

Session I: “*Revisiting Sites of Modernity*”

Panel 1

Moderator/Discussant

Dr. Thibodi Buakamsri

Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University

Dr. Thibodi Buakamsri is a lecturer at the Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University. He acquired his doctoral degree in South and Southeast Asian Studies from the University of California at Berkeley in 2018. His area of expertise include Post-Angorian Khmer social and literary history, the history of Cambodia's relations with neighboring countries, and the history of Southeast Asia. He is the author of one among the most popular textbooks on Cambodian history (ประวัติศาสตร์กัมพูชา) in the Thai language, which is currently on its third publication.

Presenters

Name: Mr. Muhammad Izuan bin Abdul Rahman

Position: Graduate Student

Affiliation: History Department, School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia

The Role Malay Elite in Modernization Johor, 1862- 1914.

This paper aims to examine the role of the Malay elite during the era of modernization Johor from 1862 to 1914. The main objective of this study is to detail the role of the Malay elite in completing the modernization process initiated by the ruler of Johor. When Maharaja Abu Bakar took over the reins of Johor in 1862, he took the initiative to implement elements and techniques from the West into the administration of Johor. At the same time, Maharaja Abu Bakar also brought in European administrators to modernize Johor holistically. Therefore, is not surprising when historians tend to give focus and credit to Maharaja Abu Bakar and his British administrators on the success of modernizing Johor. This situation indirectly obscures the role and contribution of the Malay elite that played a significant role in the modernization of Johor. This study was stopped in 1914 because in that year Johor officially fell into British imperialism. Archival and library research methods were used in this study. Therefore, primary and secondary sources will be analyzed and synthesized to extract facts and information. The study proves that the Malay elite plays a significant role in completing the modernization process initiated by the ruler of Johor.

Keyword: Malay Elite, History of Johore, Modernization, British in Johore

Muhammad Izuan is postgraduate student in History Department, School of Humanities Universiti Sains Malaysia. His field of study is Malay Historiography & Malaysia Political History. He is currently conducting a study on the role of the local elite in the modernization of Johor with a focus on the local genius aspects and "history from the gap".

Name: Dr. Pimmanus Wibulsilp

Position: Lecturer

Affiliation: Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University

Dispute over “the Islamic School of Mr. Nana”: Bangkok as a site of confrontation between Siamese modernization, Islamic tradition, and British colonization

As is generally known, European imperialism which arrived in Asia during the nineteenth century had a great impact on Siam (or present-day Thailand) no less than on other parts of Asia. In order to escape western colonization, the Siamese courts during the nineteenth-twentieth century employed diverse diplomatic schemes and launched various reforms to turn Siam into a modern nation according to contemporary western standards. One of the best sites to observe the process of self-westernization or self-modernization, as one might call it, was probably Thailand’s capital of Bangkok. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, the city itself and the lives of the population living in this cosmopolitan center were heavily transformed by diverse modernizing programs.

This article centers on a dispute over “the Islamic School of Mr. Nana” in the early 1920s involving three main parties: the Siamese government, “Mr. Nana”—the head of an Indo-Muslim family of prestige in Bangkok, who was also a subject of British India at the time—, and the British Legation in Siam. The incident illustrates how the traditional way of life of an ethnic community in cosmopolitan Bangkok was affected by the Siamese’s attempts to modernize its educational and legal systems, and how the old establishment attempted to fight back. This event also shed light on another intriguing facet of modernization in Siam and, at the same time, can well reflect the complexity of the wider Asian modernity, for at one point in this transitional period, the interests of Siamese modernization and those of the British Indian colonization, came into collision. The conflict of interests curiously turned the Europeans—usually portrayed in history invariably as the stimulant of modernization; as an initiator, a forceful hand, or a helper—into a major obstacle to Siamese modernization.

Pimmanus Wibulsilp is currently a lecturer at the Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University. After earning her bachelor's degree in history from Chulalongkorn University, she moved to the Netherlands to pursue her graduate studies. She received her Ph.D. in April 2019 from faculty of Humanities, Leiden University. Her doctoral thesis is titled *Nawabi Karnatak: Muhammad Ali Khan in the Making of a Mughal Successor State in Pre-colonial South India, 1749-1795*. It is aimed to re-write the history of an eighteenth-century South Indian state through the voices and perspectives of its local ruler, in order to bring it out of the old Eurocentric frameworks. Her main academic interests have been the history of South Asia from early modern to colonial period and the history of early modern Thailand (Ayutthaya), especially on the aspects of cross-cultural encounters and transnational relationships. In 2017, in cooperation with a Thai historian Bhawan Ruangsilp, Wibulsilp published an article on Ayutthaya history title "Ayutthaya and the Indian Ocean in the 17th and 18th Centuries: International Trade, Cosmopolitant Politics, and Transnational Networks" (*Journal of the Siam Society*, 2017, vol. 105, 97-114). Recently, Wibulsilp has broadened her research interest into the history of Thai-Indian relationships and the Indian communities in Thailand.

