

with a pattern corresponding to the original orchard blocks, and *muban-chad-san* (housing estate) of repetitive town houses, named *muban* Rachaville.

Accounts were that *Khlong* Bangsaothong used to be narrower and shallower in the past, enabling people to easily cross it; so it was the centre of the community, a space for transportation, social interaction, commercial business, and recreation. While it remains picturesque and a visiting place for tourists and an alternative transportation route to the river and beyond, its extreme pollution erodes former uses. A recent sign now proclaims “No fishing — forgiving zone”, perhaps warning of danger, certainly also upholding a basic Buddhist principle of not harming any living creature, but now also negating the most ancient basic function of the *khlong*, as a resource for food. Religion is invoked as comforting balm and rationalization for loss. There are nevertheless signs of other, perhaps earlier roles — so, from one respondent:

I think *khlong* is still important for people who live along it. Sometimes I still see them use water to bath and do other things. But if you talk about people who live in this [inner] area, it might not be like that anymore.

However, from another:

... people are too careless. They simply throw rubbish into the *khlong*. Although there is a boat cleaning rubbish from the *khlong*, people still continue doing that.

Similarly disappearing is the old sense of spatial continuity, though differently in different parts. In the surviving village along the *khlong*, there are now occasional constructed levees to limit erosion of the banks — the old continuity between land and water will be denied! Elsewhere boundaries are marked more by landmarks than by fences. Stated one participant: “a good neighbour is an even better fence than the real one”. In the *chumchon* area, by contrast, the imposition of fences began fairly recently, along the *sois* (laneways) and walkways or next to rented houses to protect against strangers. However the clear preference is for flexible and informal types of fencing that still



The concrete embankment at War Paknam Fang Tai; and semi-opaque borders and cantilevered canopies along a walkway in the northern area, War Paknam Fang Tai area. (Both photographs courtesy of Cuttaleeya Noparatnarporn)

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Demarcated space along *thamon* in the southern area; and the privatized, exclusionary space of *Muban Rachaville*. (Both photographs courtesy of Cuttaleeya Noparatnaraporn)

permit a measure of permeability, albeit only visual. In the case of the more “modern” housing in *ti-chad-san*, issues of security and privacy are even more strongly expressed: most residents would be considered middle-income and their houses often targeted by thieves; land value increase is a prized attribute and so one’s land is to be demarcated and defended; the fence becomes a symbol of status, and will usually be permanent and opaque. Fencing not only inhibits interaction, but also reduces the scope of accessible area from a neighbourhood to only a house compound. So, domestic gardens now become an object of conscious design (never so in the old communities!), meticulously maintained, as if to compensate for a greater loss. Then finally there is the Rachaville housing estate, a gated community, where isolation from the wider community is complete!

The intersecting universe of spirits is also less in evidence than in Nonthaburi: the survey revealed only two-thirds of respondents’ houses with *saan phra phum*, and one-third with *saan chao ti*. The relative absence of the latter (for the spirits of ancestors) would seem to indicate the lesser degree of spiritual connection and its expression that “modern” people accord to the history of their place. It may only be history that is so disregarded, however: two sacred trees in the area continued to be venerated (at least by some), with colourful wrappings, flowers and offerings in evidence, and old, discarded spirit houses collected to be placed under their care.

### 3. *Soi On-nut 29 to Soi On-nut 33/1, Suan Luang, Bangkok*

The third case study brings us into Bangkok proper. Though at 15 kilometres it is the most distant from Rattanakosin, this is part of the major eastwards expansion of the metropolis, in the *Thanon Sukhumvit* corridor, and now thoroughly urban. Though *Soi Sukhumvit 77* (or *Soi On-nut*) was evident in the earliest 1952 air photos, as late as 1965 the area was clearly still rural, with most buildings clustered along the area’s three waterways — *Khlong Phra Khanong*, *Khlong Khled* and *Khlong Wat Tonsai*. However at that time two further *thanons* were constructed running off *Soi On-nut*, to be named *Soi On-nut 29* and *33*, giving access to *Wat Tonsai*

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but also opening up the extensive area of rice paddy to urban development. Development rapidly lined the various *sois*, as well as the *khlongs*, while the middle area remained green. By 1987 more *thanons* (sub-*sois*) had been built, land had been subdivided into regular rectangular lots, development intensified, and *thanon*-based settlement had virtually submerged the *khlong*-based.

Figure 4  
Soi On-nut 29 to Soi On-nut 33/1,  
Suan Luang Bangkok in 2001



Source: Modified from Metropolitan Electricity  
Authority survey.

There were many comments on the end of agriculture, but by now memory seems to turn to nostalgia. One sample:

Old people are very diligent — they never feel tired; instead they had fun planting trees, working this and that, and chatting among their groups to update news. But nowadays evolution has changed our lives. People are too lazy to do this kind of work. They rather prefer convenience. Only people who really have passion in cultivation will continue to do so. ... We have no time — we always go out early in the morning and come back late at night.

Similarly there are the memories of the water world:

In the old days, *khlong* water was still usable. ... In the past, we used to swim in *Khlong* Phra Khanong. I could swim because I practised in the *khlong*, in front of *Wat* Tonsai. Around fifty years ago it was really like a rural area (*ban-nok*) — no embankment was built at the temple, unlike concrete fences and embankments nowadays.

The reference is to the concrete levees also encountered sporadically in the Thonburi case (but never in Nonthaburi); here however they are now ubiquitous, and the separation between land and water is sharp and emphatic. The levee with its concreted path does however provide for an altogether new practice: it is the place for the evening recreational and socializing stroll, in one sense replacing the old boat-borne visits of previous times, but reducing the *khlong* from community fulcrum to simple spectacle (and, with the possibility of flood, to threat).

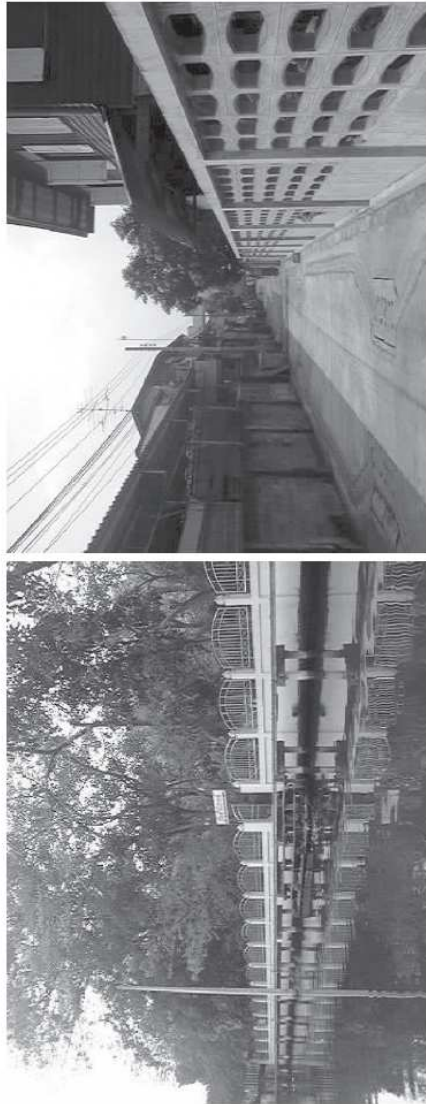
While there are still occasional boats to be seen on *Khlong* Phra Khanong, the two sub-*khlongs* now function primarily as parts of the Bangkok drainage system: watergates are at the junctions of every significant *khlong* (including *Khlong* Khled) to block the natural flow — the network has been destroyed even though its net-like structure remains. The aquatic regime has become a machine. One respondent, living along *Khlong* *Wat* Tonsai, named it “the Amazon”: it is covered by big trees and inhabited by reptiles. All has deteriorated.

