SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

A STUDY ON THE DOWNSIDE OF GENTRIFICATION PROCESSES IN BANGKOK

LAURIEN BEIJER
UNIVERSITY OF GRONINGEN

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

A STUDY ON THE DOWNSIDE OF GENTRIFICATION PROCESSES IN BANGKOK

May 2010
BSc. Laurien Beijer
1452347

Master thesis
MSc. Environmental and Infrastructure Planning
Faculty of Spatial Sciences
University of Groningen

In unofficial corporation with the Architecture Faculty of Kasetsart University, Bangkok

Supervisors:
Dr. J. Woltjer
Dr. Bart Lambregts

Abstract:

This thesis studies the consequences for the urban poor in Bangkok due to the new mass transit system, the Skytrain, which has caused gentrification close to the station areas.

Keywords:

Gentrification, Bangkok, poverty, mass transit, BTS Skytrain, silent eviction.

university of
groningen

faculty of spatial sciences

Voorwoord

Het is waar wat er gezegd wordt, het schrijven van je scriptie is echt het zwaarste van de hele studie. Maar nu ligt hij dan eindelijk voor u, mijn master thesis, de laatste loodjes voor het afronden van de master Environmental & Infrastructure Planning en het zo waardevolle papiertje.

Ik heb de periode van het scriptie schrijven aangegrepen om nog een keer op reis te kunnen. Voordelen hiervan waren dat ik er ontzettend veel geleerd heb en heerlijk heb kunnen overwinteren. Nadelen dat ik mijn net bewoonde kamer en net herstelde relatie alweer achterliet. Het is het allemaal waard geweest en goed gekomen. De twee maanden durende ontdekkingsreis in Bangkok heeft buiten de benodigde scriptie informatie ook mijn visie op de wereld en andere mensen verbreed. Hierbij wil ik meteen Bart Lambregts bedanken voor de begeleiding, discussies en adviezen gedurende mijn verblijf in Bangkok.

Hoogtepunten tijdens mijn studie zijn er veel geweest, maar ik wil hier toch nog wel even mijn uitwisseling naar Seattle noemen. Dit was mijn eerste kennismaking met een land en cultuur buiten Europa en ik ben er meteen goed ingedoken. Ik heb er een nieuwe kijk gekregen op studeren en ook nieuwe vrienden gemaakt. Deze trip heeft me nog reislustiger gemaakt en was de aanleiding dat ik voor deze scriptie wederom het onderwerp ver buiten de grens heb gezocht.

Papa en mama wil ik bedanken voor het geven van de ruimte om naast het studeren ook volwassen te worden, vier jaar was niet genoeg geweest. Ook Berend wil ik bedanken, zijn aandeel in dit verhaal is groter dan hij zelf wil weten. Dank je wel voor het luisteren naar mijn getob, gepieker en gestress en voor het blijven motiveren.

Mijn dank gaat verder uit naar Johan Woltjer, die ervoor heeft gezorgd dat dit uitzichtloze project toch afgerond werd.

Voor u ligt een onderzoek naar de negatieve effecten van nieuwe infrastructuur. Voor mij is er een nieuwe periode in mijn leven aangebroken. Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat ik met alle opgedane kennis hier goed aan kan beginnen.

Veel leesplezier!

Laurien Beijer   Groningen, 2010

Abstract

Bangkok, located at the gulf of Thailand is the prime city of Thailand and holds between six and eleven million inhabitants. The city is crowded and suffers from congestion during most of the day. There are too many cars, while most of the inhabitants still do not own a car. Because these traffic jams are creating many undesirable situations, the government shifted its focus from building more roads towards mass public transport. In 1999 the new, elevated rail system, called the Skytrain, operated and maintained by the BTSC, opened its doors. This rails system is roaring above the congested streets, approximately three stories high. It is fast and environmentally friendly and it opened up the heart of Bangkok again. But this new mass transit system also triggered negative effects. Figure 3.5 represents a circle that is triggered from outside. It is called the gentrification cycle. Gentrification refers to the resettlement of middle- and upper class in the city, almost always meaning that the lower class inhabitants have to relocate. The term is referring to the English word 'gentry' which are people of "good social position, specifically (in the UK) the class of people next below the nobility in position and birth" (New American Oxford dictionary). The figure shows that a new mass transit system (like the Skytrain) can increase the value of land. Accessibility is an important asset to land. The potential revenue of this is land thus increases, creating a 'rent gap'. Explained in chapter three, the rent gap is the difference in the profit that a landowner makes and the potential revenue when the land is put to its highest and best use. This rent gap makes land attractive for new development. This study takes a closer look to the gentrification processes close to the Skytrain stations of Ari and Saphan Kwai. Ari is a higher income area where the gentrification cycle started more than five years ago. Now, the area is full of high-rise condominiums. Housing for low income groups can be found close to the main roads. Saphan Kwai is one station further on the Skytrain but this area is not yet obviously gentrifying. This area houses many people with low incomes, making the area less attractive to develop. However, Ari is getting expensive and full and the gentrification process is moving up north

Figure 3.5 The gentrification cycle

towards Saphan Kwai. This has implications for the people that are currently living there. Rental contracts are terminated or not renewed. People are forced to move out because landlords want to develop for a higher income group. Other people move because they cannot afford the rising rent anymore. These two forms of moving are called silent eviction. This term is better explained in chapter three and five.

At first, people can move one or two streets back, but the gentrification cycle will keep circling until it is stopped from outside or the complete area is redeveloped. Because of this, the affordable housing stock shrinks until it is gone and people move further away to cheaper areas that are often less accessible. This is not beneficial for the liveability of the urban poor in Bangkok. There is a constant threat of eviction, even though people live in legal housing. There is also the uncertainty of income. Most of these people have their own business at the house or work close to home. Because Bangkok is so congested, the bus travelling by bus is hard. The Skytrain is expensive, resulting that the poor are less mobile than the middle class; they have less options to travel. They need work at or close to home. Thus gentrification has social and economic negative effects on the urban poor, and there is little they do against it. It is possible that culture is a factor; 'things are as they are' is a common heard phrase. Also the inability to link processes together and the ignorance of tenants rights cause that most silent eviction victims cannot do much against their landlord. However, it is possible to negotiate compensation and extort rights, but some assertiveness is required. Also it might be necessary to review the law on forced eviction, which is government induced instead of private, and apply the same laws on silent eviction situations.

Index

List of figures

Abbreviations

BMA	Bangkok Metropolitan Administration
BMCL	Bangkok Metro Public Company, the blue line.
BMTA	Bangkok Mass Transit Authority
BTS	Skytrain, 'the green line' (same as BTSC)
BTSC	Bangkok Mass Transit System Public Company Limited
CBD	Central Business District
CODI	Community Organisations Development Institute, public organisation
ETA	Expressway and rapid Transit Authority of Thailand
GHB	Government Housing Bank
MRTA	Mass Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand
NHA	National Housing Authority
OTP	Office of Transport Planning
SARL	Suvarnabhumi Airport Rail Link
Soi	A side street branching from a major street
SRT	State Railway of Thailand
THB	Thai Baht (The currency of Thailand)
UN	United Nations
Yup	Young urban professional

1. Introduction

1.1 Gentrification and infrastructure

"From the Bronx to Bangkok and from Nairobi to Manila, poor people in their tens of thousands are disproportionately targeted for resettlement, relocation and eviction from their homes and shops to make way for urban transport infrastructure - infrastructure which, ironically, they themselves cannot afford to use once it is built" (Brian Williams)[1].

Poverty and transportation are interrelated. Transportation can help decrease poverty, but it can also reinforce class differences. One of the most obvious issues in infrastructure construction is eviction and the related displacement. When creating new infrastructure, evictions are a common tool to create space. Eviction means 'to expropriate someone from his or her property with the support of the law, usually for the 'greater good of the public''. Eviction can also be referred to as forced eviction, because households are almost always forcibly removed. It is forced, but not illegal. This kind of forced eviction is not the subject of this thesis, but needs to be addressed here as one of the relations between poverty and infrastructure.

Infrastructure can also increase poverty because of the pricing for the usage of the transit systems. For example, Dr. Jiangyan Wang[2], stresses that in Beijing, the lowering of the fares in public transportation made a major difference in peoples mobility. In Hong Kong too, fare rates are being kept intentionally low, to make sure that everybody can use the metro system, despite of their income class. In Hong Kong this has proved to be an effective method to decrease income disparity. This is however not common practice, like Landigin states: "Based on the principle of maximising private profit, urban infrastructure and services, concessionaires naturally focus their efforts on social groups with the capacity to pay. Thus, they are not motivated to extend their services to the poor and underprivileged" (Landingin, cited in Laquian, 2005, p. 312). Public transport companies need to make a profit to sustain, thus unless governmental incentives are involved, transportation companies will focus on those 'with the capacity to pay'.

---

[1] The article 'Double Jeopardy, the link between transport and eviction' written by Brian Williams is a three-page document without information about publication in a journal or a date of publishing. The article is published on the United Nations website. Brian Williams is an urban transport specialist at UNCHS (Habitat). From the references that Williams uses it is clear that the article has been written in 1997 or later.

[2] Dr. Jiangyan Wang is director of transportation planning at Parsons Brinkerhoff in China and stated this at the Asiarail 2009 congress, that was held on the 10th of November at the Four Seasons hotel in Bangkok.

But there is another issue related to infrastructure planning, one that is less visible and less obvious, but can be just as harrowing: gentrification. Gentrification is one of many urbanisation processes. It occurs when land value rises. Value is subjective, the value of land is socially constructed; location and access are important assets. When new infrastructure is developed, it attracts side effects, both negative and positive. One of these is that because of the renewed accessibility of an area, the land prices rise. Because of these rising prices the land becomes attractive again to invest in and develop. This is explained in chapter three as the 'rent-gap'. The redevelopment of devaluated land for the upper and middle class is called 'gentrification' or 'back to the inner city movement'.

The downside of this process is that it can cause an outwards movement of the poor. Rents rise and the poor will have to move to cheaper, often less accessible areas. The urban poor are highly vulnerable to increasing rents and they often have to make a choice between security of tenure, or mobility[3]. Because of the high land prices in the accessible parts of the city, they will move to squatter areas or other precarious sites. Squatter areas make people extra vulnerable to deterioration of the environment, safety, and security (World Bank and Williams, n.d.[1]). These are not a preferred living location for many[4]. On the other hand, the affordable locations will have much higher costs in commuting (costs can be time and money).

The theory of gentrification is been tested for many American cities, but the literature involving study on gentrification in Asian cities is thin. Asian cities differ substantially in their development and that is why further study is necessary. As chapter five will explain, the gentrification theory in its current form is too narrow to be applicable in Asia. But, certain aspects of this process are present in the development of Asian cities and it is too drastic to dismiss the theory entirely. Most cities in the United States, generally speaking, develop in concentric rings from the CBD, sprawling outwards. This is called the concentric zone theory of Burgess. Box 3.1 elaborates on this classic theory. Asian cities do not follow the same development pattern as the European and American sisters. There are different reasons for this, one is that the population growth is much greater than the United States ever experienced and is not expected to slow down. Another difference is that Asian cities are already depending on a service-based economy, while the development of the city looks like the stage of the industrial revolution in developed countries. Asian cities do not just differ from places in the United States; they also differ from each other. Fundamental differences, like culture, result in different cities. Asian cities cannot be generalised to one city-system theory; however, there are also

---

[3] The ability to move freely and easily.
[4] Squatter areas seem to be not preferred by anyone, but some people have good reason to live in a squatter area, and these people are not by definition poor. These people have multiple reasons to squatter. For example they can have shadow jobs (like drugs or prostitution) and want to stay low profile or they can provide loans against very high interest to the poorest of the squatter community (Wisarut Bholsithi).

similarities between them that might need further study.

This study will zoom in on Bangkok to put the gentrification theory to the test. Bangkok has been a rapid developing city for more than fifty years now. With a population growth rate of 4,5 percent in 1950, currently around 2,5 percent[5] and not going down, Bangkok is quickly urbanizing (figure 4.2). Bangkok is relatively late with leading this urbanization into the right paths using city planning. This makes Bangkok an ideal case to study. Because Bangkok is still in transition to becoming a modern metropolis, the different urbanization processes, gentrification is just one of them, are clearly visible in the city. The BMA (Bangkok Metropolitan Administration) introduced its first mass transit system relatively a short time ago. Because the novelty of this system, it is possible to observe the gentrification processes that might be triggered by this transit system.

The term displacement was not received happily in Bangkok; it was overall considered[6] a luxury problem that only happens in America, if it even is a problem. This thesis will put some light on the downside of gentrification that does occur in Bangkok. Because of the vagueness of the term displacement, a new, stronger term is introduced to emphasize the issue: Silent eviction. In this term, eviction refers to the involuntary part of the process. Eviction also carries the importance of the process. The term 'silent' points out that this form of displacement[7] is less visible, and often not recognised as a problem. Chapter three discusses why 'displacement' is not a good term for Bangkok and in chapter five the new term will be explained. The concept of silent eviction has been drawn up for specifically Bangkok but could be applied in other cities that carry the same symptoms of gentrification as Bangkok. Bangkok is just one of many Asian cities that is experiencing a population boom and a shift towards a different lifestyle.

1.2 Motive

Bangkok is one of Asia's rapid developing cities, coping with population growth and adapting to a new way of life. One of Bangkok's newest symbols of modernity is the BTS Skytrain. The BTS (Bangkok Mass Transit System) is an elevated concrete rail system. Mike Jenks argues that the BTS is creating two separate worlds:

"The Skytrain is promoted as a symbol of modernity, comparable to the best in the world. It was built over existing streets some 3–4 stories above ground level. At this level there are direct pedestrian links from the stations into some of Bangkok's prestigious shopping malls and hotels, and links to

---

[5] To compare: the Netherlands had a growth rate of 0,55 % in 2009 (CBS).
[6] Reactions to the term from the interviews.
[7] Loretta Lees, Tom Slater and Elvind Wyhle in 'the gentrification reader' describe displacement as the forced disenfranchisement of the poor and working class people from the spaces and places to which they have legitimate social and historical claims (Lees et. al., 2010, p.317).

commercial areas. On the streets beneath this massive structure, the vibrant chaos of Thailand exists, seemingly untouched by the world above. The streets are jammed with traffic, the footways with street traders and food stalls, and the night markets teem with people. Those, the majority, who find the Skytrain too expensive, ride in cheap buses, and on motorcycles, polluting the streets with fumes and noise" (Jenks, 2003, p.547).

Mass transit development is generally considered as beneficial for a city. It does not just improve the mobility in the city, but it induces all kinds of dynamics around station areas. This happened in Bangkok, where the transformation, gentrification and increased density that occurred around the metro and Skytrain stations the past ten years, is often praised as the way to modernity. It can be called a success story form a transportation-planning perspective.

However, the question 'how this has occurred and with what consequences for original inhabitants and users of these station locations' gets less attention than it should. Literature[8] concerned with the gentrification theory emphasize that when re-investing in areas, this is not beneficial for all residents; displacement is the largest problem. In most western cities it is part of policy to offer some facilities to decrease the damage for the disadvantaged in the process. But how does this work in Bangkok? Can winners and losers as result of gentrification be clearly identified around those station areas en what is the reaction of policymakers? And if so, are these measures relevant for other Asian cities?

1.3 Objectives

This thesis will argue that there are gentrification processes going on in Bangkok, triggered by the Skytrain. The development of the BTS Skytrain, as well as the metro, has started a sprawling effect around stations in the form of development of new condominiums, apartments, hotels and offices. However, before the BTS came, the lands were not empty. This study will argue that the Skytrain has done the city much good, but that the negative effects because of it do not receive the attention that it needs. The BTS Skytrain has implications on different levels of scale. Overall considered, the Skytrain has relieved Bangkok, which was literarily standing still. It seems to be the answer to get the city moving again, but its reach is still small as figure 4.6 shows. However, the implications of the Skytrain on local scale are not all positive. It appears that the new mass transit system has boosted the real estate market, which is a good thing in itself. But, this growing real estate market is causing silent eviction, forced movement due to economy, for the low-income residents. The effects of this silent eviction are dependent of the area. In some places people move two blocks away and there are no further effects. But the effects of the rising prices due to the BTS are generally speaking sprawling,

---

[8] Among others Ruth Glass, Neil Smith and Chris Hamnett are leading the gentrification discussion.

from a station outwards. This leads into a circled development where there is less room for affordable housing. Most people move to a complete different area and usually have done so before (interviews).

From conversations with both victims of silent evictions and policy makers, it seems that 'silent eviction' is not recognised as a problem in Bangkok. Because of it, there are little policies to ease the negative effects of gentrification. This thesis will study if the Skytrain is indeed the cause of silent eviction and if this is a small problem or more a structural issue that needs attention.

This is a practical problem for Bangkok and the recommendations will carry some practical solutions. But this is also a relatively new problem in Asia that is already experienced in Europe and America. This thesis tries to encourage scholars and researchers to further investigate these issues on different situations throughout Asia. This thesis is aiming to fuel the discussion about gentrification, arguing that mass transit development is not just the saviour of cities, but does have a downside and this downside needs mitigation. This leads into the research questions.

1.4 Research questions

The above introduction leads to more specific issues in Bangkok. The gentrification process in Bangkok can easily be identified, because it follows the BTS Skytrain pattern. The Skytrain is part of the city for just over ten years and it changed the appearance of the city drastically. People and space are interconnected. If the space in the city has changed, inhabitants of those areas changed too, in different ways. They either moved out, other people moved in or they adapted to the new situation. To find out what happened to the people that were affected by the construction of the BTS Skytrain or the additional developments, the following questions are drawn up:

How has the arrival of mass transit stations affected the original inhabitants and users of the station areas in Bangkok and to what extend can this be classified as gentrification?

1. What is gentrification, and how is it related to infrastructure development?
2. How does a new mass transit system generate silent evictions?
3. Who were the inhabitants and users of the station areas in Bangkok prior to the arrival of the mass transit station?
4. What was the nature of the transformations taking place after the construction and opening of the stations?
5. Which groups of inhabitants/users have (so far) benefitted from the developments and which groups have lost out?
6. What policies have been applied to mitigate possible negative effects or to compensate the people that lost out in the process.

7. Is there, by any standards, a need for introducing or improving such policies, and, if so, what should they look like?

8. What are the implications of this case study for the broader political and academic debate on mass transit development and its effects on urban development and city life?

1.5 Relevance

The relevance of this research can be split up into three categories. The next part will discuss the academic relevance, societal relevance and relevance of planners and decision makers of this thesis.

