

# Postcolonial Studies in Education

Series Editors

Peter Mayo

Department of Education Studies

University of Malta

Msida, Malta

Antonia Darder

Loyola Marymount University

Los Angeles, California, USA

Anne Hickling-Hudson

Faculty of Education

Queensland University of Technology

Brisbane, Australia

Studies utilising the perspectives of postcolonial theory have become established and increasingly widespread in the last few decades. This series embraces and broadly employs the postcolonial approach. As a site of struggle, education has constituted a key vehicle for the 'colonization of the mind'. The 'post' in postcolonialism is both temporal, in the sense of emphasizing the processes of decolonization, and analytical in the sense of probing and contesting the aftermath of colonialism and the imperialism which succeeded it, utilising materialist and discourse analysis. Postcolonial theory is particularly apt for exploring the implications of educational colonialism, decolonization, experimentation, revisioning, contradiction and ambiguity not only for the former colonies, but also for the former colonial powers. This series views education as an important vehicle for both the inculcation and unlearning of colonial ideologies. It complements the diversity that exists in postcolonial studies of political economy, literature, sociology and the interdisciplinary domain of cultural studies. Education is here being viewed in its broadest contexts, and is not confined to institutionalized learning. The aim of this series is to identify and help establish new areas of educational inquiry in postcolonial studies.

More information about this series at  
<http://www.springer.com/series/14536>

Zane Ma Rhea

# Wisdom, Knowledge, and the Postcolonial University in Thailand

palgrave  
macmillan

Zane Ma Rhea  
Victoria, Australia

Postcolonial Studies in Education  
ISBN 978-1-137-38292-4      ISBN 978-1-137-37694-7 (eBook)  
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-37694-7

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016957785

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s) 2017

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use. The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made.

Cover image © Tim Gainey / Alamy Stock Photo

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature  
The registered company is Nature American Inc., US  
The registered company address is: 1 New York Plaza, New York, NY 10004, U.S.A.

*This book is dedicated to Tongkam Suttisan*  
*น้องเจ้า Nong Jaw*  
*A wise and generous woman*  
*who taught me about the heart of Thailand.*  
*Sadly passed away too young.*

# GLOSSARY OF KEY THAI, PALI, AND ENGLISH TERMS

This book draws on three languages: Thai, Pali and English. The Romanization of the Pali script is by now fairly well established (Nyanatiloka 1988, Vajirañāṇavarorasa 2510BE/1967, Ayya Khema 1987, 1991, Buddhaghosa 400BE/1991, Buddhadatta 1958, 1979). The Thai language is tonal and its transliteration and translation into other languages is complicated by the many conventions that have been employed to do so. While this book has consulted an array of literature to fathom cross-cultural meaning between Thai and English languages, the task has been further complicated by the Romanization conventions that are equally diverse. I have drawn on hard copy sources over the 20 year period (Rajapandit 2537BE, Pawphicit 2534BE, Haas 1964, Sethaputra 1993). The contemporary authorities are now online resources that are able to be updated. One consequence of moving such material to an online environment is that the conventions for Romanization are now more standardized. Therefore, this book has employed the online *Ratchabandittayasapha* as its authority for Thai-English Romanization conventions.

---

|                                  |                                    |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>Dukkha</i>                    | Suffering (Pali)                   |
| <i>Farang</i>                    | Foreigner of European appearance   |
| <i>Khwaamchàláat</i>             | Cleverness, intelligence, sagacity |
| <i>Khwaamrúu</i>                 | Knowledge                          |
| <i>Khwaamrúudeegvàa</i>          | Transcendental knowledge           |
| <i>Khwaamrúuphíphádtánaakaan</i> | Development knowledge              |
| <i>Khwaamrúusāmāimāi</i>         | Modern knowledge                   |
| <i>Khwaamrúusāngkom</i>          | Local knowledge                    |