Space is everywhere fragmented and delineated. Security and the fear of strangers lead to a realm of borders and barriers. The fragmentation of community, both in physical space and in people’s perceptions, is also the result of the reorganization of community structure and administration: the former village system (*mu* or *muban*), whereby the social boundaries of neighbourhood space also determined administrative (political) boundaries, was swept away in 2000 in the name of bureaucratic neatness. So now there is no community structure — space is “uniform” and every house becomes its own (bounded) world. So, judged one respondent:

It is impossible to gather these houses along the laneways together.  
I already thought about it, but there is no way to construct a

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A temple fence, which also functions as an embankment, with paralleled boardwalk along the khlong, and a small laneway bounded by fences on both sides, Suan Luang. (Both photographs courtesy of Cuttaveya Noparatnaraporn)

*chumchon* community here. It is unworkable because there is no collaboration among residents. In order to set up a *chumchon*, everyone must participate. ...

The articulation of profane space with spiritual space is here complicated by the presence of a small Muslim community on parts of *Khlong* Phra Khanong, and the more recent arrival of a Christian component, and for both these groups the spirit realm has no meaning. (But, as we shall see, it is not as simple as that, for at the surface level *all* groups will participate in the grand national celebrations that are essentially Buddhist and Brahman infused.) Among Buddhist respondents, less than two-thirds exhibit *saan phra phum*, and one third still have *saan chao ti* — around the same proportions found in the Thonburi case. And only one sacred tree was observed — significantly in the *Wat* Tonsai compound.

#### Remembering, Forgetting, Imagining

*Khlong* Phra Khanong, like others, may have become a repository of filth and degradation, but then there are moments when it bursts into brilliant, almost magical life as it becomes the focus of spiritual beliefs and practices relating to the water and space of the *khlong* as symbol of prosperity, cleanness, freshness, and sacredness. The belief in the goddess of the river (*Mae Khongkha*) is still paraded and is represented through the activities of the annual *Loy Krathong* ceremony. However for “modern” people, the emphasis of this day is on festivities for fun and enjoyment rather than on the old purpose of seeking forgiveness from the spirits — the *khlongs* will be afloat with thousands of little containers with their twinkling lights, but it is a spectacle that yields yet further rubbish and environmental damage. The irony of a ceremony of expiation for damage done to the ecology that the spirits guard and in which they inhere, but which itself adds to the damage, seems lost on the Thai people!

The very point of the spirit world is its inseparability from the (ecological) processes of nature — in one sense they are the

same. The modern consciousness separates them, and the realm of the spirits loses its (ecological) depth — it becomes mere surface in the sense described by Morris (2000, 2002) and reviewed earlier. The question however is how such fundamentals become superficial.

We can begin with the idea of memory. Halbwachs (1992), in exploring the social and collective framing of memory, rejected any Durkheimian notion of a reified or superorganic cultural memory, instead looking at how social institutions and contexts made possible certain memories, encouraging certain recollections while discouraging others (Legg 2005, p. 482). Stephen Legg cites Halbwachs as intellectual context for the vast, seven-volume (1984–92) *lieux de mémoire* (realms of memory) project of Pierre Nora (see, for example, Nora 1986). These “realms” (also translated as “sites” and “places”) emerge from dissecting memories of the (French) Republic, then the nation, and finally France itself, and can be a celebrated event, a name, a monument. The argument is that these sites are now necessary because people no longer live in *milieux de mémoire* (environments of memory). So, “with the rise of modernism and its attendant traits of globalisation, mediatisation, democratisation and massification, modern media is substituted for collective memory. What we have now is not lived memory, but reconstructed history. To compensate for this lack, sites of memory have arisen” (Legg 2005, pp. 483–84, referring to Nora 1989).

Legg goes on to criticize the Nora project on the grounds of a “melancholic nostalgia for ‘real environments of memory’ and for the unifying power of the nation-state” pervading the work (Legg 2005, p. 481). Applied to the “progression” of the urban villages of Bangkok, the argument takes on some strength. The idea of an “environment of memory” can usefully refer to the Nonthaburi case in the present study; it is fading in the compromised case of Thonburi; and by the time we reach Suan Luang it is clearly a regime of constructed “sites” of memory. So we are back to Halbwachs’ notion of encouraging certain recollections while discouraging others. How, and why?

In exploring the idea of “the nation” as an “imagined community”, Benedict Anderson (1991, pp. 199–201) draws attention to Ernest Renan’s aphoristic observation that “the essence of a nation is that all individuals have many things in common and also that all [must already] have forgotten many things” (Renan 1947–61). Certainly, as Legg (2005, p. 481) notes, “‘forgetting’, as a cognitive mishap or active willing, has shadowed the theory of memory”. Anderson’s point however is to emphasise the active willingness rather than the cognitive collapse, and to link purposive forgetting to *imagining*, and so is close to Halbwachs’ concern with the social and political framing of memory and imagining.

In Thailand there are ceremonies for the King’s birthday that see a *surface* of quasi-religious shrines bedeck the city, flags and bunting, glorious light shows, and military parades — the nation itself becomes a surface below which one does not peer. The spectacle is repeated for the Queen’s birthday. *Loy Krathong* sees expiation turned to fun, and *Songkran* similarly turns the idea of respect into carnival, as the practices of everyday life are similarly elevated — albeit for a brief moment — to this plane where boundaries between diverse spheres are to be blurred. The world of the *khlongs* departs from the ecological to become part of the “performative state”, in Jackson’s terms. There are however no monuments or memorializing events (*lieux de mémoire*) to the student massacres or the political assassinations (Anderson 1998; Dovey 2001, and more broadly Reynolds 2006); similarly the elevation (reduction?) of the aquatic sphere to quasi-religious fun effectively takes the mind off the destruction of that sphere and of the regional and national ecology that modernism bequeaths.

Still to be dealt with is Legg’s insistence that the idea of “sites of memory”, at least in Nora’s vast project, is pervaded by a “melancholic nostalgia for ‘real environments of memory’” (Legg 2005, p. 481). Legg quotes a “definition” of the nostalgic from Susan Steward (1984, p. 23):

The nostalgic dreams of a moment before knowledge and self-consciousness that itself lives on only in the self-consciousness of

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the nostalgic narrative. Nostalgia is the repetition that mourns the inauthenticity of all repetition and denies the repetition's capacity to form identity.

While Steward's observation might ring plausible, one must wonder if the repetitions of Bangkok (the cult of Rama V, the endless shrines to the King's birthday, ritualized *Loy Krathong*) are perceived alongside the loss of old spiritual and ecological *milieux de mémoire* so that mourning becomes possible. Or, instead, is the "reality" of the surface the only accepted reality, as Jackson suggests (and as reviewed previously)?

#### Boundaries and Boundlessness

We need to return to that earlier observation that the two over-riding legacies of the modernizations of Rama IV and Rama V were the *thanon* suppression of the old *khlong*-based aquatic world, and the implementation of the title deed (*chanod*) system. The former has been discussed above; the latter in the present era of Bangkok is manifested in the fences, walls, barriers against the *khlongs*, and fears of intruders that effectively determine the spatial character of Suan Luang, the current trajectory of spatial change in the Thonburi case study, and emerging fears in Nonthaburi (see Winichakul 1994). The present surveys have certainly revealed the persisting memory of that previous time whose relics persist in the flowing, transparent, unbounded space of Nonthaburi, and are recalled mournfully in the accounts from Thonburi and Suan Luang. Also in this dimension of urban space, however, we similarly find a reduction to the level of surface.

Whereas the Suan Luang locality can be identified as "Sukhumvit soi 77", that reference is to the great, structuring, west-to-east Thanon Sukhumvit that leads out of the city, effectively from Rattanakossin to the eastern seaboard and ultimately to the Cambodian border, and which determines the major direction of the city's expansion. Inner Sukhumvit and its network of *sois* is part of Bangkok at its most frenetically urbanized, and it is here (and in the greater expanse of urbanized Bangkok) that one confronts most directly the physicality of

Thai space as unbounded (uncontrolled, disordered) and Thai reality as surface. All land is subdivided, boundaries are established and legally sanctioned, ownership is frequently contested (most violently in the periodic raids on squatters or unwanted tenants), occupancies are exclusionary, and nothing could be further removed from the flowing, unbounded space described in Nonthaburi. However it is in the *uses* of land that unboundedness reigns: any activity might go anywhere, there is no zoning in the Western sense, and Bangkok is a space of chaotic and improbable juxtapositions.

