

Additional details for keynote address, roundtables, workshop, film-showings, and panels 1 thru 11 in order of appearance on conference schedule (as of October 10, 2023):

Keynote Address: “Empowering the Margins: The Roles of NGOs among Ethnic Highlanders in Thailand” by Dr. Prasit Leepreecha, Assistant Professor, Department of Social Science and Development, Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University

Abstract: More than ten highland ethnic groups reside in north Thailand. These groups include some one million people. Generally referred to as “hill tribes,” these groups have long been perceived as primitive and dangerous others. Since the late 1950s, the Thai government began launching development programs geared towards solving the “hill tribe problem.” These top-down development programs have generally resulted in a situation where ethnic highlanders have become Thai at the cost of losing their ethnic identities. In addition, many ethnic highlanders continue to lack equal rights to citizenship, land ownership and management, educational opportunities, and other basic infrastructures. More recently, ethnic highlanders have developed their own grassroots movements to better address their situations and empower themselves. A number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) initiated by both outsiders and young ethnic leaders have played an important role in the development and advancement of these grassroots movements. In this talk, I discuss the historical development and roles of NGOs among ethnic highlanders in north Thailand throughout the past five decades. I argue that, in contrast to state agencies, NGOs have played crucial roles in empowering ethnic highlanders in the country. Apart from linking up with regional and international indigenous movements, a number of young highland ethnic leaders with NGO backgrounds have recently become elected members of Thailand’s House of Representatives where they aim to continue their efforts to bring awareness of their issues and concerns to the general public and national policy makers.

**Roundtable on 190 Years of US-Thai Relations (Sponsored by The Asia Foundation)
Mr. John Brandon, The Asia Foundation; Dr. Vasu Srivarathonbul, Royal Thai Embassy, Washington, D.C.; with pre-recorded remarks from Senator Tammy Duckwork, D-IL.**

This roundtable commemorates 190 years of United States–Thai diplomacy (as of March 20, 2023) and discusses the accomplishments, challenges, and future of United States–Thai relations and prospects for the alliance in the 21st century.

Roundtable: Songs the Blind Can See! A Preliminary Case Study on Teaching the Khaen to Visually Impaired Students in the School for the Blind in Roi Et, Thailand

Jui-Ching Wang, John Hartmann and Chamni Sripraram, Northern Illinois University
The purpose of this session is to introduce a music program for visually impaired students in the School for the Blind in Roi Et, Thailand. Initiated by Hartmann, a special music program adopting the khaen, mouth organ popular in northeastern Thailand and Laos, was launched with the help of Sripraram, an experienced Thai music instructor in 2022 hoping to help preserve local culture through music and provide visually impaired students an educational setting that involves tactile, oral, and aural learning experiences. Specifically, we will share pedagogical principles of special education in music and the cultural meanings of playing the

khaen, an instrument representing the local significance of Roi Et and its neighboring communities. We hope to use this preliminary work as the foundation for an interdisciplinary program that leads to the study of environment protection (preservation and protection of bamboo) and to foster awareness of human rights in equal educational opportunities. A discussion of how this interdisciplinary project in music, special education, bamboo forestry, and cultural studies, fulfills the goals of current educational trends in STREAM (Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) will also be presented in our session.

**Interactive Workshop on Thai Music and Dance: ขบวนกลองยาว
Chamni Sripraram and friends, NIU Thai Music Ensemble**

Two words involved in the title, **ขบวนกลองยาว**, literally meaning the formation of parade set-up (**ขบวน**) and the long-tailed drum (**กลองยาว**), explain the purpose of what I propose to do in this workshop. As music is an inseparable element to human life, it plays many practical functions in human society, for example, ritual ceremonies and festival activities. Throughout different regions in Thailand, such musical functions are commonly practiced by villagers. Specifically in the northern and northeastern regions, long drums have been used to call for villagers' attention to join various festivals, such as parades. Upon hearing the calls from the drums, villagers usually respond with cheerful moods and energetic movements that match the rigorous rhythmic patterns that can be effectively "contagious" to motivate even those who attend such events as observers merely to move along and be part of the parade. One such example can be found in Thai traditional wedding ceremony that begins with the groom's **ขบวนกลองยาว** parade to the bride's house early in the morning. Usually, as an important part of the parade, the drums are being played along the way to the bride's house until the bride's family agrees that the groom can come into the house, which is when the sounds of the drums stop. In this workshop, I will first introduce the participants to the long-tailed drum and its playing techniques. The goblet shape of this drum is unique to many drums originating in mainland Southeast Asia, such as Ozi, Skor Chhaiyam, Klong Yao, with pitch-tuned paste on top of the water buffalo skin drumhead. I will also teach the participants simple rhythmic patterns commonly used in a ceremonial parade to create the **ขบวนกลองยาว**. I propose to present the learning outcome, a short call-and-response music and dance piece, in the conference banquet as part of the entertainment on Saturday night.

Short-film การเดินทางอันแสนไกล/"The Long Journey" (2512/1969; 19 min)

Jeffrey Shane and Pittaya Paladroi-Shane, Ohio University

Documents the visit of Neil Armstrong Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins to Thailand following the Apollo mission at the height of the Cold War.

Short-film "Fire" (2021; 8.19 min; Chanintorn Pensute, Director)

Chanintorn Pensute, Chiang Mai University

The high level of PM 2.5 concentration has become a significant issue affecting people's lives in Chiang Mai. What will the future look like without urgent actions to stop the problem?

Panel 1: Buddhism, Women, and Sound Cultures (3 papers)**Mastering the Karma Masters: Comparing Women's Selfhood in Thai Buddhism****Daphne Weber, Washington State University**

Institutions of Theravada Buddhism do not socially recognize women as female monks. Nevertheless, women – known as Bhikkhuni – continue to receive ordination and practice, despite this lack of formal recognition. While prior literature on bhikkhunis has concentrated on the personal narrative and charismatic qualities of the movement's founder, Venerable Dhammananda, I instead focus on the bhikkhuni's engagement with เจ้ากรรมนายเวร, or Karma Masters. Karma Masters are often described as people someone has 'wronged' in the past. As a result, these masters follow and sometimes taunt the offender. While some people seek integration and repentance with their Karma Masters, my ethnographic research since 2018 shows that others seek dissociation from their karma masters. This paper compares two case studies to show how a central Thai bhikkhuni temple has become a place of refuge from Karma Masters, therefore exploring new implications of self-hood in Thai society. I argue that women's engagement and dissociation from their Karma Masters is a new way women are reimagining their gender roles and relocating loci of power in Thai Buddhism.

