

# THE SCENARIO OF FUTURE ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY INSTRUCTION TO DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP IN THAILAND

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## **Abstract**

A learning management of environment history to develop sustainable global citizenship is extremely important due to the effect of currency issues in Thailand. Under globalisation processes, the concern of environmental collapse is one of many important issues that humankind must face together, and the additional affecting relative issues. Learning history is fundamental to making students think rationally and connect situations between internal and external factors that affect the change. In particular, environmental history will help students view history as a whole; moreover, it supports interactions of life and awareness of what we are really fighting for. The civic education in Thailand, currently and in the future must focus on learning history, based on the social value series international development to furnish students with wide visions and attitudes towards diversity. Furthermore, they will realise the human and citizenship in democracy for themselves, as well as consideration of the ecosystem and the environment that raise our lives.

**Keywords:** Environmental history; sustainable development; instruction;  
global citizenship

## **Introduction**

The more the world changes, the more humans need to learn history because everything that happens at the present time, including our existence as of now is produced by actions from the past. Historical periods from hunting and gathering societies to agriculture and commercial societies, the industrial and information technology societies have all had significant influences. History has created the 21<sup>st</sup> century world by globalisation which makes people's relationship networks change dramatically and quickly due to transportation and communication. Particularly in the digital revolution, we gained the ability to transfer information freely; we now had instant access to information that would have been difficult or impossible to find previously. As we all know, this has changed how the world functions and communications dramatically. Moreover, policies of powerful countries impact the world, for example, Donald Trump's policies on 7 Muslim immigration bans that affect vast areas. However, it is not only the superior countries, but terrorist organisations who use information technology to present and extend their connections. Those situations reflect how important globalisation is to society. Despite the concerns over human security nowadays, we must look out beyond these constrict areas. Furthermore, manmade environmental deconstruction will cause an upsurge in violence. Hence there needs to be a realisation and cooperation from the past. All in all, the education for creating citizens is important for the society both now and for the future since the creation of a sustainable society must be reliant on the power of citizens to cooperate with the potential of combined creative and sustainable societies. Even though the education for creating citizens in Thailand are impelled, people do in many ways such as formal and informal education, the core of citizens development is in the Learning Area for Social Studies, Religion and Culture known as the formal education or the basic education. Therefore, in the midst of social change, the social studies are able to change the paradigm and process of meaningful and powerful learning.

## **Objective**

This article presents a guideline for managing environmental history to develop sustainable global citizenship of high school students in Thai context by synthesising key issues from research on Environmental History for Sustainable Development: Learning towards Preparing Social and Eco-Justice Oriented Citizen in Thai Context.

## **Content**

### **History under the Paradigm of Social Studies: Learning to Create Citizenship**

Social Studies is an integrated course in the social sciences and humanities by the knowledge from anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion and social sciences including mathematics and sciences. The purpose is to help young people develop the ability to make informed decisions and rationality for the benefit of the collective. As citizens of a multicultural and democratic society in the free world social studies is an important goal to empower potential learners to live as citizens who can cope with change. Additionally, it can also contribute to solving problems and creating a better future for society. (National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), 1992)

What does history do in Thai social studies? The Core Curriculum in Basic Education in 2008. Social studies, religion and culture are identified by 3 learning goals: First, understanding of the meaning and significance of historical times and periods; and ability to avail of historical methodology for systematic analysis of various events. Second, understanding of development of mankind from the past to the present; realising the importance of relationships and continuous change of events, and ability to analyse their effect. Finally, knowledge of historical development of Thailand as a nation and culture; Thai wisdom; cherishing, pride in and preservation of Thai-ness. From such goals, it can be seen that the history of learning in the subject of social studies in Thailand is responsible for enhancing and developing students to develop higher order thinking. The skill means logical thinking,

critical thinking as well as holistic thinking with an understanding of the relationship between humanity and development changes. Whilst one objective is to try to make use of history as a base to build the common memory of the Thai nation, but another objective is a major obstacles to the management of history in Thailand due to it cannot succeed in bringing the learner to the goal of learning true history, because of the trappings of nationalist history. (Aewsriwong, 2016; Winijjakul, 2015; Kasetsiri, 2014; Suttayanurak, 2000)

When history is like a shared memory of society, authority institutions of each age use history to give meaning to existence, as well as the social ideals that authority requires to organise power relationships and allocate resources in society.

Therefore, history is an important mechanism that shapes the present and future society (Suttayanurak, 2005). The interesting question is that in the past of learning Thai national history, what types of citizen are instructed, and how does our conservative history promote the appearance of Thai society? If we look into the curriculum details and history content used in school teaching, it is found that the historical area of the Thai state is the area of the ruling class rather than the area of the citizen. So Thai history encourages patriarchal systems and authoritative culture rather than encouraging citizenship and democratic culture.