1.5.1 Academic relevance

This study has its focus on the effects of gentrification due to the construction of the BTS Skytrain in Bangkok. The gentrification theory attracted widespread attention since the 1950s in London England, its birthplace, and cities in the United States. It is a central research theme for urban social science, resulting in diverse international literature. The British sociologist Ruth Glass was the first to use the term gentrification to describe the urban change that was affecting inner-London. Ruth Glass used the term in an ironic way. Gentrification literally means the replacement of the existing population by gentry. The term makes fun of middle-class households who would still prefer a rural traditional way of life. Ruth Glass' predictions for London were spot on, the 2001 UK census data show that most of central London is now gentrifying. Gentrification has been studied further by among others Neil Smith and Chris Hamnett. There is tons of literature that studies the gentrification processes in European and American cities. Neighbourhoods like Brooklyn in New York or the centre of Chicago are classic examples that have been examined. In the 1950s and 1960s gentrification was a process that only occurred in developed cities. It was assumed that cities grow in an industrial revolution, and then move on to a more service-based economy that increases the middle-class and stimulates the suburbanization. The rent-gap in the inner city eventually causes the 'back-to-the-inner-city-movement'. This theory was applied on all cities. Cities in developing countries were assumed to be at an earlier stage in the developing process. However, today it becomes more clear that not all cities develop according the same system. American cities are all designed in the same manner and are therefore comparable with each other. But an American city differs substantially from an Asian city, as will be highlighted in section 5.3. This thesis is innovative because it will study gentrification from a Thai perspective. It will add to the discussion that Asian cities have different city systems than what has thus far been studied.

This study found the need to introduce the term 'silent eviction'. So far, in literature the term displacement is used to indicate the problems of gentrification. But displacement does not quite cover the specific issues that the upgrading of neighbourhoods cause. Displacement is also not

specifically a problem for gentrification but can apply in many situations; it is a broad term: Too broad, for this study. In this thesis, displacement is a result of silent eviction, and silent eviction is a downside of neighbourhood upgrading. The term 'silent eviction' refers to the displacement not from eviction but from contract termination as result of rising land prices. Because contracts are simply not renewed, there is nothing illegal about the process, causing that tenants have little rights. Silent eviction is a negative side effect of gentrification. It is a process that asks for further study because it is quite invisible. Because this invisibility, it is unclear if silent eviction is a serious problem. This thesis will add some material to fuel this discussion.

1.5.2 Societal relevance

Gentrification is a socially debated term. On the one hand, gentrification is seen as the saviour of cities, which are no longer suffering from a 'brain-drain' that is creating ghettos in the centre. Gentrification is turning the place of people in a city upside down. Middle- and upper-class move back to the re-developed centre, causing that poorer people have to move out of the centre, towards less desirable areas. This can cause community disruption by the original poorer inhabitants. It also causes displacement and it can mean economic decline for families. According to Lees, Slater and Whyle, displacement is the fundamental essence to gentrification. The gentrification issue has been an important political point in the United States and Western-Europe. But Asia is different than Europe and America. In Asia, countries like China, India, Indonesia and Thailand are rapid developing. Cities have strived passed their brothers in the States and Europe in both size and population growth. The assumption that Asian cities will develop in the same manner as developed cities has turned out to be untrue. The industrial revolution has been fast forwarded towards a service industry, but the expected population equilibrium did not appear. On the contrary, Asian cities are dealing with a 7% population rate, without any inclination that this will slow down (Worldbank). This rapid population growth is causing that urbanization problems are much more apparent in Asia than what developed countries had to deal with in the past. The gap between rich and poor in today's rapid developing cites is widening, inequality increases despite of the growing middle-class. In Bangkok, gentrification is one of those urbanization processes that cause an increase in inequality. The re-development of areas along the Skytrain is beneficial for the middle class and also overall for the city. But the negative effects for the poor are currently too large to dismiss. The societal debate over gentrification has not really begun yet in Bangkok, but the city is striving to improve circumstances for the lower class. Bangkok needs its blue-collar workers. They are the spill behind the cheap export production industry that fuels the Thai economy. It becomes more apparent that it is important to keep the lower class satisfied. It is the task of the lower class to fuel the debate about the

consequences of modernization and to get the attention of policymakers. This thesis can add in awareness about the relation between new mass transportation and the effect it has on people.

1.5.3 Relevance for planners and decision-makers

Concerns about injustices of displacement are highly politicized. In the Gentrification Reader, Lees et al. summarize the issue with displacement due to gentrification very clearly:

"For conservatives who favour minimal government interference with private-market innovation and competition, displacement is a regrettable, but small, unavoidable consequence of the long-term, never ending adjustment process of urban housing markets. Housing will remain most affordable, in this perspective, when the supply of housing services responds to the unregulated, efficient competition amongst the buyers and the sellers of housing services: well intentioned efforts to prevent displacement with rules like rent control will only worsen things over the long run by reducing developers' incentives to create more rental housing.

For analysts and activists of the left, by contrast, displacement is a systematic indicator – among with other injustices like homelessness – of the commodification of a basic human need. Housing, home and community, in this perspective should not be treated solely as goods and services to be traded according the rules of profit and wealth accumulation – but should be recognised as essential rights to ensure individual an societal well-being" (Lees et. al., 2010, p. 317).

This quote reflects that gentrification is not just a scientific theory, but it is also sensitive to political colour. Politicians who are more to the right of the political spectrum see gentrification as a regrettable but necessary consequence for the greater good. Politicians with a left focus see gentrification issues as an indicator that something is wrong with society and that basic compassion is lacking for the need to make money.

Bangkok is a unique city from many points of view. Its governmental system is also unique. Bangkok has a strong top-down way of policy making. Corruption is unfortunately in Thailand the most efficient way for developers or any other market party to get things done and to avoid the bureaucratic fuss. On paper, Thailand is a democratic country with a strong government. In practice this system is "weak, and it's the market that rules" (interview Thantishorn). This free market is also ruling the real-estate market.

The law in Thailand protects the landlord; if a contract is finished, a tenant has very little rights. However, a tenant can extort their compensation by protesting and organising his neighbours. All compensation that is given out is because of negotiation between tenant and landlord; hence, the title of this thesis, survival of the fittest: People that are bold enough organise themselves and demand some sort of compensation from the landlord. This is happening on a very small scale in

Bangkok, but proves to be fruitful. For example the neighbourhood of Klong Toey, which is the largest slum of Bangkok, has been fighting the government and landlords for years, it does not seem that the neighbourhood will ever be removed, the inhabitants are to strong and create too much difficulty (interview Bolsithi).

The issue of silent eviction needs to be studied in Bangkok; is there a problem and how big is this problem? Once it is recognised as an unwanted situation, it is necessary that the government get involved in this. The market simply cannot arrange issues that are done from a social point of view instead of an economic point. The laws that apply to evictions might also be desirable for the problems relating to silent eviction.

2. Research design

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is supplementary to the first and defines the research design. The research design consists of the different methods that are used throughout the analysis of the problem. The chapter finalizes with a thesis outline that will make the frame of this thesis clearer.

2.2 Methodology

This section will describe the different methods that were used in studying the research questions. While conducting this research the following tools have been used:

- Literature study
- Case study
  - Documents
  - Observation
  - Interviews
- Additional information sources

2.2.1 Literature study

The theory outlined in chapter three is the backbone and the frame for the case study. It has been written solely on the study of literature. It describes what gentrification is and why it is important in the world of planning. It also highlights the controversy around gentrification. To draw up this theoretical framework different books and articles have been used. The theories of Neil Smith and Chris Hamnett were helpful in explaining the gentrification theory. The book of Loretta Lees, 'Gentrification' discusses the definition of the concept, while Chris Hamnett discusses the importance and controversy. Different articles from 'the City Reader' were interesting to frame the history of city system theories. These 'classic' city systems are not outlined extensively, to keep the length of the theoretic frame manageable. Box 3.1 does discuss some of these theories very briefly. Literature has also been used to find evidence that corroborates my own judgement that a city in the United States does not develop the same as a city in Asia. The classic theories about city systems do not seem to fit a current developing city. Marc Gottdiener addressed this issue, which will be elaborated in 5.3.

The gentrification theory has clear pro- and opponents. One side sees gentrification as the saviour of the inner city, after the suburbanization has created a 'brain-drain'. The other side sees gentrification as a threat to the poor who depend on their place of living because they have fewer means to commute. There is some truth in both sides, as will be conceptualized in chapter three.   The

literature on gentrification ranges from 1964 when Ruth Glass introduced the term to today. This does not exclude that gentrification did not exist before it was named, but the literature written earlier has been found not relevant for this study. This is mainly to formulate a contemporary theory that highlights the most important aspects of the theory that are relevant for Bangkok. The literature written earlier did not add to that objective. Most literature is in English but some articles are in Dutch. Unfortunately the Thai literature remained inaccessible. All the literature used, also the literature that is not directly quoted, an be accounted for in the bibliography.

2.2.2 Case study

Introduction to the cases

Because of the nature of the problem statement, a case study seemed the most suitable method. Case studies are used often in the field of planning (Yin, 1989 p.14), because the research is not strictly quantitative, but it is about people. A case study allows retaining the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events, without having to compromise on information for generalization. The cases used for this research are two neighbourhoods in the city of Bangkok: Ari and Saphan Kwai. Bangkok is a rapidly developing city, one of South-East Asia's hubs. Despite of the economic progress the city has made, there is still a significant lower class, the so-called urban-poor. These urban poor depend on there work close to home because the public transport for them is out of reach. Busses are stuck in traffic and the Skytrain is expensive. To study the effects the Skytrain on these people, two stations will be studied. The development along the Skytrain line and especially around station areas is clearly visible, as well as the process of this development.

Ari station is almost at the end of the Sukhumvit line, the green line north. Station Ari fits the profile of a good case study. The gentrification is visible, but the area is not completely taken over yet like Siam. Siam station is the centre of the two Skytrain lines. This is a highly modernized area that has been transformed in high-tech 'white' shoppingmalls with elevated bridges. At Siam, it is possible to walk from aircon' to aircon' without stepping outside in the burning heat. This central station has been the most developed of all and therefore does not make a good case study, because it is impossible to trace back the transformation process. Ari is close to the end of the Sukhumvit line north. It is an originally rich-people-neighbourhood, but as everywhere in Bangkok, along the main roads poorer people are residing. The next station, Saphan Kwai is more home to the working class. These two areas seem to develop different. Ari is rapid turning into a high-rise condominium area with expats[9] and yuppies[10] as main residents. Saphan Kwai seems to be barely touched by the transformation. But it can be assumed, based on past developments, that the development will crawl

---

[9] Expatriate, a foreigner that is living outside his native country for work or leisure.
[10] Yup = Young urban proffesional. The New American Oxford dictionary states: A well-paid young middle-class professional who works in a city job and has a luxurious lifestyle.

towards the next Skytrain station and it's surrounding. Chapter five and six will elaborate on this. To study these cases, three methods have been used: Documents, observation and interviewing.
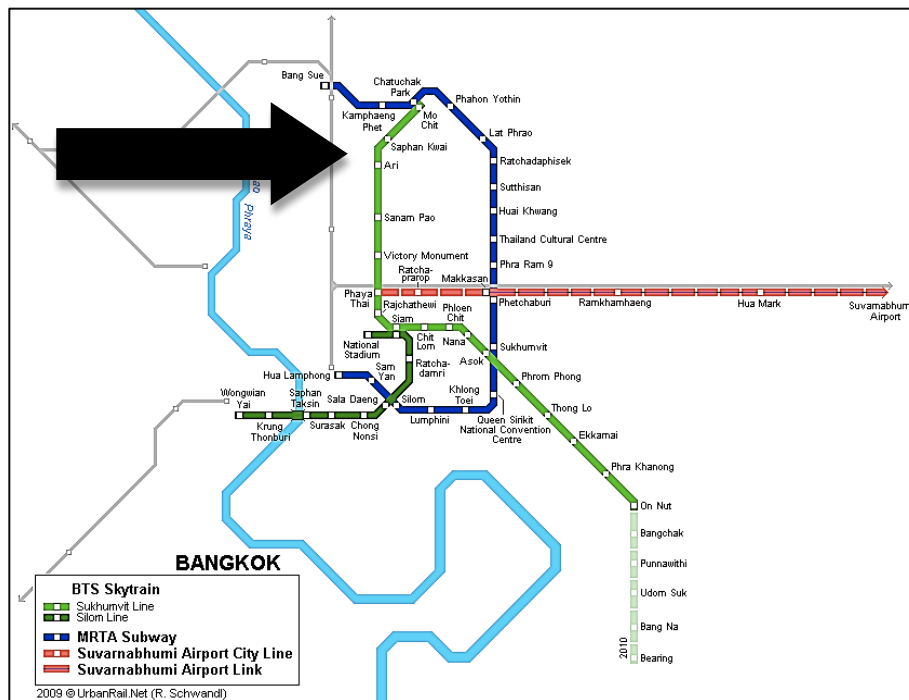
Figure 2.1 Bangkoks Mass Transport system. The green lines represent the BTS Skytrain. The arrow points at Ari and Saphan Kwai. Source: Urbanrail.net

Documents

To study the context of Bangkok, the politics and the cases, different kinds of documents have been an important component. Most of the documents were newspaper articles, magazines and even texts/opinions from different Internet forums. These documents are not objective, but represent opinions of different groups. Even newspapers are not an objective source, but the Nation and the Bangkok Post can be considered good newspapers for Thai standards. But these papers too struggle with objectivity versus income from advertisement. Internet has also been a relevant source. For example, there is an 'I love soi Ari' group on facebook[11] and Bangkok magazine dedicated a few articles online on the upcoming area of Ari. These sources served as opinions of one of the different groups that got affected by the Skytrain. Chapter six defines different groups that benefitted from the Skytrain, two of these groups are the expats and the yuppies. These are the groups that speak

---

[11] Facebook is an online network website where people can share their thoughts, photo's and friends. The targetgroup of facebook are students and adults, mostly with international connections. In 2008 facebook was ranked by compete.com as the most used online social network. www.facebook.com

good English, are middle to high educated and share their opinion online. These sources can all be accounted for in the bibliography.

The choice of Bangkok as a host city for the cases was mainly because Bangkok is an interesting city for planning researchers. On every street corner there is a visible planning conflict. But the choice for Bangkok made many aspects of the research difficult. The main problem for literature has been language. That is why the documents could only be used to identify the higher educated groups concerning the Skytrain. The other groups listed in chapter six have been identified using other methods.

Interviews

Two kinds of interviews have been conducted. First, in-dept interviews with experts are held in Bangkok. These people answered questions for example, what happened to the city since the BTS, what did the city look like before and how is it affecting the economical growth. These expert interviews did not give much information on the downsides of the process. Therefore, in addition to this, approximately thirty smaller interviews have been held with random people on the street who classified as either yuppie or blue-collar worker.

In-dept interviews:

- Mr. Wisarut Bolsithi, English-writing journalist for the Bangkok Post as well as for the website 2bangkok.com on November 22nd 2009, 09.00 hrs. Starting location Phaya Tay station, Bangkok.

This interview deserves some extra attention. It was not held at one location, instead, Mr. Bolsithi took me to the current eviction sites along the commuter railway of the SRT, known as the red line.

- Mr. Vija Chiasakul and Mrs. Sukumaporn Jongpukdee, National Housing Authority, November 26th 2009, ±14.00 hrs. Location NHA building.
- Mr. Krit Liutanakul, director of planning at BTSC, November 30th 2009, 14.00 hrs. Location, BTS building.
- Mr. Dan Tantisunthorn, research director of Jones Lang Lasalle, December 3rd 2009, 14.00 hrs. Location Lasalle office, Sathorn, Bangkok.
- Ms. Nok Rumpharwan, born and raised in the Ari area, currently living in New York. December 1st 2009, e-mail interview.

Conversations with residents:

In addition to these interviews with 'experts' I have tried to get some information from the inhabitants. For example how long they have been living here, what their rent is and how they feel about the BTS. This was difficult, because I do not speak Thai and most people in Bangkok speak little

to no English. With some help from four university students[12] it was managed to get some materials. Not all of those interviews turned out to be useful and others hold much information if you read between the lines. Also, a lot of information was lost in translating, but still there is enough information left to corroborate the study. These conversations are discussed in chapter six; they give confirming information on the third chapter about the theory of gentrification and chapter five concerned with gentrification in Bangkok. The list of these shorter interviews can be found in the bibliography.

Observation

In addition to doing interviews and obtaining literature, I have spent my time in Bangkok observing. The interview with journalist Wisarut Bholsithi brought me to the construction site of the SARL, the airport link, which connects to the Skytrain at Phaya Tai station. He also pointed out some places on the map where the BTSC was planning extensions on the green lines. I have been to a few of those areas and have seen that the developments have preceded the actual arrival of the Skytrain. Instead of following the Skytrain track, the high-rise buildings follow the main roads where the Skytrain is expected to arrive in a few years. Because my location of residence was located on Pradipat road, close to the BTS station Saphan Kwai, I have visited the area on many different times during the day. This observing has been the most time consuming from my time in Bangkok. I have been trying to link everything I saw to the research. Things that were stated in interviews I have tried to corroborate by looking. It worked the other way around too; I formulated questions for the interviews based on observations. Because I had spent more time in Saphan Kwai than I did in Ari, due to proximity, I obtained a bicycle halfway through my stay. This allowed me to visit the Ari area more often. A weakness from observation can be to maintain objective, this can be used as a critique on the method. As this can be the case, it is my opinion that if observation is combined with more consistent evidence, it is a welcome additional source of information.

2.2.3 Additional information

Asiarail 2009, November 10th -12th 2009 at the Four Seasons hotel in Bangkok. This was the 16th edition of the annual Asia Rail Congress, which is held annually in different countries in South-East Asia. I was lucky that Asiarail 2009 was held in Bangkok. I was also lucky that I negotiated a free entrance ticket for being a student, otherwise it would not have been possible to go. Being the host-city, the congress had lots of speakers that immediately or more indirectly affected the field of my study. Most interesting was Monday, when the topic of speeches concerned regional project updates for urban mass transit in Asia. At this congress information was gathered about the extension plans

---

[12] Many thanks to Issariya Mongkolphitphayathorn (Oil), Salila Trakulvech (Maprang), Kavintara Purahong (Noi), and Thanaporn Wongdontri (Pum) from Kasetsart University, Bangkok.

of the Skytrain and also about the master plan of Bangkok. Furthermore it was interesting for networking; I met Krit Liutanakul of the BTSC at this congress. The list of speakers at the congress is not included in the bibliography but can be provided on request.