Attunement of the ear and voice: The role of embodied knowledge and sensory training in the Thai bhikkhuni movement, Katherine Scahill, University of Pennsylvania

How do female Buddhist monastics understand sonic transfers of knowledge? Building upon recent scholarship in Thai sound cultures (Tausig 2019, Yamomo 2021), I draw on dissertation fieldwork in Thailand to highlight the importance of sonic and aural learning for novice and fully ordained female monks (samaneri and bhikkhuni). Although Thailand's Sangha Supreme Council does not formally recognize bhikkhuni, women continue to seek ordination. To do so, they commit to a minimum of two years as samaneri studying under a monastic teacher. Because it provides a pathway to higher ordination, samaneri training is a prominent organizing force at three regionally distinct bhikkhuni temples in Chiang Mai, Nakhon Pathom, and Songkhla. A crucial aspect of this training is what I have come to understand as an attunement of the ear and voice through listening to teachings, reciting chants (suat mon สวดมนตร์), and memorizing blessings to confer upon laypeople. The cultivation of the correct bodily comportment and sensory attunement is both a point of pride—those who receive higher ordination have undergone a rigorous program of study and practice, demonstrating their commitment to a monastic life—as well as a potential barrier to entry that male monks (bhikkhu) do not face in the same way. Through this discussion of the sonic, aural, and embodied nature of samaneri training, I hope to contribute to discussions on contemporary religious practice in Thailand and to connect with colleagues researching the political context shaping the affordances and constraints of the bhikkhuni movement in this moment.

Sounding Gratitude in Central and Northeast Thailand: Musical and Literary Structures for Filial Piety, Trent Walker, University of Michigan

Since at least the sixteenth century, the doctrinal articulation and ritual expression of filial debts and filial gratitude in Theravada contexts have occupied the core of religious motivation and practice for many Buddhists in mainland Southeast Asia and beyond. Recent studies have demonstrated the deeply intertwined approach to expressing and repaying filial debts within Khmer, Lao, and Thai Buddhist cultures, with specific attention given to exegetical Pali

commentaries, vernacular manuals drawn from the esoteric meditation tradition in Laos and northern Thailand, and vernacular poems from Cambodia. Based on a survey of audio recordings, video-recorded performances, and books printed for recitation by lay saraphanya (Pali: sarabhañña, “vocalic recitation”) groups, this paper extends these analyses to the range of short chanted poems, composed in a limited set of popular meters in the Thai and Lao/Isan languages, on gratitude to parents that grew in popularity throughout the twentieth century in Central and Northeast Thailand. I present these miniature musical and literary creations as twentieth-century irruptions of older currents across the region, in which the affective dimensions of love, grief, debt, and gratitude between parents and children shape the performance and reception of Buddhist verse.

Panel 2: Water Studies: The Social Lives of Dams and Rivers (5 papers)

Water Demand Analysis and Management in Thailand’s Northern and Northeastern Watersheds , Panisa Vishuphong, Thammasat University

This study evaluates the water demand of Thailand’s northern and northeastern watersheds, which have increased due to the economic expansion of the agriculture, manufacturing, and service sectors. Creating new water sources and managing the water supply, such as dams, is challenging because of budget limitations and environmental impacts. Therefore, managing water demand is crucial. The study uses an input-output table to estimate water demand across various production sectors and develops a simulation tool to estimate the economic impacts of different water allocation scenarios. The findings reveal that economically promoted crops by the government, such as rubber and palm oil, have relatively high water intensity and low economic value. The government should reconsider its water allocation strategies and cultivation promotion for these crops in the northern and northeastern regions. Moreover, rice production has a water intensity value above 1, suggesting the need for appropriate measures. These may include improving production technology, enhancing productivity to reduce water usage, or encouraging farmers to switch to higher-value agricultural production. Such measures can improve water efficiency and optimize water utilization in Thailand.

Haunted Renewal: Stories from Blasted Landscapes in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula and Chiang Rai, Thailand, Solomon Kronberg, Michigan State University

Communities at the frontiers of global capitalism are contending with iterative ecological and social ruptures, creating profound uncertainties. This project considers stories, people, and places encountered during a brief ethnography conducted for an undergraduate Honors Thesis along Michigan's Lake Superior coastline and the Mekong River's bank in Chiang Rai Province, Thailand, during the COVID-19 pandemic. My interlocutors—Indigenous peoples, fishers, engineers, activists, government officials, and farmers—describe how the management of land and water in service of state and capital alters their relationships to place. Mekong residents returning to the river life after working in the urban south contend with vanishing riverbanks, negotiating with new spiritual denizens of increasingly chaotic waters; toxic mining waste seeps into First Nations fishing grounds on Lake Superior while elders try to recover from the abuse of boarding school erasure programs. For my interlocutors, ruptures cannot be reduced to a single sphere of experience, time, or analysis; the multi-species violence required to extract commodities from living assemblages sharply alters the futures

people imagine for themselves, alienates the past by destabilizing local ecological knowledge, and creates complex trauma in communities marginalized by settler-colonial political economies. However, my analysis also concerns whispers of renewal and, while unique to their geographically and historically situated contexts, how rupture forms faint lines of kinship between ostensibly disparate experiences. In two nearly antipodal research sites, tensions, and congruences between rupture and renewal blend to create crucial lessons on dwelling in changing, sometimes hostile, worlds.

