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Panel Submission

Title	The Struggle for Nationalism in Contemporary Thailand	
Conveners	Joel Selway <i>Associate Professor</i> Department of Political Science Brigham Young University Provo, UT 84606 United States of America Petra Desatova <i>PhD Candidate</i> School of Politics and International Studies University of Leeds Leeds, LS2 9JT United Kingdom	
Brief Description	The central political struggle in contemporary Thai politics is over nationalism. This struggle takes on various forms, including subnationalism, official state nationalism, constitutional nationalism, religious nationalism, and monarchical nationalism. This panel examines both the causes and consequences of these various types of nationalism as each paper lends unique insight into the future of the Thai nation. Theoretical and empirical frameworks are employed in this assessment, as well as a range of methodological approaches, from qualitative comparative historical to survey experiments.	
Session Type	Double (6 presenters)	
Discussant	Allen Hicken <i>Ronald and Eileen Weiser Professor of Emerging Democracies</i> University of Michigan	
Presenter 1	Joel Selway <i>Associate Professor</i> Department of Political Science Brigham Young University joel_selway@byu.edu	Thai Nationalism Through Theoretical Lenses This essay assesses the state of knowledge on Thai nationalism through an overview of narratives via the lens of the four traditional schools of thought on nationalism: Perennialism/Primordialism, Modernism, Instrumentalism, and Ethnosymbolism. The essay highlights both the unique contributions and

		<p>limitations of a reliance on these frameworks in our understanding of Thai nationalism. The final section of the essay presents the Thai nationalism story through several contemporary approaches to nationalism, including Neo-Perennialism, Postmodernism, Post-Colonial Theory, and Constructivism. It concludes by laying out an agenda for the future study of nationalism in Thailand.</p>
Presenter 2	<p>Petra Desatova <i>PhD Candidate</i> School of Politics and International Studies University of Leeds jl08pd@leeds.ac.uk</p>	<p>Gastrodiplomacy and Food Nationalism in Post-Coup Thailand This paper examines Thai nationalism from the perspective of food by focusing on the period following the 2014 coup. Food has always been an important aspect of the collective Thai identity and a source of national pride. Since the early 2000s, it has also featured prominently in Thailand's nation-branding efforts. The National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO), Thailand's military junta that seized power in the 2014 coup, has launched a number of campaigns in cooperation with the private sector aimed at promoting Thai food both in Thailand and abroad. What is the purpose of these campaigns? What values do they promote? And how do Thai people react to them? These are only a few questions that this paper addresses in order to demonstrate that Thailand's post-coup food promotion (domestic and international) is an integral part of the NCPO's legitimation processes.</p>
Presenter 3	<p>Eugénie Mérieau <i>Alexander von Humboldt Chair of Comparative Constitutionalism</i> Institut für Politikwissenschaft University of Göttingen</p>	<p>The Constitutionalization of Thai Nationalism This paper examines Thai nationalism as embedded in Thai Constitutions. Based on an examination of constitution-drafting minutes, it analyzes the deep meanings attached to the key phrase of "Democracy with the King as Head of State" and traces its genealogy, a genealogy tied to the history of Thai Nationalism. To which extent is Thailand's "Constitutional Identity" a nationalist construct?</p>
Presenter 4	<p>Jacob Ricks Assistant Professor of Political Science School of Social Sciences Singapore Management University jacobricks@smu.edu.sg</p>	<p>Integration and Exclusion: Isan People and the Thai State Since 2000, Thailand's 20 Northeastern provinces, collectively called Isan, have become incredibly important to Thai politics, as they are home to the largest block of supporters for ousted prime ministers Thaksin and Yingluck Shinawatra as well as the Red Shirt movement. Pacifying the region has been a central concern of the current military junta, echoing the worries of military regimes in the 1950s-1970s. The "northeastern problem," thus</p>

		<p>labeled in the 1960s, is one of both ethnic integration and exclusion. Approximately one-third of Thailand’s people hail from the Northeast, most of whom are ethnically Lao and identify as Isan. Unlike other ethnic groups throughout Southeast Asia, though, Isan people tend to eschew political mobilization through their ethnic identity, instead embracing their “Thainess” and taking pains to differentiate themselves from the Lao across the Mekong. At the same time, Isan people are among the poorest in the Thai state, with relatively few economic or political benefits accruing to the region. Indeed, the Lao language and phenotype are frequently castigated by central Thais and the Thai state. Thus, the Isan region is both integrated into the Thai nation while simultaneously experiencing economic and political exclusion. In this paper, I examine the large-scale public adoption of the government-approved Thai identity among Isan people. I argue that the dual forces of both positive inducements for integration as well as negative consequences and stigmas associated with being labeled as “not Thai” create an environment wherein Isan identity is subsumed within the official Thai identity. At the same time, though, the Isan identity remains salient and serves as a possible source of political mobilization. I contend that the Thai state’s century-long effort to create a unified Thai identity could potentially be challenged by the rise of ethnic tensions between central Thais and Isan people.</p>
<p>Presenter 5</p>	<p>Khemthong Tonsakulrungruang kt15603@bristol.ac.uk</p>	<p>Thai Nationalism as Buddhist Nationalism Triggered by a sense of crisis, the Thai state and Buddhism are renewing their traditional relationship, kindled by reforms over a century ago. This paper argues that Thai Buddhism is reviving its lost aura and hegemony as a result of political conservatives searching for legitimacy and collective identity in a time of democratic regression. The result has been the rise of a Buddhist-nationalistic movement, or “Buddhist-as-Thainess” notion. The phenomenon has become more mainstream in recent years. Extreme Buddhists have targeted both religious minorities as well as non-mainstream Buddhists. The most notable incident is the crackdown of the famous Dhammakaya Temple. There has also been increased pressure on the government to alter the state-religion relationship, bringing it closer to the</p>

		full establishment of Buddhism as the state religion. These changes foretell the rising religion tension.
Presenter 6	<p>Blair Harris Masters of Public Policy University of Wisconsin</p> <p>Marcos Gallo PhD Candidate Social and Decision Neuroscience Caltech</p> <p>Elvira Correa Undergraduate Political Science Brigham Young University</p>	<p>Harnessing Nationalism in Social Campaigning</p> <p>Can invoking Thai nationalism help organizations in their efforts to tackle social problems? We investigate this question through a set of three survey experiments in which we expose respondents to social campaigns (either visual or text-based) and then measure their opinions on social issues and their willingness to support organizations in their efforts. The social campaigns we use include human trafficking and refugee immigration. We frame these social campaigns differently for different groups of respondents: control groups are exposed to a “nationalism-free” campaign, while various treatment groups are presented the same campaign with references to various aspects of Thai nationalism, such as Buddhism, the Monarchy, etc. We find that the effect of nationalism depends on the type of campaign as well as the type of nationalism.</p>