The drama of Sukhumvit arises in the effect of deep-rooted cultural practices — the disregard for boundaries and regulation, and the creative, even aggressive superimposition of surfaces over *all* space — as it plays out to produce an entirely new form of urban space. It is Michel de Certeau's notion of spatial practices making the city:

The ordinary practitioners of the city live “down below”, below the thresholds at which visibility begins. They walk — an elementary form of this experience of the city; they are walkers, Wandersmänner, whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban “text” they write without being able to read it (de Certeau 1984, p. 93).

The city is made by the “walkers” and their everyday “spatial practices” (Lefebvre 1991), and the power of Bangkok is in its revelation of how an underlying episteme and culture will play out anew, in an evolving, modernizing (post-modernizing?) world, to transform the city, creatively, into something that is altogether new and unique. It is the brilliance of the muddle, limitless contradictions and complexity of everyday Bangkok.

It is however in the public realm that the transposition of the unbounded presents its greatest challenges: the overlay of the spiritual becomes less ordered, shrines appear and then disappear, spirit houses are fewer but now in the most unexpected of places (on roofs of high-rises, balconies, in “entertainment” venues), and garlands, offerings, and displays of prayerful respect are far more in evidence than ever found in the villages of Nonthaburi (the surface

again supplanting — compensating for — the reality!). The religious and the spiritual are not “passing away”, but vibrantly transforming. Again it is de Certeau’s argument of the micro-practices of everyday life making the city.

Ambivalently merging with the spiritual is the royal: the ubiquitous images of Rama V and of (the current) Rama IX, and the periodic proliferation of royal birthday shrines (sites of memory, and “the repetition that mourns the inauthenticity of all repetition”). Then there are other, more profane overlays: the endlessly multiplying street stalls, roadside kitchens and hawkers fragment and enliven the space of the public realm. These multiple overlays are however never distinct, nor are they ever completely separate from the “hard” base of delimited allotments of defended private property. The unboundedness is thus now between levels of both activity and reality — between the layers, as it were.

The consequence of all this is that urban space is reduced to a fantastic visual jumble — in effect to a surface in Morris’s sense — where it would seem an unnecessary and futile exercise to try to discern “order”. And the reification of surface, in relation to both *khlong* (the splitting of the spiritual from the ecological) and *thanon* (the muddling of the issue of ownership and exclusion) can be seen to serve elitist interests, of both the state and property capital — everything might be permitted.

### Conclusion

While the purpose of this paper has simply been to explore what the idea of a regime of images and of an episteme of surfaces might suggest about the progress of Thai modernity and the transformations of Thailand’s urban space, it would nevertheless be remiss not to speculate on where this acceptance of the superficial might be taking the city, and on the possibility of an alternative.

If nostalgia is indeed the escape from the rupture of *milieux de mémoire*, and if the surfaces of a spiritual realm divorced from nature (that is, from its ecological “mirror image”), of spirit reduced to consumerist entertainment, of Nation to cult, and modernity as

surface displays of the imagery of capitalist consumption, then one can only conclude that the links between surfaces and what lies behind them are desperately in need of discursive reflection. But this flies in the face of the episteme — “the love of the disciplined surface”. Epistemes do however metamorphose — they have a genealogy and a present trajectory. So while the Nation might remain revered, the state is increasingly interrogated; misuses of the law of *lèse-majesté* are publicly debated; corruption (the previously unseen realm of private venality) is now exposed and noisily decried; an aggressive civil society relentlessly pushes out the boundaries — for the flip side of the globalist-capitalist incursion is indeed an expanding, demanding, increasingly educated middle class and civil society. Missing still however is a vigorous discourse on eroding, distorting greed and the violence of development (to do so would be to attack “the family”), on the silence of religion in the face of ecology compromised and nature destroyed (that would be criticizing the monkhood!), on the quality of built environments (the architects always seem to escape, and the landscape architects work for the elites), and on a singular lack of a dream of a better space of everyday life. This last is ultimately the task of the designers — to show ways whereby “the back” can re-invade “the front”, the water world restored to life, and that profound Buddhist reverence for nature re-connected to ecological realities. The *khlongs* and their transformation both physically and in discourse, we would argue, hold a key. Another is to return reflectively to the epistemic concern with being “caring and considerate”, politeness and kindness cited previously, and to call for an architecture and urban design that once again “offers alms” to a public realm and the spirits of (ecological) nature. Above all the surfaces are to be seen, and revealed in design, *as surfaces* — but now self-consciously and constructively! The design disciplines however are severely compromised (comfortably bedded with the elites and with capital), and trapped in the culture of surface respect (it is vulgar to criticize!); even the university faculties are silenced, as inadequate budgets compel academics to augment salaries by joining the compromised.

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## Reading the (Un)sustainable Development of Bangkok: Lessons Learnt from the Construction of Nakhon Inn Road

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### ABSTRACT

The phenomena of Bangkok turning into 'a city of nowhere' have been explored through the longitudinal study (from 2002 to 2009) of the areas alongside Nakhon Inn Road. Massive changes rapidly occurred due to the emergence of this 60-meter wide highway are consequent to the losing identity of place as well as the beginning of an unsustainable cycle of city development. The transformations of settlements alongside this road are explicated under three spheres of sustainable development, consisting of environmental, economical and social. The paper indicates evidences of how the spirits of old community have survived through the processes of urbanization. It also suggests what urban planners should consider in order to preserve local communities.

### KEYWORDS

Transformation, Sustainable Development, Urban fringe, Reading place, Bangkok

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, urbanization has continually expanded to the outskirts of Bangkok, following the emergence of *thanon* (roads) and the expansion of land-based settlements. Nowadays, the suburbs of Bangkok in people's understandings extend beyond the municipal boundary into the adjacent provinces, consisting of Nonthaburi, Samut Prakarn, Pathum Thani, Nakorn Pathom and Samut Sakhon. Rapid development and urban sprawls of Bangkok have caused the need to reduce traffic congestions in the inner city; hence the Outer Ring Road project was initiated in 1978 to create bypass routes for the city. The project started with the constructions on the West side of Bangkok (finished in 1995 and later in 2000), followed by the East side (finished in 1998), and recently on the South (finished in 2007).

Since these highways have been completed, new developments have continually replaced old settlements and thereby changed the scenic landscapes of suburban Bangkok. The phenomena of local people selling their lands, housing estates replacing orchards and new commercial buildings taking over local markets could be described as common (in many cases expectable!) consequences after such highways were constructed. There is a concern if the continuum of these repeated occurrences would destroy the uniqueness of locality and places in Bangkok. Lessons need to be learnt in order to prevent Bangkok from turning to be a "city of nowhere".

Nakhon Inn Road, a 60-metre wide highway built during the period of 2000 and 2003, was chosen as a case study representing impacts from the development in Bangkok's urban fringe. This paper focuses on the transformations of areas alongside this road which have been massively changed over seven years (from 2002 to 2009). The urbanization processes have resulted in the intermixed characteristics, with the co-existence (indeed juxtaposition?) of old and new elements, qualities and values. While local

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communities have been intruded and swallowed, they have also been under the pressures of finding ways to survive their own identities. Hence it would be valuable to explore how these communities have changed – what have survived, how local people have adapted their ways of living and how the changes of people's values and beliefs would reform any new community identity.

## 2. READING CHANGES OF PLACE

The idea of "reading and interpreting place" – how people perceive, shape and value their environment – was the starting point for this research. Much literature indicated the importance of dynamic and changing qualities in the conceptualizations of place and landscape (Gustafson, 2001, p.6; O'Hare, 1997, p.21). Place connotes the idea of dynamic processes where physical and social constituents are continually produced and reproduced by the interactions of humans and their surroundings over a period of time (Gustafson, 2001, p.6). Through such constituting processes, social identity and meanings are thereby constructed and attached to existential space (Brindley, 2003, p.61). This conceptual understanding is consonant with the idea that place is changing according to transformations of culture and societies (Walmsley and Lewis, 1984, p.160). At the same time, meanings and connotations of 'place' from people's perspectives are also modified and reconceptualized alongside transformations of physical existence.