Deep Pools versus Big Dams: Riverhood and Knowledge Politics in the Struggle for Mekong Futures,

Wisa Wisesjindawat, Amanda Flaim, and Noah Doederlein, Michigan State University

Underwater and mostly imperceptible, deep pools are periodic depressions in riverbeds that serve as critical habitat and dry-season refuges for migratory fish and keystone species like the Mekong giant catfish. As dense and diverse assemblages of fishes along the river, more than 400 deep pools have served as important fisheries for Mekong communities for generations, but the vitality of deep pools is increasingly imperiled by hydropower development on the Mekong mainstem and its tributaries. Although deep pool vitality is necessary for sustaining the vitality of the whole river and region, most knowledge of deep pools, and related governance questions, privilege their discrete functions in fish ecology alone, with fishing communities often cast as threats. When regarded positively, fishing communities are brought into formal conservation strategies as participants whose practices must be managed, and whose knowledge of deep pools is valued when it can be integrated into, and validated by, STEM approaches. Extending a Riverhood theory of rivers as complex socionatural territories, this participatory, multi-methodological endeavor to identify and map the deepest deep pool in the Mekong River reveals that fishers' knowledge of deep pools does more than extend STEM. Their knowledge is a critical part of the Mekong's socionatural complex itself, gathered and co-produced through intergenerational relationships with place and with one another.

Situating Isan Liver Fluke Disease in the Environmental Humanities

Visisya Pinthongvijayakul, Chandrakasem Rajabhat University

This presentation investigates the relationship between human being, fish, snail, and liver fluke at the intersection of infrastructural studies and multispecies ethnography in Isan context. Liver fluke infection and bile duct cancer can be viewed as problems that emerge from disruptive infrastructure. Flooding and diverted water from heavy rain travel from dams, weirs, culverts, canals, and pipes bring many forms of life into the waterway. Therefore, the mobilization of human being, fish, snail, and liver fluke from dam construction resulting in risk of human-liver fluke infection can be a form of infrastructural precarity. The study of infrastructure challenges what we call "the Great Divide," that is, the dividing line between nature and culture, human and non-human, technology and society. It is very interesting to bring infrastructural studies to a dialogue with ethnographic studies that will help expand the horizon of understanding of human-liver fluke problems which is not limited to only Isan eating behavior. This presentation aims to extend from cultural dimension to factors affecting local development projects on the environment and well-being which is a technical dimension that changes the environment we may have never seriously questioned before. What if we treat the dam and its associated irrigation systems as infrastructures and bring them into our

discussion rather than letting them sink into an invisible background. Can liver fluke disease be something partially man-made from infrastructure at work?

A prospective "grand bargain" towards resolving the Salween/Thanlwin-Chao Phraya interbasin transfer (IBT) imbroglio: progress report

Alan Potkin, Northern Illinois University

Here follows text from a successful NIU Thai Fund proposal with prospective new fieldwork planned for Jan-Feb, 2024. The COTS presentation would be an interactive visualized assemblage of our related previous research on both sides the Thai-Myanmar borderlands; a progress report on the state of essential colleageal partnerships; and an overview of robust socio-ecological impact assessment required for credible evaluation of a hypothetical Grand Bargain. "The contentious 1,200 MW Hat Gyi hydroelectric project, previously agreed between the Thai, Chinese (PRC) and Myanmar governments and private sector players—but bitterly opposed by anti-dam activists and NGOs within and beyond Kayin State— would likely be the most feasible supplier of the proposed Salween-Chaophraya interbasin transfer's substantive electric power demand. Subsequent to the February 2021 coup, Myanmar's present military regime reiterated its intention to move forward with Hat Gyi. If implemented, the considerable social and environmental disbenefits within lower Kayin State could be offset by implementing the “declared”, but effectively nonexistent Salween Peace Park (SPP); prospectively encompassing ~5,500 km²: conceived in fair part to terminally foreclose Salween/Thanlwin mainstem hydropower and irrigation schemes: all the way upbasin to the Yunnan border. But which, beyond the SPP's primary function as an ecological reserve and precious cultural asset, could also provide a resettlement area for ~30,000 Kayin refugees displaced by three decades of violence now in temporary camps on the Thai side and unlikely to ever be granted Thai citizenship and/or permanent residency. Accordingly, (the Thai) Kingdom should support—both materially and politically—the implementation of the SPP towards their repatriation."

Panel 3: Dealing with an Aging Society (3 papers)

The Role of Elders in Driving Primary Health Services and Decentralization: A Case Study of Lampang Province, Saifon Su-indramedhi, Thammasat University

Primary care services have grown in importance within Thailand's healthcare system since the outbreak of COVID-19. An understanding of strengthening local medical and healthcare management has become greater. In the transition of primary healthcare services to the local administrative organizations, as part of authority decentralization, healthcare professionals have undergone significant transformations. This change is aimed at fulfilling the expectations of the public regarding healthcare provision following the transfer of responsibilities to the Provincial Administration Organizations (PAO). Designing work structure and the number of healthcare providers may encounter initial challenges. Hence, this research aims to study feasible strategies for utilizing social capitals, particularly human resources in the area, to benefit the services. Considering its context, Thailand is entering an aging society. The National Statistical Office found that the early elderly (aged 60-69) accounted for 57.2% of the total elderly population. Furthermore, 36.9%, roughly 1 in 3, are engaged in work. This research adopts an applied PAR approach to prepare for the transfer of healthcare

responsibilities from the Ministry of Public Health to the PAO. The aim is to explore strategic models in terms of infrastructure, personnel, budget allocation, resource management, and service plans. The study revealed that elderly individuals have become an important mechanism in the development of primary healthcare systems. Promoting the participation and involvement of elderly in primary healthcare services is crucial in various aspects such as health promotion, prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and the areas of specific needs within the community.

Older Persons in State Facilities for Destitute in Thailand: Situations and Life Experiences, Thepparp Rungnapa, Thammasat University

This study sheds light on the often-overlooked population of older persons residing in state facilities known as the Home for Destitute in Thailand. As Thai society had faced with the impact of an aged society, the elderly living in such shelters receives scant recognition from the wider society. Out of the 4,543 clients residing in 11 Home for Destitute facilities across the country, 32.15% of them are individuals aged 60 years and above. The prevailing issue in these shelters is the lack of tailored services for the elderly residents. The protection services offered are generalized and fail to accommodate the diverse needs of the elderly. Though attempts have been made to refer older clients to specialized facilities like the Home for the Elderly, these efforts encounter obstacles due to the clients' insufficient qualifications. Moreover, even qualified individuals face extensive waiting lists as the demand surpasses the capacity of referred facilities. This research, moreover, reveals several critical factors contributing to the vulnerability of the elderly within these state shelters. Among these factors are the breakdown of family ties, psychiatric conditions, lack of civil registration status, and homelessness. By raising awareness of these challenges, this study seeks to foster a society that embraces compassion and inclusivity, valuing and dignifying its elderly population.

