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The Use of Photovoice as Reflections on the Citizens' Voices in Resolving Land Conflicts

in Thaplan National Park***

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Abstract

The main purpose of this research paper is to discuss how photovoice as a method of visual

communication for those in local communities to convey their deepest feelings for the resolution of

land conflicts in Thaplan National Park. Participants were 6 Thais a group of 18 people who were

willing to participate in the photovoice project. They were villagers, NGO personnel and an activist

monk in Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict. The use of photovoice helped the participants to record, convey,

and share their knowledge by presenting their own visual testimonies of land conflict as well as to

develop their capabilities on the public debate through the contexts of the photographs. Therefore,

this study has brought to light some of the roles of photovoice as a tool to achieve deliberative moral

sentiment over public spirits through their eyes 'view in order to brought to community development

and to reach policymakers. Implications are drawn for the development of public policies as well as

to contribute to the study of deliberative democracy in handling land conflicts.

Keywords: Thaplan National Park, photovoice, Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict, land conflict resolution

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การใช้ภาพเล่าเรื่องซึ่งเป็นการสะท้อนเสียงของพลเมืองในการแก้ไขปัญหาความขัดแย้งที่ดินใน อุทยานแห่งชาติทับลาน***

จุฬารัต ผดุงชีวิต*

คาแว มะแส**

บทคัดย่อ

วัตถุประสงค์หลักของบทความวิจัยมุ่งอภิปรายการใช้ภาพเล่าเรื่องเพื่อเป็นเสียงสะท้อนผ่านการ สื่อสารที่สามารถมองเห็นในชุมชนท้องถิ่นโดยคนในชุมชนเป็นผู้เล่าและสะท้อนเสียงส่วนลึกที่สุดในการแก้ไข ปัญหาที่ดินในอุทยานแห่งชาติทับลาน อนึ่ง ผู้เข้าร่วมในการศึกษามีจำนวน 6 คน จาก18 คนในงานวิจัยเพื่อ ร่วมในการวิจัยภาพถ่ายเล่าเรื่อง ได้แก่ ชาวบ้าน เอ็นจีโอ และพระนักพัฒนาในตำบลไทยสามัคคี ซึ่งประโยชน์ จากการใช้ภาพถ่ายเล่าเรื่องจะช่วยบันทึกเรื่องราว สะท้อนแง่มุม และแลกเปลี่ยนเรียนรู้ ถือเป็นประจักษ์พยาน ในการศึกษาปัญหาที่ดิน อีกทั้งช่วยพัฒนาความสามารถของพลเมืองในการถกแถลงสาธารณะโดยใช้ภาพถ่าย ดังนั้นการศึกษานี้นำมาสู่การจุดประกายให้เห็นถึงบทบาทของการใช้ภาพเล่าเรื่องว่าเป็นวิธีการในการพัฒนา ชุมชนร่วมกันและเข้าถึงผู้กำหนดนโยบาย ทั้งนี้การนำผลงานวิจัยไปใช้เน้นเพื่อการพัฒนานโยบายสาธารณะ และการเติมเต็มการศึกษาประชาธิปไตยแบบปรึกษาหารือในการจัดการปัญหาความขัดแย้งเรื่องที่ดิน

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For many decades, boundaries drawn by the state and its officials in the Thaplan National Park (Thaplan NP), a part of Dong Phayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex, a World Heritage Site declared by UNESCO, have led to the politics of disputes over land rights of local comunities in Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict, Wang Nam Khiao District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province. The contested land and boundary disputes on Thaplan NP have turned into severe conflicts, especially between the National Park Department of National Plarks, the local state officers, and the local people. UNESCO has urgently urged the Thai government and related authorities to deal with land encroachments over the phohibited areas of Thaplan NP. Legal proofs of land ownership are required, which include a detailed mapping exercise for boundary modification to exclude encroached or community areas, and to include adjoining areas of high conservation value to Thaplan NP. According to the formal conference on May 29, 2013, entitled "Problems of Resort Land Encroachment in Wang Nam Khiao District of Nakhon Ratchasima and the Guideline to its Solution" at Thammasat University led by the previous Director General of the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, the previous Chief of Thaplan NP, the Ombudsman, the Vice-Rector for Student-Affairs, and an Assistant Professor of the Faculty of Law of Thammasat University; the serious claims of land encroachment were brought into discussion, including land grabs. Local citizens were regarded as intruders of Thaplan NP. According to Cohen (2014, 198), the forest management failed to solve land encroachment over Thaplan NP.

The question of the inclusion and exclusion of local communities remain unclear with regard to land and boundary. The relocation on uprooting of communities out of the prohibited areas are being brought to question. The people are being considered as victims of modernity in forest management. As Jacques Rancière said, "There is politics when there is a part of those who have no part, a part or party of the poor. Politics does not happen just because the poor oppose the rich. It is the other way around: politics (that is, the interruption of the simple effects of domination by the rich) causes the poor to exist as an entity" (Rancière 1999, 11). This part of the research project focuses on gaining insights into how citizens, including civil society groups, deliberate on land and boundary conflict through storytelling and narrative arguments in public forums. The visual research method—photovoice—is used to give voice to local citizens who can present photos,

discuss their contexts, and use digital cameras as a means of triggering inner perceptions of the political geography of the disputed land in the Thaplan areas.

