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CULTURAL ADAPTATION IN THAI - LAOS ELEPHANT REARING IN THE GLOBALIZATION ERA

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to understand the cultural adaptation in Thai and Laos elephant rearing in the globalization era. A qualitative research approach is employed to conduct the study. An observation form, interview, and group interview are used to collect data. The participants are Thai and Lao elephant herders which include local philosophers, elephant owners, elephant mahouts, scholars, veterinarians, elephant camp owners, and those who have knowledge about elephant rearing culture. The survey and interview are both structured and unstructured. The data is compiled and analyzed using Structural-Functional Theory. Then the descriptive analysis method is employed to present the data.

The results show that in the present, Thai - Laos elephant rearing culture is both tangible and intangible culture. There is a relationship between the herders and the elephants that can still be seen today. However, globalization has affected the economy, society, technology, and administration, resulting in tangible and intangible culture adaptations. The tangible cultures include food, sanctuary, medicine, and elephant farming equipment. The intangible cultures

are traditions, rituals, and beliefs. It is obvious that the current domestic elephant rearing culture is mostly for business. Most Thai and Laos elephant rearing can also be seen in our daily life. The elephant rearing culture has been systematically passed down from one generation of elephant herder to the next. Elephant rearing experience that has accumulated develops elephant rearing skills that are suitable for the current conditions in each area. Over time, the skills development has shaped the appropriate method for rearing elephants that fits in the globalized era, in terms of both rearing elephants for labor and getting other benefits from them.

INTRODUCTION.

The culture of elephant rearing began in the past when humans started raising animals in the Neolithic or New Stone Age, approximately 10200-4500/2000 BC between the Middle Stone Age and the Metal Age, in which humans lived together in a village, began to know how to do agriculture systematically and learned to grow crops and store them for cooking. During this time, they also knew about weaving, making pottery, and raising animals. They started to settle down and built clay huts as permanent residences in watershed areas. They knew how to use hunting tools. Moreover, they learned to make clay containers to contain paddy and food. Animals they raised included dogs, goats, and sheep. However, they still hunted animals such as deer, rabbits, or wild boars. In Asia, there are many wild elephants. Asian elephants live in the forests in Thailand, Laos, India, Burma, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, and Malaysia. Thai and Lao elephant rearing started with some kind of work that humans could not do, such as hauling wood. As a result, humans started training elephants for labor. Therefore, rearing elephants was like bringing elephants to do some works, such as hauling trees for long journeys. Elephants, then, became a traveling vehicle. However, before the elephants can work in such jobs, they must be trained by a human.

Cultural adaptation occurs in the globalization era as a result of changes in the economy, society, technology, and administration. These factors also cause changes in both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. The tangible cultures include food, sanctuary, medicine, and elephant farming equipment. Intangible cultures include traditions, rituals, and beliefs. The researcher studied these changes by collecting and analyzing the knowledge related to cultural adaptation of Thai and Laos elephant rearing

Elephant rearing cultures are both tangible and intangible. The tangible cultures include food, sanctuary, medicine, and elephant farming equipment. The intangible cultures are traditions, rituals, and beliefs. The culture of rearing elephants in both countries can be assumed that they are somehow related. From the study of documents, including textbooks, literatures, related research, and the field observation, including survey and interview, it was found that adaptation of elephant rearing culture in the globalization era where there were changes in terms of economy, society, technology, and administration should be analyzed based on the concept of ethnicity and adaptation. The interpretation of cultural adaptation of Thai and Lao elephant rearing should be based on Structural – Functionalism Theory in order to analyze the relationship of function of the society and culture of elephant rearing. It was believed that the culture comes from forms of expressions between humans and elephants. In this culture, humans and elephants helped and supported each other so that the entire

system of the elephant rearing culture can go on when the globalization era is beginning.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE.

To analyze the cultural adaptation of Thai - Lao elephant rearing in the globalization era.

Definitions of Terms.

Elephant rearing means raising and taking care of elephants in terms of their food, sanctuary, medicine, and elephant farming equipment in order to keep them in good condition. In return, humans get products from the elephants, whether they are the main products or by-products from the past until the present.

Adaptation refers to changes in elephant rearing culture that's affected from cultural changes in the globalization era in terms of 1) Economy, 2) Social, 3) Technology, 4) Administration in Surin province, Thailand, Champasak, and Xayaburi, Lao PDR.

