

Colonialism and Displays of Third World Dependency Among Thai Sex Workers

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Expanding upon Hoang's (2015) theory that Vietnam's history of colonialism or imperialism is a precondition for displays of dependency to exist among sex workers today, this paper tests the same theoretical framework in Thailand, which is the only Southeast Asian country to have retained sovereignty over its kingdom. This paper specifically parses out the three components that Hoang seems to generally describe as facets of colonialism: an actual history of Western rule, a country's semi-peripheral status on the world stage, and the generalising effects of Orientalism. Using secondary sources such as written correspondence between sex workers and their Western clientele and interviews from other ethnographic work, it is ultimately found that acts of dependency similar to those in Vietnam are also found in Thailand. This suggests that a history of Western rule is in fact not a necessary condition for acts of dependency among sex workers today.

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Introduction

The business of exchanging sex and related sexual acts for payment or other benefits extends across all ancient and modern cultures (Jenness 1990). Sex tourism, in particular, is an industry that relies on a worldwide stratification system in which the power and the choices of the women involved are extremely limited (Conway-Turner 1998). Even though it is also prevalent in Western capitalist nations, sex tourism has grown to be more often associated with Western clients visiting Third World countries in search of sexual services (Hall 1994). Especially within the geographical context of Asia, where the growing scale of prostitution is combined with its increasing economic and international significance, there lies serious implications in the way of public morality, social welfare, sexually transmitted diseases, criminality, violation of human rights and commercial sexual exploitation especially that of children (ILO 1998). Special interest lies in Southeast Asia's intersection of tourism and prostitution, which overlaps with the third and sixth UN Millennium Development Goals of promoting gender equality and empowering women and combating HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases respectively. Joint efforts between the World Trade Organisation and the UN Women arm have produced the Global Report on Women in Tourism 2010, which studied the participation and status of women in the tourism industry and is based predominantly on International Labour Organisation (ILO) data for the Caribbean, Latin America, Asia, Africa and Oceania. The latest working paper from ILO, International Perspective on Women and Work in Hotels, Catering and Tourism is another similar study (ILO 2013). At the same time, the ILO also commissioned a study in 1998 that concluded that prostitution in Southeast Asia has grown so rapidly in recent decades that the sex industry has assumed the dimensions of a commercial sector that contributes substantially to employment and national income in the region

(ILO 1998). The same study also explored the spread of sexually transmitted diseases that accompanied the growth of the sex sector within the region.

Clearly, there exists a need and interest in better understanding the Southeast Asian region's overlapping areas of sex work and tourism and how both contribute to the relationship dynamics between the region and the West. Hoang's (2015) ethnographic study into the Vietnamese sex market shed light onto the interpersonal relationships and interaction that takes place between Vietnamese sex workers and Western clientele. One observation she made was the deliberate acts of Third World dependency that the sex workers displayed, where they portrayed themselves as victims of poverty and underdevelopment, when interacting with their Western clients. For example, a worker might directly ask for financial assistance from her client by lamenting that a family member was sick in her home village and could not afford the medical necessities otherwise. Often, the worker's family members were no longer even staying in the village; her deceit was merely a strategy to enable her to ask for larger sums of money. In her analysis, Hoang concludes that one possible reason for this phenomenon was Vietnam's colonial past that Western clients tap into to develop a "First World benevolence toward developing countries", where racialized desires and imaginations construe 'authentic' Vietnam as untouched by processes of globalisation, poor, and indicative of Third World poverty.

Borrowing from this idea, this paper aims to further elaborate on the link between a country's colonial past and overt displays of economic dependency. By studying Thailand, the only Southeast Asian country that remained under autonomous rule through history, it would be possible to test said link between a history of Western rule and present-day displays of dependency. If this theoretical relationship does indeed hold true, then one might expect that sex workers in Thailand conversely do not display acts of dependency. Admittedly, there probably exist other

antecedents to displays of dependency; Hoang discusses Vietnam's status as a semi-peripheral nation with respect to the world system as another schema that drives the notions of Vietnam as a Third World country. This paper will thus also briefly discuss Thailand's status in the world system semi-peripheral status, as well as the generalised notion of Orientalism, where despite Thailand's autonomous history, the identities of its neighbours as ex-colonies bleed into Thailand itself. This way, the idea of the Third World would broadly apply to the entire Southeast Asian region as a whole, instead of differentiating between its composite countries.

This case study of Thailand would implicitly require comparison to Hoang's profile and analyses of Thailand. As Hoang identified a history of Western rule as one reason why Vietnamese workers display acts of dependency, this paper will use secondary sources to try to establish whether or not these acts of dependency also occur within Thailand, even though it lacks a history of Western rule. While a brief overview of the vital ideas borrowed from her study will be presented, a replication or in-depth discussion of Hoang's analysis will not be included.

Literature Review

In Hoang's (2015) analysis of the interaction between Vietnamese sex workers and Western clientele, she terms the deliberate portrayal of poverty and underdevelopment "performing Third World dependency". By using the word 'performing' she highlights the fact that these women know what clients prefer, and cater specifically to that; in other words, Western clientele go to brothels in places like Vietnam expecting, or at the very least preferring, the portrayal of Vietnam as a poor and underdeveloped country that still requires the help of the West to survive. She traces this preference back to the idea of colonial dependency, where Vietnam – either under colonial or imperial rule – relied on the superior Western man. It was in being able to re-enact the age of colonial dependency, by reciprocating with benevolent or patriarchal gestures, that Westerners were ultimately able to mitigate their sense of Western decline. This notion that a pre-existing script of colonial dependency, based on the country's actual history, was activated by clients and workers, suggests that Vietnam's history of Western rule was a key factor that explained the acts of dependency. She writes, "As men participate in the multiple niche markets of HCMC's [Ho Chi Minh City's] sex industry... they may draw upon... First World benevolence towards developing countries" which in turn is drawn from "tropes [that] are drawn from the shadows of Vietnam's colonial and imperial past." Support for this idea can also be found in existing literature, which this paper further breaks down into three distinct concepts: history of Western rule, semi-peripheral status on the economic world stage, and Orientalism.