Photovoice as Visual Depiction of the Power of Visual Justification

Photovoice, or photo novella was first applied by Wang and Burris (1994, 1997) as a community-based participatory action research (PAR) tool to explore a community's experiences, problems, and strengths. Photovoice helps to promote critical dialogue and knowledge over social phenomena and to reach policy-makers. People can provide their shared knowledge and expertise to tell their stories and capture photographs as a witnesses of conflict issues. Wang and Burris (1994) used photo novella to empower local people's lives for health education. They conducted research on 62 rural Chinese women to encourage action by those women in the grassroots community. The purpose of Photo Novella is to generate new voices and empower education beyond using documentary photography to give voices to women as the active subject towards a Feminist Research Method. Wang and Burris (1997) offer photovoice as a participatory needs assessment to intensively evaluate society by enabling people to reflect on and discuss their communities through photographic techniques. They developed the photovoice concept regarding (1) critical consciousness, feminist theory, and documentary photography; and (2) an active community by inviting participants to produce photographs with narration so as to exert positive impacts for the community's well-being. Wang, Yi, Tao and Carovano (1998) used photovoice as a participatory health promotion strategy with health professionals and lay citizens. Photovoice fills the gaps of the powerless such as minority groups as well as the local people by giving them voice in a process of mutual learning and gives them control over the image-based research process. For example, Wang (1999) studied women's health by applying photovoice through small group discussions of Chinese village women. Wang invited them to document their everyday lives and to produce photographs of gender, identities, and health issues. Also, those who are homeless and living in shelters can utilize photovoice to give messages that are explicit the hidden facts so as to influence policy by making one's everyday life visible for others to see.

Photovoice can be used as a representation of 'a culture of silences.' Jo Spence, a British photographer, used her photographs of illness as narratives to describe her experience of breast

cancer. It is an example of how ordinary people utilized cameras in the cause of social change. This is socially and culturally produced through patients' works of art that photographs can expand our understanding of embodiment and illness experiences (Wang and Redwood-Jones 2001, 561). Baker and Wang (2006) conducted visual research to explore the chronic pain experienced by older adults by applying photovoice technique as an innovative participatory action research strategy. The participants consisted of 13 Black and White adults older than 50 years of age with both clinical and nonclinical-based characteristics. Participants took photographs, narrated, and shared their experiences of pain with others to bring about improvements in health policy. The images in which participants produced greatly reflected the psychosocial outcomes of pain that were hard to comprehend through means of speech or written text. In addition, Wang (2006) used photovoice to study youth participation for community changes and to empower youth mobilization with co-learning process on issues of conflict. Participants were recruited from elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as teen centers. They were given cameras to use for depicting what they wanted to be reflected on by consciously focusing on the need to create a healthier democratic society. Photovoice is essential to 'record and animate a community's strengths and concerns', to 'promote critical dialogue and knowledge on community issues such as violence within the community, so as to persuade policy makers to implement the photovoice participants' policies and program recommendations. An example is a youth photovoice action project on 'Picture Me Tobacco Free.'

For facilitating deliberation, photovoice is an innovative method to help bridge photographs and narratives to improve local community empowerment and local deliberation. In Appalachian County during a community health assessment, which included social problems, Photovoice was used in order to determine the causes of health problems and illnesses (Downey, Ireson, and Scutchfield 2008, 419). Hendriks, Ercan and Duus (2017) used photovoice as a powerful medium of communication in public deliberation on cases such as the development of Coal Seam Gas (CSG) in the Narrabri region, Australia so as to in-depth interview more than 45 participants and notably for analyzing Facebook's website. A visual study revealed high impacts of photographs that gained possible solutions such as building trust in communities. The study by Wilson et al. (2007) focused on young adolescents in social action projects in school and neighborhood assessments through photovoice. Emerging themes helped to represent what they have learned on how develop their

school's environment. An example is the theme "the Scary Place" which was represented by a dirty wall covered with graffiti and bullet holes (Wilson et al. 2007, 249). Jularut Padunchewit (2010) conducted in-depth-interviews with 15 Thai breast cancer survivors by using photo-elicitation (photo-interview) from postmodern existing artistic photographs of American women with breast cancer. Findings found that photographs of illnesses opened the possibilities of transforming the self and relating the photos to their lives. Thai participants with breast cancer could develop a new self-sense through the use of photographs when comparing themselves to American women with similar diseases. Jularut Padunchewit (2015) brought photovoice to capture Post Tsunami survivors who were single parents in the Phang Nga province, Thailand. Photovoice empowered participants to eagerly take photographs of their life miseries. The use of photovoice invited them to frame political debates such as epidemiology of disaster, mental health, and solutions to handle stress and conflicts in daily life.

Method

Participants

The target audience included community leaders as well as villagers in the areas of Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict. In photovoice project, the six participants were willing to participate and were eligible to enroll in the study. A Limitation of the study was limited sample size that affected in the quantity and quality of each participant's information. They were volunteers who took part in the photovoice project as part of a dissertation, that was composed of 18 Thai participants and were conducted for in-depth interviews. Participants were carefully chosen to represent minorities or hard-to-reach populations that yielded rich information. Three of them were NGOs and community leaders. Two participants were villagers, and one was a Buddhist monk (see Table 1).

Table 1 Characteristics of Participants in Photovoice

Participants	Sex	Age	Education	Status
Nut	М	65	Master	Married
Meaw	F	45	Elementary	Married
Phra Chailit	M	52	High School	Married
Berm	M	60	Bachelor	Married
Manode	M	66	PhD	Married
Ple	F	50	Bachelor	Married

Research Sites

The Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict located in Wang Nam Khiao District was selected as the research site for study because the community areas were overlapped with areas of the Thaplan National Park since 1981 (B.E. 2524), as well as with areas of the Agricultural Land Reform Organization (ALRO) since 1977 (B.E. 2520) in order to dividing some areas to land reformation over degraded forest. Villagers, advocacies, civil society groups, and the local state were claimed over their rights and legitimacies on land under prohibited areas. The people in those communities did not receive the ownership certificate, but were forced to pay the local maintenance tax (LMT 5: Por Bor Tor 5). However, the inhabitants were led to believe that they would receive the right to protect their land where they had settled down long before the announcement. A typology map of Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict in Thaplan NP (figure 1) shows the research sites which composes of eleven villages (See Table 2) as follows:

Table 2 Research Sites

Моо	Names of Villages		
1	Ban Thai Samakkhi		
2	Ban Suksomboon		
3	Ban Patirup Thi Din		
4	Ban Bu sai		
5	Ban Bupai		
6	Ban Huai Yai Tai		
7	Ban Pai Nagm		
8	Ban Buddhachard		
9	Ban Klongsai		
10	Ban Klong-Ya-Moo		
11	Ban Thai-Pattana		

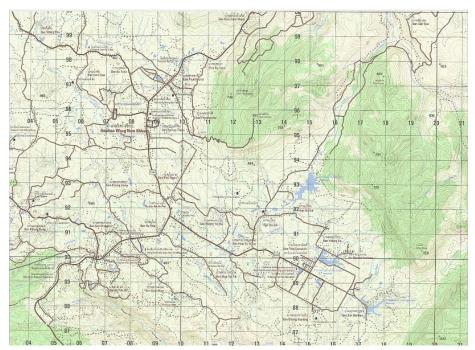


Figure 1: A Typological Map of Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict in Thaplan National Park (Source: The Typological Map was bought from Royal Thai Survey in B.E. 2559)



Figure 2: Color Aerial Photographs B.E. 2549 (Source: GISDA B.E. 2549)

Photovoice Method

Data Collection Procedure. Wang and Burris (1997) first introduced photovoice as a data collection method for community-based participatory research. For the initial meeting, participants were instructed to use the digital cameras, power of images, and ethics for their photography which the research was focused on revealing the existence of land conflicts in Thap Lan and help shape better public policy. For the final workshop, the six participants developed their own ideas that were consistent with the following major themes: capturing 'people, places, or objects' that inspired them about the circumstances of Thaplan land conflict. Then, participants were given cameras in order to capture these themes related to their own living experiences, places, memories and social evidence on land and boundary conflict resolution. After taking photographs, participants came together to discuss their themed pictures and put them in to their photo collection. To facilitate critical thinking, participants were asked questions such as "what is happening in this photograph?" and "Could you tell me more about the pieces of social evidence (objects/subjects) within photographs related to land conflict?". The participants were given a time period of two weeks before meeting to discuss their photographs and their relationships to the major themes. Photographs by citizens and NGOs were collected from B.E. 2558 to B.E. 2561.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Participants during the study had effective participation in sharing their experience and knowledge with researchers. They attributed to hold a discussion on the power of photographs and share their concerns through visual word. The photographs that participants captured with their cameras were analyzed according to certain themes ('people, places, or objects'). Participants were then asked discussed what they captured and to provide their own meanings to the photographs that were taken. The dominant themes emerged after engaging in the analysis of the photographs in addition to the transcribed text from each participant's discussion. Photovoice technique was proposed as one part of triangulation methodologies for enhancing validity and reliability over the study. The deciding of the particular themes before capturing pictures depended on what the participants chose to take pictures of that were related to land conflicts.

Findings

Participants took an array of photographs that illuminated a broad illustration of community land conflicts, ranging from the themes of aerial photography to show satellite imagery of the community areas in Thap Lan, the ecological and physical layout of a landscape, sense of community, the green activity and community development, the official receipt, deliberative public forum, the boundary demarcation, and homestay. Through discussions, the visual assessments, and narratives about each photograph, the contexts of the photographs aided with documenting each participant's personal experiences involving the negative and positive aspects of land conflict. These visual concerns offered the opportunity to present critical discussions for conflict resolution. The use of photovoice has guided participants to embody their own power in order to exert positive change for land policy concerns.

Case 1 Nut: Aerial Photographs as Witnesses

Nut, a sixty-five-year-old man and a resort owner who was a part of a NGO in Thai Samakkhi, attempted to search for evidence to support his arguments to make his claims on the national park encroachment. He greatly knew about the social histories over Thaplan areas. Through the discussion on his photos, technical maps became significant tools to negotiate his claims of land rights and to have control over his national resource. He captured evidence of these claims through

his aerial photographs; he confirmed his claims pointed to the aerial photo interpreter were proof of his rights to his land and autonomy over his homestay resort. His ability in handling such social evidences has allowed him to map boundaries over Thaplan NP using aerial photographs as evidence on his justification with rationality. Nut has used his political power with the delineation of boundaries as a postmodern space in the public sphere that was free of coercive forms of state management. Nut's claim over photos to present community existence before forestry law and policies, such as the announcement of Thaplan NP, had overlapped with communities.

In figure 3, Nut took a photo of a specialist who was an aerial photography interpreter at the supreme court. "This is Khun Dilok who helps me to prove my land right by giving details on the aerial photographs." In figure 4, Nut showed aerial photographs on process of photo analysis. "I captured my aerial photographs that were approved by an aerial specialist at the court who interpreted all evidences. The years of aerial images are indicated by the comparative years (B.E. 2513, 2518, 2526, 2537, 2542, 2552). The geographical changes over areas in each year can effectively prove that communities existed before the announcement of National Park act B.E. 2504. I consulted with the court expert who helped me with interpreting all aerial photographs. I used L7017-7018 with scale 5337-I."



Figure 3: The aerial interpreter

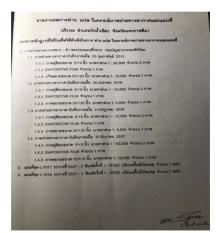


Figure 4: Process of image analysis

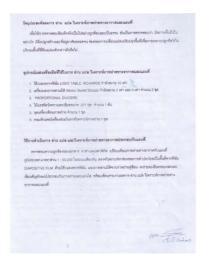


Figure 5: All materials for photo interpretation

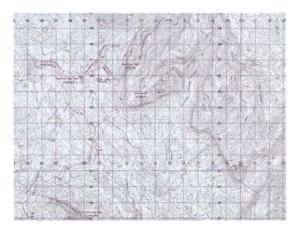


Figure 6: A topological map

In figure 5-6, he presented all materials to conduct aerial analysis.