Elephant rearing culture refers to inheritance and cultivate the lifestyle of humans and elephants in the local context, which give rise to 2 types of culture. First, tangible cultural heritage which is something that can be physically demonstrated, including both movable and immovable cultural heritage, such as food, sanctuary, medicine, or equipment involved in catching and rearing elephants. Second, intangible cultural heritage which includes beliefs, rituals, and traditions associated with elephants in Surin, Thailand and Champasak and Xayaburi, Lao PDR.

Globalization refers to the current impacts and changes that comes from the development of knowledge acquisition and application which changes two types of elephants rearing cultures. First, tangible cultural heritage, meaning something that can be physically demonstrated, including both movable and immovable cultures, such as food, sanctuary, medicine, and equipment used for catching and rearing elephants. Second, intangible cultural heritage, including beliefs, rituals, and traditions associated with elephants such as guidelines that have been created and transmitted through, orally, or by any other means. These cultures have been affected from various thing occurring in the aspects of 1) Economy, 2) Social, 3) Technology, and 4) Administration.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

Participants.

The 36 Thais and Laos were selected by purposive sampling method. The samples were the people who had knowledge about cultural adaptation in rearing elephants which consist of the following groups of people. 1. Key informants: People who has knowledge about the cultural history of Thai and Lao elephant rearing, consisting of 2 community leaders, 2 Thai and Lao elephant herders who were the spiritual leaders, and 2 local scholars who studied

about the culture. Therefore, there were 6 key informants in total. 2. Casual informants: 6 people who were rearing elephants in Thailand and Lao PDR as a business, 7 Thai and Lao people who took care of the elephants domestically, and 7 other people who were not working for anyone. In sum, there were total of 20 casual informants. 3. General informants: Groups of 10 people who takes part in promoting the lifestyle of the Thai and Lao elephant herders, such as vendors tourists, veterinarians, elephant mahouts, etc.

Research Tools.

The non-participant observation was divided into two types, structured interview for the key, casual, and general informants and unstructured interview which was an open-ended interview for the key and general informants. The researcher was the one who interviewed the participants, using the focus group interview approach in order to recheck with the data analyzed prior to the field research.

Data collection

consist of two steps: 1) Collecting information from documents to study the related research 2) Collecting the data in the field, using research tools.

Data Analysis.

The data was analyzed from the surveys, interviews, and theory.

STUDY RESULTS.

The study shows that Thai and Lao cultures of rearing elephants were related to each other. The ancestors who reared elephants in Surin, Thailand migrated from Attapu San Pang, Champasak or Southern Laos, Lao PDR today. The culture of elephant rearing had been inherited before they migrated to Thailand and settled in Ta Klang Village, Krapo, Thatum, Surin, Thailand. It is currently the most famous Thai elephant village. In Southern Laos, there was only one place where elephant rearing culture can still be seen which is Baan Kiet Ngong, Pathum Phon Town, Champasak. However, the largest elephant rearing culture in Lao PDR can be found in Ban That Muang Thong Mee Xai, Xayaburi. Most of Thai and Laos elephant herders are engaged in agriculture. The social conditions of most villagers are of high unity, obedience to elders, and strict traditions and cultures. Theses are the results of the elephant rearing culture. In Thailand, Pakham ritual had been practiced and inherited strictly, including in Southern Laos. In Xayaburi, north of Lao, there was a belief about spirit retrieving between humans and elephants.

The adaptation to globalization included economic, social, technological, and administration aspects, in terms of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. The adaptations of each aspects were as follows:

Economical Adaptation

- Elephant food: Elephants were considered economic animals that had been popular in the tourism industry in Asia. In Thailand, local elephant food sources had been developed through the policy of the Elephant Museum and the Elephant Kingdom Project by growing crops that were elephant food in order to stimulate the economy and to make sure elephants had sufficient food.

In Lao PDR, in terms of economic, people were not allowed to cut down trees in the area in order to maintain the elephant food source. As with the Champasak, there was a ban on logging which helps maintaining the elephant food to be sufficient.



Figure 1: The abundance of forests in Xayaburi Province, Laos PDR.

- Elephant sanctuary: Elephants has been considered economic animals that stimulate the economy in Thailand and Laos which resulted in a booming economy in tourism. Tourists from all over the world came to see the culture of elephant rearing, both in Thailand and Laos which boosted a better economy. The domestic elephants were taken care by the government and private sectors. The elephants in tourism industry were allocated for elephant sanctuaries in order to make the tourism business better. Stalls were built strongly and beautifully with cement floor and roof. Elephants that were not in tourism industry had their own traditional local sanctuaries where there were stalls made of easy-to-find local materials such as a wooden stall.



Figure 2: Elephants in tourism industry were allocated for the sanctuaries in Thailand.

