

BANGKOK STREET FOOD PHENOMENON

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Abstract

In 2016, Bangkok was voted as the world's best destination for street food for 2 consecutive years according to CNN. It shows that street food is very popular among both local and international tourist, as it is delicious, easy access, and cheap. Its contributions to urban life go beyond their own informal employment, as it generates demand and supply for a wide range of services provided by other informal and formal workers: (1) as fast food providers, for low to middle-income workers, (2) as an economic activity, which generates income for urban poor, and (3) as a social connector for the variety of its consumers. Accordingly, This research aims to study on the phenomenon of Bangkok street food by examining the history and relationship between street food distribution, location, and other urban activities. Din Daeng, NongKhaem, Rat Burana, and Samphanthawong are four cases that were chosen for analysis in terms of 'self-made' public space and spatial identity. With this study, the well-planned and managed street food can be part of the city, which captures and responds to Bangkok's urban contexts. And it will help to find solutions for street food to be included in policy terms as economic assets to cities, while endure in the city within the contemporary urban context.

Keywords: distribution, history, phenomenon, 'self-made' public space, street food

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Introduction

In the most regions of the world, informal employment accounts for more than half of total employment²⁹. It is one of the drivers of urban livelihoods. Within informal employment, street food vendors are visible in urban public spaces all over the globe, but its total number is clearly hard to find. As it was tended to be much less visible than formal employment in policy agendas, despite their positive contributions, street food vendors are infrequently valued in policy terms as economic assets to cities.

In Bangkok, the capital and the largest city of Thailand, street food vending provided local with cheap and convenient access to a variety of foods and a means of making a living. Even though, Thai foods are prepared daily in the most of every Thai households, yet, trading food is a common economic activity since the old days. The development of street food became more functioning and part of daily consumption way of urban living, especially in the city where people spend most of the time outside their houses.

In 2016, Bangkok was voted as the world's best destination for street food³⁰ for 2 consecutive years. It shows that street food is very popular among both local and international tourist, as it is delicious, easy access, and cheap. Most street foods are cheaper on average than restaurant meals. From the study of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 2.5 billion people eat street food every day³¹. Its contributions to urban life go beyond their own informal employment, as it generates demand and supply for a wide range of services provided by other informal and formal workers: (1) as a source of food for low to middle-income workers, (2) as an economic activity, which generates income for urban poor, and (3) as a social connector for the variety of its consumers³².



Fig. 1: Street food in Yaowarat Road, Bangkok, Thailand
Source: author

Accordingly, the aim of this research is to study on the phenomenon of Bangkok street food by examining the history and relationship between street food distribution, location, and other

²⁹Roever, S. and Skinner, C. (2016) 'Street Vendors and Cities', in: Sage Journals: Environment & Urbanization, Vol. 28, no. 2, pp. 359.

³⁰ CNN, (2017) Best 23 cities for street food from Manila to Tokyo, CNN, viewed 21 August 2017. <http://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/best-cities-street-food/index.html>

³¹Etkin, N.L. (2009) *Foods of Association: Biocultural Perspectives on Foods and Beverages that Mediate Sociability*. USA: The University of Arizona Press.

³²Tepwongsirirat, P. (2005) *The vendor and the street: The use and management of public spaces in Bangkok*, Doctoral Dissertation, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania.

urban activities. With this study, the well-planned and managed street food can be part of the city, which captures and responds to Bangkok's urban contexts. And it will help to find solutions for street food to be included in policy terms as economic assets to cities, while endure in the city within the contemporary urban context.

Research methodology

This is an empirical research that studies on Bangkok street food phenomenon, by using phenomenological approach to describe a 'lived experience' of a phenomenon, which is a qualitative analysis of narrative data. Three methods were introduced, which are literature review, secondary data analysis, and on-site observation. Four districts in Bangkok were conducted for analysis, which are Din Daeng (high-density residential zone), NongKhaem (low-density residential zone and open space zone), Rat Burana (high-density residential zone and industrial zone), and Samphanthawong (commercial zone). These districts represented the different land-use plan of Bangkok. However, there is a research limitation on the data of street food, due to the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) revoked temporarily permitted areas for street vending. Thus, the exact number of vendors and temporarily permitted areas are from 2012 – 2013.

