how the concept of ancestral house system in Lanna culture reflecting into life of people and city. The information and stories gained from the informants can be explicit witnesses how ancestral house plays important role as the cultural template to connecting people and places where they have been living for generations through annual rituals like Seub Cha Ta and Lieng Pee Poo Ya for instance. Based on the participatory mapping of land use, land tenure and comparative analysis of cultural continuity in each community, the existence of ancestral house can be the imperative tool for measuring the capacity of each local community in transmitting of cultural heritage to newer generations. This knowledge system of ancestral house and its function at today context can be the key aspects that need to be integrated into the heritage conservation and planning to prevent lose of uniqueness and its authenticity threatens by development pressure.

The Nature of Provincial Economic Disparities in Thailand

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National Economic and Social Development Board

Abstract

Thailand's rapid economic development has brought about remarkable wealth and poverty reduction over the past three decades. However, the problem of inequality continues to challenge Thailand's development process. This paper therefore explores disparities as well as convergences in income-per-capita over the past two decades. Here, both GPP per capita and income per capita from household surveys will be analyzed. The paper also investigates growth determinants at the provincial level, including agglomeration factors. Finally, the disparities in poverty and the extent to which provincial growth and inequality affect poverty and educational opportunities are analyzed.

Attitude of Thatien Community on the Reneval Area for Hospitality and Tourism

Supharom Prasatkaew
Thai Khadi Research Institute, Thammasat University

Abstract

Research Project: Attitudes of Thatien Community on the Renewal Area for Hospitality and Tourism, an added project of the "Thatien Cultural Capital for Tourism: The Renewal of the Old Area as Accommodation and Restaurant Premises". The research covers basic data and attitudes of people in Thatien community towards changes in the community. 146 questionnaires were conducted with people living in the community, most of which have lived there for a long time and seen changes in tourism areas. However, most Thatien people still keep their traditional way of life. Some people moved out of the community, while others changed their houses into accommodations and restaurants for tourists.

"Rong Ngeng": Popular Culture of the Ethnic Malays on the Thailand-Malaysia Border

Suporn Pattara-Anuwong

Pornpan Khemakhunasai
Thaksin University

Abstract

This article aims to examine meaning, relationship, opening of the space and reproductions of the space to show identity, through the 'Rong Ngeng', among the Malays in the districts of Su-ngai Padi, Waeng, and Su-ngai Kolok of Narathiwat Province. The data was collected through field observation of 'Rong Ngeng' and interviews with experienced and knowledgeable locals.

'Rong Ngeng' was related to 'Mah Yong' performance, so descendants of the 'Mah Yong' performers express their identities through the 'Rong Ngeng' form of dance. The 'Rong Ngeng' space has been integrated into the 'Mah Yong' performance in the past and expressed via medical treatment performed by both the descendants and those who were not.

Since 1991, the dance has been promoted, commoditized and performed in various ceremonies. From 2014 to the present (2016), 'Rong Ngeng' has been given its own space by the Malays in the Southern border area to encourage people to dance without limitations of gender, age, rhythm, gesture, movement, and place.

Pilgrimage and Imitation: Parallel Phenomena in Buddhism: A Case of Thailand in 26th Buddhist Century

Sura Piriyasanguanpong
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Abstract

This research aims at presenting the historical and archaeological perspectives on 2 phenomena, namely, 'Pilgrimage' and 'Imitation'. In other words, the objectives of this research work are (1) to study on the Buddhist pilgrimages in Thailand, especially the case of 'Nine Temples Pilgrimage Trips' that have been popular at present compared with the pilgrimages in the past from documents and some art works; and (2) to study on a phenomenon that is widespread in the 26th Buddhist century, parallel to the pilgrimages that are reflected through the imitation of Mahabhodhi Vihara from Bodh Gaya, India.

The findings from the study on the first phenomenon reveal that the pilgrimages at present are different from those in the past in almost all dimensions including the pilgrims, destinations, methods, and goals or real themes of the pilgrimages. As for the popularity of the imitation of Mahabhodhi Vihara, there are attempts to make the imitated temples similar to the real monastery and the minimization of art forms and functions of the imitated temples that are different from the original ones.

Both phenomena reflect that the roles of Lanka as the 'Referential Place for Sacredness' have been dissolved in Thai Buddhist people nowadays; India is more important. Furthermore, temples or sacred things are linked with auspicious beliefs are used as new referential places in the individual and separated manner.

Who Is Phraya Sri Khotrabong? : An Attempt to Trace the Ethnic Identity of a Legendary Hero

Surachai Chinabutra
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Abstract

It is interesting that, in various countries in Southeast Asia, namely, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia, one can find versions of similar stories of a hero with a magic club who later on became the ruler of a city. The stories told in these countries share the common theme and motif of the magic club, although the details in each story are different. All three versions include a name of the hero that is a variant of "Phraya Sri Khotrabong." This paper then aims to identify who is Phraya Sri Khotrabong? It also investigates what ethnic groups he was the hero of.

The author studies folk narratives, both oral and literary, legends and historical documents, e.g., Phongsawadan Nuea (Northern Chronicle) in Thailand, and Urangghathat Nithan in Northeastern Thailand and Laos and the history of Khammouane Province, Laos and Lauktadambangkranhong (the history of Phrayatrabong Khayong), Cambodia. The author also conducted field research in the three countries.

The author has a primary assumption that Phraya Sri Khotrabong was a legendary hero of a certain Mon-Khmer ethnic group that was an indigenous peoples in Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. Data from the field reveals that today in the three countries there are stories and statues of Phraya Sri Khotrabong in central and northeastern Thailand, in Khammouane, Laos PDR and also in Cambodia. In addition, in Khammouane, Laos PDR, there is a ritual worshipping Phraya Sri Khotrabong on the full moon of the third lunar month.

Contemporary field data reveals some interesting traces that a certain ethnic group in all the three countries may be the same Mon-Khmer ethnic group, reflecting how they share a social memory of this legendary hero. This memory is such that in the present day they all proclaim Phraya Sri Khotrabong to a legendary hero.

Sex Workers at Betong, Yala: The Intersection of Women Negotiation, Resources and Agency

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Abstract

This paper studies a group of female sex workers in the southern border town of Betong, Yala Province—who have developed abilities to negotiate for better social and economic status while working a trade that has more conventionally been viewed as the domain of marginalized or exploited women. To understand the sex workers' capacity to negotiate their own agencies, the researchers investigated the complex interplay of choice, socioeconomic structural factors, and empowerment influencing engagement in sex work.

The analysis of this study was focused on reasons for engaging in and staying in sex work, derived from in-depth qualitative interviews with participants. Agency is utilized to interpret the contexts of initiating sex work which was served as a catalyst or resource. The researcher argues that the women who provide the form of commercial sex services in Betong have been able to enhance their economic status and social acceptance through their business savvy, their economic contributions to the town, and their efforts to present themselves as "good" women through religious practice and warm interpersonal relationships.

Land Grabbing and the Right to Border Land Tenure at Sri Sa Ket Province

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Abstract

The Si Sa Ket border area contains fields show intense interaction between the forces of "nationalism," which seeks to control the borderlands in the name of national security, and "neoliberalism," which aims to maintain the border as an open space for free trade and investment. This paper presents the conditions that caused the process of land grabbing along the Thai-Cambodian border in Si Sa Ket province, the effects of the land grabbing process on villagers' land tenure, and the negotiation process of minor land tenure that was used to claim the land. Under this context, this review of land grabbing will help us see the complex power relations present in this situation. Although we have seen that the government has power over the land and can intervene in land management issues, we have also seen that borderlands are sold and changed both openly and secretly, away from governmental oversight. The villagers have both fought against land grabbing, and participated in land grabbing themselves.

Common Heritage Through Communication Networks Study

Surat Lertlum
CRMA Research Center, Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy

Abstract

From the beginning, Thai and Khmer researchers have been conducting collaborative research utilizing multi-disciplinary approaches including archaeology, anthropology, geo-informatics, geo-physics, and information technology, since 2005 with continuous support by the Thailand Research Fund (TRF). Originally, the study focused on the royal roads from Angkor. The team benefited from the result of remote sensing surveys which significantly helped the systematic ground trusting conducted during several campaigns in Cambodia, Thailand and as well as in Laos. Then, we have been expanding our study to identify the cultural relationships of mainland Southeast Asia, based on ancient communication networks. The research team is now includes researcher from Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam.

This presentation will be centered on cross-border multi-disciplinary research on ancient communication networks in mainland Southeast Asia which aimed, firstly, to identify all the remaining portions of ancient roads and communication networks in the region. We will explore ancient roads and paths in the region including the ancient roads and trails connecting ancient cities as well as water ways that were utilized as communication networks as well. These studies will reveal physical evidence of communication systems in the region that linked cultures through a complex range of different types of communications systems. Finally, we will illustrate the common heritage that can be identified as the result of ancient communication networks.

The Attitude and Quality of Work Life of Female Soldiers in Three Southern Border Provinces of Thailand

Surawut Chomaitong

Thanyatorn Saipanya

Abstract

The role of female soldiers is important especially in the areas that are conflicted in terms of culture and religion. They can perform one's mission in case that a male soldier cannot respond such as body searching for suspected women. Thus, supporting and encouraging female soldiers for working in conflicted is crucial. This research aims to study the attitude of female soldiers on their work and their quality of work life. The second objective is to suggest appropriate approaches to support their operation. The researchers applied mix-methods both qualitative and quantitative techniques to collect the data. Questionnaires survey with female soldiers and key informants interviews with female soldiers and their commanders were the main instruments. It was found that female soldiers were proud for their career. They felt that they have capabilities to make a living and take care of their family. They had good relations with local people and their commanders. They earned enough salary and welfares. Although, female soldiers have good relations with local people, they remained suggesting that related agencies should arrange the activities that can create relations between local people and female soldiers. This kind of activity can support them to work easier and safer. Training for local language (local Malayu language) is necessary for female soldiers that cannot communicate in local language.

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Impacts of Exclusive Relationships between Decision Makers and Systems of Problem on a Development of Household Economy in Rural Area

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King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi

Chanen Munkong
King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi

Abstract

This article argues that when causal analysis is employed to find solutions in a problematic system of household economy in rural areas, the lack of inclusion of decision-makers and stakeholders into the problematic system generates conflicting solutions and miscommunication. This case study demonstrates a way in which conflicting solutions were generated by the local elders and a university team - to the reoccurring problem of water shortage at Baan Sa-Ngin-Klang, a Karen village of 35 households on mountainous area in Omkoi district,, Thailand. There were two approaches to this problematic system. A university team, in collaboration with a Karen teacher, employed 'scientific problem-solving approach' and found that water flowed consistently from the mountain but at small volume. The amount of daily supply was 8 times larger than that of the demand. The team proposed a solution that involved adaption of consumption behavior, management of water distribution and storage on household and village scales. The local elders rejected this solution with many given reasons. One of which was difficulty in adapting the village's ways of living. On the other hand, the local elders employed 'habitual problem solving approach' and decided to increase water supply by linking a water-ducting system to the second water resource. The supply increased for all, yet the shortage reoccurred, particularly, during the common time for chores. In addition, overflow of water-appeared around the village, likely to affect ecosystem around the second water source. The 'Habitual and the scientific' are causal analyses based approaches but the extent to which causes and factors were investigated differed to a considerable degree because of background knowledge, access to technology and most critically, the decision-makers of each system disregarded oneself, in their own way as part of the problematic systems for which they were not appeared causes or stakeholders.

"Kindred Spirit" and / or "Territorial Contestation:" Male Weavers of Teen Chok Textile in Peri-Urban Areas Around City of Chiang Mai

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Abstract

This paper is based on preliminary field research notes, focusing on narrative accounts of a group of modern and well educated young university men with degrees in subjects such as chemistry, architecture, business and education. They were raised in rural environments as men in male bodies but claim cultural identity with females. Having left traditional normative life behind, they have come for higher education and to obtain degrees. During their time in the city of Chiang Mai, they have been trained as weavers of traditional female teen chok pha sin (female lower garment) while living a modern lifestyle in the peri-urban areas of the city of Chiang Mai, which accepts this lifestyle through its liberalized atmosphere.

This paper employs the "life history" approach of field interviews, and uses a narrative mode to present these preliminary findings.

The Monk on the Farm

Susan Darlington
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Abstract

The Buddha admonished members of the Sangha not to dig the earth because of the possibility of harming life in the soil. Monks receive their food from lay donations, in part so that they do not have to farm, accepting whatever people offer them. Yet a small number of monks in Thailand recognize that what the farmers in their community grow impacts the quality of their lives. Most farmers participate in commercial agriculture, growing cash crops and buying their daily rice. Many live in a perpetual cycle of debt, and are exposed to harsh agricultural chemicals. In this paper I focus on a monk in Nan Province who established a model integrated agriculture farm behind his temple to demonstrate an alternative to the farmers in his community. This monk received a Master's in environmental management as a monk, and works closely with several non-governmental, governmental, and community organizations in his efforts to help farmers shift their methods from cash-cropping to a sustainable form of agriculture. I explore the ways in which the monk articulates his agricultural work as an essential aspect of being a monk and serving his community, influenced by both Buddhist activists and thinkers, and scientific and secular knowledge.

The Examination of Bot Lakhon Nok Entitled 'Phra Rot-Meri'

Sutheera Satayaphan

Abstract

Despite the vast amount of research on Thai performance literature, little is known about Bot Lakhon Nok titled Phra Rot-Meri. The purpose of this research is to examine the version of Bot Lakhon Nok, known under the title of Phra Rot-Meri, of which ten manuscripts have been preserved in the National Library of Thailand. The study aims to analyze the invention of Bot Lakhon Nok titled Phra Rot-Meri in order to find out its era and its characteristics.

Bot Lakhon Nok or the "plays of the outer theatre" belongs to the genre of 'Thai performance literature'. According to an anthology of literature, performance literature can be divided into different categories such as Bot Lakhon Nai and Bot Lakhon Nok. The stories of Bot Lakhon Nok could come from any tales except Ramakien, Unarut and Inao. The stories were popular among villagers, some of which borrow the plot stories recorded in the Paññāsajātaka.

Phra Rot-Meri is a well-known story that was very popular among the Thai, Lao, and even the Tai Lue of Sipsong Panna. The evidence is in folktales and legends such as Nang Sipsong in Thailand and Rathasenjātaka in Lanna. Apart from this, the story of Phra Rot-Meri was also concerned with the royal ceremony from Ayutthaya. The story has also appeared in various literary genre such as 'Kab Khab Mai' [กาพย์ขับไม้] and Bot Lakhon Nok titled Phra Rot-Meri. The issue is that some manuscripts of the Phra Rot-Meri play were mentioned as an Ayutthaya play, while others were mentioned as Rattanakosin. Accordingly, the era of the play is unclear. The examination of the manuscripts will provide its characteristics which should then indicate the era.

Cultural Politics of Long Boat Racing Festival in Nan Province

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Abstract

Previous studies of long boat racing festivals—especially in Nan—have been problematic in their view of the festival, focused on issues of traditional customs, local communities and authenticity, and in particular a romanticized view of local knowledge. This paper proposes the need for added perspectives. In order to understand the multiplicity of power relationships of those engaged with the festival in a neoliberal economic and political context, the roles of companies, media, and the provincial authorities need to be addressed. This study adopts a cultural politics approach to focus on the incorporation of multiple powerful groups and their cultural practices into the long boat racing space. I also apply anthropological methodology, collecting information through deep interviews with different groups: communities, civil and religious leaders, central and provincial government officers, the staff of private companies, and media experts. The study shows that the festival, culturally and politically, is treated as a 'negotiated space' where the interaction of power groups intersects for their economic, political and socio-cultural advantage. It also demonstrates that a fluid and dynamic cultural politic forms between these power groups as they move to maintain their political and social legitimacy in Nan province.

Fatalistic Attitudes Toward Climate Change Mitigation: A Case of Rural Thailand

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Takahi Mino

Abstract

Presently, there is a growing recognition that belief in global climate change among the local people and their formation of environmentally friendly behaviors is not only a function of scientific information, but also a mediating factor, including psychological and socio-cultural variables. However, in Thailand, there is limited research exploring the possible barriers to effective perception and action to mitigate climate change. The purposes of this study were to explore how global climate change is conceptualized by Thai local people and also to investigate the influence of socio-cultural factors in shaping perceptions on proactive climate action. Mixed research methods (i.e. combining qualitative and quantitative techniques) were applied in this study. A total of 253 selected rural households in the northeast of Thailand were surveyed though one-on-one interviews. The survey results indicated that feelings of helplessness and cultural bias, and a sense of fatalism, were considered to be among the greatest barriers in responding to climate change among Thai rural citizens ($p<0.05$). In a sense, even though nearly all surveyed respondents perceived climate change as a real problem, some fatalistic respondents tended to believe that a global problem like catastrophic climate change is inevitable and time is simply wasted in making an effort to deal with its consequences. Belief in one's inevitable fate may consequently lead to cognitive dissonance, helplessness, limited individual responsibility, and also denial of the existence of climate change. Thus far, according to the survey's results, further study should clearly clarify what is the actual role of psychological and sociocultural factors in shaping both perception and proactive action towards climate change. It is also necessary to look at possible ways of overcoming this pervasive sense of fatalism among Thai local people and communities in the long run.

A Study of Society in the Context of the Peace Process in the Southern Border Provinces of Thailand

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Abstract

The Centre for Conflict and Diversity at Prince of Songkla University (Pattani Campus) led a survey of the attitudes of the general population in the three southern border provinces in conjunction with a research project entitled "A Study of the Society Under the Context of the Peace Process in Southern Border Provinces, Thailand" The survey examined a sample of 1,205 respondents from around the three southern border provinces and the four nearby districts of Songkla Province.

Survey respondents were 48.4% female and 51.6% male, with an average age of 38 years. The majority of respondents (82%) were Muslims, while the remaining 18% were Buddhists. Survey results from CSCD indicate that people in the southern border region still agree with and have confidence in the peace process, despite the fact that progress is not readily apparent to the public. On the basis of this opinion survey in the Deep South, we are able to study views and opinions regarding the demands of various groups – including the general population – towards the peace dialogue process. Respondents to this survey presented a number of fundamentally important suggestions:

1) There must be a reduction in violence on the part of all sides.

2) The establishment of judicial mechanisms chosen within the southern border provinces themselves should be pushed forward. For example, a commission should be established to examine evidence in the case of incidents that arouse suspicion and dubiousness within society and, as a matter of primary importance, to compensate victims of violence.

3) There is a need for cooperation among all parties in solving problems of concern to the local population that causes widespread damage. This is especially important – as many respondents made clear – with respect to the problem of narcotics.

Political Issue Hidden in the Chiang Mai Chronicle in the 18th Century

Suwipa Champawan
Chiang Mai University

Krirk Akarachinores
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Abstract

Tamnãn Phuen Müang Chiang Mai or the Chiang Mai Chronicle is regarded as historical evidence in recording important accounts in the past from the 13th thru 18th centuries. However, in a restoration period of Müang Chiang Mai in the 18th century, it has been found that in the Tamnan Phra Non Prua Prang (or story of the Reclining Budha), a religious inventory was inconsistently inserted. This study aims to analyze what is an empirical point inspiring the writer to insert such a story in the above-mentioned Tamnan.

This study utilizes five groups of the following old Lan Na palm-leaf manuscripts: (1) Tamnan Chiang dao, (2) Tannan Phuen Müang Chiang Mai, (3) Tamnan Phra Non Prua Prang, (4) Tamnan Phraya Dhammikarãja (righteous monarch), and (5) Tamnan Phra Chao Liablok. It is based on the concept of the change process of fabricating a legendary story into historical authenticity. It is found from this study that these chronicles were copied and rewritten during the 18th-19th centuries in the reign of Phra Chao Kãwila, a ruler of Chiang Mai, who was not a heretical descendant of Mangrai Dynasty according to a century-old coherent custom. Therefore, the ecumenical Tamnan was devised to legitimize his succession to the kingship worthy of ruling all the diverse ethnic groups in Lan Na society.

Natural Disasters and Disaster Management in Thailand: Status, Risks, and Trends

Tadashi NAKASU
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Abstract

Over the last few decades, Thailand has faced a number of major natural disasters, including the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2011 floods, the 2015-16 droughts, irregular rainfall, decreased fishing and agricultural yields, and rising sea levels. The impact of disaster variability and extreme natural hazards results in not only the loss of human life, but also damage to infrastructure, disruption of livelihoods and loss of economic activity. The purpose of this paper is to overview the status, risks, and trends of natural disasters in Thailand with a discussion of necessary future action. Data was collected from EM-DAT for quantitatively analyzing natural disasters, along with past studies, media and government reports and field surveys. All types of natural disasters from 1900 to 2014 are visualized and put into disaster risk assessment maps, and categorized and evaluated by disaster impact, death toll, affected population and economic damage. The results indicate that Thailand faced 131 disasters during the period, ranging from floods (72) to extreme temperature (1). Although only five earthquakes, including the 2004 tsunami, were recorded, they were so devastating that they account for 29.8% (8,847) of the total disaster-related mortality, in comparison with floods (13%). Floods affected a large number of people (30.7% or 55,542,471) and brought enormous economic damage (47.5% or 45 billion USD). The impact of drought is also considerably severe in terms of the affected population (16.5%). Assessment of the maps (frequency-impact by disaster type) indicates that floods, tsunamis, and droughts should be the top priorities for countermeasures, with immediate action needed for future flooding. In addition, the paper briefly explains the three significant natural disaster events in Thailand, namely the 1988 floods and landslides, the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, and the 2011 Chao Phraya River flood, from historical and socio-economic perspectives.

What Makes a Good Teacher?: Content Analysis of Prawat Khru

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Abstract

Improving quality of teachers is a central issue of education reform in Thailand, and indeed globally. Numerous efforts - such as extension of the duration of pre-service teacher education, teacher education curriculum reform in consonance with establishment of teacher license system, widening opportunities for in-service teacher education, introducing teacher appraisal direct-connected teachers' remunerations and execution of school external evaluations - have been made since the promulgation of the National Education Act 1999.

However, the question of 'what makes a good teacher' still persists in the field of teacher education and has also always refused to fix quality assurance criteria for a good teacher. Worse still, although from experience we judge that there are good teachers, such judgments of the good teacher may not meet the universal standards of good teachers. Under these circumstances, this paper examines the content of Prawat Khru (the annual publication of Teachers' Council of Thailand, since 1957) to clarify the qualities of good teaching, or the concrete examples of a 'baep yang thi di' (a moral example) in Thailand.

Preliminary results indicate that since the late 1970s the qualities of good teaching in Thailand have been characterized by equality in teachers' gender, diversification of teachers' achievements, and flat relationships between teacher and students. This is a large shift from the qualities before the 1970s, being a male dominated teaching force, achievements in Thai language education, and hierarchy oriented relationships between teacher and students.

Thai Youth Sexual Culture: Exploring Representations of Gender and Sexuality in the Thai Controversial Series, Hormones (2013)

Tammarin Dejsupa
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Abstract

Within contemporary times, mass media serves as an informative and influential platform through its representational nature of reality. Specifically speaking in the case of television, this particular medium can serve to deploy, transmit and transform viewers' understanding and perception towards social relations, or more specifically, sexual relations. Although previous studies have been made in Asian countries, very few have been explored. In the case of Thailand, topics of gender identity and sexuality have always been entrenched in discrimination or cultural taboo. Thus, resulting in a lack of print, electronic media sources or literature on the matter. For the interest of this research, the nature of young Thai's gender and sexual practice will be examined through Thailand's first televised sex-education series called Hormones (2013) to further explore on the mediated reality of Thai youth sexual culture through a reading of the series, as well as extend upon Thailand's literature on gender and sexuality. Directed by Songyos Sugmakanan, the Thai series was heralded for its sexually explicit content – revolving around controversial teen issues from premarital sex to homosexuality. This qualitative research carried out a cultural discourse analysis and visual discourse analysis of gender and sexuality depicted in the Thai controversial series, Hormones (2013). Three key areas of gender and sexuality were identified: 1) Heterosexuality, 2) Homosexuality and 3) [Premarital] Sex, where they were analyzed alongside five selected scenes obtained from the series. Findings show that Thai media still persists around dominant discourse of hegemony and patriarchy. Thai youths were predominantly portrayed within heterosexual terms, with rejection towards homosexuality (specially in the case of male homosexuality). Whilst femininity and homosexuality are viewed as sexual minorities, masculinity and heterosexuality thrives as the dominant discourse within Thai social context.

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The Network of Magical Objects Among the Hermits in King's Mountain of Northern Thailand

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Abstract

This paper investigates religious experiences that connect multiple individuals, groups, materials, technologies and institutions in forming networks around Buddhist hermit kingdoms in the mountains of northern Thailand. Many practices and discourses of the hermits and their followers are often generated using magical objects, including a variety of mystical diagrams (yan, yantra), amulets (phra khreuang), and meteorites (lek lai), together with uttering verbal spells (khatha). These objects and the attached spells are believed to provide to their owners and their family business success, wealth, exorcism (lai phi), fortune, the solving of family problems, and the extinction of suffering - providing various effects and sensory experiences.

The paper then examines the ways by which the hermits distribute these objects among believers and followers to form a network. It is through these objects that a 'boundary object' is formed to connect multiple individual actors and groups, who then interpret or 'translate' it in their own terms. Roesi Pan and other hermit kingdoms have, since the late 1990s, created hybrid networks on the border, which are distinct from the central networks of the state sangha.

Through examining these hybrid networks and their magical objects, and the related practices and experiences among hermits and their followers, the paper reveals ways in which materiality, especially of yan, has a crucial role as a 'boundary object' in connecting multiple followers. In recent years, this has included Thais and foreigners from many countries. Such hybrid networks seem to play an important role in stimulating new religious practices and experiences in contemporary Thailand, especially along its borders.

The Belief of Ogre in Thai Society and Cinema

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Abstract

The belief and doubt in ogres is produced by communities as a way to control people in their society. Overall, the key mechanism of "accusation" leads to "knowledge about ogres", which leads to a format of power being "religions rite to (chase/exorcise) ogres".

In the context of Thai society, belief in ogres begins with accusation and rumors disseminated by word of mouth. This is absorbed into the rite and ceremony of local people, which reproduces the lesson in culture until lived culture becomes recorded culture, as seen in primitive ceremony (such as the practice of Sien Khong priests and shamans using bamboo shoots to keep ogres out). The main purpose of these beliefs is to control people in society.

Later, these beliefs find their way into movies, whose main purpose is entertainment and marketing, which combines with new, international ideas. Therefore, belief in ogres in the context of Thai society and culture is produced as art in the form of movies.

The main purpose is to control people in that society. Later, this belief is made to movies by some parts from primitive community to combine with new feature which is more international. For the main purpose is entertain and marketing purpose. Thanks to this belief, where the context of a cultural area is different from others, the function will be different as well.

Conflicts, Marginalization and the Creation of Modern Nation-State: The Comparative Analysis of Pattani and Okinawa

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Abstract

In the wake of the arrival of western countries to Asia in the second half of the 19th century, imperialism and colonization heavily influenced both Japan and Siam . Among numerous reforms conducted by the state, one is particularly worthy of mention: that concerning the creation of a modern nation-state. This led to the integration of tributary states; the Ryukyu Kingdom in the case of Japan, and the Pattani Kingdom in Siam. Within the process of creation, assimilation policy was used to build up the same imagination of the nation. The assimilation policy engendered both conflicts in Pattani (the so-called South Thailand Insurgency), as well as the anti-American military base movement in Okinawa, Japan. This research is a comparative analysis of the cause of the conflicts seen from the perspective of two areas that share similar experiences.

These two aspects resulted in the creation of the concept of modern nation state through marginalization. The research used documentary research method in order to identify the common features of marginalization. In particular, narratives and historical evidences of development are scrutinized to elucidate this point. Results show that the two areas underwent significant processes that led the local people to have different images about the nation; the people of Pattani had difficulty coping with their identification because of external forces such as assimilation policy, while Okinawan people have established their own sense of identity. Based on these, the concept of marginalization noted in both countries may have different experiences but support the creation of a well-defined growing but not merely modern-state.

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A Way to Celebrate the 720-Year-Old Chiang Mai City: Periodizing and Analyzing Its Political and Administrative Structures

Tanet Charoenmuang
Faculty of Political Science, Chiang Mai University

Abstract

[None supplied]

Dancing the Nation: Religious Performativity and Cultural Revivalism in the Tai (Shan) Diaspora

Tani Sebro
Miami University

Abstract

This paper brings to the fore the politics of performance art for Tai (Shan) peoples who have migrated from the Shan State in Burma and are now living in Northern Thailand. Based upon ethnochoreological fieldwork amongst Tai practitioners of dance, theatre and martial arts, I argue that there is an intensified focus on traditional performing arts for exiled Tai and that this effort is an attempt to reinvigorate the Tai peoples' aspiration for sovereignty in the Shan State. Tai religious performance arts, as they are practiced in Northern Thailand, constitute an edifying revival that emerges due to restrictions on aesthetic expression in the Shan State under Burman authoritarian rule. By practicing and learning the dances of the the Tai performance modality known as Jaad Tai, the author brings an embodied approach to the study of the nation and its exilic subjects. The central argument holds that nations are not maintained primarily through capital and reading publics, but rather through the complex transmission of what can be called "aesthetic nationalisms," which involve embodied performances and cultural practices that constitute the body-politic. The paper offers a corrective to disembodied research modalities and instead advances a trans-disciplinary and engaged approach to the study of exile.

Hybridity Identities of Three Generations of Patani Muslim Women in Modern Education System between 1957-1982

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Abstract

In order to understand Muslim women's identities from the perspective of cross-border travel, the research project on which this study is based has studied the histories and identity formations of three groups, or "generations," of Patani Muslim women who have passed through new systems of modern education, and who have used these new educational opportunities as stepping-stones to enrolling in both religious and secular curriculums outside the Deep South of Thailand. The project focused particularly on women who studied in other parts of Thailand or in overseas locations between 1957 and 1982.

The study found that these Patani Muslim women who went on to study outside their hometown areas occupied "in-between spaces" of cultural and geographical diversity, as they worked through their encounters with both non-Muslim and Muslim peoples. Moreover, changing political and economic geographies over time led to the construction of "hybrid identities" that drew both on "Malay-Muslim" styles of "modern" identities and on Western-liberal styles of "Thai" identities. Each of the three groups of women drew on these cultural and experiential materials in different ways as they worked out their own ways of coping with "the period of change" from the era of Western-style modernization to the era of Islamic revivalism and globalization, an era that has included the re-emergence of "insurgency" in the Far South.

A City in the Colonial Margins: Chiang Mai between Empire and Nation

Taylor Easum
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Abstract

This paper explores the history of the integration of 'the north' into modern Siam, as viewed through the lens of the late nineteenth to early twentieth century urban space of Chiang Mai. From a national perspective, the integration of the north has most commonly been explained as the result of regional economic shifts and political strategies employed by outside groups (Siamese officials, British diplomats, American missionaries, etc.) to manage these changes (Sarassawadee 2006, Ratanaporn 1989). Though Chiang Mai had, since its foundation, remained part of an inland Tai space, these changes meant that the city would be both a) reoriented away from overland networks of trade and tribute, and towards--for the first time--the coast, and b) integrated into a new national political space, created by the bounding and mapping of Siam (Thongchai 1994). Looking at national integration at the urban scale highlights a different set of spatial strategies that were also key to both Bangkok's project of national integration, and the efforts of local elites to resist or shape that project to their benefit. Using the concepts of displacement, disenchantment, and reinscription of space, this essay will examine the Siamese project of spatial 'micro-colonization' carried out at the local and urban level. The essay argues a) that Chiang Mai's urban space can be seen as a 'micro-colonial' reflection of the formation of the modern Siamese state in its northern periphery in the context of global empire, and b) that the city was assembled and shaped (cf. Kostof 1991, 2005) to meet the needs of both Bangkok officials and colonial powers. Finally, the essay concludes by highlighting the complicated spatial memory of this history in the monuments, architecture, and streetscape of Chiang Mai.

Thai Digital Era: The Contestation of Data Journalism and Data Regime Towards Public Content and Dialogue in Thai Media

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Abstract

In the past decade, Information Communication Technology progress and digitalization have changed the media landscape in Thai society. This is especially true in the field of journalism which acts as a source of information in deliberative democracy. The growth of digital media outlets/channels/ platforms has created a new arena for diverse stakeholders to contest and negotiate with old privileged players. Even though half of the population is still struggling in the digital divide, there are attempts to reduce those gaps. As a result, the informed citizen can increasingly engage in public issues. Moreover, the open data movement also allows users free access to public information, and the generating and sharing of digital content (UGC: User Generated Content). Data journalism creates new places to collect/compile data and create data visualization, which works alongside traditional investigative journalism both in producing news content and setting the public agenda.

Thai independent news agencies are trying to make use of data journalism in order to disseminate inequality and undemocratic public issues. However, Thai independent news agencies realize that they are also moving towards a pseudo-democratic public sphere. We can witness a social media algorithm which controls our news feed. Consequently, data control regimes reinforce our socio-cultural and political perceptions, generating polarization among Thai netizens. Therefore, it is a great challenge for Thai society in the near future for a media landscape to emerge for participating actors to form and facilitate critical and diverse public dialogues based on the public interest.

Deviation in Language Use and the Misperception of Minorities: A Case Study on the Use of Thai Final Particles by Shan People

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Abstract

Shan people are one of the minority groups in Thailand who are often downtrodden by Thai people, deprived of their rights and social welfare benefits. Moreover, through the use of Thai language, mainstream media often portrays them as uneducated and associates them with violence. Many studies on language and minorities focus on how Thai people use their own language to create a negative perception of minorities and how the power of Thai people is maintained through such language use. However, based on our survey, the language used by minorities could be a factor causing them to be misperceived since language use and politeness are key criteria for differentiating whether an individual is Thai or non-Thai, educated or uneducated. Therefore, in this study we investigate the issue of language and minorities from a different perspective. That is, we investigate the use of Thai final particles, the units of language that convey politeness, by Shans. Since most Shans learn Thai after their critical period and from an informal learning situation (e.g., from daily routines), it is hypothesized that the Shans might not be able to use final particles in a native-like way. We discuss how such deviation in language use makes utterances of Shan appear impolite, and thus creates a misperception of them. The expected contribution of this study is to promote better understanding of Shan people, which in turn might promote their standard of living in the future.

Architecturally Analyzing the Thai Concept of 'Home' Under Mid-19th Century Modernization by the Royal Regime: Hybridization and Architecture of New Road in Bangkok

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Abstract

Western colonization expanded through Southeast Asia in the mid-19th century and largely influenced many cities in the region. Bangkok, however, was not under any colonial powers due to the 'flexible strategy' (modernization by the royal regime led by King Rama IV (1851-1868))), which intended to preserve the independence of Siam (Thailand) and the Thai identity. Thus Bangkok began to transform from a 'sacred-aquatic' to 'modern-terrestrial' city under the dominance of Thai monarchy.

Conceptually, this paper examines the origins and change to Thai ideas of 'Home' within the geo-cultural space of Bangkok in the mid-19th century. It looks at the existential (geo-cultural) space of Bangkok via mean of architecture and urban morphology to see how changes to building design contributed to shifts in the Thai concept of 'Home'. This paper adapts some aspects of 'Home'/'Place' theory as a framework to first analyze how the Thais (phrai) understood 'Home', before looking at how phrai began to hybridize their concept of 'Home' under the process of modernization in Bangkok.

This article looks at the establishment and architectural changes in New Road as a paradigmatic case study to analyze the hybridized Thai concept of 'Home'. New Road is an important site for this research because it was one of the first architectural representations created by Rama IV to promote Bangkok as a modern city.

Digital Collection of Ban Chiang Masterpieces Potteries

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Abstract

This research aims to develop the digital collection of Ban Chiang pottery, using research and development methods, which consists of 3 steps; 1) using content analysis methods by studying related documents and research gathered on each piece of pottery 2) analyzing and synthesizing metadata from existing tools to record relevant information 3) developing the digital collection of Ban Chiang masterpieces. The results of the study are 1) 30 pieces of Ban Chiang pottery masterpieces have been submitted for case study; 2) Metadata has recorded information about the pottery, which includes 20 elements of data, such as image, title, serial number, the registration number, the site of reference number, the cultural context, the style period, description, condition, measurement, material, provenance, location, descriptor, technique, textile, art aspect, socio-cultural aspect, rights and Remarks; and 3) digital collection of Ban Chiang pottery is used for data storage, offering content in metadata and in animated form. It can be used as a learning resource online, and the prototype has been established for the development of digital collection techniques on other culturally or historically significant items.

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Policy Dependency, Policy Inequality and Problem of Practicing the Policies on Helping Agriculturers: Case of the Project of Unmilled Rice Subsidy Scheme and the Project of Reducing Cost for Rice Planting

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Abstract

This article aims to survey the impact of practicing the policies of both projects in helping the joining farmers. The major assumption is that the project of unmilled rice subsidy makes the farmers to depend to the governmental policies in planting or selling, being in the condition of 'policy dependency'. The project of reducing cost of rice planting results in the level of differences in accessing such project, between the farmers who own their own farming plot and those who rent others'. This can be regarded as 'policy inequality'. From discussing with groups of farmers in five provinces in Northeastern and Central regions during the field research, the researcher finds that the project of unmilled rice subsidy forces the participating farmers to plant only some assigned rice varieties and to narrow their options of selling the unmilled rice. Meanwhile, the project of reducing cost of rice planting forces the farmers who have to rent their extra paddy field to share the subsidy with the owner. Therefore, these policies of short-term subsidy, resulting in the farmers' dependency, should be revised.

Saw Vocal Tradition in Local Schooling: The Contestation between Official Knowledge and Localized Knowledge

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Abstract

The prevailing discourses on Thai Education indicate that school is highly institutionalized and culturally hegemonized. It serves an important apparatus for the reproduction of state ideology in disciplining and preparing desired citizen. This paper is a conceptual paper that aims to address the question of whether school is actually a negotiating space. The paper argued that school was an opening space for negotiation and contestation for knowledge, thought, belief, and cultural politics. Based on the examination of Saw Vocal Tradition (or Lan Na Oral Poetry) contained in local curriculum in Chiang Mai province, the study found that Lan Na sociocultural capital developed in the past two decades served as the important force that made it possible for knowledge and culture of the locals to be included in local curriculum of schools, which highly oriented to localness. When Saw Vocal Tradition as Lanna culture product was included and represented in local curriculum, it reproduced imagined Lan Na identity, on the one hand. On the other hand, it served to reproduce 'theatrical state'. The study also revealed that the presence of Saw Vocal Tradition in the local curriculum of the schools shifted technical paradigm in educational research, knowledge management, curriculum development, educational management, and educational stakeholders. This led to the institutionalization of local knowledge or to become local official knowledge. This phenomenon, so-called "localness based-education innovation", undermined and restricted the inclusion of other local knowledge that was not institutionalized from local curriculum in school. This study concluded that an ongoing contestation in school is needed in order to provide school with choices in teaching, developing, and cherishing students.

Politicization of Rice Prices: Who Gains and Who Loses from the Populist Policies to Intervene in the Rice Prices of Thailand?

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Kittisak Jermsittiparsert
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Abstract

This research aims to (1) analyze the effectiveness of populist policies – particularly the scheme of rice mortgage and the scheme of an income guarantee for rice farmers – in mitigating the impact of the global market on the domestic rice price and (2) analyze the politicization of rice prices with regards to the sharing of benefits and risks arising from the fluctuation of rice price within the rice-trading sector, among the exporters, rice millers, and farmers. The research utilizes time-series data of export rice prices, domestic rice prices, and domestic paddy rice prices in two time periods, including (1) the pre-populist policy period from January 2000 to March 2008 and (2) during the populist policies from April 2008 to April 2014, upon which regression analyses and statistical tests are conducted. First, the results show that adopting the populist policies is effective in mitigating the influence of the global market on the domestic rice price by about 13.33 percent. It also mitigates the influence of the export price pass-through to the paddy rice price by about 35.99 percent. Second, the benefit- and the risk-sharing structures arising from the fluctuation of rice price between the exporters, the rice millers, and the farmers are 1.8305: 0.2232: 97.9463 and 14.9140: 30.7461: 54.3399 before the adoption of the populist policies and during the adoption of the populist policies, respectively. Moreover, different populist policies also result in different benefit- and risk-sharing structures. The different structures are 9.9003: 27.15753: 62.9422, 13.5071: 6.1679: 80.3250 and 5.0864: 15.0578: 79:8558 for the first rice mortgage scheme, the income-guarantee scheme, and the second rice mortgage scheme, respectively.

The Roles of Thailand in the Indonesian Revolution

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Abstract

Shortly after the Second World War, the Republic of Indonesia proclaimed its independence on August 17, 1945. The Dutch attempt to reoccupy the Indonesian archipelago led to a four-year long conflict involving both physical battles and negotiations. Eventually, with pressure from the US, the Netherlands acknowledged Indonesia's sovereignty over the archipelago on December 27, 1949.

Despite an enormous body of research on the Indonesian Revolution, little is known about how countries in Southeast Asia contributed to the independence of Indonesia. Most existing literature focuses mainly on the roles of Western nations in mediating negotiations between the disputed parties. This study examines the roles of Thailand during the Dutch-Indonesian conflict between 1945 and 1949. It looks at how the Thai government and individuals reacted to missions of the Indonesian agents in Thailand and identifies factors that may have influenced such reactions. Letters, telegrams, and reports in the archives of the Dutch legation in Bangkok and the Dutch Far Eastern Department constitute the main sources for this study.

