



Thai Society in the “Sensation Thinking” of the Humanities

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Abstract

Humanities research methodology is “*sensation thinking*” of the humanities. It is a critical systematization of knowledge from diverse experiences in places and times of people in the various societies who are different in races, religions, social classes, genders, generations, lifestyles, and cultures. In which, all these are reflected in inherent in varieties of social contexts such as many historical events, situations and historical narratives reveal the power manipulations, negotiations, surrenders, protests, and subjugations. By the limit of historical conditions, some virtues are missing and that lacking cultivates this society to be the “*short temper*” patriarchal regime, intolerant to different ideas and cultures. It lacks tolerance, the art of conflict management, and the patience to understand the “otherness” by the translation with *linguistic hospitality*. Thai elites’ society disciplined Thais by levels of education, religions and main culture, so mostly Thais are forced to be ‘*docile persons*’ and acquiesce the superiority of the mainstream culture’s values. Thai society has been become to be a one-dimensional society where one must speak in one voice, seeing only one sight, and lacking the recognition of the beauty of the differences. The discriminated will be traduced as terrorists, communists, the ‘politically ungrateful’ or even the ‘anti-patriotism’. So, it’s moral to violently wipe out all these vexing groups and periodically impeding ideas and truth from the people. With the humanities perspective, the value of trying to understand the ‘otherness’ by the translation with linguistic hospitality and tolerance to different thoughts are recognized as the highest societal common interests of all. The artful integration of all diverse from all cultures is like a marvelous conductor conducting a symphony that orchestrates all instruments to perform heavenly harmonious music, but Thai elites try only to squeeze, by beguiling and forcing, the Thais to appreciate the ‘military parade’ rather than the symphony music.

Keyword: *Sensation Thinking, Patriarchy, Multiculturalism, Public Space, Tolerance, Cultural Interventions and Assimilation, Translation, Linguistic and Narrative Hospitality, Humanities Methodology*

1. Introduction

From the study of research’s results in the project named “Debates on Value II: on Cultural Diversity” in the research’s series of “*Thai Humanities Research Forums*” supported by The Thailand Research Fund or TRF and published the book in Thai named: “เอกเสียงเรื่องคุณค่า 2: ว่าด้วยความหลากหลายทางวัฒนธรรม (Sittidumrong et al, 2018)” means “*Debates on Value II: on Cultural Diversity*” and also published the book in Thai named: “เอกเสียงเรื่องคุณค่า: ความหลากหลายทางวัฒนธรรม ฉบับย่อง่าย (Chunlawong, 2018)” means “*Debates on Value: on Cultural (Coherent Version)*”. Readers will get a picture of a complex Thai society and a variety of concepts and values that have a coordinated collision, and the dynamics fluctuate according to the timing and opportunities of internal and external factors, which is an image that cannot be found in other studies.

This article begins with images of Thai society on each side as reflected by various researches. And finally, humanities scholars will synthesis Thai society in terms of the “*sensation thinking*” and summarize what the humanities research methodology is.

2. Image of Thai Society

2.1 *The Unitary state and the oppression of the cultural diversity in the patriarchal regime*

This picture was analyzed from a Thai short story named “*Kyoto: Hidden Sense*” by Hemmamul (2014), and this story was called “*Phai-Rat-Ni-Yai* or *Phairat novel* or *Foreigner-like novel*” by Saowanit Chunlawong. This novel was told about the characters who travel across the border to other lands or other cultures, and feel “alienation” of being “otherness”. After that, when the patriarchal regime constitutes the inferior or subordinate cultures to be “otherness” as a consequence, Thais in the inferior cultures are also constituted as ‘the others’ in Thai society.



Saowanit Chunlawong explains that Thailand is a large “place” with many different cultures clashing between the mainstream and inferior cultures under the definition of “unitary state” which tries to establish and maintain its original values as the mainstream culture and suppressing various differences as a subculture. In this sense, Thailand is an operational space for creating its people to be “otherness” and some groups may have been “leaved” from Thai society (the borderline) or Thai culture (the mainstream) to remedy their bitterness. In retrospective looking at Thailand from the “Phairat novel”, the record of the exile of the heroes in other countries reveals the bitterness of being otherness in his own land (Areesilp, 2018).

Being the “unitary state” is produced by the process of establishing the mainstream culture, that is the patriarchy, over the inferior culture, and then creating “otherness” and/or “going out” of the subordinate cultures to form the “homogeneous culture”, that is *the Thainess*. Thanapol Limapichart describes this process as “the oppression of *multiculturalism*”, such as to impede the right to choose a homosexual way of life. The patriarchal regime represses this right through family and discourse of gratitude by the concepts of reciprocation for the love and dedication of the father. (Limapichart, 2018, pp. 31)

The patriarchal regime restrains not only the diversity of sexuality but also other diverse and different thoughts. Those who still live in the mainstream culture have to accept the status of “*the loser*” or “*the surrender*” to power, as consequence, both physical and mental dimensions of the human relationship are controlled.