- Elephant medicine: Elephants have been considered economic animals. Tourism involving elephants has been popular. Elephants got a better care from the government and private sectors. Veterinarians have been therefore available in the elephant tourism areas.



Figure 3: Elephant hospital in the tourism business of the Lao PDR



Figure 4: An elephant hospital in Thailand.

- Elephant rearing equipment: Elephants have been considered economic animals in Thailand and Laos PDR. The elephant conservation trend have affected the economy, including abuse prevention. At tourist attractions, foreigners saw elephant hooks abusive. As a result, they chose to travel to areas where the elephants were not abused, including Xayaburi. However, elephant hooks were considered elephant controlling as well as mahouts' protector tools in Thailand. The anti-elephant hook trend caused the decrease in foreign tourists

in Thailand. As tourists have returned to elephant villages in Thailand, elephant hooks have become a popular souvenir that tourists buy as both souvenirs and sacred objects, depending on personal beliefs.

- Beliefs, rituals, and customs: Elephants have been considered economic animals. Beliefs, rituals, and customs have been an incentive for tourism in Thailand and Laos. It has been a form of tourism marketing where interesting stories were created to attract tourists and eventually drive the economic.



Figure 5: Elephant festival in Ban Kiat Ngong, Laos PDR.



Figure 6: Elephant festival in Xayaburi, Laos PDR.

Social Aspect

- Elephant food: Elephants have been considered to be socially important animal that need to be given great care of in terms of food. In Lao society, there was a fertile ecosystem that could provide enough for rearing elephants. In contrast, elephant food in Thailand was produced from plants that were grown specifically for elephants. It has been promoted by Thai government. However, elephants have been taken a good care of by elephant herders. Sometimes, food for some groups of elephants was made from the mixture of ingredients that are nutritious and suited the elephants at different ages.



Figure 7: The abundance of forests in Champasak, Lao PDR.s

- Elephant sanctuary: In the context of Thai and Lao society, the elephant sanctuaries have been supported by governments and private organizations. The elephant sanctuaries have been built to look good and were divided into appropriate zones in order to promote elephant tourism in villages and private elephants sanctuaries. Elephant owners created various forms of sanctuary for elephants. Available and obtainable materials were used to build elephant stalls in Laos. In case of domestic elephants, elephants were allowed to live on the edge of forests.



Figure 8: Elephant wooden stall built by locals to use in elephant training.

- Elephant medicine: Elephants have been considered an socially important animal in Thailand and Laos. Elephant care is therefore vital. However, treatments were done according to the nature of each area. In an area that has access to modern medical, using modern medicine for elephants was a preferred choice of medication of Thai and Lao elephants herders. In contrast, herbs were another option for elephant rearing in remote area.



Figure 9: Herbs used to treat elephants

- **Elephant rearing equipment:** Elephants have been considered a socially important animal. Elephant rearing tools could still be found, especially elephant hooks that were found in both Thailand and Laos. However, these equipment was used at different occasions. In Thailand, mahouts would carry their hooks all the time. On the other hand, Lao elephant mahouts under private organizations would not carry elephant hooks to maintain the good image of the elephant conservation.
- **Beliefs, rituals, and customs:** In both Thai and Lao society there are still beliefs, rituals and customs related to the elephant rearing culture that could be found nowadays. In Thailand, the belief in Pakham remains in the elephant herder society. In Laos, the belief in Baai Sri lies in the Lao elephant rearing society.

Technological Aspect

- **Elephant food:** Elephants have been considered an important animal in the tourism of Thailand in terms of technology, resulting in changes in elephant food in response to the current conditions where elephant rearing has to be more convenient. Production of elephant kibbles in Thailand to facilitate elephant rearing reflected the favorable elephant rearing rate. The support for the crops growing provided adequate food sources for domestic elephants. On the other hand, elephants in Laos were reared using natural sources of food because the ecosystem was still more abundant than in Thailand. Therefore, Laos has not yet used technology to produce elephant food.



Figure 10: Elephant kibbles in Thailand

- Elephant sanctuary: Elephants have been considered an important animal in tourism in Thailand and Laos. With support from government agencies and the private sectors to promote habitat for elephant herders and elephants, their places to live were built from technology, including materials and equipment to build a more stable elephant sanctuary.
- Elephant medicine: Elephants have been considered an important animal in the tourism business. The medical evolution has made available medicines that could treat elephant diseases in accordance with the symptoms or known as conventional medicine treatment. However, access to elephant treatments might be limited in the remote areas. As a result, the initial treatment might be herbal medicine.
- Elephant rearing equipment: Elephants have been considered an important animal in tourism in Thailand and Laos. Elephant hooks were necessary equipment of a mahout and were used to control elephants. Technology affected the production of elephant hooks to meet the needs and make them available in markets in both Thailand and Laos. There were shops selling elephant hooks both for rearing elephants and as souvenirs for tourists. In Xayaburi, Lao PDR, elephant hooks could be purchased at any knife shop in the city unlike in the past where the hooks had to be forged and cast for family use.