Nut said, "You know, the process of map interpretation was complicated. The expert needed to be a specialist. He used a light table Richard and Mirror Stereo Scope to enlarge the photographs and compare with a topo map in scale 1:50,000 in the same matrix. The expert interpreted all traces on images with the use of Diapositive Film to capture all details in 3D photo from the comparative images in scale. The results showed that in the inspected areas covered 450 rais; the north of the map connected with Thai Samakkhi Village. There has the local route no. 3200 over communities. The east connected with Suk Som Boon Village. The South connected with Klong Kra Ting Village, and the West connected with Huay Yai Taii."



Figure 7: The topological area for interpretation



Figure 8: The topological area for interpretation



Figure 9: Satellite image B.E. 2513



Figure 10: Satellite image interpretation

B.E. 2513

In figure 7-8, Nut took into account the meaning of such conflicts with logical arguments and presented his understanding of the land conflicts by pointing out the significance of aerial photographs to be used as counter-arguments to state claims of Thaplan NP. "This was the interpretation of aerial photographs that was necessary in order to achieve mapping geography with classification. L7017 and L7018 in scale 5337-I were aerial photographs produced in black and white

with diapositive film which belonged to Royal Thai Survey Department. The number of photographs were 0024, 0025, and 0045 (in scale 1:50,000) with larger size 20x20 inches (in scale 1:10,000)."

In figure 9-10, Nut proved the livelihood of communities by exercising his discursive practice through the use of photovoice. Nut captured photos to counter against the state claim that was made regarding the change of land conditions from the announcement about the conserved forest over Thaplan in B.E. 2515 that had indicated there was no community within or nearby area.

"This was the aerial photographs B.E. 2513; the results showed that the areas around Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict about 80% was forest and shrub trees (F2). The rest for 20% showed the trace of human construction and farm products (A2). Nut narrated, "the land as you can see is not all forest. You know, A2 shows agricultural lands and in square symbols are the evidences of settlement. The aerial photographs also showed the cutting of road 304 and forest concessions. If you notice in 1970 (B.E. 2513), images have been found where there is evidence of existing villages with their agricultural areas (seeing the rectangle on the images). So, I noted why have state agencies announced the national reserved forest in year 1972 (B.E. 2515) and the announcement was overlap with community area. The Government didn't want to solve the mistake and now has become the source of problems of land dispute in Wang Nam Khiao. I question the forest law, the Agricultural Land Reform Office Act, as well as the national park act that are one of the causes of land boundary conflicts in Wang Nam Khiao areas".

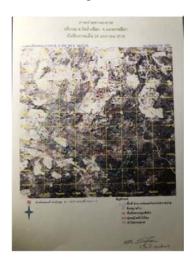


Figure 11: Satellite image B.E. 2518

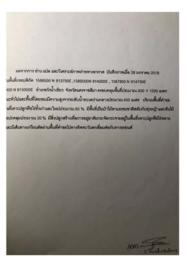


Figure 12: Satellite image interpretation

B.E. 2518

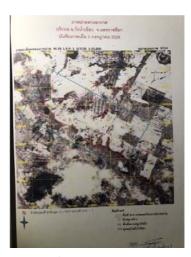


Figure 13: Satellite image B.E. 2526

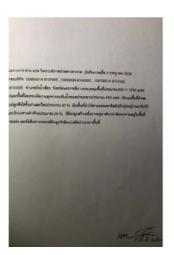


Figure 14: Satellite image interpretation

B.E. 2526

In figure 11-12, Nut narrated on the stories during the time period of the communist party of Thailand in 1976 (B.E. 2519); the area of Thaplan had been established as 'the communist village' to be easily controlled by the Thai government during that era.

"These were the aerial photos B.E.2518; the results showed that the areas in Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict were estimated to be approximately 80% farm products (A2). The other 20% of the area were forests (F1), meadows and shrub trees (M1) with traces of human construction and farm products." Nut continued with, "You see, the settlement was larger than B.E. 2513, when compared to B.E. 2518. Specifically, the areas that were mostly agricultural land and became degraded. You know, in the year 1975 (B.E. 2518), there was the coming of the Agricultural Land Reform Office (ALRO); In the maps, the land became field crops without a forest. It became the community, and that announcement had also overlapped with the National Reserved Forest in year 1972 (B.E. 2515). In the year 1976 (B.E. 2519), people escaped into the forest; in 1977 (B.E.2520) General Prem had the concept that this was exactly the zone near the border of Cambodia. He established a communist village and set up the military blockade by the community which was surrounded by soldiers, and delivered the area of the village to the Agricultural Land Reform Office (ALRO)."

In figure 13-14, Nut points out the state's mistake in a local survey over Thaplan that was made in hast to announce these areas were going to become a national park in 1981 (B.E. 2524). "This was the aerial photos B.E. 2526; the results showed that the areas around Thai Samakkhi

Subdistrict were approximately 80% farm products (A2) with meadows and shrub trees (M1) and also traces of human construction (see symbol, A2)". Nut narrated, "How are these areas are located in the park? In 1981 (B.E. 2524), an announcement of national park was made over such areas. So, ALRO could not take any action, and later Department of National Parks smuggled to announce as National Park in year 1981. I think it was policy corruption".