The above understandings stimulate the idea that we need to read 'place' through its constituting processes, which are continuous from the past through the present into the future (Eckbo, 1969, p.7). How then can we read the constituting process of community? The dimension of time or temporal effects is addressed as a very important factor, which should not be dismissed in the reading of community formation, where meanings and affiliations are constructed through longitudinal and on-going processes (Rivlin, 1987, p.28). We now face the dilemma of two dimensions of reading – reading change through time, and through space (Tuan, 1977).

The author's previous research (in 2002) was the attempt to read Bangkok's transformations through the reading of three places – three communities in Nonthaburi, Thonburi and Suan Luang, which portrayed different stages of urbanization (from a seemingly rural to a more urban area), were studied (Figure 1). The reading of these places indicated that Bangkok's development was moving towards community fragmentation and diversification. It is questioned if any places in Bangkok would actually be developing in the anticipated direction. Hence a reading on changes of particular places in Bangkok over time is thereby a challenge task for this continuing research.

Though generally in research, a longitudinal study is a rare option for researchers to observe changes of any places over a long period of time. Nevertheless, the researcher took the privileges from being able to observe changes of Bangraonok village (one of the three cases in the former study) seven years ago. At that time, Nakhon Inn Road was still under construction and villagers still had no idea how they would have to adapt their lives once the road completed. Data observed during those times are valuable information for a comparative study with those observed several years later.

The current research comprises two scales of observation and data analysis. First (the macro scale) is the physical observation of settlements alongside Nakhon Inn Road, particularly between the intersection of the West Outer Ring Road and Rachapreuk Road. And second (the micro scale) is the physical and behavioral observation of settlements in *Ban Bangraonok* (Bangraonok village) (Figure 2(1-3)). Fifteen in-depth interviews of local people were also conducted in order to understand how people perceive and have adapted their ways of livings. The first part was conducted in 2007 while the second part was carried out in 2009. Additionally, mapping, diagram and content analysis of people's own accounts are used as tools to explicate the transformations of this area.

The study of how this place has changed through times provides a ground for further speculation of how this place is moving towards as well as brings the benefits to other places where the emergence of roads become crucial to the future changes. In addition, the attempts to read place, meaning patterns and processes of constituting place through time, would also create opportunities for the new invention to be corresponding with or relating to the old.

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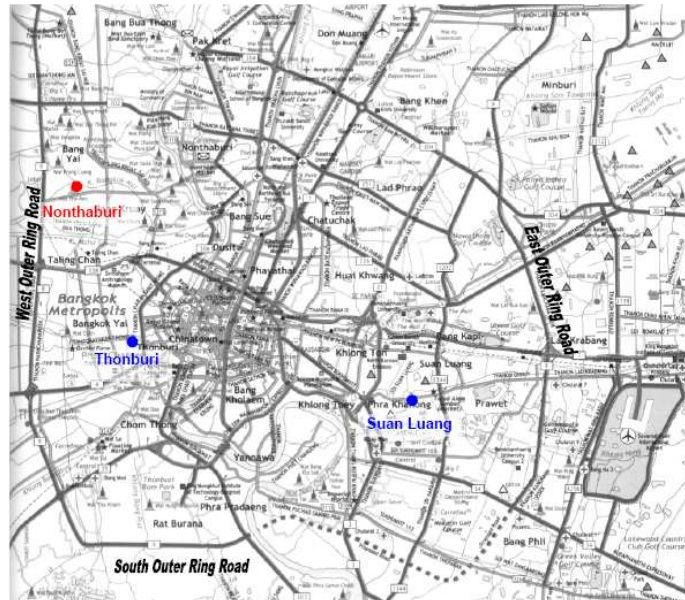


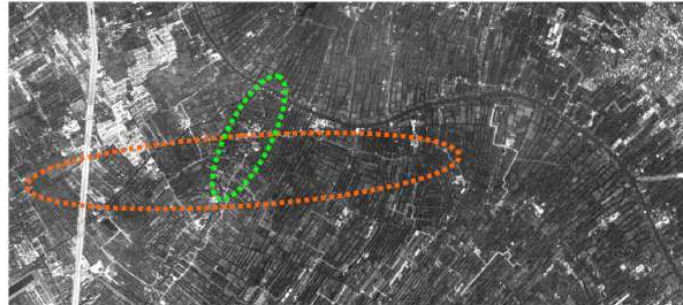
Figure 1: Map of the Bangkok Region, with locations of case study areas  
Source: [www.bookingtothailand.com/bangkok.html](http://www.bookingtothailand.com/bangkok.html)

### 3. THE EMERGENCE OF NAKHON INN ROAD

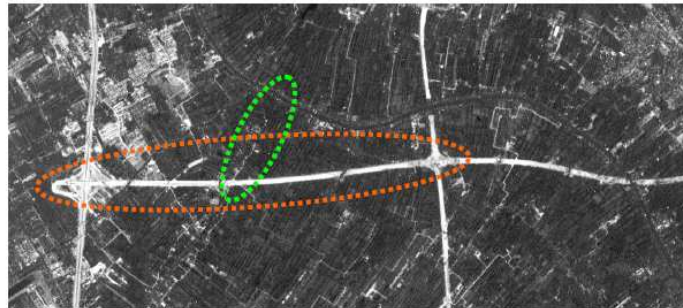
The outcome from several researches indicated that Bangkok has been developing towards a land-based city since King Rama V period (1868-1910) and the construction of road is one of the major causes of the dramatic changes of the city (Sidthithanyakit, 1999; Smithies, 1993, pp.35-53). Correspondingly, the evidence shows that the west side of Nonthaburi had remained distinctive characteristics of residential and agricultural areas for hundreds of years until the Outer Ring Road (a 70-metre wide highway) emerged in 1987. Before then, the scenes of houses along waterways surrounded by prosperous orchards (*ban suan rim khlong*)<sup>1</sup> and colorful life along *khlongs* (waterways) were still commonly perceived.

The scenery of this area would have remain green, with only minor physical changes, if the Rama V Bridge and connecting roads had not been built. The construction of Rama V Bridge and connecting roads were actually initiated in November 1999 in order to relieve traffics in the inner city of Bangkok (PWD, 2002). Rama V Bridge, completed in June 2002, is one of the sixteen bridges in the Bangkok Region which links the east and the west side of Chao Phraya River together. In order to create shortcuts from the Nonthaburi to Thonburi, two huge highways were built in the North-South and the East-West directions (Figure 2(2)). *Thanon* Nakhon Inn, a 12.40 kilometer-long road, creates a link between *Thanon* Tiwanont on the East and the West Outer Ring Road (*Thanon* Kanjanapisek). *Thanon* Rachapreuk, a 17.92 kilometer-long road, provides a link from *Thanon* Rattanaibet on the north to *Thanon* Petchkasem, a major highway to the southern part of Thailand.

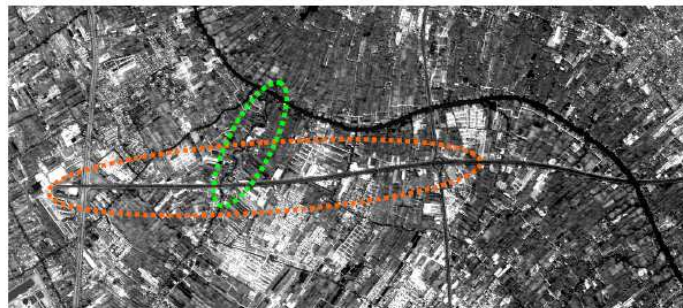
<sup>1</sup> This nostalgically held notion of '*ban suan rim khlong*' (house along waterway in orchards) has been perceived as distinctive characteristics of Bangkok in the old days. It has been used as marketing strategies for many housing estates in modern day. See further discussions at (Noparatnaropon, 2007).



Arial Photograph taken in February 2001



Arial Photograph taken in January 2002



Arial Photograph taken in February 2007

Figure 2(1-3): Aerial photograph of the study area in 2001, 2002 and 2007

Source: Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency (Public Organization) (GISDA)

The study area (micro scale)  
Ban Bangnaoek

The study area (micro scale)

During the construction of Nakhon Inn Road, from 2000 to 2003, people living on both sides of the road still crossed over each other and continued their ways of living as if there was not any obstruction. Though the road was not yet finished, the business of buying and selling lands along this road already started booming. Many large pieces of land were taken over by the land brokers and then further to the real estate companies, waiting to be constructed once the road was opened.