All in all, history under the paradigm of social studies in Thailand must open up space for learning history that interacts and is relative to life and creates a new perspective or vision of basic values for citizens. Furthermore, it should create awareness that students are part of society and the environment too. So we cannot deny that the mission of Thai teachers of social studies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to bring learners to learn history as a learning process to create a society of the future.

### **Sustainable People are Citizens Who Focus on Social Justice and the Ecology of Life.**

Globalisation processes in politics, society, economy and environment are what accelerates humanity on the Earth, and is more directly and indirectly

related. This means humanity is faced with a greater diversity of human cultures, and it can become a risk to society (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). In 2005 the United Nations announced 15 targets for sustainable development (SDGs) for each country in the world to implement in order to achieve sustainable development goals. In the context for Thailand, the researchers interviewed historical experts and academics in social studies, all of them agreed that Thailand will not achieve its goals by 2030. Even with the positive factors that the government signed internationally, the key issue is that Thailand's political system will not be able to create a democratic system where people can participate in development, problem-solving as well as fairness in society. However, the area of civic engagement will expand accordingly. The process of globalisation and communication technology will play an important role in building a democratic society. In the future, 15 years (from 2015 to 2030), Thailand is likely to face the following 4 major issues:

Social Dimensions of individual diversity, racial, religious, cultural background and age will be more faced.

Economic dimension Liberal-driven new development that pushes everything into the market mechanism will be more likely to create a disparity because Thai society does not give space for everyone to access opportunities including lack of fair laws.

Nature will continue to be a resource to drive and develop the future economy. Loss of ecosystem diversity. Moreover, the disparity and the right to manage and conserve natural resources between the people and government officials and capitalists will continue as well as Thailand will face more natural disasters as a result of global climatic changes.

The political dimension will continue to be authoritarianism that traditional institutions will still play a role in determining the political direction of Thailand and the non-democratisation of Thailand. However, democracy in Thai society will gradually be more open to the changes of time.

From this situation, we need a different citizen from the former context. Therefore, the education that needs to reinforce the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the people with international values is an important factor. The Earth Charter International Council (2009) presented the Earth Charter

concept due to integrate learning management into the goal of citizenship development. These values cover 4 main areas:

I. Respect and Care for the Community of Life:

II. Ecological Integrity

III. Social and Economic Justice

IV. Democracy, Nonviolence, and Peace

Such international values reflect the realities of social, economic, environmental, and democratic issues. It is a relative and fundamental part of the values. Overseas, the concept of Social Justice Education and Eco-Justice Education is a fundamental concept that helps shape and builds the foundations for learning to construct a sustainable society. It is evident that 21<sup>st</sup> century citizenship education is expected by our students to demonstrate greater civic engagement as a social worker. The matter of civic engagement is to focus on social justice and the ecosystem of life. Due to the problems of the future world, it can only be resolved when all humanity turns to cooperate. It is essential that the cooperation takes into account the principles of social justice and the global ecosystem.

### **The Core of Historical Environment with the Shape of Citizenship in Thai Context**

The writings of Rachel Louise Carson's "The Silent Spring" in 1962 sparked the environmental movement in the United States. A decade later in 1972, a conference in Stockholm, Sweden by the United Nations on the Human Environment was held as an international conference convened under United Nations auspices. It is the first time that an international organisation of the world community has organised a conference on environmental issues. The results from that meeting initiated a summary of the new development concept called "Sustainable Development."

From the interpretation of the meaning of the phrase Environmental History it found that it is a study of the interaction between humans and natural factors and changes occurring in the human dimension as a party and the influence of nature on humans. McNeill (2010) discusses the scope of 3 environmental studies: First is the study of material environmental history, the

human involvement with forests and frogs, with coal and cholera. Second is political and policy-related environmental history. The third main form of environmental history is a subset of cultural and intellectual history.

So, the core of environmental history and citizenship in the Thai context are integrated history learning aims to study the interactions between humans and nature through the dimension of time to see the relationship and development as well as analysis of future trends for human beings and the planning for life to deal with future situations and create a peaceful ecosystem of life.

### **Environmental History in the Context of Thailand Towards the Goal of Creating a Sustainable World.**

Knowledge of environmental history of Thailand is part of the indigenous knowledge and folk wisdom. We can begin to learn through the wisdom to adapt and live under the ecological and natural environment as well as study in the context of the changes that take place in the dimension of human resources and to use at different times, in order to see the changing factors. The author offers frameworks for senior high school.