Figure 11: Elephant hooks selling for mahouts and for tourists.

- Beliefs, rituals, and customs: Elephants have been considered an important animal in the tourism business in Thailand. Technology has played a role in manufacturing equipment related to elephant rearing, including the popularity of the sacred objects related to elephants. The technology played a role in producing the equipment for mass market, selling them on the markets, and product promotion through online media.



Figure 12: Mass production of sacred objects related to elephants in the market.

Administration Aspect

▪ **Elephant food:** Elephant has been an important animal in Thailand and Laos. There was a shortage of elephant food in Thailand due to changes in the ecosystems. At the beginning, mahouts walked elephants on streets, causing problems until legislation to prevent the mahout from wandering elephants was enforced and the mahout could no longer bring the elephants out on streets. Later, Her Majesty Queen Sirikit The Queen Mother's commanded for an appropriate care of elephants which was the beginning of the Elephant Kingdom Project, including the support from Surin Provincial Administrative Organization, which has been taken care of by the government in terms of budget to build a museum. Both projects have been focusing on the development of sources of elephant food by growing food crops for elephants. In Laos, elephant food has been abundant since the Lao government passed a law to protect the natural food sources of elephants. The law prohibiting logging had an important role in protecting elephant food.



Figure 13: Planting elephant food crops and giving the food to the mahouts in Thailand.

▪ **Elephant sanctuary:** Elephants have been considered an important animal in Thailand and Lao PDR. Thai elephants, in the early stages, had to roam on the road which was caused by a Forest Act since the elephant owners could no longer catch the elephants for sale. Therefore, they had to take the elephants to roam on city roads. Later, when a street elephant banning law was passed, the elephants had to return to where they used to live. However, the government provided stable homes for people and elephants. The elephants in the Elephant Kingdom Project and the Elephant Museum would be provided with places as the welfare. In Laos, a law prohibiting wild elephant catching was also passed. The elephants that had been caught for sale were therefore just the domestic elephants. The elephant herders who were supported by government and private sectors would be working in tourism industry. The elephant sanctuaries were taken care of by the government and private sectors. On the other hand, groups of elephants that were not in the industry lived in elephant stalls and on the edge of the forest.

▪ **Elephant medicine:** Elephants have been considered an important animal in Thailand and Laos. Getting support for tourism in both Thailand and Laos has resulted in widespread use of modern knowledge in treating elephants since they were one of the world's famous economic animals. Veterinarians were responsible for taking care of the elephants. Even though there were elephant hospitals in Thailand and Laos, hospital accessibility might affect the ease of

treatment. If elephants could not go a hospital to get the treatment, mahouts or elephant owners would use herbs to treat the initial symptoms of elephants.

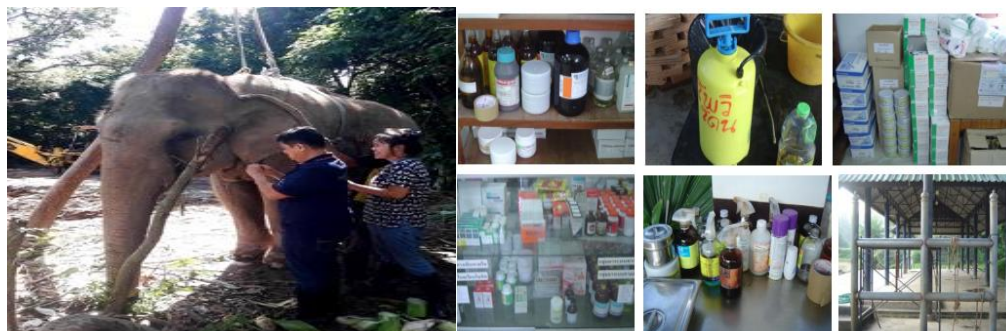


Figure 14: Elephant treatment in Thailand

- Elephant rearing equipment: Elephants have been considered an important animal in Thailand and Laos. Both countries were interested in elephant conservation law. The law would cover unabusive elephant rearing. By the time the research was conducted, both Thai and Lao herders were using elephant hooks which was an important equipment in elephant rearing since it was used to both control the elephants and protect the mahouts. The use of hooks was not against the elephant conservation law because the hook was seen as the mahouts' protective gear.