2.3 Thesis outline
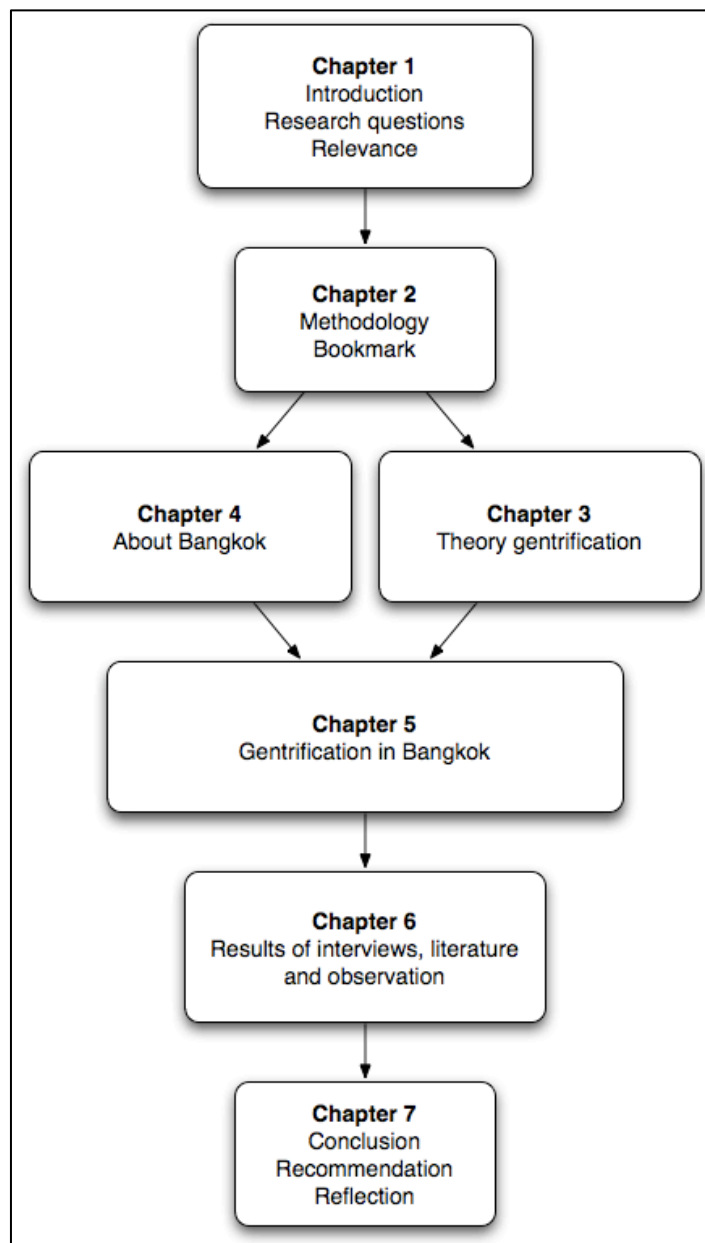
Figure 2.2 Frame of this thesis.

3. Gentrification

Dr. Dan explains gentrification in this cartoon by Garry Trudeau.
Source: Doonesbury © 1980 G. B. Trudeau. Reprinted with permission of Universal Press Syndicate.
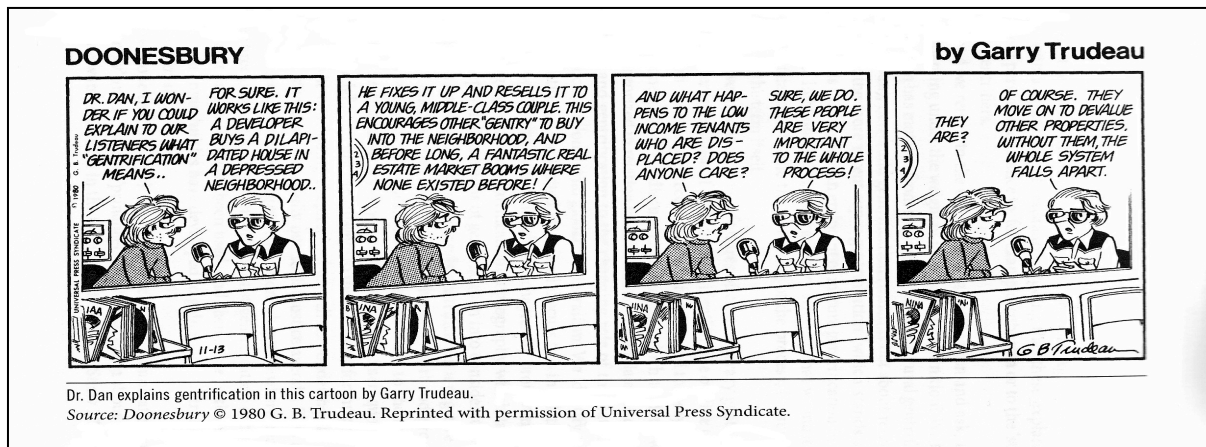
-Dr Dan, I wonder if you could explain to our listeners what "gentrification" means..
*For sure, it works like this: A developer buys a dilapidated house in a depressed neighbourhood..
*He fixes it up and resells it to a young, middle-class couple. This encourages other "gentry" to buy into the neighbourhood and before long, a fantastic real estate market booms where non-existed before!
-And what happens to the low income tenants who are displaced? Does anyone care?
*Sure we do, these people are very important to the whole process!
-They are?
*Of course, they move on to devalue other properties, without them, the whole system falls apart!

Figure 3.1 Cartoon about gentrification. Source: Lees et. al., 2008, p. 2.

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will outline and discuss the theory of gentrification. This theory will serve as a frame and backbone for the case studies. 3.2 Elaborates on what gentrification is and how the process works. 3.3 Will discuss why this theory has been and still is so important for the academic and also the political world. Paragraph 3.4 elaborates on the negative side of gentrification, displacement. In chapter five the term displacement will be replaced by silent eviction, because this received better response in Bangkok. Paragraph 3.7 holds a simple model of the gentrification cycle. There is controversy if gentrification is occurring in Bangkok, because the gentrification theory is very descriptive and strict. The model in 3.7 focuses purely on the processes and not on the implementation; gentrification knows many forms and expresses itself different in different city systems. Chapter five will further elaborate on why gentrification is occurring in Bangkok, as well as silent evictions.

3.2 Definition

The cartoon in figure 3.1 describes what gentrification means in a broad sense; new living opportunities for some versus displacement for others. The term gentrification is used to indicate the upgrading of a neighbourhood socially, culturally and economically. The rise of land prices and therefore displacement of many original inhabitants is generally an inevitable result. The term is referring to the English word 'gentry' which are people of "good social position, specifically (in the UK) the class of people next below the nobility in position and birth" (New American Oxford dictionary). Narrower, gentrification refers to the resettlement of middle- and upper class in the city, almost always meaning that the lower class inhabitants have to relocate. The concept of 'gentrification' was first coined by the British sociologist Ruth Glass in 1964. Ruth Glass was a Marxist and one of the pioneers in urban sociology (Lees et. al., 2008, p.4). The theory of gentrification is studied on the development of mostly North-American cities. In the 1960s the mass suburbanization of the middle and upper class; 'the out of the city movement', started. This caused a 'rent-gap' in many American city-centres.

Without a rent-gap, gentrification does not occur. Figure 3.2 illustrates the rent gap. The rent gap is the difference between what land is worth now and what its worth could be, so the difference between capitalized ground rent and potential ground rent.

In an urban environment, the value of land is a social creation; centrality and accessibility are important assets to land. For the rights to use the land, landowners demand money in the form of ground rent. These users are mostly tenants. A landowner or user can invest in a building on the land, to add value. For a few years, intensive development can make the site more accessible and desirable, allowing the owner to ask more ground rent. However, buildings and infrastructure age and the investment will eventually face unavoidable depreciation. Figure 3.2 shows a decreasing capitalized ground rent line. With each year, the gap between the capitalized ground rent and the potential ground rent widens. This gap is called the rent-gap and when this gap is large enough, it becomes interesting again for owners and developers to re-develop in a devaluated area. This re-development is the engine behind the gentrification theory.

The chart shows "Amount" on the vertical axis and "Time from construction date" on the horizontal axis, with curves labeled "Sales price", "Structure value", "Potential ground rent", "Capitalized Ground Rent", and the "Rent gap". "Initial development" is marked at the origin.

Sidebar text:

Capitalized ground rent: The actual economic return from the rights to use the land that is captured by the owner, given the present land use.

Potential ground rent: The maximum economic return from the rights to use the land that can be captured if the land is put to its "highest and best use".

Sales price: Structure value + capitalized ground rent

Structure value: Actual value of the building.

Figure 3.2 The depression cycle and the rent gap. The rent gap is the area between the red dotted lines. Source: Lees et. al, 2008, p. 52. Edited by Laurien Beijer.

3.3 Importance

Chris Hamnett describes in his paper five reasons why the gentrification theory received all the attention that it did (Hamnett, 1991, p. 173). These five motives can be added up into three main points that reflect the importance of this theory.

1. The gentrification theory turned out to be an interesting domain of study for the new generation of geographers and social scientist in the 1970s. This is the least important reason that Hamnett states. It is based on the point that around the 1970's geographers were getting tired of re-researching the old theories. It was a time of freedom en novelty, but they were short of new topics. The gentrification theory was challenging and interesting, but also convenient.

2. The gentrification theory was one of the first theories that really challenged the existing classic theories about city systems from Burgess and Hoyt, who argued that suburbanization was an irreversible process. This is a more convincing motive. Gentrification, like suburbanization before, represents a partial reversal of previous trends and could be the

leading edge of contemporary metropolitan restructuring (Hamnett, 1991, p.174). Box 3.1 elaborates on the classic city-system theories that preceded the gentrification concept.

3. The concept of gentrification raises a political debate about displacement of the poor. This is the most important reason why the theory received so much attention. Two polarizing arguments face each other: For some, gentrification is seen as the saviour of cities, reversing middle-class flight. But others regard to it as a threat to the inner city's 'blue-collar'-workers and are afraid that the city centre changes into a 'bourgeois playground'[13]. This battle expands from the political arena into the ideological battleground. The liberal humanists stress the role of choice and consumption versus the structural Marxists who argue against all capitalistic processes that disadvantage the working class, including gentrification.

Today, displacement due to 'back to the city movement' of yuppies[14] is less of an issue in European and American cities. This has different causes, for example policies to ease the effects. One of the big misconceptions in the gentrification theory is that cities in Asia develop the same as in America, only that they are at an earlier stage and will 'modernise' in time. The process of urbanization is very different from the first world pattern and involves factors as elite power, differences in state politics, the effect of the global economy and the effects of class structure" (Smith and Timberlake quoted in Gottdiener, 1994, p.250). After the industrial revolution in Europe and the United States, the population reached equilibrium, the growth stabilized. But Third World countries; Asia, South-America and Africa, contain three quarters of the world's population and are expected to grow much more rapid than Europe or America ever experienced. The rapid population growth is stimulating the urbanization and creating an uneven development between classes more extreme than found in the older developed nations. Developing cities suffer from a double population explosion: A high rate of natural increase and a high rate of in-migration. This population growth is the reason that the predicted 'equilibrium' that occurred in the first world cities will probably not occur in the developing nations. The gentrification theory cannot be transferred to Asian cities without first being adapted. The differences between developed cities and developing cities will be discussed again in chapter five.

---

[13] The term 'bourgeois playground' is from Schaeffer and Smith, 1986 quoted in Hamnett, 1991, p.174.
[14] Yup = Young urban proffesional. The New American Oxford dictionary states: A well-paid young middle-class professional who works in a city job and has a luxurious lifestyle.

Box 3.1: The classic theories on city systems

The basis of city system theory lies in the concentric zone theory of Ernest Burgess, who in his turn based on the model of Johann Heinrich von Thunen about agricultural land use. Burgess' model consists of a loop in the middle, the CBD that consist almost exclusively to commercial, financial and retail institutions. Zone II, the area of transition is home of the poorest residents, followed by a zone of the workmen, a better residential zone and a commuters zone which are the suburbs. The model is merely descriptive and generalizing and does not help in predicting behaviour, but was the basis for most spatial economists to base their model on. Homer Hoyt edited Burgess model. In 1939 he suggested a sectoral model, which was based on the 'wedges of activity' that extended outwards along transportation corridors, rather than concentric rings. After Burgess and Hoyt, Harris and Ullman suggested that a city does not have one single CBD, but clusters of activity. Generally, they found, the larger the city is, the more specialized the clusters are. These three concepts are illustrated in figure 3.3.

Chris Hamnett states that the gentrification theory challenges these classics. "Neighbourhood change was viewed by Hoyt and Burgess as a one-way process where 'the wealthy seldom reverse their steps and move backwards into the obsolete housing which they are giving up' (Hoyt, 1939, p. 118)"(Hamnett, 1991, p173). The one-way process of Hoyt and Burgess might be turning out to be a reversible process after all. William Alonso created a bid-rent curve to systemize city structures. "A bid-rent curve is a graph of the variations in land rents payable by different users with distance from some point in the market, usually the CBD" (Geographical dictionary). According to Alonso, higher income groups are less constrained than lower income groups in their choice of location, which can result in a preference for a CBD location instead of a quiet, spacious suburb. This process of re-inhabiting the city centre is called 'gentrification'. However, Alonso's theory was based on the assumption that the preference for space was more important than the preference for accessibility. The gentrification theory challenges Alonso's structural theory in these preferences.
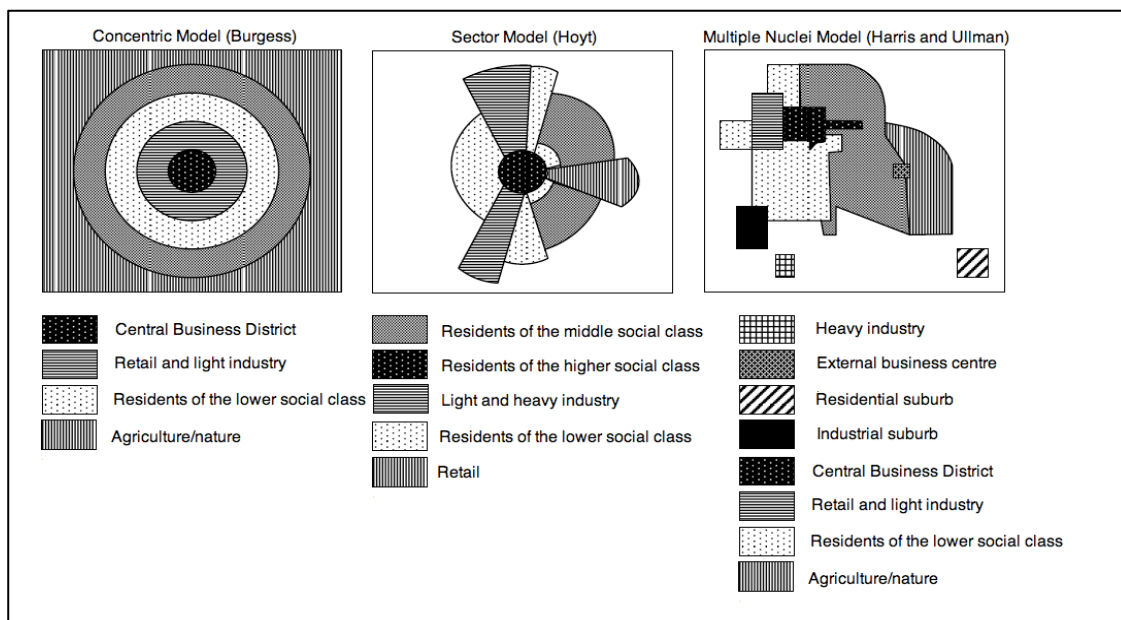

Figure 3.3 The three theories on internal city structure. Source: Verhetsel, 2007, originally published in Verhetsel, 1992, p.242. Edited by Laurien Beijer.

3.4 Displacement

Loretta Lees, Tom Slater and Elvin Wyly have edited the bulk of the literature on gentrification into the 'gentrification reader' that was published in 2010. In this reader, every article states that the main problem of gentrification is displacement. However, this term is too broad and does not have a clear definition. In the gentrification reader displacement is described as "the forced disenfranchisement of the poor and working class people from the spaces and places to which they have legitimate social and historical claims" (Lees et. al., 2010, p.317). The New American Oxford dictionary describes displacement as follows:

displacement |dis'plāsmənt|
noun
1 the moving of something from its place or position : *vertical displacement of the shoreline | a displacement of the vertebra at the bottom of the spine.*
• the removal of someone or something by someone or something else that takes their place : *males may be able to resist displacement by other males.*
• the enforced departure of people from their homes, typically because of war, persecution, or natural disaster : *the displacement of farmers by guerrilla activity.*
• the amount by which a thing is moved from its normal position : *a displacement of 6.8 meters along the San Andreas fault.*

The third definition is most similar to what is meant in gentrification literature: "the enforced departure of people from their homes, typically because of war, persecution, or natural disaster". This is also the definition that is used by the World Bank: "forced displacement refers to the situation of persons who are forced to leave or flee their homes due to conflict, violence, and human rights violations (Christensen, Harild, 2009, p.5). It is a bit far-fetched to state that gentrification is in the same line of horribleness as war, persecution or a natural disaster. The second definition in the dictionary, the removal of something or someone by someone or something else that takes their place, is also relevant. When gentrification occurs, the new gentry replace the original inhabitants.

So thus far, displacement can be described as a person that is forced to leave his or her home and is replaced by someone else. This is still too broad.

To comprehend the definition of displacement better, the concept of 'enforced' needs clarification. Chester Hartman describes that "the concept of force does not mean just the legally enforceable decision by someone who owns and controls the property to evict those living there as tenants; it also involves a decision by an occupant to sell or depart because external forces have made continued residence undesirable or impossible" (Hartman, 1984, published in Lees et. al., 2010, p.532). Displacement does not make any distinction between forced eviction by government or involuntary leave due to external factors, like the growing economy in the area. This thesis does need

to make this distinction, because an eviction that is government induced is bound by rules. However, an eviction that is market induced is less visible as eviction and therefore not bound by rules. Because this invisibility it does not create as much controversy as forced eviction that are government induced, it is a quieter process. In this thesis, displacement refers to one of the effects of the involuntary move, but does not imply the move itself. Displacement can be a psychological effect that follows on an involuntary move. A feeling of being 'out-of-place' can be caused by the loss of the community, the loss of a living situation, the change in economic perspectives etcetera. Because of the need for a more narrow term, that covers the market induced invisible forced movements, *silent eviction* will be used to highlight forced movement of poor due to contract termination or increase of rents. Chapter five will define this new term 'silent eviction' further.