This study argues that Thailand unintentionally assisted the fledging Indonesian Republic through trades of war materials and the permission to use Thai airfields to connect the Indonesian Republic to the outside world. By showing that Thailand tacitly helped Indonesia without establishing official diplomatic relations, this study highlights the contradiction between the official Thai foreign policy of the time and the actual practices regarding the Dutch-Indonesian conflict.

Sacrificing for Constitutionalism: The Image of the Constitution in the Commemoration of the Boworadet Rebellion

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Abstract

"I am proud to die in this occasion. If they would bring my corpse to the Grand Cremation at Sanam Luang, along with those of other martyrs, and if people would mourn for those who sacrificed their lives for the peace of the nation and for defending ratthathammanun, I would die with happiness" (Si Burapha, 1933).

Two months after the Boworadet Rebellion (1933), the Art and Craft Section in the Committee of Public Relations published a book Thoet ratthathammanun (Honoring the constitution) on the occasion of the Constitutional Fair of December 1933. Si Burapha (Kulap Saipradit), the Thai journalist, novelist and founder of the literary group, the Gentleman's Group (Khana suphap burut) wrote a short La kon ratthathamamnun and dedicated it to the 17 fallen heroes of the Boworadet Rebellion.

The Boworadet Rebellion brought brutality into the heart of Thailand's politics. It was followed by a proliferation of commemorative practices focusing on the commoners who sacrificed their lives for the country. In the aftermath of the incident, the search for an appropriate language of loss involved the making of a new meaning of what it was to be a good citizen and national sacrifice. This paper considers the nationalization of death as manifested in the commemorative visual forms of the funeral processions of the 17 soldiers and policemen, the crematorium at Sanam Luang and the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument in Lak Si. It concentrates on the transformation of phan ratthathammanun, which first appears in an anti-royalist context after the People's Party put down the Boworadet Rebellion. In the post-Boworadet Rebellion visual culture, phan ratthathammanun has shifted from a symbol of royal authorization to a symbol of constitutionalism, the supreme ideology of the Thai nation.

The Paradox of Morality: The Cultural Forces of Emotion in Thai Political Conflicts

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Abstract

After the political crisis of the last decade, the idea of Thai morality with the King as the center and symbol of legitimate power has faced more troubles from the new consciousness of many groups within Thai society. This new consciousness has appeared in the diversity of social sub-groups who joined with the yellow shirts, the red shirts and the People's Democratic Reform Committee movement with their different desires, demands and thoughts.

However, the problem lies in the illusion of morality that has concealed and suppressed the diversity of thoughts and other moral decision values of many groups of people in society. Subsequently, Thai political conflicts and polarization demonstrated the struggle for power over moral values among several social sub-groups. This struggle is reflected in the differences of the cultural force of emotion, which refers to the intense feelings and experience of learning within the context of the subject's position. This cultural force of emotion showed the complexity of conflicts within the seemingly binary conflicts between the yellow shirts and red shirts.

The Myth of "Thailand Eye" V.S. Global Art: Overlapping Itinerary Through Visual Art of Thailand

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Abstract

The globalized concept of art world has inextricably bound the visual art scene in Thailand through the international art movements and practices, such as conceptual art, installation art, video art, performance art, experimental art and etc. The integration of the local art forms with that of the international ones has established itself as the mainstream art movements since the 1980's and the number have multiplied quickly and become 'too large' to be contained inside art premises. Consequently, these newly developed art forms have spilled out into streets, public spaces, and other alternative spaces in many local communities. This paper examines the expanding sphere of the contemporary art in Thailand, by focusing on the exhibition of "Thailand Eye" (2015-16). It analyses the exhibition from the contexts of globalization and art world. The study shows that while the Thailand Eye exhibition could be seen being made with international artistic forms and styles--with the fusion of local myth, cultural icons, religious, and fantasy world, showing the artistically individual quality--these artists, in fact, alienate themselves from art objects and audiences. As such, the paper argues that the exhibition does not attempt to assimilate itself with the globalized visual art movements.

The Other Burmese Connection: The Silk Industry in Northern Thailand from the End of the Nineteenth Century

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Abstract

The silk industry represents one of the few 'traditional' industries that successfully found a modern market in the Thailand of the 'age of development'. Silk weaving has to some extent always been commercialized but in the late nineteenth century efforts were made to increase the amount being produced for markets and to recast it as the basis for potential modern industry. King Rama V (r.1868-1910) supported the development of the silk industry by founding a factory for silk weaving, establishing a weaving school, hiring Japanese experts as technicians, while attempting to integrate village production into the modern process fulfilling the important role of silk-weaving. Although these early efforts failed, the later government of Field Marshal Pibun Songkhram promoted silk-weaving among their other industrializing efforts as a symbol of Thailand's economic diversification.

The perception of the silk industry as an example of Thailand's endogenous industrial development is tempting. In fact, historically, the emergence of the modern industry involved, in some places, significant external input. Overland entrepreneurial traders from Burma played a significant role in establishing a transnational and multi-ethnic zone of silk production and trade between Burma and Northern Siam in the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. Raw silk was imported from Burma and carried to Northern Siam to be woven by locals, then re-exported to Burma. This transnational economic activity energized and pioneered the modern silk industry in Northern Siam and stimulated the emergence of local entrepreneurs, turning Chiang Mai into a recognized hub of Thai silk-weaving and trade. The case of the silk industry in Chiang Mai illustrates how non-state actors stimulated local industry and external inputs, and the movements of traders across the border, were as important as domestically-based resources in fashioning a modern silk industry in Chiang Mai.

Changing Meanings of Religious Titles in Present-Day Tai Yai Society

That Sriratanabal

Abstract

This article aims to explain changes in the use of Buddhist titles by Tai Yai people under the changing social and economic contexts of modern-day Thailand. The subject of the study is the Tai Yai community in Muang district, Maehongson province.

The study finds that in the traditional period Buddhism played a significant role in establishing social control in the Tai Yai (Tai/Ngiew) community. It has been found that there was a systematic use of religious titles, such as Sang, Jang, Jong, and Paga, which were arranged in hierarchical order. The religious titles were not only used to convey a person's socio-economic status, but also as a means in controlling the conduct of the members of the society. The religious titles were also employed as a tool for building social and trading networks in the Tai Yai community. Furthermore, the use of religious titles was also widely recognized as a form of Tai Yai identity by people outside the Tai Yai community.

The study finds that, with the rise of nation-state and the spread of capitalism in the latter part of the 25th Buddhist century, the Buddhist customs which were once used to convey meanings and establish social control have been replaced by other processes, resulting in the continual decline in the use of religious titles in the Tai Yai community. However, since the decade 2530's there has been a revival of the use of religious titles in Maehongson province, where the titles have been attached new meanings and are used under the following conditions. First, the use of religious titles is only restricted to religious and belief-related occasions, and is no longer officially recognized. In other words, the religious titles are no longer registered in the population registration system as they once were.

Mekong Regional Conflict : Past and Future

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Abstract

In the past, Indochina was a center of conflict between communism and liberalism. However, since the cold war ended in the 1990s the conflict did not end. The conflict became complicated and transformed into various issues. Despite the establishment of the Greater Mekong Sub-Region, conflict has persisted. Borders, ethnicity, religion, and marginalized people are the cause of new conflicts emerging both in and across the Mekong region. Competition for natural resources and territory among Mekong country members and with superpowers continues.

The Influence of the Classical Literature on the Contemporary Cinema: A Comparative Case Study of La Princess De Clèves and Lilit Phra Lor

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Abstract

Our current research aims to study the influence of the French and Thai classical literature on the modern and contemporary cinema. This influence should not be considered only from the point of view of adaptations, but also that of new versions of older movies (remakes). The practice of the remake is not widespread in Thailand, whether in the fields of literature, media and film; yet there are some examples, such Phuan Phaeng which in its fictional version can be considered a remake of ลิลิตพระลอ (Lilit Phra Lo). This is far more prevalent in Western culture, where ancient philosophy and art can be source of inspiration for later artists, philosophers and writers: one can remember the case of the Oedipus complex, the concept of platonic love or the wide influence of famous literary works, such as Tristan and Yseut.

La Princesse de Clèves and Lilit Phra Lor are certainly one of the most influential classical works, as Madame de la Fayette can be considered a very outstanding pioneer of the new era – that of the "roman à tendance psychologique" – psychological novel with interior monologue. We will present some elements of comparison between this novel and some modern and contemporary films that have be inspired by these works: La Princesse de Clèves, Le Bal du Comte d'Orgel, La Fidélité, La Lettre, La Belle Personne, Nous Princesses de Clèves and เพื่อนแพง (Phuan Phaeng).

Capital Accumulation in Phrae from the End of World War II Till the 1980's

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Abstract

Macro economic growth in Thailand has always been an academic subject of intense interest. The micro perspective, however, is an area of neglect. A study on Phrae economy is a case in point as an overlooked field of research. This study is an attempt to fill this vast void.

Two periods of its economy can be distinctly demarcated, i.e., pre and post WW II. The dynamics of the former revolved around the forest, the latter the tobacco industry. Following the initiatives of Phibul's economic policy after the 1940's, the enterprise of Thailand Tobacco Monopoly under the Excise Department (กรมสรรพสามิต) laid fertile conditions for the expansion of the tobacco producers and 'middle-man' suppliers. Phrae was chosen as the sole province of tobacco production both in terms of agricultural as well as trade promotion. The corollary is the enrichment, in Marx's terminology, of capital personified.

This paper aims to explain how these people in the tobacco business amass capital and exert eco-political influence, initially at the provincial and then the national level. Prominent among them were the families of วงศ์วรรณ of กันทาธรรม and of ศุภศิริ. Hopefully, it will shed light on patterns of capital accumulation in the Northern region and how it could lay the foundation of political power nationwide, particularly in the specified time frame and that immediately following it. Additionally, its ambition is that it might be a pioneer of studies of a similar kind.

First Steps Toward an Industrial Society: The Emergence and Development of Thailand's Footwear Industry, 1850-1997 (1)

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Abstract

While most studies of infant industrialization would probably begin with an analysis of the textile industry, the footwear industry is also one that serves as a potentially 'endogenous' example of resource-based industrialization. Given the almost universal availability of the relevant locally produced natural resources, namely leather, and additionally, in Thailand's case, rubber; a level of skill and technology easily accessible to small-scale and medium-scale enterprises; a potentially abundant domestic market and a relatively rapid replacement rate (they are not quite durable goods), footwear provides an easy entry-point for a country seeking to industrialize. But more significantly for the purposes of a study, Thailand went on to become one of the world's largest producers and exporters of footwear and for a time in the nineteen-nineties led the region.

Indeed, far from being a marginal subject, shoes accompanied and symbolized the modernization of Thai state, society, and economy over the past two centuries. They were at the heart of events when the country opened itself to the European global order of trade in the mid-nineteenth century; they were present when the state embarked on institutional reforms at the end of the nineteenth century; they reflected the pace of economic growth at the beginning of the twentieth century and the strident nationalism of mid-century; they spoke of Thailand's natural resource endowments, and they came to stand at the fore of the export boom economy at the end of the twentieth century, characterizing the economy's success and its frustrating limitations. This presentation will explore the roots of this industry, its path and its constraints, and gauge the extent to which an often overlooked manufacture contributed to the country's industrialization.

Burmese Migrant Voters in Thailand: Counterfactual Study

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Abstract

Myanmar is a country currently transitioning away from half a century of military-led authoritarianism. Part of that democratization process is evidenced by the national-level 2015 Election in Myanmar. Within the country, voter turnout was reported at 69 percent. Yet, outside of the country, of the approximately five million émigrés that make up the Burmese diaspora, fewer than twenty thousand exercised their right for "advance ballot" to externally vote in the legislative 2015 Election in Myanmar—that is, less than 0.5 percent of those total overseas expatriates, migrant laborers, and cross-border refugees actually made an absentee vote. This study explores a what-if scenario of those potential would-be absentee voters by analyzing new data collected in the months leading up to the 2015 Election on the opposite side of the Myanmar-Thailand border. Thailand hosts approximately three of the five million Burmese migrants abroad and by focusing on Tak Province in Thailand, this study argues that there was something of a "lost opportunity" in potential absentee voters for both the challenger political party National League for Democracy (NLD) and the "old regime" party United Solidarity and Development Party (USDP). Utilizing an extensive-intensive methodology of in-depth interviews (n of 20) and multinomial logistics regression of survey data (n of 3,671), new explanatory variables of mobile self-identity, mobile location, past persecution by government, and migrant commitment to democratic processes prove more efficacious than the normally argued factors of demographics or partisan politics in the literature on voter party choice. Our understanding of both party choice and absentee voting is expanded by this counterfactual study into comparative political systems. The study concludes by reviewing a selection of participants who were invited to re-interview and reflect upon these findings for the future 2020 Election.

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Disturbing the Peace: Setting and Subversion in the Thai Expat Crime Novel

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Abstract

Bangkok (and Thailand in general) is a paradise for the Thai expat crime writer. Why is this so? Thailand has a large number of expats and tourists to form a base audience for these novels and they want to understand what happens in Thailand. It has a large and very visible prostitution industry, corruption is widespread in the police, military, bureaucracy and business. It is a culture in which transparency is minimal and officials save face through non-exposure, and it has a history of political instability and violence. All of these elements mean that interesting, indeed often bizarre, crimes and detection flourish in Thailand. This reality provides the base for expat writers to construct plausible fictional settings in which they can situate their crimes, criminals and detectives. These settings and situations provide a basis for subversion – the subversion of the detective's values, the subversion of the implied reader's values, and the subversion of the officially sanctioned image of the society and polity.

Politics of Planning; Experiences in Thailand

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Abstract

Urban problems in Thailand are complicated and most of them have become increasingly critical. From upstream deforestation replaced by modern resorts to the downstream fertile paddy fields replaced by housing projects, and the increasing number of industrial estates, conflicts are everywhere and urban development is controversial. Why is planning in Thailand not functional? Urban planning is likely the best tool because of it's ability to avoid issues early in the process. What are the core reasons behind the country's planning problems?

According to the fourth revision of the Town and Country Planning Act 2015, public participation has been included as a compulsory and legally enforceable step in the planning process. However, a number of political interventions are noticeable and the use of political power to overrule planning regulations is relevant.

Nigel Taylor states that 'Planning' can significantly affect the lives of large numbers of people, and since individuals and groups may hold different views about how the environment should be planned, based on different values and interests, it is therefore also a political activity.

This may imply that the political process is about making decisions primarily based on the public interest, not in the interests of individual or particular interest groups. It seems, however, that planning experiences in Thailand are different and arguments are often inconclusive. Changes in land use and plans for more industrial development on the east coast is an interesting case, where politics has intervened in the planning process openly through the past decades.

The paper is a comprehensive analysis of urban planning development in Thailand, drawing upon some controversial cases of political intervention, using the example of industrial development on the east coast of Thailand. Moreover, discussion is needed on the future of Thai society and the consequences of this unusual pattern of industrial development.

A Framework for Effect of Language on Order-Making Process of Freight Forwarder from China to Thailand

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Abstract

In recent years, Thais have increased their interest in shopping on China's e-commerce platform.

It is interesting that while Thailand's local e-business industry is underdeveloped, public cross-border online shopping is active. Due to consumers need to communicate with sellers or service providers about price, type, shipping and so on, language has become one of the obstacles of cross-cultural communication. Therefore, Freight Forwarders act as an intermediary to help Thai consumers shop smoothly and happily, by providing translation services, ordering services, exchange services, transport services and so on. The objectives of this research are to study the impact of the efficiency of language in e-commerce and identify which process of e-commerce to which the language is most effective. The statement of cross-border e-commerce, the Freight forwarders which operate cross-border e-commerce business, and the impact of language in international communication is briefly reviewed. This research intends to identify these factors effects on cross-border E-commerce by the use of Critical Success Factors (CSFs) which are particularly formed for e-commerce business. The Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) is used to identify the influence level of language in all critical success factors, and the cross-border E-commerce process in which that language is most effective. By using this method, the organization will see the important of a language on the order-making process and its effects. Lastly, a numerical example is shown to illustrate the result.

Politics of "Page-Nongng", Politics of Nonsense: De-Formalization, Subaltern Space, Collective Identity

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Abstract

"Nongng" (literally meaning 'the younger'), a well-known Facebook page with over 223,842 likers, particularly Thai teenagers and young adults, is more and more fashionably mentioned and referred. What lies behind this page, however, is not just nonsense, vulgarity, or simple comicality as it is (re)presented.

This study aims to uncover what lies behind its representation of nonsense and use of vulgar language; "Pasa-Tip", literally meaning 'divine language', primarily derived from "Pasa Skoy" (sub-culturalised young women), which is an intentional Thai typo; and caricatures, as well as video clips with politically incorrect captions. I will reflect this page in three dimensions: Firstly, collective identity, so-called "Satsana-Nongng" (Nongng's religion), shared among page members, so-called "Nongngians"; secondly, subaltern space, where those who are not included in the mainstream political platform and dominant culture come to share their voices; and thirdly, process of de-formalization, contesting the academics of writing, framing, and representing.

Taking this page into account would bring about understanding another space where Thai politics and debates over current issues have been silently (but piquantly) (re-)produced in a form of transgression between academics and nonsense. Once nonsense becomes sensible, while voices of the unheard can be heard, the missing piece of the knowledge jigsaw can eventually be discovered.

The Politics of Thailand's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy

Tittaphan Vachananda
American University

Abstract

For the last decade, Thailand's elite, particularly the military governments, have prioritized the Sufficiency Economy philosophy as their main political agenda, aiming to draw a contrast with the ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's broad consumption-led economic policies. The elite's nationalist representation of the rural communities remains constant, despite the drastic socio-economic progress in rural Thailand. Therefore, the implementation of the Sufficiency Economy philosophy, in a way, can be seen as the elite's strategy to undermine the rural population's growing political influence by urging them to focus on their local communities instead of national politics. Moreover, it can be seen as the junta's plan to legitimize itself by aligning with the royal initiative. It allowed the military governments to shift resources away from rural development despite public demand. This paper will assess the political implications and nationalist agendas of the military governments' policies regarding Sufficiency Economy philosophy. It argues that the Sufficiency Economy philosophy is not only less compatible in the current economic context, but it also implies the state's ignorance and oppression of rural population.

Translating Rong Wongsuwan's

Tony Waters
Payap University/ California State University

Abstract

'Rong Wongsuwaan is a major Thai literary figure of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. He wrote dozens of memoirs, novels, and wrote columns for the Siam Rath newspapers. In recognition of his writing and photography, 'Rong Wongsuwaan was named a "National Artist" in 1995. But little of what 'Rong Wongsuwaan wrote has been translated into English.

My students and I have undertaken a translation of 'Rong Wongsuwaan's book "On the Back of the Dog," which is about his travels in California in the 1960s and 1970s. The book is a unique Thai look at the cultural history of California at a time of social upheaval. 'Rong Wongsuwaan provides a Thai perspective on issues like advertising, food likes, racial tensions, and the tension between older and younger generations.

This paper will discuss the significance of 'Rong Wongsuwaan in Thai literature, as well as his potential significance in the English-speaking world.

The Street Market and the Mall: Eviction and Adaptation in Bangkok's Commercial Core

Trude Renwick
UC Berkeley

Abstract

Over the past year, Siam Square Night Market vendors have been battling eviction by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration from the city's commercial core. Using research gathered from an ongoing ethnographic study, this paper describes the market and its vendors prior to, during and after their ban from the Siam Square area. Rather than framing this as a struggle between powerful government officials and street vendors, I look at a constellation of powerful groups that range in their interest in the banning of this night market. The vendors, Chulalongkorn University (the legal owner of the land upon which Siam Square stands), the adjacent mall complexes, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, as well as online anti-street vending groups, each make distinct claims about the Siam Square Night Market. By challenging the interpretation of the built environment of the global city as a continuation of modernist planning, I also reveal the diverse aims and motives of the powerful stakeholders in the transformations occurring within this global economic center of Bangkok. In doing so, I answer several questions, including: How have these "informal" urban spaces come to define this modern commercial core of these city? What distinguishes the banning of this market from other spaces scattered across Bangkok including: the banning of the weekend market in Sanam Luang and Pom Mahakan's ongoing battle with the BMA?

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The Expanding Liminality of Sanam Luang: The Remaking of Thailand's Future Polity

Trude Renwick
University of California, Berkeley

Bronwyn Isaacs

Abstract

Following the death of King Bhumibol on October, 13, 2016, an unprecedented level of collective public activity took place in the area surrounding the Grand Palace in Bangkok. Bringing Turner's (1967; 1974) understanding of liminality together with a spatial or architectural interpretations of spaces of transition we examine the way that social grief and anxiety following the King's death produced a ritually liminal pilgrimage space that was reinforced in the built environment of the city. This manifestation was expressed through a high level of participation in rituals, consumption and caretaking. Some ritual activities were widely expected prior to the event, including the movement of the corpse to the temple compound and the obligation to dress in black. While ritual activity at Sanam Luang was highly controlled, it also changed quickly, in ways not always expected in advance.

In this paper we present ethnographic description of our multiple visits to Sanam Luang between 2016-17, including six intensive visits in the first ten days following October 13th. This description is contextualized within a longer historical timeline of Sanam Luang, and our respective ethnographic research in Bangkok during 2016-2017. Bringing together social science theories of ritual and liminality and architectural and urban interpretations of transitional spaces (Van Gennep 1909; Durkheim 1912; Turner 1967, 1974; Lynch 1960; Cullen 1961; Van Eyck 1968), with the work of scholars of Thailand who explore the place of religion inside the modern state (eg. Tambiah 1976; Askew 2002; Pattana 2008), we argue that rapidly changing ritual activity may be especially suited to contemporary urban politics. We use ethnographic material (interviews, participant observation, film and photography) to speculate on the way that urban ritual spaces such as Sanam Luang can be instrumental in fostering new relationships between monarchy, military and polity in Thailand and other 21st century nation-states.

Peri-Urban Environmental Encounters: The Shaping of Landscapes Through Class-Based Values

Tubtim Tubtim
Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University

Abstract

This paper explores built, cultivated and natural landscape mosaics in peri-urban Chiang Mai as an outcome of a highly heterogeneous social setting. Peri-urban areas are where countryside meets the city, geographically and through everyday social interaction. As longstanding residents of once rural communities seek to modernize and as their occupations and world views become ever more urban, so city-folk move into the countryside along with certain norms and expectations of their lived environment in at least a semi-rural setting. This paper presents a number of examples of the juxtaposed urban and rural surroundings, and it highlights the clash of value systems that both reflect and produce emerging class dynamics in this zone.

Smallholders in Peri-Urban Chiang Mai: Where Have They Gone?

Tubtim Tubtim
Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University

Abstract

Thailand has gone through an agrarian transition, through which the situation and conceptualization of smallholders has also changed. To date, interest in smallholders has tended to focus mostly on rural areas, to the neglect of peri-urban zones. The peri-urban zone is one where people are socially and occupationally diverse and of mixed social and geographic origins. It is also a landscape where farming can still be seen in close proximity to new residential developments, and a range of other emerging land uses. This raises a number of issues for theoretical discussion on smallholders. Firstly, how have the smallholders who used to farm these areas transformed, and where have they gone? Secondly, the household as a unit of analysis is in question. Thirdly, who are the smallholders in the remaining farms, and can we call them "smallholders" in a traditional sense? This talk will use broad-level data from a study in peri-urban Chiang Mai and more in-depth examples from a village where the author lives.

Bringing Empires Back In: Premodern State Formation in the Red River Delta and the Menam Valley

Tuong Vu
University of Oregon

Abstract

This paper proposes to (re)introduce empires into our thinking about state formation and political development in East and Southeast Asia. I am particularly interested in the historical processes by which empires helped give birth to states, some of which in turn grew into empires in their own right. Existing scholarship on state formation in Southeast Asia has generally neglected the subject of empires. I argue that the process, when viewed from the angle of interactions and mutual transformations between empires and states, can yield fresh insights into the region's political development in three ways. First, this approach can capture the historical evolution of the region without losing sight of the great continuities from ancient to modern times. Second, the framework proposed here is arguably more effective in incorporating the experiences of premodern Vietnam and other states on mainland Southeast Asia. Finally, by bringing China into the story, one can expand the vision beyond Southeast Asia and observe important and consistent parallels between Northeast and Southeast Asia. I will illustrate the framework with the cases of the Red River delta and the Menam valley during the medieval period (9th-16th century). The former was the cradle of Dai Viet, whereas the latter was where Ayudhya emerged.

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Sustained Contradiction: Human Rights in a Time of Authoritarianism

Tyrell Haberkorn
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Abstract

When Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat launched a coup against himself on 20 October 1958, Revolutionary Announcement No. 4 noted that his coup "will respect and protect human rights according to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights made by the assembly of the United Nations. [The revolution] will not do anything out of step or violate the Declaration, other than if there are situations in which it is truly necessary to do so in order to ensure the safety of the nation." Over the following months, the arbitrary arrest of dissidents, the summary execution of heroin producers and communists, and expansion of the powers of the counterinsurgent military apparatus all became widespread. Throughout this period, Sarit continued to affirm his support for human rights in public speeches and his government continued to send reports to the UN lauding Thailand's promotion of human rights. Rather than arguing for an irreconcilable contradiction, in this paper I take up the intersection of engagement with the international human rights regime and the rise of authoritarianism under Sarit as a point of departure, to develop a series of questions through which to frame the early history of human rights in Thailand. Thailand was not the only country with an authoritarian government to do so, but the intersections of authoritarianism in the early decades of the UDHR and the international human rights regime remain understudied. I redress this lacuna through a close examination of this period in Thailand and I also assess Sarit's repression anew, through the lens of human rights. This paper is motivated by the idea that understanding how the histories of authoritarianism and human rights have intersected from the beginning, rather than assuming that they would be naturally opposed, may provide clues as to what would be necessary to render them apart.

How the Mekong Regionalized Its Wealth and Influence: A Thai Perspective

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Abstract

Countries in the Mekong region have entered a new phase of development which has developed a cooperation framework of the Mekong Sub-Region (GMS) The development of infrastructure to connect the region contributes to the flow of " people" and "capital" under the current of regionalization. Now, we need to review this by rethinking more to understand how regionalization is transforming the Mekong's wealth and what is possible as a result of its influence in the region and in Thailand

Factors Influencing Entrepreneurship Rates for Thai Women Entrepreneurs in Comparison to Their ASEAN Counterparts

Ulrike Guelich
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Abstract

The main objective of this exploratory study is to examine factors influencing the rate of entrepreneurship for women in Thailand and the ASEAN. One of the region's outstanding features with regard to entrepreneurship is the existence of a high female to male TEA ratio in at least five of its member countries: 1.3 in the Philippines and Vietnam, 1.2 in Thailand, and 1.0 in Indonesia and Malaysia (Kelley et al., 2016). Despite a high female participation in entrepreneurship, women in some ASEAN countries also experience some of the highest fear of failure rates in the world, spearheaded by Thai women entrepreneurs, where more than 50% fear to fail.

This study explores which factors impact female entrepreneurship rates in a comparison of Thailand to four ASEAN countries. Are perceptions of entrepreneurial skills and opportunities or networks to other entrepreneurs influencing factors? How do attributes towards entrepreneurs, such as entrepreneurship as a good career choice and media attention, contribute to entrepreneurship rates?

The exploratory finding that the high fear of failure rate in Thailand does not hinder women to start up and run their businesses has a positive connotation. Contrary to other ASEAN countries and their male counterparts, Thai women entrepreneurs tend to be influenced only by the perception of their own entrepreneurial skills set, not by opportunities, by media or knowing other entrepreneurs. These findings can help to improve framework conditions for female entrepreneurs and counteract the currently declining female entrepreneurship rates, both in start-ups as in established women entrepreneurs in Thailand.

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Reconstruction of Critical Thai Cinema New Wave: Closed Spaces in the Network Society

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Abstract

This paper argues with respect to Castells' media network concept (2007), on the pervasive power of digital communication technologies. His theory refers to empowering democratic society and people network movements in the digital era. Nevertheless, this paper argues that Thailand is an exceptional circumstance.

Three factors have affected cinema in Thailand since 1990s. Firstly, the cinema industry in all processes: pre-production, production and post-production, has entered into the digital period. Secondly, new critical film curriculums have emerged in universities. Lastly, national and international film festivals have been organized. All these factors have resulted in the creation of a new generation of young filmmakers. They produce films that open 'space' for marginalized people to voice their struggle. Furthermore, their work has challenged mainstream Thai social values and norms.

Nevertheless, Castells' account seems to ignore the particular context in particular societies, where even digital communication technologies in themselves may be problematic. Additionally, in the established Thai regime and amidst economic constraints, although the three factors are intended to build up more democratic spaces in recent years, reconstruction of critical visual communications in the digital era seems arduous.

The paper focuses on the key argument that explores two closed spaces of Thailand: physical space and conscious spaces. The physical space of cinema refers to the film markets and the systems of Thai cinema distribution that have been monopolized by two cinema conglomerates. It creates fewer opportunities for young new wave filmmakers to disseminate critical messages to the public. As for the conscious space, censor codes and legislation, including military state censors, will be explored.

Contesting Memories in the Hmong Thai Community: A Soft Weapon of Fighting in Contemporary Thailand

Urai Yangcheepsutjarit

Abstract

The body of literature on leftist movements in Thailand contains limited information about the Hmong as an active political group in the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) from the 1960s-80s. In addition, since the end of the Cold War, there has been no study that explores Hmong lives and livelihoods despite the fact that the Thai government has put a great effort into development programs for this ethnic group. Instead a handful of commemorative sites have been built throughout the country for those heroes who died by the hands of the communists. These anti-communist state sponsored memorials construct the Hmong in the CPT, the so-called "Red Meo," as a threat to national security, while honoring and celebrating the government's victory against the CPT. This study focuses on the more recent "Red Meo" response of constructing counter monuments in honor of their own dead at Doiyao-Phamon in northern Thailand. The "Red Meo" are reinterpreting their involvement with the CPT as stemming from majority Thai and state oppression, hence seeing their own struggle as a heroic struggle against social injustice. This paper examines how Doiyao-Phamon has become a landscape of contested memories for the "Red Meo" and the government.

I argue that the emergence of a contested memory in this Hmong community is a form of soft fighting between the dominant majority Thai as presented by the Thai government and a dominated minority, the Hmong. These contested memories are remnants of an unending war between minorities and the Thai state. Whereas before, state authorities and minorities such as the Hmong used weapons to compete with one other, now both use memory and memorials to impose their own versions of history. For the Hmong, that memory is one of using the CPT as a vehicle for struggling against social injustice.

The Bihu Dance of the Tai Ahoms: A Study on Its Underlying Philosophy

Urmimala Duarah
Ban-Ok-Pup-Lik-Mioung-Tai

Abstract

This Study is an attempt to delve deeper into the underlying cultures, traditions and philosophy associated with the ' Bihu Dance' of the Tai Ahom community residing in Assam, North Eastern India, and also probe into its relationship with the dances associated with the 'Poy Sanken' festival of Thailand. Following the trends of modernization, as traditions too are undergoing sea changes, it has become essential to trace the chord binding the past and present of Bihu Dance with the objective of preserving them for posterity in its true forms.

The Tai Ahoms and the Thai people of Thailand and all other Tai communities have carried with them their primal beliefs, cultures, philosophy, and way of life, which they inherited from their Tai Civilization. Though they have settled in different locations around the world, they appear to be united by a common chord which binds them as Tai/Thai.

The Methodology adopted was Qualitative, focusing on Primary Sources like live dances, audio visual recordings and interviews with specialists. The researcher is a professional dancer herself. Secondary sources will include critical writings and authoritative books on the subject.

The prime finding is that the Tai Ahom Bihu Dance is intertwined with Nature, Union, Fertility, Mother Earth and is suggestive of procreation, renewal, and regeneration. It is an expression of Man's intimate kinship with Nature, which is a prime characteristic of Tai Culture. The intensity of the union brings one to experience the cosmic force latent in nature which makes creation possible. Therefore, through the Bihu Dance folks pay homage to Mother Earth for rejuvenation of Nature for plantation, creativity, cultivation.

Understanding Bihu in its true colors will help to connect the past with the present, the old with the new, the finite with the infinite, the human with the superhuman.

Looking Back to a Colonial Past: A Comparative Study between the Discourse of Thainess in Thailand and the Discourse of Multiculturalism in Singapore

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Abstract

This paper compares the ways in which Thailand and Singapore control their citizens through state discourse. Unlike Singapore, Thailand or Siam was never formally colonized, but the country was nonetheless modernized by the encounter with a colonial power by Siamese elites. One of colonial legacies is a discourse of Thainess. Siamese elites constructed Thainess to homogenize a diversity of cultures and races and unify the Siam boundary, unlike the British empire, which ruled colonial Singapore by dividing spaces and power according to the subjects' race. This practice conceived a concept of multiculturalism that signifies and celebrates differences of race, religion, and culture in Singapore.

This paper unfolds the discourses of Thainess and multiculturalism from the colonial to postcolonial era. On the surface these two discourses seem totally different, but I argue that both are similarly used by the states as an instrument of governmentality. A notion of racial homogeneity and heterogeneity has constantly been articulated in citizenship and nation-making in Thailand and Singapore. Policy documents and government campaigns are examined to show how these discourses have continuously circulated in both countries.

Tourism and Leisure in Thailand: Development, Mobilities and Encounters

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Abstract

One of the major research interests in the study of development, culture and identity in Thailand and some neighboring countries during the past three to four decades has comprised the effects and processes involved in the development of international tourism and the globalization of leisure. More recently attention has also been paid to the importance of how domestic tourism as economic growth has led to an expansion in the middle classes, an increase in disposable income and greater opportunities for leisure activities. Tourism in Thailand has tended to focus on selected sites along an axis which includes the northern hill regions, Chiang Mai, the greater Bangkok metropolitan area, and certain beach and island resorts in southern Thailand, including Phuket, Pattaya and Koh Samui. However, there has been a recent development of other sites as tourists, both international and domestic, search for new experiences, and tourism agencies in competition have generated innovations in touristic activities. The leading scholar in research in this field in Thailand has been Erik Cohen. Not only has he contributed to the store of empirical and case-study material on Thailand but has been involved in a series of debates about theories and paradigms in the sociological and anthropology study of tourism. These debates examine the appropriate concepts to be deployed in understanding leisure activities and the transformations which tourism has set in motion. In tourism studies there are several key ideas which have preoccupied researchers, many of them in relation to Thailand, to do with cultural touristification, imaging and representation, staging and authenticity, identity, host-guest relations, and the tourist gaze. A most recent set of discussions generated by Cohen has considered the sociological concept of mobilities in understanding local-level touristic encounters. The paper will critically review these concepts in a changing Thai tourism context.

Thai Modern State Formation: Domination Through Strongmen

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Abstract

This paper studies how Thai state established its domination by relying on the power of local influential strongmen. In order to achieve its domination at the process of state formation, the state must incorporate the social force into part of state power or defeat them. Since its early formation in the late 19th century, Thai state incorporated some influential strongmen into state power without transforming them. Moreover, in many cases the state acquired strongmen characteristics and their pre-modern elements in making state legitimacy. How state and influential strongmen interacted one another at the beginning of the modern state are demonstrated via case studies. The case studies reveal that the officers sent from the central government were not efficient enough to control power over the locality. They were not knowledgeable of the locality and they did not have enough resources compared with the local strongmen, hence they inevitably relied on local strongmen to achieve their domination. This study would give reasons for the existence of pre-modern characteristics of Thai state that remained several decades after the state formation.

The Note of Venerable Phrakru Srivirasvachirapanya (The Ecclesiastical District Officer of Muang Phayao, 1861-1944)

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University of Phayao

Abstract

The note of the Venerable Phrakru Srivilasvachirapanna (Pinta Chopjit), the Ecclesiastical District Officer of Muang Phayao) (2404-2487 B.E. (1861-1944) was recorded on 11 bound foolscap and originally was the property of the abbot of Wat Srikhomkham. Later, the note was given to the Phayao Cultural Exhibition Hall of Srikhomkham Temple, Muang District, Phayao Province.

The Venerable Phrakru Srivilasvachirapanya (Pinta Chopjit) was born in 2404 B.E. (1861) and lived until 1944. He served in the Sangha administrative post in the region of Phayao; as an abbot of Wat Huakhuangkaew from 2424-2427 B.E. (1881- 1884), the high priest of Wat Ratchakrue during 2465-2487 B.E.(1922-1944), the abbot of Wat Srihomkham (Wat Phra Chao Ton Luang) and as the Ecclesiastical District Officer of Muang Phayao from 2428-2466 B.E.(1885-1923)

The Venerable Phrakru Srivilasvachirapanya was a Buddhist monk who liked recording the events happened and he recorded all events that should be recorded on plain white foolscap with a pencil as a diary writing, then the note was bound together. The number of pages is not equal in Dham alphabets. Thai alphabets are also available in some passage. Time in the record indicates the date of the year, day of waxing and waning moon based on lunar calendar, Chula Sakarat or Minor Era, Buddhist Era, some days in Christian Era.

Function of Rumor in Thai Digital Society

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Abstract

Rumor is a communication tool invented by human society that has persisted from ancient times to the digital world. In the communication perspectives, Walter Ong considers rumor to be the earliest artifact to encourage the creation of human society by organizing, enhancing relationships, giving primary information or even identifying the hierarchy of a particular society.

Up till now the Thai government has been opening its door to Western communicational technology, from the press to the Internet, aiming to bring the nation to civilization and furthering economic development. By contrast, it has been trying to push traditional Thai communication tools, such as folk tales and songs, idioms, proverbs, novels, poems, gossip and rumors, into marginalized, outdated and untrustworthy tools, symbols of underdevelopment. However, it is undeniable that these forms of communication continue to have significant roles and influence in Thai society.

This academic article adopts Walter Ong's perspective that human communication changes respective to changes in technology, similar to the way rumor once payed a key role to create oral paradigm in the past. It aims to identify the updated basic ideas about rumor within Thai digital society, then analyze how the functions of digital rumor should be changed from time to time, by adopting in-depth interview methodology on 5 interviewees. Part one illustrates how Thai people think about rumor in the digital age, while part two indicates the essential functions of digital rumor that crystalize from the interview.

Recovering Ailing Khwan: A Phenomenological Investigation of Bodily Healing in Northeast Thailand

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the Isan (northeast Thailand) body and its illness and healing. It examines the way in which the Isan body encounters transformative conditions, becomes sick, and gains back control and equilibrium. It explores the processes of healing in mediumistic ritual where "khwan" is the main locus of diagnosis and remedy. When a person is sick, the family will bring that person to see a spirit medium, who will organize a series of healing processes. The last and indispensable process is to call the khwan back to the body

Khwan has been interpreted as vital essence; the immaterial component of a person that is central in rites of passage. In northeast Thailand (Isan), khwan is understood as the cause and the remedy of illness in healing rituals. This paper offers a way to examine the materialistic dimension of khwan, or embodied experience, and examines its presence in illness and healing in Chaiyaphum's mediumistic ritual. It suggests that khwan represents a person's phenomenological existence and is central to the domains of boundary containment, social nurturance, and equilibrium. The paper argues that khwan anchors bodies; both khwan and bodies are anchored in families, which in turn are anchored in particular localities. These embedded anchorings give people a degree of control over themselves and, potentially, others. When control—especially control of the body—is in crisis, people attend to their misfortunes through intensified, multisensory, and intersubjective ritual practices focused on recovering khwan. Spirit mediums are successful in healing by identifying, locating, and reframing inchoate somatic and affective experiences in the lives of the patients. They re-domesticate and re-center the Isan body. Mediumistic healing and khwan calling compel intercorporeal re-engagement between the patient and the participants.

Anisong Through Religious Donations: The Case of the Phaya Sekong Manuscript from Müang Sing (Laos)

Volker Grabowsky
University of Hamburg

Abstract

Visitors to Müang Sing, a district situated in the far northwest corner of Laos close to the borders to China and Burma (Myanmar), feel impressed by the many temple buildings that have been renovated only recently. Donations from local villagers as well as from expatriates now living in the USA and other Western countries made this possible. The amount of money donated to monasteries depends on the donor's economic well-being as well as his or her religious faith. One of the most influential and generous donors in the history of Müang Sing was a man whose meritorious activities are still remembered by many people in the town and surrounding villages although he passed away more than three decades ago. Due to a leporello paper manuscript, currently kept by Nan Chai Saeng, the former curator of the district museum of Müang Sing, we are informed of the details of religious donations this remarkable man made over a period of fifty years, until his death in 1982.

The manuscript, classified by the Digital Library of Lao Manuscripts under the genre of Anisong (Ānisaṃsa) bears the title Kan tan phaya sekòng u-mao (ก้านทานภยาเซคองอุม้าว), "List of donations of Phaya Sekòng [or] U Mao". Based on a transcription of this unique document into central Thai and an annotated English translation of the text, a number of questions are addressed: Who was this extraordinary man of modest background who was born in Chiang Tung (Myanmar) but later played a prominent role in the social life of Müang Sing? What does his manuscript reveal about religious donations in general and the sponsoring of the making of Buddhist manuscripts in particular, in the periphery of the Tai world during the twentieth century?

Khuang Luang Wiang Kaew (The Old Palace of Chiang Mai): A Trace from Historical Archives

Vorachart Meechubot

Abstract

The last 720 years of Lan Na history, since King Mang Rai established the Capital Chiang Mai in 1296, can be chronologically divided into 3 historical periods. First: the primary 300 years governed by the Mang Rai Dynasty. Second: the 200 years that Lan Na was under control of Burmese kingdom. Third: the last 200 years, when Lan Na was depended on Chakri Dynasty.