The expectation of employers and employees in the aging labor market in Northern-Thailand, Onicha Meangbua, Thammasat University

The change in population structure to an aging society is a situation that most countries are encountering. The change in population structure provides a time-bound opportunity for accelerated economic growth known as the demographic dividend [UN,2022]. In the case of Thailand, there is 36.9 percent of the aging worker drive the Thai economy. However, a limitation of the aging labor market is matching demand and supply in the Thai market. Therefore, this study aims to reveal the demand and supply requirements information—descriptive Statistics applied to this study (frequency, percentage, and crosstab analysis). The scope of the study is to use 500 questionnaires in Lampang Province. Lampang province is in northern Thailand, with the most aging population in all northern provinces. The results point out the significant information that the aging people stay in urban areas (40 percent) harmonized with the demand to hire the aging worker in urban areas (46.5 percent). Age 60-69 years is the popular range that employers need to employ, especially in the government administrative agencies (88.9 percent), but from an aging worker's perspective, they demand to work in the personal business. The skill employers need also differs from the physical skills of employees (Chi-Square=31.962, p-value=0.00). These results imply the incongruity between demand and supply in the labor market in Thailand. It is the challenge of the government to design a policy that helps to match the demand and supply of labor in Thailand.

Panel 4: National Identity in and Beyond Thailand; Khwampen Thai/Thainess (3 papers)**Embodying ‘Thainess’ and Post-2006 Coup Crisis in Buppesannivas****Saranpat Boonhok, SOAS University of London**

First televised in 2018, Buppesannivas [Love Destiny; hereafter Buppe] was among popular and influential dramas to represent images of Thainess [khwam-pen-Thai]. It tells the story of a 21st-century female who travels back in time to possess an elite female body in Ayutthaya, during the political turmoil of the court of King Narai (r.1656-1688). Her transition not only depicts the ‘golden and international age’ in Thai history, but also highlights the theme of political conflict between nationalist and foreign bureaucrats in the royal court, culminating in the victory of the “good” nationalists over “bad” external influence and meddling. Given that Buppe was first published as a novel in 2010 by Rompaeng, it resonates with the 2006 crisis, seen through the embodiment of the characters. This paper therefore takes as its analytical focus the bodily representation of Thainess through the key characters in the novel, contextualising this against the backdrop of the 2006-coup. I argue that Buppe brings the mainstream royalist-nationalist narrative of a glorious past into dialogue with the question of national crisis. It thus reflects the anxiety of the post-2006 coup period that led to political polarisation and the discourse of the “good person” [khon di]. The main characters in Buppe are embodied as idealised or undesirable. The farang body and mind constitute an accumulation of “bad person” characteristics, encapsulating a threat to Thainess. Conversely, the good individual operates within female bodies and minds by retaining a link to traditional Thainess, while at the same time adapting to modernity.

Glai Ban (ไกลบ้าน) Phenomenon: Home (Re)making, Nostalgia/Memories of Memories, and The Question of Diasporic “Thai?” in Diaspora within Thai**Kasidit "Gunn" Phikrohkit, University of California at Irvine**

ไกลบ้าน (Glai Ban) in the Thai language translates into “far-from-home”. Documenting how one comes to inhabit spaces of unfamiliarity, a Thai celebrity Youtuber and an English teacher Farose uses the name ไกลบ้าน (Glai ban) for their internet-famous Youtube vlog series focusing on Thai individuals living abroad and their experiences being far from home. The same name ไกลบ้าน is also widely known as King Chulalongkorn's collection of written archives of his travels around Europe in 1907 that document his reflections on inhabiting a foreign space. Articulating the conception of Glai Ban as a phenomenological experience where one becomes (re)oriented in an unfamiliar place that is not one’s home, this paper explores the primacy of nostalgia/memories of memories and situated knowledge in the process of (re)making Thailand/home within and beyond the locality of Thailand among Thai individuals in the diaspora. Moreover, the paper brings in the question of ethnic otherness within the Thai diaspora and explores how it complicates ideas of ‘Thainess’ and Thailand.

Authentic Beyond Ethnicity: The Case of Thai Restaurateurs in Los Angeles**Nida Sanglimsuwan, University of California, Los Angeles**

Inspired by the popular consumer demand for “authentic Thai food,” this paper is an interview-based project investigating how producers grapple with the concept of authenticity in the context of non-white ethnic restaurants in the United States. Using an abductive analysis of sixteen semi-structured in-depth interviews with Thai restaurateurs of Thai restaurants located in Los Angeles, I challenge the idea of authenticity as commonly understood along

ethnonational lines. Previous work on authenticity in ethnic restaurants has focused on performances of “cultural” or categorical authenticity and how producers comply with or defy expectations of authenticity. I argue that these studies are based on a consumer-driven underlying assumption that restaurateurs always seek to engage with the concept, whereas the interview data shows that producers are not necessarily concerned with questions of authenticity. When authenticity is salient, however, producers engage with and navigate multiple types of authenticity that I label as categorical, individual, and signature authenticity. I organize these into a novel typology that I call the colors of authenticity, which I compare and contrast with existing typologies. Ultimately, this work contributes to the sociological understanding of authenticity, cultural production, consumer-producer interactions, and cultural (e)valuation.

Panel 5: Buddhist Historiographies (2 papers)

Palladium and Power in the Theravada Buddhist World: The Journey of Phra Bang Buddha in 1867, Zhang Chen, University of Macau

The Phra Bang Buddha, a standing Buddha statue in the Abhaya mudra, has been revered as the palladium or protective deity of Laos since the ancient Lan Xang period (1353-1707). Due to the decline and fragmentation of the Lan Xang kingdom, this sacred statue was twice captured by Siam from the kingdom of Vientiane in 1778 and 1828, respectively. However, after much pleading, the statue, along with numerous offerings, was finally bestowed upon the Luang Phrabang Kingdom in 1867. Prior to its departure, a grand procession was organized for the statue, commencing from Wat Chakrawatrachawat, where the statue was enshrined, and concluding at the Rajakij Winitchai Pavilion, where it would board the ship. A royal boat from Siam was dispatched to escort the statue from Bangkok to Nonthaburi. Ultimately, the statue was transported to Luang Phrabang via boat, traversing the Nan River and the Mekong River. The journey of the Phra Bang Buddha in 1867 serves as an excellent case study for observing and comprehending the interaction between Theravada Buddhism and the regional order in mainland Southeast Asia. Previous studies in religious and historical contexts have failed to shed sufficient light on this interaction, specifically how Siam employed various strategies to utilize Theravada Buddhism in consolidating its regional power.

