

# Social-economic foundations of China- Thailand Cooperation under One Belt One Road Initiative: The Role of Thai Chinese

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# Personal Statement

- **CHEN, TSUNG-YUAN (陈琮渊)**

- **Experience**

- Research Associate of Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS), National Chengchi University(NCCU) of Taiwan
- Executive editor of *Journal of World Confederation of Institutes and Libraries for Chinese Overseas Studies*
- Executive editor of *China and International Relations Review*

- **Education**

- Ph.D. in Sociology, GIDS, NCCU
- M.A. in Southeast Asian Studies, GISEA, TKU
- B.A. in History of Southeast Asia, HD,TKU

- **Expertise**

- Chinese Societies in Southeast Asia, Chinese Capitalism and Ethnic Business, Economic Sociology, International Migration

# abstract

- As an important platform, “One Belt One Road” initiative has promotes the level of Chinese-Thai relationship and connectivity, especially in infrastructure construction. Sino-Thai Railway project is the best symbol for the development of cooperation between China and Thailand in the recent years. This paper aim to delineating the Social-economic foundations of China-Thailand Cooperation. I will investigate the policy making and interactive mode of strategic partnership. I also point out that due to multiple connection, Thai Chinese will play valuable role in the cross cultural communication.

# Outline

- Forward
- “One Belt One Road” and Thai-Sino Cooperation
- Development and Prospect of Thai Chinese
- The role of Thai Chinese under One Belt One Road Initiative
- Conclusion Remark

# Forward

- One Belt, One Road (OBOR) is a development strategy and framework that focuses on connectivity and cooperation among countries primarily between China and the rest of Eurasia Countries
- In recent years, China made every effort to promote Chinese culture and, in the meantime, redefined the role of overseas Chinese in their relationship between China and Chinese.
- This paper point out that due to multiple connection, Thai Chinese will play valuable role in the cross cultural communication.

# “One Belt One Road” and Thai-Sino Cooperation

- Prior to 1975, Sino–Thai relations were mutual suspicion, bilateral relations positively developed after 1978 and trade became the dominant theme.
- In the end of 20st century, China gain huge foreign investments from Overseas Chinese of Southeast Asia, including Thai Chinese. This helps Thailand gain access to capital and market.
- In 2010, China is Thailand's second largest export market. China is also Thailand's largest importer of goods into the country.





# 泛亞鐵路各線示意圖



- Pan Asia railway is expected to be broken through from Sino-Thailand route. Sino-Thailand railway cooperation has been implemented, which means that the Pan-Asian Railway shall have made a significant progress, which lay an important foundation for the subsequent interconnectivity of Sino-Laos-Thailand-Malaysia-Singapore HSR(Chen and Zhang, 2015).
- Sino-Thai cooperation in Thailand's special economic zone may include the following areas:
  - Increasing the infrastructure connectivity between China and Thailand, including a 867-km railway line;
  - Strengthening trade and investment between China and ASEAN countries;
  - Developing Thailand's high-tech sector through Chinese capital investment.



# Development and Prospect of Thai Chinese

- Chinese began arriving Thailand in Ayutthaya. Nowadays, Nine million of Thai Chinese (Teochew and other dialect) accounting for 14 % of the Thai population.
- From 1882 to 1917, nearly 13,000 to 34,000 Chinese settling in Bangkok and along the coast of the Gulf of Siam.
- Thai Chinese also suffered discrimination between the 1930s to 1950s under the military dictatorship
- 1970s, more than 90 percent of the Chinese born in Thailand had abandoned Chinese citizenship and were granted Thai citizenship instead.



# The role of Thai Chinese under One Belt One Road Initiative

- A significant number of Thai Chinese are the descendants of intermarriages between Chinese immigrants and native. Thai Chinese have a strong presence in Thailand's politics. Thailand's majority of parliament having at least some Chinese ancestry.
- Thai Chinese are influential in the sectors of real estate, agriculture, banking, finance, and wholesale trading. Thai Chinese are estimated to own 60 percent of the national trade, 90 percent of all local investments in the commercial sector.

- Thai-Chinese are now the largest investors in China among all overseas Chinese communities worldwide.
- Charoen Pokphand (CP Group) is currently the single largest foreign investor in China and employing more than 150,000 people in China
- Chanchai Rouyrungruen is operator of Red Bull drink business in China
- Anand's Saha-Union, Thailand's leading industrial group, have so far invested over US\$1.5 billion in China. With over other 30 businesses in China, the company employs approximately 7,000 Chinese workers.
- Central Group, Thailand's largest operator of shopping centers have recently opened three new large scale department stores in China.



# Conclusion Remark

- Improve trade structure, explore new growth areas of economic, and promote Thai Chinese Investment
- Building cooperation platform, cultivating intelligent persons with ability of communicating across cultures
- To implement: policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration and people-to-people bonds