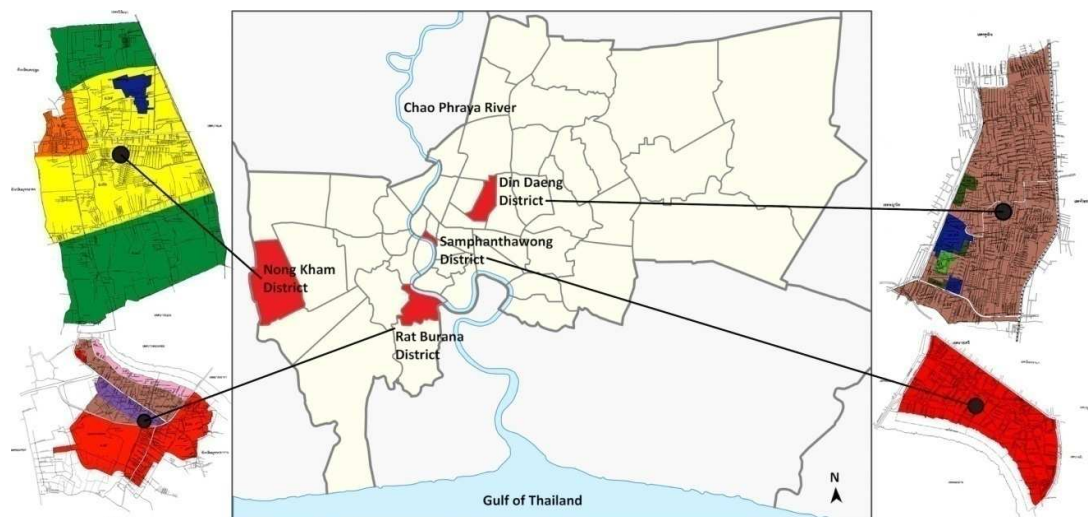


Fig. 2: Location of 4 case studies in Bangkok
Source: Author

History of street food in Bangkok

1) Street food in the start of Bangkok (From late 1700s to early 1900s)

Street food in Bangkok is the way of life in both economical and cultural ways. Its existing in Bangkok can be dated back for two centuries since the start of early Bangkok establishment (Rattanakosin period). At that time, female commoners worked as a food seller for additional income together with farming. Their strategic location is rivers and canals, which were translated into 'floating market' nowadays. They used to sell food in water market that contains a lot of boats, or delivering foods along the canal to waterfront houses. Most of sellers were

female because male commoners were recruited in the feudalism.³³ However, the economy of this period was still a subsistence economy, not for profit or wider trade.

After Bangkok was modernized during the reign of King Rama V, western development came to Bangkok, and many roads were introduced to the citizen. This shifted the trade activity from water to on-ground. As most of trading goods are foods, with this shifting, the new trade activity can be divided into two types: (1) mobile street food that sellers can take it anywhere they want to sell, and (2) food stall, which appeared to be located outside the city wall.

During Rattanakosin period, street food vendors are mixed between Thai and Chinese. Most of Thai vendors are female, while most of Chinese vendors are male. Even though the feudalism ended in the reign of King Rama V, most of Thais preferred to work in farmlands because farmer generated a lot of income during this period until the end of World War I. Thus, Chinese vendors occupied the market of street trade in the city Bangkok instead.



Fig. 3: Chinese street food vendors in Rattanakosin period
Source: Yaowarat historical center

The main finding of this period is the 'differences between Thai and Chinese street food vendors'. Nirathorn stated, "Chinese street food vendors used street trade as a stepping-stone to be entrepreneurs."³⁴ Their career started from being labors, which made them get their payment everyday and faster when compares to agricultural sector. Then, they improved to be street food vendors, and increased their savings to be entrepreneurs later. For these Chinese, street food is a class connection between being farmers in China to labors in Bangkok, and then, becoming entrepreneurs.

Meanwhile, Thai labors joined into street trade sector during the World War II (1939-1945) because of three factors³⁵, which are (1) the Chinese's promotion of economic status, (2) the government policy that limited jobs for Chinese and supporting Thai people in doing street trade and industrial sector, and (3) the worsen living conditions of Thai farmers due to the economics

³³Nirathorn, N. (2005)'The business of food street vendors in Bangkok: an analysis of economic performance and success', in: Canadian Journal of Development Studies/Revue canadienne d'études du développement, Vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 430.

³⁴Nirathorn, N. (2005)'The business of food street vendors in Bangkok: an analysis of economic performance and success', in: Canadian Journal of Development Studies/Revue canadienne d'études du développement, Vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 430.

³⁵Nirathorn, N. (2005), pp.431.

depression since the World War I. Most of farmers in the suburb of Bangkok and farmers in the northeastern of Thailand sold their properties and moved to work as labors in Bangkok's industrial sector.

2) Street food in rapid urbanization (From late 1960s to the end of 1990s)

As a consequence of the industrial development direction of the country, people in rural areas moved to Bangkok to search for new jobs in industrial sector. Then, Thai government announced its 1st National Development Plan in 1961 to stimulate Thai economy. This resulted in the occurred of slums in Bangkok and labor mobility, which caused the demand of cheap foods and goods.

Many studies about street vending in the 1980s stated that: 'since 1980, there was a rapid expanding of independent jobs.'³⁶ This rapid expanding came from two factors, which are; (1) Thai government's policy that concentrated on industrial development but neglected to agricultural sector. Thus, it resulted in rapid urbanization of Bangkok and migrant workers from rural areas of Thailand. And (2) the expansion of industrial, commercial, and services according to the export policy, which generated the demand for labor, and this labor is the 'main customer' of street food vendors.

In the study of Suwattee in 1980, there were both street food vendors from Bangkok and other provinces in the 1:1 ratio. But the ratio of migrant workers from other provinces rose sharply after 1980s due to Thai government's policy of industrial development, which focused on exports. The most significant character is woman from northeastern part of Thailand migrated to Bangkok to work in street trade due to aggravation in agriculture and the problem of imbalance distribution between Bangkok and other provinces. In the meantime, the 6th National Development Plan (1987 – 1991) was promoted, and it supported small business in urban areas, which focused on street food vendors. Thus, street food that was once a stepping-stone for Chinese to elevate their economics status during Rattanakosin period became a job for migrant workers to move over poverty from agricultural sector in rural areas. Moreover, some cases could build up their career, expanded their business, and elevated their economics status.

