

THESIS TITLE : MAEYOK (PATRONESS OF DANCERS) : A STUDY OF LI-KE
DANCERS AND AUDIENCE RELATIONSHIPS IN
BANGKOK AND PHITSANULOK
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DEGREE : THESIS FOR M.A. (THAI STUDIES) , 1997.

This thesis explores the contrasts between Maeyoks in various environments namely Maeyoks Pitsawat who appear in large cities such as Bangkok and Maeyoks Upatum who appear in less urban locations like Phitsanulok. Maeyoks play an important role in Supporting Li-ke dancers, which have been an integral part of Thai culture and history. This study compares and contrasts five areas of interest concerning Maeyoks including : personal history, extended family structure and marital relationships, geographic location and social dynamics, economic situation and sexual relationships.

It was found that Maeyoks Pitsawat (MP.) came from Bangkok had a lower primary school education and were between 30 - 60 years of age during their work with Li-ke dancers. They were married and had between 1 to 3 children. Most of their children graduated, held respected jobs and were married.

Most of the MP families had domestic problems during the parents' middle aged years. Their husbands had affairs with other women and had new wives or frequent girlfriends during their lifetimes. Also, their children moved out to live on their own.

With respect to the MP, 3 out of the 5 sample group lived in close proximity to extended family members within Bangkok. Despite this physical proximity, the extended family did not provide support or advise to the MP during times of marital distress. Therefore, the MP would often seek out other forms of support and sources of happiness. These new environments included meeting friends at cafes, playing cards and going to li-ke shows. Because li-ke performers were of lower economic status than MP, the MP would

often give the li-ke payment with money, gold and li-ke costumes often in exchange for sexual services.

Concerning the personal histories of Maeyoks upatum (MU), most were between 60 - 70 years of age. Their levels of education differed dramatically. Some finished only primary education while others graduated from teacher's colleges. MU lived in Phitsanulok, were married, and had between 3 - 7 children.

MU reported to have comfortable extended families and marital relationships. They reported that their families included many children with in-laws and nieces and nephews. It was often stated that they could freely seek out advice from family members when there were problems. The situation was facilitated due to the presence of extended families residing together. Marital problems were reported to not be significant.

In Phitsanulok, it was common for li-ke performers to compete due in part to the local popularity for the shows. li-ke dancers who excelled because popular and were supported by MU who adored the performer's abilities in dancing, singing and speech.

Many MU did not have regular incomes and they were not financially well off. MU did not experience the sexual freedom that MP encountered.

Lives of Maeyoks in these two environments were different with respect to each of the factors revoked. MP and MU who were studied in these report experienced different lifestyles according to personal history, family relationships, geographic and social dynamics, economic situations and sexual relationships.