3.5 Controversy around gentrification

Although residential displacement is recognised and empirically documented by researchers, is extend and existence as a problem have been debated. Concerns about injustices due to gentrification have in the United States always been politicised. On the one hand are the right-winged conservatives who favour minimal government interference. They see involuntary dislocation as an unavoidable consequence of the long term planning. For left, displacement is a systematic indicator of a lack of basic needs. The market simply does not care for social needs, so there is a task for the government here (Lees et. al., 2010, p.317). The evidence regarding the promise and threats of gentrification has to do with the very specific American situation. Howard Sumka recognises in his article from 1979 the seriousness of forced relocation for some households, he concludes that no federal policies are needed because there is no evidence that it is a problem. The policies could slow down the restoration of the fiscal balance in the city centre (Sumka, 1979 in Lees et. al, 2010, p.330). Sumka advocates revitalization while he has no evidence that silent eviction and displacement are *not* a serious problem, a perspective adopted by Chris Hamnett 30 years later. One of the most controversial studies to displacement that refuelled the discussion in the States was the article from Lance Freeman and Frank Braconi in the journal of the American Planning Association. They argued that if gentrification increases forced movements, than they should observe higher mobility among disadvantaged households residing in gentrifying neighbourhoods than among those residing elsewhere in the city. They conclude that lower income households in seven gentrifying neighbourhoods of New York were 19% less likely to move than poor households residing elsewhere. They speculate that poor households must appreciate gentrification. They conclude their article with:

"Insofar as gentrification…does not appear to cause the widespread dislocation of the disadvantaged that some observers have claimed…municipal governments may become more inclined to pursue policies explicitly geared to promoting it" (Freeman and Braconi, 2004 in Lees et al, 2010, p. 321).

Although the evidence in this study is just as uncertain and arguable as the studies that argue that silent evictions are a serious problem, the American government did not hesitate and adopted the research of Freeman and Braconi as true because of the convenience at that time.

Theorists like Freeman and Braconi and Sumka had their focus on the gentrifying middle class and less on the displaced working class. The second phase of research on gentrification was much more working-class oriented. Researchers like Chris Hamnett (1973), Peter Williams (1976 and 1978) and Neil Smith (1986) are the most notorious studiers of gentrification and its downsides. They all argue the same, that although gentrification can help prevent the decay of a city, it is not good that the poor that have a social claim on that area are being pushed out because of the revitalisation of the area. They argue that since there is no evidence on the effects and costs of displacement, gentrification cannot be promoted as the saviour of inner cities. Table 3.1 displays the possible pro and counter arguments of gentrification, used by various theorists and politicians.

THE POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES OF GENTRIFICATION	
Positive	**Negative**
	Displacement through rent/price increases
	Secondary psychological costs of displacement
Stabilization of declining areas	Community resentment and conflict
Increased property values	Loss of affordable housing
	Unsustainable speculative property price increases
Reduced vacancy rates	Homelessness
Increased local fiscal revenues	Greater take of local spending through lobbying/ articulacy
Encouragement and increased viability of further development	Commercial/industrial displacement
	Increased costs and changes to local services
Reduction of urban sprawl	Displacement and housing demand pressures on surrounding poor areas
Increased social mix	Loss of social diversity
Rehabilitation of property both with and without state sponsorship	Under occupancy and population loss to gentrified areas

Table 3.1 The pro's and con's of gentrification. Source Lees et al, 2008, p. 196. Original from Rowland Atkinson and Gary Bridge, 2005.

3.7 Concept

Gentrification is part of urbanization processes. Figure 3.5 shows the cycle of gentrification as it is referred to in this thesis. The trigger of the gentrifying area is the improvement of access to and from the area due to a new mass transit development. The new mass transit trigger is opening up the area, which, as discussed, raises the land value. The raised land value widens the rent gap because the potential ground rent increases. Even if landlords increase the current rents, the rent gap will still widen even more, the potential ground rent is too large. Landowners respond in making plans to redevelop their land. In order to do this they need the current tenants to move out. A part has already left because of the already increased rent, but the people who still live there will not receive a new rental contract. This is silent eviction: rising rents and contract termination, both because of the widening rent gap. To make the cycle round, because of the departure of the poor, the land value increases even more. This is the gentrification cycle that keeps going round until an area is completely over developed. It needs to be triggered from outside to start. This cycle will be used in the rest of the thesis. It is the gentrification process in a broad concept.
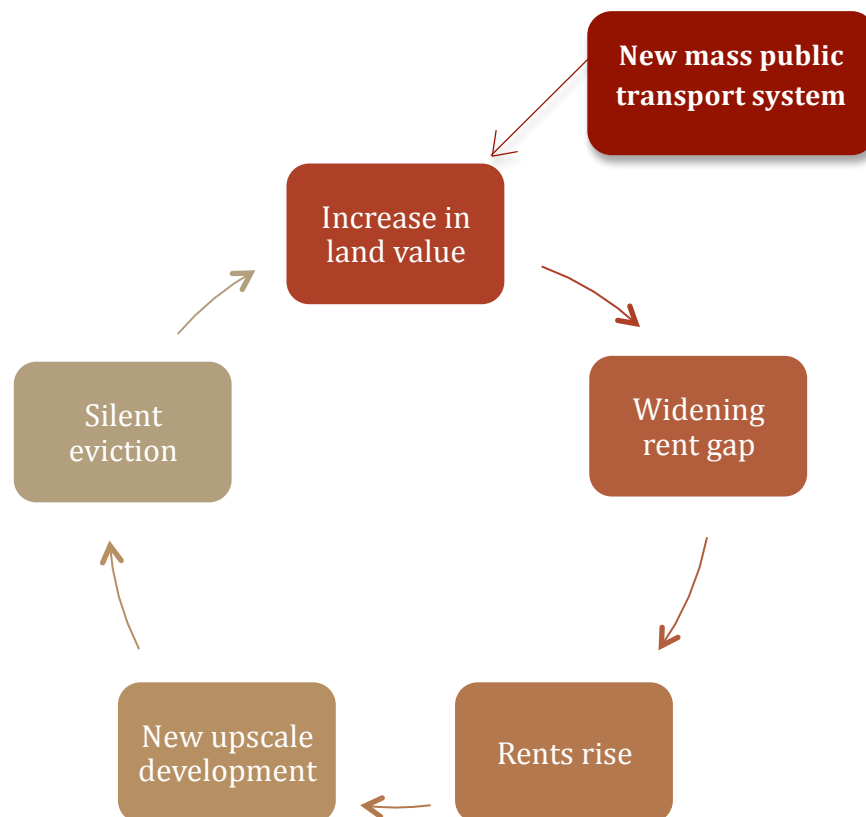

Figure 3.5 The gentrification cycle. Source Laurien Beijer

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter provided a concept that will guide the research on the case studies. The gentrification theory has been visualized in 3.7 as a cycle, implying that once the process has commenced, it will keep circling round unless the cycle is broken from outside. A new mass transit system that is developed by the government can start this cycle, because improved access is a valued asset to land. The value of the land that is within the range of this new infrastructure will increase and this will widen the rent gap. An outcome of this is that the land will be re-developed for a higher income group. An implication of this is that the stock of affordable housing declines. The poor cannot afford their rents anymore and will move outwards to areas that are still affordable. When the cycle just started, this will probably be just a few blocks further, but as the cycle keeps circling the development will sprawl outwards, further decreasing the affordable housing stock, and the implications of silent evictions will become more severe.

Whether the benefits for the public are greater than the negative side effects for a smaller group of people should be established in the next chapters but it is dependant on the size of the group of people that can be considered poor.

Gentrification is a visible effect of the modernisation of the city. A few examples that urbanization is not a process on its own are that people are better educated, make more money and can afford a condominium in the centre. The traffic jams are also an effect of modernisation, the better income causes that more people own cars. In fact, the gentrification process might be able to ease the roads, because people trade their car for a condo near the Skytrain. It is therefore not desirable to break the gentrification cycle. But the aspect of silent eviction does deserve more attention. First it should be studied how large the group of affected people is in relation to the public. It should be possible to guide the gentrification cycle by policies and urban planning in such a way that the negative effects will decrease or even disappear.

Chapter four will outline the relevant context about Bangkok. It is important to know certain aspects of a city before judging processes that are present. Chapter five will be the connection between this theoretical chapter and the context of chapter four. The gentrification cycle will be cited throughout this thesis.

4. About Bangkok

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will outline some of the facts and figures about Bangkok that are relevant for this thesis. The gentrification cycle that is introduced in chapter three needs to be triggered by an external factor. Because the cycle will be used to test cases of silent eviction in Bangkok, some background information of the city is needed. For example, the presence of poverty in the city and the nature of development need to be addressed. In order to do this properly, 4.2 will start with a compact history of Bangkok. Without knowledge of history there can be no plans for the future. Section 4.3 will elaborate on the growth and composition of the population. 4.4 will continue by describing the appearance of the city today. After these introducing sections, the presence of poverty will be discussed in 4.5. This will be linked to the cycle from chapter three. Section 4.6 continues on the presence of the Skytrain and the link to high-income groups.

This chapter holds many figures and photos that add to the text. It is encouraged to read the figures and photos as well as the text.

Figure 4.1 visualizes the geographical location of Thailand. Thailand is located in South-East Asia; it is bordered to Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Malaysia and India, which is on the other side of the Andaman Sea. Thailand has one mayor city, the prime city, and that is Bangkok. The city is located at the Bay of Thailand, which is a part of the South-China Sea.
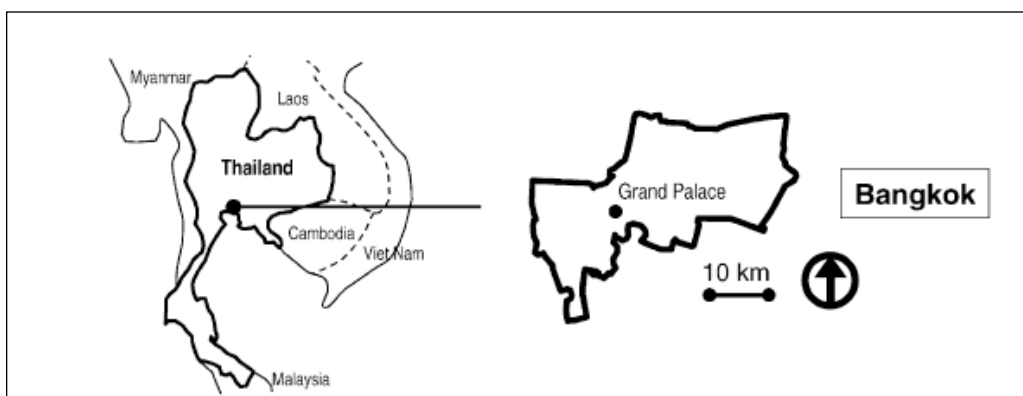

Figure 4.1 Topography of the BMA. Source: Murakami et. al.,2003, p.252.

4.2 History

Bangkok was founded in 1782 to be the new capital and the seat of the Chakkri dynasty, with Rama I as king. Bangkok is the third capital city for the kingdom Siam, following Ayyuttaya that ruled Siam for 400 years and Thonburi, located on the western bank of the Chao Praya River, which is now part of Bangkok. Bangkok was founded on a small Chinese settlement called Ban-Kok, meaning 'the water hamlet of the wild plum tree'. After completion of the royal palace and the new Buddhist monasteries, the city received a new name: Krung Thep, city of Angels. However, foreign traders continued to call the city Bangkok and so it would stay till today.

In the early history of Bangkok, canal building was one of the main activities. Bangkok had a full system of working canals and became known as Venice of the East. The water system was the most important transportation system. In 1861 European diplomats and merchants made a request toward the king that they needed roadways in the city for horseback riding, just as they would do at home. The road construction stimulated the change in the urban system, from a water-based toward a land-based city. Towards the end of the 19th century the population of Bangkok comprised about half a million people. During the reign of king Rama V, 120 new roads were constructed, inspired by the colonial cities of Penang, Calcutta, Singapore and Batavia (now Jakarta). The Germans were brought in to design railways while the Dutch designed the main station 'Hualamphong'. Although Bangkok has never been colonised, it took example from colonised cities and western expertise. The first railway opened in 1893 and Bangkok was during that time a prosperous city. Marc Askew states, "Thai urbanism has long been marked as an orientation to the outside world and cosmopolitanism in striking contrast to its subject agrarian hinterland" (2002, p. 20). Already in 1913, the capital was twelve times the size of the second largest city of Siam, Chiang Mai. In 1936, the cities built-up area comprised 43 square kilometres, in contrast with 13 square kilometres three decades earlier.

The revolution of 1932, which was more a coup of the bureaucrat elite, reduced the influence of the monarchy. Royalty has been absent from the city until the arrival of the current king in 1950, King Bhumibol Adulyadet, also called king Rama IX. In 1939, during the new nationalist regime the country Siam was renamed into Kingdom of Thailand, and multiple monuments were put up, like the Democracy monument and the Victory monument (Askew, 2002, p. 45). The changes during the revolution were not substantial and until the Second World War, Bangkok was still a service-dominated commercial city that relied on the world system, with a hinterland that was mostly focussed on agricultural export. After the war, uncertain times began, but the urbanisation continued.

In 1957 Field Marshall Sarit Thanarat gained power through a coup. His idea of city planning was, according to Marc Askew, 'basic and unsophisticated'. He banned pedicabs (or tuktuks) because they

were unsightly; he cleared out major slums and attempted a vain effort to send migrants back to the countryside. The planning was left to foreign consultants and Thai technocrats, who actually established a master plan for Bangkok in 1960. More plans followed, but none had statutory force. In 1992 a master plan was adopted, but it was "still a symbolic exercise and to decorate the wall; the power to shape the city lay elsewhere" (Askew, 2002, p.55) By 1970, Bangkok had grown to 184 square kilometres. The city had grown rapidly and the housing supply could not keep up. The overcrowded areas cannot be defined as slums, but as a mixture of all income levels. The already existing slums were pretty well maintained, but new squatter slums were appearing very fast and comprised almost only migrants. Many settlements occupied land in the inner circles of the city, due to shortage of affordable shelter and the need for accessibility to work (Askew, 2002, p.59). In 1972 the municipalities of Bangkok and Thonburi were joined in the BMA, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration. Bangkok today has grown outside of the BMA boundaries already; especially toward the bay in the south, the city is still growing.

4.3 Population

4.3.1 Number of inhabitants

According to data from the National Housing Authority[15], the population of the Bangkok agglomeration was estimated in July 2009 at 6,720,000 people. These numbers are from the National Statistical Office of Thailand, who performs a census every five years. The United Nations demographic yearbook registers about the same number. From the data website[16] of the United Nations the number is about a million people higher, 7,372,000 people. All these different numbers consist of registered citizens. Estimations of the total population of the built-up area are more fuzzy and range between 9 and 15 million people. Figure 4.2 holds a graph of the population growth of Bangkok in comparison to the population growth of Thailand. The declining growth rate for Thailand is the result of a government sponsored family planning program. Thailand has lowered its birth rate quickly - and substantially - thanks to the creativity of family planning approaches; Use of contraceptives among married couples has increased from 15 to 70 percent, and in 15 years Thailand's population growth rate has been cut in half (Frazer, 1992).

Approximately 33%[17] of the Thai population is living in and around a large city and Bangkok is by far the largest city in the country. The graph in figure 4.2 shows that although the growth rate for Thailand is declining, the rate for Bangkok continues around two percent. This implies that the urbanization of Thailand is increasing. There are still many people that move from the countryside

---

[15] Data received from Chongchit Bumrungpong on November 27th 2009.
[16] http://data.un.org/
[17] Ministery of Economic affairs, the Netherlands.
http://www.evd.nl/zoeken/showbouwsteen.asp?bstnum=5836&location=

towards Bangkok to earn money for themselves and their family. A conversation with a taxi-driver on a random day verified this trend. The man could express himself very well in English and claimed that as soon as he made enough money, which should be in about two years, he would join his family again who lived in a rural village up north. The city was horrible to live and life was better before he moved. The only thing that drew him to Bangkok was to make money to sustain his family.[18]

4.3.2 Origin

After the Thai, the Chinese are the most represented ethnic group in Bangkok. The Chinese settled on the banks of the Chao Praya River before the Thai did (see paragraph 3.2), resulting that almost every Thai has Chinese ancestors. The majority of the Chinese has integrated well in the Thai society and are not bound to Chinatown in Bangkok. The minority groups, Malay, Mon, Khmer and other mountain tribes, live mostly outside of Bangkok, near the borders of Malaysia, Myanmar and Cambodia. Besides the Asian import, Bangkok is home for a large expatriate[19] community. The expatriates in Thailand come from all over the world and made Thailand permanently or short-term their new home. The first signs of gentrification in Bangkok, the redevelopment of condominiums at Sukhumvit road, were mostly homes for the expat community. In a way, the expats have triggered the gentrified lifestyle in Bangkok.
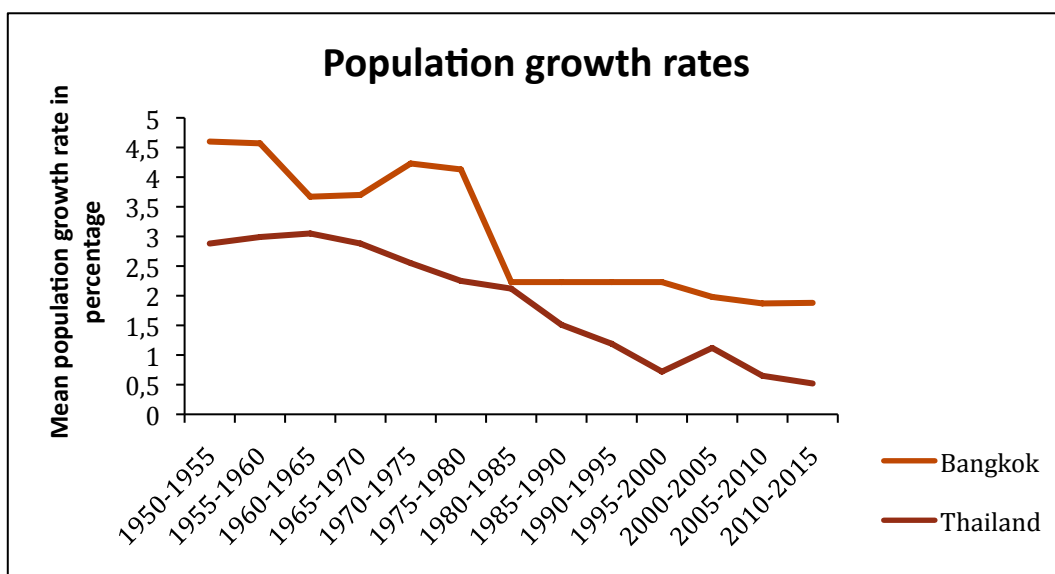
Figure 4.2 Population growth rate for Bangkok and Thailand. Source: Bangkok data UN 2001, Thailand data UN 2008 http://data.un.org/

---

[18] Coversation with a taxi driver who was taking me to one of my interviews. This conversation was not planned and I did not write the name and date down. It came to mind again while I was reading Gottdieners book.
[19] An expatriate (expat) is a person who lives outside their native country. Thailand has a very large expat community in comparison with other countries in the world. There is a difference in short-stay expats, they are usually sent out from their business. This group has a relatively high salary and do not master the Thai language. The long-stay expats are people who chose voluntarily to come to Thailand. This is the larger group. These people can be retired elderly who buy a second house. Others give up their job in their home country and are attracted to the good life of Thailand. But also criminals are a big part of the longstayers. Thailand does not exchange criminals to other countries and that makes Thailand a safe haven for all sorts of serious criminals

4.4 City view

The appearance of Bangkok's streets has changed drastically over the last decades. The former nick name 'Venice of the East' can today be replaced by 'Los Angeles of the East'. The streetscape of Bangkok used to be dominated by the pointed golden roofs of the 'Wat's' (Buddhist temples) and the many canals. But Bangkok modernised quickly and a land-based economy replaced the water-based transportation. Many canals were filled up to serve as roads. Wat's are still being built everywhere, but they no longer dictate the skyline. Today the skyline of Bangkok is towered by the many skyscraper offices and condominiums, and the concrete from the roads, elevated expressways and elevated Skytrain-track overshadows the streets. Bangkok has transformed into a congested, car-dependent city.

