

Creating a Community History through the rituals and beliefs of Laos immigrants in Northeast Thailand

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Abstract

To understand local history and collective memories, there is needs to study and understand the complexity of social relations, which are various components and concepts because the structure of the local communities arisen from linkage in various dimensions. The ideas to understand phenomenon of local history are required to link information from various branches of science, whether it is the collective memories, creating of legend and community historical monument. These ideas are as follows.

1) On the concept of creating a legend (Myth-legend), it was created to satisfy the imagination and spirit of individuals and community groups in each period. Most legends are the creation of a story or narrative of the sacred images and narratives, including of clan leaders to influence communities (community leader), warrior/heroes to protect the earth, or stories about the supernatural. It is also including of god, ghost, angel, or tree nymphs, which are involved in the beings of the community. The data comes from the myth is a story that will make social and cultural understanding of the people in the past. It is including of ability to understand the collective culture of ethnic groups that have similar social and cultural. A legendary hero in Chaiyaphum and Nakhon Ratchasima Province of

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Thailand has been influenced by similar ideas that have been created with supernatural or miraculous in battle or combat. The Legend of shooting with a gun that can't kill the serpent. The serpent was a special person who can't be shot and the gun can not kill him. There must be the efforts of the subfamily in Laos to kill the hero with a spear in the stabbing of an anal plug up. Therefore, the system of thoughts, beliefs, and history to convey the life of the community are associated with the creation of collective memories shared through the telling of the legend by using the symbols to link from the past to future generations and to create its own identity (Self-construct), and a sense of pride and unity in the community for the sake of unity. In this study, the use of an images and beliefs about the legendary creator of Pho Phraya Lae Chaiyaphum is a visual representation of a group of community leaders with prestige and influence to the community, plus getting the promotion from central government. When those important people died, their stories of a handful of states are acting as the legendary hero of the areas that future generations get to know. The courage is a martyr to the nation and fighting against an opponent to protect and to maintain that city.

2) The concept of collective memories of the community will be transferred out to meet the intent of relevant parties, whether inside government organizations or communities. The major objective of creation of collective memories is trying to create a unique community, join forces to create a healing unity for the social peace. This can be seen from the format of the annual ceremony of sacrifice and the story through the people in each period. From Ben Anderson's work about the creation of imagined community, he wrote a critique on the public concept of creating a community that the state can control and manage according to their wills. If you compare it to create collective memories in the Thai state, we will see

a phenomenon similar to Ben Anderson's story in the history of heroes, heroines in Thai history that made Thai people "remember and forget" the story of the past.

3) The concept of monument was used to create the legendary city or community with characteristics of public appearance or spiritual bond that is the center of the community. But the history on monument building was pre-determined by state plan and policies of national unity. This is the representatives of the monument or sanctuary has to be associated with the central state in nature, as the successor of state policy.

Introduction

The monument as "Memorial monument" invites the public to share the past, the local history. The purpose of building a monument is the establishment and usage of collective histories for the benefit of the state. It was built as concrete, tangible and clearly visible. You can easily access, or pay homage to the arousal of. Thus, the location of the monument is located in public areas at the heart or center of the city. The monument is the development of the Thai state and can be used to describe the social class of the governor.

The form of a monument Pho Phraya Lae has imitated the concept of the statue of King Rama III which was the concept of the establishment of a committee for monument building in the period 2475, in order to build a monument around the country. The highlight feature of this memorial statue is its location near the growing city in those days. The open space is a square with high statue base for people to look up to the statue. The statue is in great position with a dignified look to represent of the supremacy power.

The objective on building of Pho Phraya Lae monument is to create a conscious purpose on living together with harmony and in the unity of the community. A Pho Phraya Lae monument has been presented as the representation of love and sacrifice for country and community. So the idea of creating communal history or social history is a history that focuses on people's lives and communities and factor in the life of the society. To understand the social history of any community, factors and the actor to local community and people come from both external and internal factors. Attempts by the state ideology of nationalism that came up in various provinces of Thailand have created local legend in response to these policies in an era.