Structure And Function of The Elephant Rearing Culture in The Globalized Era

From the field study of the current elephant rearing culture in Thailand and Lao PDR, it was found that the traditional elephant rearing systematically divided the roles of the elephant herders, especially the role of the elephant doctors. The new way of elephant rearing was more like a business that aimed to make profits with the support from government and private sectors. It would also create jobs for elephant herders. The elephants supported by the government and private sectors were systematically managed from small scale in each family to a big scale as an elephant village. Such system was in line with the Structural - Functionalism Theory. The structural and functional roles in cultural processes can explain the origins of elephant rearing culture in the society, including both traditional and modern styles. However, the traditional elephant rearing related to Pakham was found at Ban Ta Klang, Krapo, Thatum, Surin, Thailand and Ban Kiet Ngong, Mueang Phum Phon, Champasak, Lao PDR, which was different from Ban That, Muang Thong Meesai, Xayaburi, Lao PDR where most people believed in local blessing ceremony.

Elephant rearing culture is unique, starting from elephants birth to death. It can be seen that the culture of elephant rearing has been promoted and supported in order to maintain the culture in the society. Various organizations played a different role and had different duties in the social system, starting from the budget for promoting the elephant village tourism. Such a system has resulted in a common identity in the social structure of the community.

The Structural - Functionalism Theory can be used to explain the phenomenon occurred in the community based on Parsons's social thought which includes 5 functional systems: 1) relationship between actors, 2) goal, 3) means, 4) situations conditions, and 5) norms, values, and other ideas. These five factors can help boost understanding of the structural system and function division in elephant rearing cultures, namely elephant rearing in Surin, Thailand, Champasak and Xayaburi, Lao PDR. From the structured and unstructured interviews with people involved in the elephant rearing culture of both countries, comparing with Parsons's social thought, it can be found that people in the community made decisions on social actions depending on 5 factors:

- Relationship between actors: Based on the observation, the dividing of duty that occurred among the elephant herders was clear. All the duties were under the support of government and private sectors. Anyhow, roles and actions between them were sometimes flexible. Even though some government and private sectors have been introduced to improve the livelihoods of elephant herders in terms of the welfare, the traditional social structure of the elephant herders where relatives and family members lived in the same village could still be found. At the time the study was conducted, there were 569 elephants in 3,388 households in Tha Tum, Surin, Thailand. In Ta Klang Village, Krapo, there were approximately 300 elephants and roughly 200 households. Ban Kiet Ngong, Champasak, Lao PDR, has become a large community with approximately 200 households and 6 elephants. In Xayaburi, Muang Thong Mee Xai, Ban That, there were around 225 households and 15 elephants. Both Thai and Lao families who took care of the elephants in the same community were relatives. Ban Ta Klang, Krapo, Thailand was a village that had been built based on the structure of the elephant herders who inherited Gaja-sastra, a mysterious science related to elephants. In terms of the relationship between the members of the village, it was still a supportive society, similar to other Thai society in general where members of the household are made up of all people of many ages, the older are the family leaders. Ban Ta Klang women were the house keepers. They would be trained in mulberry cultivation, silk farming, and every steps of weaving since they were young. On the other hand, the boys would be trained for workforce or taking care of elephants. The social characteristics like this were the factor that made the relatives often live in the same neighborhood. Interestingly, people in the village mostly have the same surname, "Sala-ngam" and "Jongjai-ngam". Social characteristic of Ban Kiet Ngong, Muang Phatum Phon, Champasak and Ban That Muang Thong Mee Xai, Xayaburi, Lao PDR were similar to Ban Ta Klang, Surin, Thailand.
- Goals: All of the elephant herders in the community shared the same goal, making elephant rearing the main occupation with the support of the government and private sectors that generate more tourism business rather than rearing elephant as a side job as in the past. This is the highest goal of the elephant herder community.
- Means: Each elephant herders have the same way of practice. For example, men would be responsible for the elephants and women would support them. This mean would be defined as a function which is a subunit of a social structure system.

- Situational conditions: From the clear division of duties, it was a situation of mutual acceptance, so it was an action that must be chosen without any excuse or exception. It was considered an ancestral practice. The factors were things that have happened and continued for a long time until today. It can be assumed that it was a chain of operatories that has been in the structure of the society.
- Values, norms, and other ideas: The community is spontaneously and commonly opened to the ideas. Therefore, it can be said that, within the community, the people are recognized. Rearing elephants was seen as a priceless contribution to the history, the integrity of the elephant rearing community, and economic—a vital element to the survival of the structure of the society.

