

SMALL SPACE LIVING, BANGKOK'S URBAN DOMESTICITY

In recent years, domestic living in greater Bangkok has changed as a result of economic uncertainty, a shortage of good urban space, the city's transportation problems, attitudes regarding the nuclear family and single occupancy dwellings, as well as the phenomena of working from home and flexible working arrangements. Increasingly, more people are reported to be migrating to Bangkok to find work, placing pressure on housing and transport infrastructure. How do they live in this city?

This paper is based on on-going research that aims to develop a new body of knowledge that looks critically at 'small space living,' its design and its representation in the context of urbanised Thai society, especially in the city of Bangkok. The paper presents research data by unfolding materials that elucidate the ways in which social changes are embedded in urban home-life and domestic spaces in Bangkok. The core research is undertaken using analytical surveys of the architectural floor plans and the as-lived furniture layout plans of actual small space units in Bangkok. These are apartments with a maximum area of 80 sq.m. per unit. The Bangkok small space living survey will then be compared with the small space living conditions in three other cities, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Luang Prabang. The intent is to promote discussion about contemporary urban domestic life in societies in ASEAN countries.

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