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Until the road completed in 2003, the 60-metre width of the road had enormous impacts to local people's lives, with great numbers of middle-income people moving in and massive buildings constructed. Several concrete buildings taking over vast areas of orchards have completely changed the scenery of both sides of the road (Figure 3). Nowadays, this area can be no longer described as '*ban suan rim khlong*' (house along waterway in orchards). Rather, it has turned to be a typical scene similarly to other Bangkok urban fringe, with linear shop houses and big signage along the huge highway and various styles of modern housing estates popping up along the way.

It was then the starting of the repeated story to other urban developments alongside highways in Bangkok<sup>2</sup>. Our interest here is on changes occurred after the road construction and the survival of community identity. The research was conducted with hope that something could be learnt through both transforming and surviving processes. Mistakes in the past would be great lessons for future developments in Bangkok and other big cities in Thailand.

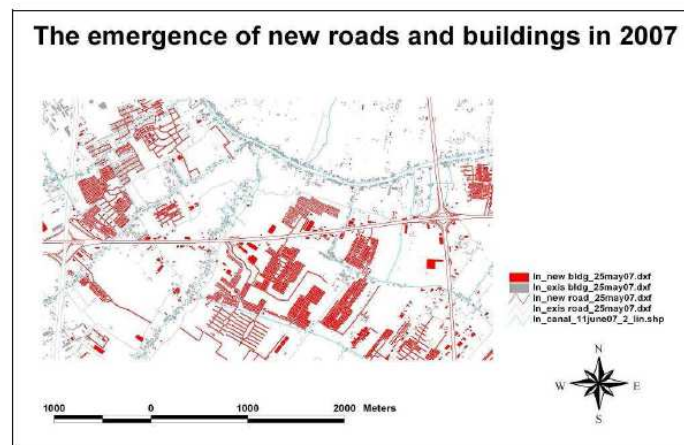


Figure 3: The emergence of new roads and buildings in 2007  
Source: Author

#### 4. OBSERVABLE CHANGES

Since 2003, Nakhon Inn road has become major route connecting Nonthaburi and the inner city of Bangkok. Subsequent to the increasing use of this road in only a few years later, the areas alongside have been dramatically changed in terms of its appearances, physical settings, land use as well as people's ways of living. By adopting the sustainable development framework (IUCN, 2006), changes are thereby presented under the three spheres of sustainability, consisting of environmental, economical and social changes.

##### 4.1. ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

In 2002, *Ban Bangraonok* was indeed a good example of a '*bang*' or water-based community. At that time, it still conveyed the nostalgically held notion of '*ban suan rim khlong*', where waterside settlements were surrounded by the greenery of orchards. It portrayed the image of a countryside village, where the notion of

<sup>2</sup> This phenomenon also happened to the area alongside the Eastern Outer Ring Road; middle-income people moving into the new housing estates and a lot of orchards being sold to the land brokers.

*chonnabot* or *ban-nok*, literally meaning 'rural area', was an assemblage of traditional *bans* (houses), extensive areas of *suans* (orchards), networks of *khlongs* (waterways) and a local *wat* (Buddhist temple), and where only a few land-based settlements were built.

The pattern of curvilinear settlements along the waterway has long been a prominent characteristic of this village. In the old days, this area was mainly surrounded by prosperous orchards – the ditch and dike pattern applied mostly to the green areas. Hence the intricate networks of waterways performed a major role linking other three important places in people's everyday lives together, comprise houses (lived-place), orchards (workplace), and Buddhist temple (recreational place).

The system of local roads, which connected all local temples together, was in fact the portrayal of how social and cultural systems had been integrated in the way people constructed their own place. On the contrary, the strong axis of the highway totally neglected these existing networks, rather concentrating merely on how to make the shortcut effective. The new roads were therefore built on the east-west and north-south directions, superimposing on the curvilinear networks of *khlongs* (waterways), the systems of local roads and the patterns of orchards (Figure 4). Its gigantic width has divided the area into two sides, separating communities which were once connected by the *khlongs* and obstructing villagers to visit each other.

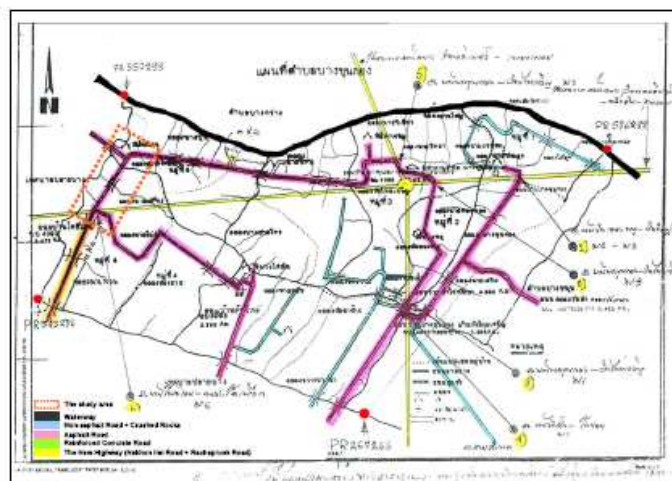


Figure 4: The networks of *khlongs* (waterway), *thanons* (road) and the new highway in Bangkray district, Nonthaburi.  
Source: Modified from the map surveyed by Bangkokkong administration in 2000.

Since the linking system of local road has been destroyed, each *thanon* (road) becomes an exit to Nakhon Inn Road. The pattern of dead-end street was then applied to numbers of new settlements along the highway. It was however the uniform pattern of housing estates that has actually changed the characteristics of this place, from the harmony of linear settlements along *khlongs* to the coexistence of two contrast patterns of the unplanned and planned settlements. It would be interesting to study how local people in these two types of community live and whether there is any social interaction between them.

Additionally, the increase of various types of buildings along Nakhon Inn Road, such as commercial buildings, factories, office buildings, shop houses, restaurants, housing estates, etc has made the land price getting higher. Local people therefore have gradually turned themselves from being orchard growers to land sellers. The green areas, which were once prosperous orchards, are now left abandoned waiting to be sold (Figure 5(1)). While many orchards are left messy, many also have been filled for further building constructions. The changing landform from the furrowed surface to an elevated flat lands has had impacts

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on a very few surviving orchards – orchard growers often blame housing estates for causing water pouring into their low lands. Several cultivators admitted that they lost attempts after fighting with annual floods many years; they finally decided to earn more money by selling their lands.

Another observable change is the increase of water pollution. A few years ago, people were still able to use water from the *khlongs* in daily life but nowadays, they can only use water to wash old rugs as it becomes very dirty and smelly. The scene of children playing and people bathing in the canal are rarely seen as they experienced illness after using *khlong's* water. Besides, water pollution also affects the lessening biodiversity of aquatic animals and the prosperity of aquatic plants.



Figure 5(1-4): An abandoned orchard, already been filled and waited to be sold (top left). One of the *khlongs* which is neglected by the new housing estate (top right). The entrance of Ban Bangraonok with the scenery of huge signage and shop houses along the highway (bottom left). The coexistence of old and new settlements (bottom right).

Source: Author

#### 4.2. ECONOMICAL CHANGES

In the past, *khlong* provides space for all sorts of activities in everyday life including commercial activities – there were many boats selling coffee, cooked food, vegetables, deserts, groceries and even noodles passing by at different times during the day. People who live along *khlongs* had to go nowhere as necessary things could be bought in front of their houses.

Since 2003, business along *thanons* is increasingly popular as observed from numbers of stores, restaurants and shop houses along both major and minor streets. Nowadays, there are not many commercial boats left as most people have changed their lifestyles, from staying mostly at home to going outside the neighborhood. The local weekly markets at the temple are no longer villagers' favorite places like in the old days. Instead they like going to the air-conditioned supermarket (Lotus) and inland market (Rama V market) for the cheaper prices and cooler temperature. Even the famous noodle boat that had been selling in *Khlong Bangraonok* for over thirty years still moved to the shop house along Nakhon Inn

Road – the seller said their business is much better though their old customers would no longer come to the new location. In this aspect, local businesses have enlarged the scale to the wider markets.

