

The Construction of Knowledge on Sino-Thai Relations and the Application of Frontier Approach to the Studies of Sino-Thai Relations through the Exploration of Cheah Yanchong's Life

Abstract

Besides reviewing the construction of knowledge on Sino-Thai diplomatic relations in Thai academia, this research attempt to propose a novel approach in exploring the relations. Underpinned by the exploration of diplomatic history in a narrow sense based on “state” as the most important actor, previous research on Sino-Thai diplomatic relations produced by Thai scholars mostly reproduce single perspective emphasizing on political ties. The previous studies thus focus on the negotiation of national interests between Thailand and China and the international context conditioning such negotiation. Therefore, the roles of commoners, especially the Thai of Chinese descent who had indispensable roles in facilitating changes in both China and Thaila and linking the two countries together are ignored. This research tries to propose a new approach that brings to light the roles of commoners, especially the Thai of Chinese descent in Sino-Thai relations. It thus explores the life of Cheah Yanchong (Yanyong Jiranakorn) in the context of changing Sino-Thai relations through the frontier approach.

Keywords: Sino-Thai relations; Thai of Chinese descent; Cheah Yanchong; Yanyong Jiranakorn