In the central area of Chiang Mai was constructed the grand royal palace of Mang Rai Dynasty, bordered by a giant wall, which we called “Khuang Luang Wiang Kaew”. This place was used for serving Mang Rai Dynasty from the Burmese period until the last dynasty of king Kawila. It did not, however, include the last three rulers, Intawichayanon, Intawaroros and Kaew Nawarat, since in the last decade of 1870, Intawichayanon moved the palace to the present-day area of Yupparaj Wittyalai School. The old palace became a prison.

This research proposes a different documentary from the side of the Siamese archives from the last 100 years, to analyze new traces from archaeological sites more completely.

Wiang Nhong Lom Wetland: A History of the Commons

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Abstract

Wetlands are often considered as 'vacant' or 'undeveloped' areas from the state's point of view. However, a rich biodiversity and unique ecosystem of wetlands have carried different meaning and perceptions for local communities. Chiang Rai has a large-scale wetland area called Wing Nhong Lom in Mae Chan district which is a tributary of the Mekong River. Wing Nhong Lom wetlands is a common ecosystem and space for public use which is jointly owned and managed by its surrounding communities. This case study represents the different perceptions which have led to conflict among local communities on the one hand, and conflict between the

communities and the state on the other. As the new public administration had been introduced into the communities surrounding the wetland, the different perceptions between state and local communities manifested themselves into a confrontation. To understand the current conflicts and problems in Wiang Nhong Lom wetlands, the research adopts a historical approach to tackle the evolvement of the commons over time. By this means it can help determine what we can learn from the past and how we might use it for the future. Thus, this study examines how different resource users and stakeholders of Wiang Nhong Lom wetlands interact in order to govern the wetland as the commons. The study traces back the first National Economic and Social Development Plan (B.E 2504-2509) until the present in order to examine changes in the governance of the commons.

Study of Sustainable Alternative for Living in Old Communities.

Walanrak Poomchalit
Kyoto Institute of Technology

Katsuhiko Suzuki

Arno Suzuki

Abstract

Most old communities in Thailand were developed from spots or service communities of waterway rice trading. Their economies are dependent on agricultural product. While urbanization and suburbanization have continued especially in original fringe, the economic structures have changed from monoculture economy based on agriculture to complicate modern economy. These make changes to urban structures and to urban spatial, economics and social as a result. However, in areas that have been continually developed, different contexts of old and new have been combined to create difference and segregation in the level of development. While the area of new settlements or communities are facilitated, the old settlements or communities are prevented and left behind. Their decadence, especially in original wooden-house communities such as abandonment, density planning and decadent materials of houses makes the communities inconvenient for living and they have been defined as slums. Migration increases because those people request access to convenient facilities.

This study aims to explore a developmental alternative for repopulation in order to recall living in old communities, and uses it as a guideline to create methodology of sustainable recovery to conserve old communities that are in risk of disappearance.

By case studies and review of sustainable urban development compared with community characteristics in target area it shows old communities have more options for development than just becoming a tourist destination. Through housing development and the repair of necessary facilities for living the old houses can become qualitative new residences. However, not only houses but also community planning must be improved. New community functions such as accessibility, open space, and recreation areas must be added to create compact community and residential environments.

Expression of Cultural Assimilation in Lao Viang Houses in Central Thailand

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Abstract

Lao Viang is an ethnic group that migrated from Vientiane in Laos to live Thailand, especially in the central region, more than 200 years ago. They are a group who have supported peculiar characteristics of Thai culture and society. In living within the Thai context, they have had to adjust themselves in order to continue their ways of dwelling. However, with the course of Thailand's development over the past sixty years, many scholars asserted that Lao Viang communities have revealed significant changes in their dwellings and their ways of life in comparison with other ethnic groups in Thailand. This raises a question as to whether the socio-cultural significance of Lao Viang people in their dwellings has still remained? Materials for discussion were derived from the research project entitled "Ontological study on the adaptation of Tai-Lao ethnicity within different wider contexts in the river basins of central Thailand" conducted in 2009-2012. Vernacular houses of Lao Viang in Tambon Ban Lueak of Ratchaburi province were selected, and examined by comparing with some Lao Viang communities in nearby provinces, existing vernacular houses in Vientiane of Laos, and other related literature. The study revealed that the houses and the way of life of Lao Viang in Tambon Ban Lueak have always changed. Their houses and various architectural details reflect their ways of transmitting and assimilating their cultural essence from Vientiane to blend with central Thai culture. This should be an approach to understand the complexity of the built environment within the cultural transformation of Thailand and its relation to Asian nations.

Route 3 as a New Outlook : Thai Fruit, Chinese Merchant and Region Connectivity

Wannarat Tantrakonsup

Abstract

Route 3 A is main connection from China towards the Mekong region. This connectivity is comprised of roads, trucks, trains and cars which carry people and commodities interrelated to China and Mekong country members. Thai fruit including durian, rambutan and mango are a major product for Chinese markets. Chinese merchants now transform from traders into investors who use silo and contract farming to dominate the fruit market across the Mekong region. Is the Mekong region a fruit resource base for China? What are the human and social relations among foreign investors and local farmers?

Batamakab Hua Chang: The Origin Myth and a Social Process on Building a Meaning of Tai Lue Xishuangbanna Community

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Abstract

The myth is a reflection of the culture of people. This article will discuss the creating meaning from the "Batamakab hua chang" that is the myth of Tai Lue community at Xishuangbanna, P.R. China. The study found that the people of this community shared the belief in Brahma's as a guardian spirit, and they related to each other through this shared belief in both Buddhism and animism that have remained in their culture and tradition. Using this sacred myth as a social process in creating meaning of community, they portrayed the relationship between the community and the myth as one inherited to remain. Moreover, the study found that the use of this sacred myth to fight for the change of the politics of China by networking and social movement through culture. Thus, that was applied to the social tradition in the past as a social tool to become the cultural products. And there has also served as a tool for social discourse as it has been preserved and pass on from generation to generation. That has led to acceptance and support by the government as well as the traditional faith and rituals from this myth has remained in Tai Lue community of Xishuangbanna.

Local Art and Craft Development for Generating Community Supplementary income: A Case Study of Kaynoi Village, Mae Taeng District, Province

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Abstract

Kai Noi Village in Mueang Kai, Mae Taeng District, Chiang Mai is one of the highland communities surrounding the center of the Royal Project Foundation at Mon Ngor. The major occupation of villagers is agriculture. They mainly cultivate the traditional product of fermented tea leaves for chewing, and a variety of modern cash crops to supply the Royal Project Foundation. One of the village's unique forms of heritage is its woven crafts made from the bark of branches of a local palm (Livistona speciosa) called " Khor." With the help of local agencies and the demand from business, the weaving craft group was created to produce sticky rice boxes and trays made of Khor bark. However, the community could not meet the high volume of orders since only a few villagers were willing to join the group to produce these crafts. This research aimed to study the problem of the village's weaving crafts by undertaking in-depth interviews with local members to analyze all expenditures involved in making the products. The researchers learned that the sale of traditional weaving crafts failed to provide enough revenue and investment return so it was not attractive for villagers to join the group. The research team analyzed the situation and provided 3 solutions as follows: 1) to redesign more modern weaving products, 2) to develop weaving skills for neater products with a higher value, and 3) to reduce the cost of raw materials such as changing materials to bamboo for some products. As a result, more villagers joined the group, increasing from 5 to 12 members. With higher standards and more modern aspects, the weaving products of Kai Noi Village were presented at both international and national arts and crafts events.

Dynamism and Application of Camadevi Legend in Contemporary Thai Society: A Case Study of "Phuttha Nakorn Tham Phra Nang Chao Camadevi Group" Lampoon Province

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Abstract

The paper studies the legend of Queen Camadevi, applied in the context of present day Thailand using "Phuttha Nakorn Tham Phra Nang Chao Camadevi Group" in Lampoon province ("คณะพุทธนครธรรมพระนางเจ้าจามเทวี" จังหวัดลำพูน) as a case study.

The study indicates that "Phuttha Nakorn Tham Phra Nang Chao Camadevi Group" in Lampoon province applied the content from the legend of Queen Camadevi, and also introduced new media to present the story of Queen Camadevi. The group created a new set of thoughts concerning Queen Camadevi by constructing new content for the historical memory of the Queen. In addition, based on these newly created historical stories about the Queen, the Phuttha Nakorn Tham Phra Nang Chao Camadevi Group also built religious objects and religious places. This makes the Phuttha Nakorn Tham's version of Camadevi story more convincing and reliable. Moreover, the group also deliberately created the image of "religious Camadevi" in this way, creating the identity of the group as different from other groups. Interestingly, based on the new version of the Queen's story, the group also created various religious products, e.g., lockets, coins, images, etc. with the branding of "Phuttha Nakorn Tham."

Overall, it can be perceived that the Phuttha Nakorn Tham Phra Nang Chao Camadevi Group uses the strategy of applying the legend of Queen Camadevi in order to assert their religious identity and their social space in contemporary Thai society. If viewing this phenomenon through the framework of "creative folklore," we can see how folk beliefs, legends and local history has been applied, re-interpreted and given new meaning in the socio-religious context of present day Thailand.

Bridging the Knowledge Gap between Local Communities and Technical Agencies in Flood Early Warning in Ayutthaya, Thailand

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Abstract

Flooding provides a host of challenges to the Chao Phraya River Basin of Thailand. The devastating flood of 2011 serves as a stark reminder of the fact that the communities in the central plain of Thailand are at-risk and should better prepare themselves. Despite the vast meteorological and hydrological data possessed by government technical agencies in Thailand, scant useful information could be derived from such data to help warn communities harm's way. Data was in fact made available to the public but not all concerned stakeholders and communities knew where to find the data, and more importantly, how to interpret and use such data. Part of the Program for Reduction of Vulnerability to Floods in Thailand aims to address that gap. The program is funded by USAID and is implemented by Asian Disaster Preparedness Center. The program identified pilot communities who were deemed at-risk from future flooding and worked with them to increase their capacity to understand flood-related information, as well as flood risk management overall. At the same time, the program also engaged relevant technical agencies, e.g., Thai Meteorological Department, Royal Irrigation Department, and Department of Water Resources, who act as information generators and providers. The purpose of this engagement is to help these technical agencies understand needs of non-technical users, largely the affected communities, and help them tailor key messages and disseminate them locally. This two-way interaction proved to be a success in bridging the gap between the communities and the technical agencies who have a presence locally. In addition to increasing the information exchange that is useful for providing early warning to flood-affected communities, the program created a functioning network of community leaders and representatives of the technical agencies that will ensure sustainability of the program.

Tai Studies in the Borderlands of the Upper Mekong: A New Look at Old Lan Na Culture Area

Wasan Panyagaew
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Abstract

The Lan Na Culture Area is the region that covers present areas of Northern Thailand, Northern Laos, Eastern Shan States of Burma and Southern Yunnan of China (referred to in this paper 'the Borderlands of the upper Mekong').

Linguistically, in this border region, there are three majority sub groups of Tai speaking peoples. These Southwest Tai speaking groups historically belonged to traditional Tai states of Lan Na, Sipsong Panna, and Lan Xang. In this review I explore on three main thematic issues, on the Tai Studies in this Lan Na Culture area. Firstly, the paper explores works that touch on the myth, history or the origin of Tai state, called Lan Na, including its cultures, people, societies, and the formation and transformation of the state. I will show how Tai Studies in the Lan Na Culture Area occasionally produced and reproduced knowledge of Tai (and Thai) cultures and societies. Secondly, the paper further investigates the political economy of knowledge construction and reproduction on Tai peoples, cultures and societies – in particular, those works that have created a political connection between Tai and Thai peoples. Thirdly, I examine new directions on studies about Tai peoples in the 'Lan Na Culture Area'. In particular, a critical review of works produced from the 1990s onwards, when regulations on state borders were lifted and changed. These cross-border mobilities and connectivities have recently become more routinized and flexible. This research is necessary to look for a new direction and new definition on Lan Na Studies, and Tai Studies in the Lan Na culture area.

Thai Premiere League: Girls, Power, Sexuality, and New Class

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Abstract

Since 2009, Thai Premiere League, a Thai professional soccer league, emerged, and it has since provided a unique opportunity for the display and practice of local identities, sexualities, discourses on modernity, and (new) Thai nationalism. Conceptualizing Thai soccer as a field of power, in this paper we investigate multiple aspects of this modern sport that involves and operates in history, culture, politics and sexuality in Thailand. Research on Thai professional soccer league, showing how this sport industry has been developed, expanded, and localized, in particular how it has transformed Thailand from below will be discussed. We argue Thai professional soccer, its formation and transformation of this professional soccer league, since 2009, reflects on not simply dynamism of class structure, the emergence of the New Class, but also Thai male masculinity and female sexuality in Thailand in the age of Neoliberalism.

Localism and Schooling in Globalization: A Case Study of a School in Thailand - Laos Border

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Abstract

Mainstream education discourse normally presented in education area including border area has been penetrated and dominated by official knowledge. This research wants to reveal that schools, especially in the border area of globalization, have been challenged by localism which has scrambled the definition of knowledge in order to let local people arrange the education by themselves. Moreover, there is also the opportunity to negotiate with the government and capitalism. The research questions are 1) How can localism become a new actor in the education area and border area development? 2) Can localism be successful in knowledge contention in school? The methodology is qualitative case study approach. The data was collected by literature review, in-depth interview and participatory observation. Counter Hegemony of Antonio Gramsci and Cultural Capital of Bourdieu were used as concepts to criticize the data.

The findings are 1) Localism used symbolic capital as a tool to set up themselves as knower and create a new set of knowledge which can negotiate and scramble the education area in schools. 2) The power of localism is not strong enough to encourage, challenge and reveal itself in the core curriculum set up by the government. Localism was misappropriated to be just a set of local knowledge in marginal curriculum.

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Public Land Encroachment at the Borderland of Surin Province

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Abstract

This study shows that historically the Chongjom borderland was primarily used by military authorities to secure the Thai- Cambodian border. There are three public land areas included in this study; first, the public land that was used primarily for assisting Thai citizen affected by communist terrorists and foreign coups, forming villages of self-defense along the Thai-Cambodia border. There are currently land plots near the district office of Kabchoeng which have no legal land ownership documents issued but the renters , who instead received an official contract designating land tenure, issued by the Kabchoeng sheriff between 1984-1995. Secondly, public land under the Agricultural Land Reform Project is managed by the Surin Provincial Land Reform Office. Finally, state land is controlled by the Surin Treasury Office.

In Chongjom, there is both direct and indirect public land encroachment. The encroachment process that occurred in the Chongjom borderland illustrates reciprocally beneficial relationships and networks among private companies, government agencies, local politicians and local leaders who directed the Chongjom border development. State land direct encroachment along the Chongjom border market results from the use of Cambodian traders to extend plots of trading space into unlicensed areas. Then they are created into a full border market development plan, which includes the encroached area. It is then submitted to the Treasury Office for leasing after it has been approved. But before the plan is approved, the hundred new 2-story concrete building shops have already been advertised and sold to interested Cambodian and Thai traders. This indirect land encroachment process is seen mainly through the illegal transfer of rented plots and land into private ownership. The agricultural land assigned to farmers who were originally entitled to use the land intended for farming was illegally sold and used.

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Six Decades of Rice Policy and Thai Peasant Studies: The Future Research Framework

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Abstract

Issues surrounding rice policy and Thai peasant experiences have emerged as frameworks for study since the 1950s. Since the period of the 1950s development project, these issues have continually been researched within policy studies and peasant studies. This article employed a method of documentary research to demonstrate the overall state of relevant literature.

The review is presented in two sections.

Firstly, research on Thai rice policy can be classified in three themes: 1.) policy analysis and economics to evaluate rice pricing policy, 2.) historical political economy of rice policy, and 3.) comprehensive knowledge and policy in rural agricultural society.

Secondly, research on Thai peasant experiences can be divided in four themes: 1.) peasants and patronage system in Thai rural society, 2.) Marxist approach to Thai peasant class consciousness, 3.) community culture framework of Thai peasant society, and 4.) roles of peasants in the post-agrarian society.

After reviewing the literature, new research questions should turn to study the whole product chain from suppliers to consumers in the context of economic globalization and the trend of agroecology.

Moreover, researches should focus on essential actors, including decision-making of the 'state' on rice policy and agricultural welfare as well as 'peasant organizations' in term of coordination for resilience.

Finally, networks of state-business-society should be examined after the green revolution 2.0.

Observing Inequality Through Economic Lenses: Negative Income Tax and Its Labor Supply Effects

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Abstract

This paper presents three to four main ideas on inequality in Thailand. First, the dynamics of inequality are considered through the economic perspective, showing that the problem has persisted and government welfare schemes have been provided inefficiently. The idea of Negative Income Tax (NIT) is the second topic, making a case for a policy that accounts for the expected mitigation of poverty and inequity, without distorting market power. The policy was also studied and proposed by a group of academics from the Fiscal Policy Office, Ministry of Finance, so it has the political potential to be implemented. However, as suggested by economic theory, the potential for disincentive remains possible if such a policy is carried out. Therefore, the third part discusses how to ex-ante estimate the effects, using econometric tools, and the results. We found that NIT would encourage the unemployed to join the labor force and discourage people who are currently working, as they receive more unearned income than expected. However, after the coefficients are taken into micro-simulation and summarized, both effects are considered small compared to the whole economy. Finally, we try to show that the issue of inequality is much more complicated and relates to many other factors. This means that the implementation of a NIT alone may not be able to achieve the goal of narrowing the inequality gap, and it is also necessary to explore the possibility of other schemes.

Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs) in Resource Governance: A Case Study of the Loei Gold Mine in Northeastern Thailand

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Abstract

This research, "Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation (SLAPPs) in Resource Governance: a Case Study of the Loei Gold Mine in Northeastern Thailand", argues that lawsuits against villagers are motivated by Natural Resource Management (NRM) regardless of whether or not the case is right or wrong. This motivation relates to violence against villagers' livelihoods - specifically those who stay around the Gold mining projects - at the individual, household, and community levels. This research found that there are more than 20 cases of villagers who have been sued by companies, and 38 by the local state to villagers to claim damages amounting to more than 320 million Thai Baht. Moreover, in the process of conciliation, and with military as the mediators, the negotiation focused on the cancellation of eight lawsuits against a company who transported ore. Meanwhile, the prosecutions have had many impacts on the villagers as they lack the income and expenses related to the lawsuit. Furthermore, for the villagers who were imprisoned by the cases, they have had to deal with conflict within their families and damage to their reputations. Finally, the activities of the protest group which was organized to protect the natural resources were stopped and participating members has reduced. In addition, this research found that violence is an important part of development. Not only does the State have a monopoly on the use of violence, but the capitalists have the potential to use it too. There have been instances of collaboration to threaten villagers' access to mechanisms that protect their livelihoods and their hometowns; public participation, in particular. However, this violence is not an intended consequence of development.

Khon Kaen in Transition: A Spatial Development and a Becoming of the Destination of Migrant Workers from Myanmar

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Abstract

The article aims to portray the dynamism of Khon Kaen, one of major provinces in the northeastern region of Thailand, which has become the destination of migrant workers from neighboring countries, Myanmar in particular. This article fundamentally deals with Khon Kaen's spatial development that has turned this province from a source of labor in the past into a hub of labor from neighboring countries at present. This article also reflects the experiences of migrant workers from Myanmar, who migrated to Khon Kaen to work as factory workers. The data used for spatial development in this article is based on a literature review, while the data on migration experiences were drawn from field research, of which the data collection methods include participant observations and formal and informal interviews with migrant workers from Myanmar in a suburban area of Khon Kaen.

From Street Protests to Shadow Plays: Expressing Experiences of Neglect in Southern Thailand

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Abstract

This paper considers the staying senses among people in southern Thailand, and considers the Thai government's neglect in addressing the issue of low rubber prices. Drawing from literature on regional geographies, I contend that these experiences of exclusion and marginalization with respect to rubber prices constitute foundations for constructions of southern regional identities. I draw first from fieldwork conducted over 2015 and 2016 in and around Cha-uat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, which had been host to large demonstrations in 2013 over falling prices (particularly at the Khuan Nong Hong Intersection), and then I discuss how these feelings have permeated (e.g. Nelson 2003) into the era of the NCPO through a less contentious setting than a protest space. This space nonetheless is considered an important forum for critique: the shadow play, or nang talung. The nang talung is perhaps one of the more recognizable venues in southern Thailand in which political and social issues intersect with entertainment, and the recent work of one performer in particular, Banyat Suwanwaenthong (who goes by the stage name Nong Diao), has become immensely popular for performances that feature interactions between Ai Phunkaeo, one of the play's recurring clowns, and Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha, whose voice Mr. Banyat imitates with remarkable precision. I contend that Nong Diao's performances not only provide important spaces of contestation, but in addition serve as venues through which individualized senses of marginalization and exclusion are enrolled into those of broader regional consciousness.

Social and Behavioral Aspects of a Digital Education within an Environment of Data Access Restrictions

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Abstract

The key issues to be discussed are the psychological repercussions of acquiring a digital education and the consequences of applying learned digital skills in a political system that limits the free flow of information. Digital technologies used in education have been shown to improve learning, synthesizing cross disciplinary knowledge as well as analyzing the exponential rise in big data. It has also been shown that digital pedagogies used within classroom settings and in curriculum design can enable a higher level of student productivity. However, what is less understood are the psychological effects brought about by a socio-political system whose opinions and rulings are antithetical to the way ideas are learned in a digital environment where access to information is not limited. Consequently, censorship and limiting access to information can result in dysfunctional behavior and cognitive dissonance.

This paper will discuss how these psychological effects manifest themselves when restrictions are placed on open access to knowledge, but also to show how alternative approaches to handling information can bypass restrictions placed on data access. With the growth of virtual cultures, social media and online communities alternative approaches to sharing knowledge are enabling newer models of human interaction to be developed and shared globally. Problems and solutions are being developed that older governing systems have not developed or are reluctant to implement because of personal vested interests or to control public opinion. The rate of change and innovation with emerging technologies as well as newly created virtual communities are providing alternate solutions such as crowd sourcing and social media that can have a direct impact on solving larger social problems. Therefore, the goal of an open access educational system is to improve decision making for larger governing bodies effecting the future growth of society.

Can We Live Together? a Case Study on Thai Cyber Activism on Facebook

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Abstract

For more than a decade Thai media outlets were under the combined hegemony of the government and the military until Facebook, as a virtual public sphere, emerged as an alternative form of media and became the information hub for the Thai cybercitizen. As an arena to express their freedom of speech, cybercitizens started to use Facebook to disclose political affiliations, post and report news, managing citizen reporting online and transforming offline activities such as calling for participation during periods of political unrest.

The Coup d'état in 2014 transformed the Thai political situation. Emergency decrees and other regulations had been enacted and implemented towards the opposition side based on supposed threats to nationality. Whilst the authorities have an absolute duty to monitor and take action during and after the Coup, there was a group of digital activists who established a Facebook page to use as a platform for deliberative democracy for the citizens who disagreed with the Coup. Both online and offline activities in that period demonstrate the functions and characteristics of Facebook.

Apart from investigating the related laws, decreed and accusations made by the new government, as a comparison, this study focuses on the methods and activities created by the cybercitizens on their Facebook page to express resistance towards the authoritarian orders coming from above. This study draws on empirical data which had been collected from popular posts and comments on Facebook, as well as the actual activities after the 2014 Coup d'état.

Modern Mosque / Modern Muslim: The Foundation of Islamic Centre of Thailand by Paichit Pongpunluk

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Abstract

This paper investigates the design of the Foundation of Islamic Centre of Thailand (FICT), conceived in 1971 under the influence of architectural modernism. In contrast to other mosques of the Thai metropolis, which increasingly appear with typical elements seen in traditional Islamic architecture, the facility designed by the Muslim architect Paichit Pongpunluk was evidence of avant-garde experimentation. The significance of the mosque's exceptional design, however, goes beyond the establishment of a 'new' architectural style. Accordingly, the study explores the role of modern architecture as being applied to the Thai context and in response to specific conditions, as well as it's use in identity formation processes. The paper argues that the modernist mosque has become a form of representation centered on various constructions and projections of Muslim identity.

Shaktism in Lanna : From Emerald Goddess to Cammadevi

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Independent Scholar

Abstract

The author argues that the legend of Camadevi, a Pali chronicle composed in the early 15th century by the Lanna Buddhist monk Mahathera Bodhiramsi, is an essential part of Hindu Tantra, a system of practices involving the worship of the goddess and designed to empower and release both mind and body.

According to Tantric Shaktism, however, every manifestation of Devi (Goddess) involves a different combination of all three elements. In practice, this means that each Goddess must have both a dark (fearsome, destructive) side, and a bright (beautiful, compassionate) side. The dark side destroys ignorance and tears away illusion; the bright side bestows Supreme Knowledge and spiritual liberation. But by that analysis, the pre-vedic Emerald goddess or Nang Kaew in Lanna , seems to have been mostly overlooked or forgotten, is the dark side of great goddess Sarasvati, Laxmi and Uma. Finally, the goddess is developed to be green Tara in Tantric Buddhism.

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Future of Alternative Agriculture Farming for Food Sovereignty and Food Security in Thailand

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Abstract

This research paper is based on the conceptual framework of political economy; employing a neo-Marxist and neo- Gramscian approach, treating the Thai agriculture, farm producing food system as part of the global capitalist system. The main question to be addressed is, how do neo-liberal ideology as a globally dominant influence and the agri-business model, the “green revolution" as a mainstream paradigm for economic growth in agriculture, lead to the dominance of ideas and ways of capitalist thinking. Corporate power ideology has become dominant over the Thai agricultural society and public policy and Thai public agricultural policy has become a hegemony, according to a neo-gramscian analysis. Hence, how are food sovereignty and food security in Thailand, as well as small-scale Thai farmers affected by these influences? Discussion deals with "alternative agriculture" as a counter hegemony and the actual practices of Thai civil society and small-scale farmers, including the self-reliant Santi Asoke Buddhist communities. How can Thai food sovereignty and food security would be met? What measures should be taken? Is "sustainable agriculture" truly an alternative way of farming in the future?

The objectives of this study are four-fold:

(1) Analyze the macro-effect of the green revolution on the Thai agricultural sector and small-scale farmers.

(2) Analyze the effects of contract farming under the corporate control on the human rights of small-scale farmers.

(3) Analyze the performance of the self-reliant Santi Asoke Buddhist communities based on the sufficiency economy model of development.

(4) Recommend alternative agricultural policy for small-scale farmers for future food sovereignty and food security in Thailand.

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Social Media-Based Far Right Movements in Thailand

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Abstract

Since late 2013, the split in Thai society between two contesting camps - the Red Shirts and the Yellow Shirts - has been radicalizing and culminated in the coup d'état in May 2014. Throughout this time, far right groups have been playing a crucial role, in the political protests on the streets leading up to the coup, after the coup as well as during the times of the interregnum.

The paper studies far right internet-based movements in Thailand. One example is a Facebook-based group, the Rubbish Collection Organization (ROC), which has wildly been recognized as an active far right group performing witch-hunts against people whom they consider disloyal to the Monarchy. Numerous loosely or non-organized individuals have joined this Facebook group, and some of its mobbing and bullying postings reach over 200,000 likes. This virtual violence has turned to open physical violence, especially in the days after the death of His Majesty late King Bhumibol.

The paper argues that the Thai groups have to be analyzed in a global context, given the current rise of far right groups on a global scale. Against this background the paper discusses how far established political theories drawing on radical right-wing groups in Europe of the 1930s can be used to analyze such groups in Thailand today. It also aims to link the online and offline situation, especially in aiming to understand the key factors that make cyber space warriors decide to enter street politics, especially in the case of Thailand.

Young Designers and Senior Artisans Developing Weaving Crafts: A Comparative Study of a Design Workshop with Mlabri Community in Nan and Highland Villages of Chiang Mai Province

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Abstract

The northern region of Thailand has long been known for its rich natural resources for producing weaving arts and crafts. Local craftsmanship for producing tools from natural materials such as bamboo, rattan wood, grass and ivy has historically been integral in village life. However, the influx of modern goods and cheap plastic products throughout the mountainous area made local weaving crafts and tools diminish, as it took longer time to produce and was not attractive enough for modern usage. Only a few elderly people in the villages still produce woven baskets while younger generations focus on other work to generate more income. This research paper discusses the work of Industrial Design students and faculties from King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT) in three areas of study; the Mlabri community in Bor Kluea District, Nan Province, and two villages in Chiang Mai Province. The class of 16 students collaborated with 3 highland communities with the aim of developing weaving crafts by learning from and building partnerships with elderly artisans. Seeing that a young generation of students from urban Bangkok valued the experience of learning to weave local products created a sense of pride in the community Synchronously, young students also introduced local artists to new techniques and design suitable for modern lifestyle. As weaving crafts is a time-consuming process, it requires a healthy relationship between teachers and students to understand each other and compromise their expectations to complete the final products. With KMUTT's connection to new markets, newly designed weaving products could be the inspiration for artisans and other younger villagers to continue making crafts that represent local identity of the communities.

Road, Communities, and Globalization： an Anthropological Investigation in Middle Thailand

Xiao Yan Long
Yunnan University

Abstract

Cunshen is located in Pak Nam Pho, northern Thailand, and sits where the railway between Bangkok and Chiang Mai passes through. It is close to Road 11 and Road 1. The town's development and change is closely related to the impact of the road. This paper investigates the impact of waterways, road and railway development on Chunshen. It argues that market liberalization and cultural identity has been changing as the highway, cross-board trade and religious activities have been affected by the community's connection with the external forces of globalization.

New Chinese Mobility and Religious Enchantment: Case Study in Chiang Mai Province

Xiaoxia Lan
Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University

Aranya Siriphon
Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University

Abstract

The new Chinese mobility has been increasing dramatically in Thailand today. Generally, hundred thousand of Chinese migrants have flown to Bangkok and other large Thai cities mainly for transnational business, economic ventures and trading activities. Interestingly, apart from these phenomena, it is found that in cultural and religious spheres, not only have Chinese churches been increasing, but many new Chinese migrants have also joined Chinese churches and Christian communities by converting to be Christian members. This article explores the situation of new Chinese migrants and their conversion to Christianity in Chiang Mai, as a case study. I apply concept of religious enchantment in order to examine how religious lives and religious activities of new Chinese migrants in Chiang Mai have been formed emergently and what the roles of Chinese Christian Churches are in encouraging the religious enchantment. As a volunteer at the Chinese churches I collected information over several months, using qualitative interview, observation and participatory research.

The paper finds that the Chinese Churches have served as an important role in institutionally guiding and shaping new Chinese migrants' belief, value, attitude, and religious practices. Moreover, new Chinese immigrants themselves have engaged enthusiastically in Christian conversion, in order to gain a sense of morality from non-religious to religious subjectivity in the modern world.

Performing Identities: Balance of Connectivity in Sino-Thai Pung Tao Gong Ancestral Temple

Xiaoxiao Ma
Sun Yat-sen University

Abstract

Pung Tao Gong Ancestral Temple can be seen as representative of Sino-Chinese shrines in Northern Thailand. It is dedicated to eleven Sino-Chinese deities, which originate in Daoism, Sino-Chinese folklore and Chinese folklores, as well as Thai land gods hidden behind the main hall. Except for entertaining personal pilgrims who are mainly Teochew and Thai, the Pung Tao Gong Charity Foundation hosts three big ceremonies particular Chinese festivals, inviting Chinese and Thai government officers, Teochew people and other Sino-Chinese dialect groups. Though adapted from original ceremonies in China, since the shrine was rebuilt in 1998 the ceremonies have been re-created constantly under the context Thai and Chinese politics and culture by Pung Tao Gong Charity Foundation.

This paper tries to elucidate how the Pung Tao Gong Charity Foundation committees integrate and interpret Thai and Chinese religious scripts through the collective memory of their Sino-Chinese community. By examining the fusion of Thai and Chinese culture in common spiritual rituals, it will explore what is expressed to the participants and the audience, and as a result, how the participants have processed the rituals.

Further, it can be seen that worship and rituals are not purely religious activities. This paper will focus on what meaning the committees and participants give to their identity as Teochew or Sino-Chinese, and how they are constructing it in local society by balancing their connection to other Sino-Chinese dialect groups, Thai society, and Chinese and Thai government representatives. At the same time, it will shed light on how Sino-Chinese leaders are establishing their positions and pursuing social/cultural capital within the Sino-Chinese community.

A Study of Naga Plastic Arts in Northern Thailand : As Examples Buddhist Temples of Mueang Chiang Mai District

Yaliang Chang
Department of Southeast Asian Studies, National Chi Nan University

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Abstract

The importance of Naga plastic arts has two aspects: (a) In terms of the research value, Naga is an important design element in Buddhist temples in Thailand. It is particularly seen in architectural decoration and ornaments, yet little research has been done on it; (b) Naga plastic arts of northern Thailand also have local characteristics. Buddhist temples are important places for observing Buddhist art. Chiang Mai was the capital of the Lanna Kingdom from the 13th century, so the city has many important Buddhist temples. In other words, the Buddhist temples in Chiang Mai are representative of Lanna culture. This study involved field research, recording Naga plastic arts in 34 Buddhist temples of the Mueang Chiang Mai District. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the characteristics of Naga plastic arts in northern Thailand. The results of this research show that Naga plastic arts of northern Thailand were influenced by Lanna culture, as revealed by their motifs, shapes, patterns, etc.

A Contrastive Study of Vocabulary at Basic Level Category in Chinese and Thai Languages Based on the Prototype Theory

Yang Yuting
Sichuan Provincial Research Institute of Thai Studies

Abstract

Prototype theory refers to the graded categorization in which some members are more typical than others. Since it was formulated by the scholar Rosch in the 1970s, it has been widely applied into the field of linguistics with researches ranging from grammar, lexicon analysis to sentence structure. However, few attempts have been made on the application of this theory into the contrastive study of vocabularies at the basic level among different languages. This paper aims to make a contrastive study of vocabularies at the basic level category in Chinese and Thai languages through a survey, that is, to find out the similarities and differences of vocabularies between the two languages at the basic level; to dig out reasons for the differences based on data collected from the survey; and finally, to explore how to apply the prototype theory into real classroom-teaching. Three tasks are assigned to 50 Chinese college students and 50 college students speaking Thai language as their mother tongue. Based on the research results, this paper concludes that vocabularies of the basic level category between Chinese and Thai languages vary a little in animal, fruit and cooking utensil category, and prototypes of each category in these two languages are different - that is, some members are more typical than others as a result of different cognitive models influenced by different cultures. This research is expected to provide insights into the teaching of Thai language in China, as lexicon is the basic unit of a language. The teaching of vocabulary in Thai language will be more effective if the teacher is aware of the similarities and differences between basic level vocabularies between Chinese and Thai languages. It will facilitate cross-cultural communication as the awareness of the differences will avoid misunderstanding.

Connecting the Unconnectable: Cultural Studies of the Interaction between Thai and Japanese Royal Families

Yasuhito Asami
Faculty of Law, Hosei University

Abstract

In the past six decades, Thai royal family members paid visits to the Japanese Imperial Palace 34 times, while the Japanese royal family members visited Thailand 31 times. The interaction between the two royal families is an important yet understudied aspect of the two countries' relations.

In the 1940's and 50's, both the Thai and Japanese monarchies had to redefine themselves. Five months after the miserable defeat in the World War II, the Japanese Emperor, Hirohito, officially renounced the imperial claim to divinity. He had to transform his image from "a solemn and sacred living god" to a secular, modern, democracy-loving yet apolitical symbolic head of the state. In the aftermath of the abolition of absolute monarchy, the Thai king also needed to recast its image.

Emperor Hirohito and King Bhumibol faced similar dilemmas. First, they could not completely sever their connection to the traditional image of monarchy, because it was the indispensable source of their authority. But at the same time, they needed to significantly change the image of monarchy, because the old image did not fit well with the new socio-political situations in their countries. Second, they were expected by many, though not all, to more or less follow the steps of the Western-style constitutional monarchy. But, at the same time, they were expected to play a role as a symbol of cultural "uniqueness" of the nation they represent.

This presentation examines how the exchanges of visits between the two royal families helped them reshape their self-images. It points out that the significance of their exchanges of visits changed over time as the new images of the two monarchies became firmly institutionalized, and also that, though their interaction has its own dynamics, it also reflects changes in the overall relations between the two countries.

Sino-Laos Transnational Farming Culture Dissemination and Interaction Study - Phongsaly Tea as an Example

Ying Qin
Yunnan Agriculture University

Jingwei Guo
Yunnan Agriculture University

Abstract

There are four kinds of forces in transnational farming cultural dissemination and interaction, which are in Chinese folk; spontaneous cross-border farming cooperation, government oriented and market oriented cooperation in agriculture, as well as agricultural disaster emergency transnational cooperation. With the development of the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation（LMC), these aspects regarding agricultural cooperation made breakthroughs, leading to the emergence of a cultural structure based on physical and human geography. These have been not only promoted by Laos' agricultural technology and industrial development, but have also improved agricultural development in the Yunnan plateau. This paper looks at the effective implementation of transnational cooperation in agriculture, the effective guarantee of food and ecological security, along with how to practice The Belt and Road construction better from an agricultural perspective.

An Analysis of Filipino Identity in Thai-ASEAN Juvenile Books: Implications for Filipino Psychology

Yingyot Kanchina

Jayson D. Petras
University of the Philippines

Abstract

For more than 40 years, Filipino psychology (Sikolohiyang Pilipino), as a discipline and as a movement, has advocated practice of psychology in the Philippines. Thus, the analysis of the Filipino's identity would rely less on Western models and views and would focus more on the Philippines' local viewpoint. However, with the advent of ASEAN Integration, the trend of writings looking into Filipino's identity started to shift from Western perspectives to ASEAN perspectives, with Southeast Asians serving as researchers and writers. This study aims to examine the Thai writers' views on the Philippines and the Filipinos as an initial attempt to determine possible impact of the regional integration to the field of the Filipino psychology. Using 10 juvenile books written by Thai authors about the Philippines-ASEAN as data sets, the study found 11 perceptions on Filipino's identity: (1) being culturally and linguistically diverse; (2) having colorful and joyful lives; (3) having high political awareness; (4) religious advocate; (5) having gender equality; (6) being educated; (7) being friends of Thais; (8) being friendly; (9) having strong family ties; (10) having similar physical appearance with Thais; and (11) having poverty problem. These perceptions are constructed through lexicons and images used by the authors. The results are used as a springboard for discussion on possible research directions for Filipino psychology in the context of ASEAN Community

Muang Noi in History : An Archeological Evidence

Yoddanai Sukkasam
The 7th Regional Office of Fine Arts

Abstract

"Muang Noi" is considered one of the most significant ancient cities in the history and archaeology of the northern Pai River plain. It sits at the present-day location of M.4, Muang Noi village, Tambon Wiang Nuea in Pai district of Mae Hong Son province.

The name "Muang Noi" first appeared in the 20th Century B.E. Lan Na period to denote the prison compound of Lord "Boon Rueang", the only crown prince of King Tilokraja, who was accused of treason and subsequently executed.

Later in the 21th Century B.E. the city was recognized as the birth place and residence of two of the Mang Rai dynasty royal family members who would later succeed to the Lan Na kingdom throne; King Yod of Chiang Rai and King Muang Kesa Kaew respectively.

Subsequently, the name of Muang Noi was lost from Lan Na history until the year 2536 BE. At which point the 4th Office of Fine Arts of Chiang Mai (former administrative name) found in survey no less than 30 scattered groups of archaeological sites: the "Phra That Muang Noi" (ruined) temple being the most significant.

In 2558 BE, with the data from this initial survey, the 8th Regional Office of Fine Arts, Chiang Mai (now the 7th Regional Office of Fine Arts, Chiang Mai) conducted an archeological study on the area of Phra That Muang Noi temple (ruined)

The result of this study led to the discovery of numbers of important archeological evidences both in the forms of archaeological sites and artifacts that after study and interpretation, have provided a clearer picture of Muang Noi history.

Building Pagodas and Constructing Charisma in the Myanmar-Thai Border Region

Yoko Hayami
Kyoto University

Abstract

There have been religious movements surrounding charismatic monks on both sides of the Thai-Myanmar border. Some of the shared features of these movements are the construction of large structures (especially pagodas [chedis]), the formation of communities of devotees sharing moral practices including vegetarianism, and the diversity and wide range of followers. Some of these constructions look more like theme parks, which reflect the accumulation of riches in the capitalist economy, while at the same time conferring legitimacy to their donors, and providing sustenance to the devotees.

In this paper, I focus especially on a Karen monk who has gathered followers on both sides of the border. Seen from the center of state power, these monks and their constructions provide opportunity for large donations and therefore accumulation of significant merit. Large-scale donors, persons of high socio-economic and political status, gain moral standing and legitimacy by giving large donations. From the peripheries, such as the Karen, however, the movement also provides existential sustenance, both physical and spiritual. The entirety of this range and diversity of the following take magnificent shape in the large structures, especially pagodas, constructed by these monks. Thus the practice of constructing itself is the act of building charisma.