This statement is more explicit from the Thai research article named “ยังไม่ซึมซาบในใจลาวนั้ก: เจ้าโลก เจ้าวัฒนธรรมใน “ไพร่ฟ้า” ของ ลาว คำหอม” means “Not yet absorbed in Laos' minds: the hegemony, the culture's master in the “*commoner*” written by *Lao Khamhom*” by Prasansak (2018). Saowanit Chunlawong describes that the nation-state operates its patriarchal power latently in its people's ways of thought, even unconsciously. Patriarchal power pressures the thoughts of those who are different in thoughts or cultures, they are driven to be subordinate and at last otherness, but they have never seen themselves as the others, but as “*oneself*” (or “*we-ness*”).

Patriarchal power of the leading class does not subjugate these “others” by violent force, but subtly elevates them to recognize the supremacy of the mainstream culture, so these “others”, such as ethnic groups, commoners, those living in the inferior cultures, inspiring to have such supreme power, but realistically all those commoners will never have such power. They have acquiesced only painfulness and otherness. So, the destiny of all ethnic groups, under the royal patriarchy, have only two choices, one is to surrender as “dust under (His Majesty) trample” or stay vagrancy as “the outsiders” in the society that their diverse cultures are subordinated under the “homogeneous culture” (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 23, 28).

Ram Prasansak studies Lao Khamhom's short story named “Prai Fha or The Commoner” by comparison with Jacques Lacan's conception of the symbolic order. After that, he analyzed the plot of the story and found that it reveals Thai elites subjectified the ethnic groups, such as *Khmu* or Alien workers to be “the subject, or local people under command” by the use of discourse about Thai language and the royal prerogative. In this process, Thai elites and the Thai state tried to fuse the diversity of cultures, minorities, and ethnic groups to be under the ideology of Nation and the Royal Institution.

Those who refuse to submerge in this symbolic order of Siam which king is the superior, such as Mr. In-Dha, a hero in “Prai Fha” who has a cost to pay. At the end of the story, the reader cannot find out where he goes, or he may return to be an evacuee worker around the landmines or the fringe of the cultures. (Limapichart, 2018, pp. 21-22)

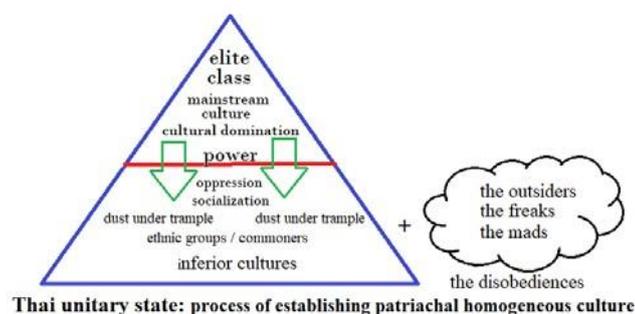


Figure 1 the patriarchal homogeneous culture of Thai unitary state

2.2 Discipline and Subjugation: The creation of Homogenizing Cultures

2.2.1 Strategies of the relationship between the elite culture and the ordinary culture

In the recent past, Thai society had no idea about the diversity, particularly the plural civilization that is a civilization that had so many differences inside such as races, languages, religions, customs, and traditions. Until the Rattanakosin City was founded with stabilization and became a Commercial center. Then the city comprising of the diverse races happened. From the above statement, there were some representing pieces of evidence of the recognition and appreciation of Siamese elites for the plural civilization that was discovered (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 31-32).

The content of *Nang Noppamas* idealizes the imagery of Rattanakosin City, between the reigns of Rama II and Rama III, as a city with highly civilized culture representing the monarch's prestige. Wisarut calls the displaced persons as "Khmu", who inhabit the capital city, and they are also called "living under royal protection" that represents the imagery land of the affluence and the growth of trading and also the delightful city. It can be said that military power and diplomacy are the two crucial principles of Rattanakosin City used to carve out the civilization with diverse races and cultures, and to reinforcing the monarch's prestige and grandeur (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 32-33).

The Buddhist and Brahman cultures are the traditional cultures imparting the well-regulated and calmness of the city. This reinforces the concept of the monarch as a supreme emperor (Pra-Ma-Ha-Chak-Ka-Pat-Ti-Raja) who rules over diverse races. The Buddhist doctrine is applied to changing political context which happened since reign Rama III when the war is lesser and the trading is more important for Rattanakosin City.

The vision of King Rama V from the two-entourage visiting Batavia and Singapore, where is the colonial port cities in Southeast Asia, deeply affects King Rama V to reform or more pertinent to modernize the royal palace customs. His vision of the new civilization was that people with diverse races and cultures were disciplined as colonized cities for the economic and governing benefits in the 19th century. Those two cities were changed dramatically from their past (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 35).

Somdej Krom Phraya Damrong Rajanupab or the Prince Damrong Rajanubhab explained that after King Rama V came back from going abroad, he changed the custom of royal palace audience, the costumes, and how to join the dining table for lords and nobles, which mostly was interpreted as *the process of Siam modernization*. But if we look at it from a cultural perspective, the Siamese elites were quite conscious of the construction of a city with plural civilization. And this process, the custom of the royal palace is strategically significant, since the royal ceremony, by tradition, is the representation of legitimacy and the royal sovereign. *Nang Noppamas* is like a cultural policy that expresses the leading class concept of searching for the cultural strategy that serves the formation of new urban society and at the same time, it is a tactic of maintaining the royal sovereign corresponding to the tradition (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 36).

