

## TEOCHEW OPERA: THE FORMATION AND REVIVING CHINESE IDENTITY UNDER THE NETWORK OF THAILAND CHINESE COMMUNITY IN THE ASPECT OF ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL RELATIONS

จ้าวแต้จิว: การสร้าง และฟื้นฟูอัตลักษณ์จีน ภายใต้เครือข่ายความสัมพันธ์ของชุมชนคนจีน  
ในเชิงเศรษฐกิจและวัฒนธรรม

Ladda Prasopsombat

Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University

### Abstract

The Teochew opera in Thailand prospered in the reign of King Chulalongkorn. There were many theaters set up by Chinese and Thai people. Additionally, the opera schools were opened as cultural exchange between Thailand and China. There were many theaters, especially in Chinatown and on Charoen Krung Road. Teochew (Chaozhou) is the majority population of Chinese residents in Thailand. Bangkok, for a period of time, used to be the center of the development of Teochew opera. In the communist era under the command of major general Phiboonsongkram, he wanted to control Chinese people in Thailand by announcing the replacement of the clan name with the surname for national security. Major general Phiboonsongkram applies Thai-Nationalism also closed down more than 300 Chinese schools. It is considered to be the suppression of Chineseness as prominent in Thai society.

After the end of World War II, the communist Chinese Red Army was at war with the Chinese government. The democratic president Chiang Kai-shek forced immigrants of Teochew Chinese opera performers including opera owners into Thailand in 1952-1962. During this time, the opera had 80 troupes reflecting the prosperity of The Teochew opera. Until 1966, opera theaters in Chinatown were dissolved. Presently, there are 12 troupes of Teochew opera in Thailand performing in the Chinese shrines.

This study aims to revive the precious value of Chinese opera. Under such circumstances, the opera has to be modified to the dynamic of the society. The Teochew Opera is tied to belief, faith, religion, and shrines. Therefore, Teochew opera is considered the high-class art. According to the study, the major social networks for maintaining Chinese identity are the Association, the

Shrines Network And the patronage of the wealthy Chines, has contributed to the identification of Chinese identity in the context of the crackdown that occurred during the Thai government's nationalism policy. It also allows the Chinese identity to continue to exist. Especially in the performing of Chinese identity through the opera require cooperation and support of the Chinese community to organize the opera. The cooperation and support from business sections and public devotion to the sacred shrines. Thus, the cooperation and support of the Chinese community and the local businesses are very important to the performing of the opera. The purpose of Teochew opera are not only to entertain but also to demonstrate the linkage to the faith, roots of the Chinese people, and a network of community relationships (Guanxi) in the context of the economic, social and cultural relations. Teochew opera is part of the fundamental identity of the Chinese people and is bound by the network of relationships of Chinese communities.

**Keywords:** Teochew Opera, Relations, Changes, Performing Identity

## บทคัดย่อ

การแสดงจ๊วในเมืองไทยเฟื่องฟูสูงสุดในรัชสมัยพระบาทสมเด็จพระจุลจอมเกล้าเจ้าอยู่หัว ซึ่งในสมัยนั้นมีคณะจ๊วเกิดขึ้นมากมายทั้งที่เป็นของคนจีนแท้ๆ และคณะที่คนไทยตั้งขึ้นมาเอง นอกจากนั้นในช่วงดังกล่าวมีการเปิดโรงเรียนสอนการแสดงจ๊วขึ้นเพื่อเป็นการแลกเปลี่ยนวัฒนธรรมไทย-จีน มีการเปิดโรงจ๊วขึ้นอย่างแพร่หลายโดยเฉพาะย่านเยาวราชและถนนเจริญกรุง

ภาพในอดีตสำหรับจ๊วอาจจะเป็นมหรสพที่ได้รับความนิยมอย่างสูง แต่เมื่อเริ่มมีการรับวัฒนธรรมตะวันตกเข้ามาทำให้ชาวไทยเชื้อสายจีน (Thai-Chinese) หลงเหลือความเป็นจีนมีอยู่น้อยเต็มที สาเหตุหนึ่งเป็นเพราะในสมัยจอมพล ป. พิบูลสงครามได้ใช้นโยบายชาตินิยมและมีความพยายามผลักดันให้ผู้มีเชื้อสายจีนให้มีความเป็นไทยและด้วยเหตุผลทางความมั่นคงและหัวนเกรงภัยคอมมิวนิสต์ จอมพล ป. ได้มีนโยบายสั่งปิดโรงเรียนจีนมากกว่า 300 โรงเรียน ซึ่งถือว่าการปราบปรามความเป็นจีนที่เกิดขึ้นอย่างเด่นชัดในสังคมไทย

