

COMPLETION REPORT

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【Subject of Research Project】

Japan-Thailand Collaborations and The Lives of Thai Female Civilians in Chiang Mai During The Second World War (1941-1945)

As the Second World War spread into Southeast Asia in 1941, Thailand was the only sovereign state who proclaimed alliance with Japan. This alliance resulted in distinct characteristics and mannerism, which inherently influenced the lives of Thai citizens. Cultural collaborations were at the core and forefront of this alliance, which both countries attempted to foster and promote. Cultural projects were therefore launched around Thailand, including in Chiang Mai, a northern province that had served as a vital military base for sending troops to Burma. The objective of these projects was to rally Thai citizens to support Japanese troops and the Thai government's war policies. Geographically, Chiang Mai is located in Thailand's far north and is connected by rail to the capital, Bangkok. Consequently, Japanese troops stationed in Chiang Mai were forced to rely on locals for trade, necessities, food, and so forth. Furthermore, the locals in this region were aware of cultural contrasts, as a number of Japanese had previously worked and established businesses in Chiang Mai, which facilitated a more welcoming and affable relationship between the two groups. This was however in contrast to other parts of Thailand; for example, in Ban Pong in Ratchaburi province, where the Thailand-Burma railway was being built, or in the northeastern region of Thailand, where the anti-Japanese movement was strong.

Female Chiang Mai residents especially benefited from the aforementioned dynamics, which helped them to avoid war's hardships and its impact on their lives to some extent. According to historical records, the Thai government and local authorities were able to assist families of Thai soldiers who were sent to Shan state in Burma to support Japanese troops. The support was in a number of ways such as providing food and necessities, medical treatment, rent payment, and housing restoration, anytime necessary. Furthermore, women actively participated in the Thai government's cultural war, while assisting the Thai army on the front lines by joining the Red Cross and soothing soldiers undergoing treatment in hospitals. Some female teachers continued teaching in schools. Some women pursued their Japanese studies while serving as translators for the Japanese army. Several landladies provided money or reduced rent for Thai soldiers' families.

The data for this study were acquired from official government documents kept at Thailand's National Archives, oral histories from Payap University in Chiang Mai, and wartime memoirs of the locals. The author has utilized a historical method, situating the research within Thailand's cultural and political conditions throughout the war. Furthermore, the author has used a critical media analysis technique to examine narratives used in the storytelling of local women. Although these women's oral histories or life diaries reflect wartime hardships, they do not harshly or adversely characterize Japanese forces. On the other hand, they were concerned

about telling their stories and achievements that were attributable to the war. These are vital peeks at battle events through the eyes and lives of Thai women in Chiang Mai. This study could potentially serve as a foundation for further research into the lives of women in various areas of Thailand, allowing scholars to analyse and comprehend differences or parallels in civilians' lives in the course of Southeast Asian warfare, as well as the consequences of collaboration with Japan.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

Phantprasit, Pattarat. "The Role of Newspapers in Representing the Alliance between Thailand and Japan during the Second World War (1942 – 1945)." [In review to be published in *Critical Media Histories in Southeast Asia*]