---

---

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <i>Khwaamrūutthaanglohk</i> | Worldly knowledge  |
| <i>Khwaamrūutjākainók</i>   | Outsider knowledge   |
| <i>Kreengcaj</i>            | Reluctance to impose (upon)  |
| <i>Langsāmāimāi</i>         | Postmodern   |
| <i>Máhāawittāyaalai</i>     | University   |
| <i>Mettā</i>                | Loving kindness (Pali)   |
| <i>Panjaa</i>               | Wisdom   |
| <i>Panjaasāmāimāi</i>       | Modern wisdom  |
| <i>Panjaathaanglohk</i>     | Worldly wisdom   |
| <i>Panjaathaangtham</i>     | Buddhist higher wisdom   |
| <i>Panjaawitce</i>          | Wisdom method  |
| <i>Paññā</i>                | Wisdom (Pali)  |
| <i>Paññāvagga</i>           | Path of wisdom (Pali)  |
| <i>Paññāpāramī</i>          | Complete wisdom, the perfection of wisdom (Pali)   |
| <i>Phumpanjaachawbaan</i>   | Indigenous Thai rural wisdom   |
| <i>Prātēt Thai</i>          | Anglicized version of Thailand   |
| <i>Riap rooy</i>            | Proper behaviour   |
| <i>Sangop</i>               | Calm   |
| <i>Sāpaan</i>               | Bridge   |
| <i>Sāpaanmitdtrāpāap</i>    | Friendship bridge  |
| <i>Satipanjaadii</i>        | The ability to get good grades   |
| <i>Sīla</i>                 | Code of morality (Pali)  |
| <i>Samādhi</i>              | Concentration (Pali)   |
| <i>Sanuk</i>                | To have fun and to enjoy oneself and have a good time  |
| สยาม <i>Syām</i>            | Siam, preferred spelling for Thailand for many Thai people   |
| <i>Siinsamaadipanjaa</i>    | Three domains of knowledge in Theravādan Buddhism: Morality, concentration and insight understanding   |
| <i>Ti-Piṭ aka</i>           | (lit. Three Baskets – Pali) is the Pali canonical collection of primary Pali language texts that form the doctrinal foundation of Theravāda Buddhism |
| <i>Wat</i>                  | Temple   |
| <i>Vipassanā</i>            | Insight understanding (Pali)   |
| <i>Vipassanā-Paññā</i>      | Insight wisdom (Pali)  |
| <i>Wichaa</i>               | University subject knowledge   |
| <i>Wipasanaa</i>            | Insight understanding  |

---

Sources: Nyanatiloka (1981, 1982), Buddhadatta (1958, 1979), Haas (1964), Sethaputra (1993), Ayya Khema (1987, 1991), Pawphicit (2534BE), Rajapandit (2537BE), Congress (2016), สำนักงานราชบัณฑิตยสภา *Ratchabandittayasapha* (2559BE/2016), Thailand (2554BE/2011)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Over more than twenty years, this sort of research is not possible without the willing support and encouragement from many people. I am grateful for the generosity of the research participants who have given of their time and their understandings of wisdom and knowledge and for teaching me about Thailand.

I would like to acknowledge Professor Bob Teasdale and Venerable Ayya Khema Bhikkuni who were both *kalyāṇyamitta* reliable guides along this path; Thai colleagues who were my wonderful *Ajaans* who taught on the *1994 Perspectives on Thailand* course at Chulalongkorn University, in particular Peansiri Ekniyom, Krisadawan Kalsang Dawa, and Soraj Hongladarom; monks, nuns and retreatants at Wat Suan Mokkh; colleagues who encouraged my interest in wisdom at the *World Council of Comparative Education Societies* Conference, 2009, Sydney Australia, in particular Konai Helu Thaman, Anne Hickling Hudson, Unaisi Nabobo, and Vandra Masseman; Thailand based colleagues, Pra-on Komolpith, Heyadat Ahmed, Marin Yari, Wipawan Kulsamrit, John Wilson, Brian Sheehan, Watinee Kharnwong, and Busarin; Australian based colleagues Kanya Schwinghamer, Olive Zacharov, Ellen Shipley, Anthony Pollock, Jaye Walton, Christopher Ziguras, and Louise Farrar; colleagues at the National Library of Australia, Vacharin McFadden, Sophie Viravong, and Jane Hodgins.

In Phitsanulok, sincere thanks to the Suttisan family, Thawee, Tongkam, Nong Mao, Nong Mong and Nong Lot for their kindness and generosity in welcoming me into their family; all the people at the Sgt. Maj. Thawee Folk Museum for their ongoing work to preserve and maintain



Thai *Phumpanjaachawbaan*; and the Buranathai Buddha Image Foundry for sharing their knowledge of Buddha image casting in the traditional Thai style.

I am very grateful for research grants I have received: the Australian government for awarding me an Australian Research in Asia Award to undertake my PhD studies in Thailand in the 1990s; and, for a number of research grants and periods of research leave from both Flinders and Monash universities to enable me to continue this research.