What Was Hidden Behind the mass-produced Buddhist Reverse Glass paintings of Siam? Catherine Raymond, Northern Illinois University

"Visual archaeology" is an emerging transdisciplinary approach in museology and art history providing a methodology for unpacking and integrating the economic, the geographical, the commercial, the aesthetic, and the religious indicators encompassed across four centuries of the Southeast Asian Reverse Glass Painting (RGP) tradition; as manifest, demonstrably, within any single such creation on glass. E.g., in Lanna RGPs largely served to illustrate venues and artifacts comprising the twelve year cycle of pilgrimages to temples extending from Bodhgaya to Laos but mainly in Northern Thailand. Each such site was emblemized by a specific animal. In Mae Hongson, also in Lanna, but quite distinct from the Siamese approach there to RGP, was that in both the Shan and Burmese Buddhist traditions —historically linked there by the lucrative Salween riverine teakwood trade route— asserted that for the devout, a key lifetime attainment was to produce or facilitate exemplars of Vessantara Jataka manuscripts

and iconography for local temple usage. Under the Siamese King Rama III, with the flourishing then of Sino-Siamese commercial and cultural exchanges, as the Chinese had already become proficient in producing RGPs, artists there in both communities focused their RGP production into Buddhist devotional materials. The essential glass panes, however, were imported from Europe, thus rare and precious. But when technologies for locally-made glass were adopted in the early 20th century, mass production of RGPs became possible: with the Chinese mercantile diaspora typically engaging local Siamese artisans on an assembly-line basis so that relatively inexpensive RGPs became practicable for ordinary people to include as the central features of their home altars.

Panel 6: Revisionist Histories of the Nation (2 papers)

Preserving Political Narratives: Collecting Anti-Communist Posters in Thailand
Hao Phan, Northern Illinois University

This presentation is the result of an investigation into the preservation of the anti-communist posters produced by the United States Information Service (USIS) in Thailand in the 1960s. The posters were part of the propaganda run by the United States in their fighting against communist influences in Thailand during the Cold War. They are valuable research materials that offer insights into ideologies, social attitudes, propaganda techniques, and artistic expressions in the context of anticommunist sentiments at the time. The anti-communist posters are also historical artifacts, serving as evidence of the involvement of the United States in Thailand. Printed and distributed in large quantities in 1960s, today it is almost impossible to find these posters in Thailand, an intriguing fact that was perhaps the result of both library practices and public perception concerning the materials. The availability of these posters in the United States is quite limited. Northern Illinois University (NIU) Libraries is one of a few institutions that collect some of these posters. My presentation focusing on the preservation of Thai anti-communist posters includes three parts. First, I will provide the historical context of these posters, explaining why they were produced. Second, I will show what posters are available today and where to find them. Third, I will discuss the posters collected by NIU Libraries, including information from my interview with the person who donated the posters, Mr. George Smith, a Peace Corp volunteer working in Northeast Thailand from 1967 to 1969.

Len Prawatisat: Games, Gaming, and Thai History
Taylor Easum, Indiana University

Play and playfulness has a long history in Thai politics. While there has been significant scholarship on childhood games, gambling and gaming in Thai economic history, as well as a wide variety of research on the more recent impact of video games in Thailand, this research project aims to use games and gaming as a lens through which to examine popular conceptions of Thai politics and history. In this presentation, I examine two concrete examples of gamified representations of Thai politics and history: Coconut Empire and Koenig von Siam. Both games represent the potential and peril of pop cultural representations of Thai politics and history. One plays on popular critical notions of Thailand as a flawed democracy, and uses the coded language of gameplay to critique the entrenched military, royalist, and political elites in Thai society. The latter shows the influence of mapping and colonial-era notions of competition through a popular genre of board game that reflects a more royalist-nationalist

view of history. I argue that although games might seem unserious by nature, they are in fact worthy of serious consideration, both as a potential critique of the status-quo, and as potentially problematic avenues where problematic notions of history, identity, and power persist.

Panel 7: Economics, Education, and Gaming (3 papers)

Unraveling Deindustrialization: China's Role in Reshaping Thailand's Manufacturing Landscape, Possapon Charoenporn, SOAS University of London

Deindustrialization poses a significant global challenge, especially in the Global South, where it occurs prematurely, leading to developmental setbacks, widening inequalities, and potential political instability. While the impact of China on the decline of manufacturing activities in developing countries has been acknowledged, its specific influence on deindustrialization in the Global South remains underexplored. This paper aims to fill this gap by investigating how China has shaped deindustrialization and regional economic development in Thailand post the 1997 Asian financial crisis. The study focuses on two crucial industrial areas: the Bangkok Metropolitan Region, representing the traditional industrial hub, and the Eastern Economic Corridor prioritized for reindustrialization. Preliminary fieldwork focuses on the textiles and automotive sectors, which have experienced the lowest growth. Employing a mixed-method approach involving interviews, institutional and policy mapping, and statistical analyses, the study draws upon the synthesized theoretical frameworks of Geographical Political Economy (GPE) and Global Production Network (GPN) to analyze the phenomena. The research posits that China has played a pivotal role in influencing Thailand's industrial development path, impacting both deindustrialization and reindustrialization, with diverse implications across industrial sectors and uneven geographical patterns. By shedding light on China's role in Thailand's industrial dynamics, this research seeks to contribute insights to the understanding of deindustrialization in the Global South. Additionally, it provides a nuanced analysis of the complex interactions between China, regional economic development, and industrial sectors.