Name: Assoc. Prof. Sawitree Charoenpong

Affiliation: Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University

“Modernity” in Old Bangkok

The establishment of Bangkok as the capital of Siam occurred in 1782. It was situated on the eastern side of the Chao Phraya River which, previously, had been a part of the former capital, Thonburi. The purpose of this study is to show that there have been some aspects of modernity in old Bangkok since it was founded even though, at that time, it was in the pre-modern period, according to Thai history. During the first century of the Bangkok period, from its foundation through its expansion, there are at least two main aspects to show that old Bangkok was built and enlarged under some concepts which also occurred later in most modern cities. These two aspects are the ideas of ring routes and city planning. With regard to the idea of ring routes, old Bangkok was surrounded not only, from the beginning, by water ring routes but also, later, by ring roads. According to city planning, the main factors causing Bangkok's shape and the direction of expansion were the considerations of zoning, security and transportation. In conclusion, although there are some aspects of modernity that occurred in old Bangkok during the first century of Bangkok history, all these developments in the physical environment of Bangkok appeared to have been influenced by factors that arose from circumstances of those times.

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Panel 2

Moderator/Discussant

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Wasana Wongsurawat

Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University

Wasana Wongsurawat is an associate professor of history at the Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University. Her research interests include transnational history, the history of the ethnic Chinese in Thailand and Southeast Asia, and the history of Sino-Thai relations. Her first monograph, *The Crown and the Capitalists: The Ethnic Chinese and the Founding of the Thai Nation* was published with the University of Washington Press in 2019.

Presenters

Name: Prof. Dr. Lwin Lwin Mon

Affiliation: Department of Anthropology, University of Yangon

Impact of exposure to information technology on marriage trends among Urban Karen, Chin, Danu in Myanmar

In Myanmar, over 100 ethnic groups live together and there exists diverse marriage patterns in rural and urban living areas. This paper explores the impact of exposure to information technology on marriage trends among Urban Karen, Chin, Danu in Myanmar. After Democracy of 2010 in Myanmar, there starts to know the information technology more and foreign investments for mobile phones were large and reached to the public throughout the whole country. People can use mobile phones not only in urban cities but also in rural villages. Over 100 ethnic groups live in Myanmar and among them, Urban Karen, Chin and Danu ethnic people have different traditions and **diverse marriage patterns** and various ways of seeking a marriage partner. Urban Karen prefers to marry internal marriage according to their traditions and religiously based matchmaking within their own communities. Chin people marry with their own consents more and in Northern Chin State; some have premarital sex, co-habitations, and internet-dating marriage. Danus prefers to marry within their own communities in olden days, parental choice of spouse, arranged marriage and nowadays, the youths seek their marriage partners online dating via social media like facebook, instagram and twitter. The aim of this research is to analyze the **multiple disciplines of marriage trends** and the **effect of information technology on marriage trends** among Karen, Chin, Danu living in various places in Myanmar with different identities and customs. It was based on ethnographic field works in 2017-2019 with using desk-reviews, IDI, KII, group discussion methodologies. (250 words)

Keyword: diverse marriage patterns, multiple disciplines of marriage trends, effect of information technology on marriage trends

Dr. Lwin Lwin Mon is a Professor of Department of Anthropology, University of Yangon, Myanmar. She had got her BA(Hons)(1991), MA(1995) and PhD(2012) degree in Anthropology Specialization, University of Yangon and Diploma(1998), MA(2000) and MRes(2001) degree in Archeology Specialization and Diploma in English (2004) in University of Yangon. Within over 26 years' experience in teaching & researches, 11 International Conference Proceedings Publications, 12 internal publications, 5 internal and 2 international research projects, 7 other international presentation and public lectures were conducted.

In 2013, the Korea-Myanmar Joint International Project supported by KOICA for Inclusive Local Community Development in Myanmar participated as a researcher. And then, attended as a fellow of Asian leader at ALFP 2013 Program and gave the public lecture at Hosei University, Tokyo, Japan. In 2015, conducted research presentation at International Conference on the Australia Myanmar Institute, University of Yangon and conducted research presentation at Chaing Mai Conference, Thailand. She attended CEU research fellow development program and gave public lecture at Dhamma Gate College, Hungary and presented in Round-table discussion in Central European University, Hungary. During 2017, conducted research presentation at The 2017 Myanmar Update Conference, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia. In 2018, presented research at 2nd International Conference on Burma/ Myanmar Studies, University of Mandalay and conducted "Curriculum Development program "at History and Social Anthropology Department, Konstanz University, Germany. She also presented research on International Conference of Danish Institute for International Studies, Copenhagen, Denmark. In 2019, she conducted presentations at International Conference on Passau University, Germany, and at Australian Myanmar Institute International Conference on University of Yangon. And then, she presented her research outcome at Webinar of DIIS- Danish Institute for International Studies, Online via Zoom in 2020 September.

Present days, she is doing as a joint research project with Dannish Institute for International Studies, Aarhus University and University of Yangon.

