

TAI CULTURE. INTERNATIONAL REVIEW
ON TAI CULTURAL STUDIES.

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The international review on Tai Cultural Studies presents analyses, translations, historical texts and other information, as for example portraits, reports and book reviews. It is focused on the language and literature, history, society, anthropology, religion, arts and lifestyle of Tai peoples and neighbouring regions of Southeast Asia.

The journal informs about the German Asia - Pacific Weeks that were held in Berlin between September 15 and October 15, 1997. About 180 events including as various cultural presentations, readings, lectures, conferences, workshops, concerts, exhibitions and business forums took place on the occasion of the centenary of the first official diplomatic visit of Tai king to Germany.

Jana Raendchen presents in her interesting article "Music is Harmony" the pedagogical concept of the St. Dominic Christian school of Bangkok, focused on the importance of music in the development of thought, mind and character of young people. This concept gives the school a high reputation in society and results in success in the field of international music contests.

Articles included in this volume deal with various topics, as for example: ethnic inter-relationships in the history of Lanna, culture and the transfer of biomedical knowledge, rural and political anthropology, rituals describing new ritual procedures within the cultural frame of reference such as calling the "life essence" of a car. B. J. Terwiel focuses in his article on the question of epidemic traced over Central Asia and the Caucasus in the 1330s and 1340s. He opens the discussion of whether an epidemic reached South East Asia in that period. The last article deals with sociological research on the constitution of new middle classes in Thailand.

The volume also includes a translation of stories from the Lao traditional tale cycle. The section entitled historical texts brings two documents, first a text written in 1900 and describing the first visit of a traditional Siamese theatre to Europe. Secondly, there is a text on Franco - Thai relations, and the question of the Mekong. The journal also introduces a project on the social and cultural history of the Tai people carried out at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University.

At the end are five book reviews. The contributions are written in English, German and French.

This inter-disciplinary journal undoubtedly brings new impulses in various spheres of research, culture and politics.

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