History of Western Rule

To begin with, during the time of colonial rule itself, colonial rulers were often accustomed to non-Western sex workers, where the idea of non-Western was also associated with inferiority. As the sex industry thrived in the urban centres of Southeast Asia's ports, many of the sex workers

were poorer women from rural areas who were drawn to these ports to earn a living through the gradual accumulation of hard currency. Some of the women were also purchased by richer colonial and local landlords. The fact that the women who worked within the industry were often poor, from rural areas, and relied upon the sex industry for their livelihoods, was a big contrast to the wealthy foreign men they served; the women were stark embodiments of what was non-Western. The distinction between what was Western and non-Western is further illustrated by the regulation of sex workers by ethnic bifurcation: the few white women in Indochina had to be at least twenty-one years and older in order to work in the sex industry, while the minimum age for local women was only eighteen (Tagliacozzo 2008). Not only were the local women different to white women, they were also more nubile and vulnerable. Padilla (2007) also noted that colonialism tended to foster racialized, exoticized representations of sexuality, which is important in understanding why sex workers in colonies were expected to be and behave different to the sex workers in the rulers' countries. Especially with Western tourists within the period of Western imperialism, local women of the colonised territories were the quintessence of exotic, which was non-Western (Enloe 2004). In Vietnam, the sex workers learned to capitalise on this racialized and exoticized representation, by altering their bodies through means like darkening their skin, which exaggerated their appearances' cohering to the stereotype of dark-skinned women from poor countries (Hoang 2015). In this sense, the racialized representation of sex workers in an ex-colony like Vietnam might also entail the assumption of poverty and thus, dependency for livelihood.

Also, similar to the economic relationship between colonies and ruling countries, where raw material was extracted from colonies and shipped to the ruling country to be consumed, sexual services are also associated with contemporary ex-colonies that provide services for Western consumers (Padilla 2007). In return, the colonies depended on their Western rulers to bring in

economic growth via trade, to administer policies and provide governance. As far as parallels to economic relationships of past go, this same dependency on the developed West is anticipated among the less developed ex-colonies.

An essential part of the relationship between a colonial history and deliberate acts of dependency is staged authenticity. Staged authenticity describes the structuring of beliefs within a social space which has a 'front', which is a meeting place of hosts and guests or customers and service persons, and a 'back', which is a place where members of the hosting team can be themselves and relax, or prepare for the next round of receiving guests (Goffman 1959). This social space can be consciously manipulated to create a projected appearance by keeping the front and back distinct, and dressing the front in a manner in which the manipulator wishes the social space to be perceived as. Set within the context of tourism, tourists seek out the ability to observe the back, where they can see and share an aspect of some society as it really is lived. It is, however, not easy to be able to witness the true nature and workers of other societies. Instead, tourists are often taken on a tour that, while seemingly able to access parts of a society otherwise closed off to outsiders, display only a staged back region (MacCannell 1973) that carefully imitates the appearance of intimacy and authenticity. In Santo Domingo, for example, the resurrection and preservation of Spanish colonial heritage is a characteristic feature of the social and physical landscape. The investment and effort that goes into the reconstruction and maintenance of colonial ruins and tourist infrastructure is justified by the income generated by tourists who are drawn to the promise of an 'authentic' Dominican cultural identity. Beautification campaigns have even sought to remove groups of locals such as the homeless who might be eyesores or offensive to tourists (Padilla 2007). The Vietnamese sex workers in Hoang's study are presenting this very staged authenticity by recognising that their Western clients specifically seek out the authentic

Vietnamese woman, perhaps best encapsulated by a client who said to Hoang, “If you’re an expat in Vietnam and you know better, then you go for the village girls, because they are the real deal... They are the real Vietnam.” The association of the authentic Vietnamese woman with village girls reveals the belief Western clientele held of Vietnam as it was in its colonial days: trapped in Third World poverty, inferior to the wealthy West, and engaged in the sex industry due to not being able to afford any other option (Hoang 2015). By darkening their skin, donning traditional clothing and offering their clients visceral experiences of Third World poverty in villages, the sex workers were actually tapping on their clients’ sympathy for material inequalities and nostalgia for colonial days gone by. Again, here we see the workers and clients orientating themselves around the historical script that governed the relationship between rulers and the ruled in the colonial and imperial eras.

Semi-peripheral Status

Another characteristic that so often coincides with a country having a history of Western rule is its semi-peripheral status within the world system. The world-systems theory, most often credited to Wallerstein, is one where the world economy is viewed as a single economic structure. The structure comprises of core countries which focus on higher skill, capital-intensive production; semi-peripheral counties which are the industrialising countries that possess partial characteristics of capitalistic societies; and periphery countries which are less developed and focus on low-skill, labour-intensive production. The distribution of global wealth is dominated by the core countries, followed by semi-peripheral countries, and finally the peripheral countries which receive a disproportionately small share of wealth through a trickle-down process (Shannon 1996). This theory sheds further light on the process by which labour-rich peripheral countries such as those within Southeast Asia sell labour power to members of core countries in exchange for wage. This is indeed the mechanism that also occurs within the sex-trade. Centres of trade, cities, and even

military outposts draw previously remote countries into the international system, often on unequal terms (Enloe 2004). Families and workers alike willingly enter into sexual transactions and there even exists a ‘dependency of the women on their customers for economic consistency’ that puts them ‘in a position of constant pressure to please their customers and boyfriends in order to survive’ (Mason, 2011). This dependency converges into the centre of the economic system, where semi-peripheral and peripheral countries are dependent upon core countries for income and economic stability (ILO 1998). Both in and out of the sex industry, the West has become so accustomed to assuming the role of First World benefactor such that Vietnamese sex workers are ultimately in part defined as cheap labour bearing a semiperipheral status as well. Moreover, contextualising the sex industry within the tourism industry, a government which decides to rely on money from tourism for its development – as is often the case with semi-peripheral economies – is a government which has decided to be internationally compliant enough that foreigners will be made to feel comfortable (Enloe 2004). This sense of compliance is in itself an expression of dependency, and if visitors expected to experience Third World dependency, the locals would certainly cater to meet those expectations. It is thus possible that independently of whether or not a country has had a history of Western rule, the fact that it possesses a semiperipheral status within the world system would mean that Western clientele seeking sexual services still end up expecting to experience some forms of dependency on the part of its sex workers, which are then met.