The expressways removed much of the view from existing streets and made underlying streets look like tunnels, see the photo in figure 4.4. Between 1947 and 1957 the number of private cars in Bangkok increased over 650 percent, representing 87 percent of all cars in Thailand. Figure 4.4 is a graph of the growth of the number of cars in Bangkok between 1960 and 1990. Despite of the growth, the graph still displays only 170 cars per 1000 inhabitants in 1990. If the majority of Bangkok residents would have a car, the problems would certainly escalate. In Thailand the car is considered a high status symbol, it is a wanted objective to achieve. Cars are also necessary because of the lack of efficient public transportation. Until ten years ago, the only alternative to the car was the bus, which would be stuck in traffic too. Since 1999 the BTS Skytrain, a mass transit system, is in operation, followed by its underground sister five years later, it relieved the inner city a little from congestion. It was not good for the streetscape however, see figure 4.5.
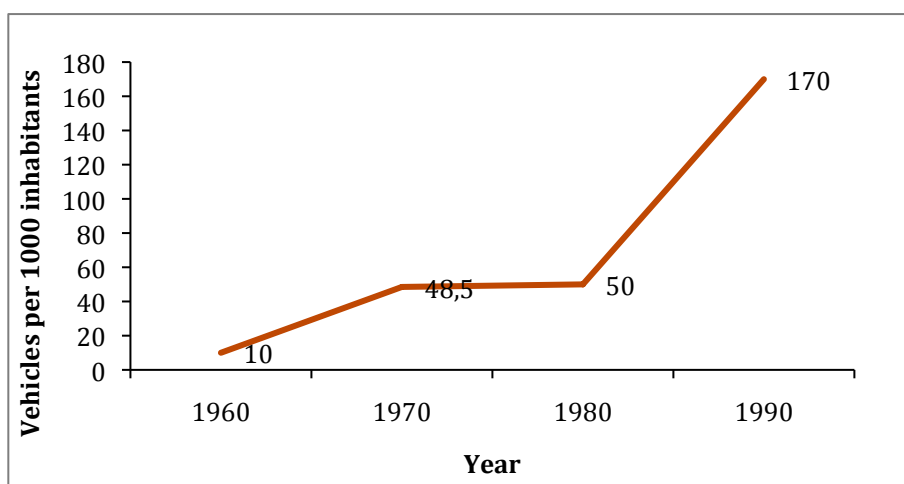

Figure 4.3 Vechicle ownership trend in Bangkok. Source: Ketraungroch, 2008. Original statistics from OTP.

Figure 4.4 Crossing Pradiphat and Rama VI road. Source: Laurien Beijer

Figure 4.5 Crossing Pradiphat and Phaholyothin Road and the Skytrain. Source: Laurien Beijer

4.5 Poverty

"While the average income of primate city residents might be higher than rural counterparts, the inequality of income and of quality of life is so severe in primate cities that the standard of living is less than in rural areas"
(Bradshaw and Fraser quoted in Gottdiener, 1994, p. 256).

Thailand is still considered a developing country and like every developing country, there are too many people living below the poverty line. It is a common misunderstanding that all the poor are living in slums. A slum is an area where people reside because they cannot get a real home, either because of lack of money or lack of adequate housing. Almost all the people living in slums are poor but not all the poor live in slums. In Bangkok, neighborhoods are very mixed; a detached 3-storey house can be found next to an overcrowded apartment complex, while across the street new condominiums are being build. The urban poor are living everywhere where they can make some economic profit or have access to go to such a place.

The City Report of Thailand (UN) makes a distinction in rates of poverty. There are the *very poor*, people who cannot afford three meals of 12 Baht[20] a day. Estimated by the UN is that Bangkok holds about 371.000 people who are living like this. Than there are the *typical poor,* a two person household who both earn 125 baht a day, with two dependable children. The typical poor comply around 20 percent of the Bangkok population (Pornchokchai, 2003, p.17). It is possible that the effects of the gentrification cycle for Bangkok are considerable, because of the number of poor compared to the whole population or public is approximately twenty percent.

Numbers on poverty do not provide a complete picture. Depending on who wrote the article or did the research, poverty numbers for Bangkok vary enormously. For example, the NHA measures poverty by the number of slum houses, but many of the poor do not live in the slum areas. Figure 4.6 is a representation of the slum areas, provided by the NHA. This map is called 'the poverty map', but this name is misleading, for not all poor households are represented. This map only represents the slums, not the poor that rent an apartment in a non-squatted building and also social housing is missing. It does not matter for this thesis what the correct numbers are, because when looking further beyond the business districts and touristic attractions of Bangkok, there can be no discussion about the existence of poverty in the city. Therefore the numbers of the United Nations, that twenty percent of the Bangkok population can be considered poor, will be leading in this thesis. Figure 4.6 shows the slums and the relation to the Skytrain and the metro. As seen in the figure, the slum areas follow the main roads and not the Skytrain (green) and metro lines (blue). There could be two

---

[20] 100 Thai Baht(THB) = +- 2 Euro

arguments that the mass transit lines do not follow the slum pattern. The first is that squatters tend to locate on accessible areas, usually close to main roads or railroads because the bus and train are affordable modes of transport compared to the mass transit lines that are expensive modalities. The river is also a preferable location to squatter. The second reason could be that the land around the mass transit lines is more intensively developed than other areas in Bangkok. Because the gentrification cycle has already gone round a couple of times, the slums could have disappeared together with other affordable housing in the silent eviction process. The land is now too valuable too allow squatting.
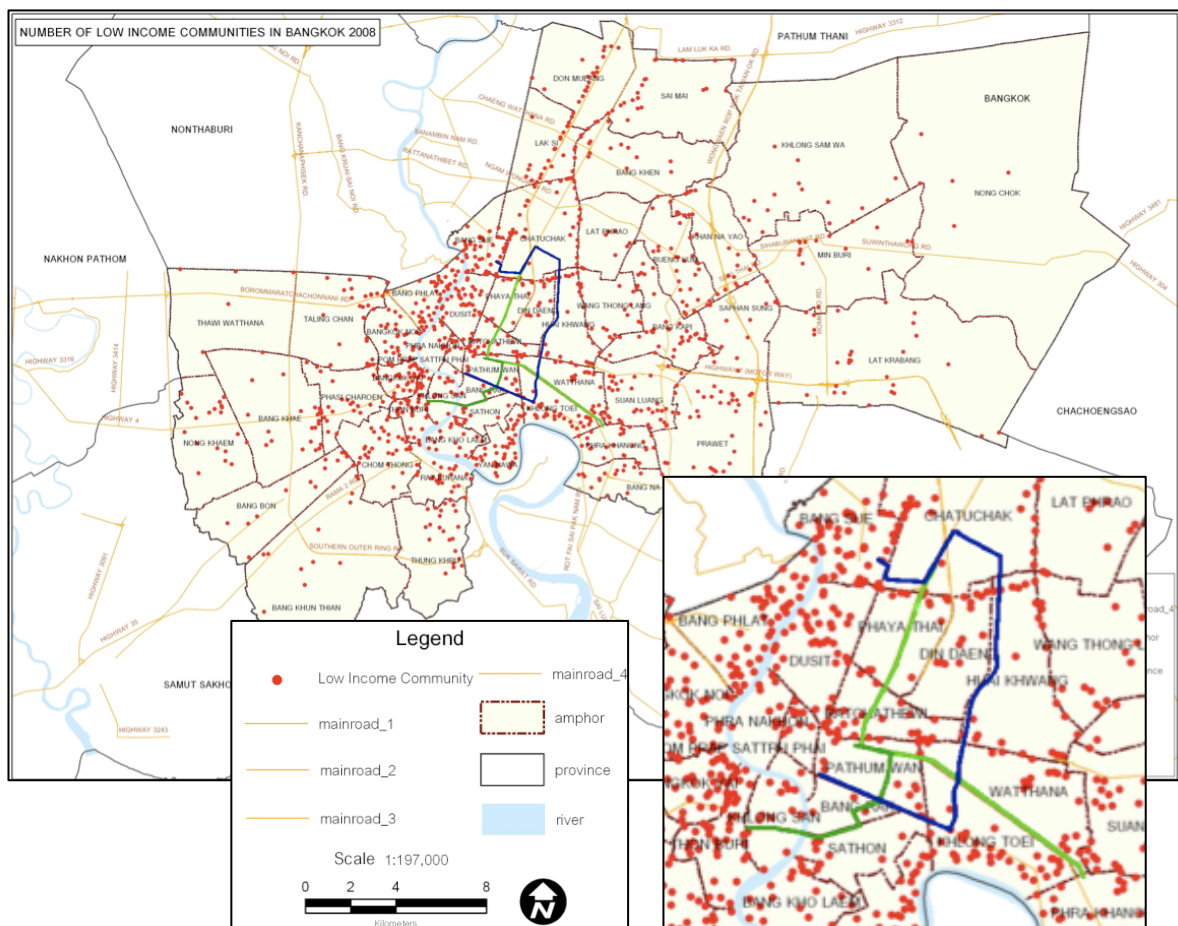

Figure 4.6 Slum areas 2008 and mass transit lines. Skytrain is the green line, the metro is blue. Source: National Housing Authority, edited by Laurien Beijer

4.6 BTSC and public transport

"Public transport is a sustainable form of urban transportation and serves as a promising solution to the problem of transportation demand in most urban cities around the world" (Wong and Lam, 2006, p. 111).

4.6.1 What is the BTS?

The roads of Bangkok have been clogged with passengers. Busses are overcrowded. The city is literally standing still. In 1993 the congestion problem even became classified as a national crisis. The need for an efficient mass transit system had become vital for the economic upturn of the city. In 1999, on the kings 72th birthday, the BMA (Bangkok Metropolitan Authority) opened its new mass transit system, the BTS[21] Skytrain, which is an elevated heavy-rail system running above the business district of Bangkok. Why the choice for a concrete track high above the ground? First, an underground system was considered too expensive at that point, so the system had to be above the ground. But since the grounds in Bangkok are already over-occupied, it was decided that an elevated track, following the busiest roads, should be the best solution. The second reason that the track is elevated is because of the risk for flooding. During the monsoon rains every year, many parts of Bangkok flood for a few days to a few weeks.
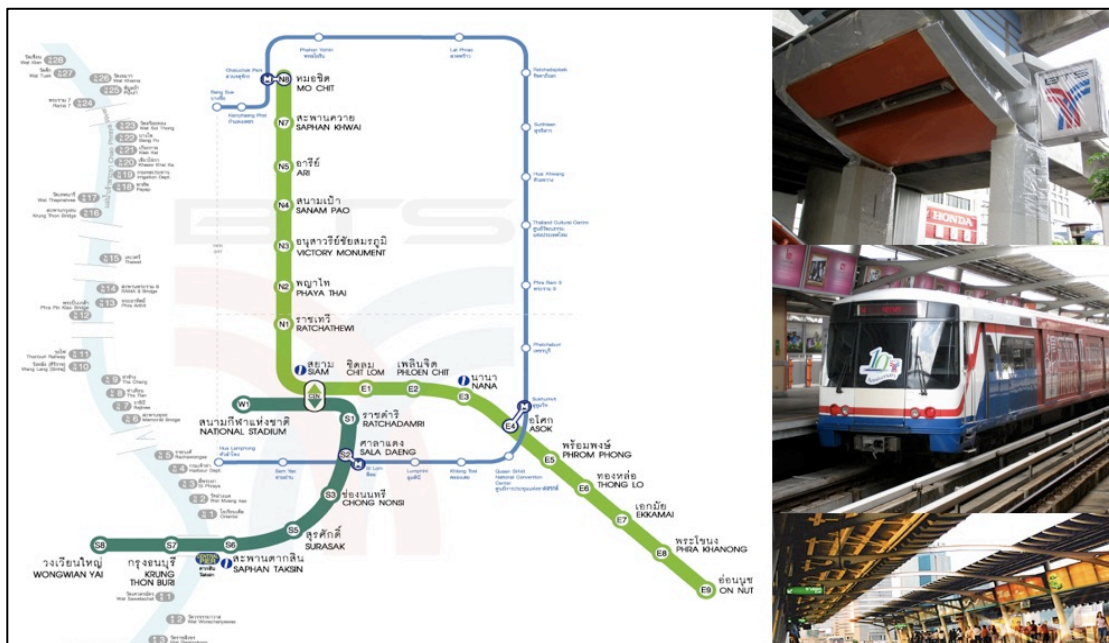
Figure 4.7 Current mass public transport systems. On the left is the rivertaxi. The blue line represents the MRT, the underground metro. The two green lines are the BTS skytrain. Source: Map BTS website, photos Laurien Beijer

---

[21] BTS and BTSC are used simultaneously. In general, BTS is used to refer to the actual skytrain, since the Thai do not use the word 'Skytrain'. BTSC is referring to the company behind the Skytrain. The word Skytrain is originally derived from the Vancouver Skytrain, which was an example for the Bangkok system. Foreigners keep using 'Skytrain' or 'BTS Skytrain'. But when asking for directions in Bangkok, mention BTS.

Figure 4.7 shows the current mass transit system of Bangkok. The blue line is representing the Bangkok underground system, operated by BMCL. It has three intersections with the Skytrain lines. The lightgreen line represents the Sukhumvit line, 16,8 km from 'On Nut' south to the Mo Chit' terminal north. The dark green line is the Silom line, which runs from 'National stadium' to 'Wongwian Yai', on the other side of the river. This line intersects with the water taxi at 'Saphan Taksin' station.

4.6.2 BTS implications

Although the Skytrain adds significantly to the accessibility of the inner city, it is not for everyone. Mike Jenks writes that the elevated design of the Skytrain is creating inequality: "At this level there are direct pedestrian links from the stations into some of Bangkok's prestigious shopping malls and hotels, and links to commercial areas. On the streets beneath this massive structure, the vibrant chaos of Thailand exists, seemingly untouched by the world above"(Jenks, 2003, p.547). Jenks argues that the Skytrain is creating two different worlds, one for the middle class and the rich and one for the rest. The target group of the Skytrain is indeed the middle- and upper class of Bangkok. This can be assumed because the lines only reach the business and commercial areas. Tickets are also very expensive, compared to a bus ride of 7 Baht. A ride on the Skytrain costs between 15 and 45 Thai Baht (BTS website). Mike Jenks takes it a step further, according to him, it is not just the poor, but it is the majority of Bangkok inhabitants that cannot afford to ride the BTS Skytrain (Jenks, 2003, p. 547). Mike Jenks does not base himself on figures, but compared to the estimation of the UN, that 20 percent of the Bangkok population can be considered poor, this statement of Jenks seems plausible. Also, the Skytrain is triggering the real estate market around the stations. Whether this is beneficial for the poor or harmful will be discussed in chapter five and six. The BTSC counters Jenk's argument; they state that the price is not too high for the service that is delivered. An average ride is 25 Thai Baht, which is already cheaper than when the Skytrain first started operating. The BTSC is a private company, without government support. Apart from maintaining the current system, the BTS wants to extend the current lines; this requires money. The proposed extensions will add significant to the accessibility of Bangkok[22]. The BTSC does claim that it is because of the Skytrain that the property market changed. "The real estate market, especially for residents, had to catch up in areas where it wasn't that developed yet" (interview Liutanakul). The BTSC does not see any harm in this development; on the contrary, it is good for the city. These arguments will be discussed further in chapter five and six.

---

[22] Stated by Krit Liutanakul, planning director at the BTSC, 30-11-2009.

Figure 4.8 The elevated track of the Skytrain. Source: Laurien Beijer

4.7 Political system

At time of this writing, the situation in Bangkok is very sensitive. The opposition of the current government, supporters of ex-prime-minister Thaksin also called the red-shirt-group, have stormed the parliament building on April 6, 2010. In reaction to this and other incidents, the current government has called a state of emergency. In response, the red-shirts have declared war to the government and have threatened to siege provincial town halls (2bangkok and NRC Handelsblad).
The above actual situation is a continuance from disturbances that are going on for a decade as a result of the dismissal of ex-prime minister Thaksin who was accused of corruption and is cited here to illustrate the sensitivity of politics in Thailand and the uncertain position of the government.

Bangkok is one of the two special administrations of Thailand. The other one is Pattaya. These special administrations choose their own governor, unlike in the other 75 provinces[23] of Thailand, where the Thai government appoints a governor. This special administration is called the BMA, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration. However, the built-up area of the city expands far beyond the borders of the BMA. The Bangkok build-up area is part of the BMA and six other provinces: Nothaburi, Samut

---

[23] A province in Thai is called 'changwat'.

Prakan, Pathum Thani, Nakhon Pathom and Samut Sakhon. Bangkok is subdivided into 50 districts or 'khet', which in turn are divided in 'kwaeng'. Figure 6.1 in chapter six shows the districts of the BMA.

The BMA government is split up in two parts: the governor and the BMA council. The governor is the chief executive of Bangkok. The people elect him or her for a four-year term. The governor then appoints four deputy governors to look after the administration. The citizens also elect the members of the BMA council. There is one councillor to represent 100,000 people[24].