On the Effect of Dissemination of Romance of Three Kingdoms in Thailand: The Role of Feedback in Cross-Cultural Literature Dissemination

Yong Jin
Peking University

Abstract

As one of the four great classical novels in Chinese literature, Romance of the Three Kingdoms is broadly spread and communicated worldwide, especially in East and Southeast Asia. In Thailand, Romance of Three Kingdoms enjoys immense popularity.Samkok, the first Thai version of Romance of Three Kingdoms, is popular throughout the whole nation, and highly respected by generations of Thai people. Most interestingly, Samkok is actually regarded as Thailand's national literature despite its foreign origin. Samkok is deeply rooted in Thai people's everyday life, and has become a part of Thai traditional culture. The dissemination of Romance of the Three Kingdoms in Thailand is a classic case of cross-cultural literature dissemination. The issue should be discussed from an internal Thai perspective, and this is the only way to understand why it could have happened. In the process of the dissemination, feedbacks have played a significant role. An effective feedback process can decide whether a literary work could be totally accepted by the readers in a foreign cultural context, which is the vital link to achieve the best dissemination effect. Through the active feedback of "Gatekeeper", "Opinion Leader" and the "Diffusion of Innovations" which are inspired by them, Romance of the Three Kingdoms is highly appraised and adopted by Thai people, has localized within Thailand's vernacular culture and has turned into a Thai literature masterwork.

Teochew Community in Thai Society: A Case of Loanwords to Thai Daily Life

Yoopin Claymone
Institute of East Asian studies, Thammasat University

Abstract

Recognizing the importance of the influence of Chinese culture in Thailand, the topic of this research paper is to show the existence of the Teochew community in Thai Society by looking through Chinese loanwords used in Thai daily life. The study reveals that although Chinese loanwords in the Thai language came from the following dialects: Teochew, Hokkien, Hainanese, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Hakka, the majority came from Teochew dialects.

The paper is divided into five parts: 1) Introduction of Chinese community in Thailand focusing on Teochew. 2) History of Teochew in Thailand. 3) Method of gathering the data from documentary research and current issues. 4) Objectives and result of the study that concerns Chinese loanwords in the Thai Language.

The objectives are to study and compile Chinese loanwords in the Thai language focusing only on the Teochew dialect. Chinese loanwords in the Thai language are classified into the following groups: Books, Food and Restaurants, Personal Names, Tradition, Religion and Belief, Slang, Equipment for Home Use and Furniture, Business and Trade, Relatives, Career and Occupation, Games and Sports, Clothes and Ornaments, Numerals and Units of Measurement, Flower Names, Race and Nationality, Communications and Transport. These Chinese loanwords have been adjusted to fit Thai consonants, vowels, and the tonal system. Of those three elements, the consonants have the most similarity to the Chinese pronunciation while the tones have the least. Finally, 5) Conclusions, points out that Chinese loanwords, especially from the Teochew dialect, still exist in Thai society.

Thai SME Policy and Japanese Cooperation after the Asian Economic Crisis

Yoshihiro Otsuji
Institute for International Economic Studies

Abstract

This presentation analyzes the interaction among the four major actors in the rapid growth of the automobile parts industry in Thailand after the financial crisis in 1997, namely, the Thai government, Thai entrepreneurs, Japanese private companies, and the Japanese government. It argues that industrial connectivity between Thai and Japanese private companies went through fundamental changes after the financial crisis. It also shows that in the process of those fundamental changes, the interactions with Japanese bureaucrats and Japanese companies influenced the ways of thinking of the Thai bureaucrats and Thai companies. It points out the process of accumulation in the auto parts industry in Thailand by considering the introduction of Shindan (corporate diagnosis system), the dispatch of roving experts, and development of the activity of Technology Promotion Association as a catalyst for relations between Japan and Thailand.

Illusive Equality: Religion and Education in Thailand

Younghee Ahn
Faculty of Education, Chiang Mai University

Abstract

Thailand's Constitutional Law and Educational Law provide guarantees of religious equity. Additionally, Thai citizens are guaranteed religious education according to one's faith. However, it would appear that such guarantees are of little consequence in Thailand's public religious education sites. This paper attempts to develop an academic discussion about functional and critical features of religion with its social and political aspects. The discussion furthers how this complex features of religion and politics influence religious education in Thailand public school in terms of religious equity. Further, it illustrates what happens when politics deliberately promotes a single religion in the public sphere, what is the generating cause, and what functions the religion serves in Thai society. The author argues that in any pluralistic nation, such as Thailand, such favoritism violates fundamental human rights, undermines sound pedagogical practices, stirs up tensions among different religious groups and results in discriminating against religious minorities. This is a descriptive analysis which includes documents and contents analysis, historical overlook, other related studies, and the author's direct experiences and observations.

Religion? Cult? or the Truth? – Yiguan Dao (Anuttaratham) in the Thai Religious Market

Yu-Sheng Lin
Kyoto University

Abstract

Yiguan Dao ('Anuttaratham' in Thai) is a religious group that was founded in China in the late 19th century, which in past decades has rapidly developed in Thailand. Different from its development in other countries, there are many non-Chinese members in Thailand. Therefore, instead of relating it with Chineseness, we should consider its relation with Thai society and religions, particularly Thai Buddhism.

Many scholars tend to use syncretism or hybridization to comprehend the relationship between Thai Buddhism and various religious practices in Thailand. However, those views are usually no more than the description of the change of structure itself, seldom an explanation to it. Some scholars criticize this view and indicate others, such as a more all-inclusive view of 'religious repertoire' (McDaniel 2011) or a complementary view between Thai Buddhism and other religious practices (O'Connor 1993; Kataoka 2014, 2015), but those views overlook the dynamic process of the relationship between Thai Buddhism and other religious practices. Instead of taking Yiguan Dao as a syncretic part of Thai Buddhism, I argue that we should take a competitive view to understand its interaction with Thai Buddhism in the Thai religious market.

In Thailand, although Yiguan Dao is not recognized as 'religion' (sasana) by the state administratively, there are few regulations from the Thai government. Instead it faces attacks and criticism from Buddhist critics, who call it a 'cult' (lathi). In response to those critics, Yiguan Dao members claim their teaching is the 'truth' (thamma), and create various discourses and practices to map out their location in relation to Buddhism in the Thai religious market.

Made in Thailand: Reconstruction of National Image by Thai Traders in Kunming Exhibition Fair

Yueping Wang
Yunnan University

Abstract

Along with globalization, international trade and cargo flowing across national borders has been dramatically increased. This has not only increased the interconnectedness between two countries with different cultures, but also interlinked the people, their activities and their networks through the trade. Scholars observe this phenomenon loosened state control and increased deterritorialization through localization and regionalization. This research focuses on the Thai traders who attended an Exhibition in Kunming to examine the local dynamics under globalization. It is argued that the Thai government and Thai traders are continuously promoting the national imagination of "Made in Thailand" as part of the Thai identity, which is a result of state participation in globalization. Through transnational cargo flows, transitional networking, and transitional operation of trade by the traders, the state has participated in the globalization process through localization and regionalization for their own benefit.

The Meaning of 'History' or 'Past' in the Context of the Tai-Lue Cultural Revival Movement

Yuji Baba
Kyoto Bunkyo University

Abstract

The three villages of Tai-Lue people in Thawanpha district, Nan province, migrated from Muang La, Sipsong Panna, Yunnan, China, around 200 years ago. They have celebrated their guardian spirit originating from their home place, Muang La, in Sipsong Panna, as a symbol of their historical memory of migration.

In the 90's, the enlargement of ritual as a local cultural revivalism caused conflict between two of the three villages. Since they both insisted on having a central role in the ritual by their own interpretation of their migration history, the ritual was finally split into two places in 1996. In their recent cultural revival movement, the tradition of the Tai Lue culture is attempting to perpetuate, especially in the Chao Luang Muang La ritual.

Recently, BMT (a group practicing Buddhistic austerities) appeared near N village. BMT is a transcended time community without feelings toward "the past", so religious precepts are important to them. N village, meanwhile, desires the perpetuity of the future while still referring to the past. The "traditional culture" of N village is out of the interest of BMT so they criticize the life of N village itself as not based on religious precepts and do not accept its value. After conflict between N village and BMT, N village came to promote their Tai-Lue culture even more than before.

Through these events, that have continued for more than the past than 20 years, I will examine the meaning of 'History' or 'Past' in the context of the Tai-Lue Cultural Revival Movement.

Reflections on the Development of Sichuan Opera Based on the Study of Khon

Yujie Zhu
Sichuan Provincial Research Institute of Thai Studies

Abstract

Khon is a genre of Thai dance drama which is traditionally performed solely in the royal court. The Khon drama, commonly called the "masked-play", involves singing, dancing, acting, acrobatics, and music. The contemporary development of Khon has been attributed to collaborative support from the royal court, the industry, the government, and the non-governmental level. The study aims to explore how the Sichuan opera of China could be better developed based on research about Khon.

'Sea People' in Transition: Change in Moken Identity after the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami

Yuki Suzuki
Kokushikan University

Abstract

On December 26th, 2004, a great earthquake occurred off of the western coast of northern Sumatra. The earthquake triggered a tsunami which spread across the Indian Ocean and hit the west coast of six provinces in Thailand. This tsunami killed 5,395 people – many of them tourists from abroad – with another 2,817 people swept away or lost. Moreover, the tsunami resulted in economic losses of 14 million baht (approximately 0.5 million USD).

Phang-nga province experienced particularly severe damage, and the Moken and Surin islands (a minority group in Thailand) were also affected. Most have been engaged in fishing activities for generations and are known as 'Sea People' (c'hao le 'in Thai). Almost all of their houses and boats were completely destroyed by the devastating waves. Many NGOs came to Phang-nga province to help the Moken by providing a variety of necessary things such as boats, houses and supplies. The Thai government was also actively engaged in assisting the reconstruction of the lives of the Moken and started offering them Thai citizenship. Although some Moken acquired Thai nationality after that, most still remain stateless. For all intents and purposes, the Moken can be divided into two types: Thai-Moken and Non-Thai Moken.

This study aims at analyzing the complex ethnic situation after the disaster, focusing on the self-representation of the Moken, and showing a transformation of consciousness in the way they define themselves as 'Sea People'.

Ethnic Tai in Vietnam: A State of Knowledge and Its Politics

Yukti Mukdawijitra
Thammasat University

Abstract

Knowledge production on the Tai in Vietnam has long been contested. My paper looks at how the Tai have been studied with various approaches in different periods and how this knowledge is produced within contexts of national, regional and global politics. I employ ethnographic, historical, and documentary research in Vietnam and Thailand. Along with the emerging scholarship on "world anthropologies," this research on knowledge production on Tai in Vietnam is aimed to shed light on comparative studies on the production of anthropological knowledge in this region. The Tai in Vietnam were well studied by the French during their colonial period. After the Vietnamese defeated the French in 1954, Tai studies were no less important and flourishing. In the postcolonial context, aside from Marxist influences, knowledge production on the Tai among the Vietnamese scholarship is strong in terms of ethnic division of labor. A smaller number of ethnographic, linguistic, and historical works about the Tai in English, conducted mainly by American scholars, were produced. Though small in number they remain influential, particularly within linguistics. Around this time, due both to the war with the French and the Vietnam War, Tai diaspora emerged both in Europe and in the United States. Scholarships on the Tai have been produced by both the diaspora Tai themselves and others who studied these migrant Tais. Another major body of Tai scholarship was produced by scholars of Thailand. Thai scholars become much interested in the Tai of Vietnam since at the 1940s when the idea of pan-Thai was promoted during the Japanese occupation of Thailand. As it stands today, new approaches and directions are being produced by young scholars.

The Future of Panjaa Wisdom in Langsàmăimài Postmodern Globalized Universities

Zane Ma Rhea
Monash University

Abstract

One of the goals of Thai higher education policy is that that students should be educated to be wise, and this paper reports on research conducted to examine the extent to which this has been achieved over the last 20 years. The first section of the paper will make close analysis of the definitional aspects of the key terms: panjaa wisdom, khwaamrúu knowledge, phumpanjaachawbaan rural wisdom, and langsàmăimài postmodern society in order to clarify how these terms and phrases are being used. The second section of the paper will provide a synthesis of the relevant literature and methodological aspects of this study that has used a mixed methods approach drawing on developments in the field over time. The third section will report on key findings about what might be considered to be uniquely Thai forms of wisdom as they are being discussed in the contemporary Thai higher education system as both a religious concept and in its traditional rural forms. The research found that there is uncertainty among Thai senior higher education policy makers in how to operationalize their vision of Thai wisdom as a national 'common asset' drawing from Buddhism and rural wisdom, to name two strong cultural assets, across their higher education systems given external pressures that compare the Thai university system in international rankings. Findings also suggest that in Thailand, while there is an extant pedagogical pathway called siinsamaadipanjaa that could underpin and shape discussions about how to evolve traditional understandings of Thai wisdom into a langsàmăimài postmodern globalized Thai university system, there is little research about the pedagogical or curricula aspects of preserving a Thai-style approach to the cultivation of wisdom within the contemporary university and that this lack of attention will make the attainment of the policy intention difficult to achieve.

Comparison and Analysis of the Development between the Thai Ethnic Chinese and the Malaysia Ethnic Chinese

Zhenfeng Li
Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Science, Chongqing University

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Abstract

Though overseas ethnic Chinese have been spreading all over the world these days, most live in the Southeast Asian region. They integrate into the local society to different extents and have an influence on the local society to different degrees, making them an important ethnic group to local places. Compared to other countries' ethnic Chinese, Thai ethnic Chinese are undoubtedly the most successful; having been mostly acculturated by the local race and integrated deeply into Thai society, they achieve higher levels of national identity, race identity, political participation, economical participation, and social and cultural participation. This differs from places such as Malaysia, where the ethnic Chinese still maintain a rather perfect Chinese tradition.

Many causes play an important role in this phenomenon. For example, due to their Chinese descent, the Thai royal family are friendly to the Chinese, which strengthens their relationship; Thailand has never been under colonial rule, while Malaysia was once a colony of the British, who implemented a policy of "divide and rule" that had adverse effects on the relationship between the Chinese and the Malays; both the Chinese and the Thai believe in Buddhism, while the Malays believe in Islam which contradicts Chinese faith; China and Malaysia have have different policies in education etc., which results in greater difference between the two; and so on. Thus this article states the difference between the development of Thai ethnic Chinese and Malaysian ethnic Chinese and inquires into the reason why Thai ethnic Chinese acculturate so deeply.

Roundtables

ROUNDTABLE

Cultivating 'Good Muslims' and Seeking 'A Better Life' Through Formal Education

Coordinator(s)

Anusorn Unno
Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology, Thammasat University

Chalita Bundhuwong
Kasetsart University

Description

While Islam promotes learning through the course of Muslims' lives, it is not easy for Malay Muslims of southern Thailand to pursue their education. On the one hand, traditional Islamic schools such as Tadika and Pondok are under strict control and have been closely monitored as they are suspected of indoctrinating radical and militant Islam which is deemed accountable for the recent unrest in the region. In addition, even "Private Islamic Schools" which have been adjusted according to the Thai state's policy are still under control and monitored. On the other hand, Muslim college and university students are under close surveillance. Muslim student clubs have always been raided, along with the dormitories and apartments in which they stayed have always been searched. Recently, many Malay Muslim students in Bangkok were arrested and taken into custody for interrogation on the unrest. Importantly, they have faced prejudices and difficulties while studying in colleges and universities in Bangkok and other major cities that are not sufficiently sensitive to their religion, ethnicity, and language. These state's attitudes, policies, and measures on Islamic education and Malay Muslim students create obstacles for Malays Muslims to cultivate "good Muslims" and seek "a better life" through formal education.

Despite such obstacles, however, Malay Muslims have initiated a variety of projects and activities to achieve what they aim in education. Traditional Islamic school owners adjust their teaching methods and the ways they operate their schools to meet regulations while serving religious study. Private Islamic School owners and administrators not only arrange courses to be in line with the religion but also provide students with knowledge and skills necessary for worldly lives and occupations. Malay Muslim students collaborate and create links with college and university student activists in general to strengthen and broaden their activities. Such struggles and initiatives, however, have hardly been discussed in public and especially in academic conferences by those involved. This round-table is therefore aimed to provide Malay Muslim students, Islamic school owners and administrators with an opportunity to discuss obstacles they have been faced with in education, projects and activities they have initiated to achieve "good Muslims" and "a better life" through formal education.

Panelists

1. Anusorn Unno, Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology, Thammasat University
2. Abdulhafiz Hile, Lukmanulhakeem Foudation
3. Maroning Salaming, College of Islamic Studies, Prince of Songkhla University, Pattani Campus
4. Danyal Abdulloh, Social Development Program, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Khon Kaen University

ROUNDTABLE

Institutionalizing Socially-Engaged Research at Chiang Mai University: Experiences and Challenges

Coordinator(s)

Avorn Opatpatanakit
Chiang Mai University

Description

As the first regional comprehensive university of Thailand founded in January 1964, under a Royal Charter granted by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Chiang Mai University has been expected to engage with the northern community, in particular, to assist in reaching sustainable development goals. However, academic knowledge transferred from CMU scholars may not benefit local target groups enough due to a top-down approach. Since 2002, the Center for Community-based Research, a project-based unit was set up at the Faculty of Agriculture, supported by the Division of Community-based Research, the Thailand Research Fund (TRF), to facilitate CMU academic faculties and students to co-produce situated practical knowledge with community researchers through "community-based research (CBR).

Under the program, 95 CBR projects were provide grants for support. Some examples of the topics researched are: participation to improve agricultural practices to decrease chemical usage; capacity building of aging groups, youth groups and local administrative organizations; participatory management of the debt problem, health problem, community forests, traditional irrigation management, impacts of industrialization and community waste management; restoration of natural resources; and participatory management of elderly patients with chronic disease, patients with diabetes and high blood pressure.

The empowering research methodology, referred to as "community-based research" (CBR) was applied based on four principles:

- community members are the core research team with academic researchers,
- research questions are identified by the core research team,
- integrating local wisdom with academic knowledge,
- applying participatory process; thinking of practical actions and design activities to find the solutions based on collected data.

The aim of this paper is to review the experiences of the program and assess social impacts in terms of community empowerment and meeting objectives. The paper is based on a review of reports and papers from the program.

Some of the lessons learned from the projects are:

- Community members can be empowered through practice as community. Actions designed from collected data and information increase the confidence of community and academic researchers,

- Local wisdom is an effective tool for problem solving. Yet, in many cases local wisdom alone is not sufficient to solve the problems. Academic knowledge can be integrated to solve more complex problems. Thus, faculties should be encouraged to collaborate with local people, supported by university societal engagement unit,
- New management mechanisms usually emerged after a series of actions, thus endorsing the effectiveness of action learning and action research approaches.

Panelists

1. Avorn Opatpatanakit, Chiang Mai University
2. Supapan Krairoek, office
3. Rattasit Sukhahuta, Chiang Mai University
4. Ratanaporn Awipan
5. Woralun Boonyasurat, Faculty of Fine Arts, Chiang Mai University

ROUNDTABLE

Together … We Are Stronger: CMU and Umong Collaboation for Creating Citizens to Strengthen Local Community Management

Coordinator(s)

Avorn Opatpatanakit
Chiang Mai University

Description

Thai society faces many problems, including corruption, poverty, inequality, low educational quality, migration, sexual harassment, hunger, health problems, climate change, drought, disasters, and floods, with many communities ill-equipped to cope with these hardships. The Umong Sub-district in Muang District of Lamphun Province is one such community.

This round table will discuss how Umong Sub-district could integrate local wisdom and academic knowledge, shared by Chiang Mai University scholars, to empower citizens to strengthen community management. To deal with such problems, the leaders and residents of Umong realized they needed 'good citizens' to collectively and effectively address these problems. Starting from 2007, they have worked to do so through local wisdom, and to this day have developed 28 community learning centers with 31 innovations. Having developed 'good citizens', they wanted to share their knowledge and innovations with other Tambons. They launched the Umong Mahawitchalai for Citizen Creation Project in late 2015 with support from the Thai Health Promotion Foundation. They established a community-university whereby 'scholars' from 28 learning centers acted as 'teachers' to share knowledge, skills, and experience with the learners from 60 local administrative organizations throughout the country.

However, many other challenges in Umong community could not be managed by local wisdom alone. Umong Mayor Kayan Wipromchai, executives of the Umong Mahawitchalai for Citizen Creation Project, executives and personnel of the Umong Sub-district Municipality, and 11 community leaders have been collaborating with Chiang Mai University lecturers and students to continue to create 'good citizens' and promote health in Umong by analyzing the community's problems and research gap using a community research methodology based upon the Rapid Ethnographic Community Assessment Process (RECAP) and development of the Thailand Community Network Appraisal Program (TCNAP) through a new research program – Research to Support and Develop Citizens for Strengthening Local Community Development. This consists of 12 sub-projects: identifying characteristics of Umong active citizenship, increasing pre-school teachers' capacity in child development, utilization of folk toys to increase physical skills of pre-school students, participatory empowering of local school students to be active citizens, promoting active citizenship among youth and empowering youth through bicycle-oriented activities, promoting elderly peoples' health through pharmacy students' activity, self-administration of local herbal remedies for relief of infections and chronic diseases, lessons of successful community welfare fund development, participatory developing public policies for solving smoking problems and health management.

Twelve research teams have been applying R&D and community-based research as a research methodology. Researchers from Chiang Mai University and community researchers have been helping to identify the target groups as well as community researchers, reviewing the research topics and questions, and confirming the collected data before analysis. Progress has been continually reviewed.

After 16 months of work, the 12 sub-projects have identified and developed community researchers who are now preparing to mentor 20 local administrative organizations through Umong network on a similar research agenda and projects. The research projects have fostered a collaborative learning environment that has confirmed the necessity of developing citizens to create sustainable development

Panelists

1. Worrapong Trakarnsirinont
2. Ratchaneekorn Tongsookdee
3. Virapong Saeng-Xuto, office
4. Avorn Opatpatanakit, Chiang Mai University
5. Anusan Permsuwan
6. Puckwipa Suwannaprom, Faculty of Pharmacy, Chiang Mai University
7. Narumol Thongwai, Chiang Mai University
8. Chawapornpan Chanprasit, Faculty of Nursing. Chiang Mai University
9. Supapan Krairoek, office
10. Rangsiya Narin
11. Paisit Panitchkul

ROUNDTABLE

Miang: Past, Present and Future

Coordinator(s)

Chartchai Khanongnuch
Chiang Mai University

Description

Miang is an ethnic fermented tea leaf (Camellia sinensis var. assamica) from northern Thailand. It has long history of socio-cultural relationship with northern Thai people. Unlike other types of tea, Miang is a unique product that is known as chewing tea or eating tea. In addition, it is also a specific food for traditional religious ceremonies and funerals. Although chewing of Miang has become less popular among younger generations, there remains a demand for Miang in specific areas of northern Thailand. Understanding traditional fermentation mechanism for Miang has not been well documented and the information is now being developed. The current understanding of Miang has been developed from literature on historic and socio-cultural relationships of Miang, current evidence scientific evidence and personal interviews with local Miang producers. From the plantation areas close to Miang production, physiological, chemical and microbiological analysis of Miang were undertaken and integrated with current scientific literature and community surveys to build an evolving body of new knowledge. This panel discussion provides important historic background of Miang and its ethno-botanical relationship with northern Thai people. Traditional production of Miang and its chemical and physical properties make Miang different to other fermented tea leaves. Therefore, this unique Miang with ethnic roots in northern Thailand is a potential source of health relevant bioactive compounds that is rapidly gaining research interest and can be advanced for many beneficial food and health applications.

Panelists

1. Kate Grudpan
2. Tanet Chareonmuang
3. Anan Ganjanapan, Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University
4. Woralun Boonyasurat, Faculty of Fine Arts Chiang Mai University
5. Chalermpong/Chartchai Saenjum/Khanongnuch, Chiang Mai University
6. Chalermpong/Chartchai Saenjum/Khanongnuch

ROUNDTABLE

Religious Frameworks for Social Change

Coordinator(s)

Jacob Hickman
Brigham Young University

Description

This roundtable brings together current findings from a series of ongoing ethnographic projects that examine religious strategies and frameworks that provide resources for people to address dramatic social change. The roundtable presenters are currently conducting fieldwork in a range of distinct religious contexts in Hmong and Northern Thai communities. The ethnographic projects that provide the basis for this roundtable discussion seek in various ways to understand how religious frameworks provide means of adapting to rather dramatic social and political shifts in these communities. This includes both the strategies inherent in these religious ideologies for addressing social change, as well as the unique ways that practitioners of these frameworks adapt their religious understandings to deal with change. Specific topics include: an analysis of the Buddhist concept of care and how institutions and families wield this concept in caring for people with disabilities; an ethnographic exegesis of a current Christian millenarian movement where subsistence concerns have been cast as irrelevant given the immanent return of Jesus; understanding how women recast ideologies of gender through Christian frameworks, in part as a critique of 'traditional' gender relationships; analyzing the changing forms of shamanism in a Hmong community that faces rapid economic change and development; and an analysis of the deep ontological holism that allows Hmong to incorporate seemingly distinct ontological and medical models into a broader syncretic understanding of the body, health and healing. Presenters will discuss preliminary findings—trends in their emerging ethnographic data—and compare findings for a broader discussion. As these presentations will be made in the middle of the fieldwork phase for these projects, all roundtable participants (both presenters and attendees) will have an opportunity to collectively analyze data and trends provided by the presenting participants. By design, critiques of these initial findings will productively influence the remainder of the projects as presenters return to fieldwork. Thus, this roundtable will involve a roughly equal proportion of presentation and collective analysis / discussion / critique. The broader discussion will consider these emerging trends and seek to facilitate collective analysis of these trends by all participants in the roundtable discussion.

Panelists

1. Sydnee Higginson , Brigham Young University
2. Brinnan Schill, Brigham Young University
3. Stephanie Parsons, Brigham Young University
4. Pa Vang, Brigham Young University
5. Madison Harmer, Brigham Young University

ROUNDTABLE

Navigating Family Life in a Changing Society: 'Development' as a Context of Development

Coordinator(s)

Jacob Hickman
Brigham Young University

Description

This roundtable brings together current findings from a series of ongoing ethnographic projects that examine development in both of its senses—psychological and socioeconomic. The roundtable presenters are currently conducting fieldwork on a range of issues related to kinship and family life in highland Hmong communities in Northern Thailand, examining how these are affected by fast-moving societal-level changes. Arguably, these changes (i.e., socioeconomic 'development') are underwritten by competing accounts of 'modernity,' and these projects analyze how people navigate these competing notions of modernity across the course of life. One of the focal fieldwork communities has almost entirely converted to Christianity (Seventh-Day Adventist and Protestant), while the other is the focus of a series of Royal Development Projects and is a burgeoning tourist destination. The ethnographic projects that provide the basis for this roundtable discussion seek in various ways to understand how religious and socioeconomic shifts in these communities affect practices of kinship, parenting, language socialization, and life course development (the 'other' development at stake here). Specific topics include: understanding how emerging adults experience 'traditional' Hmong culture in the face of dramatic changes in Hmong communities, including the fact that many Hmong youth do not speak Hmong particularly well; understanding how Hmong families interpret the efforts of the development projects in their communities, and how it affects their ability to live a 'Hmong life'; an analysis of how kinship practices and relationality shift as new religious frameworks challenge the social structures underpinning traditional kinship arrangements; understanding models of parenting employed by families in these communities; and analyzing trends of language socialization in a recently Christianized community. Presenters will discuss preliminary findings—trends in their emerging ethnographic data—and compare findings for a broader discussion. As these presentations will be made in the middle of the fieldwork phase for these projects, all roundtable participants (both presenters and attendees) will have an opportunity to collectively analyze data and trends provided by the presenting participants. By design, critiques of these initial findings will productively influence the remainder of the projects as presenters return to fieldwork. Thus, this roundtable will involve a roughly equal proportion of presentation and collective analysis / discussion / critique. The broader discussion will consider these emerging trends and seek to facilitate collective analysis of these trends by all participants in the roundtable discussion.

Panelists

1. Kalli Abbott, Brigham Young University
2. Katherine Earnshaw, Brigham Young University
3. Leanne Lor, BYU
4. Luke Packer, Brigham Young University
5. Venice Jardine

ROUNDTABLE

Thailand's Contradictions and the State of Knowledge in Labor Studies

Coordinator(s)

Kriangsak Teerakowitkajorn
Syracuse University

Description

From a development viewpoint, Thailand's economy is full of contradictions. On the one hand, policymakers see Thailand as a success story for 'its transition from low-income to upper-middle economy within a period of less than a generation' (World Bank 2016). On the other hand, for critical scholars and civil society organizations, Thailand is seen rather as a case study for inequality, in view of its inability to adapt, and inertia to change. Burgeoning studies on Thailand's middle-income trap, for instance, or the outcry following Thailand's new record-breaking status, as the world's 3rd most unequal nation, is exemplary of this latter view. It is not an exaggeration to say that the Thai economy is full of contradictions.

This roundtable invites speakers – experts in various fields both from academia and practitioners – who have long studied labor issues, to engage with such contradictions by reflecting on the current state of knowledge in Thai labor studies. How might labor studies help bridge the gap between reality on the ground and such a dominant view as the World Bank's? To what extent do such contradictions reflect the limitations, shortcomings on the part of labor scholars and practitioners, or perhaps the overall 'dearth' of knowledge and research? Where do the limitations and shortcomings come from? How do we address the rifts and gaps between those working from the scholarly and activist realms?

Panelists

1. Peter Bell, State University of New York, Purchase, NY
2. Voravidh Chareonlert, Chiang Mai University
3. Patchanee Kumnak, Good Electronics Network

ROUNDTABLE

Utilizing the Collaboration and Network to Increase the Quality of Life Among the Disadvantaged Ethnic Groups and Immigrants Who Suffer from Cleft Lip and Cleft Palate. "Connect the different...to Make a Smile"

Coordinator(s)

Krit Khwanngern
Department of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, Chiang Mai University

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Description

"Moving toward an inclusive society with equitable access to the fruits of prosperity and development" is one of the ultimate goals of Thailand's 4.0 policy. This goal challenges such local higher institutes as Chiang Mai University which is located among diverse ethnic group communities in the northern part of Thailand, and immigrants from neighboring countries in upper ASEAN.

This roundtable will focus on the quality of life of children from ethnic group communities and immigrant families who suffer from craniofacial conditions such as cleft lip and palate.

The children born with cleft lip and cleft palate require special care from a team of different health professionals. The series of treatments is planned, managed, and monitored from infancy to young adulthood. Theoretically, the best outcome should be achieved when the treatment is done in the right time of growth and development.

The ethnic group and immigrant patients often fail to accomplish the series of treatments as shown in the treatment protocol. That is because of financial problems, difficulty of 4-5 hours travelling from their remote communities, repeated surgical corrections, long-term treatment, too frequent doctor's appointments etc.

What can CMU scholars do to increase the quality of life of children with cleft lip and cleft palate and their parents? Thanks to the CMU team an initiative has been created for patients with cleft lip and cleft palate especially for the disadvantaged ethnic group communities and migrant laborers.

The team consists of expertise from many professionals including a surgeon, dentist, ENT doctor, nurse, speech and language pathologist, social worker, and IT person. They address the same problems and use their expertise to find answers for each issue.

The goal of the project is that every patient could achieve the necessary standard of treatment for patients with cleft lip and cleft palate.

Panelists

1. Krit Khwanngern, Department of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, Chiang Mai University
2. Panarat Kodkeaw, Chiang Mai University
3. Watcharaporn Sitthikamtiub, Round table
4. Juggapong Natwichai
5. Ubonwan Srimchaiwong
6. Krit Khwanngern, Department of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, Chiang Mai University

ROUNDTABLE

PODD: An Innovative One Health Surveillance System Preventing Pandemics with Animal Origins

Coordinator(s)

Lertrak Srikitjakarn
Chiang Mai University

Description

Aiming for early disease detection and prompt outbreak control, digital technology with participatory one health approach were used to create a novel disease surveillance system called Participatory One Health Disease Detection or PODD. PODD is a community-owned surveillance system, which provides data, automated outbreak identification and alerts, which are direct and immediately benefit the community; empowering communities to protect themselves. The system had been proven its effectiveness on rapid detection and control of disease outbreaks, particularly on clinical suspected Avian Influenza infection in backyard chickens, which indicated success in pandemic prevention at the animal source. The system was piloted in 74 local governments (LG) in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Total of 296 volunteered reporters have attended in the system. The volunteers and LG were key actors in PODD system. Volunteers monitored animal diseases, human diseases and environmental problems in community and reported the events via smart phone application. LGs took responsibility in outbreak control and supported volunteer roles in the community. Outcome mapping was used to evaluate the performance of PODD volunteers and LGs. LG performance was divided into three groups, A - good, B - fair and C - poor. The most of LGs (45.94%) were categorized into Group B where LGs had met criteria and PODD designed outcomes. After 16 months of implementation, 1,029 abnormal events had been reported and confirmed to be true reports. The majority of abnormal reports were sick or dead animals (404 reports, 39.26%), followed by zoonoses and other human diseases (129 reports, 12.54%). Devastating animal disease outbreaks have been detected and successfully controlled. Total of 26 chicken high mortality outbreaks, 4 cattle disease outbreaks, 3 pig disease outbreaks, and 3 fish disease outbreaks were detected and controlled. Communities and animal authorities cooperated to apply a community contingency plan to control those outbreaks. Volunteers in communities continued to monitor the abnormal events for 3 weeks after an outbreak was controlled. By design PODD started to target animal diseases that could potentially be human pandemic and then expanded to cover human health and environmental health issues for better a response to community needs.

Panelists

1. Lertrak Srikitjakarn, Chiang Mai University
2. Jennifer Olsen, Skoll Global Threats Fund
3. Lamar Robert, PODD project
4. Pairat Trakarnsirinont, Chiang Mai University
5. Kochi Phetpraiphanawan, PODD Project
6. Kanoksak Duangkaewruen, PODD Project

ROUNDTABLE

Thailand's Accountability in Thai Direct Investment in CLMV

Coordinator(s)

Montree Chantawong
Towards Ecological Recovery Regional Alliance

Description

Thailand has started capitalizing its direct investment in the neighboring countries (such as Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam) since 1980s, and expanded insensitively according to two main overarching policy phenomena: the implementation of 'from the battlefield into market place', initiated by the government of Prime Minister Chatchai Choonhavan; and the globally economic ideas entitled "Washington Consensus", supported by prominent economists and international organizations, such as the IMF, the World Bank, the EU and the US. The Washington Consensus consists of the policies that enhance reform agenda and a clear shift of development paradigm towards liberalization and free markets economy. The four main economic development initiatives underlie economic stabilization, liberalization (trade and investment), deregulation (the role of the state in controlling investment) and privatization (transfer from state to private sector).

The study of Thailand's direct investment (TDI) in the CLMV region in the past 10 years (2005-2014) founded Thailand's direct investment ranked third, after Cayman Islands, and Singapore. TDI was in the similar value to Mauritius Island. Ranked no. 4 and 5 are Hong Kong and British Virgin Island, respectively. These countries are popular destinations as a base for capital transfer to invest in the third countries because these countries have initiated tax incentives and convenient transactions. The TDI accumulative value in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam is 18,170, 45, 403, 70,355 and 56,097 million baht, respectively. Most of TDI are in electricity and energy sector, oil and gas exploration, steam and domestic air cooling (in Lao PDR), financial sector, industrial production sector (e.g. sugar and textile), loans transaction among affiliates, trade credits, mining and quarry and concrete. There are three dominant procedures of investment; 1) project developers; 2) project supporters and financiers; and 3) investors and financial institutions.

According to the research conducted by the Marketing Research unit of the Thai Stock Exchange, the results show four push-and-pull factors indicating reasons to invest. There are: market seeking, resources and labor seeking, efficiency seeking and assistance in risk diversification of the business sector.

TDI in CLMV region in the past years has resulted in both benefits and disadvantages. This trend of TDI has been met with growing concerns about investor disregarding environmental and social governance, environmental and social impacts of the project, negative implications for human rights and the environment in their business practices including unfair and unjust remedy provided to the project affected people. There are several cases in Cambodia and Myanmar that are impacted by TDI and the villagers have submitted the complaint to the Thai National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) for investigation, for example the case of Hatgyi dam on the Salween in 2006 by Electricity Generation Authority of Thailand and the case of Xayaburi dam in Lao PDR, submitted to Thailand' Administrative Court.

Due to several efforts of Thai civil society, Project Affected People and NHRC's recommendation on the TDI cases, Thai Government has recognized the impacts of TDI in the neighboring countries as demonstrated in the release of Cabinet Resolution dated 2 and 16 May 2016.

Panelists

1. Nirun Pitakwatchara, Ubonratchatnani university
2. Montree Chantawong, Towards Ecological Recovery Regional Alliance
3. Premrudee Daoroung, Project SEVANA South-East Asia
4. Chalermsri Prasertsri, Community Resource Centre Foundation

ROUNDTABLE

Economic Growth and the Rise of Dictatorial Regimes in Asia

Coordinator(s)

Niabdulghafar Tohming
Focus on the Global South

Description

Asian countries including Thailand have prioritized economic growth and placed it at the top of their national agendas. To achieve this growth, governments pursue neoliberal economic policies which come in the form of greater trade and investment liberalization, such as privatization of essential public sectors including healthcare, education, water, electricity and others. Private – public partnerships are another form of state – corporate power relations that often result in environmental and ecological degradation, land conflicts, forced eviction and other forms of human rights violations. Such economic policies and approaches grant more rights and privileges to investors and corporations, while compromising on human rights and, social and environmental standards in order to provide incentives and fast-track to investment projects. Meanwhile, resistance to these destructive projects by land and environmental rights activists, labor unions, indigenous peoples and local communities are often met with intimidation, suppression, violence and judicial harassment both by state and private companies. The rise and shift to dictatorial regimes that show little interest to respect and protect human rights and the environment in their race for growth - creates grave concerns about the current and future human rights situation and the impact of trade and investment projects and policies on peoples' livelihoods and ecology. The panel aims to examine and analyze the cost of this continuous emphasis on economic growth by governments, in regard to rights and power of local communities and ecology. It also will analyze the political situations in the region in relation to global trends in the democracy.

Panelists

1. Walden Bello, Focus on the Global South
2. Surichai Wungaeo, Rotary Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, Chulalongkorn University
3. Naly Pilorge, Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights

ROUNDTABLE

Water Management: Reflection from International Experience

Coordinator(s)

Nipon - Poapongsakorn
Thailand Development Research Institute

Description

The first roundtable on "water management: reflection from international experience" will focus on 2 issues, i.e. The experience and lessons of water management and river basin management in developed countries; and the reflection of gaps between the best practice models and reality. The speakers are scholars and international consultants who have both extensive academic works and long experience of advising many governments on water management.

Panelists

1. François Molle, Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD)
2. Tjitte Nauta, Strategic Advisor Integrated Water Management
3. Junji Miwa, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

ROUNDTABLE

What Have We Learned from Shocks and Surprises, the Cycle of Flood and Drought Conundrums, in Thailand?

Coordinator(s)

Pakamas Thinphanga
Thailand Environment Institute (TEI)

Description

A seasonal cycle of inundation and dry spells is a common feature not only in Thailand, but also across much of Southeast Asia. But in the last decade, Thailand has suffered from the worst flood and drought crises in history. The cycle of dramatic flooding and drought is also occurring more consecutively and more frequently. The 2011 and 2017 floods and 2016 drought disasters are some of the more recent and severe examples.

In 2011, the largest flood disaster in Thailand's history was caused partly by reaction to a severe drought in the previous year. Dams were kept full throughout the early rainy season of 2011. After months of unexpected intense rainfall, spillover and emergency discharge increased water levels in already saturated, low-lying floodplains, exacerbating flooding in the Central Plain. Following the 2011 flood disaster, water supply shortages hit many parts of Thailand. This was caused partly by reaction to the major flood in the previous year as dams were emptied out in early 2012 to allow more room for rainwater retention to prevent flooding.

Leading up to the extreme drought in 2016, which hit nearly 30 provinces across the upper part of the country, water shortage crisis was already occurring for three consecutive years. By mid 2016, water levels in some of the biggest dams were below 10 percent and major reservoirs were at record-lows. Later in the same year, some of those provinces were declared flood disaster zones. Thousands of people were evacuated and several people were killed. As provinces in the Central Plain began to flood and with more heavy rain forecast, Bangkok was under threat of another flood crisis.

Drawing on recent crises and on-going experience, patterns of uncertainty, vulnerability and increased challenge are emerging. The cycle of water crises in Thailand illustrates failures to understand and deal with increasingly complex social-ecological systems. Urbanization processes have transformed much of Thailand's social dimension and ecological landscape from rural, agricultural to industrialized country. Similar issues of drastic land use change, urban infrastructure system development, pollution and contamination, and inequality and poverty are manifested across Thailand. Climate change is a complex, multi-faceted challenge that will exacerbate all existing weather-related problems in unpredictable ways. The implications and interactions of urbanization and climate change create new forms and magnitudes of risks and compound vulnerabilities that will require more than the traditional emergency relief methods and the 'predict and act' approach to deal with. This is evident in the January 2017 flood disaster in southern Thailand. Adaptive governance and having the capacity to shape change are important components of resilience and necessary to address uncertainty and surprises.

The panel will provide an analytical overview of historical and present events and reflect on key lessons learned with different perspectives grounded in social-ecological systems, political economy and climate science. In this session, challenges in urban and economic development planning,

environmental problems and disaster management will be discussed to open up debates on how to improve strategies and mechanisms to address shocks and surprises.

