

## Recent Books from Thailand – July 2017

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### **Anthropology**

Pwo Karen in Focus : Photographs, field notes and memoirs, Dong Luang, 1960s North Thailand / Elizabeth Hinton (Incorporating photographs and writings of Peter Hinton (1939-2004)  
Bangkok: White Lotus Co. Ltd., 2017  
viii, 360p.  
9789747534863  
\$ 22.00 / PB  
496gm.

Pwo Karen in Focus: Photographs, field notes and memoirs, Dong Luang, 1960s North Thailand, records sixteen months in 1968 - 69 that anthropologist Peter Hinton and his wife Elizabeth spent in Dong Luang, a Pwo Karen village in the hills of North Thailand. Peter was specifically studying Karen swidden agriculture, but together they learned a lot else about Pwo Karen society. Part ethnography and part memoir, the book is an account, in text and photographs, of village life almost fifty years ago. They saw the change of seasons, observed rice farming in the swiddens, and participated in weddings, funerals and village ceremonies. They became acquainted with village social organization, and with the spirits who underpinned Karen understandings of prosperity, health and wellbeing, illness and death. They saw houses being built of bamboo from the forest. The self-sufficiency of this subsistence society was impressive. But especially, the book tells how it actually 'feels' to do fieldwork – of the excitement of observing strange and exotic customs; of the cultural contradictions and clashes encountered; as well as the anxiety, confusion and the inevitable faux pas involved in living in an unfamiliar environment. Anthony R. Walker Ph. D (Anthropology) says, 'Pwo Karen in Focus is an invaluable introduction for any student preparing to carry out field-work of his own. It gives useful insights into the concrete realities of the practice of Anthropology

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=243970>

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## **Economics/Development Studies**

Thailand Health Data, 2016-2017

4<sup>th</sup> Ed.

Nonthaburi: Alpha Research Co., Ltd., 2017

418p.

Includes Index

9786167526416

1. Province – Thailand – health statistics

\$ 25.00 / PB

478gm.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=243972>

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## **Religion - Buddhism**

Imagination and Narrative : Lexical and Cultural Translation in Buddhist

Asia / (Eds) Peter Skilling & Justin Thomas McDaniel

Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2017

vi, 290p.

Includes Bibliography

9786162151354

\$ 39.50 / PB

354gm.

The essays in this volume highlight the movement of Buddhist ideas and practices across Asia and how the encounter of far-flung cultures and personalities encouraged adaptation and transformation. At times this meant textual translation and transmission, as seen in the chapters about Chinese and Japanese Buddhist texts and their authors, or the analysis of Buddhist manuscripts in northern Thailand. Other cases entailed cultural translation—local adaptations of *jataka* tales, the evolution of legal notions within the framework of Theravada Buddhist teachings, localizations embedded in material culture seen through inscriptions and archaeological traces. Some themes go beyond Buddhism writ small to explore the broad canvas of engagement: the East-West encounter in the British geographical and anthropological exploration of Burma, and the place of Brahmanism in early Buddhist thought as expressed through the *jatakas*.

This expertly curated selection of scholarship shows that the diffusion of ideas and religious thought is much more than a tale of decline and loss or cultural appropriation and impoverishment. The fresh perspectives presented here—all drawn on primary sources—give an overall

impression of a singular diversity that somehow participates in an unacknowledged unity. Beyond the fragmentations of sectarian and cultural divides, disparate Buddhist and non-Buddhist traditions have gone beyond arbitrary boundaries and flourished through their simultaneity.

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