DISCUSSIONS

The elephant rearing communities in Thailand and Laos are connected in terms of historical background and ethnicity (Srisawas, 2008). Elephant rearing cultural and social structure arose from functions related to elephant rearing, which was a subsystem in the overall structure of the elephant rearing society or community. These functions or subsystems always interact to one another, both in a small family unit such as duties of elephant caring, and a larger subunits in the community. For example, the Elephant Village had families that took care of the elephants as subunits.

When interactions between each other had become institutionalized, the social system were formed. Social systems can come in various sizes. Parsons (1937) believed that in studying structure of the society, it is imperative to consider the subcomponents that forms the social structure because when combining those subunits systematically, they can reflect the overall picture of society. Then a clear social structure can be seen and the origins of society can be explained (**Parsons, 1937**). However, Satsanguan (2008) explained the Structural-Functionalism Theory based on Brown's (1940) thought that social systems consist of structures and activities and that the social structure is a long-lived pattern. The population in the society has interactions, both between people and people, and people and the environment. The interaction between a people and people consists of both acceptance and conflict, but the conflict can be reduced to a persistent level with a suitable system management (Brown, 1940). From the ideas of the two sociologists, namely Parsons and Brown, it can be found that the two concepts see the important of elements of the Structure - Functionalism Theory differently. Parsons focuses on the functions or actions while Brown focuses on the structure or system. However, both of them agrees that this theory must consist of two complementary parts which are consistent with Srisantisuk (2009). Srisantisuk mentioned in Socio - Cultural Studies to Support the with Parsons' thought that the social system or structure can be created based on two primary situations. First, actors must be driven to perform based on their roles or status. Second, it is needed for the systems in the society to shy away from any possible conflicts or behaviors that do not comply with the norms in the society.

Because the elephant herders in family unit consisted of both family members and those who were employed, what motivated the actions towards one another

in elephant rearing were improved economic conditions from elephant rearing. Therefore, incentives were essential to enable individuals to adhere to their roles or status in systems in the society in various conditions. The incentives can refer to beliefs, values, or ideas that were embedded in the relationships between people in society. The incentives for elephant rearing were as the following.

- Affective neutrality and affectivity. For instance, the relations found in husbands' and wives' relationship in families are affective. Yet, it is a neutral relationship if such relationship is found between employees and employers.
- Specificity and Diffuseness. For example, employer and employee relationship is specific. In contrast, the relationship between husband and wife is diffuse because it involves all aspects in a society.
- Universalism and particularism. For example, elephant rearing was a common task people did and was known to public. Therefore, elephant rearing was considered universal. In contrast, rearing elephants as a business is particular.
- Inborn quality, such as ethnicity; age; gender, and ascription, such as the inherited knowledge in rearing elephants.
- Self-orientation and collectivity orientation. These variables were evident in elephant herders who were important in both subunits like families and larger units like the overall community.

In addition to these variables showing the interactions between members of a society, the actions were key components of the process that builds social system. The social processes were as follows.

- Social contact that used the elephant rearing culture as a main interaction.
- Boundary maintenance was the process that maintain a balance in society, as evidenced by the use of resources such as forest or river like Wang Talu forest together for elephant rearing.
- Personality, society, and culture was a supportive system because the entire community had the same foundations in both the ideas and skills that were developed from elephants rearing.
- Social control prevented members of the society from violating social norms. It is a mutually accepted agreement such as the use of resources, etc.
- Socialization is the process that passed the spirit of members of the society to the next generation which was evident from the inheritance of wisdom in rearing elephants from generation to generation.
- Social change arose from a person accepting values and beliefs and appreciating personalities of people in the elephant rearing society, resulting in the consistent and long-term diffusion between personality and culture. This diffusion then cause the social change and become an institution of the community.

The processes mentioned above, as stated by Spenser (1995), must only come with consent and have certain values or beliefs that lead to a similar goal. Various situations indicate the actions, roles, and status the actors are having towards each other. These things have been constantly done and changed to be

suitable to the community. The important characteristics of this process are as follows.

- The social system is made up of relationships between various parts, for example, the family relationship with elephant rearing, the relationship of the family with the elephants to each other, as well as the relationship of the community with the government who supports and promotes the culture which has been practicing regularly and for a long period of time until the system was gradually formed.
- Maintaining the boundaries of the society is what the social system usually does to keep its own system from being destroyed by other systems. This can be illustrated from their attempts to pass on the elephant rearing through improving their knowledge to strengthen the community, especially the elephant rearing culture which is the heart of the society. When the elephant rearing system changes, such as the development of the elephant village by the government, the villagers did not completely reject. On the other hand, the villagers accepted those changes and applied the change to the local wisdom so as to survive or bring about betterment to the existing system.
- Parts of the system in an elephant rearing community are there to keep social balance. If the system is not retained by the community, the social equilibrium or social balance is prone to be affected, which can make these systems disintegrate into another system or change to a new system. However, the possibility is low in strong communities such as Ban Ta Klang Elephant Village, Krapho, Tha Tum, Surin, Thailand.