Leading Public-Private Partnership Through the Network Governance of Early Childhood Education: A Case of Community Engagement in Thai Eco-Industrial Estate Phrueksaphong Visuthduangdusdee, Indiana University

Over the past few decades, the emergence and evolution of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and eco-industrial development have led to increased public-private partnerships for several sustainable development projects in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC), Thailand. Significantly, educational development programs became among the leading programs for creating shared value (CSV). The author examines network governance and institutional arrangement to understand industry-community engagement in early childhood education as a strategic human resource management. The manuscript is drawn from the field experiences of empirical research in Rayong province, Thailand. The findings show that network governance of early childhood education was established and developed by "Dow Thailand Group" and the public-private partnership. The community engagement approach and institutional arrangement were used to achieve sustainable development goals in the action arena.

"Wait! Let's Break the Cycle!": Teachers' Professional Identity Formation in Thailand

Duangkamon Winitkun, Northern Illinois University

Previous studies on teachers' professional identity were mostly based on Western contexts and assumptions and that cannot be assumed to be applicable for all cultures. This research presents struggles in pre-service teachers' identity formation due to power distance in Thai school settings. Hofstede's cultural dimension theory was employed as a theoretical framework of this study. In two 60-to-90-minute life story interviews, five Thai pre-service teachers from the North and Northeastern regions of Thailand were asked to narrate their past educational experience and their experiences during their student teaching. A thematic analysis of these interviews revealed two robust themes that influenced pre-service teachers' identity formation 1) power distance and classroom interaction and 2) power distance between pre-service teachers and tenured teachers at the training sites. The results of this study provided a cultural description of these phenomenon that explains the interaction between individuals in Thai school environment and emphasizes the needs of educational reform in Thailand.

Panel 8: Film, Literature and Media (4 papers)**Searching for the soul through journey, inspired by Somdet Ya, in *Yim*, a Thai documentary-drama, Pogkrong Boon-Long, Thammasat University**

Yim, or in English, *Smile*, is a short Thai docudrama made in 2006 to express gratitude to King Bhumibol Adulyadej on the Sixtieth Anniversary Celebrations of His Majesty's Accession to the Throne. The film, which is on YouTube, portrays the female protagonist who is making a documentary film about a young student living upcountry while she struggles with certain teen crises. The leading character successfully completes her mission after she gains her serenity, empowered by her surroundings at The Princess Mother Memorial Park, or in Thai, Suan Somdet Ya, in Thonburi District. This article aims to explore and analyze the creation of the main character in this film which provides the vital data, with textual analysis being the key method in this study. The concept of representation and semiotics are applied to data analysis. The author of this article, who is also the producer and screenwriter for *Yim*, most notably explores how the female protagonist in the film is created with the attention of women's experiences relatedly constructed through the virtue of the Princess Mother, or in Thai, Somdet Ya, and His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. She has also been through the healing process for her suffering in this journey of work, strongly encouraged by Somdet Ya and His Majesty The King.

Canals, Cars, and Calamity: Traffic Jams and Flooding in Bangkok Past, Present, Future, John F. Hartmann, Northern Illinois University

Past. This presentation will proceed by looking back at urban traffic congestion and flooding in Bangkok a generation ago. Two short stories by Wanich Jarungkitanan illuminate sudden social change that followed in the wake of almost overnight changes in modes of transportation and rapid, uncontrolled urbanization. The loss of traditional culture began in earnest when roads replaced canals and was accelerated by the building frenzy that took place during the American phase of the war in Indochina. Wanich narrates the punishing economic and emotional effect that rapid urbanization has on the young who are lured by the lights of the big city. Switching gears from fiction to science is a Thai researcher's geographic modeling and social analysis published in *Social Science Review* (sangkhomasat paritat) in 1976. It

looks back in history, examines the congestion of that moment in time, and offers possible solutions through renewing and repurposing the infrastructure of the canal system. The author presents three different classical theoretical models of urban design, none of which fit the unique cultural practices and economic calculations of the Thai. In her conclusion, she wonders aloud if the contemporary plans for constructing alternative means of moving people and goods will solve the problem of traffic congestion without disadvantaging the poor. Present. Moving into the present, an attempt at assessing the current situation of flood management will be made. Future. Finally, a dark Sci-Fi vision of a future submerged Bangkok will be drawn from the book *Windup Girl*. Conference attendees are encouraged to read the book and Wanich's story, "The Capital" in advance of the meeting.

Crossing Cultures: Foreign Ghost Stories Told by Thai Narrators
Chanintorn Pensute, Chiang Mai University

The research article "Crossing Cultures: Foreign Ghost Stories Told by Thai Narrators" examines the definition of ghosts and beliefs about ghosts in various cultures through documentary research and content analysis. The study selects 13 ghost stories from 9 countries told by Thai narrators from YouTube's The Ghost Radio Channel. The research findings reveal that these stories reflect a shared belief in supernatural phenomena beyond natural explanations among both foreign nationals and Thai people. Language differences pose a barrier to communication between senders and receivers of messages, but the narrators used technology to overcome this obstacle. The narrators also linked the stories to cultural contexts they were familiar with and used religious beliefs they held to explain the stories they encountered abroad. On folklore, the study shows that adhering to one's cultural context may create conflicts with other cultures. Keywords: ghost, story, culture, folklore

Urban Hauntings: Vengeful Female Ghosts in Contemporary Thai Horror Cinema
Raiden Montero, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Thailand has been well-known for its terrifying horror film industry ever since *Nang Nak* (Nonzee Nimibutr, 1999) sparked the worldwide rise in popularity of Thai ghost films. This paper will discuss the Vengeful Female Ghost (VFG) trope in Thai horror cinema. The VFG trope is centered around a malevolent female ghost whose driving force is to enact revenge on those who wronged her when she was alive. This trope made its way into Thai horror in the early 2000's with popular films like *Buppah Rahtree* (Yuthlert Sippapak, 2003) and *Shutter* (Banjong Pisanthakul and Parkpoom Wongpoom, 2004) taking inspiration from the international rise of Japanese Horror films that established the VFG trope, such as *Ringu* (Hideo Nakata, 1998) and *Ju On: The Grudge* (Takashi Shimizu, 2002). Often set in urban areas like Bangkok with the Thai vengeful ghost, *phii tai hong*, as the VFG, these films reflect traditional values haunting urban Thais that are being consumed by the 'evils of modernity', as well as anxieties of older generations over the upcoming, traditionless urban generations (Ancuta, 2016; Kitiarsa, 2011). The methodology consists of film readings from an intersectional feminist lens respective to urban Thai identities commonly displayed in VFG films like late adolescent cis-male/female, poor migrant worker, middle-class business worker, and high school student. This paper will answer an overarching question: what can critical readings of VFG films add to academic discourse of social identity in contemporary urban Thai society?