Myths and Legends series, originally building process.

Pho Phraya Lae to the legendary city of Chaiyaphum has been renewed and built up in two types of building; first type from a set of knowledge creating of the state, and the second type from local people or communities, the majority of data is the first material. It is presentation of the loyalty of Siam during the third reign of Siam until he get that nickname "Loyal Chumphon" with the following information.

"Phraya Lae is a native of Laos who served in the court of Anu Vientiane. After that, he migrate his family to settle at Ban Hongnamkhun, Sung Noen, Nakhon Ratchasima, on the 2360. He has migrated later to new homes at Non Nam Aom, or Chilong, Muang District, Chaiyaphum Province. With persistence, perseverance, and the leadership of the serpent, he has been recognized as the chief to gather the people who settled in 12 nearby villages to collect tribute. It is a tribute to the subfamily of Vientiane. He was rewarded by his passion for the subfamily as Khun loyal Chumphon. Later, at home, there was the draught problem at Chilong. They were moved at year of 2365 to Baan Luang or presently called as "Ban Nong Lhord" and

“Ban Nhong Pla Thao”, Muang District, Chaiyaphum Province. It is a direct tribute to Thailand and presented to His Majesty King Rama III. Lator, he was nominated and got a rank of nobility as “loyal to Chumphon (Lae)”.

Later in the year 2369, Vientiane the subfamily, the dominion of the Rattanakosin troops to attack Nakhon Ratchasima. Lady Mo had gathered the army from nearby territories to fight on the battle to defeat the subfamily. The Lao military has taken part in Chaiyaphum Province and seduce the Phraya Phakdi Chumphon(Lae) he was a friend as well. But the loyal to Chumphon (Lae) did not betray the Chakri dynasty. He were arrested and killed at the big tamarind tree beside the Nong Pla Thao which is the Chao Phraya, the location of the current shrine of Phraya Phakdi Chumphon(Lae).

With loyalty of the Phaya Phakdi Chumphon, people of Chaiyaphum City have united the court to serve as a respectful homage and worship the souls at Nong Pla Thao. Lator, the people of Chaiyaphum, including of official public and traders, have united to gather money to build a monument to remember the goodness of the loyal to Chumphon (Lae). He is notable as elegant as a cherished sacred town of Chaiyaphum, at the intersection of the road near City Hall Gallery and provides an annual celebration, since the opening of the monument on January 12, 2510 onwards.

This set of local history makes people who feel the story of the heroic struggle against an enemy or opponent that he is a legendary symbol of the subfamily opponent. Which corresponds to Nithi Aewsriwong’s concept on creating the myth of the nation will have to make an enemy or opponent. This is to the separation of these two parties and their allies. It is evident from the words highlighted in the story, the word “surrender” and “loyalty”.

On the second type of data, it is a telling about the legend from the villagers. For this type of myth, the study were analyzed from a sample of young researchers on local history Northeast Group 2 projects of title “the

belief of Ban Nong Khun to Ya Mo and Pho Phraya Lae from past to present” Kham Thale So Wittaya School, The Education Service Area Office 5, Nakhon Ratchasima province. It was mentioned that the legendary Pho Phraya Lae and relationships with local history in an interesting new perspective. The relationship between the Pho Phraya Lae and Thao Suranaree from the legendary tale as follows;

“MR. Lae is the mentor of Anu of Vientiane. Laos has been a leader to settle at Ban Nhong Khun for about two years to bring some people migrated to the city later in Chaiyaphum and surrendered to the Ya Mo, Madame Secretary of Nakhon Ratchasima. As a result, said the Empress is associated with Ya Mo. The villagers from Ban Nhong Khun beliefs about the relationships in the past and turbidity of the Pho Phraya Lae. He already has demonstrated loyalty to Ya Mo and the heroism involved in the battle field achievement. Both were discussed at the court of the miracles Pia, now is the beginning of Ya Mo miracle at Indian almond tree at Ban Nong Khun”.