Orientalism

A final factor worth mentioning would simply be the general idea of Orientalism, where regardless of whether or not a country has a history of Western rule or is considered semiperipheral within the world system, just the fact that it is situated within the Orient would render visiting Westerners susceptible to certain assumptions, such as that of Third World dependency. The Orient,

that has defined the West as its contrasting image, is both a geographical and cultural in its definition. Geographically speaking, the Orient encompasses the countries to the east of Europe all the way to the Pacific Ocean. More than that, on a cultural level, the Orient simply describes anything that is non-European (and later, non-American and simply non-West) that stems from the idea of the Western identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-Western peoples and cultures (Said 1979). While the historical roots of Orientalism lie in the history of actual British and French colonialism that saw a tradition of administrators, colonial armies, and economic dominance in the Orient, the idea soon came to represent the hegemonic dominance the West held over the non-West, also seen as the 'other'. In this way, the Orient can be conceptually separated from the earlier discussed ideas of a colonial history or a semi-peripheral status, where non-Western countries are seen as inferior simply owing to their non-Western identity, even if they lack both a colonial history and semi-peripheral status. For example, China, though technically never colonised in the sense that it was never governed by Western rulers, became a frequent object of ethnocentric bias during the period of Western imperial expansion, and was frequently ridiculed for general backwardness (Macfie 2002).

Although this paper will not delve deeply into the literature of Orientalism, it is important to recognise the general concept due to the fact that Thailand and Vietnam are both within the Orient. Furthermore, Thailand is surrounded by countries that have been ex-colonies and are also of semi-peripheral status. Even if Thailand and Vietnam were vastly dissimilar, the generalised assumptions of Western hegemonic cultural and ideological dominance would render Thailand similar to Vietnam in that it is simply non-West. Western clientele who subscribe to this heuristic, whether consciously or not, would be given no reason to expect differences between the sex workers of the two countries. The expectations for displays of poverty and exoticism might thus

also be generalised to Thai sex workers, and these women in turn deliberately meet those expectations when interacting with their Western clientele.

Before further moving forward, two disclaimers must be made. First, it is difficult to discuss one of the three concepts presented above without also discussing the other two. Historically, the three more often than not occur together, where ex-colonies tend to also bear semi-peripheral status and are subject to Western hegemonic assumptions. That said, the abstract essence of the three are separate and it is possible to conceive of situations where only one factor is present. In this sense then, it would be possible to try to isolate the effect of colonialism on acts of dependency within the sex trade. Secondly, there are probably also a multitude of other factors that can explain displayed acts of dependency among sex workers. However, this paper does not seek to uncover all possible precursors for dependency. Again, this paper simply seeks to uncover the necessity of a history of Western rule as a condition for displayed acts of dependency.

Case Background

Thailand: As the only Southeast Asian country that was never subject to colonial or American military rule, the development of prostitution in Thailand began with the ancient Buddhist conceptions of gender roles, which historically made women subordinate to men. This patriarchal set of gender relations have endured until today and continue to support the supply of women in the sex industry (Mason 2011). The reign of King Rama I (1782-1809) then brought about a male-dominated wave of Chinese immigration into Thailand. Up until King Rama IV, most of the prostitutes that met these needs were Chinese women themselves. As the Thai economy expanded and new settlements of foreigners were established, the sex market also grew to accommodate these foreigners. In addition to the capital city of Bangkok, regional centres also operated as hubs for the sex industry that served a relatively significant proportion of local men. Throughout its pre-modern history, prostitution was profitable, legal, and to some extent acceptable in Thai society (ILO 1998). The abolishment of slavery in the early 1900s under the reign of king Chulalongkorn left many women without access to education and without the support of the old feudal system. Many joined the sex industry as a way to make ends meet (Jeffrey 2002). The Venereal Disease Act introduced in 1909 by the Siamese government regulated entry into brothel prostitution, by requiring brothels to obtain renewable licenses and sex workers to prove themselves free of venereal diseases and freely willing to engage in sex work. Despite pressure from the League of Nations to immediately abolish the system of licensed brothels, Thai authorities instead opted for progressive and gradual abolition of the system. Up until the 1950s, government policy on sex work emphasised venereal disease control and regulating brothels rather than quick abolishment. It was only in 1960 that the Prostitution Prohibition Act was passed and required sex workers to undergo reformatory training for up to a year that included vocational training and an

emphasis on traditional Thai values. Following the expansion of its tourism industry beginning in the 60s, the commercial sex sector grew in publicity and size. This is reflected in the Entertainment Places Act passed in 1966 that required massage parlours, go-go bar, karaoke bars and similar establishments to be regulated and licensed. While not expressly permitting sex work, the act allowed ‘service partners’, ‘bath service providers’ and other sexual service providers to operate on those premises (Fox 2009). During the Vietnam War, the US Department of Defence had a contractual agreement with the Thai government to provide for the ‘rest and recreation needs’ of American soldiers. To meet the influx of clients seeking sexual services, entertainment centres were set up around military bases to cater to American men. During this period, the sex sector expanded rapidly (Wathinee Boonchalaksi and Guest 1994). Upon the withdrawal of the American troops, the existing infrastructure found demand for sexual services among tourists. The first wave of tourists were Americans and Europeans up until the early 1970s, when the Japanese overtook as the dominant clientele (Mason 2011). At the same time, a high local demand also exists today due to the social acceptance of men buying sexual services (ILO 1998). It is interesting to note that despite the lack of colonial rule, Thailand has in the past and especially in the present, been known as a hub of sex tourism (Mason 2011). Over the past two decades, the sector has witnessed an increase in the number of incoming sex workers from neighbouring countries. At the same time, scores of Thai women have also left for other fast growing economies, especially those in East Asia, as well as countries of origin of sex tourists like Germany (Wathinee Boonchalaksi and Guest 1994).

Vietnam: Following centuries of Chinese rule, Vietnam realised full sovereignty in AD 938 and saw a series of successful Vietnamese dynasties. In 1883, however, after a series of military conquests that eroded away the country’s independence, France eventually gained control of the

entirety of Vietnam, which became the Union Indochinoise in 1887. Under the French administration, large urban centres were set up and these cities became loci of trade, administrative power, and finance. The development of these cities were fertile grounds for the previously largely informal and diffused sex industry, which flourished with the concentrated growth of population and single foreign workers coming through these hubs. In particular, a niche segment of the sex market formed that catered specifically to French men who were stationed in Vietnam as civil servants or military men (Stoler 1992). In 1888, legislation was passed that required all sex workers to register in local municipalities and also undergo medical examination for sexually transmitted disease. Regardless, many illegal underground sex circuits continued to operate under the radar behind the façade of lounges, cafes, and dance halls. During this age of colonisation, Frenchmen were often the highest paying clients, bore the prestige of being white, and thus tended to patronise the more upscale brothels (Hoang 2015). After the Japanese invasion of Vietnam during WWII in 1940, the communist and nationalist liberation Viet Minh movement sought independence from French rule, which ultimately culminated in the dissolution of French Indochina in 1954. Vietnam was separated into North and South Vietnam, led by the communists and nationalists respectively. At this point, the United States began to increase its involvement in South Vietnam by providing financial, political, and military support in an attempt to quell the communist insurgency. The large influx of U.S. capital and men fuelled the growth of the sex industry, especially in areas that were designated as rest and recreation stops for the foreign soldiers. Often, these rest and recreation stops were often urban centres that were already burgeoning due to relocation, urbanisation, and defoliation (Vo 2011). Nightclubs, massage parlours, bathhouses, and bars were frequently patronised by U.S. men in search for sexual services, and this was particularly obvious around the U.S. military bases and living quarters which were thickly surrounded by bars catering exclusively