Panel 9: Politics: From the Street to the Ballot (3 papers)**"#MuteluforDemocracy: Gender and Modernity in the Rebranding of Magic in the 2020-2021 Thai Protests; Abhichana Anna Naiyapatana, Cornell University**

Encompassing lucky charms and protective amulets, worship of deities from different religious traditions, and various divinatory practices, the subculture of Mutelu played a significant role in the Thai protests of 2020-2021. Despite the seeming contradiction of incorporating premodern magic into a modern, pro-democracy movement, Peter Jackson argues in his book *Capitalism Magic Thailand* (2022) that neoliberal capitalism and new media are actively producing new forms of enchantment. However, the book does not address the gendered aspect of this process. Building on Jackson's scholarship, this paper argues that Mutelu is rebranding Saiyasat aimed at young cosmopolitan female and queer consumers. This rebranding eliminates the negative, superstitious connotation of the practice and transforms it into trendy and globalized products and services. The popularity of Mutelu on Twitter led to its incorporation into the 2020-2021 protests, eventually resulting in the creation of the #MuteluForDemocracy subgroup of the movement. This paper suggests that the prominence of Mutelu in the protest movement signifies a deliberate female and queer rejection of orthodox magic and religious practices favored by the patriarchal military-monarchy conservative political establishment. The paper offers two case studies: one highlighting the shift towards Hindu deities as a rejection of Thai Theravada Buddhism and the deification of the monarchy, such as the worship of Chulalongkorn and Phra Siam Thewatirat, and another showcasing the adoption of tarot as an alternative divinatory practice in lieu of Horasat court divination.

The Turning Point of Voting Behavior in the Thailand Election of 14th May 2023: A Case Study of Chiang Mai Province, Pailin Phuweenaphan, Chiang Mai University

This research aims to investigate the changes in voting behavior while exploring the electoral campaign strategies employed by parties and candidates in Chiang Mai Province. The findings of this research reveal that voters are increasingly inclined to cast their votes based on party ideologies. They firmly believe that their votes can play a crucial role in reshaping the landscape of Thai politics by reducing the influence of the military, which has dominated the political scene for almost a decade. A noteworthy aspect of this shift is the victory of the Move Forward Party (MFP) over the long-dominant PheuThai Party (PTP) in Chiang Mai Province since 2001. The MFP can be attributed to the incorporation of young and fresh candidates, supported by a campaign strategy that proactively addressed concerns related to the actions of the military government. As a result, the MFP gains victory in 7 out of 10 constituencies and achieved favorable results in the party list ballots. Moreover, the research highlights a significant decline in the influence of vote-buying as the primary determinant of electoral success. In conclusion, this research presents the transformative nature of voting behavior in Chiang Mai Province, emphasizing the evolving characteristics of voters across different generations. The success of the MFP exemplifies the effectiveness of strategic candidate selection and proactive campaign approaches.

The Bhumjaithai Party's strategies to expand its political dominance in the Isan region in the 2023 Thai general election, Patawee Chotanan, Ubonratchatani University

Based on public opinion polls before the Thai general election on May 14, 2023, the Bhumjaithai Party was not hardly popular with the people. However, according to the results

of the elections, the party had 71 elected MPs, followed by the Moving Forward Party with 151 seats and the Pheu Thai Party with 131 MPs. From the north-east of Thailand, also known as Isan, a stronghold of the Pheu Thai Party, the Bhumjaithai Party received 35 MPs, which is more than the party received from 16 constituencies in the 2019 election. The purpose of this article is to investigate the Bhumjaithai Party's strategies for strengthening its political dominance in the Isan area in the 2023 general election. The Bhumjaithai Party's electoral strategies had been implemented prior to the announcement of the election by the Election Commission of Thailand. The party established local networks through local politicians and the Village Health Volunteers (VHVs.) so that they would help its candidate campaign in the 2023 election. As a ruling party, it gave more importance to the development of the provinces which had its MPs like Buriram, Nakhon Phanom Surin or Sisakate than those that did not. Many politicians from other parties having won the previous elections were persuaded to join the party to run for the forthcoming elections. Rather than delivering their party's policies to the public, its candidates campaigned through a patronizing connection with their constituents.

Panel 10: Gender and Queer Studies (4 papers)

Queer Commerce and Representation in Thailand

Texanna Faulk, Midwestern State University, Texas

For the last three decades, Thailand has been known as a lavish site for gay tourism and even seen as a sanctuary or safe haven for members of the LGBT community. This status has greatly enhanced the country's national and economic status around the world. Three main ways this has been achieved has been through gay tourism, the commodification of transgender women in media, and the economic success that came with the emergence of the Boys Love (BL) industry in the early to mid 2000s. All of these components contributed to a budding economy and national image both within the country and internationally. This argument will consist of a historical review of the "queer booms" from 1970-1990 and the more recent resurgence in the 2000s, the cultural significance of Thailand being known as a "gay paradise" and how this monetarily impacted the state's economic and political image, the media presence of trans women and their lived experiences, and finally, the global phenomenon of Boys Love and how shows, such as 2gether, The Eclipse, and Sotus, have garnered economic success and social acceptance within the country. Additionally, some fundamental theorists and historians considered in this work will be Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Peter Jackson.

Gender Movement: Writing Thom (Tomboy) History

Emily Donald, Cornell University

Can we study thom ทอม (tomboy) history? What might a historical framing of thom masculinity do for understandings of gender history more broadly? This paper explores the possibilities of thom history through archival research on Thai media sources from the 1960s to the 1980s. The paper argues that, while thom is a relatively recent category, emerging in the 1960s but not widely popular until the 1970s, tracing its subtle movements in the archive yields insights about the messy social lives of gender categories. Modern gender categories, the ones we think we know so well, come to be known only through unpredictable processes that never actually reach social consensus. Today, thom means different things to different people. What we might call its "official" definition is: women who take up and remake

masculine styles of dress and are interested romantically in women. But this does not capture the social assumptions, historical baggage, and diversity of those voices that animate this gender category. Thom, I suggest, is about gender movement, it is a category with no fixed origins that rests on a shaky social consensus and incorporates movement in terms of its definitions and associations. Thom can be trendy, fashionable, and modern, as well as a dangerous and corrupting social “problem.” Thom can mean butch lesbian and it can share experiences and dialogues with the emerging categories of non-binary and transman, but it is also its own set of practices and histories. This paper explores thom as a history of gender movement.