Panelists

1. Pakamas Thinphanga, Thailand Environment Institute (TEI)
2. Thanawat Jarupongsakul, Thailand Global Warming Academy
3. Apichart Anukularmphai, -
4. Thongchai Roachanakanan, Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning

ROUNDTABLE

Service Excellence Through Curriculum and Service Learning

Coordinator(s)

Paskorn Champrasert
Computer Engineering, Chiang Mai University

Description

This roundtable seminar will bring the opportunity to learn and discuss about the service learning activities in Chiang Mai University, Thailand. The lecturers, who are the pioneers of service learning activities in their classes, will share their experiences. This includes topics of 1) increasing the 21st skills of agricultural extension students through participatory service learning in local schools, 2) the role of the study of fieldwork research in service learning, 3) the role of social services (social learning) and training practice in the community of medical students, 4) CPE-DirtCamp: learning through activities for community engagement of computer engineering students, and 5) the service learning activities of mass communications students. These activities from variety of faculties will exemplify the service learning in the university. Through this roundtable, the best practice of service learning will be revealed.

Panelists

1. Kittipan Tikum, CMU
2. Avorn Opatpatanakit, Chiang Mai University
3. Thitiwut Boonyawongwiwat , Chiang Mai university
4. Paskorn Champrasert
5. Alicha Treerotchananon, Chiang Mai University

ROUNDTABLE

Unlearned Lessons from the 22 May 2014 Coup D'état

Coordinator(s)

Pinkaew Laungaramsri
Chiang Mai University

Pitch Pongsawad
Chulalongkorn University

Description

The 22 May 2014 coup d'état, led by General Prayut Chan-o-cha, the 12th since the country's first coup in 1932, was peculiar in several ways. While it was called for by the urban middle-class masses to end the protracted political crisis and societal cleavage, it was also believed by its supporters to bring back peace and happiness back to the country. In exchange for such "peace and happiness", the constitution was suspended, parliament was dissolved, and Thai democracy was brought to an end. Two years into the regime of the 2014 coup and its subsequent junta government, not only have happiness and peace remained military rhetoric, but the effects of the coup have continued to be deeply felt by dissidents and the general public. Massive human rights abuses and suppression of freedom of expression have made Thailand into one of the countries with the worst human rights violations in the world. Ironically, the undemocratic performance of the junta government seems to have had little effect on its middle class proponents.

This roundtable offers a critical reflection on Thai politics since the 2014 coup. It asks a wide range of questions in order to understand the complexity and convolution of political conflict, the regime of suppression, and the discourse of democracy in Thailand. How has the people-state relationship been constructed, especially within the hegemonic discourse of Pracha Rat and 99% democracy? Why have Thai academics who used to be a reputedly democratic driven force become major supporters of the past two coup d'états in Thailand? What is the link between the socio-political landscape of the post-1970s, the increasing neoliberal atmosphere of Thai and global higher education, and the anti-democratic tendencies among contemporary Thai academics? How has contemporary Thai art been used as a propaganda tool via cultural governance programs initiated by NCPO and Ministry of Culture since May 2014 Coup? Under what conditions have renowned Thai artists joined the "right turn" of Thai politics and how has such a turn been challenged by younger and avant-garde artists? How has the history become newly urgent after the 22 May 2014 coup? What new perspectives on the past and forms of writing history are both possible, and necessary, after the 22 May 2014 coup and the repression it has engendered? And if the "attitude adjustment camp" — a civilized avatar of the notorious concentration camp -- represents part and parcel of the authoritarian state's sovereignty, what are the implications of the camp, especially when it is escaping the walls, inflating and taking over all of social life? By posing and answering these questions, this roundtable will begin to map the long-term effects of the 22 May 2014 coup and suggest what will be necessary to redress them.

Panelists

1. Pitch Pongsawat, Chulalongkorn University
2. Yukti Mukdawijitra, Thammasat University

3. Pandit Chanrochanakit, Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University
4. Tyrell Haberkorn, Political and Social Change, The Australian National University
5. Pinkaew Laungaramsri, Chiang Mai University

ROUNDTABLE

"Public Policy and the Adaptation of Peasants and Farmers [1 and 2]

Coordinator(s)

Prapart Pintobtang
Social Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University

Description

At present Thailand has rice-farming land areas of 2.8 million hectors (68.98 million rais) and 3.73 million rice-farming households. The annual production of rice crop is 32 to 33 million tons. In 2016, the rice yield of 18.61 million tons was produced for domestic consumption, seedling preparation, and animal foods production. The rest yield of about 15 million tons was for international export.

Since the rice subsidy scheme was scrapped in 2013, the price of low quality paddy harvested freshly from the farm dropped to at the rate of 6,000-6,500 Baht per ton (the price of paddy of a normal humidity rate 15% was 7,200 to 7,500 Baht per ton). Jasmin rice's price also fell to the rate of 7,000 to 8,000 Baht per ton (the price of this paddy type at the normal humidity rate was 9,000 to 9,500 Baht per ton).

Although the government has launched several policies and measures; for example, subsidy scheme at the amount of 1,000 bath per rai (but not more than 10 rai), regulating rice barns, controlling prices of production factors, promoting integrated organic rice farming and etc., to help out farmers, the problems of decreasing paddy price and farmers' income remain. Consequently, farmers must struggle and find varied adaptive strategies to survive.

The roundtable "Public Policy and the Adaptation of Peasants and Farmers" is aimed to open a platform to exchange ideas and experience of farmers who are directly impacted by such government' policies, with academic experts on rice policies and grassroots economics, rice mill operators and entrepreneurs, and representatives of involved agencies that implement government's policies. The roundtable is also to find recommendations to solve the current farmers' problems and risks of rice farming in Thailand.

Panelists [1]

1. Patamawadee Pochanukul, The Thailand Research Fund (TRF)
2. Wiwatchai Atthakorn, National Institute of Development Administration's (Nida)
3. Thanaporn Sriyakul, Faculty of Business Administration, Mahanakorn University of Technology
4. Wassana Assaranurak, Nakorn Sawan Chamber of Commerce
5. Witoon Lianchamroon, BioThai Foundation
6. Supa Yaimuang, Sustainable Agriculture Foundation
7. Saman Tubtiang

Panelists [2]

1. Patamawadee Pochanukul, The Thailand Research Fund (TRF)
2. Wiwatchai Atthakorn, National Institute of Development Administration's (Nida)
3. Thanaporn Sriyakul, Faculty of Business Administration, Mahanakorn University of Technology
4. Wassana Assaranurak, Nakorn Sawan Chamber of Commerce

5. Witoon Lianchamroon, BioThai Foundation
6. Supa Yaimuang, Sustainable Agriculture Foundation
7. Saman Tubtiang, Farmer Group

ROUNDTABLE

Migrant Workers as a Consequence of Land Grab: Change of Lives and Communities, and Potential Impacts to the Region

Coordinator(s)

Premrudee Daoroung
Project SEVANA South-East Asia

Description

The Thai sugar Industry has now gone to its neighboring countries. In 2006 and 2008, the two major Thai sugar companies, Khon Kaen Sugar Ltd. and Mitr Phol group had invested in Cambodia and Lao PDR. In Cambodia, both companies awarded almost 20,000 hectares of land each, under an Economic Land Concession (ELC) scheme. Their investment in Koh Kong and Oddor Meanchey Province had become the major complaint and the first investigation crossing border ever of the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand, and Southeast Asia. The NHRC's reports of both cases came out in 2015, stated that the companies need to take responsibility of the people, those suffer from the land and livelihood loss, forced eviction and violation occurred to them. NHRC also recommended to the Thai government to set up the proper regulations and process to monitor the Thai investment abroad.

The panel will discuss the content related to the testimony of local people those being evicted in 2009 from O'Bat Moan community in Oddor Meanchey Province, to make ways to the sugarcane plantation of Mitr Phol company. Mitr Phol pulled out their investment from Cambodia in 2015, but yet, the government still do not give the land back to the people.

Project SEVANA South-East Asia with other NGOs based in Thailand and Cambodia had conducted the research on this issue in 2016. The key element of people's testimony in the research is the changing livelihood after the land and forest was lost. People who were still living in the nearby areas of the ex-O'Bat Moan community were living with no other hope, but to get their land back then they could regain their livelihood. From another end, the O'Bat Moan migrant workers that fled to Thailand since their eviction were hearing the stories of being an illegal migrant worker and the risk they were taking after changing their life from a farmer and forest dweller to migrant laborer in Thailand, one of the region's migrant workers hub.

The panel will discuss the 'gaps' within and among the different actors of those that contributed to create such scenario as O'Bat Moan, with the question if there will be a way to make the situation better, or the similar thing will continue in the region without hope? ASEAN, highly promoting the economic pillar, and the individual state of those supporting their business and welcoming investors, can they be more balanced in their role to protect their people and resources? In upgrading their investment abroad, and with more questions and protests on sugar business, will the company be able to find a way to listen and do better? For the local people who are the direct 'victims', will they be able to keep up with their struggle amidst the political limitation and the difficult manners of the business? And for the government and general public in Thailand, will they be able to recognize that the Thai investment abroad and the migrant workers coming to Thailand is the same issue?

Panelists

1. Premrudee Daoroung, Project SEVANA South-East Asia

2. Siwawong Sooktawee, Home
3. Ubon Yoowah, NE Alternative Agriculture Network, Thailand

ROUNDTABLE

Southern Thailand (Patani) in Peace Table: What Is Going On?

Coordinator(s)

Ramadon Panjor
Deep South Watch

Description

The peace dialogue between Thailand's government and the representatives of MARA Patani, the shadow organization of 6 separatist movements has lasted for 3 years since 2014. The process has developed slowly, but still progressively moved. On the one hand, the Thai government's delegation denied the draft of Term of Reference (TOR) that is supposed to accept MARA status and grant immunity for its members. On the other hand, both parties accept that they have to bring about the safety zones to show their mutual confidence. In fact, they eventually accepted a more simplified TOR to avoid serious setback before making a more tangible agreement on other constructive issues. There exists some unsolvable problems. A major group of the so-called liberation movements, BRN, has divided into two wings, comprising of the political wing that supported MARA and military wing supporting the ongoing armed struggles. The reluctance of BRN has led to criticism from many skeptics of the peace dialogue. Could the peace dialogue under the Junta government be delivered? Is it possible that the slow process of dialogue leading to a safety zone solution? Is the peace process for real or deception? This panel discussion brings together some actors who take part in the peace talk table in Kuala Lumpur to reveal the hidden thoughts behind the peace process in the Deep South of Thailand, including Gen. Aksara Kerdpol, the head of Thai dialogue panel and Abu Hafez Al-Hakim, the official spokesperson of MARA Patani. This panel is specially designed so that the individual from the illegal MARA Patani could safely show up in the discussion. This is rare opportunity that both could freely present their ideas in an academic conference.

Panelists

1. Gen. Aksara Gen. Aksara
2. Abu Hafez Al-Hakim
3. Srisompob Jitpiromsri , Faculty of Political Science, Prince of Songkla University

ROUNDTABLE

Lessons Learned from Haze in Northern Thailand

Coordinator(s)

Sermkiat Jomjunyong
Department of Industrial Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Chiang Mai University

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Description

The spread of haze in the months of February-April has become an annual phenomenon in Northern Thailand. The high concentration levels of PM10 and PM2.5 has caused serious health impacts on people at risk of respiratory diseases, especially elderly people and young children. Haze is caused by smoke from forest fires and burning of agricultural waste to clear the land for new season planting of both subsistence crops and cash crops. In 2016 10.6 million Rai of land was burned, causing deterioration of air quality in the region. The estimate economic impact from the loss of tourists cancelling their holiday bookings and the treatment costs due to health impact amounted up to 1.7 billion US dollars in 2016.

Haze is often caused by expansion of cash crops plantation in the high land, which also changes the livelihood of people who live in the highland from a subsistence economy to a cash based economy. To reduce the impact of haze we need to understand the root causes of the problem, where haze came from, who will be impacted and how they will be impacted. The round table will involve a discussion about research under the project “Haze Free Thailand” on various aspects of haze. Where haze came from, and who causes haze? What are the impacts of haze on people and the environment. The panel will also discuss the science of haze, how it is dispersed in the atmosphere. And lastly we will discuss ways to communicate the project of haze to the general public so they can understand the cause and effects, and how everyone could have a role in reducing haze.

Panelists

1. Poon Thiengburanathum
2. Chitchol Phalaraksh, Department of Biology, Faculty of Science, Chiang Mai University
3. Tippawan Prapamontol, Research Institute for Health Sciences, Chiang Mai University
4. Somporn Chantara

ROUNDTABLE

SEZs, Border and Border Studies [1 and 2]

Coordinator(s)

Siriporn Wajjwalku

Description

The present Thai government had announced the policy to establish SEZs in order to promote economic development focusing on growth in the region where SEZs are located. In fact, this policy is not new, but it gains much attention this time owing to the fact that several SEZs will be established in the border areas with an expectation to get advantage from regional integration.

As known, border is a special area with complexity and diversity in terms of political structure and authority, economic mobility, and social interactions among different cultural and ethnic groups of people. SEZs in borderland will make the area more complex and diverse, which can be both opportunity and challenge for people living there.

Border Studies recently reflect the continuity and change in scientific thought. In addition, its focus has moved from state dominant issues and ethno-cultural areas to cover more diverse topics of socio-spatial and geographical space of different levels (local, regional, and global). Therefore, as a research filed, it requires a multidisciplinary approach to understand this complexity (Kolossov and Scott 2013)

This panel aims to present and discuss about the evolution of SEZs to be established in 3 border areas in Thailand, namely Tak, Chiangrai, and Mukdahan Provinces. The presentation and discussion are based on research projects initiated and conducted by scholars who are members of Thailand's University Network on Border Studies consisting of 4 universities from 4 border provinces, including CMU, MFU, UBU, and MSU. The discussion emphasizes on 4 topics: the policy debate on Thai SEZs in the context of spatial, economic, social and political integration of ASEAN Community; social equity and land governance in SEZs; human security in the context of SEZs development; and border management and co-creation in the contexts of border development, SEZs, and GMS regionalization (focusing on labor, health care, and education). Through research and discussion with multidisciplinary approach, it is expected that the knowledge about SEZs and border will be enhanced, and this activity will also contribute to the academic community of Border Studies as a whole.

Panelists [1]

1. Kanokwan Manorom, Ubon Ratchathani University
2. Kwanchewan Buadaeng, Faculty of Social Sciences
3. Chusak Wittayapak, Chiang Mai University
4. Aranya Siriphon, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University

Panelists [2]

1. Kanokwan Manorom, Ubon Ratchathani University
2. Kwanchewan Buadaeng, Faculty of Social Sciences
3. Chusak Wittayapak, Chiang Mai University

4. Aranya Siriphon, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University

ROUNDTABLE

U.S.-Thai Relations: Diplomacy, Thai Studies, Economics, and Security

Coordinator(s)

Sittha Lertphaiboonsiri
U. S. Consulate General Chiang Mai

Description

The U.S. has maintained longstanding diplomatic relations with Thailand since the signing of a Treaty of Amity and Commerce in 1833. In terms of security, U.S. support is aimed at strengthening judicial institutions and promoting good governance practices, in addition to arranging joint training sessions such as JUSMAGTHAI and Cobra Gold military exercise operations. The U.S. is Thailand's third-largest trading partner, after Japan and China, and is also one of the largest providers of FDI, particularly in petroleum, finance, consumer products, and automobile production. Thailand boasts the second largest economy in ASEAN, with over $50 billion invested from American Chamber of Commerce companies. U.S.-Thai relations will be further strengthened through a continued cooperation on policies such as education, health, and good governance.

Panelists

1. Melinda J. Masonis, Counselor for Public Affairs, U.S. Embassy, Bangkok
2. Thak Chaloemtiarana, Cornell University
3. Kirida Bhaopichitr, Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI)
4. Siripan Sawasdee, Faculty of Political Science Chulalongkorn University

ROUNDTABLE

Citizen's Engagements in Health: The Thai Case Study

Coordinator(s)

Surichai Wankaeo
Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, Chulalongkorn University

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Description

Health systems in Thailand have been well-recognized by the global community, especially Universal Health Coverage. The success of Thai's health systems has rooted in citizen engagement. Started from the primary health care movement around 1970s, citizens contributed in kind such as labor to build health facilities, i.e. toilets, water wells, tap water system, to ensure their access to basic needs. Later on, Volunteer Health Workers (VHW) was initiated to allow villagers to take part in managing primary health care and to solve problems of lacking doctors and nurses in rural communities. The level of citizen engagement in health has been increasing and more meaningful gradually since then.

Citizen engagement at an implementation level has been scaled up to an advocacy level in early 1980s. Several NGOs and active citizens such as NGO Coordinating Board on Public Health and Drug Watch Group have moved several health issues to political agenda. Patients gather as a group such as a group of people living with HIV/Aids to call for health equity and negotiate their health benefit with the government.

Till the political atmosphere opened up around late 1990s and early 2000s, active citizens called for democracy and their right in decision making. Many new laws and regulations promulgated during that period stipulate the participation of citizens in several ways. National Health Act in 2007, among others laws, specify the right of an individual or a group of people to participate in the assessment of health impact resulting from policy and the right to express his or her opinion on such matter. Considering the composition of important governing bodies established in 2000s, such as National Health Commission and National Health Security Board, civil society organizations have certain seats in these commissions to voice their opinions and make decision together with state organizations.

The evolution of citizen engagement in health seems to be progressive. Health organizations use tools, i.e, health assembly, health charter, health impact assessment, district health system, and local health fund, to promote and strengthen citizen engagement at the national and sub-national levels. However, the advancement of citizen engagement still highly depends on numerous factors especially socio-political factors. This session aims to situate citizen engagement in Thailand and review why and how this can happen. Factors to enabling and threatening citizen engagement will be explored and further discuss how to manage with those factors. Additionally, global perspectives will be brought in to compare with Thai situation and understand the global trend.

Panelists

1. Surichai Wankaeo, Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, Chulalongkorn University
2. Weerasak Putthasri, National Health Commission (NHC)
3. Wiput Poolchareon, Health Impact Assessment Commission

ROUNDTABLE

Anthropological Imagination of Thai Anthropologist: Professor Pattaya Saihoo

Coordinator(s)

Surichai Wankaeo
Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, Chulalongkorn University

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Description

Professor Pattaya Saihoo, the pioneer Thai sociologist died on 25 February 2017. He was the lecturer at department of sociology and anthropology, faculty of political science, Chulalongkorn University and was also the first director of Chulalongkorn University Social Research Institute (CUSRI). As a sociologist, he had hard effort to construct sociological knowledge based on understanding of Thai society along his life. กลไกของสังคม (Social Mechanics); โลกสมมติ (Constructed Worlds) and การศึกษาสังคมผลไม้รวม (Understanding of Mix-fruited Society) could be well represent his ambitious. Apart from his academic career, he was also the Chair of Social Sciences Committee of UNESCO.

In order to keep on his intention, CUSRI and UNESCO-MOST agreed to organize a panel tribute to professor Pattaya Saihoo at ICTS, Chiang Mai. Main purpose of the panel is discussing with Pattaya's imagination, is it possible to construct sociological knowledge from Thai context and how to? Based on his three prominent books, is it still relevant to Thai society?

Panelists

1. Sawitree Suwansathit, MOST Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), UNESCO (former)
2. Suthep Suntornpaesat, Chiang Mai University
3. Surichai Wankaeo, Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, Chulalongkorn University
4. Narumon Arunotai, Social Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University

ROUNDTABLE

Social Enterprise Approach for Secondary Cities Urban Development

Coordinator(s)

Tanakrit Meesomjit
Convener

Pattanun Hansapiromchoke
Convener

Description

The urban planning process in Thailand has been a centralized process without taking much consideration of the urban process. The accumulations of problem related to urbanization in cities in Thailand are more pronounced in secondary cities, where the central government did not take in much account of the individual characteristics of each city. With individual characters, each city has different key issues in its urban development perspective, especially how to reduce common urbanization problem such as rapid urbanization, urban sprawl, silver society and economic migration. Housing in urban areas would also have impact on other perspectives of the city such as traffic congestion, slum, and even crime committed in the city. Hence, effective and efficient housing would be able to solve some other their undesired prospects of the city. In contrary, to push the city into the path of smart growth, the urbanization phenomena will be the economic and innovative drive and growth of the city. Recently, there has been a rise of private sector in the cities, who would like to contribute to cities development via social enterprise. A social enterprise in each city has been set up to work with the government to develop urban development project, such as Khon Kean Social Enterprise has developed urban transportation system to serve its population, Phuket Social Enterprise is in a process of developing an urban transportation project as well. The social enterprises in each province have come together as a network to share their experiences and lesson learned in the process of urban development. The network is supported by academics and public authorities.

Panelists

1. Suradech Taweesaengsakulthai, Khon Kaen City Development Co., Ltd. A.K.A. Khon Kaen Think Tank
2. Phadet Jinda, Phuket City Development
3. Luesak Luesakprasert, Samutsakhon City Development (Social Enterprise Co., Ltd.)
4. Noppadol Thamwiwat, Saraburi City Development
5. Wirach Panyatipsakul, Phitsanulok City Development Co., Ltd
6. Narong Tananuwat, Director of Chiang Mai City Development
7. Athiwat Kunadechdee, Rayong City Development

ROUNDTABLE

Critical Conversations with Ajarn Ben

Coordinator(s)

Thak Chaloemtiarana
Cornell University

Description

This panel is a tribute to Benedict Anderson's works and 'impact' on Thai Studies'. Prof. Anderson (August 26, 1936 – December 13, 2015) is one of the most well-known scholars on Southeast Asia. His academic masterpiece: 1983 Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism, has been translated into 33 languages in 38 countries, including Thai. Like most Southeast Asian academics his specialty is on one country i.e. Indonesia. However, in the period of teaching and researching for half a century Anderson had managed to cross the fixed national boundaries and language limitation. He crossed over from Indonesian into Thai and Philippine studies. His works on Thailand starting in late 1970s have a strong impact on leading Thai academics and students. Therefore, it is a good opportunity that at the 13th International Conference on Thai Studies, to be held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, July 15-18 that we shall have such a panel. It is timely and appropriate to gather academics as well as non-academics from different generations and backgrounds, who are familiar with Anderson's work, and hear what they have to say of the man who passed away on December 13, 2015. Their views would enhance not only the studies of Thailand but for Southeast Asia as a whole.

Panelists

1. Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Kick the Machine Films Co., Ltd
2. Coeli Barry, Mahidol University
3. Craig Reynolds, Australian National University
4. Pakavadi Verapaspong, Independent researcher
5. James Ockey, University of Canterbury

ROUNDTABLE

Status of Knowledge on Lanna Music and Its Future Development

Coordinator(s)

Thitinadda Chinachan
Social Research Institute

Description

This paper presents the topic of "Status of Knowledge on Lanna Music and Its Future Development", focusing the survey of music phenomena in 8 Northern provinces: Chiang Mai, Lamphun, Lampang, Chiang Rai, Phayao, Phrae, Nan and Mae Hong Son, which can be named in all as Lanna region. This region comprises both sharing culture and that of particular ethnic group, such as Tai Yai(Shan), Tai Yuan and Tai Lue.

The research team has surveyed the relating music phenomena by specifying the topics as following: folk music, folk music instruments, vocalizing, artist, song, contemporary music, role, change, cultural area, music instrument artisan, perception, policy/support, education/succession and other relating ones.

Meanwhile, the team has surveyed some academic papers which have been studied and researched before, to be analyzed for any possible knowledge gap. The results are presented for further directions in knowledge construction of Lanna music.

The team has divided the presentation areas to be four themes: Lanna music viewed by ethnomusicologists, Lanna music with the viewpoint of music education, Lanna music view as a form of vocalizing creativity and direction of developing future knowledge of Lanna music.

Panelists

1. Songkran Somchandra
2. Khanithep Pitupumnak, Faculty of Fine Arts
3. Bringkop Vora-Urai, College of Music
4. Nattapong Punjaburi, Department of Thai Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Chiang Mai Rajabhat University

ROUNDTABLE

Soul of Lanna - the Eternal & the Sublime Local Connections in Time and Place - Thriving Amidst Globalization?

Coordinator(s)

Walaiporn Tantikanangkul
RCSD

Description

The basis of this discussion stems from the thought - how can culture be preserved amidst globalization? The talk with the selected group will look at the map of thinking, of connections by shedding some light on the pioneer work on mural paintings in Lanna by a renowned national and international artist - Fua Hariphitak (1910-1993) in the past, and the contribution of his work as seen through the eyes of his artist son, Thamnu Hariphitak, and daughter-in-law, Sirinthorn Hariphitak. The past and present can be linked by Phongphan Ruananchai, a local artisan, who has contributed in many different media - painting, Buddhist sculpture, sword-making and its ritual - with support from Chuanpit Napatasai, an independent researcher of Lanna language and culture. Also, the work of Usa Srisuwan, a civil servant, who has been preserving the heritage of Princess Dararatsami, from Lanna via rituals, music, dance and craft. Looking at Buddhist art, Thongchai Yukantapornpong, an artist and academic, with a team of artists and academics, uses Japanese-style woodblock prints to represent 9 unique temples in Chiang Mai. And finally, Thammanit Phuvasatien, a former lecturer and designer, has produced his clothes without compromising Lanna antique weaving. Their work bears connections like machines in that they have assembled, as Deleuze defines "connections" as "abstract machines, - they are "built from many local connections", and they are always bound to a time and a place, to particular desires (J.Racjchman, 200). Their work represents a plane of how Lanna can thrive, albeit on a small scale, committing to the idea of 'preserving' the soul of Lanna, hence the eternal returns - indeed, it is the sublime.

Panelists

1. Thamnu Hariphitak, painter
2. Sirinthorn Hariphitak, painter and academic Assistant Dean and Assistant Professor
3. Chuanpit Napatasai, independent researcher of Lanna language and culture
4. Thaongchai Yukantapornping, Fine Arts Faculty, Chiangmai University
5. Phongphan Ruanancha, a sculpture and painter
6. Usa Srisuwan, a civil servant from Chulalongkorn University
7. Thammanit Phuvasatien, independent designer and collector

ROUNDTABLE

The Legend of Lord Buddha's Journey Around the World: Mobilities and Conectivities in Lan Na Culture Area, Past and Present

Coordinator(s)

Wasan Panyagaew
Chiang Mai University

Description

The Legend of Lord Buddha's Journey around the World is a Tai Theravada literature which has long been influential. This Buddhist literature reflects the power of literature which makes great consequences on societies, politics, traditions and cultural practices among people who live in the Great Mekong Sub region. The powerful influence of this great Tai literature on other Tai literatures, also includes people's daily life such as rational pilgrimages to pay respect to Buddha's relics and footprints, which are narrated in this legend, traditional Dharma chanting and offering, long distance pilgrimage routes of Buddhist monks in northern Thailand and its neighboring areas, the spread of Theravada Buddhism in the borderlands area of upper Mekong through this Buddha legend, and the belief in Ton Boon (charismatic Buddhist monk). This academic roundtable aims to present a

transliteration of the original text found in Sipsong Panna, called Chiang Rung Text, in a comparative study with another text found in northern Thailand, called Goo Kham Text. The discussion also aims to explore the places and the names listed in this Theravada Buddhist text, showing the Lan Na Culture Area which covers the four nations states of the upper Mekong today. In this roundtable, the presenters will also show their study on traditional practice and beliefs which are relevant to 'the legend of such places'. This academic discussion and presentation therefore will show only an evaluation of this great Tai Buddhist literature, but also an ethnography of Tai cultural phenomena, which enable us to analyze and synthesize mobilities and connectivities among the Tai peoples in the borderlands of the upper Mekong, past and present.

Panelists

1. Suddan Wisudthiluck
2. Sommai Premchit, Social Science Research Institute
3. Wallop Thongon, Kamphaeng Phet Rajabhat University
4. Prakong Nimmanhaemin, Office of the Royal Society

ROUNDTABLE

University Engagement: Executive Perspectives

Coordinator(s)

Worrasit Tantinipankul
1. School of Architecture and Design (International Program), King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi 2. RMUTL-KMUTT Collaborative Center for Royal Project Foundation and Academic Activities

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Description

Higher educational institutions in Thailand have long been supporting less fortunate communities of various ethnic groups and social strata. However, the works were limited to use only by academic societies and commonly generated short-term benefit to local communities due to the conventional one-way communication and top-down approach in operation. However, universities, government agencies and scholars in recent years have changed and moved forward to the direction of social engagement focusing on close collaboration, participatory method, long-term commitment and out-come to communities. With in this direction, universities encounter more challenge in not only archiving breakthrough research and providing excellent teaching quality but also conducting social engagement with communities. How can communities benefit from the knowledge universities provide in classroom and conduct advance research? This round table discussion centers on perspectives of the executives and the heads of research units from 4 major universities engaging with local communities in the northern region of Thailand. The discussion of university leaders will focus on how universities in this past two decades have created strategies to support researchers and scholars to build partnership and collaborate with communities in order to bring knowledge and expertise of universities to benefit all members of society.

Panelists

1. Krissanapong Kirtikara
2. Avorn Opatpatanakit
3. Aphinun Suvarnaraksha
4. Kanyanut Sirithunya Sirithunya

Panels

PANEL

The Politics of Digital Activism and Cyber Security

Convener(s)

Aim Sinpeng
University of Sydney

Description

This panel examines the many ways in which advancement in digital communications have reshaped state-society relations. It specifically focuses on two main themes of Internet politics: digital activism and cyber security in the case of Thailand. The growing ubiquity of Internet use among Thai people has transformed the nature of politics and society. How does this rapid technological 'disruption' change the way people relate to one another, to their communities and their governments? The papers in this panel draw on in-depth studies of how Thai Internet users use social media for activism, understand the issue of Internet censorship and how civil-military relations have changed as a result of a new cyber security policy. Each author adopts varying methodological tools, such as online surveys, social media profiling, online content analysis and process-tracing, in their data collection and analysis. The papers in this panel will provide original empirical data and theoretical contributions to the burgeoning scholarship on new media studies in Thailand. The innovative ways in which each author probes online data would be of interest to those seeking to pursue research on Internet studies more generally.

Panel members

1. Wimonsiri Hemtanon
2. Aim Sinpeng
3. Gennie Gebhart

PANEL

Beyond Zomia: Growing Markets, Social Inequalities and Revitalizations of Theravada Buddhism in the Borderlands of Thailand, Myanmar, Laos and Southwest-China (1 and 2)

Convener(s)

Alexander Horstmann
Tallinn University

Description

In this panel, we will examine the complex interfaces of growing economies, livelihoods and revitalizations of Theravada Buddhism. For this purpose, it is helpful to conceptualize the activities of revitalizing Theravada Buddhism as a growing public sphere that is boosted by donations forthcoming from Buddhist ethnic minorities and borderlanders, as well as from wealthy Thai patrons. We currently witness a diversification of Buddhism, with Buddhism going into different directions to appeal to the communities and to their material as well as spiritual needs. We observe that Buddhism is blossoming in the capitalist world of Southeast Asia as well as in the post-socialist countries and what emerges is a landscape of different ethnic groups that put modern living Saints in the center stage of a land of the Buddha - a transnational moral utopian Buddhist community.

While this form of charismatic Buddhism is set apart from the state-controlled Buddhist Sanghas in the Buddhist life-words of Southeast Asia, it is pivotal to study the ground activities of monks and laypeople in relation to the state and in relation to modern capitalism. Here, we argue that the current flourishing of Buddhist forms is not just going back to traditional forms but that the revitalization of traditional forms involves itself a transformation of these forms and is mainly fed by a form of capitalism that has been called millennial (Comaroff & Comaroff 2001). By millennial, the Comaroffs mean both capitalism at the millennium and its messianic, salvific and magical qualities - not far from the traditional messianic, millenarian and magical qualities of charismatic, ascetic Buddhism.

People living in the borderlands are confronted with processes of conflict, dispossession, land grabbing, environmental degradation, and development. Other people benefit from the introduction of new cash crops, tourism or both.

Some saints receive political and financial support from the highest echelons of elite society. Some saints are patriotic and are venerated by a specific ethnic group; some change from enemy to ally of the state. In this light, the panel examines the changing alliances of Khruba saints in the respective nation-states; their local, national and cross-boarder practices and strategies, and their changing relations to political leaders and wealthy patrons.

Importantly, the panel will shed light on the complexity of the monk-laypeople relationships in physical, spatial and virtual environments, in the communities, monasteries and cyberspace. A key question is the reciprocity and redistribution of money, the circulation of money and its use (Rozenberg 2004). Equally interesting is the emergence of images and hagiographies of the Buddhist saints, their circulation and contribution to the reputation and respect for the Saints.

The panel will examine in depth the dynamics of the rise of the charismatic Khruba Saints, their branding and image, the circulation of sacred objects, the activities of the saints, their political and

economic connections, their complex relation to different communities of the laypeople and to the governments of the region.

Panel members [1]

1. Pisith Nasee
2. Anthony Irwin
3. Dylan Southard
4. Amporn Jirattikorn

Panel members [2]

1. James Taylor
2. Kwanchewan Buadaeng

Yoko Hayami

PANEL

Muslims in Southern Thailand: Local Actors in Global Connections

Convener(s)

Amporn Marddent
Walailak University

Description

In recent years a growing body of literature has traced the historical and contemporary transborder movements of Muslims and Islamic ideas as historical and contemporary phenomena. Notable examples include the works of Engseng Ho (The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility Across the Indian Ocean, 2006), Eric Tagliacozzo (The Longest Journey: Southeast Asians and the Pilgrimage to Mecca, 2013), Francis Bradley (Forging Islamic Power and Place: The Legacy of Shaykh Daud bin 'Abd Allah al-Fatani in Mecca and Southeast Asia, 2015), and Farish Noor et al. (The Madrasa in Asia: Political Activism and Transnational Linkages, 2008).

At the same time, there have appeared increasingly detailed studies of Islamic teaching, law, and practice in and near the southern boundaries of Thailand/Siam, including their relationship with the larger contexts of the local and national Malay and Siamese/Thai states. Examples include the works of Michael Peletz (Islamic Modern: Religious Courts and Cultural Politics in Malaysia, 2002), Joseph Liow (Islam, Education, and Reform in Southern Thailand: Tradition and Transformation, 2009), Christopher Joll (Muslim Merit-Making in Thailand's Far-South, 2012), and Tamara Loos (Subject Siam: Family, Law, and Colonial Modernity in Thailand, 2006).

The present collection of articles on Muslim communities in southern Thailand attempts to bring these discussions of global and local intersections into new areas. For example, Numan Hayimasae focuses on the Thai government's surveillance of Thai citizens in Saudi Arabia from 1939 to 1966. Numan shows that in addition to collecting general information on the lives of Thai citizens in Mecca, the government of Thailand, especially the Ministries of the Interior and of Foreign Affairs, were monitoring particularly closely the activities of Malay Muslims from Thailand's Far South, in hopes of preventing their involvement in separatist politics.

Muhammad Ilyas Yahprung invites us into self-consciously "Salafist" perspectives of early twenty-first century reformers such as Shaykh Dr. Ismail Lutfi. He argues that the twenty-first-century Salafi revivalists in Thailand see themselves as part of a historical chain of Patani-area revivalists that began more than 200 years ago. At the same time, they draw explicitly on recent Middle Eastern methods of reading and interpreting scripture. The paper explores how the new Salafists perceive their historical background and current roles, and the ways they feel that Thai Buddhism needs to change to meet their standards of purity.

Edwin Zehner moves the discussion into Thailand's "Upper South," focusing on secular education, and attitudes toward secular education among Muslims in a set of mostly Thai-speaking yet heavily Muslim communities located outside the Malay-majority areas that are the usual focus of studies Thailand's Muslims. The primary focus of this preliminary research report will be on the purposes of secular education in the minds of Muslim parents and community leaders, the role of domestic and international connectivities in developing the formation of curricula and teachers, and the manner in

which all of that relates both to the participants self perceptions as joint members of the area's Muslim and Thai communities.

separatist politics.

Panel members

1. Numan Hayimasae
2. Muhammad Ilyas Yahprung
3. Edwin Zehner

PANEL

Women in Southern Thailand: Another Window on the South

Convener(s)

Amporn Marddent
Walailak University

Description

Women and agency are central conceptions of this panel argument. The discussion about the construction of women's agency in these three studies focusses on ability to make change. With but a few exceptions, Chaiwat Satha-Anand on the hijab controversy of 1987-1988 for example, the lives and social contributions of women have been overlooked in recent scholarship on Southern Thailand, including in the Southernmost three provinces of Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat that are the primary focus of the three papers in this panel. Furthermore, studies of women in the Deep South of Thailand have tended to overlook non-Malay, non-Muslim populations. Yet both Muslim and non-Muslim women play important roles in the communities in these areas. The present collection of articles on women in Southern Thailand will help to fill the information gap by focusing on specific groups of women that deserve greater attention, observing the processes that have shaped them, and outlining the ways in which they have helped shape and contribute to the societies around them.

Panel members

1. Amporn Marddent
2. Taweeluck Pollachom
3. Surang Ajnarong

PANEL

Tai –Thai Literary Tales: Its Popularity and Invention (1 and 2)

Convener(s)

Aphilak Kasempholkoon
Faculty of Liberal Arts

Description

Tai –Thai Literary Tales are the intellectual output of the society and reflect the sentiments of the author as a citizen, and in the context of each political, social and culture. Though the literary tale has been retold in a new region or new time or new type or in a new technique, but it still maintains the identity of the subject in conjunction with the identity of the new context created. In order to present the identity of the original tale, and present the context of the "rebirth" of the inventive and response to some function for society. That's why we so often found many similar tales featuring both in local Thailand and Tai groups such as Tai. Shan, Tai Dehong, Tai Xishuangbanna or Lao. As a result of the tales will travel through migration or war. The popularity of Tai - Thai literary tales has interested in various dimensions in terms of literary studies, history, political science, anthropology, folklore and ethnology.

Panel members [1]

1. Nathanarin Methivuthinan Phanuphatharathanavat
2. Wannida Thungsang

Rattanaphon Chuenka

Panel members [2]

1. Yoopin Claymone
2. Duanghatai Luedung
3. Porntep Tochayangkoon

PANEL

Reflecting on Thailand-China Connectivity and the "Community of Common Destiny"

Convener(s)

Aranya Siriphon
Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University

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Description

During the past decade, China's accelerated growth has created a wide range of new opportunity and challenges for Southeast Asian countries. Economic ties between China and her southern neighbors, particularly Thailand, have been strengthened under the promotion of ASEAN connectivity. These efforts by Thai and Chinese governments, in cooperation with the private sectors and transnational corporations, have been said to help build economic development and confidence in the region. This panel uses different disciplines of economics, political sciences and anthropology to explore Thailand-China connectivity in multiple concrete examples from four papers. Through the foreign direct investment of China in Thailand, Romyen's paper has examined the engagement of Thailand and China in building the "Community of Common Destiny". The paper points to the uneven development paths, especially showing the "Community of Chinese influence in Thailand". Apart from the "Community of Common Destiny", the "One Belt, One Road" (OBOR) initiative is another strategy that China promotes as a means to link with ASEAN. The Sino–Thai railway route has been developed inconsistently under political pressure in Thailand. Rather than focusing on the macro level in economics and politics, Panitda moves to examine the railway's meaning as viewed "from below". The paper analyzes the local experience of railway development and the future expectations fat the local level. Two more papers focus on recent transnational Chinese entrepreneurs and their mobility into Chiang Mai City, tracing their transnational business diversification and modes of applying technopreneurships into their business (Aranya). During their long stay and economic ventures in Chiang Mai, Christian conversion, for recent transnational Chinese entrepreneurs, could be possibly acted, as a form of resistance to their perceived PRC ideological domination (LEE Kian Cheng).

Panel members

1. Romyen Kosaikanont
2. Panitda Saiyarod
3. Aranya Siriphon
4. Kian Cheng Lee

PANEL

Queer Ties: New Perspectives on Social Organization, Contentious Histories, Public Affect, and (Sub)cultural Production in Contemporary Thailand

Convener(s)

Arnika Fuhrmann
Cornell University

Description

This panel highlights new directions in the study of queerness across Thai social, political, and cultural fields by scholars at different stages of their careers. Queerness, and sexuality more broadly, are still frequently addressed as separate, specialized categories of the political present in Thailand. Yet, rather than restricted to the bedroom (or sex hotel, or park), sexuality is as much at the heart of politics as are coup d'états, street politics, or vote buying. Queer Ties' individual contributions thus examine queerness in relation to the aesthetic, religious, political, and globally-informed modernities of Thailand: the papers investigate queerness in relation to affective histories of the Cold War and the Southern Thai conflict, examine the ways in which queerness itself becomes instrumental in the production of social normativity, explicate the constitution of queer designations and same-sex desires in a global context, and track early queer (sub)cultural production and social forms. Uniquely suited to the conference goal of "resolv[ing] [the] conflict between the hegemonic view of self-contained Thailand and global socio-cultural transactions," Queer Ties stresses a translocal focus that manifests in both geographically and theoretically comparative frameworks.

Panel members

1. Chairat Polmuk
2. Chanan Yodhong
3. Samak Kosem
4. Sirithorn Siriwan, and Kitt Wongarsa
5. Arnika Fuhrmann

PANEL

Violence of Natural Resource Management in Thailand Under the Military Regime

Convener(s)

Atchara Rakyutidharm
Social Sciences Department, Faculty of Arts, Sipakorn University

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Description

Our panel challenges popular accounts of development studies and political ecology on international influence as an important factor of violent conflicts over natural resource management (NRM) in most developing countries. We argue that Thai politics must be seriously examined because violence over NRM often occurs under the military's rule.