นอกจากนี้ในช่วงหลังสิ้นสุดสงครามโลกครั้งที่สอง และกองทัพแดงของฝ่ายคอมมิวนิสต์จีนได้ทำสงครามกับรัฐบาลจีนฝ่ายประชาธิปไตยของประธานาธิบดีเจียไคเช็ค ทำให้ชาวจีนแต่จ๊วรวมถึงนักแสดงจ๊ว และเจ้าของคณะจ๊วได้อพยพเข้ามาในประเทศไทยในช่วงปี พ.ศ. 2495-2505 สองฟากของถนนเยาวราช และเจริญกรุงเต็มไปด้วยโรงจ๊วในช่วงนี้มีจ๊วมากถึง 80 คณะ ซึ่งนับเป็นช่วงที่รุ่งเรืองที่สุดของจ๊วในประเทศไทย หลังจากปี พ.ศ. 2505 จ๊วเริ่มเสื่อมความนิยมลง จนกระทั่งปี พ.ศ. 2509 โรงจ๊วในเยาวราชต่างเลิกกิจการและเปลี่ยนเป็นโรงภาพยนตร์แทน คณะจ๊วแต่จ๊วปัจจุบันเกือบทั้งหมดในประเทศไทยเป็นคณะจ๊วเร่ที่จัดแสดงตามศาลเจ้าเท่าที่รวบรวมได้ มีอยู่ราว 12 คณะ

การศึกษาค้นคว้าครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาการกลับมาฟื้นฟูกิจการของจ๊วแต่จ๊ว ภายใต้สถานการณ์เช่นนี้จ๊วแต่จ๊วได้มีการปรับเปลี่ยนให้เข้ากับการเปลี่ยนแปลงของสังคม จ๊วแต่จ๊วเชื่อมโยงกับความเชื่อศรัทธาศาสนาและศาลเจ้าและถือเป็นศิลปะชั้นสูง จากการศึกษาพบว่า เครือข่ายทางสังคมที่มีความสำคัญในการดำรงอัตลักษณ์จีน ได้แก่ สมาคมเครือข่ายศาลเจ้า และกลุ่มเก่าแก่อุปถัมภ์ ซึ่งมีส่วนในการทำให้อัตลักษณ์จีนดำรงอยู่ท่ามกลางการปราบปรามที่เคยเกิดขึ้นในช่วงที่รัฐบาลไทยใช้นโยบายชาตินิยม และยังทำให้อัตลักษณ์จีนสามารถดำรงอยู่ได้อย่างต่อเนื่อง โดยเฉพาะ

อย่างยิ่งในการแสดงอัตลักษณ์จีนผ่านการแสดงจิ้วซึ่งต้องเกิดจากความร่วมมือและการสนับสนุนจากชุมชนชาวจีน ซึ่งมีความสำคัญอย่างยิ่งต่อการแสดงจิ้ว การแสดงจิ้วแต่จิ้วไม่ได้เป็นเพียงเพื่อความบันเทิง แต่ยังแสดงให้เห็นถึงการเชื่อมโยงกับความเชื่อ รากเหง้าของคนจีนและเครือข่ายของความสัมพันธ์ของชุมชน (Guanxi) ในบริบทของความสัมพันธ์ทางเศรษฐกิจ สังคม และวัฒนธรรม ดังนั้นจิ้วแต่จิ้วเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของอัตลักษณ์ของชาวจีนและมีความผูกพันกับเครือข่ายความสัมพันธ์ของชุมชนชาวจีน

**คำสำคัญ:** จิ้วแต่จิ้ว ความสัมพันธ์ การเปลี่ยนแปลง อัตลักษณ์การแสดง

## Introduction

Chinese Opera is the performing arts originated thousands of years. As seen from the evidence appeared in the era of Song Dynasty 960-1279 CE, there were a street opera troupes performing in the southern provinces of China. Formerly, the distinctiveness of Chinese opera was the specific style of singing and music pattern telling story through proses and poems. Chinese street opera, since performances were held on stages in open spaces. The clothing is not much unique but little makeup and good musical composition with the popularity spreading to various counties to the north through the Mongol nation. The fame of the opera, even in China, led to the establishment of the court opera. The vital factor was the development of the colorful costumes expressing the prestige associated with the virtues and charming of oriental kings of the dynasty and indicates the elegance to welcome visitors. Thus, the opera was classified as high-class performing arts of China. Opera can spread to different areas of the country by the settlement of Chinese immigrants. (Sikhakoson, 2012: 95-101)