Queer Rave and the Aesthetics of Rawness in Bangkok’s Nightlife

Rory Fewer, University of California, Riverside

Bangkok and its nightlife scene have long been considered a type of “paradise” for queer communities, an image sanctioned by government bodies such as the Tourism Authority of Thailand. However, this visual economy of inclusion has not translated to an expansion of political rights and instead posits the “queer” as a modern political identity at the center of various power differentials. Under these conditions, a handful of Bangkok-based party collectives operating under the label of “queer” have emerged over the past five years with varying approaches to carving out community-based queer nightlife spaces. This paper examines the musico-aesthetic qualities of self-described “underground queer raves” in Bangkok to ask how they perform the work of queering despite needing to negotiate the neoliberal articulation of the “queer” as commodity object. I ask how the rave’s soundscape of distortion, warping, and otherworldly textures functions as a strategy of “rawness” that resists the threat of its sanitization. At the same time, I question how the aesthetics of futurism underlying the genre of electronic dance music might adhere to a progress narrative of modernity that excludes those who sit outside of its designation of “queer.” How might the aesthetic of rawness in the joyous atmosphere of a rave serve as a technology of queer failure that transposes pain into the possibility for pleasure, allowing listeners to hear and feel new social reconfigurations? How does the rave operate as a space of imagining outside a politics of opposition, and what might be the limitations of a queer “underground” in a city whose queer nightlife publics are famously hyper-visible?

Mapping the contemporary Thai feminist movement in Latin American feminism with ‘Sidaluifai’ (2020) and ‘Un Violador en Tu Camino’ (2019)

Jittawat Kunyamoorn, The University of Texas at Austin

In this paper, I aim to encourage a critical dialogue between contemporary feminist movements in Southeast Asia and Latin America under the notion of Global South feminism. I investigate the trajectory of ‘Sidaluifai’ (2020), a Thai feminist protest song and performance (re)created by Feministplodaek collective, who adapts the Spanish original version of ‘Un Violador en Tu Camino’ (2019), created by LasTesis, a feminist collective in Chile. I ask three main questions: how does the Thai adaptation of the Chilean feminist song and performance contribute to feminist movements in the Global South? how does such adaptation link the contemporary feminist movements in Thailand and Chile? and what characteristics or challenges of the contemporary Thai feminist movement are reflected upon such adaptation? My first analysis attempts to chart the contextualization and localization of the Chilean feminist performance in Thailand by comparing the theme, language, and cultural references

used in the lyrics of the Spanish and Thai version. My second analysis focuses on the strategies and aesthetics of the feminist demonstration shared by the Thai Feminist plodaek collective and the Chilean LasTesis collective. My last analysis offers a reflection on the contemporary Thai feminist movement, grounding on the act of ‘translating’ the Chilean feminist performance into Thai society. I finally argue that the particular linguistic, cultural, and political contexts in Thailand reflected through the Thai adaptation of the Chilean feminist performance have broadened the horizon of Global South women’s lived experiences, knowledge, and creativity, and have decentralized the movement from Global North feminism.

Panel 11: Shifting Upland-Lowland Relations and the Politics of Fire in the North (2 papers, 1 film)

Keeping the State at a Distance through Legibility: A Karen Youth Group’s Efforts to Maintain their Swidden System in Thailand

Mitchell Rigert, Northern Illinois University

In this paper I examine the activities of the youth group of a particular upland Sgaw Karen community in Thailand within the framework of political ecology. Many of these youth have recently returned to their home village since pursuing educational and employment opportunities with a vision to advocate on behalf of their cultural heritage. I treat the phenomenon of village youth group in its current construction as emergent in that its members utilize and leverage modern communication platforms such as social media and attend extra-village promotional events to a greater extent than ever before, giving them and the culture(s) they represent unprecedented exposure. I particularly address the ways in which the group communicates to various audiences the merits of swidden agriculture, a central aspect of Karen identity. In doing so I contextualize swiddens’ historical and present politicization and reframe James C. Scott’s notion of “escape agriculture” to suggest that despite the proliferation of technologies that demolish distance, shifting cultivation in certain contexts still exists outside the states full reach. I argue that the quest for state recognition of this system along with the legal rights to practice it, however, hinges on a novel strategy of representation that prioritizes visibility. To support my argument, I provide ethnographic accounts of the ways my Karen youth group interlocutors mobilize this technique to rectify negative, state-generated stereotypes, replacing them with a positive, locally informed, Indigenous-centered counter discourse that emphasizes swiddens’ ecological and cultural significance in order to secure and legitimize its existence.

“We are in a much better position these days”: Indigenous Peoples’ shifting status in Thai national imaginaries, Micah Morton, Northern Illinois University

In this paper, I draw on recent research and exchanges with certain (upland) Indigenous persons in north Thailand, especially with members of the Akha community. I examine the questions of if, how, and why the positions of Akha and other Indigenous Peoples in the country are shifting in broader Thai imaginings of the nation. In examining these positions, I broadly touch on issues ranging from coffee/ethnic entrepreneurship to ethno-agro tourism, social movements, electoral politics, museum representations, the politics of research, and upland-lowland/rural-urban dynamics. While many individuals that I spoke with and recent developments in Thailand suggest that the overall position of Indigenous Peoples is gradually

improving, other developments complicate this picture and suggest that Indigenous Peoples continue to be heavily stigmatized as so-called “hill tribes” and experience discrimination and marginalization, especially with respect to legal citizenship, land tenure, and cultural rights.

Short-film “Fire” (2021; 8.19 min; Chanintorn Pensute, Director)

Chanintorn Pensute, Chiang Mai University

The high level of PM 2.5 concentration has become a significant issue affecting people's lives in Chiang Mai. What will the future look like without urgent actions to stop the problem?