Nang Noppamas book was revealed that in the plural civilization society, the royal prerogative and royal grandeur facilitate foreigners with convenient trading. But in *The Royal Twelve-month Ceremony* or All royal ceremonies, the monarch represents as creator of the dynamic and supervises diverse cultures to be modern and disciplined. The concept and tactic of regulating multiculturalism of the Siamese elite in the reign of King



Rama III, and especially King Rama V, are ambiguous, that is, it celebrates the diversity but at the time, it tries to dominate them. *The Royal Twelve-month Ceremony* was revealed the pertinacity to initiate “minglement” in the traditions and “harmonious concord” is the cultural policy to incorporate the social diversities or, at least, it’s imagery (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 37).

The privilege of the Siamese stated in the 19th century is the monarch who must be Buddhist and the Patron of all religions and also at the same time, he is the highest ruler over the diversities. This imaginary civilization is the concept representing the reaction to the globalization phenomenon about the oversea commercialism and the Western colonization. The multiculturalism in that period is a political and cultural means of Siamese elite for bargaining with the Western.

The imagery of Siam’s plural civilization seems highly paradoxical since its occurrence is the mixing of the traditional principles of the monarch with the policy of the contemporary reformed world colonialism. The Siam’s monarch expresses his prestige over all diversities and articulates them under the unitary order of Buddhist principles. This imagery of plural civilization indicates both the desire and the anxiety of the Siamese elite. This is the westernized civilization, from Batavia, Singapore and India, which is the Siamese elite adopt to be the archetype for building the desired plural culturalism, as seen in *The Royal Twelve-month Ceremony* (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 38).

2.2.2 *Cultural process of oppression and domination (the discipline) of Siamese elite*

The period of time that Siam established *the absolute monarchy*, Siam was seriously accosted by powerful European nations, the Siamese elite successfully sustained the nation not to be a vassal state, and this became a nationalist myth that had been claimed to be national pride. But at the same time, this also became a limit for understanding the relation of power between Bangkok and other cities during two decades, 2430- 2450 (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 45-42).

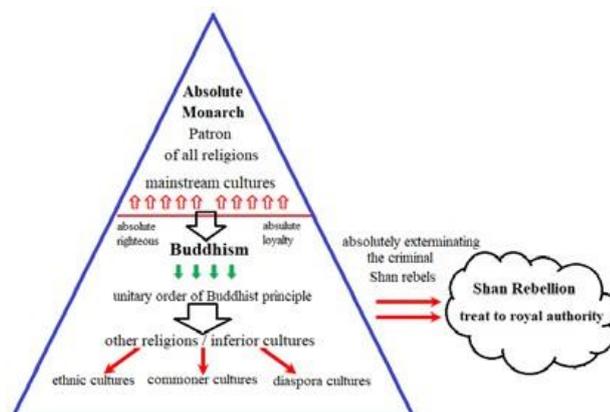
Siam is compelled by European colonial nations, but at the same time, Siam showed the power of Bangkok over other political centers. Establishment of the absolute monarchy by Siamese elite does not limit only at the new governing regulations, but also the demonstration of the mastery of Bangkok’s culture overall dominions incorporated as parts of Siam, this is called “*cultural absolute monarchy*”. This is the *literary production* to claim a sovereign power over the whole kingdom, such as *Lilit Payap*, a special kind of poem, *Lilit*, written by King Rama VI, since he was appointed as *Crown Prince Vajiravudh*. (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 42). His record of the journey: *Lilit* which aims at glorifying the king’s honor after Bangkok conquers the *Shan Rebellion* with “*Decisive Victory*”, is a cultural manipulation of the absolute monarchical regime. This poem declares the prestige of Siam nobles over the land that threatens the regime. So, *Lilit Payap* is the “vanquishment of Shan Rebellion by writing” especially the words describing the journey of the Crown Prince to Phrae province which is the origin of the Shan Rebellion, which was one of the major threats to the absolute monarchy and it caused a lot of conflicts between Siam and French colonial nation, which affected Siamese elite. Probably the Shan Rebellion should shake the governing of absolute monarchy, so there was a large military operation to defeat the Rebellion for the first time in Siam. (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 44)

Lilit Payap's story has been described the various ethnic groups who waiting to welcome the Crown Prince, with loyalty consists of Thai, Shan, Yao, and Muser. When the Crown Prince reaching to the boundary of Lamphun and Chiang Rai, *Lilit Payap*'s story has been concluded the story by writing the vanquishment of Shan Rebellion once more, emphasizing the victory over the rebels that “absolutely exterminating the criminal Shan rebels”. This record also has been shown the adaptation of the absolute monarchy in dealing with cultural differences. From the point of view of King Rama VI, *Lilit Payap*'s story has not been shown the interest in those ethnicities, but it has been given special attention to the Crown Prince as the center of Payap province’s loyalty to Siam. It can be said that *Lilit Payap*'s story is literature composed to show the readiness of the Crown Prince to become the next King of the absolute monarchy state. (Limapichart, 2018, pp. 22)

Thanapon Limapichat concludes that from these 3 studies, we can see many forms of defining and placing cultural relations between the periphery centers and Siamese elite. We can understand the problems and narrowness of today's conceptual manipulation of cultural diversity, which has its roots in a long history and has become conditions and obstacles to create a society with cultural diversity. Strategies for establishing the power center of the monarch together with regulating cultural diversity, consisting of mainstream culture, inferior



cultures and diaspora culture, which has Buddhism as the center. Power exercised through the King who is the patron of all religions, but at the same time, ready to suppress any challenges to this power center. This concept is presented in picture 2.