Therefore, to create a set of community knowledge through the myth told by local elders, in a series of research projects and young researchers, has reflects the relationship of society and culture in the province of Chaiyaphum and Nakhon Ratchasima. People in the two areas have both the origins of this shared history and common ancestry Pho Phraya Lae. If the zoning ruled the province and the government started to be used during the reign of King Rama 5, people are divided by district and it can not be defined by geography and culture. Border line or frontier was a sacred ritual. We continue in the memories shared in the past. It can not be separated. However, this set of knowledge can describes the creation of collective memories and the identity of the community. But the collective memories associated with the separation and selection of the creation of a new historical occurs. For example, the replacements of belief about the

Pho Phraya Lae to Ya Mo with more respect and power than ever before. By creating a legend of myth and ritual sacrifice for the greater integration, the phenomenon of “fading past” has occurred in response to divided and ruled policy of the government.

On the contents of the myths about 2 Godfathers, it is interesting on the difference of the position to focus or remember. For the reason of this cause, researchers analyze how the faith of the two main causes of this difference is the power of the local organization and the power of local community. An identity beyond that of others (Superiority) such as image of a representative government, the capital city of the Northeast Region during that time was Nakhon Ratchasima province. It is a reflection of discourse that uses the word surrender or loyal to Ya Mo. Ya Mo is the sacred area of Nakhon Ratchasima together, so that Phraya Lae has been made in relation to the Korat as the loyalty to the city of Korat.

The meaning of collective memories associated with the action in local rituals. Ritual is a reflection of the power of faith in the memories of the past. These rituals were created or hosted by a faith act or participation in the story, such as in a sacrificial ritual Pho Phraya Lae is held two times per year. The first set of rituals was held by local community and the second was organized by the state. The annual event was held Pho Phraya Lae consecutive years since the construction and opening the monument of Phraya loyal Chumphon (Lae) in 2510. Mr. Chuay Namthanakorn, the governor of Chaiyaphum Province in those days, has held the initiative to celebrate the monument. Thereafter, the gallery is an annual event held annually during the period of January 12 to 20 for 9 days 9 nights at the circus Phraya loyal Chumphon (Lae) and at City Hall Gallery. The importance parts of the local rituals consist of ceremony to worship the sacred souls of the loyal Chumphon (Lae) and was

known affectionately called. “Pho Phraya Lae”. There also has the attendant ceremony as godfather elephants and the procession of the parade of a heritage culture of great charm. In addition, there is the Red Cross Fair in Chaiyaphum. So it is also the annual Red Cross Fair of Chaiyaphum Province.

The rituals performed by government agency, most of the activity are an expression of exalted heroism and loyalty to national institutions and the king. For the preparation and celebration, it is the government agency to manage everything from the ceremony, the attendance, and the work exhibitions of various government agencies. It is the report or the work of each unit of local government representatives to the central or the provincial governor. This concept reflects to the centralization of public administration. It is the integration of a monumental image as a representative of loyalty to national institutions. The ore was said to local leaders. The legendary story of the heroes is created and continuously implementation (continuity) of devotion. As we know from other similar stories such as Ya Mo bravery in repelling the subfamily, Naresuan expel Myanmar, Thao Thepkasattri and Thao Srisoonthorn fighting against Myanmar.

Rituals practiced by the villagers act as the leader is the festival parade “Baisi” or “the sixth month religious ceremony” On Baisi Festival parade of sixth month religious in the year 2553, there is 53 parade procession of Baisi religious ceremony with over fifty thousand people attend the continuing tradition of offering rice to “Pho Phraya Lae”, the first ruler of Chaiyaphum province.