From all the information mentioned above, it can be concluded that the Structural - Functionalism Theory has a hypothesis that there are subunits or subsystems within a society which comes from motivation actions that an individual acts according to their roles or status within the system in the society. Then, those subsystems, which are formed, methodically function its different roles. It is necessary to take into account the principles of action to make the systems become a structure in order for the society to be able to maintain the purpose of the society with the desirable characteristics of the community. Traditional elephant rearing wisdom involved the division of duties in the elephant rearing families. This was a systematic sub-process because it has clearly divided functions. Therefore, they were the keys to the system to develop into a social structure in the community. The Structural Functionalism Theory was used to explain the community phenomena of Parsons, with a focus on the mentioned factors, including 1) actors, 2) goal, 3) means, 4) situational conditions, and 5) norms, values and other ideas. These factors served as a guideline to apply the wisdom of elephant rearing.

According to Structural Functionalism Theory, it was found that the elephant rearing culture had a better adaptation in the globalization era but still had some problems such as insufficient food sources for elephants or inadequate income for the elephants herders. Based on the theory, it could be assumed that the emergence of new social structures in the elephant rearing culture was due to the integration of society. For example, Elephant herders in Surin, Thailand used technology in public relations on online media such as YouTube and Facebook. The online media can also generate income for the elephant herders

by accepting jobs such as showing up as the people's favorite celebrity elephant. They had also been taken care of by the government in order to solve the problem of street elephants by creating jobs which changed the elephant rearing culture to become more like cultural and traditional tourism where the elephants were presented as public relations to attract tourists. The small details of the elephant rearing culture that were embedded with local beliefs disappeared since the economy was important to the social structure, causing elephant rearing become a business because it was believed that society would change for the better and be developed when the economy was good. Social functions maintained the elephant rearing culture because society has social processes that unifies and harmonizes the culture. This is consistent with the book 'Globalization' by Steger (2009). In the book, it said that the contemporary period, since the 1970s, has expanded and each actor dynamically rely on each other. This is in line with Sanyabhiwat's Structural Functionalism Theory (Sanyawiwat, 1997). The important hypothesis of the Structural Functionalism Theory is that society must be stable, not interested in changes because he believed that if any component of society changed, other components would be changed as well. This theory can be compared with the nature of the elephant rearing culture in Thailand and Lao PDR. In other words, the elephant rearing society believed that if the society was stable and they did not need to be interested in all the changed and that if any single component of society changes, other components would be changed as well, but the culture and tradition might remain. At the time the study was conducted, local elephant herders were interested in the new way of elephant rearing even though elephant rearing culture had a long root. In prehistoric times, the animals raising was a part of human lives. Elephants were used as a means of transportation in relocation or as to help with certain activities that humans could not do such as hauling. Human began to learn to use elephants and therefore needed to adapt to the environment in that time. The important things for them were foraging, hunting, finding habitats with abundant natural water sources and suitable for cultivation, as well as finding ways to prevent natural disasters. The elephant herders from the past until globalized era, elephant herders in three areas had adapted and tried to understand the environment around them for adaptation and love their life based on their experience and knowledge transfer about elephant rearing culture. Traditionally, rearing elephants was about the belief in the supernatural power. However it has changed today. The lifestyles of the elephant herders have become a new knowledge about the beliefs that people had about elephants through various physical environments. It played an important role in the way of life and well-being of the elephant herders where the environment has become the determination for the status, position, personality, and morality. The administration among the elephant herders that has been changed causing the differences in elephant rearing cultures i different places. In Surin, Thailand, the trend of cultural tourism has been increasing. Elephant rearing got supported by government The careers for the elephant herders has emerged in various forms. This is in line with Vaddhanaphuti (2011) where he pointed out a functional relationship between the behavior of each institutions towards society as a whole. In other words, the occurrence and existence of certain (serving) behavior maintained a society. He also mentioned that society had elements or sub-systems which included social institutions with its own role leading to the existence of society, such as the duty to improve