to the foreigners (Jamieson 1995). In the North, however, local women were strictly prohibited to engage in sex work, as part of the North Vietnam rulers' efforts to equalise men and women, and therefore encourage women to join the fight against the American and French (Taylor 1999). When Saigon fell in 1975, the U.S. forces quickly evacuated, leaving South Vietnam to the capture by North Vietnam. Under the communist regime, sex work was labelled as indicative of a bygone imperialist era (Nguyen-Vo 2009) and was quickly suppressed. Sex workers were sent to schools to receive medical treatment and also training to become productive labourers (Hoang 2015). In 1986, Vietnam introduced programs to liberalise its economy, beginning its transition towards a socialist-oriented market economy. Opening the country to large-scale tourism, foreign trade, and investment drew a large number of foreign visitors and businessmen, upon which the local economy greatly relied. Western tourists specifically frequented entertainment spots where reminders of Vietnam's history of foreign occupation allowed them to express their nostalgia for the time of Western rule (Hoang 2015). Even though sex work remains illegal in the country, both sex workers and clients alike continue to evade punishment due to the industry's integral role in the Vietnamese economy as a facilitator for entrepreneurial activities and tourism.

It is worth noting that in both of these countries, foreigners probably make up only a small proportion of the commercial sex sector's clientele. That being said, the salience of foreign – and especially Western – sex tourists is undeniable, with certain areas specifically catering to tourists of a certain origin, most notably the beer bars and A-Go-Go sectors (Hoang 2015). It is within this setting that Hoang observed sex workers interacting with Western clients and also where this paper draws its sources from.

Even at the height of the colonial era, the largest degree of influence a foreign power could exert on Thailand was only through legal advice. Thailand remained fully autonomous and never

became a formal colony or subject in the sense that its laws, policies and administration was still conducted by its own Thai government, which was the body with the highest authority. Despite international pressure for Thailand to abolish the sex industry altogether, its government still retained control over the country's administration and created their own policies in their own time, much to the frustration of many Western powers. This is in stark contrast with Vietnam, which actually underwent periods of rule by foreign governments, and had policies pertaining to its sex industry created and administered by French and U.S. authorities, who had the highest level of authority within Vietnam. This subjection to foreign rule might have created a social script among the local Vietnamese, where complete economic dependence on and deference to Western powers might have become a norm; Thailand, on the other hand, would not have the same political environment that developed this script of dependency.

Method

Even though this paper is presented as a case study of Thailand, it implicitly draws from Gerring's (2007) method of using most-similar cases for hypothesis testing. By studying Thailand, it can be used as a comparison against Hoang's analysis of Vietnam, in order to study the strength of the relationship between a country's history of Western rule and displays of dependency among its sex workers when interacting with Western clientele. The hypothesis testing most-similar case technique uses two cases that are similar in all dimensions except the explanatory variable of interest, which is the presence a history of Western rule with the cases of Thailand and Vietnam. If the cases only differ in the explanatory variable of interest, the researcher can expect to find similar outcomes if the theoretical expectation holds true, or disprove the theory otherwise. According to Hoang's theory, the dependent outcome variable, the presence of acts of dependency displayed by sex workers to Western clients, should not similarly exist in Thailand, since the country was never subject to Western rule. If acts of dependency do exist in Thailand's sex industry, however, it would indicate that Hoang's theory of the relationship between a history of Western rule and dependency is perhaps not so deterministic after all. Thailand's acts of dependency would suggest factors other than a history of Western rule, such as a country's semi-peripheral status or Orientalism, could also be responsible for sex workers displaying acts of dependency.

Thailand and Vietnam are Southeast Asian countries that are separated by Cambodia in the South, and Laos in the North. Culturally, the two countries share similar profiles, with social relations governed by the tenets of Confucianism that heavily emphasise filial piety and holistic harmony over individual utility. The dominant religion in Thailand is a mix of Buddhism and Hinduism, which was also the case in Vietnam right up until its communist years. Presently, most Vietnamese are non-religious, although some still practice indigenous beliefs. The dominant ethnic

groups in both countries are their native Thais and Viets, respectively, which make up between 80-90% of each country's population. In both countries, sex work is technically illegal (VOA 2003), but is often tolerated and sometimes even facilitated by smaller officials. The industry in both countries are closely tied to tourism and remains a hugely profitable engine of development that draws many women from rural areas to urban centres. Economically, both Thailand and Vietnam are similarly classified as developing or newly industrialised countries, although the specific developmental rate, stage and dominant sectors do differ somewhat.

The explanatory variable of interest, whether or not a country has a history of colonisation or Western rule, differs between Thailand and Vietnam. Both were ruled by a succession of royal dynasties until the age of colonialism in the 19th Century, when Vietnam fell under French rule, and went on to experience significant military and political intervention from the United States even after gaining independence from the French. On the other hand, Thailand remained a sovereign kingdom.

