

What is border in a borderless world?: an emerging local imagination



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Introduction

- How to imagine border in borderless world
- How to problematize and conceptualize border
- Shifting approaches from a marginal area to a living space
- Local imagination of the **in-between space**



1. Historical Background: Pre-Colonial World of S. E Asia

- Indigenous conception of boundary
- *Mandala* world of center-focus sphere of power without border
- Multi-centered states in tributary relations
- Overlapping territory
- Control of manpower not territory



2. Border as colonial political construction

- **Colonial mentality** - Territorialization of the state as control over natural resources
- Arbitrarily **political construct** without imagination
- Ben Anderson (1983) Nation-state as **Imagined Communities**
- Thongchai Winichakul (1994) **Siam Mapped** – nation as geo-body (territorial entity) with technology of mapping

3. Border myth vs border reality



- Border is constructed as center-periphery dichotomy under single sovereignty
- Border as marginal area –powerless- no-man’s land
- Edmund Leach (1960) : **The Frontiers of “Burma”** as complex relationship between hill and valley people-in between India and China

4. “Border” of ethnic complexities



- Louis Golomb (1978) Brokers of morality: Thai ethnic adaptation in a rural Malaysian Setting – selective uses of ethnicity –conflict avoidance
- Ryoko Nishii (1999) “Coexistence of religions: Muslim and Buddhist relationship on the west coast of southern Thailand” –cognatic kinship
- Patrick Jory (2008) “Luang Pho Thuat as a southern Thai cultural hero: popular religion in the integration of Patani”

5. Territorialization of border and citizenship



- Paiboon Hengsuwan (2012) 'In-between Lives: Negotiating Bordered Terrains of Development and Resource Management along the Salween River', Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis (Social Science), Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai



5. Territorialization of border and citizenship (cont.)

- Conflicts over Salween and Mekong river dam construction
- Contested border of ethnic conflicts
- Border violence and naked life
- Citizenship as territorialization



6. Negotiating life on the border

- Negotiating livelihood on both sides of the border
- Andrew Walker (1999) *The Legend of Golden Boat: Regulation, Trade and Traders, in the Borderlands of Laos, Thailand, China and Burma.*
- Nedson Pophiwa (2010) “Mobile livelihoods: the players involved in **smuggling** of commodities across the Zimbabwe-Mozambique border”
- **Formal vs informal economy**

7. Border Identity beyond border



- Donna K. Flynn (1997) “**We are border**: identity, exchange and the state along the Benin-Nigeria border”
- Joselp Chinyong Liow (2011) “Muslim identity, local networks, and **transnational Islam** in Thailand’s southern border provinces”

7. Border Identity beyond border (cont.)



- Anusorn Unno (2010) "'We Love 'Mr. King'": Exceptional Sovereignty, Submissive Subjectivity, and Mediated Agency in Islamic Southern Thailand', Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation (Anthropology), University of Washington, Washington DC.
- Negotiating border under multiple sovereignty

8. Imagining border as communal space



- Alexander Horstmann (2002) *Class, Culture and Space: The Construction and Shaping of Communal Space in South Thailand*.
- National border in ethnic and religious boundary
- Negotiating contested local space – cultural consumption in private and public sphere
- Social movement as a process of symbolic struggle for local authenticity and morality
- Buddhist and Islamic movement as middle-class based movement