To describe the government of Bangkok, words as 'bureaucratic' and 'corrupt' come to mind. Rod Strickland describes the situation as:

"Responsibility for the transport sector is divided among a number of ministries and agencies within each ministry, leaving no single body with the power or authority to tackle the complex issues involved. It is the failure of each of the agencies to implement individual projects, rather than the absence of central guidance and policy direction, that has led to the lack of progress. Examples of this abound, noticeably with regard to responsibility for the development of rapid transit systems"
(Stickland, 1993, p. 4).

John Tantisunthorn, research director of Jones Lang Lasalle in Thailand describes the BMA as follows:
"There is too much regulation. The government is rapped in capitalism, unmonitored development and overregulation. They have gotten to a point where they cannot do anything anymore; even the basic things are difficult" (interview 3-12-2009).

This political situation, over-regulation, and at the same time an inclination to corruption, are causing that the issue of silent eviction is snowed under a pile of other, more urgent matters and will not be on the agenda anytime soon if other factors do not change.

---

[24] http://www.mapsofworld.com/cities/thailand/bangkok/

4.8 Conclusion

The contextual factors that this chapter hands are important to establish differences between developed cities and Bangkok. First, although the city is just as old as the first cities in the United States, Thai culture is much older and continued to shape the city. This has resulted in a city that has grown out of its boundaries and reflects chaos everywhere. The Skytrain is bringing some order in this chaos. . It could be that these are already removed due to the gentrification cycle, the land got more expensive and attractive for new development. At first this new luxury style of living in condominiums was meant for the expatriate community, but this way of living is starting to attract high-educated Thai too. There are no slums to be found close to the Skytrain as figure 4.6 shows. The absence of slums does not equal absence of poor people. Most of the poor in Bangkok live in apartment complexes scattered throughout the city.

Bangkok suffers from suburbanization from the well educated and a flow of poor migrating to the city. The population is not expected to reach equilibrium any time soon and continues to grow. This is mainly because the hinterland of Thailand is still very poor. The flow of poor uneducated people in search of a way to make money continues, resulting that a large percentage of Bangkoks residents is still considered poor to very poor by the United Nations.

Currently, the liveability of Bangkok is negatively affected by the traffic congestion. Devaluated apartment complexes and concrete from the elevated highways and Skytrain adorn the street. The gentrification cycle is therefore welcomed as the necessary process to upgrade the city. Because this enormous need for upgrading, the negative effects like silent eviction and displacement are insignificant to the economic growth and the nicer appearance of the city. However, the group that gets affected by the Skytrain might be just as large as the group that benefits from it, there are no hard statistics but many indirect leads that this might be the case. Than where does the public good lay? From 4.7 it seems that the BMA is sensitive to lobbying of private parties. It seems that acting in favour of the public good might be overshadowed by acting in favour of the purse.

Chapter five will further elaborate on this problem of public good, as well as on the concept of silent eviction. Chapter five will also connect the gentrification theory from chapter three to the situation of Bangkok.

5. Gentrification and Bangkok

5.1 Introduction

Chapter three concluded that the term displacement was not sufficient to illustrate the issues, especially the specific issues going on in Bangkok that this study focuses on. Paragraph 5.2 introduces a term that is used in this study only, to illustrate the problems. The term displacement will now only be used as a psychological problem as a result from a forced move. This move will be referred to as silent eviction, 5.2 will elaborate why. Than, section 5.3 will discuss if gentrification is an issue in Bangkok. There is literature that is claiming it is not. In this paragraph it will be argued why gentrification is present in Bangkok and in what form. The chapter closes with a short conclusion.

5.2 Definition silent eviction

During the interviewing in Bangkok, it was difficult to explain what displacement meant, the term was too vague and too broad for a study in Thailand. For the persons that I interviewed, it was difficult to refer to a problem that they couldn't see. As alternative, I referred to evictions, but than not by the government. This usually made the story clearer. The broadness of the term 'displacement' calls for a new concept: A term that reflects the seriousness and invisibility of the problem, and draws a distinction between involuntary move because of external factors and a move forced by a government. For this goal, the concept of 'silent eviction' is introduced. I grew into this term during my stay in Bangkok and slowly found that it does cover what displacement does not.

Silent evictions refer to involuntary moving of households because of economic growth in the neighbourhood. It includes moving because of rents that keep rising, until the point where a household simply cannot afford it anymore. It also includes contract termination by the landlord who wants to build a new structure for a higher income group on the land. The term does not include forced removals done by government with the back up of the law. Silent eviction can cause displacement but it is not the same. The word 'silent' stores on the invisibility of the issue, while 'eviction' covers the seriousness of the problem, as well as the issue of involuntary or even forced relocation. Silent eviction is counter to forced eviction. Forced evictions are visible and well organised; because they are visible, compensation measures have to be met. In the case of silent eviction, this refers to a situation that is hardly visible. People leave their houses silent and do not blame the landlord, he did not make the economy and this is how it works. Because the invisibility of the issue, governmental officials are unsure if it is a problem, they are even unsure if this is not just

one of those 'pushed out of balance' American stories. Because of this, landlords have no obligation whatsoever to keep rents low or to offer any kind of compensation to the silent evicted.

5.3 Is Bangkok gentrifying?

5.3.1 Differences between 'developed' and 'developing' cities

The title of this section refers to developed and developing cities. This is not a completely just name: 'Developing' refers to cities in Asia like Beijing, Jakarta and Bangkok, but also cities like Johannesburg and Rio de Janeiro. 'Developed cities' refer to cities in America en large cities in Europe, for example New York, Chicago, London and Paris. This way of naming is not completely just because some aspects of developing cities are more modern than their brothers in the United States, however that is not the subject of discussion here. This section will discuss the differences between Asian cities that are currently rapid developing to American and European cities that have already experienced the extreme growth.

Mark Gottdiener addresses a few misconceptions as far as urbanization in third world countries is concerned. The first misconception he states, is that third world societies are primitively developed compared to the United States. He states this in his book 'The new urban sociology' from 1994. Now, almost approximately fifteen years later, this conception of third world cities has weakened slightly. Second, more important is the conception that developing countries are very much as developed nations, only they are at an earlier age and will 'modernize' in time. In fact, "the process of urbanization is very different from the first world pattern and involves factors as elite power, differences in state politics, the effect of the global economy and the effects of class structure" (Smith and Timberlake quoted in Gottdiener, 1994, p.250). The third difference Gottdiener names is the increasing influence of the global economy. To add a fourth to Gottdieners list, Third World countries, Asia, South-America and Africa contain three quarters of the world's population. The rapid population growth is stimulating the urbanization and creating an uneven development between classes more extreme than found in the older developed nations. Third world cities suffer from a double population explosion: A high rate of natural increase and a high rate of in-migration. This population growth is the reason that the predicted 'equilibrium' that occurred in the first world cities will probably not occur in the developing nations. This is one of the main reasons why currently developing nations will probably not develop the same as first world cities did.

5.3.2 A broader concept of gentrification

Marc Askew argues that in Asia the standard gentrification model is not clearly applicable. The middle classes in Bangkok have been less concerned to reoccupy the city centre as to indulge in the

cultural capital of large houses in suburban estates. He states that in Bangkok, some of the clear features of gentrification are absent. It is notable that the key areas developed for luxury condominium complexes have long been associated with high-income groups. The wave of Thai middle class re-occupying the city has not taken place; rather the occupants have been largely foreign expatriates and affluent Thai families who were always located in the inner city. Askew does acknowledge displacement for Bangkok, but only for slum-dwellers, not long-standing old communities (Askew, 2002, p. 238-239). Askew's description of gentrification is a copy of the gentrification theory that is applied in Europe and the United States. This is the reason that it is not applicable in Bangkok. But it is too simple to dismiss the theory for Bangkok entirely. Fact is that certain aspects of the theory do take place, although in a somewhat different context.

The problem with the concept of gentrification is that it is too narrow. Gentrification is back to the inner city movement, why not other places? Gentrification is the restoration of old buildings. Why not the demolishing of a structure to replace it with a new building? Chapter three already introduced the gentrification cycle, free from the constraining details that are insignificant for the process. The concept was based on the statement of Erik Clark. He argues for a broader concept of gentrification:

"Gentrification is a process involving change in the population of land-users such that the new users are of a higher socio-economic status than the previous users, together with an associated change in the built environment through a reinvestment in capital. The greater the difference in socio-economic status, the more noticeable the process, not least because the more powerful the new users are, the more marked will be simultaneous change in the built environment. It does not matter where, and it does not matter when. Any process of change fitting this description is, to my understanding, gentrification" (Clark, 2005 in Lees et. al., 2010, p. 25).

According to this description, gentrification processes are present in Bangkok. The emergence of high-rise condominiums has been rapid and synonymous with the urban property boom, which was a central part of the regions much acclaimed growth to the late 1990s (Askew, 2002, p. 226). Marc Askew (2002, p. 230) summarizes a number of trends that relate to the condominium boom in Bangkok from the 1980s:

Supply side:

1. Ever- increasing demand for business and residential uses result in increasing land prices. This leads to that original landowners sell or develop their (sometimes very old) landownings.
2. To maximise investments, buildings tend to get higher and blocks get smaller.
3. The government allowing foreigners to take part in new constructions.

Demand side:

1. Foreign companies demand high status and conveniently located accommodation and offices for their expatriate employees, they are willing to invest to create these places.

2. Worsening urban traffic congestion, attracting high-income Thai families to invest in condominiums as weekday residence.

These trends can be summarised into the process of gentrification.

Figure 5.1 Gentrification in Bangkok near Skytrain stations. Source: Laurien Beijer

The photo in figure 5.1 is taken in the middle of two Skytrain stations from a pedestrian bridge. On the left, the concrete structure is the Skytrain. Although the area of Ari is a higher-income area with lots of detached housing, Bangkok is known for mixed income neighbourhoods. So even though a neighbourhood is classified as high-income, does not dismiss that low-income residents do not live there. This street is a classic example for Bangkok. The houses along this street, in the lower right corner of the picture, are small apartments for low-income residents. They provide the products and services for the higher-income, old Thai families that live a few streets back from the main road. In the right upper corner, buildings are being constructed fast. This is close to the Ari station. Those buildings are mostly condominiums built for middle-class office workers that have never lived in the area and prefer a more modern, luxurious lifestyle. The condominiums have their own supermarkets

and other small shops on the ground floor, reducing the turnover of small businesses in the area. Gentrification is not just upgrading of an area, it is a visible spatial component of social transformation (Lees et. al., 2010, p10). This is the kind of gentrification that is occurring in Bangkok. The process may have begun with the existence of a large western group of expatriates in the city, but this way of life has been adopted by the new Thai yuppies. The numbers of condominiums that are spurting from the ground like mushrooms are simply too much to just fit the foreign community. At the beginning of the gentrification cycle the high-rise buildings tend to locate close to the trigger, in this case the Skytrain. But after the cycle has gone round a few times, the gentrification effects tends to sprawl outwards, suggesting that the implications of silent eviction get worse because the affordable housing stock in the area diminishes, forcing people to move further away. This can be clearly observed close to other BTS stations, for example Asoke on Sukhumvit road.

5.4 Conclusion

Concluding this chapter with the notion that gentrification is most definitely present in Bangkok. The scales on which this takes place is dependent from the amount of times the gentrification cycle has gone round, which is different per area. According to the narrow concept of gentrification as it occurred in the United States, it could be argued that Bangkok is not gentrifying. However, this study is aware of the differences between cities that are rapid developing now in Asia and the western cities that experienced this population boom a while ago. The conceptual model in chapter three describes gentrification as a cyclic process of increasing land value and upgrading of the city. When this concept is used as gentrification, than the process is occurring in Bangkok and the Skytrain is one of the triggers As chapter six will discuss, the issue of silent eviction is not recognised as a problem in Bangkok and is not linked to the construction of the Skytrain by many of the poor. This lack of being able to connect different processes is an important component of the existence of silent eviction. Chapter six will discuss how the BTS has changed the area of Phayatai and will produce the result of the different interviews.

6. Results from the cases

6.1 Introduction

This part will discuss the results of the interviews and observations in both Ari and Saphan Kwai, framed by the sub questions. A few questions lead this thesis. First, who has moved out and did they object? This question will be discussed using the conversations with residents from Ari and Saphan Kwai and observation. How is silent eviction present in these areas and is it really silent? To answer this, also the inhabitants themselves are the only ones that can reply to these questions. These silent evictions are market induced; the government is not an actor here. And where do the evicted people go once they have to leave their house? These are key questions that need answering in order to conclude on the main research question.

Section 6.3 discusses the situation in Ari and Saphan Kwai before the BTS and will try to identify what kind of people inhabited the neighbourhood. Section 6.4 will follow up with the transformation that the area went through. It describes the different experiences of people since the BTS construction. What is the link between the BTS and the changes in the area? And what has changed exactly? In the end, it should be possible to give a reasonable clarification on the first part of the main research question: How has the arrival of mass transit stations affected the original inhabitants and users of the station areas in Bangkok?

6.2 Introduction to the Phayatai district

Figure 6.1 is a representation of all the districts of the BMA. The population in Phayatai consists of older and new inhabitants residing in the many apartments of all price ranges. At present[25] there are 77,029 people living in 32,382 households. The density is 9,548 people per square kilometre, in comparison with a density for Bangkok of 1,301 people per square kilometre. The area is crowded. According to the travel guide of the district of Phayatai, single-family houses are most characteristic for the area. The main road in the district is the Phaholyotin road. This is the route the BTS follows. There are three BTS stations in Phayatai district. These are Sanam Pao, Ari and Saphan Kwai. The next parts will introduce Ari and Saphan Kwai, before presenting the results of these cases.
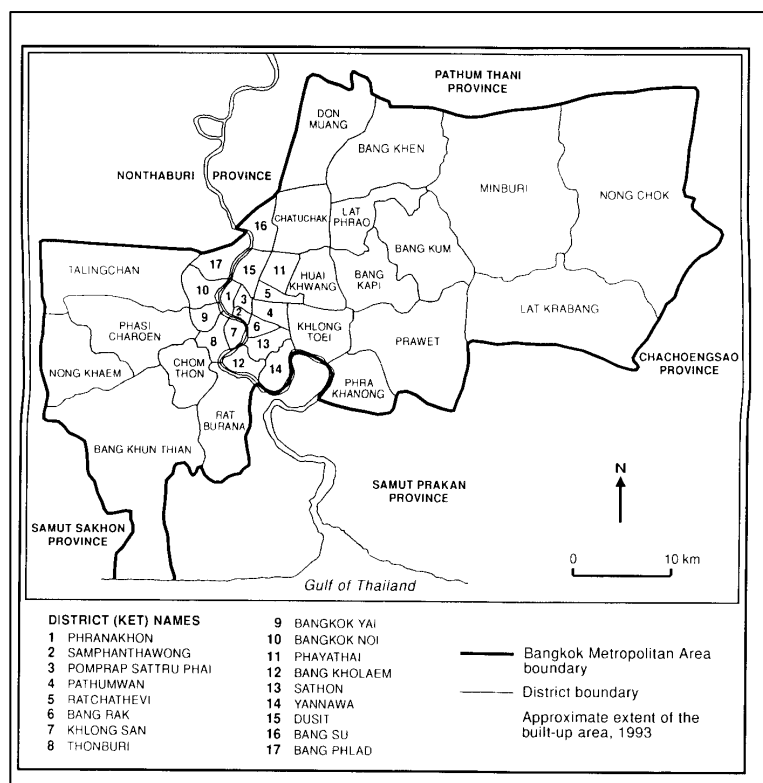

Figure 6.1 The Bangkok Metropolitan Area and surrounding provinces, 1993. The Phayatai district is number 11. Source: Askew, 2002, p.62

---

[25] Information from the Phayatai district office, published in the travel guide of phayatai.

6.2.1 Ari

The first case study of this research is the BTS station Ari and the surrounding area. Ari has long been known as a residential neighbourhood popular with the city's well-to-do residents in search of a quiet village feeling, wide choice of restaurants and excellent links to the rest of the city (Bangkok magazine). Ms. Nok Rumpharwan describes the Ari area as a neighbourhood full of large old families., she has grown up in the area. Today, the area is home for some government offices as well as the Thai army. The arrival of the government was the first wave that transformed Ari from a village into a neighbourhood of Bangkok. Rumpharwan states that the offices brought traffic and noise and that the area became more crowded since then. When walking through the Ari neighbourhood, it feels like a yuppie magnet. It is not yet discovered by the masses (or tourists), but because of the accessibility, the areas have become interesting for developers. Example of this development is the La Villa Market, which by some is called an oasis of Western convenience, by others it is seen as a threat for the local small businesses. The La villa is a small mall with typical western shops[26].Not just expats are served by these kinds of services; also the young, well-educated Thai are drawn to the Western lifestyle.

Figure 6.2 La Villa, a small convenience centre with different shops, restaurants and cafes, a supermarket and a spa. Source: Lifewindow 365 website.

6.2.2 Saphan Kwai

Up until the 1960s the area known as Saphan Kwai was very much on the outskirts of Bangkok and home to rice fields and many buffaloes. Saphan is Thai for bridge and kwai is Thai for buffalo; Saphan Kwai thus literally stands for "Buffalo Bridge" (Stickman weekly).

Saphan Kwai is located north of Ari and is the next stop on the Skytrain. This neighbourhood is less high-end as the Ari area and houses much more lower class residents (figure 6.3). The area used to be one big market of food and clothing. But since the BTS, many people pass by Saphan Kwai and go

---

[26] A Starbucks, an Apple store and a supermarket with western import products are the biggest pull factors of the mall.

shopping one station further, at Mo Chit, which is the location for the large weekend market. Apart from the market, Saphan Kwai is known as the gogo[27] area for the Thai, unknown by (sex) tourists. The bars are low profile, if you are not aware of the existence; it is possible to walk around the area without seeing one sign of prostitution (which happened to me). According to the residents that were interviewed, the area knows a lot of crime and it is getting worse. Vijtra Aekudomsin, owner of a small utilities shop close to the BTS station states: "There is a lot of crime here. People don't come shopping at night anymore because of the crime, which makes it difficult to keep the shop running". Kwanchai Trakulpradit is a police officer for the Phayatai district and he also acknowledges the increased crime rates. According to him this is because the increase in the number of people in the area, so indirectly due to the Skytrain (interview December 10th 2009). Saphan Kwai houses the so-called urban poor in the many low budget apartment complexes. When walking on Pradipat road after dark, you can see the first people are making their beds on the concrete of the street. Although poverty is clearly visible on the streets, you would never hear a Thai person admit that he or she is poor. The Thai culture is very proud and prevents people from complaining.