As a more than 20-year project, my thinking on this topic has been developing and modifying over the years and I would like to acknowledge the intellectual genealogy that has underpinned this work. This book is derived in part from ideas first developed for my PhD and later published in G.R Teasdale and Z. Ma Rhea (Eds), *Local Knowledge and Wisdom in Higher Education*, Copyright Elsevier Science Ltd.2000; cited in text as Teasdale and Ma Rhea (2000) and Ma Rhea (2000). Thanks also to Taylor & Francis for their permission for me to use parts of my article “Buddhist Wisdom and Modernisation: Finding the balance in globalized Thailand.” *Globalizations* 10 (4):635–650. doi: 10.1080/14747731.2013.806739 (<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rglo20/10/4>). Other writings are cited in text as relevant. Please refer to the Bibliography and endnotes for further information.

Finally, I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to my wife, Jeane Freer, for her ongoing support and encouragement in enabling me to write this book.

# CONTENTS

|          |  |           |
|----------|--|-----------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Balancing Old and New Wisdom in the Thai University</b>               | <b>1</b>  |
|          | 1.1 <i>Introduction</i>  | 1         |
|          | 1.2 <i>Śyām Thailand Past and Present</i>                                | 11        |
|          | 1.3 <i>A Brief Note on Methodology</i>                                   | 18        |
|          | 1.3.1 <i>A Priori Considerations</i>                                     | 19        |
|          | 1.3.2 <i>Methodology and Methods</i>                                     | 23        |
|          | 1.4 <i>Framework of This Book</i>  | 29        |
|          | 1.5 <i>Conclusion</i>  | 32        |
|          | <i>Bibliography</i>  | 32        |
| <b>2</b> | <b>ปัญญา <i>Panjaa</i> Wisdom and ความรู้ <i>Khwaamrúu</i> Knowledge</b> | <b>39</b> |
|          | 2.1 <i>Wisdom and Knowledge</i>  | 39        |
|          | 2.1.1 <i>Wisdom and Knowledge in Education</i>                           | 40        |
|          | 2.1.2 <i>Wisdom and Knowledge in สมณ Śyām Thailand</i>                   | 46        |
|          | 2.2 <i>Pathways to a Wise Life: Panjaathaanglohk Worldly Wisdom</i>      | 50        |
|          | 2.3 <i>Knowledge</i>   | 55        |
|          | 2.4 <i>Conclusion</i>  | 59        |
|          | <i>Bibliography</i>  | 59        |
| <b>3</b> | <b>The Thai <i>Máhāawittáyalai</i> University</b>                        | <b>65</b> |
|          | 3.1 <i>Introduction</i>  | 65        |
|          | 3.2 <i>Foundations of the Mähāawittáyalai in Thailand</i>                | 70        |
|          | 3.2.1 <i>The Australian University in Thai Context</i>                   | 73        |
|          | 3.2.2 <i>Sàpaanmitdtrápáap Friendship Bridge</i>                         | 75        |

|               |   |            |
|---------------|---|------------|
| 3.3           | Wichaa, Khwaamruusàmäimài, and Panjaa<br><i>in the Mähäawittáyalai University</i>   | 78         |
| 3.3.1         | <i>Wichaa and Khwaamruusàmäimài</i>   | 80         |
| 3.3.2         | <i>Siinsamaadipanjaa</i>  | 84         |
| 3.4           | <i>Conclusion</i>   | 90         |
|               | <i>Bibliography</i>   | 90         |
| <br>          |   |            |
| <b>Part 1</b> | <b>Knowledge, ‘Outsiders’, and the Market</b>   | <b>95</b>  |
| <br>          |   |            |
| <b>4</b>      | <b>Old and New Exchange: Transitioning to Modernity<br/>and Beyond</b>  | <b>97</b>  |
| 4.1           | <i>Introduction</i>   | 97         |
| 4.2           | <i>Examples of Old Exchanges</i>  | 98         |
| 4.3           | <i>Examples of New Exchanges</i>  | 103        |
| 4.4           | <i>Atmosphere Surrounding Exchanges</i>   | 117        |
| 4.4.1         | <i>Attitudes Held by Thais About Australia and<br/>Australians</i>  | 117        |
| 4.4.2         | <i>Attitudes About Thailand and Thai People Held<br/>by Australians</i>   | 122        |
| 4.5           | <i>Conclusion</i>   | 128        |
|               | <i>Bibliography</i>   | 129        |
| <br>          |   |            |
| <b>5</b>      | <b>Higher Education Services Markets: The Interplay of<br/>International, Global, Regional, and Local Thai Perspectives</b> | <b>131</b> |
| 5.1           | <i>Thailand and Internationalisation</i>  | 132        |
| 5.2           | <i>Thai Engagement with Globalised Higher Education<br/>Services Markets</i>  | 138        |
| 5.3           | <i>Thai ‘Self-Sufficient Inclusion’ and Regionalism</i>   | 148        |
| 5.4           | <i>Conclusion</i>   | 154        |
|               | <i>Bibliography</i>   | 155        |
| <br>          |   |            |
| <b>6</b>      | <b>Building the Wooden Horse Together? Mutuality<br/>and Contestation in the Knowledge Market</b>                           | <b>161</b> |
| 6.1           | <i>A Brief History of Bilateral Relations</i>   | 162        |
| 6.2           | <i>Scholarships and National Interests</i>  | 168        |
| 6.3           | <i>National Policy Development and University Education:<br/>Tensions and Opportunities</i>                                 | 171        |