Maneepong³⁷ examined the continuum³⁷ of street trade in Thailand from a spatial perspective in his study. He digested a post-1997 character of street vendors by advanced business, technical and language skills, and claimed them as 'a new generation of street food vendors.' The new generation of street food vendors is "acutely aware of market conditions, operated utilizing sophisticated, but often informal, networks."³⁸ He later contrasted this group with the "old generation" of street vendors, who sold mostly street food to customer base of mainly low-income workers in the neighborhoods in which they lived. (See fig. 4)

³⁶Vichienpradit, P. (2008) *A Study on Effects of Spaces and Activities of Yataimura (Stall Village)*, Master Degree Thesis, Department of Urban Engineering, Graduate School of Engineering, The University of Tokyo.

³⁷Maneepong, C., & Walsh, J. C. (2012) A new generation of Bangkok Street vendors: Economic crisis as opportunity and threat. *Cities*.

³⁸Maneepong, C., & Walsh, J. C. (2012)

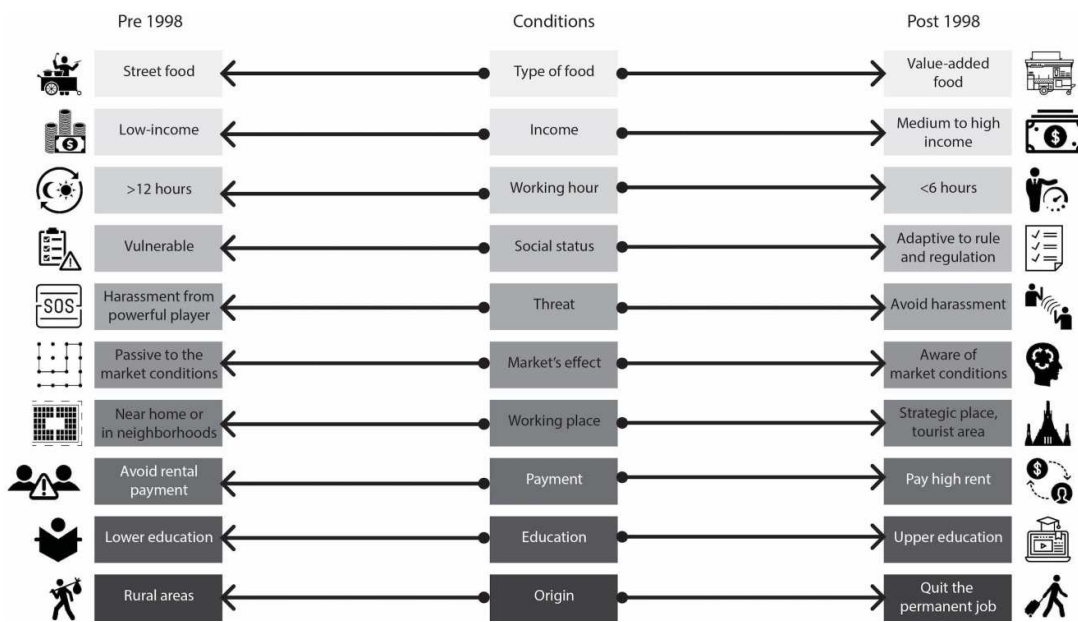


Fig. 4: Characteristics of street food vendors in Bangkok before and after the financial crisis in 1998
 Source: Author

From fig. 4, it shows that the character of street food vendors changed from the old generation to a new generation between 1997 and 1998. As of now, there is a variety of economics status of street food vendors. Many researches (Yasmeen 2001; Nirathorn 2005; Nirathorn 2009; GSB 2013; Sereerat 2014) assert that there were a lot of low-income street food vendors, but the current trend is showing that some of street food vendors are not low-income anymore. However, this situation does not mean that the low-income people can elevate their economics status into middle-income, but it means that middle-income people are joining the 'street food trade court'.³⁹ For example, Mr. SiriwatWorawetwutthikun, whom faced the financial crisis in 1997, he turned himself from real estate developer to a sandwich seller⁴⁰ on the street. This phenomenon is a part of employment paradigm shift, which showed in the table that employee in the company quit their permanent job to start their own business.

3) Street food after Thailand financial crisis (From 2000s onward)

A study by Sereerat (2014) concluded that from 2000s onward, street food vendors in Bangkok faced many up-and-down situations as follows; (1) Street vendor clearance program was launched in 2000, resulted in a strict enforcement of law to street food vendors. This caused a decrease of vendors from 34,267 to 26,704. During 2001 to 2005, the Thai government loose control in street vendor policy and the number rose sharply to 37,523 street vendors. However, the number of vendors stuck in 2006 because of (2) Thai Coup d'état and stabilizes from 2006 to 2010 until the (3) Red shirt mob burned down Bangkok in 2010. (4) Thai flood crisis in 2011 caused the greatest losses and damages in Thai history and the number of vendors slightly decreased before rose to the peak in 2012 due to many urban crises as previously mentioned.

³⁹Nirathorn, N. (2005) 'The business of food street vendors in Bangkok: an analysis of economic performance and success', in: Canadian Journal of Development Studies/Revue canadienne d'études du développement, Vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 429.