Currently, the opera is developed to form a complete gratefulness as seen in singing pattern,

makeup, clothes and opus. The energy that people bring creativity merges into a unique pattern. The opera has different models such as local opera, Teochew opera, Cantonese opera, Beijing opera, Hainan opera, etc. In the present time, Chinese opera has more than 300 kinds widely spreading over 200 species. Teochew opera is the distinguished art of the 10 greatest operas of China. Teochew opera is particularly notable by music and symphonic music. Teochew opera has been performed for over 450 years which longer than any other opera and in the mid-Ming Dynasty used a completely Teochew language during the show.

## Teochew people and Teochew opera in Thailand

Teochew, one of the ethnic overseas Chinese, were originally come from the Chaoshan region of eastern Guangdong province speaking the Teochew dialect. Today, most Teochew people live outside China in Southeast Asia, especially Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and Indonesia.

Thailand is the home to the largest Overseas Chinese community. However, Thai-Chinese today speak Thai as their native or main language.

Most ethnic Chinese live in major cities such as Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Phuket, Hat Yai, and Nakhon Sawan. Chinatowns in these cities still feature signage in both Chinese and Thai. In 2000, only a little over 200,000 Thai-Chinese still speak a variant of Chinese at home. A little over half speak Teochew, which is the largest dialect group, followed by Hakka, Hainanese, Cantonese, and Hokkien. (Smalley, 1994: 10-11; Tong, 2001: 67)

Thai Chinese are Thai citizens of Chinese, primarily Han Chinese ancestry. Thailand is home to the largest overseas Chinese community in the world with a population of approximately nine million people, accounting for 14% of the Thai population in 2012. It is also the oldest, most prominent, and best integrated overseas Chinese community. The Thai Chinese have been deeply ingrained into all elements of Thai society for the past 400 years. The present Thai royal family, the Chakri Dynasty, was founded by King Rama I who himself was partly Chinese. His predecessor, King Taksin of the Thonburi dynasty, was the son of a Chinese immigrant from Guangdong Province and a Thai mother. Nearly all Thai Chinese identify themselves as Thai due to the highly successful integration of Chinese communities into Thai society. (Luangthomkun, 2007: 191)

The displaced Teochew people are estimated at more than 10 million people. This Chinese usually settle surrounded or near the river and along the central since the Ayutthaya period. A large amount of immigrants from Guangdong came to Thailand in the early Rattanakosin

period while some of the Chinese people living in different regions in Southeast Asia. The overseas Chinese community was born in the land itself. The basic elements of the Chinese community consist of Chinese schools, Chinese newspapers and the Chinese associations.

The migration of Chinese people became larger in numbers after the end of the Qing Dynasty in 1911, when there were conflict and political turmoil in the country until the communist revolution took the role afterward. This was the time that more of Chinese immigrants migrated to foreign countries. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Chinese community in Southeast Asia made a tremendous growth due to the economic and industrial prosperity of the region, especially during the decade from 1920 to 1930 after recovering from World War I.

This period Chinese immigrants were called Huaqiao amount of an education and a sense of patriotism and partly with the hope of returning to China in the future when the political situation resolved. But most of them were able to return since the communist revolution in 1949. The numbers of Chinese immigrants in Southeast Asia in 1950 were about 10 million people, but the influx of Chinese immigration ended after the communist revolution in 1949. However, overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia continued to grow steadily. Chinese, who were born in the other countries, maintained the identity and culture of their ancestors. Zhuang & Wang (2010) estimated that there were 20 million of overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia; 5.46 millions of

overseas Chinese in Indonesia in 1990, 5.25 million people in Malaysia, 4.81 millions in Thailand, 2.52 millions in Singapore, 0.96 million people in Philippines, 0.5 millions in Vietnam and 0.85 millions in Cambodia, and 0.46 million people in Myanmar. (Niyomsilp, 2014: 1-15)