Figure 15: Satellite image B.E. 2552



Figure 16: Satellite image interpretation B.E. 2552



Figure 17: Officer signatures report for for boundary demarcation B.E. 2543

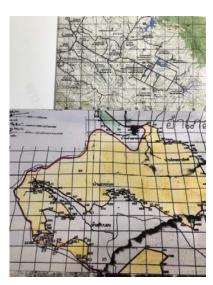


Figure 18: Boundary demarcation B.E. 2543

In figure 15-16, Nut supports his claim by pointing to the latest update of his photo in B.E. 2552. "The last picture contains aerial photos B.E. 2552 by using the Google Earth program; the results showed that the areas around Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict were full of farm products (A2), 5% contained traces of human constructions along with many road constructions." Nut concluded, "we should use all aerial photographs to reveal the truth as systematic way in seeing the changes of all areas...I mean...people who were claimed as intruders should find their own ways to fight in the court. Never give up!"

In figure 17-18, Nut claimed on local map by state and community as the boundary demarcation in B.E. 2543. Nut narrated, "I captured the important part of the map for you. The yellow areas are the prospect areas that should be excluded from the national park; whereas, the green areas should be added more to the Thaplan National Park. You know, Thai government gives promise to UNESCO on March 1, 2005 in excluding areas of communities (43,729.63 hectares) from the Thaplan NP and in including areas of wild forest to the Thaplan NP (17,627 hectares). All actions should be completed as promised by the prospect year 2007. This is very important for us to rethink a state policy on the boundary demarcation in B.E. 2543. The law should change! In these photos, you will see the signatures from all related groups—state officials, local officers, park officers, forestry department, ombudsman, villagers, and all committees. They all signed to support for the new boundary in B.E. 2543. I insisted on the ALRO right, along with B.E.2543 boundary. The ALRO should be used as a land right in order to reclaim Sor Por Kor land from illegal occupants over the national park. The state should give more power to the right of Sor Por Kor, for our communities that are here. Therefore, people are not illegal anymore under the prohibited areas.

Case 2 Meaw: The Ecological and Physical Layout of a Landscape

Meaw, a forty-five-year-old woman and owner of a resort and restaurant in Thaplan, had captured her own images of the land to contribute her voice to society. She held the land rights document as Por Bor Tor 5 (PBT 5) without knowing that such a document cannot prove her private land right and ownership. However, the document was evidence to pay taxes to the local government (SAO) for use of the land, administered by a local village leader who oversaw possession rights and boundaries. Meaw became shocked and distressed when park officers arrived at her resort and

restaurant with armed with guns and charged her family as being invaders of the national park. Meaw narrated that park officers investigated every area, took photos, notably a photo of her husband, and later posted on newspapers and the Internet with a headline that read, "A Famous Spec Arrested in Wang Nam Khiao". Photovoice invited Meaw and her husband to take photos to record and reflect their concerns in regards to the situation. Meaw explained that she and her foreign husband were trekking through the forest. Her husband took a photo of elephant dung to claim the healthy ecology around her land resort. They also mentioned the wildfire was the reason why the land and forests were destroyed all over areas, not them.

In figure 19-21, Meaw narrated, "This land has slopes. Some spots of the land had grass and wild bananas growing. So, I bought it from the villagers. The ownership document is Por Bor Tor 5 is a general document. It is the only document and was signed by the SAO. We came to make things better. We didn't come to harm anyone. We came to grow trees. I have never seen any tourist, villager or business owner cutting any tree because everyone takes care of the forest. How can tourists be the source of pollutants? My bungalows have air conditioners. However, I don't think that my bungalows will change the eco-system because I there are plenty of forested areas surrounding our location that prevents any type of change. Animal footprints still can be found here. My husband is a foreigner; he found elephant dung when he was jogging in the forest here, which makes the soil fertile. We are not invaders. We have helped nourish this by growing trees on almost 6 rai of the land. In the first year, there was a wildfire and it was blown into this area by the wind. If it weren't for the villagers who were very kind and stayed here for 2 days to help water the grass roofs, the roofs would have become too dry and eventually burn down along with the surrounding areas. The wind carried the wildfire from the other side of the land. The villagers and I grew trees together in order to prevent the wildfire by creating the wildfire defense line. No wildfire has occurred again after people came here."



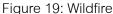




Figure 20: Elephant dung



Figure 21: My greenery resort

Case 3 Phra Chailit: Sense of Community

Phra Chailit, a fifty-two-year-old-man, is an activist monk. Temple areas are an ALRO right (ALR 4-01) which means the temple was allowed to built in ALR area. He was trained by the courses of Thammasat University and Wong Chawalit Kul University to be a community development monk. He used photovoice to prove his forest conservation and village development. His photos were used as strategies to embed the principle of goods, living harmony with nature, and community involvement to encounter state claims as national park encroachment. He also mentions to the B.E. 2543 boundary line to solve such land disputes over Thaplan.

In figure 22-25, Phra Chailit emphasized, "It's a pity that park officers made the claim that this land belonged to Thaplan. The temple area is separated as a public area by a former SAO chief, 14 Rai in total, due to the area being a slope and thus not suitable for cultivation. In fact, this area was not declared as prohibited areas. But there was an officer from the park who came and caused a disturbance. When the officer had asked us to cease construction of the temple, myself, along with approximately 20 villagers went to talk with the park officials and asked them to send some men to guard these areas. Here is our Silathong Temple, I led villagers to explore the area uphill. I became a community development monk. The land here is Sor Por Kor 4-01 for agricultural areas and has 14 rai. Our community has helped me plant trees around the temple and they take good care of the hill. I protect people from cutting down trees and educate people to preserve all forests. As a social developer, I believe that development needs people who possess a strong will and truly care about nature and willing to take care of it; not to reap the benefits. At the present, benefits have too much

influence. They should stop building temples within the forest. Right now, the government agency has foreign capital groups which have said that the villagers like to trespass in the forest area. So, they give out 500 THB per Rai to villagers to grow palm trees. Do you think that this type of method is good? It's highly devastating on budget. Before area development, before budget investment, shouldn't there be someone who can educate villagers or officials first? Visiting villagers and providing education to the community is the most important concept. It would never become successful if approached by force. The government should find good quality personnel to train the national park officers and visit the villagers. For appropriate personal development purposes, the officers should visit the community. The B.E. 2543 boundary line should be revised and applied to solve the land conflict. It should be investigated further to prove invasion rights from the investors. However, it should be done quickly in order for the B.E. 2543 boundary line for the villagers who have been doing agriculture and inhabit the area are safely protected from some corrupted officers."