Another observable change is the opening of Rama V market in 2005, only two years after the road finished (Figure 6(1)). The happening of this market has totally changed the economic system in this area – it has now become a new magnet for both locals and travellers. This large market is crowded mostly on weekend and night time (7pm to 4am) when the cheap wholesale market is open. It suits the lifestyles of those people living in the housing estates who prefer convenient style of grocery shopping. Most products are not from the local which is rather disappointing for city shoppers who thought they could get local fruits and vegetables from the local market.

The new business emerging in this area is the renting business. In the past, most people would live in their own houses and lands; and very few would rent temple's lands for living. After a few years of economic booming in this area, a lot of labors have increasingly moved into the locale closing to their workplaces. Hence the demands for cheap rooms for rent thereby correspond with the increase of flats and residences in the inner areas (Figure 6(2)).



Figure 6(1-2): The atmosphere of Rama V market during the day (left).  
An elevated land on sold and the flat with rooms for rent at the background (right).  
Source: Author

#### 4.3. SOCIAL CHANGES

Corresponding to the two types of settlements, the curvilinear villages and the uniform housing estates, two different patterns of social lifestyles could also be observed comprise a traditional lifestyle along the *khlong* and a modern lifestyle in the housing estates.

##### 4.3.1. A traditional lifestyle along the *khlong*

The first group is a social network of close relatives who live along the same *khlong* (waterway) – all villagers knows each other very well and usually have social gatherings at each other houses or at the local temples. In the past, *khlong* was signified as a major element for villagers – the first generation (great grand parents) usually built their houses along the *khlong* while the later generations would build their houses next to their parents, closer to *thanon*. The remnants of docks, ladders, piers, *salas* (pavilions), verandas, and even post-boxes observed at almost every house on the *khlong* side indeed indicate the significance of the *khlong* as one of the main entrances even now.

Since Nakhon Inn Road finished in 2003, road has become major route for transportation – the new highway which cut across the whole area makes the villages that were once very far from the main road become easier and shorter to access. Although the roadside is still explained by most villagers as the rear of the houses, people commonly use *thanon* as the main access to their houses. Consequently, several new houses were built facing the local road with permanent fences and closed gates contrasting to the

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unbounded space<sup>3</sup> in the past. Such evidence could be described that *thanon* is perceived as increasingly unsafe due to the increased numbers of pass-by strangers. It is worthwhile noted that the style of newly built houses are similar to those found in the typical housing estates. This could be explained that modern house seems to be perceived as "the house of dream" by new age people.

While numbers of new comers moving into the area is increasing, many local villagers are on the other hand considering moving out. The emergence of Nakhon Inn Road has made the local road easy to access; hence numbers of passengers who use this *thanon* as a short cut is therefore increasing. Consequently, local people have gradually developed the feeling of insecurity and unhomely whereas evidence of thieves was described as increasing.

*Khlong*, on the other hand, remains everyday space though the frequency of uses is much less. Every household has car or motorcycle as it already becomes necessary thing in life while boats are left unused in the dock without maintenance. Though a few people still row their boats to visit relatives and a lot more to the temple during the Buddhist day, numbers of boats selling food have instead moved to the shop houses along the road serving more customers who pass by.

Besides, the interviews also explicated that most elders have stopped growing orchards whereas the youngsters mostly work or study in the city – many of them live in the city during weekday and come back to their hometown during weekend or special Buddhist occasions. There are only a few low-income people who still work in the village as orchard labors, construction workers or motorcycle drivers, etc. In Bangraonok, the only three families that still growing orchards are considered well-to-do – they are proud of being cultivators and love doing it, nevertheless they have sold some of their lands to earn money for living but decided to keep their houses and orchards closer to their houses as assets for their children.

Though physical environment has been altered over the years, one thing that has never changed is villagers' strong beliefs in Buddhism – local temple is always crowded during every Buddhist day (Figure 7(1)). The ambience of familiarity, unity and warmth could be perceived while people were helping each other performing ceremony (Figure 7(2)). In this aspect, local *wat* (Buddhist temple) still strongly perform a major role in uniting villagers together.



Figure 7(1-2): The ambience of Buddhist ceremony at Wat Pho-en (left)  
and social gathering during the ceremony (right).  
Source: Author

#### 4.3.2. A modern lifestyle in the housing estates

The second group is residences who live in the modern housing estates. It is a road-oriented space where all houses face *thanon* and people commonly drive. These projects were designed with attempts to construct sense of community, hence shared facilities and public spaces are built for purposes of recreations and social interactions. Land is approximately equally divided into blocks and residential

<sup>3</sup> See further discussions on the unbounded quality of Thai space and its transformations at (Noparatnarapom, 2005).

buildings are also built relatively in the same style. The houses in these estates are usually two-storey concrete buildings surrounded by small gardens.

The slogan "good quality of life comes with good safety" has been frequently used in these housing advertisements. Hence all eight housing estates, which were all located along Nakhon Inn Road, have extremely high security systems – visitors must get permissions from the owners before being able to access these communities; visitors with no business will not get permission. Besides, all houses in these estates are bounded with permanent fences and many are double projected with security alarm systems.

However, high safety often comes the ambience of quietness (city people call it 'peacefulness' rather than 'lifeless') – very few people and activities could be observed on the inner streets (Figure 8(1)). Though residences have paid for the shared facilities and infrastructures, they hardly had time to use public spaces, i.e. pocket park, playground, swimming pool, club house, etc. The neat and well-designed spaces with good maintenance were most of the time left emptiness except weekend afternoon when people were free from work (Figure 8(2)).



Figure 8(1-2): Lifeless scene along the thanon (road) (left) and in the public park (right) in the housing estate.  
Source: Author

In this community, people use car to go everywhere – they hardly walk on the street or use public transportations. Most people have city lifestyle; they go to work during weekday and to the supermarket or Rama V market for grocery shopping on weekend. When they are free from work, they prefer staying at home or go outside the neighborhood. Some of them still visit the nearest *wat* on their special occasions such as birthday or special Buddhist Day. In this aspect, *wat* are indeed a gathering space for both groups of people who live in the same area but have totally different lifestyles.

## 5. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

The picturesque of Bangkok urban fringe has increasingly become similar in terms of its appearances – the scenery of massive highway paralleled by linear shop houses with very few trees, the juxtaposition of traditional and modern buildings in various styles and numbers of huge signage become typically seen. It then comes to the question of where such places are developing towards and how we could prevent these places from turning into placelessness. The reading of transformations along Nakhon Inn Road therefore provides us great lessons for future city development.

As we read along the three cases in the former study, Nonthaburi, Thonburi, and then Suan Luang, respectively, one could see that the newly built land-based settlements have increasingly invading the traditional water-based settlements. Various combinations of these two types of communities have indeed created diversity of places in Bangkok. While physical environments were described as developing towards betterment, social and mental connections were on the other hand perceived as down grading. In this aspect, sense of community is rarely found in the urban area; instead communities are moving towards fragmentation or in other words individualistic.

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The above study explicated that Nonthaburi over the past seven years has also been changing in the same direction which is towards the expansion of land-based settlements. If we look closely at Thonburi case, the coexistence of old and new settlements has constructed special characteristics for this place – Each community has developed their different ways of dealing with space and perceiving place. While *khlong* was still used for transportation and some daily activities, *wat* still perform a major role of uniting people in these two communities together.

For Nonthaburi present-day, the two types of communities (old villages along the *khlongs* and newly-built housing estates) also coexist: people in each community have completely different lifestyles, senses of community as well as environmental perceptions. Similar to Thonburi case, although people in each community lives separately and do not have social interactions, they still share the strong beliefs in Buddhism and perform ceremonies together at local *wat*. Besides, the decreasing uses and changing role of *khlong* in Nonthaburi (though in a lower degree) was also similarly observed in Thonburi.

Accordingly, it could be anticipated that, in the near future, Nonthaburi case could possibly be transforming to be close to Suan Luang case. In Suan Luang, urban area has almost taken over the old community. The increasing complexity of buildings, spaces, vegetation, residents and activities was observed at the same time as the disappearance of greenery and degrading of activities along the *khlong* and at the temple. The old notion of “*ban suan rim khlong*” or houses along *khlong* in orchards remains only nostalgically recalled in the minds of a few indigenous people, who still live in this area. In this area, most people hardly socialized – they lived in a completely enclosed space and rarely spend time in the neighborhood.