⁴⁰Yasmeen, G. (2001) 'Stockbrokers turned sandwich vendors: the economic crisis and small-scale food retailing in Southeast Asia'. Groforum, Vol. 32, no. 1, pp. 96.

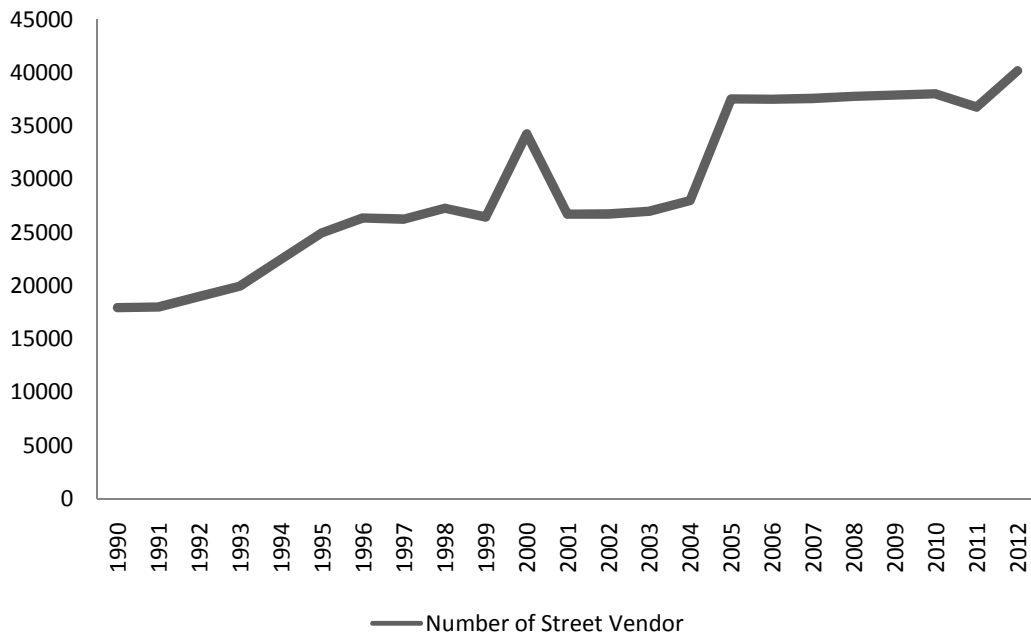


Fig. 5: The linear chart of the number of street vendor in Bangkok from 1990 - 2012
Source of data: City Law Enforcement Department of the BMA (2013)

After the BMA's street vendor's areas limitation in 2016, there are a lot of low-income economics' reflections due to the limitation. So, the BMA considered this topic as urgent one and collaborated with Ministry of Commerce to improve quality of life of low-income people. This action plan will create job opportunities, living standards, and support for microeconomics. As street food is targeted for this plan, it has to be upgraded to meet the sanitation standards for customers to have a variety of options at a cheap price. Besides, the BMA will provide potential places for the upgraded street food.⁴¹

Relationship of street food distribution, location, and other urban activities

Cross⁴² explained that: there are six different relationships between people and places, which are 1) biographical as a person being born in and living in a place, 2) spiritual as a person feels a sense of belonging, 3) ideological as a person lives according moral guidelines for human responsibility to place, 4) narrative as a person learns about a place through stories, 5) commodified as a person chooses a place based on desire and lifestyle, and 6) dependent as a person constrains by lack of choice, depending on another person or economic opportunity. For street food vendors, it can be related to places from level of dependent relationships to commodified relationships. Before 1990s, relationship of street food vendors and places was in the level of commodified relationships as they did their business in the desirable places. However, after the BMA announced the temporarily permitted areas, some of street food vendors forced to move to another place. Thus, it can be described as dependent relationships as the vendors are depended on another person.

The reviewed literature on street food together with previous surveys in Bangkok show that Bangkok street food is associated with other urban activities in location and distribution. By

⁴¹Post Today (2017) Upgrading Bangkok street food, viewed 21 August 2017.
<http://m.posttoday.com/local/bkk/499438>

⁴² Cross, J.E. (2001) 'What is Sense of Place?', in: *the 12th Headwaters Conference, Western State College, November 2-4, 2001.*

using a comparative study with comprehensive plan, four districts in Bangkok were conducted for analysis as follows:

1) Din Daeng district

Din Daeng is one of the main residential zone of Bangkok as it is the location of Din Daeng flats; the early low-income housing that was built by National Housing Authority (NHA). From Bangkok comprehensive plan, Din Daeng district is major covered by brown color, which means high-density residential zone. In 8.4 sq.km, there are 123,966 inhabitants with the density of 14,757 persons per sq.km. It is also a place for the 2nd Office of Bangkok Metropolitan Administration. Thus, there are two major activities here, working and living.

In Din Daeng district, 26 locations of street food vending are all in high-density residential zone. It has 907 street vendors along 3,303 m. distances, which 64% are street food vendor. The average vending area per lot is 3.64 m. Street vending activity appears near community and public utilities. Their working hour is starting from 5 a.m. in the morning until 2 a.m. in the morning of the next day.