Figure 22: Community involvement in forest



Figure 23: Community involvement in forest



Figure 24: A Silathong temple



Figure 25: A Silathong temple

Case 4 Berm: The Reality of Land Conflicts

Berm, a sixty-year-old man, is a restaurant owner, NGOs, and a community leader. Berm was accused of land encroachment on Thaplan National Park. He had explained why he was accused of invading the Thaplan National Park because the borders in 1981 (B.E. 2524) were only 300 meters from the entrance of the street. He identified that all of the areas beyond the borders were the park's areas including those of a schools, temples, and subdistrict administration organizations. He was not informed before that his restaurant was situated in the area of national park. He reported on the unclear park sign that was not indicated as the national park zone. He mentioned that section 8 of the National Park Act indicates that any officer must use any pole, sign or mark that indicated the national park's borders as appropriate in order to show to the people that it is the national park's area. Berm suggested that in Wang Nam Khiao, there was no park indication like this and that it led to the increase of the community establishment. Berm showed the layout of his land from the past as a tool to reflect the current reality of agricultural land significance as a means to raise his concerns. Berm also presented the photographs of his land, the letters, and a fee receipt from encroachment as important evidence to represent his opinions on land conflict.

In figure 26, Berm narrated, "I had a friend who was a provincial police station commander who suggested the land to me in Wang Nam Khiao District, but I was not satisfied with it. Then, I met Pranom, the sub-district headman who suggested this area and persuaded me to grow trees here. I thought that it was a good side road land. I bought it for 120,000 baht. When I bought this land, there were no forests over such areas; I grew all of the trees myself. It can be seen that the numbers of green areas have been increased since I bought this land." In figure 27, Berm stated, "This is our group...a forest conservation and quality of life group—a group volunteering for community development and sustainability. We donated useful things such as drinking water and bicycles for Wang Nam Khiao hospital. You are also invited to join the group."





In figure 28-29, "I wrote a letter to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment to listen and help delay arresting villagers. I would like to show my gratitude to the government by presenting the facts and collected relevant documents for the considerations at every forum."

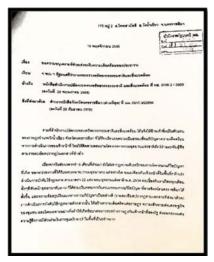


Figure 28: A citizen complaint letter to the Ministry of Natural Resources and

Environment

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Figure 30: A letter of gratitude from Thaplan NP



Figure 29: A citizen complaint letter to the Ministry of Natural Resources and

Environment

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Figure 31: A ticket from Thaplan NP

In figure 30, Berm presented evidence of his forest conservation support group.

"I and other villagers helped in extinguishing the fire that blazed over forest. We received a letter of gratitude from the National Park, Wildlife, and Plant Conservation Department. Here...this is the letter to show that we love the forest, and that we are not destroying such media broadcasting."

In figure 31, Berm captured the ticket from park officers, charging him to pay fines as an invader. "I was forced to pay a lot of money to park officers and they charged me so many times. I felt so disappointed! Not only me, but other villagers also received tickets to pay fines. I hope the land conflict problems will be handled with sincerity by applying the boundary in 2000 (B.E. 2543) and place a limit to the authority's power; the roles of the park and forest officers should be reduced or limited in order to promote flexibility of forest management. Some part-time park employees wore the park uniforms and extorted people by claiming that it was their duty to do such things. You know, in 2004, there was no park officer giving an order to demolish the restaurant. There were even the officers who were drinking at the restaurant."

Case 5 Manode: A Deliberative Public Forum as A Chamber of Political Desire

Manode, a sixty-six-year-old man, is a community leader. He has been fighting for community land rights for decades because all villagers were accused of land encroachment on the Thaplan NP. He explained that park officers have claimed over the park boundary that was announced followed on the public road—route no. 304 road from 300 meters until reaching the temple (Wat Bu Phai); the backside was a park including where the shops located in Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict. Manode suggested that accusations of invasions of the park as well as the whole subdistrict were alleged because all communities were situated on in the Thaplan NP boundary.

Manode applied photovoice to show the photos of his facilitating deliberation in land conflict assessment to achieve better policies in identifying possible solutions on deliberative mini-publics. He gathered evidences such as social histories beyond Thaplan to gain legitimacy to live there. Manode claimed that the designated areas overlapped with the Land reform Office which happened after the national park announced its borderline in B.E. 2524. The Land Reform Committee knew it was wrong, but was negligent about it. The Royal Forest Department granted the land to the Land

Reform Committee by imposing a 'ministerial regulation' in 1985 (B.E. 2528) to prepare to transform the usage of the land. When the land was reformed, it was considered to belong to the Land Reform Committee without issuing any ministerial regulation, but by issuing Sor.Por.Kor. 4-01 among the areas of national park. Since the forest was degraded, it was a concession. Manode insisted to apply the 2000 (B.E. 2543) boundary as a land solution due to more accuracy in mapping with GPS with authorities and local communities.