**Natural landscape and lifestyle in Thai society:** The study of historical documents and research found that in Thailand, the geographical features and environments of differs in regions. It is a place full of ecological diversity and abundant resources for people's livelihoods and that is the main reason why the history of the environment in Thai society is a living history as well as the foundation of social and cultural formation; for example, the Northern society, the Southern society, the Northeast society and Central region society. Therefore, the natural landscape in each area defines the way human beings within varied landscapes adapt to sustainable survival. This has become the nucleus of human culture in Thai society. In addition, if the analysis of Na Thalang (2001)'s proposal is about the similarities in social and cultural cohesion in each region, reflecting the adaptation of human relationships to nature as follow: rice culture, Buddhist culture and belief in ghost. However, these three elements are based on the culture of social networking in both vertical and horizontal systems. The vertical is the "patron

system" and the horizontal "relativity and tie" system. The two systems are not separated but merged under power relations condition. So the environmental history of Thai society relates in addition to the important question of how we interact with nature. (Na Thalang, 2001)

Moreover, why and under what circumstances did the people of the past of this land organise the orderly relations of life in society?

**State policy and changing natural landscape:** In this dimension, we can invite learners to study the actions of the state or ruling class in each period, resulting in changes in the concept of society in nature which we can analyse through both internal and external factors and changes that affect the state's policy-based relationships that influence the changing social and ecological conditions. (Access to people's resources with the struggle for the rights of people) and the relationship between humans and nature. (Use and impact on the environment)

**Environmental issues and natural disasters:** In environmental quality report Prepared by the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning during 2011-2012. It found during this time that Thailand and Thai people in each region must deal with a changing environment. Climate change and environmental risks must be met. According to each local area. Those can reflect the Thai people's vulnerability is a testament to the deterioration and environmental problems that are not far away. Conversely, these problems bring awareness and panic to Thai society.

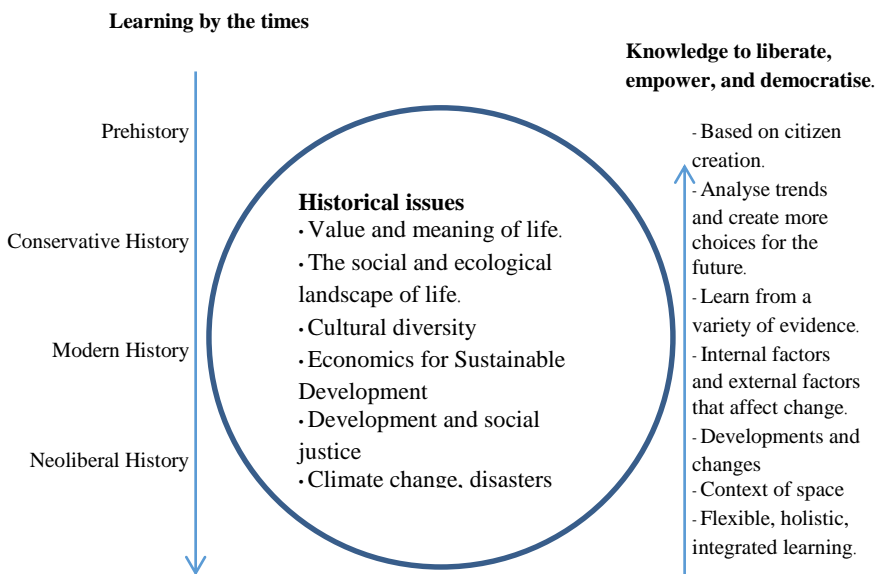
**Civic fighting history that focuses on social and environmental justice in context:** In the past, the result of the National Economic and Social Development Plan that brought Thailand into the industrial economy and made huge uses of natural resources. Many development projects have had an impact on society and the environment. For example, air pollution from a coal mine and Mae Moh Coal Plant in Lampang Province. From issues as mentioned above, we can see that the Social Justice with Eco-Justice are related to environmental history management for civics sustainability is a learning to open the key questions for the learner how they will move in the future world ecosystem. Of course, the citizens will grow and be able to fully participate in solving the problem with the political system "Democracy",



therefore, is both a process and an important goal of sustainable world formation.

### **An Important Guideline in the Management of Environmental History Education for Sustainable Global Citizenship at the Upper Secondary School Level.**

Researchers have synthesised a preliminary framework for studying environmental history in order to develop a sustainable world for high school students. The framework is based on expert interviews.



**Figure 1:** The Framework of Environmental History Instruction in Thai Context

**Sustainable world citizen** 1) respect for and respect for the community of life; 2) ecological integrity; 3) economic and social justice; 4) democracy, nonviolence and peace.

From the framework, it can be seen that learning about environmental history can develop a sustainable world, and it is imperative for teachers to be able to learn holistically. It is the integration of knowledge, skills, values, so that learners can learn meaningfully. Empowering the learner to see his or her

value as a citizen is important for building a peaceful society. Here, the author will expand upon the proposed framework.