The process of creating relative cultural diversity: An imagery of plural civilizations

Figure 2 Imagery of plural civilizations of Siamese elite: relative cultural diversity

2.3 Power and Negotiation

“Public space” or *royal area* where people do not have rights to own. From the study of Sant Suwatharapinun (Chunlawong2, 2018) explains that public space refers to free space with *physical dimensions*, where people can come together to perform some activities, which creates an *abstract dimension* (social space) for the sharing groups. Henri Lefebvre, a Marxist geologist and sociologist, proposed the idea of “*production of space*” and “*the right to the city*” (Chunlawong1, 2018, pp. 424). According to Lefebvre, space is a mechanism of social control rather than a passive geographical area. City and architecture are invented relying on political conditions and control, resulting in unity, and unifying various phenomena into that space, causing various differences to be in the same image. Power controls people through space, and at the same time, it is the condition that leads to questioning, negotiating, and calling for new reconsideration, in order to create or open opportunities for diversity, or create guidelines for assigning new values as well. So, space is like a double-sided coin that, on the one side, controls the unity of society and on the other, it is used to investigate righteousness and struggle to find and reveal the suppressed diversity (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 48).

Panin (2009) studies the city and the public spaces in Rattanakosin City. She said that urban development clearly demonstrates the power of state manipulation, both of the king and the government. If considering the details, it will be found that these public spaces are places for a social gathering at the community level which appeared and existed before the western urban administration (Chunlawong1, 2018, pp. 429). These public spaces are lively. There are a privacy atmosphere and also the public. These spaces are created from the lifestyle living according to the concept of Lefebvre. That is this physical space creates common social consciousness and causing joint actions under the conditions of that space which causing life in that area. Space functions as production and reproduction. Therefore, space changes its function from the passive to the active.

The studies of Chatreekun (2012) and Thongleong (2012) show that the Soi area is a public space that encourages diversity. It was produced by regulatory requirements with a certain character and is also resulted from the livings of people using that alley. From the survey of the alleys using by the city people, we may see the signs of the diversity of lives in public spaces in the city. The study of 3 Soi which are Soi Charoen Mueang 2, Soi Mun Mueang 6, and Hatsadi Sewi Road Soi 2, shows that Soi is a *semi-private public space*. Soi looks like empty space with a clear physical boundary but at the same time, it is also a social space for various activities.

The analysis of the “*representational space*” of Soi shows that lifestyles, adaptations, even traces of civil disobedience, intransigence negotiations, according to Lefebvre, the “*right to the city*” or the effort of “*taking care of oneself*”. Various “*spatial practices*” in the alleys, such as planting trees, building a fence that can



be peeped and modestly high, setting a chair in front of the house, decorating the area in front of the house (*dialog-linking practice*). These create an effective social space and a beautiful physical public space. While operating in another way such as placing obstacles in front of the house, black film fixing, attaching a barbed wire fence, or building a high wall, causing an area of self-defense, reinforcing estrangement, using space as a tool to protect yourself (*block-barring practice*). At the same time, the expression of space is a representational space of Soi that is coined to communicate with the people using the Soi space (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 53). These differences depend on many factors, such as the physical conditions of Soi, width or narrow, easy or difficult access, etc., and economic opportunities of Soi, including the personality and competency of the people living in each Soi (Limapichart, 2018, pp 32).

Beyond Lefebvre's framework, this study discovered that in diverse spatial practices on the 3 Soi, these conditions are mixed culture and language, the term "public" that comes from the royal area or the government area, causing the notion of understanding the "right" and the "rights to city" different from the west. In Thai society, the management of the area is not to disrupt industrial and modern society. But as each person in Soi manages Soi space, it reflects the daily life according to the Thai way. It is a space negotiation relying on compromise rather than intransigence and resistance (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 54). The operations of power and negotiation of people in public space are illustrated in figure 3.