Fig. 6: Street food distribution and location in Din Daeng district
Source: Author

In fig. 6, these white dots represented the distribution of street vendor in Din Daeng district. Two main roads that contain huge numbers of street food vendor are SutthisarnVinitchai road and Prachasongkhrao road. These two, which are the connection between Vibhavadi road and RatchadaPisek Road, cut through residential areas of Din Daeng district. Buildings along these two roads are (1) school, (2) NHA office, (3) temple, (4) flat, (5) government office, and (6) market. Din Daeng has a high percentage of raw ingredients with 21% because it has high-density residential zone and a lot of fresh markets, in which, these raw ingredient sellers are extended from the fresh markets.

2) NongKhaem district

NongKhaem district is on the western side of Bangkok. Most of the areas are for low-density residential zone (yellow color in fig. 7) and green area with part of an incinerator area (blue color in fig. 7), and medium-density area in the west of the district (orange color in fig. 7). This district has 35.8 sq.km, which contains 155,229 inhabitants with the density of 4,332 inhabitants/sq.km.

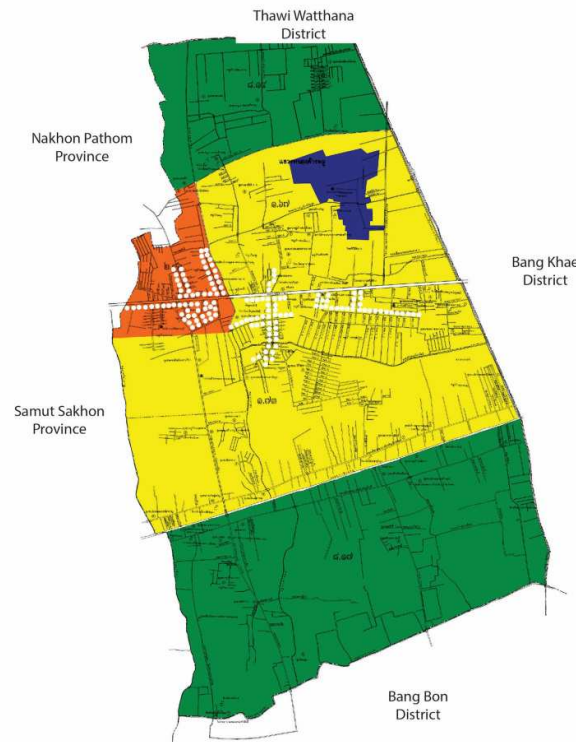


Fig. 7: Street food distribution and location in NongKhaem district
Source: Author

Most of street vending activities in NongKhaem district happen around housing estate like Hansa Village, Phetkasem Villa, Sin Petch Village, etc. This district has 67% of street food vendor from the total. Total distance for street vending in NongKhaem district is 1,778 m, which contains 671 street vendors in an average vending area 2.65 m/lot. It has 11 temporarily permitted areas in both medium-density and low-density residential zone. Street vending activity happens near working and living areas like (1) school, (2) government office, (3) market, (4) shopping mall, (5) temple, and (6) community, which clustered along Phetkasem road as in fig. 6. Their working hour is starting from 5 a.m. in the morning until 2 a.m. in the morning of the next day.

NongKhaem is a location of incinerator in blue color in fig. 7. It has Phetkasem Road as the main skeleton of its residential zone, with housing estate spreads alongside small roads that expand from Phetkasem Road. The white dots in fig. 6 shows that street food vending actives alongside Phetkasem Road and continues on the north and south as most of buildings around here are housing estates, in which they are the main consumers of street food.

3) Rat Burana district

Rat Burana is also on the left side of Chao Phraya River. It has 84,157 inhabitants in 15.8 sq.km, which makes its density to 5,332 inhabitants/sq.km. Rat Burana district has four different land-uses, which are commercial zone (red color in fig. 8), industrial zone (purple color in fig. 8), high-density residential zone (brown color in fig. 8), and riverside zone (pink color in fig. 8).

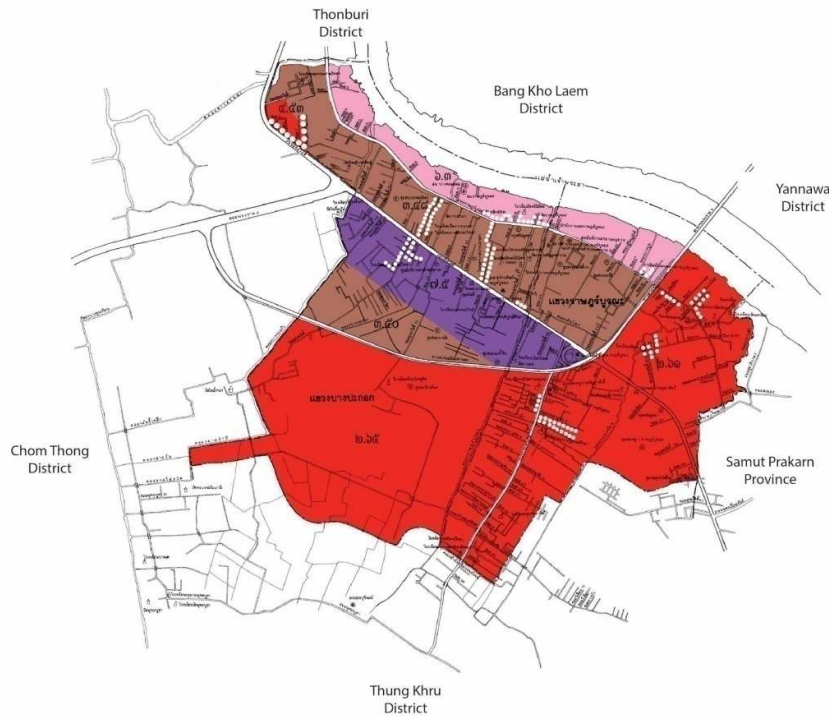


Fig. 8: Street food distribution and location in Rat Burana district
Source: Author