|   |   |         |
|---|---|---------|
| 6.4   | <i>The Market and National Interests</i>  | 178     |
| 6.5   | <i>Working Together: Partnership, Reciprocity, and Mutual Benefit</i>                               | 181     |
| 6.6   | <i>Future Plans in a Globalised World- Thailand and Australia</i>                                   | 184     |
| 6.7   | <i>Conclusion</i>   | 186     |
|   | <i>Bibliography</i>   | 187     |
| <br><b>Part 2 Towards a <i>Langsàmäimài</i> Postmodern Wisdom</b> |   | <br>191 |
| 7   | <b>Balancing Outsider Knowledge, Holding Thai Wisdom</b>  | 193     |
| 7.1   | <i>Introduction</i>   | 193     |
| 7.2   | <i>Thai Universities: Complexities and Challenges</i>   | 195     |
| 7.3   | <i>Preserving the “Higher” in the Thai University Mission</i>                                       | 196     |
| 7.3.1   | <i>Higher Education and the <i>Langsàmäimài</i> Postmodern Individual</i>                           | 197     |
| 7.3.2   | <i>Where Is Wisdom in the Thai University?</i>  | 199     |
| 7.4   | <i>Bringing Thai Phumpanjaachawbaan into the University</i>   | 206     |
| 7.5   | <i>Conclusion</i>   | 213     |
|   | <i>Bibliography</i>   | 214     |
| 8   | <b>The Future of <i>Panjaá</i> Wisdom in <i>Langsàmäimài</i> Postmodern Globalised Universities</b> | 217     |
| 8.1   | <i>Stepping Onto the Pathway to Wisdom</i>  | 218     |
| 8.1.1   | <i>The Panjaawítee Wisdom Method</i>  | 218     |
| 8.2   | <i>Reflections on the Pedagogy of This Pathway</i>  | 224     |
| 8.3   | <i>Considerations</i>   | 225     |
| 8.3.1   | <i>Methodological</i>   | 225     |
| 8.3.2   | <i>Understanding Panjaa Wisdom and Khwaamrúu Knowledge</i>  | 226     |
| 8.3.3   | <i>Khwaamrúu Knowledge and Its Forms</i>  | 229     |
| 8.3.4   | <i>Sociological Considerations</i>  | 229     |
| 8.3.5   | <i>Considerations About ‘Higher’ Education</i>  | 231     |
| 8.4   | <i>Conclusion</i>   | 234     |
|   | <i>Bibliography</i>   | 235     |
| <br><b>Bibliography</b>   |   | <br>237 |
| <br><b>Index</b>  |   | <br>257 |

## LIST OF FIGURES

|             |   |     |
|-------------|---|-----|
| Fig. 1.1    | Interlocking interests under globalisation  | 28  |
| Fig. 2.1    | Pathway to higher wisdom (Adapted from Ma Rhea 2013a)   | 49  |
| Diagram 5.1 | Twelve core values [Thai version] (Reporters 2557BE, NNT 2557BE)                                    | 152 |
| Diagram 5.2 | Twelve core values [English version] (Reporters 2557BE, NNT 2557BE)                                 | 153 |
| Fig. 8.1    | Pathway to a wise life with links to Buddhist knowledge (Adapted from Ma Rhea 2013a)                | 218 |
| Fig. 8.2    | A pedagogical framework for cultivating wisdom in the university (Adapted from Ma Rhea 2000, 2014a) | 220 |

## LIST OF TABLES

|           |  |     |
|-----------|--|-----|
| Table 4.1 | 1995 estimates of providence, (@ AUD20,000 per student)                            | 115 |
| Table 4.2 | 2015 estimates of providence, (@ AUD40,000 per student)                            | 115 |
| Table 7.1 | Number of Thai Government Scholarships by Government<br>Ministry by Country 2013   | 204 |
| Table 7.2 | Relative allocation of Thai Government Scholarships by<br>Ministry by Country 2013 | 205 |