The study on “overseas Chinese” is an issue that focuses in terms of Chineseness in overseas territories, capital accumulation and wealth creation in business as an entrepreneur in the territory where they settled. Moreover, the People’s Republic of China has initiated a policy of economic reform and opening up since 1978, it appears clear that much wealthy overseas Chinese there. The relevant profound effect on the success of such a policy (Lynn, 1999: 254-260) If look in this dimension, the Chinese will stay on as a minority (An ethnic group), which could influence the economic, social and cultural. In a land where Chinese immigrants settled then (Skinner, 1957: 247; Poston & YuYu, 1990: 480-508) is still regarded as a group of overseas Chinese is nonexistent. “Transnational actors” plays a role in the eyes of the international community (Liu, 1998: 582-609; Josselin & Wallace, 2001: 151)

Southeast Asia is a Chinese territory where most residents. Compared with other regions and in this region, the Chinese are minority of countries like Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, although the Chinese living in overseas territories is unique, reflecting the China-sharing, including the use of Chinese food, faith along Confucianism and ancestor worship. The traditional Chinese preference until the building.

“The Chinese Communities”. (Lynn, 1999: 254-260)

The Teochew opera became a popular art form in Guangdong province by the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Teochew opera reached Singapore at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the arrival of immigrants from China. (Pong, 2002: 39-55)

The Teochew opera in Thailand prospered in the reign of King Chulalongkorn. There were many theaters set up by Chinese and Thai people. Additionally, the opera schools were opened as a cultural exchange of Thailand and China. Opera has opened up widely, especially in Chinatown and on Charoen Krung Road. Teochew is the most population of Chinese residents in Thailand.

Bangkok, for a period of time, used to be the center of the development of Teochew opera. In the communist era under the command of major general Phiboonsongkram, he wanted to control the Chinese people in Thailand by announcing the replacement of the clan name with the surname for national security. Major general Phiboonsongkram also closed down more than 300 schools. After the end of World War II, the communist Chinese Red Army was at war with the Chinese government. The democratic president Chiang Kai-shek forced immigrants of Teochew Chinese opera performers including opera owners into Thailand in 1952-1962. During this time, the opera had 80 troupes reflecting the prosperity of The Teochew opera. Until 1966, opera theaters in Chinatown had dissolved. Presently, there are 12 troupes of Teochew opera performing in the shrines.



(Juntaronanont, 2013: 54-72)

Since 1982, opera has returned to get attention again for to celebrate the Rattanakosin 200 Years of Opera Arts Association of Thailand-China. Opera had shown at the National Theatre by HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn to coming to preside over as well as broadcasting on Channel 9 MCOT. After Saha Pattana Piboon supported the opera to show on Channel 9 MCOT for publicizing the washing powder brand “Bao Zheng”, Bao Zheng’s drama aired every Tuesday from March 1983 to March 1986. Thailand’s opera Bao Zheng became famous and appreciated. After a while, the opera troupes began to decrease in numbers and sometimes they were showing in the shrine with fewer numbers of visitors or just a few people.

The Teochew opera in Thailand and the other countries in Southeast Asia often funded and supported by businessmen and investors. The place for showing is normally located in the capital city. It is the some of the opera troupe’s management business for renting the showing theater. The troupe manages the actors by themselves. That is good show to get it had hired in the next If not popular opera theater owners were laid off trouper. The allocation of duties within the board opera deliberation some was settled by the award-winning show from the audiences. Each troupe is highly competitive for the stability to survive. Sometimes they have to apply something new to invite customers to watch shows such as the set of episodes story to attract the audiences to come back

and see the final episode. Sometime the troupes have to give away items or give the award to visitors, such as a satin suit, satin cosmetics etc. The owners are trying to look for wealthy supporters to hire some of the famous actors. Actors also need to practice in order to raise the standard of their performance and to increase their popularity. Additionally, the board of supervisors and drama teachers must try to add something new to attract an audience. The competition between the operas always exists.

The role of reproduced Teochew opera becomes a celebration of the shrines. The celebrations also require cooperation and support of the Chinese community to organize the opera. The cooperation and support from various sections of the business community and public devotion to the sacred shrines. Therefore, the cooperation and support of the Chinese community and the local business community is very important to the performing of the opera. Teochew opera are not only a show for entertainment purposes but also linked to the faith, roots of the Chinese people and a network of community relationships (Guanxi) in the context of the economic, social and cultural relations. Teochew opera are part of the fundamental identity of the Chinese people and is bound by the network of relationships of Chinese communities.