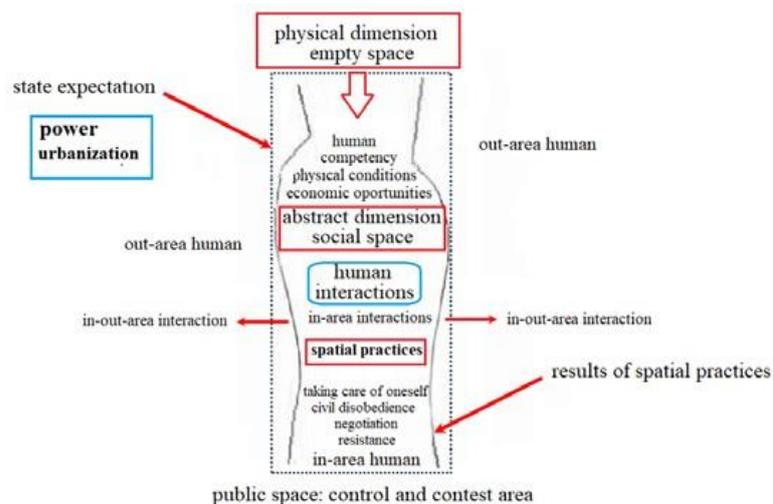


Figure 3 Mediated public space: state power in urbanization and contestation of spatial practices

2.4 Values and methods for creating cultural diversity in Thai society

2.4.1 Complexity and paradox of the concept of cultural diversity

While Thai elites use the strategy of creating "minglement" and "harmonious concord" in cultures, in order to stimulate cultural diversity under the royal protection with Buddhism as the center. This process establishes the mainstream culture and suppresses inferior cultures and diaspora cultures. But the stage of multiculturalism in Europe is quite more complicated.

Verita Sriratana (Chunlawong2, 2018) cites the concept of "Phamakon" in the dialogue of *Plato's Phaedrus* and Jacques Derrida explains that cultural diversity is seen as a therapeutic drug that helps to prevent sexism, racism, class and religious bias. But on the other hand, this idea may be like a poison that creates a split because it gives so much importance to the identity of ethnic and cultural groups that it overlooks the common characteristics or qualities of humanity (Limapichart, 2018, pp. 29).

Although the idea that politics, which is considered to be a public matter, and culture, as a private matter, are indivisible, a view on the cultural diversity of post-modernism, nonetheless, *the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity* still reflects the paradox of the prohibition of claiming cultural differences as a legitimate violation of human rights, which shows a lack of adherence to *the principles of cultural diversity*.



The complexity and contradiction of this concept in the Central European region consist of the definite political regime, which is reflected in the post-modern short story entitled “*Everything I Know about Central Europeanism (with a Little Friendly Help from Olomouc and Camus)*” written in 1960 by Pavel Vilikovský. This story reveals the cultural diversity of the Austro-Hungarian Empire of Central Europe, which actually is a paradox because it is a consequence of a cultural oppression policy for some time and is later criticized, negotiated, deconstructed as well as created a new meaning. As it presents a view of cultural diversity in Central Europe as being used as a tool to meet the need to find and erect a modern nation-state. That is *the modernist unity*, but that desire is just a wasted effort.

The confrontation with cultural diversity in the modern age is a dramatic change. Europeans view this situation divided into 2 trends. Once view the cultural diversity is a failure. But on the other side, this policy should be maintained and reformed for the better. But Vilikovský’s short story shows that the case of Central Europe is a special case that is more complex than Western European countries. Due to a lot of changes in regime borders, systems of government, and the wars that always exist in the Central European region, but its economic power has never been an advantage. Thus, people in Central Europe continue to hold ethnic and cultural identities rather than political identities. *Cultural unity* is, therefore, a means for preventing the collapse of the state (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 62-63). So, the view of Central Europe to cultural diversity today cannot be seen as the cause of violence and inhumanity. But should still look with the understanding that it is a consequence of being rid of *the right of thinking* and *right to journey*, that is the heir to the dictatorship for almost a century and under absolute monarchy many centuries before.

2.4.2 Tolerance: Principle of practice for creating a political society promoting sustainable human benefits

In *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (Chunlawong2, 2018), John Locke proposed to separate religious beliefs from politics. Because religion is a personal belief but politics is a public matter. Both should not be mixed. He proposed a way that rulers should equally treat their people with different religious beliefs, hoping to create political unity. He disagreed with the coercion of citizens to have a religious belief determined by the state or rulers. In short, it is a political plan to support *the plural religious beliefs* in society by allowing everyone to have equal rights and freedom under public regulations, regardless of one’s religious belief.

John Rawls, an American philosopher, proposed that *tolerance* is the cornerstone of coexistence in modern politics permeated with people of different religious beliefs. Rawls developed the concept of “*reasonable pluralism*” as a solution to this conflict. Because humans have the ability to ponder and reason with different weights to these different conditions. Therefore, there are inevitable conflicting opinions. But those controversies may be resolved if each side changes sides or brings themselves into the conditions of the other party, and get clearance the reasoning different from their own, Rawls suggests that no human should have the right to attack people with different religious and cultural beliefs, and states or rulers should be tolerant of opinions and views in public space as resulting from cultural differences.

Leo Strauss, a political philosopher, suggests that Locke’s political proposal was influenced by Thomas Hobbes’s political philosophy, which emphasizes the human reasoning for protecting himself from all dangers. “*The state of nature*” of Locke is not a state in which humans obey God’s laws, but is a state of survival from dangers by protecting “*basic rights*” according to their nature, that is, the right to live and save lives. Locke points out that humans save their lives by possessing property, to be free from hunger. Strauss interprets that Locke’s political philosophy is based on the key principles of preserving life within the framework of the response to human interests, more than belief in the existence of God.