Consequently, there is a great concern if Bangkok continues developing in this direction, how would local communities be able to survive? If data presented in this paper enables readers to speculate the unsustainable development of Bangkok in the future, there is therefore an urgent task to sustain indigenous communities as well as to seek for possibilities to restore those ruined ones.

We have learnt from the study that physical changes with the lacking of consideration to the prior ecological systems are major consequent to the modifications of economics and social systems in the area. Consequences from environmental changes have had impacts on the adaptations of people's ways of living as well as the decrease of social connections and commercial activities. The lesson from the construction of Nakhon Inn Road also tell us that the width of the road is also an important factor obstructing or even destroying the existing network. Hence appropriate scale for urban development should also be considered in the planning and design. Nonetheless, it is proposed that a consideration to the existing (both visible and invisible) networks before making any changes to the area would enhance possibilities for people to sustain their environmental, economical and social networks.

Through the reading of changes, there is however an indication showing that old communities along waterways are able to maintain strong sense of community. This suggests that urban invasion may have high impact on changes of physical characteristics but the spirits of this place are able to survive in form of subsisted intangible qualities. The findings emphasize the significant role of local *wat* and *khlong* in the surviving processes. These two places are key mechanisms that enable people to develop their sense of place, sense of home, sense of community and thereby the deep connection to their place. It is therefore important to maintain these two places in good condition – the evidence of its degradation either in terms of its uniting role or quality of space for everyday life would tentatively be a sign for losing sense of community.

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## แบบสัมภาษณ์

### ข้อมูลทั่วไป

เลขที่ผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์ \_\_\_\_\_  
สถานที่สัมภาษณ์ \_\_\_\_\_  
วันที่ \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
เวลา เริ่ม \_\_\_\_\_ เสร็จสิ้น \_\_\_\_\_ รวมเวลา \_\_\_\_\_ ชั่วโมง \_\_\_\_\_ นาที  
รายละเอียดเพิ่มเติม \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### รายละเอียดส่วนบุคคล

ชื่อ-นามสกุล \_\_\_\_\_  
อายุ \_\_\_\_\_ ปี  
เพศ ชาย / หญิง  
ศาสนา พุทธ / คริสต์ / อิสลาม / อื่นๆ \_\_\_\_\_  
ที่อยู่ \_\_\_\_\_  
โทรศัพท์ \_\_\_\_\_  
อาชีพหลัก \_\_\_\_\_  
อาชีพเสริม (ถ้ามี) \_\_\_\_\_  
สถานที่ทำงาน \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

เงินเดือน \_\_\_\_\_ 0 – 5,000 บาท/เดือน  
\_\_\_\_\_ 5,001 – 10,000 บาท/เดือน  
\_\_\_\_\_ 10,001 – 20,000 บาท/เดือน  
\_\_\_\_\_ 20,001 – 30,000 บาท/เดือน  
\_\_\_\_\_ มากกว่า 30,000 บาท/เดือน

### ประวัติของผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์

- ท่านอยู่ที่บ้านหรือชุมชนนี้มากี่ปีแล้ว  
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- หากย้ายมา ท่านย้ายมาอยู่ที่นี้กี่ปีแล้ว และทำไมจึงย้ายภูมิลำเนา  
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- ท่านมีญาติอาศัยอยู่แถวนี้บ้างหรือไม่ ท่านรู้จักใครในละแวกนี้บ้าง  
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## ชุดคำถาม

### 1. การเปลี่ยนแปลงของหมู่บ้านและผลกระทบ

- 1.1 กรุณาเล่าเรื่องราวที่ท่านคิดว่าเป็นเหตุการณ์สำคัญที่เกิดขึ้นในหมู่บ้านนี้ที่ท่านทราบ เหตุใดท่านจึงคิดว่าเหตุการณ์นี้สำคัญ และในช่วงที่เกิดเหตุการณ์นั้นท่านมีส่วนร่วมหรือไม่ อย่างไร
- 1.2 ท่านสังเกตเห็นอะไรเปลี่ยนแปลงไปบ้าง ภายหลังการตัดถนนนครอินทร์ (ทั้งในด้านสภาพแวดล้อม วิถีชีวิต ระบบสังคม และเศรษฐกิจ การค้าขาย)
- 1.3 ปัจจุบันนี้คงเหลือครอบครัวที่ทำสวน (เป็นเจ้าของสวนเอง) หรือ รับจ้างทำสวน ในหมู่บ้านท่านบ้างหรือไม่ มีจำนวนเท่าไร
  - ท่านคิดว่าสาเหตุใดเป็นสาเหตุหลังที่ทำให้จำนวนครอบครัวที่ทำสวนลดลง
- 1.4 ปัจจุบันนี้ กิจกรรมที่ยังคงเหลือในคลองบางราวนกมีอะไรบ้าง (กิจวัตรประจำวัน ค้าขาย เดินทาง เล่นน้ำ ฯลฯ)
  - ท่านคิดว่าสาเหตุใดเป็นสาเหตุหลังที่ทำให้กิจกรรมในคลองลดลง

### 2. ชีวิตประจำวัน

- 2.1 กรุณาเล่าถึงกิจกรรมที่ท่านทำเป็นประจำในชีวิตประจำวัน
  - ท่านทำอะไรบ้างในวันทำงาน และ วันหยุดเสาร์อาทิตย์ ตั้งแต่ตื่นนอนจนกระทั่งเข้านอน
  - โดยปกติ ท่านจ่ายตลาดหรือซื้อของใช้ในบ้านที่ใด (ทำกับข้าวเองหรือไม่)
  - ท่านมักใช้เวลาในการพักผ่อนที่ใดในวันว่าง
- 2.2 ในละแวกนี้สถานที่ใดที่ท่านไปประจำ และท่านมักไปทำอะไร

### 3. ทักษะคติ

- 3.1 ท่านชอบในการใช้ชีวิตอยู่ในหมู่บ้านนี้หรือไม่ เพราะเหตุใด
- 3.2 สถานที่ใดในหมู่บ้านนี้ที่ชอบเป็นพิเศษ เพราะเหตุใด
- 3.3 หากท่านสามารถเปลี่ยนแปลงแก้ไขอะไรก็ได้ในชุมชนนี้ มีอะไรบ้างที่ท่านอยากจะเก็บรักษาไว้ และอะไรบ้างที่ท่านอยากจะเปลี่ยนแปลง เพราะเหตุใด

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## สิ่งที่ต้องการค้นหา

การเปลี่ยนแปลงและผลกระทบที่เกิดขึ้นภายหลังการตัดถนนนครอินทร์ ใน 3 ด้านหลัง ดังนี้

- ด้านระบบนิเวศวิทยาสิ่งแวดล้อม (สภาพแวดล้อมกายภาพ พื้นที่ทำสวน คุณภาพน้ำ/ดิน/อากาศ)
- ด้านเศรษฐกิจและการค้าขาย (การค้าขายริมคลอง/บนบก)
- ด้านระบบสังคมและวัฒนธรรม (วิถีชีวิต กิจวัตรประจำวัน Live-Work-Play ประเพณีท้องถิ่น ทักษะคติของคน)

**โครงการวิจัยเรื่อง “การเปลี่ยนแปลงภูมิทัศน์ของชุมชนท้องถิ่นในกรุงเทพมหานครและปริมณฑล:  
ผลกระทบจากการตัดโครงข่ายถนนวงแหวนรอบนอกฝั่งตะวันตกของกรุงเทพมหานคร”**

สนับสนุนโดยสำนักงานคณะกรรมการการอุดมศึกษา (สกอ.) และสำนักงานกองทุนสนับสนุนการวิจัย (สกว.)