Thailand is named as a democratic country even though there have been 13 occasions of military coup since the country turned to democratic rule in 1932. During the past 84 years, the military government's have held more time and power than the civil governments, and the military always retains power above the civil government. Notably, the military has often manipulated their extraordinary power in order to conduct numerous projects which exempt regular laws. Our panel will review the historical violence of NRM under the military regimes. Three case studies will also demonstrate local people's hardship under the power of a junta. In the northeast, the villagers protest gold mining that pollutes the environment. In effect, they were abused by the outlaw men and threatened by a gunman, while some villagers were even prosecuted by the mining company. In the north, the villagers are struggling with a forest conservation project, yet they are afraid of exposing their tough situation to the public because it might put them at risk of prosecution. In the borderland of the North, ethnic minorities are at risk of the impacts of mega dam projects along the transnational Salween River. These projects have been planned and protested for decades, but the present Thai government is strongly pushing them forward. Under military rule, local people hardly have avenues to voice their struggle. The rule of law is undermined and many institutions for people's petition and mass media are seized or dominated by the military. Some NGOs and civil society are either closely controlled by the military, or keen to collaborate with the dictatorial government instead of fighting for democracy. As such, we argue that Thai politics and the political dictatorship are the key conditions driving violence in NRM.

Panel members

1. Atchara Rakyutidharm
2. Wichean Anprasert
3. Sakkarin Na Nan
4. Paiboon Hengsuwan

PANEL

Religion and Identity in Northern Thailand

Convener(s)

Brooke Schedneck
Institute of Southeast Asian Affairs

Description

Religious narratives, praxis and aesthetics are often central to the process of shaping individual, ethnic, and national identity. This panel explores the myriad ways religiously inspired ritual, festival, performance, art, artifact, commodities and narrative mythologies shape identarian politics in Northern Thailand. The aim of this panel is to address the question: How do people who label themselves as part of Northern Thailand imagine, express, and construct their identities through religious media? The papers in this panel address this through exploring different facets of religious performances of Thai and Shan peoples in this region.

Identity in Northern Thailand is linked with distinct heritages, which are expressed in clothing, folk practices, and various forms of art. These traditions of Northern Thailand not only link people to tangible and intangible culture, they also serve to connect with the past. This panel investigates the ways traditions located within Northern Thailand are maintained in the present and preserved for the future. Although identity is shaped by the past, we are concerned with the ways it is imagined in the present. The case studies we specifically explore include contemporary funeral practices, mythical cults, Buddhist temple aesthetics, and cultural performances. Our concern is not to only document these expressions, but more broadly to understand how they are conserved and reimagined, who is most invested in these identities and what is at stake if they are lost.

The authors interrogate the commodification of Buddhism, while also attending to the dense symbolic meanings of Northern Thai religious artifacts and expressions. The analyses presented are based upon situated research and fieldwork in Northern Thailand which collectively seek to uncover how religious praxis, performance and commodification are shaping the modern Northern Thai cultural landscape.

Panel members

1. Brooke Schedneck
2. Rebecca Hall
3. Piyawit Moonkham
4. Tani Sebro

PANEL

Thai Migrants in a Transnational World [1 and 2]

Convener(s)

Busarin Lertchavalitsakul
Faculty of Social Sciences, Naresuan University

Soimart Rungmanee
Thammasat University

Description

This panel aims to freshen phenomena on Thai people's migrations into other countries and investigate their patterns of transnational mobility between their national homeland and destinations. Panelists, with nuances of conceptual framework and focused geographical areas study forms of Thai migration within a broad aspect that how social scientists can understand such diverse migratory patterns from different steps within the continued and discontinued process of moving in, residing in and adapting to newly politico-economic and socio-cultural conditions. Studying migration process helps fulfill one of the ongoing debates in migration studies: while migration flow studies continue to increase, mechanisms that sustain or weaken the migration process are rarely unraveled (Van Hear 2010). They might also migrate from one country to other new countries to suit their required migration patterns and their livelihoods; using their resources and social capitals such as kinship, friendship and other networks. Such process reflects different patterns characterize internal-international migration on one hand, and return patterns on the other, which could happen to one single migrant in other migration processes elsewhere (King and Skeldon 2010). Therefore, this panel presents that migration process can be two-way flow – starting within Thailand, and from Thailand to other countries and might return to Thailand due to particular reasons and obstacles. These phenomena go in line with some scholars (Cresswell, 2011; Sheller 2011; Sheller and Urry 2006) who criticize that sedentarism in social sciences regularly either view people as static entities tied to specific places, or as nomadic and placeless. They suggest mobility turn as a key term to understand movements and forces that drive or constrain those movements. This reflects that while several people can migrate, some might not be able to do so.

We also conceptualize Thai migrants' creation of a transnational world in which lives of migrants cannot be separated from two spatial places. The two geographic sites are unified to become a hyper-spatially "social field" (Rouse 2002) where articulation of the new pattern of migration is allowed to occur, as well as more opportunities and pathways to migrate. The complex migration situation, as a result, reflected through several categories and terminologies that have been used in migration studies. In this panel, we use the term "migrant" to include Thai people and communities who are high-skill and low-skill workers, who are short-term and long-term residents in destination countries, and whose objectives are educational and professional pursuits. We include those who move to other countries from cross-cultural marriage; those who can acquire their secured and legal, semi-legal, and illegal residential statuses; and those being considered second or third generations in new countries. Furthermore, this panel opens for studies focusing on Thai migrants' livelihood and communities in relation to and in adaptation to destination countries' politico-economic structures and socio-cultural settings in term of immigration laws and regulations, integration policies, as well as social norms and

cultural acceptance. Within a migratory process, Thai migrants find their ways to survive economically and socio-culturally.

Panel members [1]

1. Pataya Ruenkaew
2. Nanrawee Kitiarsa
3. Soimart Rungmanee

Panel members [2]

1. Busarin Lertchavalitsakul
2. Chang Liu, and Xiaohai Zhu

Asama Mungkornchai

PANEL

Thailand's Overseas Investment in Southeast Asia and Transnational (In)Justice

Convener(s)

Carl Middleton
Center for Social Development Studies, Chulalongkorn University

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Description

Thailand's companies have become major investors in neighboring countries, including agribusiness, hydropower, mining and various forms of industry. Thailand's companies are backed by government policy, and typically financed by Thai commercial banks as well as, sometimes, Thailand's Export Import Bank (Thai Exim). Thailand's regional investment has furthermore been facilitated by various regional economic integration programs, including the Asian Development Bank's Greater Mekong Subregion Program and more recently the ASEAN Economic Community. As one of the major economies of mainland Southeast Asia, Thailand has sought to position itself as central to economic regionalization. Given that Thailand itself is embedded within a wider global network of production, its companies' investment in neighboring countries' resource extraction and commodity production can also be tied to a wider global political economy.

Whilst it seems that investment, commodities, goods and natural resources flow readily across borders, the same cannot be said of access to justice. In this panel, empirical case studies will be presented of Thailand's cross-border investments, that have in the process resulted in environmental and social harms, and in some cases violated human rights. The panel explores the various processes and arenas that have emerged as communities and civil society have sought redress and access to justice. These arenas have included in the national courts of the project host country, but also through various formal and informal cross-border processes that link to Thailand, including via Thailand's National Human Rights Commission (TNHRC), and in one example a case ruled upon by Thailand's administrative court. Meanwhile, a report of the TNHRC on the Dawei Special Economic Zone in Myanmar led to a Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommendation in March 2016 that the government should set up a mechanism for the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights for Thai companies investing overseas. Thus, a wider array of international norms is also brought into play, reflecting the legal pluralism that nowadays governs cross-border investments. This also brings into focus a question of the extra-territorial obligations of Thailand with regard to the investment of Thai companies.

This panel will critically evaluate Thailand's investment role in the region through the lens of transnational social and environmental justice. Through empirical case studies on agribusiness, hydropower and special economic zones, the political economy of these investments will be explored in order to understand the production of injustice and human rights violations. The papers will ask: what are the roles, opportunities and challenges for public interest law, national/ regional human rights institutions, other transnational soft law mechanisms, and civil society in protecting and promoting human rights with regard to Thailand's investments?

Panel members

1. Sriprapha Petcharamesree, Michelle D'cruz, and Carl Middleton
2. Naruemon Thabchumpon, and Carl Middleton
3. Carl Middleton

PANEL

The Making and Perception of the Peripheral North

Convener(s)

Chaiyan Rajchagool
Faculty of Political Science and Social Sciences, Phayao University

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Description

As the Bangkok-based central state stepped up to "develop" the North, its transformation in the last over decades has been pronounced beyond recognition. The change can be appreciated on two fronts, namely, the state-initiated action on the one hand, and the business push on the other.

The former is noticeable since the start of National Economic and Social Development Plan, 1961-1966. The latter gradually but steadily has taken place at various levels, from small to large scale enterprises.

This panel tries to distance itself from the common view on the North. That is the perspective from the 'Chiang Mai paradigm', which has been taken for granted among the mainstream scholars of Thai Studies in general, and of "Lanna" Studies in particular. Different from the common and popular studies on Chiang Mai as the representative of the North, this panel focuses on an area of the peripheral North, namely, the three provinces Phayao, Chiang Rai and Phare.

All these provinces have been under the eco-political influences and forces of two-pronged dynamisms, i.e., that of Bangkok on the one hand and of Chiang Mai on the other. As their integration into the BKK/CM domination have transformed their physical outlook, the perception has also been significantly altered. The expression in songs about Phayao and Chiang Rai is a testimony of this cultural change.

The panel proposes four research works covering the profound changes in the periphery of the North. The state-led actions in selected spaces in Phayao and Chiang Rai are two microcosms suggesting an overall change. The development along the capitalist path in Phrae is an examination of how the local and the central capital intersect. A literary analysis of songs about Phayao is an attempt to explain the work of subtle cultural forces from the centre. Hopefully the panel can make a contribution in creating a new understanding about the pattern of development in Thailand in general, and the North in particular.

Panel members

1. Thirayu Bambat
2. Pipat Manakit
3. Vorawan Wannalak
4. Montra Pongnil

PANEL

Agrarian Society in Thailand Amidst Neo-Liberalism

Convener(s)

Chalita Bundhuwong
Kasetsart University

Description

The insecure lives of farmers has long been a significant problem in Thai agrarian society. Thai small scale farmers have had difficulty in coping with various risks, especially the fluctuation of price of farming products which is beyond the control of farmers. Another one is natural disasters, either flooding or drought, from which farmers hardly receive sufficient remedy. Moreover, the government's approach to disaster management can cause farmers more vulnerabilities. In the case of flood prevention for the city area, it makes many paddy field areas become temporary annual catchments without proper compensation. This is similarly the case in the government's drought problem-solving methods of terminating water supply to farmers and/or prohibiting them from farming to keep sufficient water for urban usage. Also policies and measurements to preserve the forest makes lives of farmers difficult and insecure.

Up until now, small scale farmers have applied various adaptive strategies to encounter risks and pressure. They change types of plants and adjust their land management, as well as build various social and political connections including with politicians and political parties as a channel to negotiate or appeal for resources. A very important adaptive strategy is to earn one's living on non-farming activities, which is still full of limitations because of restrictions on minimum wage labor and the monopoly of trade and business not allowing new and small entrepreneurs to be successful.

The livelihoods of farmers seems to be more difficult in the context of neo-liberalism, in which government and capital more closely integrate over economic activities. Under neoliberalism, the government plays an important role to keep economic and financial stability in the market. Importantly, government serves and lessens all regulations to promote the flow of global capital. At the same time, government is reducing its role in providing welfare to people through healthcare and education. Although during the past 4-5 decades, Thai governments usually conducted economic policies to promote industry and service sectors, which suppressed the price of farming products and labor wages. In the context of today's neoliberalism, the concentration of capital is impacted by the growth of huge corporations on agriculture, contract farming, and special economic zones that push small scale farmers to be more reliant on capital and corporations. It is important to note that under the military junta regime, neoliberalization has increased intensively since the junta has no check and balance system, and is without participation from people in the process of policy decision making.

This panel aims to present papers related to the dynamics of Thai agrarian society under neoliberalism, both regarding its impacts on small-scale farmers and their adaptation to encountering risks and pressure. The papers presented in this panel will be helpful in terms of academia, policy making, and the empowerment of people in Thai agrarian society.

Panel members

1. Chalita Bundhuwong, Purin Naksing, Kangsadan Chawathanakun, and Angkoon Hongkananukraw

2. Amata Jantarangsee, Patrapan Tamdee, and Teeraporn Thongpanya

PANEL

Thai Football, Fan Culture, Power, Sexuality, and Provincialism in Thailand [2]

Convener(s)

Charn Panarut
The University of Sydney

Wasan Panyagaew
Chiang Mai University

Description

Football is not just a game, but a vehicle for the display of local and national identities, development and discourse on modernity and the expression of sexuality. Since 2009 in Thailand, this modern sport provides the new class a unique opportunity for the display and practice of local identities, sexualities, discourses on modernity, and (new) Thai nationalism. In practice, this sport is also a social mechanism to govern people's daily life, the tourist industry and urban development. Conceptualizing Thai Football as a field of power, this panel will propose a new approach to investigate multiple aspects of this modern sport that involves and operates in history, culture, politics and provincialism, male masculinity and female sexuality in Thailand.

Utilizing cross disciplinary approaches, the papers in this panel aim to;

(1) provide a historical sociology of sport in Siam and the anthropology of Thai professional football league in the age of Neoliberalism, showing how this sport industry has been developed, expanded, and localized, in particular how it has transformed Thailand from below;

(2) provide an ethnography of football fan culture and its practice in the daily life of ordinary Thais, how this 'popular sport' is related to media business, provincial power, and local people in the countryside and the Thai capital; and

(3) demonstrate how the formation and transformation of this professional football league, since 2009, reflects on rural transformation, dynamism of class structure, Thai politics, and Thailand in the age of Neoliberalism.

Panel members

1. Nuttakorn Vititanon
2. Chalinee Sonphlay
3. Bisma Putra Sampurna

PANEL

Thai Studies and Climate Change: Local Multiplicity and Global Connectivity (1 and 2)

Convener(s)

Chaya Vaddhanaphuti
Chiang Mai University

Description

Climate change has become a fast growing topic of research in Thailand. The past few years saw the rise of national-level publications such as Thailand's First Assessment Report on Climate Change, as well as the national climate policy Thailand Climate Change Master Plan. What is very much lagging behind in climate change studies in Thailand is simply the study of the human dimensions of changes in weather, season and climate. This panel offers an opportunity for Thai studies scholars, especially from the social sciences, humanities and inter/transdisciplinary studies to discuss a simple yet largely unexplored question of how the weather and climate are historically and culturally bound up in Thai society, and in the wider environmental, socioeconomic and political contexts of the region. Dwellers of the mountains, rice fields, seas and cities are constantly interpreting changes in the weather and climate in relation to their livelihoods, landscapes and everyday politics. Through their cultural lenses, the flows of the weather and changes in climate co-constitute languages, emotions, imaginations, oral histories, cultural beliefs, rituals and religions, literature, art, identities and cultural practices. This suggests irreducible, plural and complex ways of perceiving and knowing the Thai weather and climate.

While changes in weather, season and climate are embodied, told and practiced in the lives of Thai people and landscapes, these climate cultures are never stable. They constantly shape and are shaped by external forces, activities and actors such as government bureaucrats, corporates, nongovernmental organizations, intergovernmental institutions, media and climate scientists. The ideas of climate are co-produced and circulated through local and global spaces of science, policy, media, pop cultures and social movements, and they are often (re)interpreted to fit new contexts. For example, climate change is variously seen as the end of the world as caused by human sin, a hopeful opportunity to save the world, a cause of social conflict, or a result of structural injustice. Such framings of climate change create particular discourses, different actors and ways of responding. Through ongoing and complex connections with Southeast Asia and the world, perhaps Thai climate changes just as much as the Thai culture that is used to interpret it. Engaging, communicating, responding and governing climate change as a sociocultural phenomenon, therefore, requires understanding the inseparable and multiple climate-culture ontologies and epistemologies that exist in Thai society.

Panel members [1]

1. Abram Bicksler, Boonsong Thansrithong, and Bunsak Tongdee
2. Louise Rose
3. Preedee Phisphumvidhi
4. Puntita Tanwattana, Chantra Tongcumpou, Suthirat Kittipongvises, and Tansiphorn Janhom
5. Suthirat Kittipongvises, and Takahi Mino

Panel members [2]

1. Phaothai Sin-Ampol
2. Robert Farnan
3. Poon Thiengburanathum, and Pongtip Thiengburanathum
4. Sittisak Sugsaisakon, and Suthirat Kittipongvises

PANEL

Social Exclusion and Inequity Inclusion: Challenges in Knowledge, Policies and Movements

Convener(s)

Cholnapa Anukul
Center of Just Society Network

Description

Following an outbreak of political and economic conflict, the National Reform Commission was established in 2011, and provided a set of policy recommendations to reduce inequality in Thailand, based on wide research. Since then, inequality has become a major focus of various academic research. Economic research found that economic growth in Thailand reduced poverty, but inequality remained steady for more than two decades. A range of economic inequality research, based on measurements of wealth disparity data has been conducted. At the same time, many social research has paid more attention to disadvantage groups. The study of marginalized populations have become a main research interest and a movements in themselves.

However, research on marginalization are sidelined among the academic community too. As a result, a lack of research leads to a lack of knowledge and reinforces the invisibility of marginalized people. Additionally, knowledge on these groups has not been integrated with knowledge on social and economic inequality. Consequently, the marginalized movements have less voice in the policy negotiation process.

Is it possible that knowledge of the nature of marginalization can reveal the structural factors that lead to the exclusion marginalized groups from policies? Do these marginalization factors cause the inequity among other populations too?

Chiangchaisakulthai's paper focuses on how we measure inequity through the lens of social science concepts and by demonstrating comparative statistics; the combination of three aspects that reinforce inequity: High Risk, High Rent and High Loss, can reveal the social inequality. Charoenratana's paper concentrates on indigenous people and rural farmers and explores the way they are included/excluded by land use. Her paper examines both the efforts of marginalized groups to justify their claims on community rights and explores how various levels of stakeholders enforce the law. Phattara's paper centers on the application of negative income tax policies to reduce the income gap between formal and informal workers. Wasi's paper takes a look at the efforts of various grassroots women's groups working on gender-based violence and unintended pregnancy issues and explores the essential importance of empowerment in underpinning women's movements.

Through this panel, we hope to demonstrate the exclusion and inequity that marginalized people experience, and how these structural inequities belong to all of us. The panel will facilitate greater understanding on various efforts to close the gap, both through the use of policy structures, and through social movement.

Panel members

1. Kwanpracha Chiangchaisakulthai, and Cholnapa Anukul

2. Sayamol Charoenratana
3. Weerawat Phattarasukkumjorn, and Sayamol Charoenratana
4. Jarupapha Wasi

PANEL

The Thai Army and Its Role Abroad, 1910s-1990s

Convener(s)

Din Buadaeng
Paris-Diderot University

Description

The Thai army has been one of the prime subjects of study among scholars in the field of Thai studies, especially regarding its involvement domestically in terms of politics. This political role of the Thai army has been explored by scholars, from its establishment during King Rama V period, and yet the topic remains salient until present day. However, the Thai army has not only been involved in domestic politics, but it has also been involved in foreign affairs. This role of the Thai army in a broader and a more international perspective is in fact understudied. The objective of this panel is thus to discuss and illustrate the Thai army's roles in the international arena from the participation in the First World War to the twilight of the Cold War. In so doing, this panel hope to provide broader perspective and understanding of Thai army in modern Thai history.

Panel members

1. Din Buadaeng
2. Pran Jintrawet
3. Greg Raymond

PANEL

Region and History in the Localization of Thai Spirit Possession (1 and 2)

Convener(s)

Erick White
University of Michigan

Description

Part 2: During the past two decades scholars of Thai religion have increasingly turned their critical gaze upon spirit possession. Different historical forms, cultural traditions and social modalities of spirit possession have been documented and analyzed, along with their contemporary transformations and innovations. As a result, spirit mediums have become a regular and expected feature in case studies of local and regional Thai religious landscapes (Morris 2000; Cohen 2001; Stengs 2009; Kitiarsa 2012; Johnson 2014). Spirit mediums have joined monks, novices, mae chi, astrologers, palm readers, Brahmins and other religious actors as conventional and commonplace moral authorities within the variegated ritual ecologies of local Thai Buddhist worlds.

Comparative reflections upon Thai spirit possession and mediumship, however, have been lacking. This panel will begin to address this silence by examining spirit possession through the analytic framework of regional dynamics and processes of localization. The papers in this panel will comparatively explore these dynamics and processes primarily with regards to the past century, and in particular the post World War II era.

A variety of questions will be investigated. How have regional cultural, social and political dynamics differentially shaped the varied local expressions of Thai spirit possession? How have regional historical developments, narratives, and self-understandings influenced the diverse cultural meanings, social forms and performative styles of Thai spirit mediums? How, if at all, have types of spirit possession ostensibly similar and stable across the national landscape - such as possession by Chinese spirits, Hindu gods or Thai royalty - been invested with regionally specific form and meaning through the process of localization? How do particular regional or local forms of spirit mediumship respond to the frequently standardized, modular narratives about, and representations of, spirit possession that circulate in and through Thai national media networks and platforms? And to what degree, if any, have transnational or global connections, mobilities and circulations shaped the localization of Thai spirit possession and mediumship within particular regional, ethnic or historical traditions?

Panel members [1]

1. Visisya Pinthongvijayakul
2. Benjamin Baumann
3. Andrew Johnson

Alexander Horstmann

Panel members [2]

1. Irene Stengs
2. Kazuo Fukuura

3. Erick White
4. Pipad Krajaejun

PANEL

State Formation in Thailand

Convener(s)

Erik Kuhonta
Department of Political Science, McGill University

Description

This panel examines the politics and history of state formation in Thailand. The papers address the question of state formation through a number of themes: violence, local strongmen, trade and war, and patrimonialism. The paper writers are political scientists who study Thai politics through a comparative-historical lens, as well as through qualitative case studies. The discussant for the panel is a historian, Professor Thongchai Winichakul of the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

The first paper by Professor Prajak Kongkirati of Thammasat University examines the role of violence in shaping and legitimizing the state from the era of Field Marshall Sarit Thanarat to the present. This state violence has been used for maintaining state power and for curbing dissent. By uncovering the inner logic, process, and practice of state violence, Prajak suggests that this pattern of violence may be potentially reduced. The second paper by Professor Viengrat Nethipo of Chulalongkorn University analyzes the interaction between local influential strongmen and the central state. Viengrat argues that the Thai state has historically been weak and has needed to ally with local strongmen to implement policy at the local level. Although the center has traditionally sent its officials to the periphery, these officials have often lacked knowledge and capacity and were therefore unable to completely transform the periphery. As a consequence, certain pre-modern institutions remained embedded in the state. In the third paper, Professor Tuong Vu of the University of Oregon looks at the role of war and trade in premodern state formation in Thailand. In comparison with neighboring Vietnam and Burma, Vu argues that war played a much lesser role in state formation compared to trade. This is because of the Chao Phraya river delta's easy access to the ocean and its trade links with China, Japan, and the Middle East. What trade brought was less the means to finance war than an activity for ruling elites to accumulate resources to build cities and attract settlers. Trade with faraway markets brought not only goods, but also knowledge, technology, immigrants, and a prestigious status in the region. In the last paper, Professor Erik Martinez Kuhonta of McGill University examines the political origins of the contemporary Thai state. Kuhonta claims that the Thai state has lacked strong institutional foundations to develop necessary capacity to advance policy reform in the contemporary period. This can be traced to the process through which state formation occurred. Although efforts were made to develop a functioning bureaucracy under King Chulalongkorn in the late 19th century, patrimonialism remained a key feature of the state. Further periods of state-building provided some means for rational-legal institutional development, but were never able to end the patrimonial lineages of the state.

Panel members

1. Prajak Kongkirati
2. Viengrat Nethipo
3. Tuong Vu
4. Erik Kuhonta

PANEL

Diverse Perspectives on Educational Inequalities in Thailand

Convener(s)

Gerald Fry
University of Minnesota

Description

This panel will focus on educational inequalities and disparities with an examination of extensive empirical data on this issue in Thailand, and policy suggestions for reducing such disparities.

Paper analyzing the nature of disparities in educational attainment in Thailand by Dr. Dilaka Lathipipat of the World Bank:

This paper will cover four basic topics: 1) historical trends in inequality, 2) student performance disparities in standardized assessments, 3) factors underlying low student performance and high learner outcome inequality (with a special emphasis on the small school problem, and 4) policy suggestions for reducing student outcome inequality in Thailand.

Paper on explaining urban-rural differences in educational achievement, by Dr. Kiatanantha Lounkaew, Dean, Faculty of Economics, Dhurakij Pundit University:

Major educational achievement gaps are common in most countries. This paper will examine the nature and extent of the urban-rural gap in educational attainment in Thailand. Then it will explain factors accounting for these differences. Finally, the paper will offer policy options for reducing these differences.

Paper on the nature of provincial economic disparities by Dr. Suphananda Limpanondha of NESDB:

Thailand's rapid economic development has brought about remarkable wealth and poverty reduction over the past three decades. However, the problem of inequality continues to challenge Thailand's development process. This paper therefore explores disparities as well as convergences in income-per-capita over the past two decades. Here, both GPP per capita and income per capita from household surveys will be analyzed. It also investigates growth determinants at the provincial level, including agglomeration factors. Finally, the disparities in poverty and the extent to which provincial growth and inequality affect poverty and educational opportunities are analyzed.

Paper presenting a model for explaining regional disparities in educational in educational attainment in Thailand by Dr. Gerald W. Fry (University of Minnesota, Hui Bi (St. Olaf College), and Dr. Rosarin Apahung (Pathum Thani University, remote Isan program):

Multiple theoretical/conceptual frameworks guide the conduct of this study, namely central place theory (Christaller), forms of capital (Bordieu), economies of scale (Simon), and fiscal neutrality (Glenn). The analyses of the paper are based on extensive disaggregated provincial level data sets with over 50 empirical educational, social, and economic indicators for each province of Thailand. With these extensive data it is possible to develop a psychometrically sound index of the quality of education for each of Thailand's 77 provinces. Then using both correlation and regression analyses, the correlates of educational quality are examined. The paper also involves mixed methods, as field research was conducted in November 2015 in the most remote part of Isan to hear local perspectives on regional disparities. One of the coauthors (Rosarin) is an educator from one of the most remote

areas of Isan and she brings diverse perspectives to the interpretation of our quantitative data and the development of alternative public policies for reducing regional disparities.

Panel members

1. Dilaka Lathapipat
2. Kiatanantha Lounkaew
3. Suphananda Limpanondha
4. Gerald Fry, Hui Bi, and Rosarin Apahung

PANEL

The Reconfiguration of Ethnic Groups in Northeast Thailand

Convener(s)

Jaggapan Cadchumsang
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Khon Kaen University

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Description

As Thailand's most populous region, the Northeast, widely known as "Isan", has been inhabited by a number of ethnic groups, whose settlements are located in different parts of the Isan plateau. Their ancestors could be those native to the region or those who came from the land beyond present-day Isan before or after the emergence of nation states in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS). Moreover, in recent times, some ethnic groups migrated from neighboring countries to hire themselves out as migrant workers in most large cities across Thailand. Transformations of political, socio-cultural, and economic nature have taken place over time at both the local and national levels, including development in the GMS, and have resulted in various forms of adaptations and movements of ethnic residents in this region. Adopting a constructivist approach, this panel is comprised of three papers. The first paper deals with the Phu Tai of Renu Nakhon in Nakhon Phanom Province, whose painful memories of being discriminated and stigmatized by the Thai State during the Communist Expansion Period have been revived and redefined as a tool employed in the negotiation with the state against the backdrop of local community development. The second paper explores the coming together of the Phu Tai from several areas of Isan to imagine a transnational community through the construction of ethnic narratives across the Thai-Lao borders. The third paper portrays Khon Kaen's spatial development that has turned this province from the source of workers going abroad and to other parts of Thailand in the past, into the hub where workers from neighboring countries concentrate in the present. It also reflects the everyday experiences of migrant workers from Myanmar, who migrated to Khon Kaen to work as factory workers.

Panel members

1. Ninlawadee Promphakping, and Maniemai Tongyou
2. Pasutar Komolmal, and Jaggapan Cadchumasng
3. Wilasinie Sopapol, and Jaggapan Cadchumsang

PANEL

The Pre-Modern State and Its Archival Remains – the Contributions of Diplomatics to Thai Studies

Convener(s)

Jan Dressler
University of Hamburg

Hiroshi Kawaguchi
Aichi University

Description

In recent years, the auxiliary science of diplomatics has increasingly attracted attention as a means of investigating the development of the pre-modern Siamese state and its administration through the examination of its archival remains. This panel will be devoted to current research into these documentary artefacts of Siamese and Southeast Asian origin, dating from the 16th to the late 19th century.

As a sub-discipline of historical inquiry, diplomatics provides a set of methods of examining written material of a non-literary, official nature (such as land titles, documents of taxation and labor control, royal grants, court records, legislation, etc.). Initially developed in Europe during the early 18th Century as a method of scrutinizing the authenticity of official documents, the discipline of diplomatics has since then broadened and refined its methodology and thereby contributed to the understanding of pre-modern administration and government.

Research in diplomatics today not only endeavors to investigate the development of writing materials, inks, scripts (extrinsic elements), and the characteristic features of administrative texts and the employment of language therein (intrinsic elements) alone, but also attempts to elucidate the bureaucratic context and administrative practices in which these documents were generated and put to use. These different approaches help historians to assess the nature and value of often scattered documents as sources providing insight into the development and functioning of the pre-modern state, beyond their sole quality as repositories of particular political and economic information.

This panel aims to increase awareness among colleagues and the interested public about the value of archival remains and the possible contribution of the diplomaticists' approach to our understanding of these sources in particular, and more broadly to the study of the Siamese state and its development.

The meeting shall furthermore provide an opportunity for the exchange of experiences in the application of the methodology and the dissemination of insights gained during the research process, in order to focus and facilitate future research.

Panel members

1. Jan R. Dressler
2. Hiroshi Kawaguchi
3. Jacques Leider
4. Erika Masuda

5. Andrew Peacock

PANEL

The Thai Smallholder: Transformation and Persistence

Convener(s)

Jonathan Rigg
Asia Research Institute and Department of Geography, National University of Singapore

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Description

The panel explores the puzzling persistence of the smallholder in Thailand. Agrarian transformations in Thailand, as well as more broadly in East and Southeast Asia, have taken a path that is distinct in global terms. Rather than witnessing a farm-size transition towards diminishing farming populations working ever larger farms, the reverse is occurring with rural households, seemingly, keeping hold of their land even as holdings shrink. But while smallholders may have persisted in Thailand, they have not remained unchanged. This raises a number of theoretical, empirical and policy questions:

• Why has Thailand's smallholder sector proved to be so persistent even in the face of deep, rapid and profound social and economic transformation?

• Who are these smallholders? Are they a distinct class, a relic population, or do they comprise new entrants in the agricultural sector?

• How have rural livelihoods been sustained in the context of declining farm size, and with what social and environmental consequences?

• How has farming, as both a profession and an agro-ecological system, adapted to emerging pressures and opportunities nationally, regionally and globally?

• How do we theorize the agrarian transition in Thailand? How do we conceptualize the smallholder?

• What has been the role of Thai government policy, current and historical, in shaping the smallholder sector?

• What rural futures present themselves for the Thai smallholder?

The panel invites papers that address any of the above questions to elucidate why and how smallholders exist and persist in Thailand.

Panel members

1. Will Shattuck
2. Jonathan Rigg
3. Tubtim Tubtim
4. Philip Hirsch

PANEL

Science, Religion and Health in Local Thai Settings

Convener(s)

Julia Cassaniti
Washington State University

Description

This panel takes its cue from the 13 ICTS conference announcement calling for new conceptual insights and new forms of critical knowledge on Thailand. Speakers at this conference in previous years have noted the absence of interactions between science disciplines and traditional conference fields in the humanities and social sciences. The panelists will endeavor to carve out a space where "scientific" and humanities perspectives can speak to one another. We interpret religion broadly, and health in the panel title refers to mental as well as physical health.

The panelists – anthropologists and historians – will draw on their expertise in medical anthropology, forensic medicine, cognitive psychology, psychological anthropology, and risk assessment. One aim will be to explore what the Annales school termed mentalités (mentalities): a person's outlook on the world or their worldview. We are interested in understanding psychological processes that people use to make sense of their world. Another aim is to explore the ethnographic fact that the "religious" and the "psychological" are not always easily distinguished. We are also interested in developing a new vocabulary for studying Siamese / Thai subjectivity and personal sovereignty both historically and in contemporary clinical settings.

In their presentations panelists will emphasize the methodologies they use from the sciences, however they define the term, to draw conclusions from their research materials, fieldwork or clinical experience.

Panel members

1. Craig J. Reynolds
2. Nancy Eberhardt
3. Julia Cassaniti

PANEL

'คุณธรรมจริยธรรมไทย' (Thai Morals and Manners): A Historical Perspective

Convener(s)

Juthamas Tangsantikul
Department of Industrial Design, Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University

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Description

Since the beginning of the political crisis just over a decade ago, conservative voices have frequently claimed an apparent deterioration of Thai morals and manners - even citing it to justify the military coups of 2006 and 2014. In the aftermath of the 2014 coup, for example, the National Reform Council made great play of the inclusion of a 'special reformation agenda' (วาระปฏิรูปพิเศษ) for morality, ethics and good governance in its overall plan for the political and social reform of the country. Moreover, the promotion of good morals and manners —particularly for young people—was placed on the agenda of various reform committees and sub-committees

Discussion about and regulation of morals and manners in Thai society are not restricted to the state but permeate everyday life. Outcries over the demonstration of 'inappropriate' manners, as well as plaudits for examples of 'heroism', are now a daily occurrence on social and other media. However, far from reaching any consensus, Thais appear deeply divided over what is deemed to be 'civilized' behavior.

Despite such public discussion about morals and manners, little attention has been paid to their historical context. As Norbert Elias' seminal work demonstrates, morals and manners in fact change over time due to the transformation of social, economic and political structures. This panel aims to engage with the ongoing debates on the subject of Thai morality and manners by bringing to light some key moments in modern Thai history when particular morals and manners were promoted and reproduced, while others were challenged, redefined, or even forbidden.

Panel members

1. Patrick Jory
2. Thanavi Chotpradit
3. Juthamas Tangsantikul

PANEL

Political Economy of Land Along Isan Borders

Convener(s)

Kanokwan Manorom
Ubon Ratchathani University

Description

The borders of Isan are perceived as spaces for potential trading, rich resources and sites of cross border economic and social development. With this, land is a key potential resource that has been increasingly taken over and controlled over the past 10 years. In some areas land conflict is a common phenomenon. Factors affecting land control include: borderland development, crop booms, national security and cross-border trade. Actors involved in borderland control come from many groups, including local villagers from within and outside the areas, local and outside traders, government agencies, politicians and local authorities. This paper studies land resources along the borders of Isan through the lens of political economy. This lens allows us to conceptualize the history, current situation and dynamics of land use, land struggle, land conflict and land control along the Isan frontier, in the context of the changes brought about through Mekong development and integration.

Panel members

1. Kanokwan Manorom
2. Pinwadee Srisupan
3. Watcharee Srikham
4. Surasom Krisnachuta
5. Chantha Thanawattanawong

PANEL

Writing Histories of Human Rights in Thailand

Convener(s)

Karin Hongsaton Zackari
Human Rights Studies, Department of History, Lund University

Tyrell Haberkorn
Political and Social Change, The Australian National University

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Description

Since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was proclaimed in 1948, Thailand has been a part of the global human rights regime. This participation has taken on a range of forms from the period of cold war dictatorships, the nascent human rights movement in the 1970s, international solidarity movements and institutionalization in the 1990s, and a widening scope of rights advocacy in the 21st century. The majority of international human rights studies to date are filled with lacunae, both because they adopt a legal and institutional perspective focusing on state practice and malpractice and have been overwhelming focused on the Americas and Europe. This panel responds to these lacunae to show how social and political movements have engaged with human rights - as a language, idea, and institution - in dialogue with or in opposition to the Thai state.

The different papers respond to these lacunae and begin to map a history of human rights in Thailand through a series of chronological case studies. The papers identify the continuities and ruptures in this history, and illuminate the multiple histories of human rights to be told. Moments of human rights expression in Thailand connect to global history and inform us about the limits and possibilities for human rights activism and practice. By tracing how the global phenomenal of the human rights regime is lived and challenged in Thailand, the panel offers a local study of universal rights and freedoms and challenges the boundaries of area studies.

Panel members

1. Tyrell Haberkorn
2. Karin H. Zackari
3. Bencharat Sae Chua
4. Coeli Barry
5. Pimsiri Petchnamrob

PANEL

Thai Studies Using Digital Humanities Research Approach

Convener(s)

Kulthida Tuamsuk
Digital Humanities Research Group Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Khon Kaen University

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Description

Digital Humanities (DH) is a research issue that emerged from the integration between computer science and humanities. The field of digital humanities covers research both related to the compilation and systematization of knowledge and the storing of the compiled knowledge in digital formats, both for statements and mixed media. It also explains knowledge in terms of semantics, statistics, and visualization related to interesting topics in the humanities or human-related works. Because digital humanities research responds to needs and necessities of knowledge management in the humanities discipline, it is important to study and preserve human accounts that are being gradually diminished. This knowledge can be retained in digital formats using modern technology, and can be utilized in research studies or exchanged among humanities researchers and individuals. The Digital Humanities Research Group (KKU-DHRG), therefore is established to work on digital humanities research focusing on, among other topics, Thai cultural heritage.

The objectives of KKU-DHRG are to: 1) Collect, analyze, synthesize, store, and organize knowledge in the humanities existing in various forms. This knowledge is usually rare, but reflects history, culture and people's way of life. Storage risks destruction and loss both from human naivety and natural disasters. 2) Use high technology to manage content in digital forms in order to open up opportunities for unlimited access to knowledge without any obstacles in distance, time, and place so as to avail learning in new and multiple dimensions. 3) Enable research with academics in humanities, a discipline with few innovation integrations of knowledge, so as to improve research studies and hence create more research outcomes in the field using modern technology.

The research issues of KKU-DGRG focus on: 1) Development of the system for knowledge, metadata, ontology, web semantics, and knowledge-based expert systems for humanities topics in Thailand, or countries in the Mekong Subregion, eg. folk tales, folk songs, history, local wisdom, ethnic groups, beliefs, ways of living, traditions, and culture; 2) Resource–Development of 3D Virtual Museum or digital learning resources for certain objects or major Thai art work; and 3) Processes and behavioral knowledge management and the study of information relating to behavior in the humanities. For instance, the knowledge exchange process, the knowledge transfer process, and the knowledge systematization process.

At ICTS13, this panel session would like to introduce digital humanities research to the scholarly community by giving a view on how advanced information technology can enhance research on Thai studies. In addition, four research projects of KKU-DHRG will be presented by researcher and the students from the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Information Studies. These include: 1) Knowledge organization of Isan proverbs (Pha-ya) for semantic retrieval; 2) Semantic ontology of folksongs in the GMS; 3) Digital humanities research approaches for organizing contents of ethnic groups in Thailand; and 4) Data organization of Ban Chiang potteries for a 3D virtual museum. This will be the first time introducing digital humanities research to the international Thai studies scholarly community.

Panel members

1. Kanyarat Kwiecien, Krongkaew Kingsawat, and Sompetch Junlabuddee
2. Nattapong Kaewboonma, and Kulthida Tuamsuk
3. Juthatip Chaikhambung, and Kulthida Tuamsuk
4. Teerapol Suebchompu, and Kulthida Tuamsuk

PANEL

Neo-Liberalizing Border: State, Market, Religion, and Identity in Motion

Convener(s)

Kwanchewan Buadaeng
Faculty of Social Sciences

Description

Borderland of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) has never been marginal or isolated. Bustling markets at various localities in the borderland along trading routes were found in both pre-modern and modern times. Borderland in this area has also housed the sites of active missionization of many world and local religions. As borderland people are diverse and not fully controlled by the states or their promoted religions, they are rather free to choose and develop their material and spiritual ways of living. Since the 1950s, the state of Thailand has tried to assert sovereign power on this borderland (GMS), as seen by numerous military and police posts and check points along the border. Bureaucratization of the border has also been made through the documentation of migrant labor where various forms of official paper has been produced and used as a surveillance tool to control the movement of people. But the control over the movement of people across the border has always failed due to corruption in this mechanism. Furthermore, the state of Myanmar cannot exercise their sovereign power as many ethnic groups are still holding their own economic, political and military power in the borderland. At present, neo-liberalization rules the borderland and sovereign power cannot be fully exercised due to the exceptional laws, which are proclaimed to promote capital flow and rapid accumulation. This panel discusses the present situation of the GMS borderland, which are characterized by tensions between market forces and national security ideology. It also further discusses the expansion of religious missionization and the construction of religious land following this neo-liberalization, which facilitates the flow of people and capital across the border. This revives and reconstructs religious law and communities across national boundaries, and thus undermines state power. The Thai state, for example, struggles to maintain their sovereign power by obstructing the flow of migration by registering and classifying who is and is not a Thai citizen. This does not stop the flow but creates more problems for borderland people. In sum, the panel investigates the tension between political security and neo-liberalization processes in the borderland, the opportunities opened up by that process and the impact on borderland people in GMS.

Panel members

1. Pinkaew Luangaramsri
2. Prasit Leepreecha
3. Deborah Tooker
4. Mukdawan Sakboon

PANEL

Thais Outside Thailand: Image, Identity and Lived Realities

Convener(s)

Mala Sathian
University of Malaya

Description

The impact of globalization, the increasing presence of ASEAN in the region, and the resulting interconnectivity of trade, labor and communications, requires closer scrutiny of communities living on the fringes, who are instead often overlooked and left 'unconnected'. This panel proposes an examination of Thailand's connectivity to Thais living outside the country.