### Workplace Experiences

In the study, preliminary data is a study of the Teochew opera in Thailand. The researcher

participates in and gets to know the actors, owners of opera and the audience for the understanding of the basics of opera and getting used to collect data. After getting acquainted, in depth study will be interviewed. The researcher follow the opera to different places to see the phenomenon between Chinese communities relations and Chinese opera as well as the historically to the development and adaptation of opera at various times.

Sai Yong Hong troupe very popular under the administration of “Yee Chae”, women aged seventy years, and “Soe ei”, women age sixty, who like Teochew Opera very much had acquired ten years ago and the creation of this opera is very popular in the last 5-6 years. This can be seen from the number of viewers of the opera.

### Effects on Subsequent Intentions

Understand the act of Teochew opera in the context of changing the economic and political culture of mainland China that resulted in the change of Teochew opera and understand the relevance of the network of Teochew opera shrine and the Chinese community of faith in the divine. The regeneration and export of Chineseness that affect the dynamics of Teochew opera in Thailand are also focused.

### Theoretical Framework

This study focuses mainly on Teochew opera as a cultural invention multinational cause the identity of the Chinese people through the experience and imagination together. This is

the operating culture through the performing arts. The researcher is looking at the performance of the opera in the current context of economic, cultural changes. Teochew opera is contributing to the realization of China in Chinese communities. “Teochew opera” has always been the representative of China. Teochew opera was linked to the identity of the Chinese. However, Teochew opera is a society of modern communications technology to attention and adaptation to link to the Guanxi network relationship.

This study has reviewed the concepts of 1) the identity and performing identity 2) the Nostalgia, 3) the network relationships (Guanxi).

Hall & du Gay (1996) described the nature of that identity, not something that exists naturally or occur irresponsibly but formed within the culture at any period of time. The culture, it is the social construction and non-stop shooting. It is a circuit which has called. “Circuit of culture” circuit, Culture and Identities explain identities have in the process been produced to occur can be consumed and control (Regulated) in these cultures that and also has a different meaning (Creating Meanings) through a Symbolic Systems of Representation about the position of the identity of the variety that we use or brought create our identities.

Identity is a performing. In anthropological terms, a performance can be many things at once. It can be artful, reflexive, and consequential while being both traditional and emergent. Both original and improvised performances (Bauman & Ritch, 1994: 255-280). A cultural performance is a performance, such as a concert

or play. Performing culture is an activity that people engage in through their everyday words and actions, which reflect their enculturation and therefore can be studied as performances regardless of whether the subjects are aware of their cultural significance. (Schechner, 2011: 3-34)

Phanjinda (2010) described the characterize want the social space or the Marker is in the concrete and symbolic globalization the information to communicate across cultural boundaries is simple and fast. The rapid advancements in technology have brought society into a modern broadcasting and media, the flow of time in the post-modern condition with the changing conditions of society, economy, culture, social system. Causes doubt about the authenticity of a lack of confidence in the future sense of loss or whatever it was shaky going into the crisis. The question of “identity” which tied with the realization that relates to the past. Has been linked to identity in the wake revive those memories alive. (Phanjinda, 2010: 5-12)

Nostalgia is a concept that has been influenced by the Postmodernism or Nostalgia is a way of looking at the world or how to give meaning to the life of one man by emphasizing the importance of imagination and the emotions of the people. “The present moment” with former passed Jameson (1991: 57) a pattern or way of looking at the world, such that looking back in history or how a yearning for the past.

We are nostalgic for the past, because it is impossible to return to the past in the world

of reality. Unless the make or model it in the form of stories and memories in the form of yearning for the past is an important part of the personality of each human being. As well as society, which is reflected in a holistic way? People and society Craves or back to the past because the past is fascinating and hugely energetic feeling and imagination. Everyone seems to channel the cultural imagination and react to the limits of place and time in the world of reality. Because no one back in time to a world of the past was physical, the wistful or nostalgic in different ways is something everyone can do and often act is always to become part of the lifestyle of individual and culture of the society in general. (Kitti-asa, 2003: 20)

Nostalgia is the basis for the creation of an identity. It is a pattern recognition algorithm or gives meaning to the past experience of individual humans used to produce customized or personal understanding. Personal memories are the representative or identity of each human being. The Nostalgia of the society is the sum of what is in your thoughts, feelings and imagination of the individual. The Nostalgia often starts from the style of your imagination to create the pattern and practice of cultural and political situation in different ways. In order to restore life to the past, such as the definition of History, film, music, performing arts, etc. These are representatives of the visual presentation. Nostalgia is a sharing product of people in a society, organization or group of people responsible for production, consumption and



dissemination of cultural products resulting from a longing for the past.