Rat Burana district has 15 temporarily permitted areas, with total distance of 1,435 m. along the street and 318 street vendors are working from 5 a.m. in the morning until midnight. Thus, the average vending area per lot is 4.51 m. There are 262 street food vendors out of the total, which is 87% of the total. School, shopping mall, and temple are main areas of street vending activity as 10 from 15 temporarily permitted areas are around these functions, while the rests are in residential zone and industrial zone.

From fig. 8, three main roads that contain huge numbers of street food vendor are Rat Burana road, Suk Sawat road and PrachaUthit road. These three connect with ChalermMahanakorn Expressway, which is the connection between Bangkok CBD and Thonburi side. Buildings along these three roads are (1) Industry, (2) school, (3) temple, (4) flat, (5) government office, and (6) market. Due to its high-density residential zone and industrial zone, residents and labors from industries are the main consumers of street food in Rat Burana.

4) Samphanthawong

Samphanthawong is the smallest district in Bangkok. It has only 1.4 sq.km, with 26,932 inhabitants. This makes Samphanthawong one of the highest-density districts of Bangkok with 22,638 persons/sq.km. From Bangkok comprehensive plan, Samphanthawong district is the only

district that does not contain residential area in the district. Thus, buildings in this area are mostly commercial buildings that open directly to footpath.

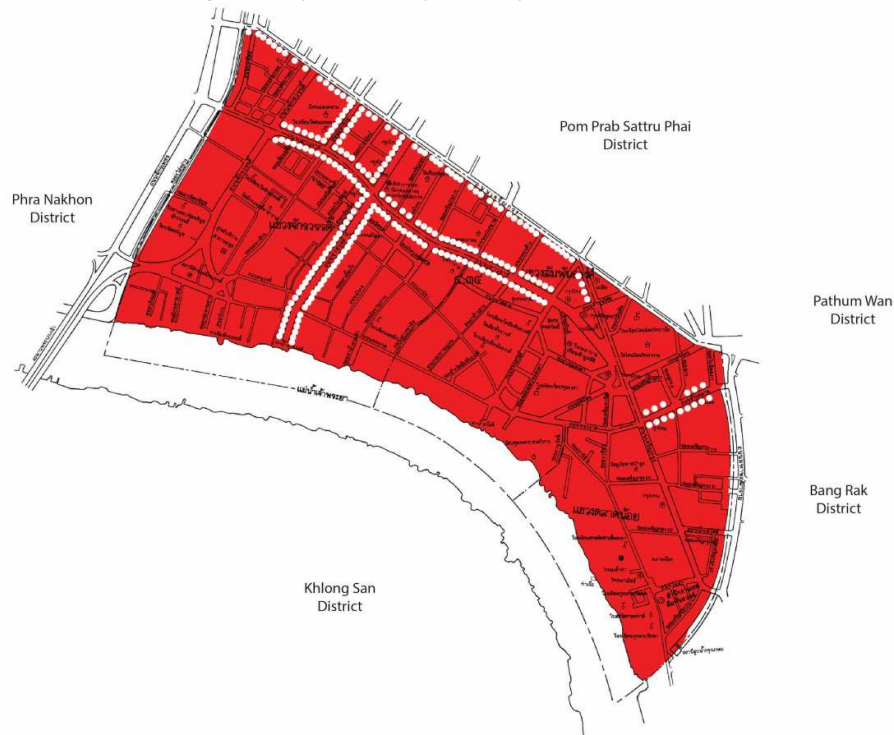


Fig. 9: Street food distribution and location in Samphanthawong district
Source: Author

Samphanthawong is the location of Yaowarat road, which is called 'Chinatown' of Bangkok. Foods that sell here are a bit different from other street in Bangkok, as it has more 'Chinese' oriented than other places. Street food here is usually found along the lanes of five main roads; Yaowarat, Charoenkrung, Ratchawong, Mahachak, and Khaolam, while other goods vendors join in the street to make it busier, which contains 804 street vendors. This district has the lowest percent of street food vendor compares to other cases as it has only 34% from the total. The total distance of street vending in this area is 4,672 m., which makes the density in this area is 5.81 m. per lot.

It has only commercial zone due to its location in the center of Bangkok. From fig. 8, those white dots represented the density of street food vendor. Three main roads that contain huge numbers of street food vendor are Yaowarat road, Charoenkrung road, and Ratchawong road, while Mahachak road and Khaolam road has fewer street food vendor. Buildings along these two roads are shop houses and Chinese restaurants that expand its dining area into the footpath along Yaowarat Road and the small lanes.