The dependent variable of interest is the presence of the practice of displaying acts of dependency employed by sex workers when interacting with their Western clientele. Where acts of dependency have been established as present among Vietnamese sex workers, this paper seeks to study the presence or absence thereof among Thai sex workers. Hoang (2015) observed deliberate acts of dependency in her work as instances where Vietnamese sex workers would go out of their way to-sometimes deceitfully-give the appearance of being vulnerable, poor, and uneducated. An earlier example introduced in the paper would be that of the sex worker telling her client that her motorcycle broke down in the hope of receiving financial support to 'fix' said motorcycle. Another examples Hoang discussed include the way in which sex workers typically held onto two phones and hid their newer, more expensive phones when with clients in order to

make it seem as if they could only afford older phones with outdated technology. Or, the sex workers' practice of artificially darkening their skin in order to look like poor villagers. These are all examples of the ways in which these workers were able to use the stereotype of what a Third World underdeveloped country might appear to Westerners as leverage to extract more money from their clients out of pity and First World benevolence. Instead, the women hid evidence of their upward economic mobility, access to global capital, and status. In this sense, this paper refers to economic dependency when dependency is discussed. It is also important to be able to recognise positive instances of the absence of acts of dependency, for it is not convincing enough to simply say that these acts were not observed or did not happen. Positive instances of the opposite of dependency should also be considered as evidence against the presence of dependency. For example, a sex worker might interact with her client in a purely transactional manner, implying no desire to extract money from or display dependency on the client over a prolonged relationship. Alternatively, a sex worker might speak with her clients of her desire to have her line of work established as a legitimate occupation that does not rely on Third World stereotypes. In this way, this paper seeks to identify evidence for instances of dependency, or instances of non-dependency as well as the absence of dependency, among Thai sex workers, where acts of dependency are conceptualised in a binary manner as present or not.

As a most-similar case comparison, this paper faces some challenges. For one, the strength of the inferential leverage one can draw on relies upon the connection between the sole explanatory variable that differs between the two cases, and the dependent variable. The display of Third World dependency in the sex industry, however, cannot be solely explained by whether or not the country had been a subject of Western rule in its past. As previously discussed, the economic status of the country on the world stage, as well as the extent to which general Orientalism applies, can also

explain the presence of acts of dependency. This makes it difficult to determinatively deduce the effect of historical Western rule on acts of dependency. If it turns out that Thai sex workers do indeed display acts of dependency, it could be any of the three factors, whether independently or jointly, creating that effect. In this case, it would be difficult to determine anything about the necessity or sufficiency of a history of Western rule as a condition for acts of dependency. However, if Thai sex workers do not display acts of dependency, despite having similar economic status and being part of the Orient like Vietnam, then it would be logical to be able to conclude that having a history of Western rule is at the very least a necessary condition for acts of dependency to be present in the sex industry.

For the purposes of this paper, a variety of secondary sources will be studied. Short of directly conducting interviews or ethnographic research in Thailand, second-hand accounts or existing ethnographic work that contains information about the client-worker interaction can be searched for evidence of acts of dependency, non-dependency, or the lack of. Any written record of client-worker interaction, such as letters, will also be used. Most of these secondary sources were collected or written by Western researchers, which is closely aligned with the group of clientele the sex workers being studied served. It is possible that the sex workers showcased within the material is a selective group that is more open to interacting with Western clientele to begin with, and are more familiar with displaying acts of dependency. However, it bears mentioning that these women are also more likely to be the workers that populate locations patronised by Western clientele, and that this paper does indeed aim to study the interactions between Western clientele and Thai sex workers. Also of importance to note is the fact that many of the sources used date from the early 1990s, while Hoang's analysis takes place between 2006-2011. This difference in time period is not a critical problem for this paper since the analysis only requires that the

comparisons of both countries take place post-colonial and post-imperial era. This paper seeks to find out if acts of dependency merely exist or not in Thailand, and does not make claims about how this script of dependency might change over time. As long as a country such as Vietnam has undergone Western rule, the presence of a script of dependency that might arise from Western rule suffices. Moreover, Thailand's status as a semi-peripheral economy in the early 1990s is comparable to Vietnam's semi-peripheral status in the world stage today, and its position in the Orient is one that does not change.

Analysis

Walker and Ehrlich's (1992) compilation of letters sent from Western clients to their female companions working in the sex industry, as well as interviews with the workers themselves, offer us a glimpse into the sort of exchanges sex workers have with their clients. Even in their introduction, they write,

Many men like to think they're different from the other men in the bars. Some acquire a missionary-like complex... The bar girls seem to like this kind of guy best as these are the types who usually send them the most money. (p. 7)

While not much can yet be said about how the women behave around their clientele, whether or not they initiate or welcome their clientele's generosity, already the rhetoric of a sex worker being dependent on their Western clientele for livelihood or as the only possible way to lift herself out of Third World poverty and the industry, is present or at the least observed by the authors. In almost all of the letters, the Western clientele make reference to sending money to their lovers in Thailand. Oftentimes, this money is sent to meet financial need or to help the woman exit the sex industry, despite the couple having met within that very setting. One man writes,

Please please get out of Patpong [the red light district]. I know it is hard and you have to send money for your son. If you need to get teeth done I will send you money so have nice teeth-£70 I think you said-that is OK. When I come back Thailand I want you out of Patpong... Your boss is a fucking wanker... Any man who makes money out of young girls selling their bodies is cockroach. (p. 35)

Another client sends money with the intention of helping a sex worker through school and financial security:

I am sending \$200 to your account at Bangkok Bank... I want you to use it to study more or to save for your future. (p. 38)

Despite that fact that these men had met their lovers through the sex industry, their disdain for the practice and hopes that their partner lifts herself out of it and into better circumstances are

still apparent. As Hoang (2015) notes, many of the clients feel that sex work is acceptable only if the women were driven to it through dire economic need and had no other options. Women would thus respond and proving “their respectability by portraying Vietnam as an impoverished Third World nation, inferior to the wealthy West, and by presenting themselves as innocent victims of poverty” (p.150).

The women themselves certainly have some agency in extracting money as well. Requests for money and gifts are made even when the Western man is not well off. One client complains about having difficulty with meeting his lover’s demand while he himself has to work hard for a living.

I have bought a motorcycle for £225 and am working hard. The money is O.K., but I want more money. I want to be a very rich man... When I am rich I will buy you a helicopter and B.M.W. car... I don't know if you love me. Many times I think you only want me for my money. I remember you say to me 100 times “Buy me television.” Even when you came with me to the airport you said to me many times “give me money.” (p. 45)

Another writes,

Thank you for your letter which I got today... Please be patient with me, for money. I promise to send you all the money you need direct to your bank, but right now it is difficult, because I have many debts to pay off first. (p. 48)

It is not known if either client actually does deliver on his promise. Nonetheless, it is still apparent that Thai sex workers put effort, such as maintaining written correspondence, into displaying dependency to Western clients in general, even if they are neither particularly generous, nor very wealthy.

