

THAILAND IN THE THONBURI AND EARLY BANGKOK PERIODS (1767-1855)



After the defeat and destruction of the old Siamese kingdom of Ayutthaya in the wake of a Burmese invasion (1767) the premodern Siamese polity was temporarily reconstituted in Thonburi. This first attempt at national consolidation under the leadership of a general of Chinese descent, King Taksin (r. 1769-1782), ended, however, in social and political unrest, which ultimately propelled a well-established aristocratic Siamese family into power (1782). The rulers of the Chakri Dynasty succeeded in restoring order and stability and henceforth ruled the kingdom from the city of Bangkok. Subsequent decades witnessed the restoration of institutions like the traditional monarchy and the Buddhist clergy, the promulgation of a unified legal code, the expansion of agricultural production and trade, as well as the creation of works of art and literature, which came to define Siamese culture prior to the large-scale influx of Western ideas and models. The end of the period under investigation is marked by the Bowring Treaty of 1855 which triggered the opening of Siam to the world economy. This course will familiarize attendees with the political, legal, social and economic history of Siam since the fall of the Ayutthaya kingdom (1767) until the conclusion of the Bowring Treaty (1855).

THURSDAY
14:15 - 15:45

ESA OST
ROOM 233

4 APRIL -
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Volker Grabowsky is Professor of Thai Studies at the AAI since 2009. He has published extensively on the Thai and Lao history and manuscript cultures.



Jan Dressler holds a master's degree in Southeast Asian Studies from Thammasat University and the University of Hamburg. Currently pursuing a Ph.D. in the History of Southeast Asia, his research focuses on the interrelation between traditional political institutions, Theravada Buddhism, and historiography.