Figure 6.3 Apartment complexes in Saphan Kwai. Source: Laurien Beijer

---

[27] A gogo bar in Thailand is a dance club, discothèque or bar that covers as a venue for prostitution.

6.3 Before the BTS

The whole area of Phayatai used to be on the outskirts of Bangkok. The soil was used for agriculture and rich families obtained large pieces of land to work and develop. These lands would pass from generation on generation. Nok Rumpharwan is a member of one of those families. She states in her interview: "Soi Aree[28], was a big area of rice fields, about one hundred years ago. My grandfather came to buy the land to start a big family here. So there are many old families like ours that came to the area to live in a Thai big family style. The lands transferred from one generation to the next. This only changed approximately ten years ago."

But within those hundred years, Bangkok has grown substantially. From a small city on the banks of the Chao Praya river, Bangkok transformed into the prime city of Thailand with over six million residents. The Phayatai area got swallowed and surrounded by the city and was no longer a village based on agriculture. But the families stayed. They adapted to the new way of live, sold some of their land but most of them kept the house. This resulted that the Ari area was still a rich peoples-old family-detached housing area. The development of Bangkok circled around Ari, but right through Saphan Kwai. Saphan Kwai developed itself into an area full of overcrowded apartments. The people living there mostly work in servicing (hairdressing, foodstalls etc.) as a means of living.

---

[28] Soi is the term used in Thailand for a side street branching from a major street. Sois are usually numbered, and are referred to by the name of the main street and a number, as in "Soi Sukhumvit 4", "Sukhumvit Soi 4", or "Sukhumvit 4", all referring to the fourth soi of Sukhumvit Road in Bangkok (Wikipedia). It happens often that a soi develops into a main road and develops its own sois. When this happens the original Soi is appointed a name. Soi Aree is one of those streets. It used to be a soi of Phaholyothin Road and is now a main road called Aree.

6.2 Change

Figure 6.4 The corner of Phaholyothin road and Pradiphat. Left Saphan Kwai in 1968, source: J.B. Sadler. Right, the same corner in Saphan Kwai now, source: 2bangkok website.

In the early 1990s, the construction on the BTS Skytrain started. During the construction, the streets were extra congested. The Bangkok residents were unfamiliar with the mass rapid transit system, so the overall opinion about the future Skytrain was not too positive.

Mr. Krit Liutanakul of the BTSC refers to the construction period: "More than ten years ago, many people were used to their cars. The construction of the BTS caused many traffic jams on the main roads, so the people didn't want the Skytrain, and they didn't like us at all, because we were blocking the roads." Rumpharwan validates this statement. She was not happy with the construction of the BTS, also because it almost immediately triggered the construction of condominiums in soi Aree: "Soi Aree became overpopulated and congested with traffic jams due to the many condo buildings in the small soi. You could be stuck in the soi for hours due to the traffic jams. My grandmother died in the ambulance because it was stuck in traffic and the hospital was only a few streets away. The BTS is causing the construction of the condominiums, so it is also causing the traffic."

But, when the BTS was finished, the opinions of most people turned. "But now when we extend the lines, people know what the traffic jams are for. There will be traffic jams but we get no complaints, they know it will be okay, that this mass transport will pass their home and they will be able to use it. People are really happy now"(Krit Liutanakul).

Mr. Dan Tantisunthorn is an expert on the property market of Bangkok. He states that at first, it was uncertain how the people of Bangkok would adopt the Skytrain. But that now, it is a regular means of transportation, not just for tourists. He is very certain that the Skytrain is a key consideration for

businesses where to locate their new offices, but it is also a consideration for where people live, where retail locates: "It is a key driver in the property market, it is tangible, people can see it."

In chapter three it was explained that the value of land is a social construction and that increasing the accessibility of an area usually increases the land value. The Skytrain has managed to make Bangkok accessible again, causing an enormous increase in the potential ground rent. This created a rent gap and boomed the property market in many places that are close to a Skytrain station.

Nina Suebsukcharoen writes for the Bangkok Post that the condo boom will continue. Reasons for this are "fears of higher oil prices and a desire for the convenience of being close to the rail lines, but also problems finding reliable household help, and the better security that condominiums provide". The BTS is planning new lines and in those areas many condominiums are already being developed, even though it can take years before the Skytrain arrives.

Back to the cases, in Ari the Skytrain has obviously created a condominium boom, but the effects are less visible in Saphan Kwai. It could even be possible that the area is deteriorating due to the growth in Ari and the market at Mo Chit. There used to be a Merry King department store, but that has closed down, approximately 10 years ago. The market across the Skytrain station has been demolished to host a Big C supermarket. This is not beneficial for the social control in the area and crime is increasing. I asked Dan Tantisunthorn how it was possible for two areas to develop in such a different manner while they are right next to each other. He stated: "It comes down to market segmentation. Ari is higher priced so it is just easier to build there, and because of the government agencies, more government workers needed housing close to work." However, even though Saphan Kwai is lacking behind in development, the first condominiums are carefully moving from Ari in the direction of Saphan Kwai. Ari is becoming more and more expensive, so the gentrification cycle will start over a few hundred metres further, near the Saphan Kwai station, starting at the Phaholyothin plaza (figure 6.5).

6.3 Consequenses of gentrification

The groups that got affected by the BTS can be split up in two: Those that benefitted from the Skytrain and those that lost out. This list has been created using my own observation and both the expert interviews and the conversations with random residents on the street. Note that this list is generalizing and a bit subjective because it is based on observation and interviews, but it is relevant to identify possible victims of gentrification.

Groups that gained from the Skytrain:

- ✓ Property developers
    - o The Skytrain has increased business and revenues
- ✓ Government
    - o Better access to the city, growing economy, less congestion.
- ✓ High end retailers/restaurants
    - o Business due to many condos, higher revenues.
- ✓ High-educated young people (yuppies)
    - o Better living environment, accessibility.
- ✓ Expatriates
    - o Western lifestyle
- ✓ Urban poor
    - o There are a small percentage of people that managed to stay and benefit from the growing economy.

Groups that have lost out:
- ⊗ Old, high-end families
    - o Lands and house sold, loss old neighbourhood.
- ⊗ Urban poor
    - o Silent eviction, displacement.

It is apparent from this list that the groups that gained from the Skytrain are people earning a good income. They have upgraded their lifestyle in some way or another due to the BTS because they had the means to do so. The second group is split up in two kinds of people; the big old families that owned houses in the Ari area and the working class. They usually do not have a car and cannot afford

the Skytrain. This means that whenever they have to go somewhere, they go by bus. The bus in Bangkok is also stuck in traffic, making it not a desirable mode of transport, except from the cost. This is why many lower-class residents have their own small business close to their home. These businesses can be small food-stalls on the street, or laundry services, including ironing and sewing. They do not generate much income, but just enough to get by and it is close to home[29]. Because these businesses are close to home, moving can have severe economic consequences. It is also important to find out how far people have to move.The next part will zoom in on the urban poor or working class and their reactions on the processes that are happening around them.

Kriankai Wantong, 45, lives at the plaza on Phalyothin Road for twenty years (figure 6.5), near BTS Saphan Kwai.

The area used to be a slum with lots of nightclubs and bars, until the contract was expired. The current landowner took the land and decided to build a plaza (the current apartment complex) and rented some of the buildings out. Today, there are less drug-addicted people and the overall quality of life is better, but people are moving out because the rents increase. Currently, contracts, including my own, are not being renewed because the landowner is going to build a condominium at this site to increase his revenue.

Kriankai is a classic example of a victim of silent eviction due to gentrification. His rent is going up and finally his rental contract is terminated. Although he does use the BTS himself for travelling, he still has to move and he is not looking forward to it. At first, Kriankai liked the up scaling of the area, because it became in his price class. But the upgrading continues and now he is on the other side of the spectrum. Currently, the area of Saphan Kwai is still full of affordable housing, so Kriankai probably does not have to move far away and can keep his clientele. The process in this case can still be defined as silent eviction, but the expected displacement will not (yet) take place. However, the gentrification process has been defined as a circle. It will keep going round, decreasing the affordable housing stock, which is already almost gone around Ari.

The next story is one of many in the same manner. Russame Saehene is a 40 year-old woman, owner of a small noodle restaurant on the street, near BTS Saphan Kwai.

A lot has changed ever since the Big C store came into the area. I loved the old environment, the old social relations when there was a variety in community and in the market. I do not like all the developments, the BTS creates noise and it is crowded with people. The new offices and

---

[29] This part about urban poor is mainly based on observation and also on the conversations with different residents.

condominiums create a new social system. Small businesses go down. It is not due to the BTS that the prices increase, the owners of the land decide on the prices.

Russame is mentioning all the side effects of gentrification, but is not experiencing them as such. She is not able to see the connexion between the better accessibility of the area to the rising land prices. Other lower educated people in the area responded in the same way. They do see the developments going on, but are unable to anticipate because, to them, the different processes do not connect.

Figure 6.5 The Phaholyothin plaza. A cheap, busy apartment complex. Source: Laurien Beijer

Si is 38 years old and is a hairdresser at the same plaza where Kriankai lives too.
I have been renting this space for one year. In one year, the rent has increased from 4000 to 4500 to 5000 to 5500 Thai Baht. I will try to live here as long as possible, despite the condominium plans. As long as no one is kicking me out, I will stay. If I have to move, I will look for a place in the area, as long as I can afford it.

This is also a typical reaction that I received during the interviewing. The residents know that their landlord has plans to build a condominium to replace the current building. Many people are very steady in these situations, it has happened to them before. However, they are not organising against the landlord or using their time in finding out about their rights or even finding a new place. They wait and see what happens, things will turn out okay. This is a common thought and typical for Thai culture. A part of the solution to silent eviction is in this attitude. It has been proven successful in

Bangkok, that as communities organise, they have the power to get the landlord negotiating about compensation or alternative housing.

Si is hoping to stay in the area, but is not realizing that although she can probably afford a flat now, the prices will keep increasing because of the cycle and she will probably have to move out again.

As figure 6.5 shows, the plaza where many people were interviewed houses a lot of people. This plaza is a good example of the gentrification cycle. First, it was a slum area. But the whole area upgraded and so did this place. The slum dwellers had to make way for the new plaza. This plaza is still a low-budget living accommodation. And since the BTS station Saphan Kwai is right in front of the complex, the land is now worth much more. Meaning that the rent gap has widened. The landlord already started with increasing the rents. The rents in the complex vary, Si pays around 5000 THB, her apartment was small but included a small hairdress shop. 23-Year old Pon sells noodlesoup outside; her apartment is now 1500 THB, she just moved in. 56-Year old SomChai used to pay 500 THB ten years ago, now his apartment costs 2000 THB a month. But this rising rents will not be enough to close the rent-gap. The landowner of the plaza realizes it, cause he is already making plans for a high-rise condominium. This means that the same people that first benefitted from the gentrification cycle are now the people that will have to move out.

But the gentrification cycle does not automatically disadvantage every person that is poor: Authai is around 45 years old and owns a small flower stall on the sidewalk near BTS Ari.

There used to be a market there (pointing at the Noble reform project), but now its gone. It's going to be a condominium. The people are gone too. I do not worry, people will come and live there and they buy flowers too. The transformation is good, well not for those who left, but when you can stay, its good. The BTS attracts more people to this area; they will hopefully be new customers.

Authai is recognising the economic potential of the new people that have higher incomes. Flowers always sell in Bangkok, for every income group. They are used for honouring Buddha and keeping bad spirits out of the house by giving them a nice home outside, decorated with fresh flowers. Currently the future of Authai is looking bright, as long as her landowner does not decide to build, she is safe. And if she is making more money, there is a chance that she can afford to pay more rent and she could rent another flat in the same area. Mr Bholsithi corroborates this. He states that if the poor can manage to keep their job and find a new place to live, that the gentrification process will result positive for them.

Authai was asked if she knew what happened to the people that worked at the market that is now gone. She answered that she did not know for sure, but she expected they moved to a complete other neighbourhood, because she never saw anyone around anymore. She also stated that it was hard to find anything affordable in Ari, it was best to stay where you are, if you can.

6.4 Policy

Ms Rumpharwan is angry about the fact that many developers of new condominium projects in Ari are ignoring the law and building higher than eight floors. "It is so corruption!!!!" she states in her interview. Corruption still is a big problem in Thailand. As stated before, the government is a relatively weak player compared to the strong market. And when the government does try to make a statement, it often happens that a developer or anyone who has the means can sail around the law by effective 'lobbying'. This corruption sensitive system is adding to the fact that victims of silent eviction do not have many tools to stay put.

The National Housing Authority is responsible for alternative housing for everyone that is forcibly removed from his or her home. But in the case of silent evictions, landlords simply wait till contracts expire and they do not renew them. Dan Tantisunthorn explains the Thai rental system: "If the lease is not registered, than there is very little the tenant can do. Any lease under three years does not need registering. After three years, the landlord has to register his tenants. This registration gives the tenant security for up to thirty years, depending on the agreement. But unless someone has a registered lease, there is nothing they can do. The law protects the landlord." There are indications that this registering is not happening as it should. Because people are silently evicted after living somewhere for twenty years, either their lease is not registered, or they do not know their rights from being a registered tenant. This is one of the 'silent' aspects of silent eviction and should be able to be made less silent if people know more about their rights.

According to this system, the government does not have a good grip on the rights of tenants, especially those with little means. But, it has been proven in the past that when the social organisation is strong, that it is possible to negotiate compensation money for a new home from the landlord. Most landlords rather pay some more, within certain limits, than receiving bad publicity and trouble. This system is purely based on the right of those who stand steady, hence the title of this thesis.

The unfairness of silent evictions is not yet recognised by the BMA or national government as a problem. Perhaps that better community organisation can help put the subject on the political agenda. Mr. Wisarut Bholsithi states that the modernization resulting from the BTS is overall positive, but that there are some aspects that cannot and should not be erased. The government should step in to soften those aspects, he says.

6.5 Conclusion

The areas of Ari and Saphan Kwai have modernised and further urbanised. The Skytrain has accelerated this process enormously. Proximity to the Skytrain is one of the greatest selling points of condominiums (figure 6.6). There are strong indications that the arrival of yuppies and expats into the area is pushing old families and poorer residents out. The old families are in general higher class and receive money because they owned the house that they sell. They loose their house, but can start over somewhere else or even buy a condominium too. For the poor residents in the overcrowded apartment complexes the consequence is more severe. They usually do not receive any money. It happens a lot that people are economically bound to where they live, so moving means more commuting or starting a new business. Commuting too is more difficult for the urban poor; they do not own cars and cannot afford the Skytrain. They keep moving more to the urban fringe, while the inner city is being taken over by high-educated young Thai who like the western lifestyle. In the ideal situation, people manage to keep their job and also their house. Than they can benefit from the economic growth the BTS brings to the area. With a higher income they can maybe afford a new house in the area if it turns out that their own house will be demolished. But this does require some kind of anticipation to the situation. The interviews show that most inhabitants do not react very assertive on expected silent eviction. They are unaware that community organisation can help a lot, even if it only in receiving of compensation money. It can help if people are better educated about their rights as a tenant. They are also unaware of the connection between different processes. A landlord does not just decide to raise the rents, unless he has reason to do so, like the increasing land value, which has risen due to the Skytrain station. Schooling can be important in this process of understanding and taking action, but also in adapting the business for a higher income group.

Figure 6.6 A condominium project in Ari, covered by plastic showing the Skytrain and the telephone number of the sales office.
Source: Laurien Beijer

7. Conclusion and recommendations

7.1 Conclusion

7.1.1 Objectives

The first objective of this thesis, stated in chapter one, is to provide evidence that there are gentrification processes going on in Bangkok, be it in a different form than what the original gentrification theory argues. In order to make this argument, the gentrification theory had to be outlined. The gentrification theory as chapter three describes it, is based on literature that all studied the processes in American or European cities. New York (Brooklyn) and Chicago are classic examples, but also Amsterdam has been studied for gentrification, among many other cities. This literature argues that a city develops in concentric rings, if a person earns more than he will move a ring outwards (Burgess). Finally, the middle class will flee from the city entirely to settle in an idyllic surrounding on an easy car distance from the city. This is called suburbanization. Because of this outward migration, the inner city will deteriorate and will house the working class. The gentrification process means that those same suburbanites will move back to the inner city to tidy up the old housing and so upgrade the inner city. The city is attractive because it is close to work and the buildings are old and unique.

In Bangkok, the upgrading of old housing is not an option. Areas are becoming attractive because of the new accessibility. Bangkok is completely congested; the main roads are clogged during most hours of the day. People are standing hours in traffic jams each day to go to work and back. Because of the Skytrain, it is suddenly an option to buy a small condo in the city for during the week. But there are more people that are interested in condominiums. Not just the people that keep a house and family in Bangkoks suburbs, but also the younger high educated people that want to live in the city to experience a western lifestyle. The old apartments will be demolished to make way for sky-high condominiums. This condominium pattern stretches all along the Skytrain track and is not constrained to the inner city.

The second objective is to state that although the Skytrain is modernising and mobilizing Bangkok, it does have its downside that is currently not recognised. This downside is silent eviction of the poor. The gentrification cycle visualizes the process that is happening in Bangkok. The Skytrain (but metro as well) has increased the land value, which results in higher rents and new developments. The poor are silently evicted from their houses. They try to stay in the area but as the cycle goes round, this becomes more difiicult. It has happened to some of the interviewees before, they moved to their

current area because the former flat got too expensive. Although the implications of silent eviction are not as severe at first, once the cycle is started, it will keep going round and diminish the affordable housing stock. This means that first people can move one block away, without much further implication, but if they do not economically profit from the processes, they will eventually have to move to a complete different area. Most urban poor have their business in the same building as their house. For example, they have small grocery shops, ironing service or a hairsalon below at the street and live behind or above, depending on the size of the apartment. When silently evicted, the business is evicted too. Meaning that the source of income has to restart on a new location.

The third objective is to provide some material to fuel a new discussion about gentrification that has its focus on Asian cities. The literature on urbanization processes in Asia is thin, but on gentrification is practically non-existent (in English though). This absence of literature can imply that gentrification is either not occurring or that it is not recognised as an issue. The previous part has discussed that at least for Bangkok, gentrification and silent evictions are occurring. This can mean that it is also present in other rapid developing cities in Asia, but this needs further study. For cities that have the same characteristics as Bangkok in its urbanization process, it can be carefully assumed that gentrification is probably occurring there.