Figure 32: A chamber of political desire



Figure 33: Our communities' forum

In figure 32, Manode used photovoice to make claims over a deliberative public forum at Wang Nam Khiao Town Hall meeting. The Meeting was for the consideration of the suggestions from the ombudsman for solving the land conflict in Wang Nam Khiao District. The main objectives aimed to achieve effective communication, detailed orientation, and outcomes focused on the land conflict resolution in the big scale of various groups that reflected individuals. Manode narrated, "I gave this picture the name 'A Chamber of Political Desire', I felt so impressed by it. I was the one who had spoken on forum that day...at Wang Nam Khiao Town Hall forum in 2017 (B.E. 2560). The ombudsman and his committees were listening me and other villagers in trying to solve such land conflict. We made an impression that day! I believe that the potential outcomes of the consensus will set everything in the right direction for implementation of the new policy change in the future."

In figure 33, our community forum, "This is my friend's restaurant in Ban Suksomboon (Moo 2), which was opened for the community forum to discuss land conflict resolutions allowing them to equally and freely speak with experts such as lawyers to provide any guidance. The villagers and I always come here to deliberate solutions and gather evidence. In my group, there were 300 members

who were accused with National Park invasions. This is a big deal! The news had largely spread false information as if we were criminals. We have to submit individual opinions that a prosecution order should be made and sent the opinion, together with both the files and the alleged offender, to the public prosecutor; next to the prosecutor was the governor, if the governor agree with this order next to sue. We were in the expectation of being innocent and must be prosecuted. I had to go to court and pump my fingers! Being an offender made me nervous, and was even difficult for my wife. When we came to do the fingerprints, it made me feel like I was a criminal. I told my friends in the group about the criminal procedure so that they could prepare themselves in advance."

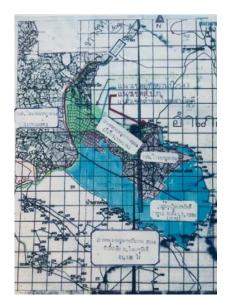


Figure 34: A boundary demarcation B.E. 2543



Figure 35: The border of ALRO, Thaplan NP, and communities

In figure 34-35, Manode showed clear details on the boundary demarcation in B.E. 2543 with the ALR officers, local communities, and the national park officers. Manode narrated, "If the community is separated from the forests along the boundary line in B.E. 2543, they can take care of the forest. People who live in the area can also plant trees in the forests in the community area. In

addition, we need the Agricultural Land Reform 4-01 document to prove our community's rights. As you see in the picture here (in figure 34-35), the Thaplan areas in B.E. 2524 in figure 34 have overlapped with the ALRO areas that forced the community to move out of the Thaplan areas, same as in figure 35. If we use the Thaplan boundary line in B.E. 2524, those within the community in the Thaplan areas will be charged as if they were criminals. So, this complicated boundary issues (ALRO vs. Thaplan NP) must urgently solved with care to all related people and the state. We want to live in the area legally. The National Park Department and Thai government desire to continually register the Wang Nam Khiao Forest as UNESCO World Heritage Site. They need to take action on improving the reality of Thaplan borderline followed the agreement with UNESCOs that will use the B.E. 2543 boundary line, instead of the B.E. 2524 boundary of Thaplan NP. In addition, if the authority of the Ministry of Resources, or the National Park Department did not fix boundary and keep accuse people in community as criminals, there is no obligation to take care of people due to state-owned land. The community was here before the National Park Department announced the park as the forest area."

Case 6 Ple: My Green Land

Ple, a fifty-year-old woman, is an owner of a homestay resort in Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict and captured photos of her homestay to represent her green activities against medias that accused her as a deforester. Ple didn't realize that her homestay was located in the prohibited area of Thaplan. She mentioned the Subdistrict Administrative Organization—SAO as an ineffective system because it allowed the construction in Thaplan without any warning from local officials to stop building nearby her homestay resort. Her husband is Japanese. Ple explained that, "The Japanese government has different public policies over land management. If the areas aren't forests (degraded forests), the government allows their people to manage and to restore those areas. They support a better community as well as sustainable areas. The government does promote marketing for their people who live in that area. People can produce and directly sell their own agricultural products. However, in Thailand the farmers have to accept less income because they have to sell through a middle man. If the Thai state follows Japan pathway, I am ready to provide my support. However, if the state tries to take my land, we need to find an agreement. Our goal is to develop the land, not to destroy it."



Figure 36: My green land



Figure 37: My green land

In figure 36-37, Ple engaged in a forest conservation activity to claim the rights for her land. She narrated, "this is My Green Land, my homestay resort which is filled with trees and meadows. I do organic farming here. I have planted trees and take care of the pond. I helped villagers by hiring them to help with taking care of the green areas and I have never cut trees. The area of Wang Nam Khiao over a decade ago was nothing more than a bald mountain. Today, there are lot of forests where people have planted trees and shrubbery. I began to make improvements with the soil by digging a well for water and fire lines with the afforest allowance from Subdistrict Administrative Organization's support. After three years the trees grew and however during April, there was a fire which was caused by a dry season. Villagers did not have anything to eat, so they light a fire to keep rats out of the morass. The fire though began to spread. I stood there in tears regretting the three years of all the hard work and had stopped working for one year. After that, the much-needed rain came. The teak trees burned but grew back since we planted more, and after that, the fire burned them again, four times. Eventually, I stopped planting this type of tree then I began planting fruit trees to provide income and jobs for garden workers. At that time many government agencies helped promote planting flowers because this space was suitable for the cultivation of the flowers. We planted several types of flowers for trials and finally planted. At that time, I did not have the knowledge of homestays. We were only performing trials. I did it for one year because it gave encouragement for the villagers."