The papers in this panel will look at diaspora groups and explore their connectivity to Thailand and khwam pen Thai (Thai-ness). It proposes to do this through the following perspectives and case studies:

• Lived realities and perspective of Thai communities living in northern Malaysia

• Generational perspectives of children of Thai-Japanese marriages living in Japan

• The traditional monarchic-nationalist perspectives of Thai Nirat literature on the image of 'Malay'

Key concepts dealing with identity formation include pluralism, amphibiously-cultural identities, hybrid identities of people in border zones, and nationalism. These will be explored within the scope of the Thai diaspora. The three papers referring to these various perspectives will collectively suggest how diaspora communities indeed demonstrate khwan pen thai in various ways, and show how multiple identities are constructed that act as agencies connecting the people to their origins, or blur that connection.

Panel members

1. Mala Sathian, and Rosenun Chesof
2. Sari Kayoko Ishii
3. Pitchayada Mekhirunsiri

PANEL

Cultural Relationship Along East-West Corridor in Thailand and Mainland Southeast Asia

Convener(s)

Mamoru Shibayama
Kyoto University ASEAN Center/International Strategy Office, Kyoto University

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Description

This panel is the combination of research related to the study of cultural relationships through the ancient communication networks of mainland Southeast Asia focusing in the area of present-day Thailand and neighboring countries. The archaeological studies and the analysis of spatial data provide a broader picture of regional relationships. The results of these studies provide a broader picture of sharing and adaptation of culture in the past. The research into the development of transportation systems and industries opens new knowledge of the cultural material and evidence that has not been achieved previously.

The main focus will be on the impacts affecting cultural change in order to visualize the relationship of culture at a regional scale in the past, to discover the relevance and coherence that impacts on society and culture as a whole and the cultural development until the present. The topics of research are: the roots of culture in the region, the study of ancient communication systems, the study of people alongside the communication systems, the study of the relationship of art and culture across the region, and the development of a geo-ontology technique for database development to fit with the condition of the cultural data of the region, and finally, the adaption of the research into real life situations. As for the East-West corridor, the relationship of Thailand with Myanmar, Cambodia and Vietnam in the 5th to 18th centuries will be discussed here.

Panel members

1. Mamoru Shibayama
2. Surat Lertlum
3. Pongdhan Sampaongern
4. Jeerawan Sangpetch

PANEL

Thailand's New Water Law

Convener(s)

Manoj Potapohn
Faculty of Economics, Chiang Mai University

Description

Reform of the institutional framework for water governance in Thailand is long overdue. The current system has proved to be ineffective in steering the country's economy and social fabric through droughts, flood and water pollution, and the matter is unlikely to get better on its own under the changing climate. A new balance between the needs for vertical and horizontal coordination and decentralization is needed. The governance architecture is replete with examples of both fragmentation and overlapping of mandates with responsibilities distributed to as many as 22 government agencies straddling across 8 ministries. The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, other large municipalities and numerous local governments all face significant challenges in handling water-related emergencies and stresses that imply the need for further reforms. Civil society and the public needs to be involved more in the strategic preparations for floods, droughts and other challenges in the allocation of water and maintaining water quality. The need for reform emerged clearly in public hearings after the devastation caused by the floods of 2011 underlined the weakness of key institutions in Thailand in the face of extreme events which could easily become more frequent or severe under climate change. The proposed water law has been in the legislature for almost a year, following almost 30 years of inconclusive progress towards a Water Law. Given the political development, there is a sense that the long wait is about to come to an end and a passage of the water law from the military appointed legislature seems imminent. An assessment on how the new water institutions would or could perform would be useful for outlining pathways towards an implementable framework for water Governance in Thailand that is equitable and sustainable.

Panel members

1. Sukit Kanjina
2. Michael Shafer
3. Royol Chitradon

PANEL

Interface between Local Knowledge and Scientific Knowledge: Disaster Management in Thailand

Convener(s)

Masayuki Nishida
Japanese Studies Center, Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Mai University

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Description

With growing concerns about climate change and increasing calls for security for human lives and property, the notion of an at risk society has gradually entered contemporary Thai society. Expert knowledge on risk management allows Thais to identify, assess and prioritize the risks of disasters in a more systematic manner. This knowledge drives social endeavors against disaster, e.g. sophisticated surveillance and warning systems and civil engineering protection. However, it requires unexpected responses at the local level as it interacts with local knowledge in a complex manner: it can disrupt the worldview of the locals, and concomitantly present opportunities that may lead to local initiatives against disasters and creative re-interpretation of disaster management. This panel addresses the intricate process of interaction between modern expert knowledge on disaster management, e.g. risk assessment and comprehensive database, and local knowledge, e.g. disaster-lore and traditional use of local natural resources in Thailand.

Panel members

1. Senjo NAKAI
2. Masayuki Nishida
3. Tadashi NAKASU
4. Warittha Wannathong

PANEL

Kunming-Bangkok Highway: Improving Connectivity in Globalized Thai or Pushing Social and Cultural Changes?

Convener(s)

Ming He
National Centre for Borderland Ethnic Studies in Southwest China, Yunnan University

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Description

The construction of the Kunming-Bangkok highway was completed in 2013, and is a landmark point in improving the connectivity between the two biggest economic bodies in the Great Mekong Subregion. Under China's "The Belt and Road Initiatives", this highway seeks to improve regional integration by increasing trade, promoting mobility, enhancing cultural exchange and improving road accessibility. Both the Chinese and Thai governments are expecting increased globalization and economic benefits through this road. Empirically, however, the improvement in infrastructure development does not necessarily always lead to positive outcomes in both environmental and socioeconomic terms. Existing obstacles may limit connectivity through regulation, legal and extra-legal mechanisms. More importantly, the Kunming-Bangkok highway also leads to social and cultural transformation for indigenous people who live along this road. Therefore, it urgently requires research to examine the impact of the road construction. This panel is organized create timely outputs through a collaborative research project between Yunnan University and Chiang Mai University. The five articles in this panel present the social and cultural changes experiences by people along the Kunming-Bangkok Highway from various perspectives under the trend of a globalizing Thailand. The panel also addresses the issue of social connectivity and local cultural interactive-dynamics among indigenous communities and people under the globalization agenda in the Great Mekong Region.

Panel members

1. Yueping Wang
2. Lingfei Zhu, and Wei Ma
3. Ying Qin, and Jingwei Guo
4. Xiao Yan Long

PANEL

Crisis of Democracy, Military and Hybrid Politics in Thailand [A Tribute to Licit Dhiravegin]

Convener(s)

Naruemon Thabchumpon
Asian Research Center for Migration, Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University

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Description

Thailand has retreated away from parliamentary democracy to a more authoritarian rule. This panel intends to present as a tribute to Professor Licit Dhiravegin, a respected political scientist and democracy advocate, who had been recognized as a trenchant critic of the coup-installed regime and provide principles that all political scientists should uphold.

As political scientists follow the path of Prof. Licit in aiming to understand "Political Development in Thailand", many political science students today follow his standpoint on democracy. This panel is composed of four papers relating to democracy, hybrid regime systems, civil and military relations and the concentration of power politics among elites under authoritarian regimes.

Based on the revelations of paper presenters, this panel aims to examine and understand the situation of undemocratic elements that seems to be taking over society. It hopes to explore and learn from existing inspirational experiences and alternative frameworks that can be applied in the ongoing struggle for systemic change.

Panel members

1. Siripan Nogsuan Sawasdee
2. Puangthong Pawakapan
3. Wolfram Schaffar, and Naruemon Thabchumpon
4. Naruemon Thabchumpon, Jakkrit Sangkamanee, Carl Middleton, and Weera Wongsatjachok
5. Narut Wasinpiyamongkhon, and Arunee Santhitiwanich

PANEL

Boundary Making and Negotiation in Thailand-Myanmar Trans-Border Contexts

Convener(s)

Neeranooch Malangpoo
Department of Anthropology University of Wisconsin-Madison

Description

The papers in this panel focus on the construction and negotiation of boundaries as an integral part of Thai nationalism and its imaginations of others. The panel introduces three research studies on the relationships between Thai and Myanmar actors both within and beyond Thai national territory. Despite sharing the theme of migration and border crossing, these studies rely on various approaches and kinds of ethnographic data: 1) the transformation of immigrant landscapes and racialized boundaries between Thai locals and Burmese migrants, 2) language socialization and the valuation of migrant childhood in Thai state schools, and 3) the creation and the practice of religious tourism in Myanmar. By concentrating on transnational commodities, diasporic communities, and people on the move, these studies question how boundaries are made and confounded. Several questions are raised: How do we understand the making of physical and socio-cultural boundaries and their consequences in shaping different forms of citizenship and (trans)national spaces? How does the attempt to maintain and redraw such boundaries lead to paradoxical understandings of Thai and non-Thai identities? How might Thai nationalism(s) be challenged and negotiated by mobilities, movements across borders, and transnational economic forces? How might various ethnographic circumstances discussed in this panel suggest alternative discourses about the Thai-Myanmar relationship?

Panel members

1. Puttaporn Areeprachakun
2. Moodjalin Sudcharoen
3. Neeranooch Malangpoo

PANEL

Grant Evans and Tai Studies: Political Engagement and Intellectual Legacy [1 and 2]

Convener(s)

Olivier Evrard
Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD)

Paul T. Cohen
Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, Macquarie University

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Description

This panel is devoted to the Australian anthropologist Grant Evans, who passed away in Vientiane on 16 September 2014 and leaves a rich collection of books, articles and reviews. He devoted a large part of his work to Laos, making him one of the most influential scholars in the field of Lao Studies, but he also contributed to the knowledge of Asian societies at large, as well as to theoretical debates regarding the anthropology of State or of kinship for instance. Our panel intends to assess the lasting value of Grant's work for the knowledge of Tai societies in Southeast Asia and in South China. We welcome contributions on any aspects of Grant's work, including the following themes:

-The Tai State on a long-term perspective:

Grant Evans addressed a wide range of topics related to the historical and political anthropology of Tai societies, including their hypothetical early origins in Yunnan, the millenarianisms and rebellions in the Tai chiefdoms, the situation of Tai "peasantries" in socialist countries, the reinterpretation of Buddhism by the State or the lasting heritage of royalty. How does his work influence the contemporary approaches of Tai social history?

-Interethnic relationships in Tai societies:

Grant wrote several papers on the upland regions, notably on the "taization process" and on tourism; he also studied urban ethnic minorities in Tai cities. What does his work tell us about the attenuation and perpetuation of ethnic boundaries in rural and urban contexts in contemporary Tai societies?

-Borders studies and Tai transnational identities:

At various points during his career, including in his last academic article, Grant wrote about the historical influence of Chinese culture on Tai identity, as well as on the contemporary transformations occurring among the Tai populations settled in the Chinese southern borderlands. Nearly two decades after the publication of his book Where China meets Southeast Asia, what are the current researches on that topic and how did Grant 's work inspire them?

-Political involvement and the ethics of anthropology:

Successively a student activist, leftist writer, journalist, teacher and academic, Grant Evans was one of the first Western scholars to do fieldwork in Laos after the revolution. He was also one of the very few who dealt with political and development issues openly in that country, even under difficult personal circumstances. In recent years, he also made several contributions to political debates beyond Laos. What does his personal trajectory tell us about the role and the responsibility of academics, between civil society, media and the State?

Panel members [1]

1. Kathryn Sweet, and Peter Cox
2. Paul T. Cohen
3. Pinkaew Laungaramsri

Panel members [2]

1. Catherine Churchman
2. James Chamberlain
3. Olivier Evrard
4. Manynooch Faming

PANEL

Disturbing the Conventional Discourse: Critical Voices in Literature, Language Education, and Cultural Politics to the Nation-Centric Curriculum in Thailand

Convener(s)

Omsin Jatuporn
Naresuan University

Description

In post-colonial Thailand, the mainstream discourse, as established by government-supported intellectuals and propagated through texts such as literary works, state-based educational policy, and curricula, remains highly influential and is respected by many Thai people. However, this discourse has inevitably become hybridized in the neoliberal globalization era as recent decades have seen new meanings and anti-establishment discourse on Thailand being constructed by critical scholars. Therefore, this panel seeks to function as a democratic space for critical scholars in literary criticism, English education, and curriculum studies to disturb the powerful conventional discourse in Thailand. Our mutual commitment is that even though Thailand is currently under a military government, we will continue to explore and extend a socio-political space in which a variety of discourses must be tolerated. There are three dimensions to be explored further:

Dr. Hoy will discuss the setting and subversion in the Thai expat crime novel. Thailand has a large number of expats and tourists to form a base audience for these novels and they want to understand what happens in Thailand. It has a large and very visible prostitution industry, corruption is widespread in the police, military, bureaucracy and business, it is a culture in which transparency is minimal and officials save face through non-exposure, and it has a history of political instability and violence. All of these elements mean that interesting, indeed often bizarre, crimes and detection flourish in Thailand. This reality provides the base for expat writers to construct plausible fictional settings in which they can situate their crimes, criminals, and detectives. These settings and situations provide a basis for subversion.

Dr. Buripakdi will discuss the importance of language ideology and language policy in relation to the status of English in Thailand. It revisits the hegemonic role of the English language that increasingly affects learners, local people, and educators. It also addresses the concept of neo-liberalism that has played a pivotal role in commodifying Thai education, in making it a liberal market. In theory, it can't be denied that English has become a symbolic capital. In reality, there is a gap between language practice and policy. But learners can, and do, view English as the language of cultural struggle. English education in Thailand is still far from reaching the goals the government has set for it.

Mr. Jatuporn will discuss the educational reform context in Thailand after the junta came to power in May 2014. By analyzing the socio-cultural politics that are being contested in social studies education, social studies has become the centerpiece of public schools' efforts to cultivate younger generations into a particular idea of "Thainess". Thailand was never colonized by western nations but the colonial legacy still exists through the internal colonization. Based on the postcolonial pedagogy, it provides critical implication that if educationalists are to educate young Thais for global citizenship, the curriculum and pedagogy must go beyond the Siamese colonization of knowledge and provide pedagogical spaces for the experiences, knowledge, and perspectives of diverse people in Thailand.

Panel members

1. Thomas Hoy
2. Adcharawan Buripakdi
3. Omsin Jatuporn

PANEL

Art as Politics: Artistic Compliance, Negotiation, and Resistance Against State Power in Public Spaces

Convener(s)

Pasoot Lasuka
Chiang Mai University

Malinee Khumsupa
Faculty of Political Science and Public Administration

Description

The past decade has seen more dynamism in the public of political expressions and contestations in the form of artistic movements. Some of the key factors that have contributed to this phenomenon are the increasing intensity of polarized national politics that has plausibly drawn in more people from art sector to become more active on the national political scene. The growing level of legal enforcement by state authorities to suppress the state's rival political expression is also another factor that has contributed to the 'indirect' articulation of oppositional political voices in the public. This whole phenomenon of the Thai public sphere being reconfigured by artistic cultural forms calls for a serious and thorough examination and consideration in a theoretically succinct way on the relationships of art and popular cultural forms, politics, and the public sphere. This panel explores the political implication of contemporary artworks, created in various formats, styles, and places, upon a political vibe and changes in the country. It addresses the questions such as, to what extent the Thai public sphere is distinct from or shares any features with the traditional Habermasian concept of the public sphere when looking at it through the exhibitions of political artworks. How does an 'indirect' form of political articulation through these art pieces shape the public space and political landscape? There are five papers on this panel which study different types of artworks, yet all try to understand the politics of artworks and movements, in relation to public space and national politics. One paper looks at direct artistic responses to the 2014 coup d'état, the latest military rule which can be seen greatly concerned with the politically resisting power of people in the public. Another paper moves on to discuss the specific type of public artwork, sculpture, by looking at how it has historically developed and politically engaged with the Thai public. Another two papers study audio-visual art forms, such as cinema, and video installation from different perspectives. One looks at the so-called independent films and how the making of the films was influenced directly and indirectly by the state's censorship law. The other looks at a specific set of audio-visual artworks of Apichatpong Weerasethakul, and how his works represent political resistance from underground. The last paper returns to the idea of art exhibition and how the hegemonic ideology of national art has been maintained in the globalized context of Thailand.

Panel members

1. Pandit Chanrochanakit
2. Kamol Phaosavasdi
3. Sudarat Musikawong, and Malinee Khumsupa
4. Noah Viernes
5. Thanom Chapakdee

PANEL

On New Directions in the Study of Thailand: Materiality and the Political

Convener(s)

Pasoot Lasuka
Chiang Mai University

Preedee Hongsaton
Thammasat University

Description

What are the various relationships between technologies and the political? This panel addresses the roles that different technologies play in the different relationships of power in modern Thai society. The papers propose that materials are not simply employed as political tools, as has been previously proposed in the study of Thailand. Things also recruit non-materials into the political. We aim to show the agency of techniques in the making of political spaces, from early twentieth century Siam to studies of Thai popular culture. Situating our cases within this time span, we seek to show that there are continuities and ruptures over time, in regards to how techniques and the human intermingle in political spaces.

This panel consists of papers that vary in several aspects, while still having a common focus on the relationships of materiality and the Thai state. Starting in 1902, when the Shan Rebellion erupted in the North, the telegraph was quintessentially shown to be the absolute Monarchy's materiality. The telegraph was not only used to suppress the rebellion, it was also a major component contributing to the emergence of the modern Thai state. Advancements in technologies would soon become the compulsory character of the Thai state throughout the twentieth century, and they would define the political during important moments in Thai history.

Such a relationship between materiality and the political is evident in the literary expressions of the following decades. For example, the literary joy and aesthetic created through the act of traveling in travel literature owed a considerable amount to the social transformation that allows more Siamese to have access to, and to become familiar with, various means of modern transportation and their technologies. Moreover, the production of these literary values also worked to interrupt the power relations of the different social classes of the recently modernized Siam. A similar materiality of print material could still be seen in the 1970s. The reproduction and dissemination of photographs from events on the 14th of October 1973 and 6th of October 1976 formed political counter spaces. In this respect, materiality had a direct relationship with the political. Towards the end of the twentieth century, the materials, including the mass media and telecommunication, injected an unprecedented momentum to contestations in various Thai political arenas. How the power was contested could be seen in the complex operation of materiality and technology of papers, facsimiles, mobile phones, and the cable television broadcast, used by the protesters of the 1992 Black May uprising to contest the power of the government. These appearances showed the contradictory character of the Thai state, moving reluctantly into modernity.

Panel members

1. Pasoot Lasuka

2. Preedee Hongsaton
3. Karin H. Zackari
4. Chanokporn Chutikamoltham

PANEL

Transnational Intimate Relation, Migration and Rural Transformation (1 and 2)

Convener(s)

Patcharin Lapanun
Center for Research on Plurality in the Mekong Region (CERP) Khon Kaen University

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Description

Thai-Farang marriages and intimacies have become increasingly common in Thai society these days. These transnational relationships often associated with migration. The common pattern of such migration presents what Nicloe Constable calls 'global hypergamy' -- women 'marry up' and move to a higher socio-economic location in the global hierarchy. Yet the reality in Thailand and elsewhere is a reverse pattern of marriage migration, where farang men move and settled in Thailand with their wives/partners. In this context, these men have to adjust and negotiate the roles and expectations not only as husbands but also as sons-in-law. Two papers in this panel explore experiences of these men; one focusses on farang men in Isan, while the other looks at German migrants in Pattaya - a tourist contact zone. These papers reveal how the Western men and their Thai wives had to manage and negotiate both their financial commitments and social relations. Their relationships present both interdependence and tension. Another paper discusses specifically on the interdependence between Thai women and their German husbands upon settling in Germany, and explores how this contributes to a constant relationship between spouses. This is despite their unusual paths to marriage, and relatively short periods of acquaintance prior to marriage.

The reverse migration mobility highlights cross-cultural relations and interactions in communities where farang men resettled with their Thai partners. In the meantime, it evokes questions about social transformation at the 'local end' of transnational connections, as a part and process of global migration dynamics. Papers in this panel also examine the consequences of transnational marriages on rural transformation in Isan society. One paper considers the effects of an influx of farang men on the traditional smallholder economy of the Isan region, and the ways in which their presence transforms the economy and supports its persistence. Another paper explores how women's choice for a marital relationship outside marrying locally is perceived by local men. It looks at how the reaction has generated 'masculine anxiety,' altered masculine ideals and influenced gender relations in Isan communities.

Panel members [1]

1. Kanokwan Somsirivarangkool
2. Megan Lafferty
3. Kwanchanok Jaisuekun, and Sirijit Sunanta
4. Pataya Ruenkaew

Panel members [2]

1. Eric C. Thompson
2. Patcharin Lapanun

3. Buapun Promphakping

PANEL

Continuing Conflict in Thailand's Deep South Borderlands Since the Coup: Dimensions, Trends and Challenges (1 and 2)

Convener(s)

Paul Chambers
College of ASEAN Community Studies, Naresuan University

Description

Since at least 1902, tensions sometimes leading to violence have existed between the Thai state and the Deep South borderlands of what are today the provinces of Pattani, Narathiwat, Yala and parts of Songkhla. On one side, Bangkok-centered security officials have sought to ensure Thailand's continuing control over the region. On the other side, insurgent groups have fought for secession. In 2004, these festering frictions exploded into an exacerbated and more permanent insurgency. Repressive state policies, including two massacres by state officials, merely fanned the flames of the insurrection. By 2013 the elected government of Yingluck Shinawatra had commenced negotiations with one of the rebel groups. Thailand's 2014 military putsch temporarily brought these talks to an end though they began again in 2015 between the junta and MARA Patani, an umbrella group of insurgent organizations. Actors on both sides made slight alterations to their positions, negotiations initially appeared to be fruitful, and there was hope that these talks would move the Deep South region toward some form of conciliation. However, in 2016-2017, violence grew while the talks between the Thai state and MARA Patani began to peter out. Nevertheless, on a civil society level, meetings among different groups in society have commenced and various organizations have sought to encourage moves towards a cessation of hostilities. This panel, which is divided into two parts, examines the state of conflict in the Deep South in 2017, focusing principally upon state and society, within the context of inter-ethnic and inter-religious relations, Malay Muslim society in the region and other issues. Part One features five presentations which examine trends and challenges in regard to different dimensions of the conflict. The first presentation, by Paul Chambers and Napisa Waitoolkiat, scrutinizes the role of security forces in the Deep South. A second presentation, by Norbert Ropers, looks at burgeoning efforts by civil society actors to diminish hostilities in the Deep South region. A third presentation, by Matthew Wheeler examines the state of the peace dialogue in the region. The third presentation, by Daungyewa Utarasint, examines the rise and fall of the Malay-Muslim political faction "Wadah." The final presentation, by Surawut Chomaitong and Thanyatorn Saipanya, specifically looks at the role of female soldiers in the Deep South. The presentations altogether attempt to shed light on the current situation and future of Deep South actors within the context of their relations with the Thai state. What are the obstacles to attaining the cessation of hostilities? How might a future compromise come about? How has the long conflict led perhaps to a moderating of local Buddhist or Muslim perceptions? This panel examines these and other related questions.

Panel members [1]

1. Shintaro Hara
2. Paul Chambers, and Napisa Waitoolkiat
3. Matt Wheeler
4. Surawut Chomaitong, and Thanyatorn Saipanya

5. Daungyewa Utarasint

Panel members [2]

1. Srisompob Jitpiromsri
2. Anders Engvall
3. Mahbubul Haque
4. Suwara Kaewnuy, and Srisompob Jitpiromsri

PANEL

Appraising Paradigms and Issue in Thai Studies

Convener(s)

Pawaluk Suraswadi
Faculty of Liberal Arts, Mahidol University

Description

This panel will weave together three themes in Thai studies: Perception, Identity and history. All four papers examine various aspects of these three themes in the development of perception in intellectual debate, and social ideology. Orada Lelanuja's paper concentrates on analyses of three play scripts written by three young playwrights which explore their notions of self and self-expression, alienation, and loneliness as seen in the scripts and other production elements. Pawaluck Suraswadi's paper centers on Pang Daeng community people, one of the ethnic groups of people migrated from Myanmar who live in Chieng Dao district, Chieng Mai province. They have struggled through political and economical changes around them. Pawaluck studies how Makhampom Theatre troop has used applied theatre as a cultural process with the identity of Pang Daeng youth for almost ten years in order to make changes in both personal and community levels as based on the creation of social space notion. Yingyot Kanchina and Jayson D. Petras 's paper looks at the Thai writers' view on the Filipinos as an initial attempt to determine possible impact of the regional integration to the field of Filipino Psychology. Using 10 juvenile books written by Thai authors about the Philippines-ASEAN. Jirathorn Chartsiri's paper concentrates on the perception of Thai history through monuments and shrines of famous Thai kings. The Monuments and Shrines of Famous kings became popular tourist attractions that helped local economy. Government agencies such as Tourism Authority of Thailand and Cultural office of each province also supported the idea of festival or activities but Thai historians are hardly involve in the process and the public history and academic history are rarely the same.

Panel members

1. Yingyot Kanchina, and Jayson D. Petras
2. Pawaluk Suraswadi
3. Jirathorn Chartsiri

PANEL

Spirits, Deities, Divas, and Divination: Emergence or Resurgence of Ritual? [1 and 2]

Convener(s)

Peter Jackson
Australian National University

Description

Research on rituals and practices on the margins of official Buddhism in Thailand has expanded considerably in recent years. The growing prominence of spirit mediumship, divination, the cult of amulets and other forms of ritual raise many analytical issues that can benefit from comparative and cross-disciplinary perspectives. In the past, inquiry on these topics has at times been limited by a focus on institutional Buddhist practice and doctrine and a tendency to overlook the invocation of spirits and other ostensibly "unorthodox" forms of ritual. These two panels will bring together scholars from anthropology, cultural studies and cultural history to explore the question of whether the forms of ritual we are observing are genuinely novel and emergent or rather, by contrast, represent a resurgence of older forms of religious practice.

Panel members [1]

1. Jovan Maud
2. Megan Sinnott
3. Poonnatree Jiaviriyaboonya

Panel members [2]

1. Edoardo Siani
2. Dredge Byung'chu Käng

Peter Jackson
3.

PANEL

Land Tenure and Resource Rights Among Marginalized Communities

Convener(s)

Peter Vail
National University of Singapore

Description

This panel examines issues of land tenure and resource rights among marginalized communities across different regions of Thailand. In particular, we are interested in examining the intersection between ethnicity, class, and material disempowerment, whether deriving from economic conflict among competing private interests or with the state and its laws and policies directly. The case studies presented here address not only the ideological dimensions of conflict in terms of justice, equity, and human rights, but the practical dimensions concerning the implementation of policy and the various abuses engendered in the process. We further consider historical roots of ongoing conflicts, and how such conflicts reverberate in other aspects of social life, including family structure, enfranchisement, and social welfare. We pay particular attention to the role of violence, both structural and physical, that marginalized communities face, and examine various attempts at conflict resolution and the manner in which— and the extent to which— such attempts are effective.

Panel members

1. Nathan Porath
2. Malee Sitthikriengkrai
3. Peter Vail
4. Sommai Chinnak, and Kanjana Chinnak
5. Chainarong Srettachau

PANEL

Cultural Revival in Thailand

Convener(s)

Peter Vail
National University of Singapore

Description

Over the last few decades, a growing current of multiculturalism has challenged and expanded Thailand's national culture and its narrow focus on 'Thainess'. Such multiculturalism has typically taken the form of cultural revival among ethnic minority groups. This panel examines, in a comparative perspective, several case studies of such cultural revival efforts in different regions of Thailand. By contrasting diverse approaches, we can see the contours of the civic 'space' afforded to cultural revival projects through official channels within the broader Thai polity, both in terms of ideology and actual practice. We can also discern regional differences in how such space is designated and conceived and recognize the obstacles revival efforts commonly face. While formally assessing success in cultural revival projects can be elusive, the panel reflects on each case study's particular successes, partial or otherwise, to evince those approaches and strategies that may serve as models for future endeavors elsewhere.

Panel members

1. Pichet Saiphan
2. Nobuko Koya
3. Saran Samantarat
4. Narumon Arunotai

PANEL

Transformations in Environmental Governance: A Political Ecology of Market Mechanisms, New Actors, and Uneasy Alliances (1 and 2)

Convener(s)

Peter Vandergeest
Department of Geography, York University

Vanessa Lamb
School of Geography, University of Melbourne

Description

In the past decade environmental governance in Thailand has become more complex, as diverse private actors and market mechanisms have supplemented or displaced the traditional top down state management regimes. These new mechanisms are generating both new kinds of alliances, and new conflicts, involving NGOs, corporations, workers, community/neighborhood organizations, government agencies and others. At the same time, these new processes are interacting with the new authoritarianism in Thailand in sometimes unexpected ways. This panel will explore the implications of these new actors, mechanisms, and environmental politics for the wellbeing of workers, farmers, and low income groups, with specific attention on the governance of forests, plantations, fisheries, and aquaculture. Papers drawing on other sectors such as rivers, mining and energy will also be welcome. We aim to move away from assumptions that fetishize market mechanisms as inevitably producing marginalization and inequality. The papers are instead based on careful field research that investigates new exclusions or displacements associated with these new governance processes, as well as the potential benefits, the re-distribution of incomes and livelihoods, and the new politics, including alliances bringing together corporations with NGOs and community organizations. Some specific themes will include the formation of new urban-rural linkages through markets for sustainable commodities, payments for eco-system services, REDD+ projects, and the effects of buyer action on improving the situation of workers in the fishing industry.

Panel members [1]

1. Peter Vandergeest, and Melissa Marschke
2. Rapipun Maoyot, and Chusak Wittayapak
3. Chattraporn Bua-In, and Chusak Wittayapak
4. Megan Youdelis

Panel members [2]

1. C. Khongkaew, Jawinit Kittitornkool, and K. Kittiwattanawong
2. Jawinit Kittitornkool,, Pakamart Thongkam, and Sara Bumrungsrit
3. Jawanit Kittitornkool, Wichitta Uttamamunee, and Jarunee Chiayvareesajja

PANEL

Land Relations and Governance in Globalized Thailand

Convener(s)

Philip Hirsch
University of Sydney

Chusak Wittayapak
Chiang Mai University

Description

This panel aims to review and evaluate the relations of people and land in the changing social, economic, political and regional circumstances of Thailand over the past 50 years. It proposes to situate land issues in the larger context of Thai political economy and Thailand's regional position. A generation or two ago, land issues mainly resonated in farmer movements, ranging from landlessness, land rent, land tenure to land reform. Despite a reduced research attention to land with the declining interest in agrarian questions, land issues have continued to be an integral part of politics and development of Thailand as the country has industrialized, urbanized, globalized and regionalized. The role of the state in furthering capitalist development has dominated land policy and governance. The neoliberal push and globalized markets have shaped land issues into ever more complex configurations within and beyond the country's borders, with constant challenges from civil society and local community voices arguing the meanings of land beyond the means of economic production. This panel seeks to broaden debates on land issues as embedded in a variety of problems, including urban public space and its governance, various dimensions of social conflict, discourses of global climate change and non-traditional security domains such as food, livelihood and environment.

Possible themes in the panel include:

- Current agendas in land governance: land bank, progressive land tax, communal land title
- Land implications of regional and national economic development through Special Economic Zones
- Issues of social inequality and its links with land
- Land implications of military rule and autocratic governance
- Green agendas in land relations
- Boom crops and land
- Spaces and flows in land governance
- Exclusionary powers and processes in land governance in Thailand
- Urban and peri-urban land conflict and governance

Panel members

1. Kanokwan Manorom
2. Pornpana Kuaycharoen, Phurinat Chotiwan, and Tiwat Dumkaew
3. Robert Fisher

4. Philip Hirsch
5. Chusak Wittayapak

PANEL

Shifting Ethnoscapes and the Politics of Indigeneity in Contemporary Thailand

Convener(s)

Prasit Leepreecha
Chiang Mai University

Description

In recent decades the concept of indigeneity has moved beyond the Americas, Australia and New Zealand to Asia and Africa. As a result, indigenism has become a new global phenomenon with both promises and perils for communities working to empower themselves and overcome various forms of oppression. As different groups in Asia and Africa have organized social movements under the banner of indigeneity, they have cultivated particular meanings and practices of indigenism that have been empowering and constraining as well as inclusive and exclusive. In this panel we examine the politics of indigeneity in Thailand where a sub-national Indigenous peoples' (IP) movement first began in 2007 when certain leaders of the former "hill tribe" groups in the north officially established the "Network of Indigenous Peoples in Thailand" (NIPT). Since that time different lowland groups from within and beyond the north have joined the movement, making it a national movement that has increasingly caught the attention of the Thai state. Nevertheless, the state's official stance towards the movement is that there are no IPs in Thailand. In fact, the state has long viewed the so-called "hill tribes" as recent, and, in some cases, illegal migrants. This view persists in spite of the fact that many of the "hill tribes" in the north were present in the region prior to the modern Thai state's direct incorporation of the area into the Thai geo-body.

In spite of their non-recognition the leaders of the expanding IP movement have worked to re-define themselves as IPs rather than either "hill tribes" or "ethnic groups." The IP movement in Thailand has further sought to address a number of issues of everyday concern to IPs locally and nationally. These issues include their basic rights to land tenure and legal citizenship, as well as the right to practice their distinct cultural identities and languages. The IP movement in Thailand has thus taken the form of an ideological and practical struggle for state recognition and basic rights. The papers in this panel explore each of the following issues: the nature and impact of state discourses, policies and practices towards "ethnic groups"; the historical development and ongoing expansion of the IP movement; the dynamic nature of state and IP movement alliances and power relations; and local (mis)understandings of the concept of IPs and the larger IP movement.

Panel members

1. Prasit Leepreecha
2. Micah Morton
3. Ian Baird, Prasit Leepreecha, and Urai Urai Yangcheepsutjarit
4. Narumon Arunothai

PANEL

Attending to Neglected Disease: Probing the Prevalence of Bile Duct Cancer in North East Thailand Across Disciplines

Convener(s)

Rachel Harrison
School of Oriental & African Studies

Description

The North East region of Thailand is home to the highest rates of bile duct cancer (cholangiocarcinoma or CCA) in the world. While CCA is normally a rare disease, Isan reports a record number of over 20,000 cases a year. Asymptomatic until the later stages of the disease, only c.700 of these cases are operable and five-year survival rates among those treated are low. In the remaining cases, the only option is palliative care. The majority of scientists agree that one key cause of high rates of CCA in Isan is the consumption of the raw, partially cooked and fermented cyprinid fish dishes that harbor liver fluke (Opistorchis viverrini, OV), a known class 1 carcinogen. From a medical perspective, CCA in Isan is therefore one of the few cancers in the world that is potentially preventable, through the aim of achieving a fluke free environment. From a socio-cultural perspective, however, the dietary practices which scientists deem dangerous to public health are deeply culturally embedded and linked to important local forms of self-expression and complex relationships to forms of power and modernity. Public health campaigns in operation since the 1950s have therefore had limited success in effecting behavior change and, crucially, in combatting the prevalence of OV infection and CCA. To more fully comprehend, and hence be in a position to respond thoughtfully and effectively to, the culturally embedded behavior and practices at play in persistent OV infection and subsequent CCA, this panel forges what we see as a necessary transdisciplinary approach. By addressing the very specific medical problem of CCA in Isan from a wide variety of differing yet interrelated perspectives, we seek out the connections that pertain across disciplines in the need to comprehend disease and dis-ease that evidently relates to cultural specificity.

Panel members

1. Edoardo Siani
2. Saowanee Alexander
3. Rachel Harrison, and Leon Redler
4. Atit Pongphanit
5. Pierre Echaubard, and John F. Smith

PANEL

Conflict Transformation Across Socio-Political Divides

Convener(s)

Ratawit Ouaprachanon
Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, Mahidol University

Eakpant Pindavanij
Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies (IHRP), Mahidol University

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Description

Thailand has been entrapped in the deeply protracted social conflicts and social divides for more than a decade, both political conflict at the national level and conflict in the Deep South Thailand. Nationwide political conflict and violence due to series of political protests have not only resulted in different episodes of loss of lives, injuries, damages and prosecutions, but it has also led to the situation where the conflict parties use hate speeches to create mistrust and polarization in the society. Also, the conflict in the Southern Border Provinces has prolonged since 2004 resulting in more than 15,000 violent incidents with more than 6,600 deaths and 18,500 injured people (Srisompob Jitpiromsri, 2016) in which both Buddhists and Muslims have been targeted. Such situations in both cases have generated deep distrust among people from conflicting parties and between people and the state.

Over the decade of series of violence and conflict, there have been several efforts for peace settlement and reconciliation by the state mechanisms in both cases such as the establishment of National Reconciliation Commission in 2015 as well as ongoing peace talk with BRN and MARA Patani on the conflict in Deep South; the establishment of Truth for Reconciliation Commission of Thailand (2010 – 2012) addressing issues on political violence in 2010; and the establishment of National Reform Council's Committee to Study Approaches on Reconciliation in 2015 to study the approaches for reconciliation on the political conflict since 2006. However, the effectiveness and results toward wider reconciliation and conflict transformation in the society proved to be limited especially the healing scheme which focuses only on financial reparation but fails to address deeper concerns of different conflict parties due to lack of political will.

This panel is organized in order to create a platform for public discussion on how we can constructively transform the conflicts across the social and political divides in Thailand. The concept of conflict transformation and peacebuilding suggests us to address the conflict along the timespan. In other words, we need to heal the 'past', address the issues in the 'present', and envision for the constructive and common 'future' in dealing with the conflicts in the society. Therefore, this panel will focus on three themes on conflict transformation across social divides, namely 1) Grand Social Platform, 2) Social Healing and 3) Transitional Justice. Meanwhile the concept of Grand Social Platform is addressing issues at present time and envisioning the future, Social Healing and Transitional Justice is the concept to deal with the present and the living past. The panel will begin with presenting the findings from ongoing research on three above topics under the Research Program on Study of Transformative Change across Socio-Political Divide by researchers from the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, Mahidol University. We also accept papers from 2 scholars or students who are interested in these themes too.

Panel members

1. Eakpant Pindavanija, and Bordin Saisaeng
2. Eakpant Pindavanija, and Ratawit Ouaprachanon
3. Ngamsuk Ruttanasatian

PANEL

Tai Houses: Social and Symbolic Structures [1, 2 and 3]

Convener(s)

Rawiwan Oranratmanee
Faculty of Architecture Chiang Mai University

Description

Houses of the Tai ethnic groups (or "hern", "huen" or "ruen" in Tai language) share common characteristics with houses in peasant society that are long rooted in Asia and Southeast Asia. The materiality of Tai houses embeds not only the physicality of houses in the tropical region but also the social and symbolic values of the Tai ethnic groups. While climatic and geographic conditions determine the common form of houses built on stilts, the economic way of life, social structure, cosmologies and belief systems govern the forms, orientation and spatial relation both inside and outside the house.

Discussions of Tai house can embrace not only the domestic structure of houses but also the whole range of Tai cultural landscape. The Tais are typically lowland dwellers living their life as wet-rice cultivators in the fertile river valleys. Customarily they live in a village system called baan, maan or waan which is socially and culturally bound by a social relation and kinship system as well as spiritual and Buddhist beliefs. Several villages with a common governing system form a township called mueng or meng, and several townships form a state and a nation. The geographic, social, cultural and political relationships of house, village, town, state and nation marks the territorial existence and the cultural boundary of Tai ethnic groups.

This panel "Tai houses: Social and symbolic structures" will examine the complex interrelationships between the physical, social, cultural and symbolic dimensions embedded in Tai domestic settings. Tentative papers comprise - but are not limited to - the following issues:

- Domestication and ideology in Kon Muang houses
- Concepts, form and space of Tai Lue houses
- Ancestral beliefs and the spatial relations of Tai Dam houses in Vietnam
- The dynamic of Shan vernacular houses in Assam, India
- Cultural assimilation and its impact on Tai houses in Shan and bordering regions
- Cultural linkage between houses of Lao Wiang and those in Central Thailand
- Gender beliefs and spatial organization in Tai Puan houses in Laos PDR

Panel members [1]

1. Andrew Turton
2. Rawiwan Oranratmanee, and Chaowalid Saicharoent
3. Kreangkrai Kirdsiri, Thanick Muenkhamwang, and Chanthanom Soukhaseum

Panel members [2]

1. Hara Yusuke, Shimizu Ikuro, Tanskanun Pranom, and Sooksawasdi Surasawasdi
2. Ornsiri Panin
3. Chantanee Chiranthanut

Panel members [3]

1. Wandee Pinijvarasin, and Ornsiri Panin
2. Chotima Chaturawong

PANEL

Exploring Urban Futures in Thailand: Coming to Terms with Urbanization

Convener(s)

Richard Friend
Environment Department, University of York

Pakamas Thinphanga
Thailand Environment Institute

Description

Urbanization has received relatively little attention in the field of Thai studies. Much effort has instead been directed towards rural society, and despite it being over 25 years since Thailand achieved the status of Newly Industrialized Country (NIC), there has been a persistent narrative of Thailand as a predominantly agricultural society. The rate and extent of urbanization has often been underestimated, with the implications of urbanization and an increasingly urban future poorly understood.

There are conceptual challenges to understanding urbanization in Thailand, compounded by constraints of terminology and lack of data. Yet across urbanizing Thailand similar challenges are emerging – failures of land use planning, resource management and accountability, environmental pollution and poor quality of life, inequality, and limited engagement of urban citizens in shaping urban futures. Effectively addressing these challenges has become ever more urgent, but it will be hard to accomplish without acknowledging and understanding the broader processes of urbanization that fuel them.