โครงการวิจัยนี้เป็นงานวิจัยต่อยอดจากการทำวิทยานิพนธ์ระดับปริญญาเอก เรื่อง การอ่านและแปลความหมายภูมิทัศน์ของกรุงเทพฯในปัจจุบัน : การเปลี่ยนแปลงทัศนคติและคุณค่าความหมายของถิ่นที่ ณ มหาวิทยาลัยเมลเบิร์น ประเทศออสเตรเลีย ซึ่งได้ทำการศึกษาการเปลี่ยนแปลงภูมิทัศน์ของชุมชนในกรุงเทพมหานครผ่านกรณีศึกษา 3 ชุมชน ทั้งนี้ หมู่บ้านบางรวนก จ.นนทบุรี นับเป็น 1 ใน 3 ชุมชนที่ผู้วิจัยได้ทำการศึกษา เมื่อ 7 ปีที่แล้ว (ระหว่างปีพ.ศ. 2545 ถึง พ.ศ.2547) ซึ่งในขณะนั้น เป็นช่วงเวลาที่ดินนครอินทรียังอยู่ในระหว่างการก่อสร้างและยังไม่ได้เปิดใช้

ผู้วิจัยได้เห็นถึงความสำคัญของการตัดถนนนครอินทรี ซึ่งได้ก่อให้เกิดการเปลี่ยนแปลงและผลกระทบต่อหมู่บ้านบางรวนกในเวลาต่อมาเป็นอย่างยิ่ง จึงได้เลือกทำวิจัยต่อเนื่องในพื้นที่นี้และศึกษาผลของการเปลี่ยนแปลงดังกล่าวนับตั้งแต่ถนนเปิดใช้จนถึงปัจจุบัน อนึ่ง งานวิจัยนี้ประกอบไปด้วย 1) งานสำรวจภาคสนามเพื่อเก็บข้อมูลทางด้านกายภาพของหมู่บ้าน 2) การสังเกตการทางพฤติกรรมศาสตร์ และ 3) การสัมภาษณ์ผู้อยู่อาศัยในหมู่บ้าน ในการนี้ ผู้ทำวิจัยจึงต้องขอความร่วมมือจากผู้อยู่อาศัยในหมู่บ้าน โดยการให้สัมภาษณ์และตอบคำถามประมาณ 12 คำถาม ซึ่งเกี่ยวข้องกับเรื่องราวการเปลี่ยนแปลงต่าง ๆ ของหมู่บ้าน วิถีชีวิตประจำวัน และความคิดเห็นเกี่ยวกับการเปลี่ยนแปลงของหมู่บ้าน นอกจากนี้หลังการสัมภาษณ์ ยังต้องขอความร่วมมือในการพาชมบริเวณโดยรอบบ้านและขออนุญาตให้ถ่ายภาพบริเวณรอบบ้าน รวมไปถึงการระบุตำแหน่งสถานที่ในชุมชนที่มีการกล่าวถึงในการสัมภาษณ์โดยการชี้ในแผนที่

อนึ่ง การสัมภาษณ์นี้จะใช้เวลาประมาณ 1 – 1 ½ ชั่วโมง ข้อมูลที่ใช้ในการสัมภาษณ์นั้นจะเป็นประโยชน์ต่องานวิจัยเป็นอย่างยิ่ง ดังนั้นหากท่านจะกรุณาอนุญาตให้อัดเทปการสัมภาษณ์นี้ จะเป็นการสะดวกต่อนักวิจัยในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลเป็นอย่างมาก เนื่องจากจะเป็นการประหยัดเวลาในการจดย่อข้อความ อีกทั้งจะสามารถรวบรวมใจความได้ครบถ้วนอีกด้วย อย่างไรก็ตามหากท่านไม่สะดวกที่จะให้อัดเทปตลอดการสัมภาษณ์ หรือแม้แต่บางช่วงของการสัมภาษณ์ ทางผู้สัมภาษณ์ยินดีที่จะทำการจดข้อมูลทดแทนได้ นอกจากนี้ท่านยังสามารถขอให้ตัดข้อความที่ไม่ต้องการออกได้หลังจากการสัมภาษณ์เสร็จสิ้นแล้ว อนึ่ง ข้อมูลทั้งหมดที่ได้จากการสัมภาษณ์นั้น ทางนักวิจัยจะรักษาจริยบรรณในการไม่นำข้อมูลนี้ไปเปิดเผยที่ใด นอกจากการอ้างอิงข้อมูลในงานวิจัยหรือบทความของนักวิจัยเท่านั้น ซึ่งจะไม่มีการอ้างถึงผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์โดยตรง

หลังการสัมภาษณ์ หากท่านต้องการสอบถามละเอียดหรือข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมที่เกี่ยวข้องกับงานวิจัย ท่านสามารถติดต่อสอบถามโดยตรงได้ที่หัวหน้าโครงการวิจัยตามที่อยู่ด้านล่างนี้ นอกจากนี้จะมีการจัดทำเอกสารสรุปการสำรวจภาคสนามและส่งให้กับหน่วยงานกลางที่ดูแลหมู่บ้านของท่านต่อไป

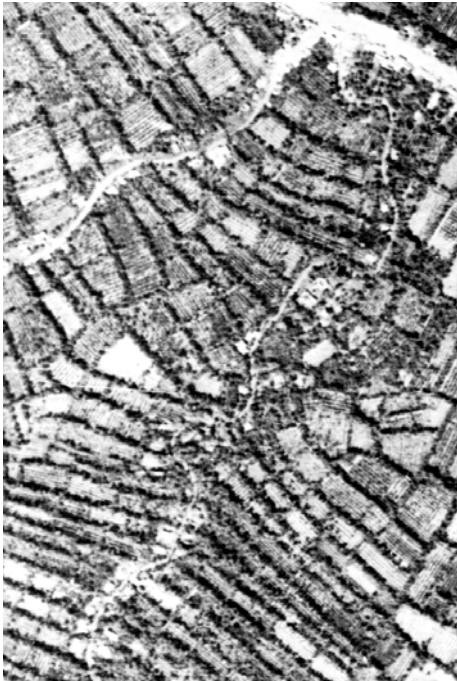
ขอขอบพระคุณทุกท่านที่ให้ความร่วมมือกับการศึกษาวิจัยนี้ ข้อมูลจากท่านจะเป็นประโยชน์ต่องานวิจัยชิ้นนี้ รวมไปถึงการพัฒนาทางวิชาการในสาขาการวางผังเมืองและสาขาภูมิสถาปัตยกรรมของไทยในอนาคต

ด้วยความเคารพอย่างสูง

นางคัทลียา จิระประเสริฐกุล (หัวหน้าโครงการวิจัย)  
คณะสถาปัตยกรรมศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยเกษตรศาสตร์  
50 พหลโยธิน บางเขน จตุจักร กรุงเทพฯ 10900  
ทำงาน 0-2942-8960-3 ต่อ 310

รายงานวิจัยฉบับสมบูรณ์ โครงการ การเปลี่ยนแปลงภูมิทัศน์ของชุมชนท้องถิ่นในกรุงเทพมหานครและปริมณฑล:  
ผลกระทบจากการตัดโครงข่ายถนนวงแหวนรอบนอกฝั่งตะวันตกของกรุงเทพมหานคร

**ประมวลแผนที่ภาพถ่ายทางอากาศของหมู่บ้านบางราวนก ตั้งแต่ปีพ.ศ.2495 ถึงปีพ.ศ.2544**  
ที่มา กรมแผนที่ทหาร



ปี พ.ศ. 2495



ปี พ.ศ. 2510



ปี พ.ศ. 2518



ปี พ.ศ. 2530

รายงานวิจัยฉบับสมบูรณ์ โครงการ การเปลี่ยนแปลงภูมิทัศน์ของชุมชนท้องถิ่นในกรุงเทพมหานครและปริมณฑล:  
ผลกระทบจากการตัดโครงข่ายถนนวงแหวนรอบนอกฝั่งตะวันตกของกรุงเทพมหานคร



ปี พ.ศ. 2542



ปี พ.ศ. 2544

ภาพที่ ค-1 แผนที่ภาพถ่ายทางอากาศของหมู่บ้านบางรวนก ปีพ.ศ. 2495 ถึงปีพ.ศ. 2544  
ที่มา กรมแผนที่ทหาร



ภาพที่ ค-2 แผนที่แสดงตำแหน่งของบ้านที่ทำการสัมภาษณ์ในหมู่บ้านบางรวนก ปีพ.ศ.2552  
ที่มา ผู้ทำวิจัย