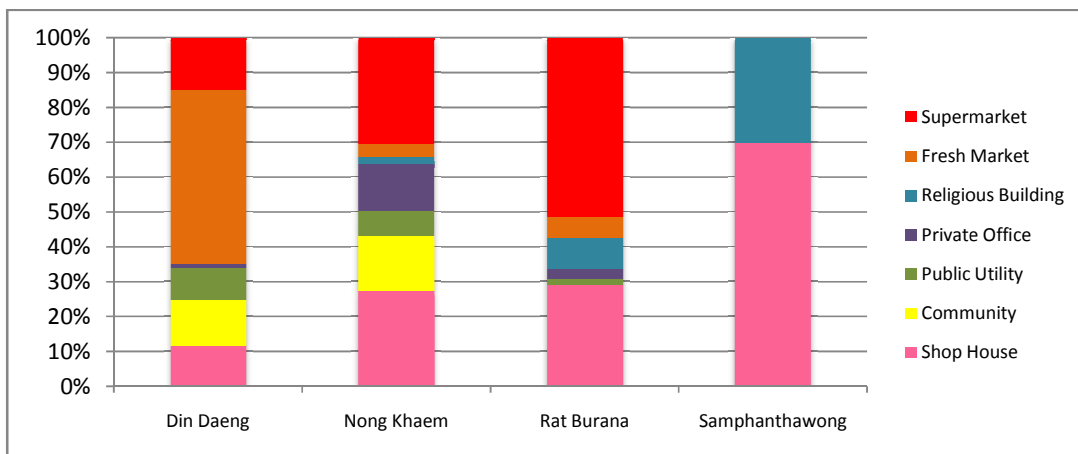


Fig. 10:Percentage of street food vendor in each urban activity
 Source: Author

From fig. 10, 61 locations of street food activity are related to urban activities can be concluded as follows: (1) shop house, fresh market, and supermarket are significant locations that street food vendors fragmented along or nearby these areas as in the bar chart above. These areas are in commercial area, high-density residential area, and medium residential area, in which a lot of commercial activities take place. In terms of sense of place, it related to places from level of dependent relationships to commodified relationships. Before 1990s, it was commodified relationships as they did their business in the desirable places. But, after the use of temporarily permitted areas, some of street food vendors forced to move to another place. Thus, it can be described as dependent relationships as street food vendors are depended on another person or economic opportunity.

The 'self-made' public space

The study by Sereerat⁴³ revealed that the intervention of visible elements in public space in the Thai case expressed a unique kind of place that could be called the 'self-made' public space. 'Self-made' spaces emerge within the overlapping areas of the public-private area. It is the temporary transformation of private spaces along the boundaries line into public spaces. 'Self-made' space is derived from the multi-layered interaction of urban elements, such as streets and buildings, and informal urban elements such as display devices, street vending devices, goods, and users. The creation of 'self-made' public space comes from the complexity of social and cultural expressions informed by the spatial atmosphere and generates a sense of place, sense of belonging, and local identity. The 'self-made' public space in Bangkok emerges naturally through the efforts of the users to make enjoyable public spaces for community, even under the constrains of existing modern urban forms and, these could emerge only when the architectural elements and street elements allowed the public-private activities to flow into one another in Asian context. Moreover, this empirical study reaffirmed the importance of urban elements in the 'outer layered field' as proposed by Ohno, H. (1992), in that urban life is retained through communication and exchange between public and private spaces in the real world. The form of the layer is fluid, dynamic, and sometime invisible, but it greatly influences the socio-cultural sense of place. It may thus be said that Asian streets can be improved by regenerating 'self-made' urban spaces, which would require the co-operation of the public and private sectors.

⁴³Sereerat, S. (2014) *Roles and Spatial-temporal Identities of Street Vending in Contemporary Urban Contexts: Case Studies from Bangkok*, Doctoral Dissertation, Tokyo: The University of Tokyo, pp. 84.