Drawing on field experience in Bangkok and in secondary cities across the country, this session brings together different perspectives grounded in political economy and Social Ecological Systems to consider the driving forces, trends, trajectories and implications of urbanization in Thailand. We consider urbanization as fundamentally a challenge of governance, as a process that transforms social and ecological relations of and between the rural and the urban. The session takes a regional perspective to examine the influence of trade and investment in driving patterns of urbanization. Additionally, the session considers the linkages between urbanization and global environmental changes, creating new patterns of vulnerability and risk, poverty and wellbeing. A constant theme throughout the panel is issues of power, grounded in specific local studies that explore how different actors maneuver through and shape the urbanizing landscape.

In bringing together these different perspectives the panel aims to contribute to an understanding of a fundamental change unfolding in Thai society, and to open up critical debate of how urban futures might be shaped. In doing so, the panel aims to contribute to Thai studies, but also to the need for theory of urbanization that is grounded in the experience of Asia, and the global South.

Panel members

1. Pakamas Thinphanga
2. Bart Lambregts
3. Khanin Hutanuwatr, Wanpen Charoentrakulpeeti, and Surichai Wungaeo
4. Richard Friend

5. Thongchai Roachanakanan

PANEL

Political Mobilization, Cleavages, and the Prospects of Social Democracy in Thailand

Convener(s)

Robert Dayley
The College of Idaho

Description

This panel explores where social, ethnic, regional, class, and political identities in Thailand overlap and diverge. Particular focus is given to the consequences of such identities on socio-political mobilization, political cleavage, national identity projects, education, and overall political development. Recognizing Thailand's repeated failures in consolidating democracy and its unending constitutional reconfigurations, the panel explores the possibility of social democracy as a system to reconcile existing cleavages and to balance conflicting ideals within Thai society about "democracy." Might social democracy offer new hope to those in Thai society with democratic aspirations? How might Thailand's existing identities and cleavages be channeled through social democracy as opposed to liberal democracy? Are Thailand's class, regional, and ethnic identities too rigid for broad socio-political compromise? Or, are they too weak to mobilize in favor of social democracy? To what extent do the nationalization projects by officials and elites seeking to shape a common Thai identity inhibit political mobilization and the organic development of social democracy? What does the history of social democratic movements in other countries suggest about Thailand's prospects for social democracy?

Panel members

1. John Draper, and Joel Selway
2. Jacob Ricks
3. Robert Dayley

PANEL

Reclaiming Identity Through Local Memory

Convener(s)

Rungsima Kullapat
Carolina Asia Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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Description

Oral sources at the local level recreate a living Southeast Asia. Folklore, oral traditions, oral histories, and local legends are contemporary, living parts of this ancient region. Local people's memories identify their histories, stories, land, places, traditions, and beliefs. As the oldest communication of humanity, oral sources are passed on in human memory from generation to generation, with each person possessing specific techniques for memorization. However, local memory has been neglected by some scholarly fields. The challenge of using memory as evidence to reclaim a people's identity or heritage is proven by decoding the meanings hidden in these words. While some scholarly fields require factualness, memory consists of truthfulness as well. Local people continue telling their stories from their heritage. They tell about the place, names, routes, artifacts, and architecture of which their identity consists.

Panel members

1. Marie Nakamura
2. Rungsima Kullapat
3. Benjawan Narasaj

PANEL

Thai Architecture and the Modern Movement

Convener(s)

Sant Suwatcharapinun
Faculty of Architecture, Chiang Mai University

Description

Modern architecture that originated in the Western world during the 1960s and evolved into an international style can be considered as the starting point for the growth, and expansion of modern architecture into Thailand. The period from 1958-1985 A.D. was when the architectural works in Thailand truly exhibited characteristics of modern architecture, while completely abandoning the influence of classical architecture from the Western world that had played an important role in the period between 1932-1957 A.D. However, following the change in regime in the year 1932, there was a decrease in the number of foreign architects, followed by a governmental and private funding movement in support for Thai students to enroll in vocational programs of architecture abroad (in countries such as in France, the United Kingdom and in the United States). In 1933, vocational architecture programs have been initiated in Thailand at Chulalongkorn University. Since then a new architectural design concept has been adopted in Thailand, featuring the construction of buildings in modern styles (to sustain increasing demand for public utility), most of which are public buildings owned by both government and private sectors; for instance, Sala Chalermkrung Royal Theatre, Parliament Building, academic buildings, office buildings, and so on.

During that period, the utilization of steel reinforced concrete as a construction material, in place of wooden materials, has influenced Thai architecture, as witnessed in the distinction between modern architectural forms and those from the past. The architectural features exhibited during that period have harmoniously integrated the Thai roof forms, considered as a unique national identity, into the building structure. The design of shading panels as supplements to the building structures, purposed to suit Thailand's hot climate, were first observed in buildings that were constructed during the period 1940-1973 A.D. These features continue to served their purposes until the present-day.

In recent decades, the architectural heritage of the modern movement appeared more at risk than during any other period. However, Thailand has officially become a member of the International Organization for Conservation of Modern Architecture, also known as DOCOMOMO INTERNATIONAL, since September 2014, with the support of the Association of Siamese Architects under Royal Patronage (ASA), established in 1934. The new chapter, DOCOMOMO Thailand, will play an official role in conjunction with the Organization for Conservation of Modern Architecture's achievements. There are currently members from more than 70 participating countries worldwide. DOCOMOMO Thailand's establishment shall be the first step towards the conservation of modern Thai architecture, in conjunction with the idea of conservation of modern international architecture that will lead and promote the value of modern Thai architecture at a global level. We shall keep a close watch to monitor the demolishing of modern Thai architectural achievements (1932-1985), which is considered as prominent transitional elements for Thai civilization.

Panel members

1. Pirasri Povatong
2. Pinai Sirikiatikul
3. Winyu Ardrugsa
4. Sant Suwatcharapinun

PANEL

Religious Experience and Religious Connectivity

Convener(s)

Shigeharu Tanabe
Center for Ethnic Studies and Development

Apinya Fuengfusakul
Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University

Description

This panel discusses the way people make sense of their own religious experiences and connect multiple individuals, groups, materials, technology, and institutions. Various kinds of religious experiences, the ordinary and the ineffable, or the conceptual and the affective will be taken into account. The ways the actor understands and interprets them will be explored. Emphasis is given to how religious experiences are expressed and conveyed to others. Different modes and channels of communication will be scrutinized. Also important is how religious communication enhances connectivity among members of religious groups.

Through this connection, therefore, connectivity and networks involved in religious practices and experiences are investigated. The panel will focus the ways in which religious connectivity and networks increasingly involve not only individuals and groups of people, but more significantly, media, material objects, tools, technology and other non-human elements. Special attention will also be paid to the multiplicity and hybridity associated with ethnicity, nationality, and class composition. Throughout this panel comparisons will, thus, be made between different religions and belief systems, e.g. Christianity, Buddhism, Islamism, Confucianism, and ethnic spiritualism.

Panel members

1. Xiaoxiao Ma
2. Asree Mahama
3. Ryoko Nishii
4. Apinya Feungfusakul
5. Tanabe Shigeharu

PANEL

Dynamism of Folklore: A Comparative Study between Countries

Convener(s)

Siraporn Nathalang
Chulalongkorn University

Description

Folklore, whether it is folk narrative, belief, ritual, performance, textile, crafts or food, exists as a part of culture, and has been changing alongside the context of a changing Thai society. Today, Thailand is in an age of globalization, creative economy, tourism, information technology, social media and transnationalism.

Given this context, this panel aims at exploring the various aspects of the dynamism and the application of traditional Thai folklore in contemporary Thai society. It is found that traditional Thai folklore has been applied, re-interpreted and reproduced to serve new social contexts. For example, local legends are re-interpreted for touristic purposes, or certain traditions are adapted or invented and presented in a new context.

The concepts related to the analysis presented by this panel include: cultural reproduction, transmission of folklore, authenticity, representation, invented tradition, applied folklore, creative folklore, etc.

It is an intention of this panel to contribute to a deeper understanding of changing Thai society, and therefore add to the body of knowledge on Thai studies from the angle of folklore studies.

Panel members

1. Iyared Boonyarit
2. Surachai Chinabutra
3. Preeyarat Chaowalitprapan

PANEL

Dynamism of Folklore in the Northern and Northeastern Thailand

Convener(s)

Siraporn Nathalang
Chulalongkorn University

Description

Folklore, whether it is folk narrative, belief, ritual, performance, textile, crafts or food, exists as a part of culture, and has been changing alongside the context of a changing Thai society. Today, Thailand is in an age of globalization, creative economy, tourism, information technology, social media and transnationalism.

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It is an intention of this panel to contribute to a deeper understanding of changing Thai society, and therefore add to the body of knowledge on Thai studies from the angle of folklore studies.

Panel members

1. Warisara Anantato
2. Sarapee Khowdee
3. Pannawadee Srikhao, Pokkasina Chathiphot, and Nilobol Phuraya

PANEL

Dynamism of Folklore in Urban Culture and New Media

Convener(s)

Siraporn Nathalang
Chulalongkorn University

Description

Folklore, whether it is folk narrative, belief, ritual, performance, textile, crafts or food, exists as a part of culture, and has been changing alongside the context of a changing Thai society. Today, Thailand is in an age of globalization, creative economy, tourism, information technology, social media and transnationalism.

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It is an intention of this panel to contribute to a deeper understanding of changing Thai society, and therefore add to the body of knowledge on Thai studies from the angle of folklore studies.

Panel members

1. Prasirt Runra
2. Apiwat Suthamdee
3. Saipan Puriwanchana

PANEL

A Landscape of Thailand's Demographic Change and Its Probable Repercussions

Convener(s)

Suchada Thaweesit
Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University

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Description

Driven by family planning policies and programs since 1970, Thai society has already entered the stage of rapid demographic changes. In the present day, the total fertility rate of Thai women has decreased to 1.6, which is well below the replacement rate of 2.1. The number of population increased at around 0.4 million per year, indicating a slow growth rate. It is important to note that a slow pace of population growth appears jointly with an escalation of longevity. These demographic phenomena give rise to a swelling in the number of ageing population and a shrinkage in the number of children and those in the labor force. The percentage of aging people climbed up rapidly and the percentage of young people and children increased slowly or remained stable. It is hypothesized that an imminent demographic change will reshape and rework the socio-cultural, economic and political landscapes of Thai society in myriad ways. This panel weaves together the presentation of demographic figures in transition and the demographic outlook, to engage with Thai studies. We hope to demonstrate that demographic changes is one among various important challenges that Thai society is experiencing and approaching today.

Four papers of the panel will explore socio-cultural, economic, and political challenges associated with demographic change. Pramote Prasartkul's paper provides an overview of Thailand's current demographic figures and trends. The paper touches on critical areas that demographic changes will affect in Thai society. Dr. Rossarin Gray's paper concentrates on the challenges of care for the elderly in an ageing society. Her research findings show that although filial piety is one of the core values in Thai society, caregiving for the elderly in the family may turn out to be a stressful and burdened situation for care providers. She thus discusses the effects of positive and negative aspects of caregiving on subjective well-being (SWB) of family caregivers and ways in which the caregivers manage their stress. Dr. Bhubate Samuthachak's paper centers on an issue about how an increasing trend of mother's economic participation located outside the domestic sphere as a result of the reduction in the labor force, as well as how the restructuring of the family affects the well-being of family members, especially children. Dr. Chalermpol Chamchan's paper deals with an issue relating to the social integration of cross-border migrants from neighboring countries, especially children. He focuses on migrant children who were born in Thailand and their access to birth registration, education and health care services. Due to the decline in the magnitude of the country's own labor force, it is no longer possible for Thailand to take cross-border migrants' economic contributions for granted. The presenter argues that only by using integration policies can Thailand benefit more from cross-border migration.

Panel members

1. Chalermpol Chamchan, Kanya Apipornchaisakul, and Kanchana Hianlai
2. Bhubate Samutachak

3. Pramote Prasartkul, Suthida Chunwan, and Suchada Thaweesit

PANEL

Thailand and Its Connectivity to India [1 and 2]

Convener(s)

Surat Horachaikul
Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University

Piyaboot Sumettikoon
Chiang Mai University

Description

The ties between India and Thailand (Siam) or perhaps between India and Southeast Asia can be traced back to the old days. Maritime Southeast Asia, Srivijaya on Sumatra, between the seventh and thirteenth centuries, was a center for Buddhist studies and of Sanskrit learning. Moreover, the renowned maritime Southeast Asian dynasty of Sailendra, which became the dominant maritime and land power in Malaysia by the eighth century, is believed to have originated in the Indian state of Orissa. The last Hindu kingdom in the Southeast Asia region was Majapahit, which flourished between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries in Java. From the fifteenth century onwards, with the rise of the kingdom of Malacca, Islam spread throughout the region. For their part, Indian traders from Gujarat, Malabar, Tamil Nadu, and Bengal helped the spread of Islam in Southeast Asia.

In particular, the expansion of Hinduism which was followed by the spread of Buddhism to the east made the religious and cultural messages travel directly from India as well as through China. This led to the emergence of a cultural synthesis of these beliefs, the imprint of which is evident today in Southeast Asia.

Unfortunately, during the British Raj, ties between India and Southeast Asia was disrupted. Yet, there were many Indians who migrated to Southeast Asia, forming the large Indian diaspora communities in Southeast Asia. Before India gained independence in 1947, Indian leaders were fully aware of the disrupted bond between India and Southeast Asia. Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore was very keen to discuss about Asian unity as reflected in many of his speeches in Southeast Asia. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in the beginning of his premiership had made many good attempts to revive the ties between India and Southeast Asia. However, the relations were still largely constrained by Cold War politics.

In the aftermath of the Cold War, India came up with Look East Policy paying importance to ASEAN's member states. This policy has been very successful and as a result the current Prime Minister Narendra Modi has now shifted from Look East to Act East. Thailand welcomes the initiatives of India and her commitment to strengthen the perpetual bond between India and Thailand. In the aforementioned context, this panel is expected to attract more than 100 audience members who are seriously interested in India. It is hoped that the seminar will provide understanding and appreciation on the necessity of having India-Thai relation. All in all, the objectives of the seminar are

1. to disseminate information and knowledge on India and the relations between India and ASEAN and India and Thailand; and

2. to build network among scholars and students of Indian studies.

Panel members [1]

1. Reena Marwah
2. Ashok Sajjanhar
3. Bhagirathi Panda

Panel members [2]

1. Piyanat Soikham
2. Deb Kumar Chakraborty
3. Piyaboot Sumettikoon
4. Por Boonpornprasert

PANEL

Thai Textiles in the 21st Century (1 and 2)

Convener(s)

Susan Conway
School of Oriental and African Studies

Description

Thai textiles are recognized worldwide for their beauty and the skill of generations of spinners, weavers and dyers who created them. Exhibitions in Thailand have helped promote political and historical significance and ethnic and cultural importance. Many tourists visiting Thailand today include on their schedules a visit to a Thai textile outlet and a textile museum.

This inter-disciplinary panel will address twenty-first century issues including; existing trends in Thai textile production, current ways of using and wearing Thai textiles, and the conservation and preservation of historical material. Papers are welcomed on all aspects of twenty-first century Thai textile studies including; museology, conservation, anthropology, ethnography, economics and tourism. Participants should take into consideration how textile and dress studies impact on the wider field of Thai studies.

Panel members [1]

1. Methaporn Singhanan
2. Jacinta Brown
3. Suriya Smutkupt
4. Eric Boudot

Panel members [2]

1. Pradip Kumar Gogoi, and Chandra Kanta Phukan
2. Serena Lee
3. Mrinmoy Das
4. Chris Buckley
5. Gary Suwannarat

PANEL

Temple and Community: Social Complexities

Convener(s)

Susan Darlington
Hampshire College

Description

Our panel focuses on an understudied topic, that of the actual nature of temple and community relationships in contemporary Theravada Buddhism. While the Buddhist canon describes monastic/lay relations as ideal types, this panel explores the way the interactions of local communities, both lay and monastic, are influenced not only by scriptural interpretations, but social, political, and economic factors, as well as individual personalities. We aim to expand upon the limited research that has been done on the ways in which particular lay and monastic communities interact with each other. Our case studies explore: lay governance in a Shan community in northwestern Thailand; the way abandoned temple sites in Chiang Rai operate in the creation of contemporary Buddhist communities; monks involved in agricultural projects in northern Thailand; and a Buddhist temple in Oxford, England. Our goal is to provide a wide range of cases to advance how we understand Buddhism and Buddhist communities in Thailand and its diaspora.

Panel members

1. Nicola Tannenbaum
2. Anthony Lovenheim Irwin
3. Susan Darlington
4. Pyi Phyo Kyaw

PANEL

Resources, Entrepreneurs and the Emergence of a Modern Market: Studies in Thai Economic History [1 and 2]

Convener(s)

Thomas Bruce
School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

Thanyarat Apiwong
Chiang Mai University

Description

The extent to which a country industrializes depends upon its openness and its ability to attract foreign investment and technology. The extent to which it can draw upon its own natural resource endowments, human capital, and pool of entrepreneurialism is of enormous consequence to the nature of its subsequent economic development. Thailand has been shaped by an abundance of certain natural resources which arguably allowed the majority of the population, and the state, to survive comfortably enough (whatever the given Gini coefficient) without the need for the sort of technological development effort of less-resource abundant countries such as Singapore or Taiwan. This has allegedly left Thailand with its well-known 'technologyless' industrialization, first characterized as such by Kunio Yoshihara in 1988, and may well explain the country's frustrating persistence in a middle-income bracket.

This widely accepted characterization has seemingly obviated the need for more detailed, historical microeconomic, case by case, sector or firm specific studies and has in practice meant the content's relative neglect. At the same time, interest in commodity-focused history has been returning to a solid grounding in economic theory and methodology after a period of having been approached from the angle of cultural history. This panel aims to refocus attention on the historical microeconomy with the rationale that such analysis in the long durée can provide valuable insight into the current predicament. The papers on this panel thus examine the harnessing and adaptation of pre-modern economic activities, for example the production and trade of such commodities as rice and silk, or the introduction of new ones, such as rubber. They examine local resource-based manufacturing, such as alcohol, textiles and footwear. Crucially, they examine these undertakings' interaction and negotiation with the state and global markets, placing local actors center-stage and appraising the role of government.

Panel members [1]

1. Amnuayvit Thitibordin
2. Apicha Chutipongpisit
3. Thanyarat Apiwong

Panel members [2]

1. James A. Warren
2. Panarat Anamwathana

3. Thomas Bruce

PANEL

Tourism in Lan Na Civilization

Convener(s)

Ubonrat Yasai
Social Research Institute

Description

This panel focuses on tourism related to the Lanna Civilization, aiming to bring together academics and researchers from all areas related to the topic. The panel attempts to integrate contributions from several subjects such as cultural tourism, tourism management, sustainable management, tangible and intangible dimensions, conservation and restoration, carrying capacity, archaeology and tourism, industrial heritage and tourism, tourism in the historic city, among others. Moreover, the concept of sustainability is more relevant to political consensus, balancing the environmental, social, economic and also climatic aspects of life is essential for ensuring the safe and successful development of tourism.

In this panel, we use the term “Lanna Civilization” in outlining guidelines of cultural routes in Thailand's upper north region, in connection with its neighboring countries of Laos, Myanmar and China (Southern Region). Clearly, cultural tourists who travel to northern Thailand are interested in cultural sites and attractions. However, although tourist demand is high, the supply is still ineffective and requires urgent improvement. So, this panel will propose guidelines for tourism management and development in Thailand's upper north region, including the three neighboring countries that constitute Lanna Civilization.

Panel members

1. Korawan Sangkakorn, Archabaramee Maneetrakunthong, and Sansanee Krajangchom
2. Archabaramee Maneetrakunthong
3. Sansanee Krajangchom, and Sudarat Auttarat

PANEL

New Mekong Thinking: Connectivity and Conflict

Convener(s)

Ukrist Pathmanand
Mekong Research Center Institute of Asian Studies Chulalongkorn University

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Description

New Mekong Thinking: Connectivity and Conflict attempts to analyze both dynamic geographical changes and socio-economic transformations in the Greater Mekong Sub region since the end of Cold War in 1990. According to connectivity, Asian Development Bank (ADB)' GMS infrastructure reconstruction plan includes the North-South Economic Corridor, the East-West Economic

Corridor and the Southern Economic Corridor, rebuilding border trade, recreating work forces and improving incomes for GMS people. Foreign direct investment flows from Japan, Thailand, Taiwan, US and China in the textile and garment industries, plantation and energy sectors led to economic growth in the GMS around 6 % from 2010 up to now. However, connectivity which brought freer flow of capital, goods and people does not just have positive effects. Hydro dam construction has harmed marginalized people. Interestingly Chinese communities have been established in areas covering the GMS region. Its seem to indicate ethnic domination from Chinese.

Panel members

1. Ukrist Pathmanand
2. Theera Nudhpieam
3. Adison Siemyem
4. Wannarat Tantrakonsup

PANEL

New Media, Old Regimes: Deconstruction and Reconstruction of Thai Media

Convener(s)

Unaloam Chanrungmaneekul
School of Communication Arts Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University

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Description

This panel will discuss two main themes present in the Thai media in the digital era; the deconstruction of traditional media discourse and their ideologies, and the reconstruction of digital media's landscape and their transforming attributes, particularly in Thai journalism and cinema. Within the two themes, we will present three arguments on the deconstruction and reconstruction of Thai media, as driven by globalization and Thailand's political consequences over the last ten years.

Firstly, covering the period since the 2006 Thai political transition, in their paper Akkanut Wantanasombut and Kunnawut Booraek, examine ten online Thai news agencies in respect of their ideology, content, context, organizational culture and operation, in order to find the common identity of new media in Thailand. The paper develops a proper framework as a tool for defining and identifying new media in Thailand. The reconstruction and definitions of Thai journalism are further discussed.

Secondly, among the Thai media's economic and politic constraints, Teeramon Buangam's paper explores the emergence of investigative data journalism in online newspapers. The paper shows how it has led to a new era of news reporting that encourages interactive and participatory communication among both middle class and low class citizens. Significantly, it appears to be shaping the perspectives of Thai society in regards to empowering citizen's participation against unfair and non-transparent circumstances.

Lastly, Unaloam Chanrungmaneekul's presentation will argue with respect to Castells' media network concept (2007), which refers to new social movements and the power of digital communication technologies. The paper focuses on Thai digital cinema that opens 'space' for marginalized people to voice their struggles and for young independent filmmakers to challenge mainstream social values and norms. Nevertheless, in the established Thai regime and amidst economic constraints, although digital technologies, new film curricula and various communication forums have been invented to build up more democratic spaces in recent years, reconstruction of critical visual communications in the digital era seems arduous. The argument will concentrate on the Thai conservative consciousness, film markets and the military-state censorship.

The panel will weave the three main arguments in order to investigate the transformation of Thai media in the digital era, seeking to 'reconstruct' new definitions and their attributes. Simultaneously, we hope to open the panel to sociological, political, economic and media disciplines, for contributions concerning particular constraints in Thailand regarding globalization and digital media.

Panel members

1. Unaloam Chanrungmaneekul
2. Akkanut Wantanasombut, and Kunnawut Boonreak
3. Teeramon Buangam

PANEL

Urban Political Ecologies in Thailand: Spaces of Nature Of/for the City?

Convener(s)

Vanessa Lamb
University of Melbourne

Description

In what is widely proclaimed to be the "urban millennium," Southeast Asia is one of the fastest urbanizing regions in the world and is notable for its unprecedented growth of numerous major metropolitan areas. Yet, in Thailand, the challenges and politics of urban environments represent a set of topics that have been largely overshadowed by the "rural" in the study of politics, environmental movements, and conservation. Over the past 17 years, urban political ecology (UPE) has grown in visibility as a useful theoretical lens from which to examine the interrelated processes of the social production of urban nature (Rademacher, 2015, Heynen, 2013, Gandy, 2003, Kaika, 2005, Desfor and Keil, 2004, Robbins, 2012) with "the language and logic of an explicitly urban political ecology seem[ing] more prescient than ever" (Henynen, 2013). Thus, UPE provides a novel framework from which to theorize socionatural transformation, it facilitates opportunities to deconstruct "new era of planetary urbanization" (Merrifield, 2013), particularly as it materializes in Thailand, where questions around the ways in which urban and rural environments and livelihoods co-articulate persist. As such, this panel showcases the study of environment (in the broadest sense) in and across urban contexts in Thailand as a way to spark discussion of the role of cities and urban residents in how environments are conceived, shaped, and managed. This panel will also speak to the increasing importance of cities as linked to global discourses on governance, modernity, and the environment. We seek papers for this panel from multidisciplinary scholars who engage with emerging work in UPE to facilitate a robust discussion of the links between cities and nature in and for Thailand.

Panel members

1. Mary Mostafanezhad
2. Sukanlaya Choenkwan, and Micah Fisher
3. Tubtim Tubtim
4. Keith Bettinger
5. Gregory Gullette, and Sayamon Singto

PANEL

Manuscript Cultures and Epigraphy in the Tai World - Epigraphy and Scripts

Convener(s)

Volker Grabowsky
University of Hamburg

Description

Over the past three to four decades an impressive corpus of manuscripts and epigraphical material in Thailand, Laos, and adjacent Tai speaking areas has been surveyed, documented, and – in recent years – digitized. Scholarly interest in this material has not been restricted to philological and historical studies of the texts contained in manuscripts and inscriptions, but also to material aspects which consider manuscripts (written on palm-leaf, various forms of paper, cloth, bamboo and other organic material) and inscriptions (on stone, metal, wood, etc.) as culturally significant objects. Though manuscripts and inscriptions may be considered "things of the past" in the modern world dominated by book printing and digital technologies, there are still areas in the Tai world where they are being produced. This panel seeks to explore the production, use, and transmission of manuscripts both as containers of traditional knowledge and as objects used in daily life, such as rituals and ceremonies. Special emphasis shall be given to the relationship between manuscripts and inscriptions, as both have influenced each other to a large degree.

Innovative research questions which might be explored in this panel pertain to the reflection of modernity in the still living manuscript cultures of the Tai world. Is there a shift of writing support (for example, from palm-leaf to mulberry paper, and from mulberry to industrial paper) and of scripts (for example, from various variants of the Dhamma script to modern Thai and Lao) due to certain cultural and economic developments in the 20th and 21st centuries? How do these shifts affect the transmission of traditional knowledge (such as local wisdom, folktales, ritual texts)? How do biscriptality, a typical feature of Tai manuscript cultures, and diglossia or multiglossia (i.e. the use of two or more dialects/languages) in one and the same manuscript reflect a multi-ethnic environment, especially in the Upper Mekong and Salween Subregion? Other complex research questions pertain to the preservation and storage of manuscripts. Here it would be helpful to investigate the different kinds of repositories, ranging from diverse local repositories (for instance, in Northern Thailand and Yunnan) to large international collections in the Western world. Finally, natural scientists are invited to present the contribution of scientific laboratories on the analysis of issues which are quite often beyond the ability of humanities (such as determining the origin of writing material and writing substances, the age of manuscripts and inscriptions and the reconstruction of different layers of scripts). The now relatively easy access to these bodies of texts allows us to take a more comprehensive look at the chronological and synchronic development of the literature of the Tai world. What new lessons can be learned? Can we assess with greater accuracy the "weight" or social importance of some literary productions?

Conference theme(s) to be discussed by the panel include manuscript cultures; epigraphy; preservation, documentation, and the digitization of manuscripts and epigraphical material; Thai and Lao philology; transmission of texts; and the history of literature.

Panel members

1. François Lagirarde
2. Michel Lorrillard
3. Renoo Wichasin

PANEL

Manuscript Cultures and Epigraphy in the Tai World - Tai Manuscripts and Cultural Revival

Convener(s)

Volker Grabowsky
University of Hamburg

Description

During the last three to four decades an impressive corpus of manuscripts and epigraphical material in Thailand, Laos, and adjacent Tai speaking areas have been surveyed, documented, and – in recent years – also digitized. Scholarly interest in this material has not been restricted to philological and historical studies of the texts contained in manuscripts and inscriptions but also to material aspects which consider manuscripts (written on palm-leaf, various forms of paper, cloth, bamboo and other organic material) and inscriptions (on stone, metal, wood, etc.) as culturally significant objects. Though manuscripts and inscriptions may be considered as "things of the past" in the modern world that is dominated by book printing and digital technologies, there are still areas in the Tai world where they are still being produced. This panel seeks to explore the production, use, and transmission of manuscripts both as containers of traditional knowledge and as objects used in daily life, such as rituals and ceremonies. Special emphasis shall be given to the relationship between manuscripts and inscriptions, as both have influenced each other to a large degree.

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Conference theme(s) to be discussed by the panel include manuscript cultures; epigraphy; preservation, documentation, and digitization of manuscripts and epigraphical material; Thai and Lao philology; transmission of texts; history of literature.

Panel members

1. Poppy Gogoi
2. Phibul Choompolpraisal
3. Achariya Choowonglert

PANEL

Manuscript Cultures and Epigraphy in the Tai World - Anisong Manuscripts

Convener(s)

Volker Grabowsky
University of Hamburg

Description

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Conference theme(s) to be discussed by the panel include manuscript cultures; epigraphy; preservation, documentation, and digitization of manuscripts and epigraphical material; Thai and Lao philology; transmission of texts; history of literature.

Panel members

1. Louis Gabaude
2. Volker Grabowsky
3. Silpsupa Jaengsawang

PANEL

Manuscript Cultures and Epigraphy in the Tai World - Buddhist and Classical Literature

Convener(s)

Volker Grabowsky
University of Hamburg

Description

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Conference theme(s) to be discussed by the panel include manuscript cultures; epigraphy; preservation, documentation, and digitization of manuscripts and epigraphical material; Thai and Lao philology; transmission of texts; history of literature.

Panel members

1. Hemanta Kumar Gogoi, and Labonya Baruah Gogoi
2. Larry Ashmun
3. Brereton Bonnie
4. Jana Ignunma
5. Sutheera Satayaphan

PANEL

The Politics of Thai Education

Convener(s)

Vong-On Phuaphansawat
University of Cambridge

Description

This panel brings together researchers who have individually examined aspects of Thai education in its socio-political settings. The overall objective of the panel is to situate education and educational problems in Thailand in its broader political context, by engaging with various social and political theories ranging from the state to post-colonialism. The panel's theme – The Politics of Thai Education – indicates the shared focus of the four papers on issues of power relationships, structural constraints, and the contest among social forces and the discourse for hegemonic positioning within the Thai education system. In one way or another, each paper addresses the key questions of why educational arrangements in Thailand are the way they are today; how they are related to the global and local political forces, whose interests they are meant to serve; what mechanisms of control are at play, what are the structural limits of teaching and learning in Thailand, and, finally, how those limits might have manifested differently. The particular topics to be examined in this panel include the Thai state in higher education, neoliberalism, standardized testing, and quality assurance in the Thai higher education. It is hoped that this panel discussion will generate accounts of the Thai education that depart from technical debate on educational outcomes and educational management to the ones which have broader focus on state and society.

Panel members

1. Jennifer Goodman
2. Rattana Lao
3. Pad Lavankura

PANEL

Thai Football, Fan Culture, Power, Sexuality, and Provincialism in Thailand [1]

Convener(s)

Wasan Panyagaew
Chiang Mai University

Charn Paranut
The University of Sydney

Wasan Panyagaew
Chiang Mai University

Description

Football is not just a game, but a way to display for local and national identities, development and discourse on modernity and the expression of sexuality. Since 2009, in Thailand, this modern sport provides, among the new class, a unique opportunity for the display and practice of local identities, sexualities, discourses on modernity, and (new) Thai nationalism. In practice, this sport is also a social mechanism to govern people daily life, tourist industry and city development. Conceptualizing Thai Football as a field of power, in this panel we propose a new approach to investigate multiple aspects of this modern sport that involves and operates in history, culture, politics and provincialism, male masculinity and female sexuality in Thailand. Utilizing cross disciplinary approaches, the papers in this panel aim to do (1) a historical sociology of sport in Siam and the anthropology of Thai professional football league in the age of Neoliberalism, showing how this sport industry has been developed, expanded, and localized, in particular how it has transformed Thailand from below; (2) an ethnography of football fan culture and its practice in the daily life of ordinary Thais, how this 'popular sport' is related to media business, provincial power, and local people in the countryside and the Thai capital; and (3) how the formation and transformation of this professional football league, since 2009, reflects on rural transformation, dynamism of class structure, Thai politics, and Thailand in the age of Neoliberalism.

Panel members

1. Charn Panarut
2. Wasan Panyagaew, and Playfa Namprai
3. Arjin Thongyuukong
4. Pongsakorn Saguansak

PANEL

Thai-Yunnan Borderlands, Celebrating the Life and Work of Nicholas Tapp (1 and 2)

Convener(s)

Wasan Panyagaew
Chiang Mai University

Roger Casas Ruiz
Austrian Academy of Sciences

Description

Avoiding the pitfalls of nationalist histories, while at the same time resisting the urge towards considering regions predominantly in terms of extraneous, global influences, the study of regions has become a healthy corrective against the danger of both extremes and a reminder of diversity. Born after the International Conference on Thai Studies held in Canberra in 1987 to reflect the new possibilities created in the region following the opening of China, the Thai-Yunnan Project has served as a point of encounter between Australia-based academics working in the borderlands of China, Burma, Laos, Vietnam and Thailand, and specialists from the region itself. Emphasizing the importance both of cross-border flows and movements in the region, and of the centrality of origins, the TYP was a rare pioneering example of cross-regional collaborations (Tapp 1991).

During the 10 years he was based at the ANU, Nick Tapp, with the help of Andrew Walker, served as Director of the Project and as guiding mentor for many students coming from different countries in the region. Located itself at the crossroad between Thailand, where he did research for his PhD, and China, Tapp's work on the Hmong and on Southeast Asia in general reflects the nature of the region as a transformative area of cultural flows. After leaving the ANU in 2010 and until his untimely demise in 2015, Nick Tapp continued supervising ANU students working in the region, and striving to move the Thai-Yunnan Project forward.

This panel brings together students and colleagues of Nicholas Tapp from different nationalities, in a tribute to his outstanding contribution to the study of the region and its peoples, and to anthropology as a whole. While looking back to what Tapp and the Project so dear to him achieved in the past, the gathering will explore the possibilities of a new version of it "to contribute to evolving understandings of the region in new ways, through a deepened appreciation of the complexities of border situations, the workings of state power, the intricacies of cultural identifications and reformulations of ethnicity, and the machinations of both formal and informal markets" (Tapp 2011).

Panel members [1]

1. Roger Casas
2. Quanmin Li
3. Simon Rowedder

Panel members [2]

1. Kumiko Kato

2. Kang Nan Shan
3. Niti Pawakapan

PANEL

Connecting People, Places and Culture: The Deep Meaning of Our Heritage

Convener(s)

Woralun Boonyasurat
Faculty of Fine Arts, Chiang Mai University

Description

Today, preferred methods of approaching the conservation of cities' heritage are primarily concerned with the conservation of physical architecture and urban landscape. Conservation efforts focus on style and condition. This is because building works are a clearly perceived concrete testimony. Proof of age and authenticity are easily accepted, and they don't in any way arouse skepticism towards their value.

However, cities are also composed of cultures which are nurtured in the imagination, knowledge and abilities that enable mankind to survive, and they reflect the taste, aesthetics, ideas and beliefs that the people of one city or of one society share. We recognize that cultural values are vital to a city's heritage, too. Culture gives a city distinctiveness and identity, a unique character that is often used as the selling point for many heritage cities, and is turned into events and products to attract tourism and generate economic gain.

In these approaches to heritage, an important factor which is usually left last is people, who serve the function of cultural transfer from the past to the present and to the people of the future. People are also the agents of transformation of culture into the forms of expression of everyday life, and in the festivals of the city, connecting the city with culture. The link between three factors, people, places and culture, is like a lifeline that furthers the longevity of the city.

The key point is the conservation of city heritage amidst a changing world, and an expanding global culture, which disrupt ways of life and present the greatest challenge to cultural integrity.

Many heritage cities preserve the physical condition of buildings via the enforcement of rules and regulations, but with the present day cost of living and modern ways of life, which are the result of changes to the city, people in the city are no longer able or no longer wish to live in the same places at current prices. Being aware of fast changing opportunities, they quickly adapt to take advantage of new developments, the new economy, and reap the benefits. Such processes of conservation prevent many heritage cities from being able to keep locals living in the city, thereby shaking the foundations of identity of the city, creating a lack of authenticity in that most important matter of the people, those who express a culture. City development which separates the city into parts has brought problems to cities with unique identities. Many cities have become unbalanced and may never again be restored.

If city conservation continues to proceed in this way, many of the world's cities will lose their unique identities, and will end up with the same tastes and styles.

The topic of this discussion is the result of finding that the current methods of conservation of historical or heritage cities have resulted from a deficient paradigm.

Panel members

1. Rungsima Kullapat
2. Supawut Boonmahathanakorn, Samart Suwannarat, Praewpon Sukutsathian, and Ajirapa Pradit
3. Karine Peyronnie, and Pijika Pumketkao

PANEL

University and Hidden Communities (1 and 2)

Convener(s)

Worrasit Tantinipankul
1. School of Architecture and Design, King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi / RMUTL-KMUTT Collaborative Center for Royal Project Foundation and Academic Activities

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Description

Academic institutions have long been serving the community and society in various forms, applying theory and methodology to support collaborative work. However, much of this work with communities has been predominated by a one-way and top-down approach resulting in short-term outcomes. Moreover, often these efforts were not considered as scholarly work. Area-based scholars who have focused their efforts in Thailand have sought to understand the core values of communities around this country. However, the products of their work are often limited in that the written publications circulate among the group of elites, government and academic agencies. As a result, scholars and academic institutions have been criticized as exclusive and have been questioned for their roles in local communities and society. How can communities benefit from scholarly research? This panel discussion aims to demonstrate the collective work of socially- engaged researchers where the approach to community-university collaboration was bottom-up and centered in the community. It will also focus on how universities and scholars in recent years have built partnerships and worked alongside communities to create new knowledge for life-long learning experiences and research for community empowerment.

Panel members [1]

1. Norachat Wongwandee, Nipon Jeenkawkam, and Worrasit Tantinipankul
2. Chayaporn Sittisun, Thatchakorn Thaseekaew, and Worrasit Tantinipankul
3. Wanthida Wongreun, Worrasit Tantinipankul, and Bavornsak Petcharanonda

Panel members [2]

1. Suree Poolong, Bavornsak Pejaranonda, and Chanen Munkong
2. Saengthicha Duangprapa, Bavornsak Pejaranonda, and Chanen Munkong
3. Woranooch Chuenrudeemol, Nanthana Boon La-Or, and Worrasit Tantinipankul

PANEL

Thailand and Its Connectivity with Japan

Convener(s)

Yasuhito Asami
Dept. of Global Politics, Faculty of Law, Hosei University

Description

Thailand and Japan have long and multifaceted relations, which cannot be fully covered by a single panel. This panel focuses mainly on the post-World War II era. The first three presentations deal with economic relations between the two countries, while the fourth presentation analyses a unique feature of the two countries' relations, that is, the exchanges of visits between the Thai and Japanese royal families.

In the past two decades, the relative significance of the Japanese presence in Thailand has been visibly declining. In the first half of the 1990s, trade with Japan accounted for nearly one-fourth of Thailand's total trade, but Japan's share has shrunk to slightly over 10%. Japanese idol singers and TV dramas, once dominant on Thai TV screens, were replaced with K-pop stars and Korean TV dramas. Japanese tourists visiting Thailand are now far outnumbered by Chinese tourists.

Will the Japanese presence in Thailand continue to shrink? If so, will it be a blessing for Thailand? Or will Japan manage to remain an important player in Thailand? If so, how? What is its implications on the Thai economy and politics?

The first two presentations will be made by bureaucrats-turned-scholars. Both of them used to work in Thailand as high-ranking Japanese bureaucrats directly responsible for economic cooperation between the two countries, before they started teaching in universities. The first presentation argues that Thailand and Japan can move forward to the new stage of "industrial connectivity," by examining the most recent development in the public and the private partnership between the two countries under the framework of the AEC (ASEAN Economic Community).

The second presentation analyzes Japan's influence on the formation and implementation of Thailand's SME policies, especially in the field of automobile parts. It suggests that the interaction between Japanese bureaucrats and its counterparts in Thailand, as well as cooperation between the private companies in the two countries, have deepened over the past two decades despite the shrinking Japanese presence on the surface.

The third presentation deals with the history of Japanese technical assistance to the development of the railway systems in Thailand. Japan's once-dominant position in this field also came to face serous challenges from other countries, especially China. The third presentation points out both the strengths and weaknesses of Japanese involvement in the development of Thailand's railway systems.

The fourth presentation sheds light on one of the least studied aspects of relations between Thailand and Japan, that is, the exchanges of visits between the two royal families. Under the present circumstances, scholars face many obstacles in academically analyzing the activities of the royal families in the two countries. The fourth presentation in this panel will not say anything "unsayable." It only says the sayable, but it will show that there are many "sayable" but unsaid facts in the interactions between the Thai and Japanese royal families, and points out that their interactions are important components of the two countries' relations.

Panel members

1. Daisuke Matsushima
2. Yoshihiro Otsuji
3. Ichiro Kakizaki
4. Yasuhito Asami