Nostalgia is one of the repercussions of the identity crisis, which is a phenomenon that occurs when the old structure of nation-states and communities are broken and the move to economic and cross-cultural. Nostalgia is the result of a phenomenon that was the identity of the modern experience. Past and memories is an important part of the personality and identity of the people is a pattern recognition algorithm or how to make sense. Each human life in the past used to produce customized or understand through stories, memories or images representing the human or social identity which is shared memory.

Today's society in the postmodern era faces with globalization. The Capitalism and technology transcend geographical boundaries to change the traditional way of life of the people. As a result, many people want to return to the ways of the past and attempt to revive the past to life again in the capitalist world. These have gradually formed a community group. Nostalgia people gather together to build up the social consciousness together. In the Chinese Diasporas, the opera is like returning to the past, and an agent to a representative of China, or the roots of the Chinese people. So there are some people are trying to build China and the realization of a Chinese opera.

Sikhakoson (2012) has discussed the relationship of Chinese society that the Teochew in China's ties with relatives and have Powerful confederation is concentrated. The family clan

system is the heart of the old Chinese society the same surname as "cousin from the same clan" clan will be split into several branches. Each branch uses "Generation Name" and respect to the ancestors of the family line and often in the same village but it is different villages, but it is "kinship of the same surname". They are bound together when the Teochew Chinese move to colonize overseas territories or abroad, they will be grouped together by family or clan origin such as Teochew Chinese Association.

Teochew Chinese people unite together as a whole family, clan associations. The association sub-clan lineage District Residents Association and the Chinese Association of Teochew, including various charities powerful combination of Teochew overseas are much stronger. This collection is a network of social relations, one that causes a succession of Teochew Chinese culture. In addition, the relationship of Teochew also closely linked to the concept of Confucius too.

The concept of a network of highly influential to study social sciences and has developed widely as well as the influence of the social network concept network society.

Guanxi is a Chinese word meaning relations to mutual benefit a relationship that will be integrated into a personal relationship with a formal relationship. Guanxi refers to the delicate art of creating, nurturing relationships and a deeper relationship and enduring. It takes the time to build on the basic principles of Guanxi such trust, assist, Unity and adjustment. These

four principles are an important part of building Guanxi relationships. (Yang, 1994: 287-311; Su & Littlefield, 2001: 199-210; Gold, Guthrie & Wank, 2004: 3-5)

Guanxi embedded in the Chinese way of doing business through relationship building that Cultural system has been converted into a business and needs to rely on the implementation of the business relationship. (Chu & Ju, 1993: 32-45) This relation has been suspended and combined with Confucianism.

## Methodology

This study is a qualitative research. The data and review documents were collected using structured and non-structured interviews with the owners, the opera performers, audiences, opera teachers, executive committees of the Chinese society to study the Chinese communities in relation of the opera to the context in education and contribute to the analysis of changes that occurred from the opera phenomenon still exists today and the opera has been linked to a Chinese identity and Guanxi network relationship. The researcher selected to study Sai Yong Hong troupes, which is currently the famous one. There are 40 members including actors, musicians and stage staff.

## Finding & Discussion

The findings of the study are “Chineseness” has never disappeared from Thai society, although the government has used nationalism policies and Thailand is successful in implementing a

consciousness-building policy. “Thainess” to the Chinese for a long time. In education, the Thai government has tried very hard to restrict and discontinue Chinese language education for decades. Over 40 years after the Second World War, Chinese learning in Thailand is falling down. In addition to the reasons given by the Thai government, there are other social reasons. Opportunity to study or have a job. Learning Thai and English will give the students more opportunities to learn Chinese. After the Second World War, Chinese descendants, despite their relatively high levels of education, were poorly educated in Chinese. Many Chinese descendants cannot speak and write the language of their ancestors.