Giving precedence to human benefits, the existence of a political society is interpreted as a result of human contracting to promote the best interests of humans, that is, the stability in life that arises from possessing and increasing property and opulence, in this sense, not for happiness but to reduce the pain, especially death. The tolerance in *A Letter Concerning Toleration* can be applied as a foundation for contemporary political society, which is full of differences in beliefs, religious faiths, and cultures. Locke views that the root cause of the chaos does not come from a state leaning against particular religious groups, but from all sides considering only their own interests, or each party has a narrow attitude. Locke, therefore, proposed to focus that the public interest (that is, to prevent humans from facing death and other pain) is more important than the group interests.



For Locke, tolerance to things is for human benefits, all religions and beliefs. Tolerance may lead to the pain of being with someone who is so different from them. But to prevent the greater pain that is death and disorder and chaos, tolerance is an important principle of practice for states and rulers for establishing political societies that promote sustainable human benefit. *Intolerance* can occur only when there are violations and challenges to public regulation, that are of utmost benefit to humans, regardless of whether the offenders believe in any religions or beliefs.

2.4.3 Acceptable governmental intervention and assimilation of cultural minorities

A multicultural society has various groups, consisting of individuals, each of whom has an individual right, recognized by the government. But this right may conflict with the rights of the group (*Group's Right*) or if the group claims certain rights, conflicting with *the individual rights* of people in the group or outside group or society. Then becomes a conflict between cultural claims and moral claims. What will the government have to do? (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 77)

In case that the state needs to intervene or adjust to assimilate the cultures to protect its citizens, such as harming the body of children and women according to certain cultures or traditions which may cause disability or injury, or restriction of rights of women according to tradition causing so much disadvantage that unable to live by oneself. The state must-have criteria for "*Acceptable cultural interventions and assimilation*" which are built on the basis of "*the obligations that people in society hold together*" concurrent with rights in a *free democratic society*. According to the idea of H.L.A. Hart, L.W. Sumner and Thomas Scalon, "*rights*" should include rights and benefits that should be obtained, or "*entitlements*", which is just one consideration that needs to be weighed compared to other considerations. When members of society must consider which priority should be responded to the requests of any members or groups in society, the criterion is the "*justifiability to others on grounds that no one can reasonably reject*" (Limapichart, 2018, pp. 27; Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 77).

Scalon's entitlement has reduced the weight of the cultural claims of the minority. In conclusion, he proposes to consider: 1) the benefits of an action and what is the price, and who is the disadvantaged person? 2) Who does it affect? And whether that person has reasons to argue or oppose. 3) Is there any other action that may be used to compensate for it? And if used the other, what is a result?

After considering all reasons, if the reason to refute is more weighted than the reason for it, then that action cannot be done. But if there is no reason having enough weight to opposing, it means that it is a justifiable action that cannot reasonably be opposed. Therefore, that action is considered to be able to do without immorality, or *morally acceptable*.

The basic moral claim, which is probably the most desire of the cultural minorities, according to the concept of Taylor (1994) and Appiah (1994), is *the survival of the group*, especially cultural minorities. The criteria for classifying the acceptable or unacceptable *cultural interventions or assimilations* involves four factors, namely:

1) *Physical survival* (that intervention must not affect the right to secure survival, and not harmful to the body and life).

2) *The ability to access the physical space* (rights and access to physical space necessary for the existence of groups, such as land, resources, public utilities, and sufficient compensation)

3) *Social space* (for the perception of people in the group [a sense of belonging to the same cultural and social group] and perceptions of people outside the group [society admits existence and freedom to be different from the majority], which Taylor calls "Recognition").

4) *Political space* (joining political groups or having the opportunity to become a member in a large political organization for participation in decision making and political learning in order to be a citizen in a political society, which focuses on benefits for the public rather than the interests of specific groups).

In the case of Thai government requires all schools in three southern border provinces to use the official language, Thai, in teaching and learning. Since it affects the learning of Muslim children who are unable to keep up with the lessons and also affecting the feelings of Muslims that have to learn the content of Buddhism hidden in the lessons (Premsrirat, 2006), this case is considered as an unacceptable intervention.

Another important condition in this consideration is the "*justifiability to others on grounds that no one can reasonably reject*" according to Scanlon's guidelines, testing the claim for action, we have to consider those



involved who have gained or lost benefit from that claim. And consider whether the reason for supporting or objecting the claim is pertinent and has enough weight or not, such as the policy of education in mother tongue and Thai language for Muslim children in the three southern border provinces, which UNESCO proposed to the Thai government. Considering reasons from people in different positions, including students, parents, teachers, other minorities, non-Muslim, and general Thais, bringing various reasons to consider together and comparing the reasons for both sides. In this case, the reason for objecting to the policy of the use of only Thai language is justified and has more weight because it directly relates to academic achievement. Contrary to the reasons for objecting the policy of using mother tongue in conjunction with Thai, the reasons for supporting are impertinent and do not have enough weight (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 81)

The significance of this criterion is changing from the “*right claim*” to *duties* or *moral obligations*. This idea is consistent with Thai society that does not use “right claim” as significant as moral obligations that people in the society should have, such as Thai society believes in interdependence. We should donate to beggars because we have more and they are inferior. This idea should be extended as a solution to social issues related to cultural minorities.