**Prehistory:** From the Pleistocene Epoch, which is about 2,000,000 - 10,000 years ago. The emphasis is on the study of archaeological evidence of human development in prehistoric times, derived from the learning of human beings, whose way of life was under the influence of nature. For now, teachers can choose to present information from archaeological sites in their own region as an example to learn because the prehistoric archaeological evidence is distributed throughout all regions of Thailand today. (Shucondej, 2016)

**Conservative History:** From the time of the city was built through various ancient cities. In this period of preservation, the following issues must be emphasised: 1) the wisdom of building a city 2) the creation of a Buddhist and Brahmanism belief system that influences the organisation of social relationships 3) human development in the conservative era with natural management 4) external influences that affect the transformation of a conservative city 5) the process of becoming a large kingdom of Ayutthaya until the early Rattanakosin period. This is the era of agriculture and trade.

**Modern History:** Starting from the reign of the 4<sup>th</sup> Rattanakosin era. Impact of the scientific revolution and the industrial revolution started from Western society. The superpowers have a desire to hunt down colonial territories for resources and use them as a market for goods. That led to the Siamese elite, as a conservative socialist, which meant they had to adjust dramatically. Especially in the reign of King Chulalongkorn, this is the era of Siamese modernisation and since then, Siam has become part of a new global network that cannot separate itself from the global network of the world.

**Neoliberal History:** The results of the development of the country during the Cold War, they use of natural resources to develop more economic and after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the years 1989-1991, the neoliberal order appeared. This makes neoliberal policies spread to developing countries. While the currents of environmental conservation and the struggle for social and environmental justice that have begun since the end of the modern era have become clearer when it enters this era. After the emergence of the 1997 constitution, it is evident that individuals, societies and societies have been pushed into the neoliberal market mechanism and have a more

increased social gap. By the 21<sup>st</sup> century, environmental problems have intensified, including global climate change. While democracies and civilians are weakened by Thailand's failed political process, it is difficult for Thai society to move towards a sustainable society.

From a historical perspective, nature and humans affect each other. As a result, Thai society needs to improve its citizens. The foundation and purpose of building a citizen through learning environmental history is Citizens according to the Earth Charter concept in four areas: 1) respect for the community of life 2) ecological integrity 3) economic and social justice 4) democracy, nonviolence and peace, which can be seen as based on the concept of "Social justice and fairness of the ecosystem of life."

### **Principles of Learning Management**

**1) Integrated process learning is holistic.** Teachers is a caching and facilitator supporting and providing opportunities for learners to learn as a process. Teachers must have an understanding of the essential knowledge that is central to learning history, the environment, and integrating them into critical learning to give learners meaningful learning.

**2) Flexible and consistent with context.** Use case studies or archaeological sites or historical evidence available locally, link, compare, and see relationships with different contexts.

**3) Developments of events and changes.** Focus on historical studies in the dimension of time and change in order to see the development of the situation and its impact.

**4) Internal factors and external factors that affect change.** Focus on the study to see the relationship between internal factors and external factors that affect change in each context.

**5) Learn from a variety of evidence.** Both local and non-contextual evidence is used to see the variety of issues that learners are learning including a variety of comments from the students themselves.

**6) Analyse trends and create more alternatives to.** Focus on learning to use historical thinking skills, which focus on thinking. (Chronological Thinking), which will be more useful when learners can analyse trends in the future.

**7) Based on democratic citizenship.** It is a history-based learning management for civic engagement. Teachers must create a climate of democratic learning and also criticise and present a variety of learning issues have ideas and collaborate. Moreover, learning on the basis of research or projects that use historical knowledge or historical thinking as a thinking process so that learners can build knowledge to liberate, empower, and humanise democratic citizens.

## **Conclusion**

The study of environmental history in the Thai context should focus on studying the dynamics of resource use over time relative to the social situation which includes social justice and fairness to the ecosystem of life by focusing on the view of human relationships with nature and between mankind with each other. Teachers must adjust their role as preachers out of the traditional conservative teaching frameworks that emphasise narrative styles with emphasis on nationalism. In future more teachers have to come to a different learning form from the original format. Specifically, historical history will help develop students' thinking skills to live a 21<sup>st</sup> century life in a meaningful way. The study of environmental history under the paradigm of social studies emphasises the use of integrated knowledge and focuses on meaningful learning through social projects, a focus on developing inner values, understanding of the world with universal values, confidence in democratic citizenship and commitment to sustainable social and environmental development. Finally, if Thai society wants to move on the path of sustainable development for the objective of a peaceful society they must open up more areas of human learning. We need to learn about democracy alongside the creation of a democratic society so that everyone in the society can contribute to a fair and equitable solution. We still need to look forward to a beautiful world and it is a mission that each human being must carry on until the end of the race because it may be the only thing that makes our humanity grow and glorify the world that gave birth to us.

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