Some of the interviews conducted with the sex workers reveal the possibility of genuine relationships between the woman and her client. The interviews are dotted with stories of women having their hearts broken, suggesting a true desire to continue seeing their client. As one

interviewee reveals, “Sometimes I like only one man, I want to stay with him for free” (p. 72). Askew (1998) similarly views the act of bringing a client to a sex worker’s village as less a calculated move to inspire pity, and more as a way to “accelerate his engagement in the woman’s life, through friendship with her family, and will draw him into a web of financial/moral obligations which are calculated to extend the relationship with the woman.” Cohen (1982), in his ethnographic work, writes:

Many girls respond genuinely, especially if they started only recently to work with farangs and if the relationship becomes an extended one. Indeed, they may continue to be in love (r&l with one man, even after he has left... However... many learn to fake involvement in order to satisfy their customers’ expectations, while they remain cold or are even turned-off by the man. (p. 414)

Even though real relationships certainly are possible, many of the women maintain a practical management of their relationships, even if romance and practicality might sometimes be at odds with each other. Even within the aforementioned quote from Askew, he brings attention back the utility of hastening a long-term relationship with a client: enforcing financial and moral obligations to support the woman. Here, even though the visit to a village is to establish and strengthen the bonds a woman’s client shares with her friends and family instead of to portray a picture of Third World poverty, the same motive of cementing a relationship of dependency on the client remains. Similarly, Cohen describes the process through which many sex workers eventually withdraw emotionally and settle into staged relationships. A worker describes her plans for the future with a German man she keeps correspondence with.

One German write, also he do send money. He very good... Two years I know him. I never love him, only like him... German love me too much. About future, I talk to him already. If I marry I want to stay Thailand... I don’t think so I like Germany... but difficult him. Because he don’t have job. (p. 39)

Another worker talks about her experience with juggling multiple boyfriends in the interest of maximising economic security.

Now have two boyfriends, Denmark man never say he want take care of me forever. Australia man say he want take care of me forever. Australia man worried about my daughter also. I don't love the friend of Australia. Just friend. I do love Denmark man... I have to wait. Now I play a game, two games, with two boyfriends. Some people have to show me they love me and my daughter also. (p. 54)

Both women acknowledge that they do not love their client, but still choose to maintain a relationship due to financial benefit. Particularly in the second case, the woman chooses to keep the Australian man despite her clear romantic preference for the Danish man, since the latter made no promise to 'take care' of her in the long term. Despite the rather utilitarian and interchangeable appearance of their relationships, it seems to be a real dependency that compels these women to remain in these relationships, that is sometimes disguised as romance. In Cohen's work, he goes one step further by suggesting that even if relationships might be transactional and purely profitable in the beginning, some women do end up forming a genuine dependency upon their clients over time.

Since girls who offer themselves to farangs are plentiful, the economic situation of each is precarious; economic security is thus often foremost in their minds... Once the relationship becomes a more permanent one, the girls often develop economic... dependency on their boyfriends... (p. 413)

Again, this economic dependency can occur both with and without the psychological attachment. One worker, when asked if the women lie in their letters, admits:

I know they speak (she imitates a high-pitched, sing-song voice), "How are you? I love you! Take care yourself! Don't work too much!" I speak, "love", but not true. I never love! (laughs). I lie. (p. 66)

It is also interesting that a narrative of romance and 'love' is employed in order to justify the worker-client relationship as one within which boundaries allows for economic dependency without coming off as mercenary. On the part of the Western clients, being in a romantic relationship seems to entail physical and emotional intimacy, while with the women, the relationship seems to more closely entail a promise of care. The excerpts tell us a story of a strategic

arrangement wherein the sex workers enter long-term relationships to procure care in the form of financial aid, while the men expect to receive intimacy in return. In some cases, there seems to be a mismatch of expectations where the couples are unable to meet each other's' expectations. Furthermore, the men seem to expect compliancy along with the economic dependency. With their remittances, Western men would financially support women who they deemed as deserving beneficiaries, and in return assume authority enough to lay out plans for the sex workers' future in order to rescue her from poverty. The remittances, then, are framed as philanthropic or direct charitable giving. It is possible that what consists of a 'real' relationship for this women, then, is the responsibility of care that comes from her Western partner(s), and is actually not simply a deceptive method to procure money. This relationship dynamic echoes Hoang's observation of the women who manage brothels, who perform poverty in order to pull on "men's heartstrings", and help the men "frame their financial gifts as a particular form of charitable giving" (Hoang 2015:99). Again, we see the employment of notions like romance and charity as possible ways to justify an otherwise dependent and mercenary relationship.

In some cases, it seems the women continue this dependency even without the pretence of a romantic relationship at all. A smitten client, who continues to send money despite the woman's clear indifference to the relationship, laments:

I think, you don't like to stay in a love story with a man. I tried to phone you several time. On your birthday in the morning, I waited fifteen minutes but I did not talk to my love... I don't know that my money arrived your bank... This is the last time to ask you for love if you don't answer. (p. 60)

The dependency of the relationships also seems to occur in both directions, where the sex worker is dependent on her clients for a livelihood, and the client is dependent on her for emotional intimacy, as discussed previously. The fact that the men also seem to experience distress when the women withdraw their affections hint at a more equal power dynamic than previously thought and

might actually take away from the sense that sex workers can be described as dependent at all. Hoang refers to dependency as Third World dependency, which is to emphatically use displays of poverty (genuine or not) in order to procure more money. In this sense of the word, even if the power dynamic in the relationship might actually appear to be somewhat symmetrical in that the men are emotionally reliant on the women, the fact still remains that sex workers do display acts of dependency. Perhaps then ‘displaying dependency’ and ‘dependency’ would not be good terms to use to describe the client-worker relationship, as it entails an asymmetrical power dynamic; ‘performing poverty’ and ‘economic reliance’ might be more appropriate instead. The emotional reliance of men on their lovers is a theme that is neither apparent nor greatly delved into in Hoang’s analysis. It is possible that such ‘equal’ relationships do not exist within Vietnam’s sex industry at all, but it is perhaps more likely that the nature of her interviews was more focused on the sex workers themselves, and thus little could be revealed about the Western client’s feelings or perceptions of their relationships with the women.

While the letters and interviews conducted by Walker and Ehrlich do seem to indicate acts of dependency, the authors seem to think that this dependency arises from a genuine need. In their introduction, they noted that often the sex worker’s “impoverished family comes first in her consideration, and that the girl will help her family by sending money home” or sometimes she is even “supporting a husband or local boyfriend”. The seeming plight of the Third World is captured well by one client.