After Thailand established diplomatic relations between China in 1975, during the government of M.R. Kukrit Pramoj, the relationship between Thailand and China was progressing and becoming more and more active. Good relationship and growing of China especially in the economic field, the Thai authorities have become aware of the need to utilize Chinese knowledge. The Chinese school in Thailand started to develop again. As a result, the new generation turned their attentions to Chineseness and Chinese identity. This means that the new generation has turned its attention to Teochew Opera as a performing of Chinese identity. Although the new generation will learn Mandarin is a part of encouraging students to expand their interest in Chinese culture. It is considered to support the understanding of the opera. It is considered to support the understanding of

the opera.

The researcher discussed the term of Guanxi. Guanxi is the Chinese business through the way of forming relationship. Guanxi demonstrates personal ties to the irony of power and developed relationships by building trust of each other and share their expectations for the future. While Confucianism aimed to the belief in the consensus. Respect for elders, obedience and authority, loyalty and acquisition of knowledge have many positive effects on the life and culture of the Chinese people and overseas Chinese. This system has resulted in downsides such as bias personal relationships, play favoritism and the patronage system that may lead to corruption. Guanxi is currently called sensitive face-to-face social network. The social networks for maintaining Chinese identity are the Chinese Association, the Shrines Network and The patronage of the wealthy Chines.

The opera in Thailand and in other countries in Southeast Asia often receive subsidies and investment from business to business. To business opera is sometimes shared by multiple partners. Sai Yong Hong troupes have owner together two people who owned a jewelry business, and the company Print sticker on one of the largest in Bangkok. Sai Yong Hong owner has a network connection in the same business and her friends. Most friends will support opera by reward and watch the show wherever they go as opera fans.

In terms of the employment opera presented in the annual celebration, they will make a reservation of the drama over the years. The

contract is signed over the year before the show time but without placing deposit. Thus, this indicates trust among both sides. In hiring opera each requires the support and cooperation of the people in the community. In particular, the preparatory work on employment and wages for the opera, generally at about 40,000 baht per night. Always show at least 3 nights or 5 nights, up to 9–12 nights per job. The payment was placed after the last night of the performance, so it required a lot of money, which the organizing committees had to raise money to support through a network of Chinese communities to support the opera either in the form of donations or an auction of worship. The auction of worship is an activity that must be held every opera. Items being auctioned were considered sacred. These activities present the identity of the Chinese that remain in Thailand.

## Conclusion

In the premodern times, Chinese opera was the primary form of communal entertainment. It also created a teaching, histories, cultures, values, and beliefs. Today, despite its decreasing of popularity, various forms of opera still demand their audiences to feel the connection with Chinese classics and traditional values. Chinese opera might be the only place where modern Chinese occasion in which such traditional values as loyalty and righteousness are put in play. Opera is a representation of Chineseness and connection to Chinese past. (Lei, 2011: 8-11) The opera is sponsored by the Chinese Association, the Shrines Network and The

patronage of the wealthy Chineses.

The Association is an important network for the maintenance of China. The Guanxi relationship model has emerged to help each other so much. According to studies, it has been found that The Association sponsors Chinese education for Chinese children. Encourage learning Chinese culture such as Chinese New Year, Chinese opera.

Shrines Network is the network of people in the Chinese community to maintain their Chinese identity through sacred rituals. And it's an important network to support the opera. The Goddess Birthday and festivals of Chinese people. People in the community will be hired to show the need to bless the gods.

The patronage of the wealthy Chineses is Support at the individual level. Both the association and the shrine community are all supporters of Chineseness. These groups cannot

be formed without the patrons. These individuals play an important role in supporting the opera through the fundraising.

In present, the Opera needs to be adapted to the existence in society. Thai language can be used in the show to narrate the short stories before the show to clarify the audiences. They should use modern technology in the show to create the excitement to the audiences. They should use online communication to make the opera accessible. Currently, the opera becomes more famous and continues to grow. Even the numbers of the audience are not as many as in the past but the ages are varied. The opera has developed model representations to make it more attractive. There is also a group of people who like to see the opera following their favorite troupes. The Teochew Chinese in Malaysia and Singapore often follow the show. The audiences are expanding widely.