Reflections from Visual Analysis

The production of visual text is a truth-revealing mechanism because images are guided by subjects with in-depth responses to the exploration of society with their essential consciousness (Harper 1998, 29-35). This study represents each participant's image making as a form to communicate the benefits of land conflict resolution for the prospect future and better policy making. The analysis of these themes brings about the following outcomes of photovoice to consider:

- 1. The mistake over boundary delimitation of Thaplan National Park: the aerial photographs provide evidence to show the existing villages and communities since B.E. 2513. The same applies for the establishment of Thai Samakkhi Village since B.E. 2520. The government allocated land to villagers who clearly had the legal right of possession over the land rights due to the government's policy at that time in order to separate the people from the communist terrorists. In addition, the areas of Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict used to be the areas that the government had approved for the forest concession since B.E. 2511.
- 2. The ineffective system of administrative process: The Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict in the areas of Thaplan, at present still overlaps with inconsistent government policies. The Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict Administrative Organization (SAO) allows villagers to construct homes and resorts. Villagers use the document of Por Bor Tor 5 (land tax payments at the local administrative office) to verify their land titles and to approve their land rights in protected areas.
- 3. Land management concerns: the areas of Thai Samakkhi Subdistrict were announced as the National Reserved Forest in 1972 (B.E. 2515) according to the ministerial regulations No. 505. Moreover, in 1978 (B.E. 2521), the government legislated the Royal Decree. Some of the reserved forest areas were divided for the Agricultural Land Reform Office (ALRO). Those areas consisted of the Nakhon Ratchasima District, Chokchai District, and Pak Thong Chai District. So as to management following the land reformation project, later in 1985 (B.E. 2528), there was a distribution of the ALR 4-01 (Sor Por Kor 4-01) document regarding the possession over the land. In addition, the announcement of the National Park Act (B.E. 2524) over Wang Nam Khiao District includes almost all of Thai Samakkhi village's areas that overlap with the areas of the Thaplan National Park till present with unresolved border of land conflict. The consequences of becoming a national park caused many problems until recently due to the National Forest Law being exceptionally strict. In section 16 of the

National Park Act, there are many prohibitions that prevent people from living or residing in buildings in the national park.

- 4. The rectification of the Thaplan National Park's boundary line as land conflict resolution: the royal forest department (RFD) have come to terms to rectify the borderline of the Thaplan National Park to be consistent with reality. The rectification had been accomplished in the year 2000 (B.E. 2543) through a collaboration from related officers from the Royal Forest Department, park officers, administrative officers, community leaders, and citizen representatives. The boundary line has permanently been settled with the primary satellite coordinates, including the completed new boundary map and the new zone has been accepted by all concerned parties, both government and local people. Although the redevelopment of boundary demarcation of Thaplan National Park was completed, the draft ordinance for the change of the national park to have legal effect has been waiting to be presented to the cabinet for approval and urgently needs the effective policy to be imposed.
- 5. The commitment of the Thai Government to UNESCO: The Thai government had issued a letter to UNESCO on March 1, 2005 which was signed by Mr. Suvaj Singhaphan, a former Director General of the NP, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department. The important message in that letter was UNESCO promising to change the landscape of Thaplan NP as a physical reality in order to separate the communities and the NP zone. This was done in order to gain suitable areas of the NP to register as the UNESCO World's Heritage Zone. The areas of community and the degraded forest area around 43,729.63 hectares would be removed from Thaplan National Park and would append 17,627 hectares of forested land into Thaplan National Park. The action should have been completed by 2007 (B.E. 2550). However, the real border of Thaplan is still unclear and urgently needs to be revised and resolved for sustainable land management and community development.
- 6. A deliberative public forum: The state management used deliberation as an innovative tool to solve such conflicts. All justifications from the state and citizens were found to be effective under well-organized systems of public forums. The systems were opened for the dynamic interaction and led to the wisdom of the public. The strength of deliberation on state management will integrate information and attribute to sustainable conflict resolutions for the future.

Conclusion

Photovoice represents citizen's political freedom of communication with the public according to Habermas's (1984) theory of communicative action, which favored coercive-free communication to be considered as deliberative ethics. This claimed the authenticity of communication in order to bring a subjective truthfulness and achieve agreements based on good reasons along with the righteousness of norms (Habermas 1984). Participants in this study learned to influence their narrative voices through photos to gain public attention on land conflict resolution. Stithorn Thananithichot, Wichuda Satidporn, Nittaya Ponok and Charat Pratuengrattana (2016, 33) suggested that public deliberation attributes to accomplishing public spirited debates in discursive justification by learning and hearing from one another in order to promote social learning.

This type of visual processing invites the public to engage in participatory needs assessments for land conflict resolution. According to Wang and Burris (1997), they identified that photovoice enables people to identify issues in their communities and make collective actions. This visual technique successfully helps to fulfill empirical data as a part of doctoral research project in order to enhance the validity of certain research methods. Photographs provide empowerment, as Wang and Burris (1994) suggest that photovoice enables the concept of power to interpret and develops the power to achieve one's own ability to influence society for positive changes among communities. The social evidence through photographs consciously document people's experiences of social reality on land conflicts. Learning arises from analyzing photographs to encourage positive changes—politically, socially, and economically in righteous ways of life. The photographs focus on the simplistic views of society and land conflicts beyond shared views of picture interpretation. Additionally, photovoice helps people to position their power in order to apply their intelligence to defend their own position and survive amongst difficulties. Also, the use of photovoice which compliments deliberative practice was clearly guided to the reality of the situations to affirm the creation of the policy-making. The power of photo deliberation by people in local communities can attribute to transform their own voices to be heard for sustainable development over land conflict issues. According to Dewey (1927, 6), "The political facts are not outside human desire and judgement...the phase of human action we should not start with is that to which direct causative power is attributed. We should not look for state-forming forces. To explain the origin of the state by saying that man is a political animal is to travel in a verbal circle.... impels men to speech." The genius of the visual justification as 'wisdom of public' in merging principles of logical and rational evidence such as using local knowledge, technological information, and social history were important elements of deliberative democracy to gain the power of 'Dewey's concept of ethical justification'—the justification for the superiority of democracy of the moral communities over social intelligence at managing such conflict.

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