I love you so much and I send money enough to solve the problems of your family... I think, you will forever have problems with money to your family because your father drink too much and he cannot make enough money... Sure, darling my great love if we are married I want to give some money to your mother but now I cannot help you and I hope you will understand me... tell me how much money? (p. 70)

It is evident here that the client is responding to a firm request made by the sex worker who presented her situation as a dire one, with an impoverished family and alcoholic father. Whether or not this particular sex worker is truly having such difficulty is not known. A brothel owner also acknowledges the circumstances that drive women to work in the sex industry.

Maybe have problem with her Thai husband. Or she need something. Or husband cannot give her more. Or because she have baby, she must take care... other problem is her family... If she want to have money, she can work... Because if you work, you have money. Finish problem. (p. 173)

Askew argues that “poverty itself is not a sufficient condition” to drive a woman into the sex industry. When discussing the reasons why women enter the trade, he says, “They can include revenge on Thai ex-husbands, support for family members and collective projects, rebuilding material and moral prestige (through consumption goods and lucrative partnerships with foreigners), and emotional/sexual security.” The prestige and ability to consume associated with the pay workers get in the industry can be achieved through deceitful means, as with another sex worker, with whom the acts of dependency become clearer and more deliberate.

I work one-and-half year Patpong... I like work... Only one man from Norway help me, every month send money. I don't believe other letters. Bullshit... I never see money in the bank for me. They only say, “Love, love” ... Bullshit. Sometimes I write, “I don't want working Patpong. I want you send money for me in the bank.” (p. 72)

Despite her enjoying her work and acknowledging its profitability, this woman uses the narrative of trying to eke out a better life outside of sex work in order to extract more money from her clients. What she does actually spend the money on are often visible symbols of wealth and upward mobility.

Good money pay for me. I want shirt, he buy shirt. I want jean, he buy jean. I want camera, he buy camera. And tape cassette, big, he buy for me and give me 6,000 baht to go Philippines... Baby one-year-eight-months. And he send money to me in the bank... He say, “I like you.” Never say love you. And I say, “I like you.” Never say love you. (p. 73)

And this particular woman is by no means an anomaly. This interviewee also reveals spending the money on something other than the reason she gave her client.

He send one time 300 dollar. I write letter, "I have problem with my family." Say, "My mother leg no good and want to take out problem in her eye." And he send money. My mother don't know. I lost the money play card. Poker. (p. 118)

Perhaps the most indicative account of deliberate performances of dependency would be the interview with a woman who helped translate and write letters for the sex workers. She admonishes girls who "just think about the money."

If they only want money, they will tell me, "Please try to help me write this letter..." To get money, the girl will say, "my mother sick" or say, "I take abortion" or "father and mother sick" mostly. They cannot pretend about motorcycle accident or any operation because when man come, he will see no scar... When any girl try to pretend operation, I tell her, "You have no any scar to show him." So she change her mind. She say, "My mother sick. My father sick..." Some men don't know about Patpong girls' behaviour, so I explain to the man about the trick and how she manipulate. (p. 177-179)

Often, the scribes are complicit in the deception and have been known to write letters on behalf of the sex worker in her absence, or even attempt to extract money from the client while pretending to be the sex worker (Cohen 1986). Cohen observes that many scribes take pride in their ability to mislead the women's foreign clients, and even when a scribe might feel uneasy about their role in deception, it is rare that one discloses the truth to the client.

However, only in exceptional cases does a scribe dare to disclose to a girl's far-off friend her real doings. There was a rumour... of a case in which a... scribe disclosed to a girl's boy-friend the depth of her deception; the girl, who had succeeded in extracting considerable sums of money from that boy-friend, is said to have murdered the scribe in revenge. (p. 118)

The clients are by no means unaware to the possibility of being deceived. After having sent money to the sex workers for a period of time, some clients become suspicious about the sex worker's true intentions or how the money is truly spent. All the same, many continue to send

financial aid. One client expresses his doubt of his girlfriend's feelings for him while continuing to support her dependency:

... to feel safe and secure and protected and happy to be with me... I do not want you to feel that you care for me because of the money. I will send you money... I would have gladly sent you the money if you had said that you need it (Cohen 1986: 123).

Another client expresses his suspicions about the amount and frequency of money being requested of him:

I am concerned that you ask for money as I just sent you money in December. Eight hundred dollars is a lot of money and you should have plenty of money... I will send you your money 22 Dec... I won't send you money... unless you can show me how you spent the money... This makes me wonder what you do with your money... (p. 123).

These examples of false or inflated poverty notwithstanding, even if the sex workers in Thailand were indeed driven to display dependency by a true need for aid and differed from Hoang's analysis of the Vietnamese workers' deliberate and deceitful pretence of dependency, the fact remains that these women do indeed use a script of dependency that allows their clients to respond with benevolence. Odzer (1994) summarises this the process of building this economic dependency by stating, "Women used poverty and the Third World conditions of Thailand to turn the customer/prostitute relationship into a saviour/damsel-in-distress relationship." Many of the letters these clients receive from the sex workers paint a picture of Third World poverty, with images of villages set amidst rice fields, unpaid bills, and no access to proper healthcare or channels of socioeconomic mobility.

Last week I went to the north about grow rice in my farm. I'll become to a farmer... On Sunday, my brother had the accident... So, the policeman bring he to the station police. He want some money from me. But now I don't have money to him for my brother to finish. I'm sad and want to take care of my brother... Oh my love. Please send some money to me. I want about baht 20,000... I wait and hope from you to help me...

And that money you send me it not enough. Because I have to pay for my room rent and pay for motorcycle too... Please understand me and please send to me some more money... Darling I have some problem to let you know... My house in the north almost fall because of raining. I am so much worry too about my house. And money don't have in hand (p. 163 - 164).

Furthermore, like the sex workers in Vietnam, the Thai women also seem to understand the exoticized representation of Third World poverty that clients seek out. When asked why Western clientele seek out Thai sex workers, one woman responds that “they like the brown skin and black hair” (p. 56). The translator whose testimonial was discussed above agrees with this assessment and says, “Beautiful girl in American eyes. But not beautiful in Thai eyes. Maybe dark skin, but he love very dark skin.”

Hitherto, the discussion has focused on evidence for displays of dependency in client-worker interactions. That is not to say, however, that all sex workers operate the same way. One interviewed client complains (Belk, Østergaard, and Groves 1998):

My mates went, and I waited in the bar for them. They came back really pissed off. They shot their bolt in ten minutes, and the girls didn't want to know them. Yeah! Gave them their clothes and told them to get dressed. No kissing, no cuddling, nothing. Just a quick screw. They paid for an hour, and they only got 15 minutes. A bit rough really (p. 206).

