

EuroSEAS 2019 Double Session Panel Proposal:

Transnational Living, Cross-border Connections and Socially Embedded Exchanges between Thailand and Europe

Joint-Convenors:

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Today, some partnerships between Thai women and Westerners have lasted for more than a quarter of a century. Early pioneers acted as intermediaries and facilitated more partnerships by introducing friends and kin from across national borders and showing them the ropes. In this way, cross-border partnerships have produced specific migration streams, that have grown significantly over time and importantly transformed the social fabric of the transnational localities and “linked lives” that they have produced. At the same time, increasing numbers of European retirees settle in Thailand to benefit from affordable healthcare, while new sectors of service provision are emerging on the periphery of the tourist industry selling services of “Thai-ness” (massage, spirituality) to Western tourists. This panel aims to study cases of lived experiences of “transnationalism” between Thailand and European countries, that are increasingly prevalent in Thailand and Europe, initiated by the significant and longstanding forms of mobility and migration related to marriage, life-style, student education, retirement, sex-tourism and healthcare. How does “transnational living” between Thailand and Europe become manifest as a social form within space and place, and with what consequences for the individuals involved? What gendered power inequalities are at the core of Thai-Westerner exchanges? From the Thai perspective, what are the long-term impacts of these exchanges for individual life chances and wellbeing, on extended families, and on the communities and societies where they are embedded? Cases include Thai-Western long-term partnerships in Thailand, Thai marriage migrants to the UK, child migration to Germany, European retirees in Pattaya, Thai women in Belgium and small-scale entrepreneurs serving Western Tourists in Hua Hin.

Session 1: Chair Dr. Sirijit Sunanta

Making a Life out of “Unintended Transnationalism”: Thai women’s experiences of marrying a Westerner as a strategy for a better life – Prof. Paul Statham, Sussex Centre for Migration Research, University of Sussex, UK (paul.statham@sussex.ac.uk)

Thai marriage migrants in the UK: social networks and wellbeing - Pattraporn Chuenglertsiri, PhD Candidate, University of Sussex/Mahidol University (P.Chuenglertsiri@sussex.ac.uk)

From marriage migration to child migration: migration from Thailand to Germany - Dr. Pataya Ruenkaew, Thailand and Global Intimacy Cluster at Thammasat University, Thailand and Independent Researcher, Germany (pataya@gmx.com)

Session 2: Chair Prof. Paul Statham

Socio-Economic implications of Long-Term European migrants on Local Society: A Case Study of Pattaya, Thailand - Kwanchanok Jaisuekun, PhD Candidate, Mahidol University, Thailand (k.jaisuekun@gmail.com)

The transnational, the transgenerational and the transcendental: Thai migrant women in their Buddhist social spaces in Belgium – Dr. Asuncion Fresnoza-Flot, Research Associate FNRS Université Libre de Bruxelles, Brussels (ULB), Belgium (Asuncion.Fresnoza@ulb.ac.be)

Providing Thai Services to Westerners: Intimate Labour and Long-stay Tourism in Hua Hin, Thailand – Dr Sirijit Sunanta, Mahidol University, Thailand (sirijit.sun@mahidol.ac.th)