

## Yellow Shirts and Red Shirts: Political Protest in Thailand Today

This workshop intends to further an anthropological understanding of the current political crisis in Thailand and the use of a symbolic repertoire by the different groups that are engaged in political struggle.

Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity  
2- 4pm Wednesday May 12, 2010  
Library, Haus 11, Hermann-Fög-Weg 37073 Göttingen

### Program

2-3 pm: Brief presentations from four Thai specialists

3-4 pm: Discussion



Professor Baas Terwiel will provide a historical comparison of the popularity of military dictator Field Marshall Sarit Thanarat and telecommunications mogul and ex-Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

Professor Terwiel first went to Thailand in 1962. In the early 70s he did his PhD on Thai Buddhism. Much of his academic career took place in Canberra, Australia. From 1992 until 2006 he held the chair for Thai and Lao Languages and Literatures at Hamburg University. He has continued writing on Thailand after his retirement. His latest publication is *The Ram Khamhaeng Inscription, The Fake That Did Not Come True* (Ostasien Verlag, 2010).



Dr. Alexander Horstmann will discuss the symbolic connotations of the colours used in the conflict, as well as the significance of the blood sacrifices.

Dr Horstmann is a research fellow at MPI-MMG. He has joined the 'Globalization of Religious Networks' program of Prof. van der Veer. Alex is a social anthropologist, specializing on Thailand, religion, globalization and identities. He has followed Thai politics during his long stays in Bangkok and Southern Thailand. He has published a book and numerous articles on Southern Thailand.



Dr. Jovan Maud will explore the concepts of democracy and moral authority in relation to the crisis.

Dr. Maud is a postdoctoral research fellow at MPI-MMG working in the 'Globalization of Religious Networks' program. He completed his PhD at Macquarie University. He has lectured at Macquarie University between 2006-9, and was Acting Director of the Master of Applied Anthropology program during 2009. Research interests include religion and the nation-state; Theravada Buddhism and Chinese religious forms; transnational cultural and religious flows; religious commoditisation and syncretism; and pilgrimage and religious tourism.



Dr Sophorntavy Vorng will speak on the urban-rural divide and the class aspects of the conflict.

Dr. Vorng is a postdoctoral research fellow at MPI-MMG and is working on the 'Comparative Study of Urban Aspirations in Mega-Cities' program. She completed her PhD at the University of Sydney. Her anthropological work focuses on Theravada Buddhism, the urban middle class, consumption, and space in Bangkok. Her current research focuses on the intersection of Thai middle class social, political, and religious aspirations.