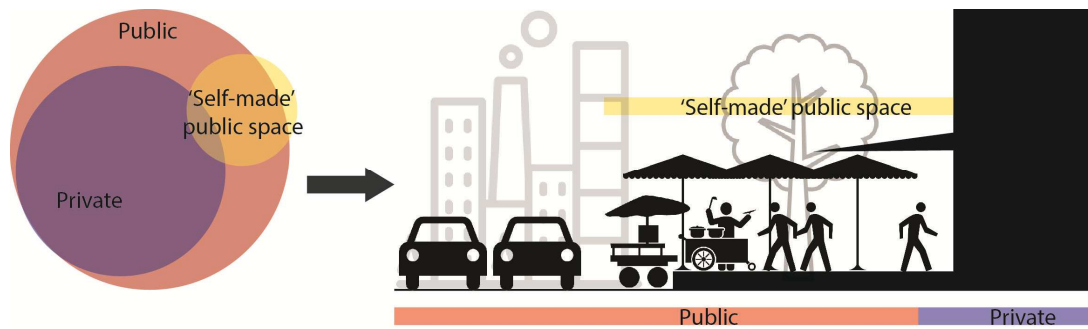


Fig. 11:The diagram of 'self-made' public space
Source: Author

Spatial identity

In the past, street food vendors used rattan basket rack carried on poles, pushcarts, and umbrellas, which are typical vending elements found in the Thai context, to operate their job. But this has changed overtime, and street food vendors in Bangkok stabilize their business in specific locations like around the junction or along the roads rather than hawking around. In contemporary social context, street vending and street food “assumed an intermediate position and was controlled in a way that called for compromises.”⁴⁴ This condition allowed street food vendors to survive throughout the pressures by adapting, evolving, and upgrading themselves. Nowadays, street food in Bangkok is “an inclusive occupation for all of the populace, is attractive for tourists, and are a key element in making unique places that called ‘self-made’ public spaces”⁴⁵. However, the traditional form of street food vendors or the ‘old generation’ has decreased in the process of urbanization much as with other modernized cities, and was replaced by the ‘new generation’ street food vendors, which are more fit into contemporary urban context. This spatial identity is influenced by the following four main factors: differences in location, spatial factors, temporal changes and market forces. Furthermore, there are factors that also effect to spatial identity of street food including the economy, urbanization, urban policies and planning, local geography, climate and local people. Some urban planners in Bangkok consider street food as an inclusive urban element and a tourist attraction, even though some are still think that it is an image of a poor and illegal.

Conclusions

1) Street food vendors

The evolution of street food vendors started from the establishment of Bangkok, when Chinese vendors occupied the market of street trade in the city Bangkok instead, while Thai vendors favored in floating market. During the World War II, Thai labors joined into street trade sector mainly because the Thai government policy that limits jobs for Chinese and supporting Thai people in doing street trade and industrial sector, and the worsen living conditions of Thai farmers due to the economics depression and low rice price since the World War I.

⁴⁴Sereerat, S. (2014) *Roles and Spatial-temporal Identities of Street Vending in Contemporary Urban Contexts: Case Studies from Bangkok*, Doctoral Dissertation, Tokyo: The University of Tokyo, pp. 32.

⁴⁵Sereerat, S. (2014) *Roles and Spatial-temporal Identities of Street Vending in Contemporary Urban Contexts: Case Studies from Bangkok*, Doctoral Dissertation, Tokyo: The University of Tokyo, pp. 32.

As a result, Bangkok turned to be the world most 'primate city' due to rapid urbanization from 1960s to 1990s. In the beginning, there were both street food vendors from Bangkok and other provinces in the half-half ration. But migrant workers moved in during 1980s⁴⁶ due to Thai government's policy of industrial development and raised the ratio rapidly. However, after the financial crisis in 1997, there is a variety of economics status of street food vendors due to those middle-income workers were joining the 'street food trade court'. In conclusion, street food that was once a stepping-stone for Chinese to elevate their economics status during Rattanakosin period became a job for migrant workers to move over poverty from agricultural sector in rural areas. Moreover, some cases could build up their career, expanded their business, and elevated their economics status as their main factor for successful is 'sources of cheap ingredient'⁴⁷, while the other factors are (1) location, (2) self-confident, (3) financial knowledge, and (4) social network.



Fig. 12: The development of street food vendor
Source: Author

2) Relationship

According to the various potentials of street food mentioned above, street food vendors maybe considered as a component in maintaining cities accessible to everyone. But, most governments and policy-makers in planning used to turn a blind eye to these potentials of street food, due to many reasons. However, the BMA is starting to open their eyes for street food vendors after rethinking about the potential of street food, and they intends to change the poverty image, illegality of street food by readjusting permitted areas for them in order to "come over those traditional incurring by governments, policy makers, developers"⁴⁸ and "urban designers controlled by modern concepts who try to diminish street food from cities"⁴⁹.

According to the interview, rights and responsibilities of street food vendors are the most crucial point of their answers, as part of inclusive city. It means that street food vendors not only advocate for their rights but also are ready to participate and contribute as citizens through adherence to existing policies and procedures. It also supports the long-term co-existence between street food vendors, local authorities, and pedestrians, as it is the replication and enforcement of progressive laws and regulations, in particular, those pertaining to the licensing and location of vendors, and sanitation measures. Besides, it will support street food vendors who have the potential to expand their business. This will not only address the potential of

⁴⁶Nirathorn, N. (2005) 'The business of food street vendors in Bangkok: an analysis of economic performance and success', in: Canadian Journal of Development Studies/Revue canadienne d'études du développement, Vol. 26, no. 3, pp.434.

⁴⁷Nirathorn, N. (2005), pp. 435.

⁴⁸Bhowmik, S. (2010) *Street vendors in the global urban economy*. New Delhi: Routledge.

⁴⁹Poerbo, H.W. (2010) 'Competing for the sidewalk: Street peddling as an unwanted urban activity'. Paper presented at the On Asian streets and public space: Selected essays from Great Asians Street Symposium (GASS) 1 & 2, Singapore.

some street food vendors, but also show responsiveness to the changing employment paradigm and the strengthening of the grass-roots economy.

In conclusion, street food stalls are one of the most visible urban elements that connected to other urban activities in Bangkok. Even though, Street food stalls are an informal-temporal urban element, it co-exists with other urban elements and activities in Thai public space through social and physical connection. This is why the BMA and Thai government should take it into account in place making and integrate it to urban design theories and practice for the future inclusive planning and sustainable development of the city of Bangkok.

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