Another client even refers to a sex worker's apparent dislike to receive money when he says, “I know you don't like to receive money from me but it is better from me than from someone else.” Like the different personalities of the many individuals that make up the sex industry, it is hard to expect that each sex worker interacts with her clientele in the same way – it is worth acknowledging that there are probably some sex workers who do not display acts of dependency in order to extract more money, or instead keep their relations more transactional and frank. It is also possible that sex workers who might not need more money simply do not engage in long-term relationships with their clientele or the performances of poverty. Indeed, many of the interviews

with Thai women who manage brothels and thus probably earn more money (Walker 1992) suggest that they think poorly of the practice of establishing relationships just for the sake of extracting money. One manager says, *“I need money but if I no like him, I no need”* (p. 160). Another says, *“I don’t like that. If you like to give, OK, but I never ask”* (p. 170). This seeming ethic does not seem to be apparent in Hoang’s analysis of brothel managers in Vietnam, who also engage in long-term relationships in order to procure loans to start small businesses (Hoang 2016).

The many examples of displayed dependency identified in the sources used speak volumes about the frequency with which that rhetoric is employed. Furthermore, the fact that the script of dependency exists at all is indicative that Thailand’s sex industry is probably not that different from Vietnam’s in terms of client-worker interaction, despite its lack of colonial or imperial history. However, some small differences or additional themes can be seen with the Thai sources. For one, with the correspondence between Thai sex workers and their Western clients, we are able to gain insight into the sort of intense emotional reliance the men have on their partners. Not only do they expect emotional intimacy as part of the relationship, they also seem to suffer without it. The Western men also seem to desire their partners to quit working within the sex industry when engaged in long-term relationships with them. Secondly, while Hoang’s interviews seem to reveal the generalizable practice of displaying dependency to extract money from clients, the Thai interviews show that at the very least a handful of workers refrain from doing so. Many of these are themselves brothel managers who also sometimes provide sexual services. It is possible that the ethic of not exploiting their clients might arise from these managers’ better economic circumstances.

Discussion and Implications

The analysis of the secondary ethnographic work and interviews used in this paper reveals general behaviour among the Thai sex workers that is very similar to the acts of dependency identified by Hoang among Vietnamese sex workers. The same acts of dependency, where sex workers use stereotypes of Third World poverty to extract financial support from their clients, also exist in Thailand. It is evident from the behaviour of Thai sex workers that having a history of Western rule is not a necessary condition for displayed acts of dependency when interacting with Western clientele. Thailand, despite never having been a colony or subject to U.S. intervention, still sees the same scripts of dependency among its sex workers that also exist in places like Vietnam, which underwent French rule and U.S. occupation. It is possible that these acts of dependency are instead driven by either Thailand's semi-peripheral status on the world stage, the concept of Orientalism, or a combination of both. The actual dependency of Thailand's semi-peripheral economy on the core U.S. economy might be projected onto client-worker relationships, while Thailand's geographic position in the Orient might also bring with it generalisations of the country's cultural subordination to the larger Western hegemony. That said, it also should be acknowledged that during the Vietnam war, Thailand was one of the designated rest and recreation stops for the American soldiers. It is possible that this official designation could de facto be construed as significant American influence in Thailand's political sphere. Nonetheless, it bears repeating that Thailand always retained complete autonomy over policy making and administration. Many of the governmental arrangements between Thailand and Vietnam resemble partnerships more than subordination.

While the act of dependency and the reciprocity of clients probably do in part stem from the West's idea of the 'Third World' semi-peripheral status and the benevolence that derives from

that, the notion of Orientalism could possibly have an even stronger effect. The particularly racialized desires of the Western clientele reflect the fetishized opportunity to ‘rescue’ exotic women. With deep historical roots in colonialism and American military imperialism, the region survives in the Western imagination today as an untouched land of subservient people which include brown-skinned, petite women who look different from the average white woman. In fact, the sex workers serving Western clienteles shied away from nose jobs, unlike their colleagues who serve the local population and rich Vietnamese businessmen returning from the West. It was the precise features that were dissimilar to Western women that Western men preferred; sex workers believed that Western men would “reward them more if they could successfully pull off a dark aesthetic that conveyed rural authenticity” (Hoang 2015: 147). Western men also expressed their preference for ‘real’ Vietnamese women who were only recent migrants to the city and more closely resembled what these men imagined to be the rural population. Some brothels even required their workers to wear uniforms that were “sexier versions of the traditional Vietnamese *ao dai* (dress).” These racialized features that Western men desire are not simply isolated to Vietnam, but can be generally found and expected from the exotic Orient. It is possible that in another Third World setting outside of the Orient, Western clients would not be driven to reward sex workers for displaying acts of dependency. What is really interesting here is that despite the men’s declared desire for women who are unlike the more assertive, dominant Western women, it can be seen from the letters that some of these sex workers are ironically rather assertive in asking for money, and can even seem to be the dominant partner in the relationship whom the Western men emotionally rely upon. Future work can expand on this idea of Orientalism driving benefaction and acts of dependency by perhaps studying sex markets in Third World semi-peripheral countries outside of the Orient.

It is also worth noting that another possible necessary condition for these displays of dependency to exist is the long-term nature of the relationships these sex workers have with their clients. At the very least, when a sex worker is going to have repeated interactions with her Western clients, she would then have the opportunity to build a rapport with him enough to extract additional money. If the relationship was a one-time single transaction, it is likely that the sex workers do not bother to invest in the relationship as it would not reap much money. This probably occurs more frequently with more transient Western clientele such as backpackers, as seen in the testimony of one client, as opposed to Western expatriates or businessmen who would frequently return.

Outside of the effect of Orientalism and the condition that the relationships entail repeated interaction, the displayed acts of dependency are also likely the result of a confluence of many other factors. For example, studying the gender norms present in Thailand might further shed some light on whether these acts of dependency are unique to Western clientele or not. As Hoang did, studying Thai sex workers' interaction with local men would provide an answer to the possibility that Thai women typically display acts of dependency to their male counterparts anyway, regardless of whether or not they are local or Western. Gender is but one of the many other possible conditions for dependency; an immersive ethnographic study would probably be the most suitable method to understand these relationships in more detail, which is beyond this paper. This paper sought to establish the necessity of the condition of a history of Western rule, and found it to be unnecessary.

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