social relationships, to allocate resources, to control manpower, etc. These duties were allocated, established, and adjusted to suit each other's needs. If there were dysfunctions of institutions, rituals, or beliefs, these things will eventually shrank, stopped, or changed, otherwise, society would not survive. The mentioned theory was similar to the characteristics of the Thai - Laos elephant herder cultures.-Laos. Beliefs in Pakham, rituals, or any beliefs had a part in building a strong culture in the community. If these things disappeared or changed, society would not survive eventually. This is consistent with Jaiwang (2015) who studied the structure of roles and value in the rituals of Taikern Tribe in Sanpatong of Chiang Mai Province in Thailand. It was stated that the Taikern rituals, according to the Structural – functional Theory and the four structural roles of folk wisdom, bring enjoyment, retaliate the significance of the rituals itself, improve education, and help maintain the norms of the society. Such was derived from the concept of Structural-functional Theory in the belief system found in religious, governance, educational, and recreational system. Each system is considered a cultural mechanism, which has its own function that helps the society to survive, brings about bonds, and reduces conflicts among Taikern people. Yet, the most noticeable incident is the harmony and beneficence among the kinship. The above theory is consistent with the characteristics of Thai-Laos elephant rearing culture. The Thai-Laos elephant rearing, which is being practiced traditionally, is a process where duties among the elephant herders are clearly divided, especially the roles of the elephant doctors that help create bonds, reduce conflict, and bring forth harmony within the group of the elephant herders.

CONCLUSION

The study of "The Cultural Adaptation in Thai and Lao Elephants Rearing in the Globalization Era" in Surin province, Thailand and Champasak and Xayaburi, Lao PDR, the researcher collected data from related documents and research to create the good understanding of the concept of adaptation in elephant rearing culture. The globalization adaptation included economic, social, technological, and administration aspects. The found tangible and the intangible cultures mentioned earlier can be concluded as follows. Living with elephants in the society is the process of elephant herders adaptation that was expressed by taking care of the elephants since they were born until they passed away. Each phase of the Thai and Lao elephant rearing has changed with related relationships, giving rise to two types of a cultures. (1) Tangible culture heritage: Something that could be demonstrated physically. It covered both movable and immovable cultural heritage. Nowadays, the tangible cultural heritage was not only devices for rearing elephants but also the architecture that attracted tourists or a landmark, which is Elephant World. The architectural design emphasized the combination of locality and the elephant rearing culture. (2) Intangible culture heritage. It refers to beliefs, rituals, and customs associated with elephants. At present, there are still people who believe in these cultures. Pakham spiritual leader used the belief in Gaja-sastra to rent the sacred objects to those who were interested in the belief. The sacred objects were rented through many channels, including online channels or opening the Pakham spiritual leaders' house for those who were interested. This can be considered as the creation of an interesting tangible culture by using the faith and ritual to generate income for the spiritual leaders. However, there were only a few

spiritual leaders left now. The publicity of Phakham spiritual leaders' story through the website to bring their reputation into the attention. Many people have come to the area to participate in the ritual. There were two types of elephant rearing cultural heritages today: tangible and intangible cultural heritage. However, the cultural heritage has been changed according to the globalization.



Figure 15
Elephant World Project, Thailand.
Youtube.

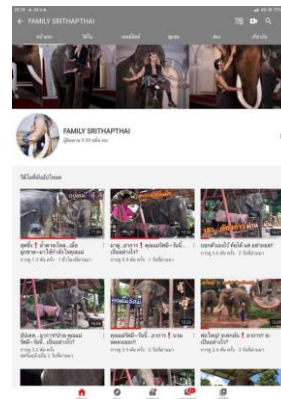


Figure 16
Promoting domestic elephants on
Youtube.

SUGGESTIONS

Significance of the Present Study

This study can be a guideline for the conservation of domestic elephant rearing cultures in both countries. The research results can be a policy proposal. The present study can also lead to the domestic elephant conservation for the cultures at risk of depletion of domestic elephant culture.

Suggestions for Further Studies

- The conservation guidelines should be applied in the development of cultural management in other areas with similar contexts.
- The conservation that involves a participatory process in the community should be used to solve other problems of the community by applying them in accordance with the circumstances happening in a particular area.

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INTERVIEW

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|---|------------------|----------|------|
| Mr. Kan Sounthone (Interviewee), | 12 | February | 2020 |
| Mr. Seum Thephavongsa (Interviewee), | 4 | May | 2019 |
| Mr. Lanorlin Phongsavath (Interviewee), | 22 | February | 2020 |
| Mrs. Noutsy Yokkhanthne (Interviewee), | 5 | May | 2019 |
| Mr. Boonma Sandee (Interviewee), | 13 March 2020 | | |
| Mr. Phadet Siridamrong (Interviewee), | 15 November 2020 | | |