2.4.4 Understanding the others through translation with “*linguistic hospitality*”

Cultural diversity by vocabulary implies the disagreements which mean cultural conflicts. But exactly speaking, the differences in values that humans hold posit different humans, even though they use the same language, that is, conflicts arise. Solving the problem of not understanding other people is the key to creating “tolerance” for holding different values. We have relationships with others through language or, more proper, we live in language. Kearney (1996) therefore offers translation to understand others. We can relate to others through acceptance with respect (*recognition*) or (*reconnaissance* in French), which is accepting the different others as still being themselves.

Recognition, according to Ricoeur, divides into 3 steps: first, *recognition as identification*, that is, identifying what it is; second, *recognition as self-recognition*, remembering and knowing from identifying identity, or awareness; and finally, *mutual recognition*, accepting the person as himself. The process of identifying others’ self or identity of others can be done through *translation*. Translation allows us to accept foreignness into ourselves.

Dominico Jervolino (Chunlawong2, 2018) proposes that because humans exist in the language, we have to meet people different from us, translation is therefore necessary. Speaking is already a translation. The linguistic pluralism is inevitable, so humans live together through translation, and the translation is an endless process.

There are 2 types of translations: 1) *Cross-language translation*. It is communication for various benefits and is like a bridge leading to learning other cultures which extends the scope of self-understanding to understand other cultures and societies. And 2) *Cross-body translation*. It is a phenomenon that occurs even if people speak the same language, it is a communication between humans. The implications of these two types are to broaden the scope of understanding, between us and others, bringing us to others, or other groups. It brings the otherness into us by understanding through translation. A good translation must take into account the historical and cultural context, to avoid the “*rootless state*” of language. Ricoeur suggests that translation is to serve two masters, the author and the reader, or as Friedrich Schleiermacher (Chunlawong1, 2018, pp. 112), a German philosopher, describes that it is bringing readers to the author and bringing the author to the reader.

“*Bringing readers to the author translation*” is the translation based mainly on authors. Translators try to preserve the socio-cultural contexts of the authors, in order for readers to understand what the author communicates from the social, cultural context of the author. And “*bringing the author to the reader*” is the translation based particularly on the reader, to understand what the author is trying to communicate, by taking the context of societies, cultures, and languages of the readers as a condition of understanding. But in the end, no translation was considered a final resolution or absolute translation. If one dissatisfied with the older or any translation, it can be re-translated and even reading another language by readers who know that language is also a new translation.

Ricoeur proposes “*Linguistic Hospitality*”, a concept for managing the relationship between identity and otherness, in order to enable us to accept otherness in our mother tongue, and *the ethical dimensions of translation* must be taken into consideration, in order to preserve the otherness of the source language in the



process of making the destination language. Venuti (2004) an American translation theorist, says when translators choose to translate, he chooses to create a common cultural community. It is a shared community between cultures of the source language and the destination language. The important thing is to make the destination culture understand the source culture through translated texts. But we have to pay for the shortcomings that occur in cross-cultural translation, that is, some meanings of the source language cultures are missing in the translation process, Venuti suggests that the translation should maintain the historical, social, and cultural dimensions of the source language for readers in destination language to understand even the goal is for readers in the destination language.

Ricœur emphasizes the importance of the dimension of power in translation. In the interpretation of the text, the decisions we make are not like *a court of law*. Because such an interpretation is suppressing other interpretations, that is a form of violence. Ricœur offers “*linguistic hospitality*” as a medium for accepting other languages as a guest in our language. Linguistic hospitality aims to allow us to use our imagination to understand other people without breaking or diminishing otherness into our understanding framework, or presents it as *universal*. We require to understand others as they are in the contexts surrounding them, not ours. For this reason, translations help us openly accept others into our language, and make us accept the other's stories into our perceptions. Ricœur's model of translation opens the way for *a variety of translations* in response to cultural differences, with the *ethics of translation* in order to prevent the oppression of otherness of the text.

The translation is an important tool for bringing other cultures into our culture through stories, resulting in the exchange of memories, which acknowledge the otherness from other cultures. In *telling new stories* from the past and the memories of others, the narrators must have an ethical responsibility in re-forming the past, which is a new shared memory between us and others, as is called by Kearney (1996, pp. 8), the “*Narrative Hospitality*”. The narrative of others is a responsibility and should be responsive to the memory of the others. Our *storytelling* allows others to have a voice, able to speak and tell their stories through our translations.

Ricœur explains that the story relates to the *identity of groups*. By specifying the identity of groups through “*Narrative identity*” of the storytelling, that is, we know the identity of groups or individuals from stories about that person or from the biography or history of groups. But the identity is not fixed or inflexible. For Ricœur, those stories can be told in many ways, or changed over time. On the opposite, narratives allow readers to use their imaginations for understanding. Storytelling and reading stories generate *cultural memories* by recognizing others. Translation brings memories from other cultures into our cultural society, it nourishes mutual understanding and sympathy. In telling a story based on memories and imagining the past, it is necessary to argue, to seek reason, in order for the others to agree on some level. It was *an exchange of memories* through storytelling, which Ricœur mentions as a remedy that would stop the violence at the language level through debates, instead of oppressing a chance of the other voices, which may wait for time to erupt.