Format of the Baisi parade of Chaiyaphum Province, all processions have been presented in the form of procession that conveys the loyalty of the Chaiyaphum people to Pho Phraya Lae. The procession was decorated beautifully with to present the authentic way of people’s life in Chaiyaphum province. Baisi from each community has different features and points of

interest from the first base section to the top section of Baisi. The final section is a prominent feature, especially from Hintang community to get Baisi stacked beautifully decorated with ancient style Baisi for each section. Each section elaborately decorates with Baisi to preserve traditional knowledge. For each of individual layer, it consists of thousands of tiny scales, petals and petal at a banana leaf on every floor of their persistence and perseverance of the technician and the cooperation of the people and communities.

On the Baisi rice offering ceremony, there has traditional dance with the reed mouth organ of Northeastern Region, and Isan style singing of “Mho Lum” It reflects the existence of the cultural identity of traditional ethnic Lao’s cultural heritage. The how to bring life and power to local history, rituals has made the local communities has power to negotiate with the state at a certain level. Announcement of its unity and resistance has made local area in the history of their own. It cause economic value added of promoting cultural tourism. For example, the annual festival of Pho Phraya Lae and Baisi the sixth month religion ceremony that have been promoted by both public and private sectors at a later time.



Pictures of Sacrifice performing in the sixth month religious ceremony

Ref.www.chaiyaphum.com

Research Analysis

In recognition of the legendary Pho Phraya Lae in the 13 villages in the province of Nakhon Ratchasima and Chaiphaphum, derives from a set of young researchers on local history project at Kham Thale School. It results on understanding of community history about the culture and beliefs of Laos immigrants from Vientiane in the period of the second and third reign of Thailand to the area of Nakhon Ratchasima and Chaiphaphum. The area has a collective history for over 200 years. The community has been told the people, the sacred area, and legends from generation to generation.

Circumstances that people have remembered or forget the past are common causes of social continuity and discontinuity. Cracks of the shared memories of community residents with actual changes in the social community left no power to society to solve the problem in their community.

Factor in the local area that make people try to revive their past collective memories to bonds of the past to tie them together and returned local library of intellectual properties of their ancestor back to be the shared property of people in the community. This is for availability of adjustment to eliminate the problems that their communities are facing with. Although the state is trying to create a model of government to centralize power and unity or loyalty to the central government, but one thing that the central government has overlooked is the memory of the communities. The community parents take care of each other in the past and demonstrate about the relationship of the people in the same cultural area.

Conclusion

The transferring process of memories into a social struggle while the authority has created an official history (Authority) in the knowledge of the life history, the methods of the state to make people appreciate the

history by the way of the education system, conveying of information, mass communication, rituals, myths and monuments.

At present time, the legendary hero and the local heroine has goes through the presentation from public policies with principles of centralized state authority (Centralization). Bringing of this concept has led to efforts to create unity to the nation. But the centralization of local spirit is not only defined in the minds of the local government area or simply on the building a monument to the hero worship. Collective memories about the history and local heritage through the telling can empower communities to realize the sharing of a common past in many communities over the definition of the word “village, district or province.”

On trying to make history and collective memories of the people in Nakhon Ratchasima and Chaiyaphum Province from a project of young local researchers, has enable us to understand the relationship of these two regions which are separated by the geographic conditions. But in geography and cultural aspect, these communities still have collective legend. So the myth or the creation of collective memories is creation of commandments (Charter) to people n next generation or communities to practice and believe in what is being built together to become a characteristic of local history birth from sharing a collective memory of the state and locals as mentioned above.

From Yongyuth Chu Wan’s work, it has been stated that studying local history should aim to build knowledge with all aspects. The local people should get involved in the process of creating collective memories that we need to review, improve, learn, and transfer within community. This process will result in strong local history to live all the time. This will result in a valuable self-knowledge with realization of local history of new quality. This is the abstract form of the deepest foundations of society that contribute to the local sustainable development.

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