Name: Mr. Gunha Kim

Position: Graduate Student

Affiliation: Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations, Seoul National University

Iranian Martyrdom: Embedded Masculinity in the Discourse of Ali Shariati and Morteza Avini

This research finds changing notions of masculinity in Iranian religious nationalism as a ‘site of modernity,’ where the concept of modern gendered subject is contested and negotiated. It analyzes embedded masculinity in late-twentieth century Iranian political discourses centering on martyrdom or shahadat by focusing on works of two prominent Iranian cultural theorists, Ali Shariati (1933-1977) and Morteza Avini(1947-1993). Both men focused on the potentiality of religious traditions for making political changes; the former, as a scholar-activist before 1979 Iranian Revolution, re-interpreted Islam into revolutionary ideology through the medium of books, articles, and speeches, and the latter, as a documentary filmmaker during the Iran-Iraq war, played crucial role in re-capturing revolutionary ideology and turning it into one that can be utilized in favor of the state, utilizing visual media. Previously, masculine nature of Iranian history and patriarchal religious interpretations constituting sociopolitical activities and apparatuses have been criticized by Iranian gender studies (Afary, Mir-Hosseini, Shahrokni), and the discourse of martyrdom has been proposed as being representative of this trend (Aghaie, Gerami, Moallem, Najmabadi). This research finds them problematic in the sense that ‘Islamic masculinity’ has been considered monolithic and static, devoid of change in contrary to heterogenic Islamic femininities. By tracking differentiated masculinity in the discourse of Avini from the one of Shariati, this research observes a destruction of family and construction of patriarchal state and differentiated notions of modern male subject from autonomous and independent thinker to loyal and unquestioning soldier in fraternal hierarchy.

Gunha Kim is currently in his master's course, studying modern Iranian history at the Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations, Seoul National University. He achieved his B.As in West Asian Languages and Civilizations, and International Relations from the same institution, where he graduated with the highest grade from the former major and was awarded with the best paper award from the latter major. His current academic interest lies in masculinity embedded in political ideologies of Iran. Especially he would like to investigate proactive local masculinities in non-Western context, overcoming prevalent views toward non-Western masculinities as distorted ones inflicted by Western hegemonic masculinity. His current research focuses on masculinity of religious nationalism of Iran, but he intends to broaden his scope toward Middle East, Asia, and Islamic world in future. He has been awarded in Korean Middle Eastern Studies Student Paper Contest with his article, "Blood, History, and Soil: Strategy of Iranian Jewish Diaspora in United States," where he investigated alternative identity formation of Iranian Jews diaspora in United States vis-à-vis national identity proposed by Islamic Republic of Iran.

Name: Mr. Akkanut Wantanasombut

Position: Graduate Student

Affiliation: Thai Studies Center, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University

Sending money back home: Banking digitalisation, Myanmar migrant workers, and Thailand-Myanmar border trade.

The ministry of labour of Thailand reports that Thailand has accepted approximately 3 million legal migrant workers from her neighbouring countries, two-thirds of these migrant workers came from Myanmar. For decades, this huge number of migrant workers from Myanmar, directly and indirectly, benefits Thailand-Myanmar border trade in many aspects, including when Burmese workers sending money, they earned in Thailand back to their family at home.

In the past, accessing to banking and financial services in rural Myanmar where most of the migrant workers came from were limited. In the areas where no formal channel available, the workers have no other choice to send money back home. The only informal system allows them to do so. Through this channel, not only workers can send money home with a cheaper fee, Burmese and Thai traders are able to offset their trade. As there are many Burmese workers in Thailand, the money workers sent home become a significant part of the Thai-Myanmar border trade. However, the digitalization of banking and financial system has offered the migrant workers choices of remittance.

This paper studies how the development of economic activities, financial, and banking that evolved and revolved around the border trade. Field research was conducted by using a semi-structured interview of totally 32 Myanmar migrant workers whose lives and work in Samutsakorn province and 9 Thai border traders at Mae Sot. Base on the interviews, it turns out to be that the digitalization of banking is, actually, strengthening informal banking as it makes a faster and better money distribution.

Keyword: Myanmar Migrant Workers in Thailand, Thailand-Myanmar Border Trade, Illegal Remittance, Banking Digitalisation.

Akkanut grew up in Bangkok. After receiving his B.Eng. in Mechanical Engineering in 2002, he was active in various industries, such as construction, electronics, automotive, restaurant, and import-export. His career led him to travel throughout the Asian region and brought about a growing interest in the societies and cultures of his neighboring countries. He went back to school at Chulalongkorn University in 2011, where he received his M.A. in Southeast Asian Studies. Akkanut's M.A. thesis research about the smuggling trade on the Thai-Myanmar border. After his M.A. he moved to Chiang Mai where he developed his research interested in a various issue including the digital transformation and social impact of the platform economy. Akkanut returned to Bangkok and enrolled for his Ph.D. in Thai Studies in 2017.

Akkanut's Ph.D. research topic is about the Thailand-Myanmar-Ethnic Armed Groups relationship during the Cold War. He is currently working at the Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University as a researcher focus on Thailand-Myanmar relations. Though his general research interest lies in historical and contemporary Myanmar, his passion for digital transformation continually drives him to pursue his research on digital economy.