## References

- Bauman, R. & Ritch, P. (1994). Informing Performance: Producing the Coloquio in Tierra Blance. *Oral Tradition*, 9(2), 255-280.
- Cheung, C. K. (2004). Chinese Diaspora as a Virtual Nation: Interactive Roles between Economic and Social Capital. *Political Studies*, 52(4), 664-684.
- Chong, T. (2006). Ethnic Identities and Cultural Capital: An Ethnography of Chinese Opera in Singapore. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, 13(2), 283-307.
- Chu, G. C. & Ju, Y. (1993). *The Great Wall in Ruins: Communication and Cultural Change in China*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Gold, T., Guthrie, D. & Wank, D. (2004). *Social Connections in China Institutions, Culture, and the Changing Nature of Guanxi*. UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Hall, S. & du Gay, P. (1996). *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Jameson, F. (1991). *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.

- Josselin, D. & Wallace, W. (2001). *Non-state Actors in World Politics*. New York: Palgrave.
- Juntaronanont, P. (2004). *Chinese Way*. Bangkok: Praphansan. [in Thai]
- Juntaronanont, P. (2013). “Teochew opera” history and relationship with Chinese shrine. In *Thai social and cultural context: The changing and renovation in order to take part in ASEAN community in the cultural aspect*. Bangkok: Thai Khadi Research Institute, TU. [in Thai]
- Kitti-asa, P. (2003). *Pop: The Thai Identity in Popular Culture*. Bangkok: The Princess Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre. [in Thai]
- Lei, D. P. (2011). *Alternative Chinese Opera in the Age of Globalization: Performing Zero*. New York: Palgrave.
- Liu, H. (1998). Old Linkage, New Networks: The Globalization of Overseas Chinese Voluntary Associations and its Implementations. *The China Quarterly*, 155, 582-609.
- Luangthomkun, T. (2007). *The Position of Non-Thai Languages in Thailand*. Language, Nation and Development in Southeast Asia, Chulalongkorn University.
- Lynn, P. (1999). *The Encyclopedia of the Chinese Overseas*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Niyomsilp, S. (2014). The Fourth Wave: Southeast Asia and New Chinese Migrants. *Proceedings of the 4<sup>th</sup> National Sociological Conference, National Research Council of Sociology, Faculty of Science, Chulalongkorn University*. On the occasion of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of April 2012 at the Marquis Grand Hotel. [in Thai]
- Osatharom, W. (2013). Chinese opera in Thai social art and cultural context. In *Thai social and cultural context: The changing and renovation in order to take part in ASEAN community in the cultural aspect*. Bangkok: Thai Khadi Research Institute, TU. [in Thai]
- Phanjinda, P. (2010). *The analysis of the phonomeon of recalling the past from the Thai periodic motion pictures*. Chiang Mai: Chiang Mai University. [in Thai]
- Pong, C. S. (2002). Teochew opera in Singapore: continuity and change. *Tirai Panggung*, 5, 39-55.
- Poston, D. L. Jr. & YuYu, M. (1990). The Distribution of the Overseas Chinese in the Contemporary World. *International Migration Review*, 24(3), 480-508.
- Safran, W. (1991). Diaspora in Modern Societies: Myth of Homeland and Return. *Diaspora*, 1(1), 83-99.
- Schechner, R. (2011). *Between Theater and Anthropology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Sikhakoson, T. (2012). *Teochew: Great minority*. Bangkok: Matichon. [in Thai]
- Skinner, G. W. (1957). *Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History*. New York: Cornell University Press.



- Smalley, W. A. (1994). *Linguistic Diversity and National Unity: Language*. Chicago: University of Chicago .
- Songprasert, P. (2015). *Modern Overseas Chinese*. Bangkok: Haier Press. [in Thai]
- Su, C. & Littlefield, J. E. (2001). Entering Guanxi: A business ethical dilemma in mainland China? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 33(3), 199-210.
- Tong, C. K. (2001). *Alternate Identities: The Chinese of Contemporary Thailand*. Singapore: Times Academic Press.
- Wong, Y. H. & Chan, R. Y. (1999). Relationship marketing in China: Guanxi, favouritism and adaptation. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 22(2), 107-118.
- Yang, M. M. (1994). *Gifts, favors, and banquets: the art of social relationships in China*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Zhuang, G. & Wang, W. (2010). Migration and Trade: The Role of Overseas Chinese in Economic Relations between China and Southeast Asia. *International Journal of China Studies*, 1(1), 174-193.



**Name and Surname:** Ladda Prasopsombat

**Highest Education:** Ph.D (candidate) Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University

**University or Agency:** Chiang Mai University

**Field of Expertise:** Sociology and Anthropology

**Address:** 285/47 Chang Klan Rd., Chiang Mai