Most importantly, the debate leads to *hearing*, which is the first step leading to *forgiveness*. Translation, therefore, plays an important role as a bridge connecting us with others which leads to recognizing other different people. In the end, debate releases our clinging to a fixed identity, so we can openly accept others that bringing about *reconciliation* and *forgiveness* instead of forgetting (Chunlawong1, 2018, pp. 127).

3. Methods of Humanities

In the *9th Humanities Research Forum 2015*, Nidhi Eoseewong gave a keynote speech on the topic of “*Criticism of Humanities/Humanities Criticism: Humanities Rehabilitation in Thai Society*” In conclusion, the value of humanities is not just knowledge and disciplines, such as history, literature, philosophy, or art, but rather *a way of thinking*, which is different from other ways of thinking such as science (Eoseewong, 2016, pp. 9-15), which is compiled from the various experiences of many people from different eras, with different ages, and different societies, melt as “*the sensation thinking*”, or the way of thinking with feelings. It is not a feeling based on the emotions received from the momentary experience, but on *knowledge* (Eoseewong, 2016, pp. 13). Therefore, the way of thinking in humanities emphasizes the specificity of the individual characteristics and/or society, cultures, and eras (Limapichart, 2018, pp. 33).

The method of humanities emphasizes the importance of reading texts which are not limited to literary documents but extend the boundaries to other “*texts*” such as paintings, photographs, movies, music, literature,



social areas such as cities, buildings, monuments, etc. Reading these texts is not only using critical analysis but also including thorough reading, being careful from the beginning, with regard to the surrounding contexts when it originated. And when the texts have been read and interpreted to define meaning and value, taking into consideration the relationship between that text and the other texts including the other contexts (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 13-14).

The humanities reading is the “*reading*” with an open view and perspective, which is an insightful reading and recognizing the ambiguities, paradoxes, and various hidden implications, various voices, and varied meanings. The humanities reading substantially needs to be based on the possibility of interpretations, citations of evidence. This should be shown within a consistency of conditions and other environmental factors, relying on logic, reasoning, knowledge, feeling, sympathetic understanding, with an open perspective on differences and possibilities.

Deliberation on ‘cultural diversity’ by the humanities reading is like reading various cultural texts, taking into account the historical dimensions, acknowledging the necessity and limitations of political and ethical concepts, with grasping the significance of understanding the groups and individuals under various conditions and limitations. Humanities reading not only provides perspectives and social actions relevant to cultural diversity but also shows the value of “*humanities methodology*” in understanding cultural diversity, importantly and necessarily for the diverse contexts of races, religions, languages, classes, including genders, particularly relevant to the context of Thai society, that posits the conditions and limitations of Thai academic circles (Chunlawong2, 2018, pp. 14).

4. Conclusion

The humanities sensation thinking is a compilation of knowledge from a variety of experiences in different places at different times, of people from various societal differences. All these are reflected in diverse contexts in societies such as paintings, photographs, movies, music, literature, and social areas such as cities, buildings, monuments, etc. Humanities sensation thinking presents a visual picture of the power manipulations, surrenders, resistances, suppressions, and negotiations expressed through events, situations, including various storytelling. And of utmost importance, it manifests what and why one important virtue is missing from Thai society with limitations of historical conditions, that missing causes Thai society to be a “*short temper*” patriarchal regime, a “*low boiling point*” of temper towards different ideas and cultures. Toleration has been lacked from this society, and also lacking the art of negotiation. The mainstream culture domination and suppression are sources of the weakness of the local community. The other lacking is the effort to understand the “otherness” with “*hospitality translation*”.

The studies reveal that Thai society is disciplined by mainstream education, religion, and culture, for docile citizens with only economic competence, the majority of Thais are “tamed” to accept the superiority and hegemony of values in the mainstream culture. As consequence, Thai society turns into a *one-dimensional society*, demanding to hear only one voice, and to see a single sight, lacking the acceptance of the beauty of differences such as a chorus or choir, although those elites pretending to appreciate this kind of music. The worse is that those who have different thoughts are “traduced” as communists, terrorists, the ‘politically ungrateful’ or anti-patriotism so it’s morally to use violence wiping out all these vexing groups and periodically impeding ideas and truth from the people by a military coup.

Humanities obviously praise values of the effort to understand ‘otherness’ with hospitality translation and tolerant of differences, for the common interest of society by using the art of value negotiation which varies according to the socio-economic conditions of each period. A society that can artistically combine the diversity of all cultures is comparable to a classical orchestra (Symphony) with excellent conductors controlling different musical instruments. Playing music harmoniously together is another uniquely melodious quality. But Thai elites try to miseducate all Thais by forcing and stipulating to appreciate the ‘military parade’ rather than of classical music.



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