7.1.2 Sub-research questions

The objectives have been met by answering the sub questions that are stated in chapter 1.4. Each sub question will be discussed here:

1. What is gentrification, and how is it related to infrastructure development?

Discussed in chapter three, gentrification refers to the resettlement of middle- and upper class in the city, almost always meaning that the lower class inhabitants have to relocate. Gentrification can occur when there is a rent gap that makes redevelopment of land attractive. The rent gap is the difference between what land is worth now and what its worth could be, so the difference between capitalized ground rent and potential ground rent. The rent gap can widen because of a sudden increase in the land value. Because the value of land is socially constructed, multiple factors can make its worth increase. For example when a mall in the area creates new shopping opportunities, a new police station can make the area safer thus worth more or a new mass transit system can make the area more accessible. This is how gentrification is linked to infrastructure development. New infrastructure can open up an area that was before difficult to reach. In Bangkok, this development has been the Skytrain, which roars above the streets over the traffic jams. Accessibility is a socially appreciated asset for land, thus when an area opens up, the land value increases and this starts the gentrification cycle.

2. How does a new mass transit system generate silent evictions?

Figure 7.1 shows the gentrification cycle that was introduced in chapter three. As the figure shows, the cycle can be triggered from outside. Anything that increases the value of land can trigger gentrification. Once gentrification occurs and no measures are mitigating the effects, silent evictions are a unavoidable effect. The cycle will keep going round until an area has reached the potential ground rent or until an intervention takes place.
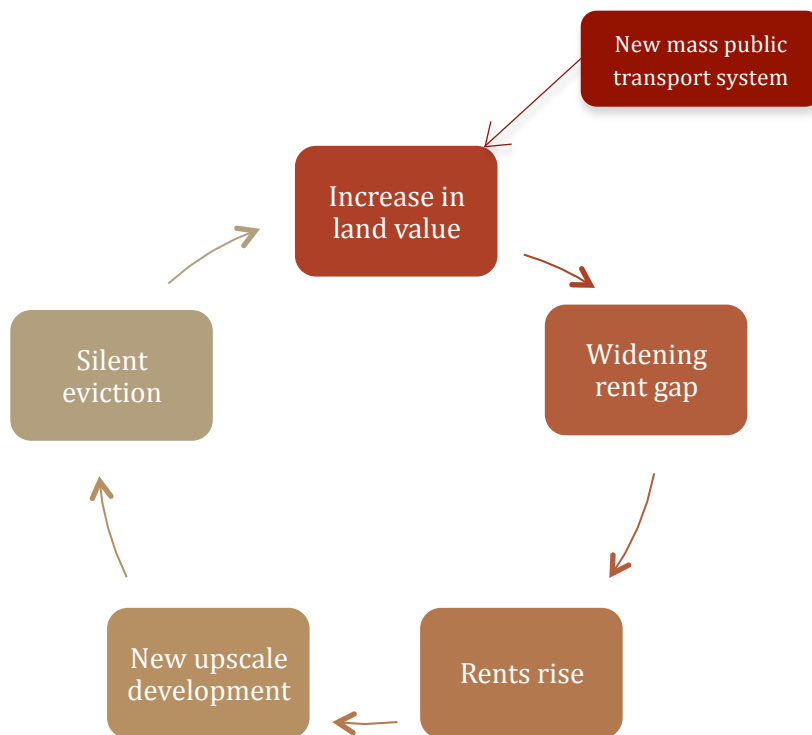

Figure 3.5 The gentrification cycle

3. Who were the inhabitants and users of the station areas in Bangkok prior to the arrival of the mass transit station?

From the case studies in Ari and Saphan Kwai it seems that the inhabitants before the gentrification cycle started were both old families with a large detached house, formerly living from agriculture, and the urban poor, the people who live in a very small house/apartment also with a big family, just getting by from small businesses like tailoring, laundering, sewing or selling food. The increased land value stimulates the development of housing more suitable for higher income groups. The condominiums are popular to young well-educated Thai (yuppies), the expatriate community and for people living outside of Bangkok that keep a condo for during the week. These condominiums repel the affordable housing stock, which is mostly privately owned. The diminishment of affordable housing is forcing the poor to relocate to another area that is not gentrifying.

4. What was the nature of the transformations taking place after the construction and opening of the stations?

The new BTS Skytrain stations almost immediately triggered the construction of many condominiums close to Ari station. This caused many traffic jams and also disturbed the peace that the neighbourhood was known for. The condominiums attracted another group of people than who were thus far living in Ari. Condominiums are attractive for middle class, well-educated Thai and for expatriates. The condominiums offer a western lifestyle and better security. Because of the new target group, the demand for more western products became larger and so the La Villa was constructed right in front of the Skytrain station Ari. The Villa holds a western supermarket, a globally known coffee shop as well as a fruity computer shop. Along with other shops and a Thai massage parlour the mall is considered an oasis of western convenience. Bangkok magazine describes the Ari area as 'up and coming', only attracting more middle class and continuing the cycle. There are markets in Ari that are gone now, as well as the people that used to sell their food there. There are indications that these people moved away to a complete different area, because Ari does not hold many affordable houses and there was no room for their business anymore since the market is gone. Those sites are now construction sites for sky-high buildings, promoting proximity to the Skytrain.

In Saphan Kwai the gentrification cycle is less apparent, but it has also begun circling. This means that silent eviction victims do not have to move far. The Phaholyotin plaza is a good example that in Saphan Kwai too, silent evictions are taking place due to proximity to the Skytrain and a high potential ground rent because of it. But currently, Saphan Kwai is lacking a bit behind Ari, but because of the rising rents in Ari, Saphan Kwai can become the new 'up and coming' very soon. This has more implications than in Ari. In Ari, the former inhabitants were mostly house owners, if they leave, they will have to sell their house, which makes sure that they can buy a new house somewhere else. These people have also more options in transportation, meaning that they do not have to change jobs when they are moving. In Saphan Kwai, the living standard is lower, the people are poorer. There are many food stalls and small shops that help them to get by. But they mostly do not have a lot of buffer to endure a rental increase and when the have to move, the business has to be started again at the new house. Because the cycle just started, many can find a new home within the area, but as the circle will go round again, this will become less possible increasing the economic and social implications for people.

5. Which groups of inhabitants/users have (so far) benefitted from the developments and which groups have lost out?

Question four already answered part of this question. The group that lost out on the development of the Skytrain are the people that had to move out from their home. But there is a difference in these two groups and that difference is money. The house owners in Ari don't like to move out, but they

have the option to sell the house, probably with a good profit due to the risen land value. The urban poor in Ari and mostly Saphan Kwai do sometimes benefit from the development, if they can manage to stay put. The Skytrain brings in more business and economic return. But most people that manage to stay put now, will have to move eventually, and for every person that can stay there are dozens that are silently evicted. If the site where your home is placed is assigned as location for a new condominium, than there is very little you can do. But if your home is not going to be demolished any time soon, and you sell a product that is also attractive for higher income groups, like flowers, its possible to raise your income and be able to keep living in the area. The story of Authai in chapter six corroborates this. But this happens to a small part of the urban poor. However, it is up to the people themselves to try and stay. It will need some anticipation on the situation, adapting your product for a higher market segment, which can be achieved with better education.

The groups that have benefitted from the BTS are mostly the middle- and high income groups. The Thai yuppies and civil servants profit from quicker commuting and also from the new luxury apartments and condos that are flooding the real-estate market. Also the expatriates live mostly in these condos.

6. What policies have been applied to mitigate possible negative effects or to compensate the people that lost out in the process?

When talking to the NHA and the BTSC, also with Dan Tantisunthorn, it does not seem that the negative consequences of the Skytrain are recognised. The improved accessibility and the following economic growth are highly praised, but the negative effects are put aside as non-important. Mr. Bholsithi does feel that the government should step in to soften out some negative effects. Currently, every form of compensation money is given out on the basis of negotiation between tenant and landowner. This requires some degree of assertiveness.

The BMA does have strict rules when it comes to forced evictions. When the government confiscates land to serve the public good, than they are required to offer the evicted a sum of compensation money, and they need to offer alternative housing. However, the social housing is usually on the outskirts of the city, resulting than many people will be back in the inner city, living in slums, within a few months. The alternative housing can thus far not be considered successful, but the compensation allows people to find new housing on their own. It should be studied if the laws that apply on forced evictions can be of help in silent evictions.

7. Is there, by any standards, a need for introducing or improving such policies, and, if so, what should they look like?

It seems that the government should at least not close its eyes for the silent eviction processes that

are going on. The solution should not be sought in more rules, because the BMA is overregulated already (Tantisunthorn). The current system of registering a tenant after three years needs some revising. Currently the system works in advantage of the landowner, the tenant has little rights until he/she is registered. But it needs study to examine if tenant are being correctly registered and if an awareness campaign from the government might increase the awareness about a tenants rights.

8. What are the implications of this case study for the broader political and academic debate on mass transit development and its effects on urban development and city life?

This study touches on issues in Bangkok that are also happening in other Asian cities. This has implications for both the academic world as well as for the policymakers. For academics, this thesis can be an inspiration to further look into gentrification processes in Bangkok, but also in other Asian cities. What are the similarities and in what way is every city unique? Because gentrification is perhaps over studied in the United States, but understudied in Asia, a shift is necessary towards the Asian cities in order to draw a gentrification theory that can be applied globally instead of only in the United States. Policymakers in Bangkok should also start studying what the effects of silent evictions are on the short and long term. Is it only a social problem? Or does it also have economic implications? Because there are currently plans made to extend the Skytrain line, this should be a good moment to involve the social effects in the effect studies. Bangkok is obliged to perform EIA's, maybe these impact assessments should not only involve the economics and environmental implications, but also the social effects on different population groups. Bangkok can also look abroad for possible solutions. For example in Malaysia, the land developers are obliged to build a certain percentage of the new houses or apartments for low income groups. But first they need to study and acknowledge the problem.

7.1.3 Main research question
All the sub questions have been answered and this now allows answering the main research question from chapter one:

How has the arrival of mass transit stations affected the original inhabitants and users of the station areas in Bangkok and to what extend is this classified as gentrification?

It can be stated that the arrival of the Skytrain has done Bangkok much good. The city is accessible again and the economy has been boosted. Despite the global economic crisis, the real estate market is flourishing. The demand for condo's and offices in close proximity of the Skytrain keeps growing. The fact that the number of people that is educated is increasing in Bangkok adds to this demand. But because of the in-migration of Thai from outside Bangkok, the number of uneducated people is also growing. These are the people that occupy the deteriorated, overcrowded apartment complexes that are so similar for Bangkok's streetscape (figure 6.3). In Ari and Saphan Kwai, it was found out that the

original inhabitants were two, very different, groups. The first group consists of the house owners in the soi's. Many families own a detached house around Phaholyothin road. The second group are the people that are living at the main roads, Phaholyothin road, but also Pradipat and many others, in overcrowded, badly maintained apartments. In Ari the main road has many of these kinds of apartment complexes but the soi's are housed with the single family detached houses. In Saphan Kwai these apartment complexes can also be found in the soi's. The arrival of the Skytrain has caused a transformation in both areas. In Ari it has caused a condominium boom and the disappearance of markets and cheap housing. Ari also houses many offices and the la villa market is providing the needs of western convenience. Ari is referred to as the new 'up and coming'. It is a hip location for young Thai urban professionals as well as for the expatriate community, who desire comfort, convenience and security. This has caused that the first group no longer feels at home and sells their houses to make way for more Sky-high buildings. For the second group, this has caused economic growth as well as silent eviction. It has caused economic growth for those people that manage to keep their living space and sell a product that is also interesting for the new people in the area. But for most urban poor, the Skytrain and related developments have only caused rental increases and contract termination. This is the broad definition of gentrification. An area is upgraded due to renewed attractiveness (the Skytrain), which raises the land value. A higher class of people starts to buy houses at the cost of the urban poor that cannot afford to stay put. The silent eviction as a result causes displacement, an often-heard downside of gentrification.

7.2 Recommendations

7.2.1 A study towards the social and economic effects

Because the BTSC in corporation with the Office of Transport Planning is making plans to extend the lines of the Skytrain, it is necessary to perform a study to the downsides of this infrastructure in order to mitigate the effects. It is necessary to look further than just the construction of the Skytrain, but also at the related developments around the lines and station areas. This study found that the Skytrain in Bangkok is creating gentrification processes that cause silent eviction of the low-income group. These evictions can bring social, but also economic problems in the long term. This thesis did not do research on the possible effects for the city, but the social effects on the affected people are non negligible. In order to solve the problem of silent eviction, the BMA first needs to recognise it as an issue before any action can be taken. This can be achieved by performing a study that is government induced.

7.2.2 Tenants rights and assertiveness

From the conversations with residents in Ari and Saphan Kwai, it was founded that the silent evicted victims did not see it as a problem themselves. 'This is how it is, this is how it works', was a common statement. Landowners profit from this by ending contracts and not mentioning any rights that the tenants might have. It was stated that after three years, a tenant has earned the rights to stay put and a lease needs to be registered. It was unclear if this is actually happening, because in the example of Phaholythin plaza, many people were living there for more than three years and they had terminated contracts just as any other. It can be carefully assumed that the landowner did not register the leases and that the tenant never asked for it. The same is happening with a compensation sum for any trouble that the termination is causing the tenants. Every tenant has the right to ask for it, but they do not. The landowner is by law, unless the lease is registered, not obliged to give out compensation, but usually he/she rather pays to avoid any trouble from the tenants. But of course, the landowner is not offering any compensation in his own initiative. The tenants require some sort of assertiveness to ask for what they can possibly get, but this is just not imbedded in the Thai culture. Also community organisation can help out a lot in making demands from the landlord. A group is much stronger than an individual, which has been proven in the Klong Toey slum in Bangkok, which probably will never be removed due to the strong inhabitants. But in order the reach this assertiveness and organisation; a leader is needed who can make tenants aware of their options and rights. Either government or non-governmental organisations should appoint this leader who can than negotiate on behalf of the tenants.

7.2.3 Silent eviction act

Because silent evictions are disadvantaging citizens of Bangkok, the BMA has a duty towards those victims to protect them. The tool that the government has is the writing of laws. The BMA could apply the same rules as in forced eviction. The government is obliged to pay compensation towards the evicted. It should be expected by law that private landowners always pay compensation to their tenants if he lets rental contracts expire without renewing, and also with termination of contracts. The tenants should be made aware of these rights to make sure the landlord sticks to them.

There are a few flaws in this recommendation. The BMA and also other governmental institutions are very bureaucratic and have overregulated without the means to enforce. This and the sensitivity for corruption make this recommendation one that looks good on paper, but will probably not suffice in practice

7.2.4 Schooling

The education of the urban poor can achieve many things. First, it gives people insight in how to run a business and how to adapt to the target group. This gives them more chance to keep their business and also in increasing revenue. If the income increases than it might be possible to stay in the area and pay more rent. This means that they can keep the business and let it grow further, resulting in becoming lower middle class instead of belonging to the urban poor. Schooling can also help in linking different processes together. From the conversations with the residents it became clear that many people to do not think that the Skytrain is the cause of the rising rents. Schooling makes people more assertive, this can help to anticipate to a situation instead to just wait and see what happens.

Reflection

The conclusion is written, the thesis is finished. With a double feeling I look back on both the outcome and the content. There were some important constraining factors that made the outcome of this thesis satisfying, but not optimal. The research for this study has been mainly done in Bangkok and therefore restrained by time. I gave myself no more than seven weeks to gather enough evidence to corroborate the research question. This time constrained did make that I worked very effectively but if given more time, I could have included more evidence of the existence of silent eviction in Bangkok. Also the language was constraining. I did not have access to any Thai literature, nor could I talk to people that did not speak English. Once back in Groningen, the first two chapters kept changing and I was afraid that I would get in trouble with the information I gathered. There was unfortunately no opportunity to adapt the information to the thesis, because the research was done in Thailand. In the end, this was luckily not the case; almost all gathered material is used in this thesis. A critique on the results is that it stays quite general. It would have been good to find more specific examples to draw more concrete conclusions.

At the end of this thesis, many questions remain unanswered, however, given the amount of time and means available, I am pleased to say that this thesis is a start towards the research of silent eviction in Bangkok and provides a good basis for a follow-up study.

Bibliography

List of interviews

In-dept interviews

- Mr. Wisarut Bolsithi, English-writing journalist for the Bangkok Post as well as for the website 2bangkok.com on November 22nd 2009, 09.00 hrs. Starting location Phaya Tay station, Bangkok.
- Mr. Vija Chiasakul and Mrs. Sukumaporn Jongpukdee, National Housing Authority, November 26th 2009, ±14.00 hrs. Location NHA building.
- Mr. Krit Liutanakul, director of planning at BTSC, November 30th 2009, 14.00 hrs. Location, BTS building.
- Dan Tantisunthorn, research director of Jones Lang Lasalle, December 3rd 2009, 14.00 hrs. Location Lasalle office.
- Ms. Nok Rumpharwan, born and raised in the Ari area, currently living in New York. E-mail interview.

Short interviews

These interviews were held on December 6th and December 10th 2009. The names might be spelled incorrect due to translation.

Saphan Kwai

- Anonymous, Chinese shrine employee
- Bunchao, construction worker
- Kriankai Wantong, random jobs
- Kwanchai Trakulpradit, policeman
- Pone, restaurant employee
- Putch, restaurant owner
- Russame Saehene, food-stall
- Si, hairdresser
- Somchai, unknown
- Sopa Saeyean, Chinese shrine employee
- Suwanna Fuangfung, food-stall
- Vijtra Aekudomsin, shop owner

Ari

- Anonymous, motor taxi

- Anonymous, bakery owner

- Chatudej Thanapanoparathna, food-stall owner

- Guchart Trapchurekalapa, retailer

- Naphat Issarangkul, tailor

- Somchai Boonphoapichart, engineer

- Rut Prabhasabhakdi, family business (yup)

Additional information

Asiarail 2009, November 10th -12th 2009 at the Four Seasons hotel in Bangkok. Speakers list on request.

References

2Bangkok.com, almost like being there. Available at: www.2bangkok.com [Accessed frequently between September 2009 and April 2010]

ASKEW, M., 2002. *Bangkok, place, practice and representation*. London: Routledge. ISBN: 0-415-18853-9

Bangkok airporttrain, 2007. *Suvarnabhumi Airport - Bangkok Rail Link and Trainnews* [Online]. Available at: www.bangkokairporttrain.com. [Accessed 11 November 2009]

Bangkok Mass Transit System, 2003. *BTS Skytrain* [Online]. Available at: http://www.bts.co.th/en/btstrain.asp [Accessed 19 September 2009]

BENGTSSON, M., 2006. *The Bangkok skytrain, the transportation solution for Bangkok people?* Spring semester final paper. [Online]. Umeå, Sweden: Umeå University. Available at: http://www.geo.umu.se/VG_uppsatser/BengtssonM.pdf

BOEDELTJE, M., J. CORNIPS, 2004. *Input and Output in interactive governance.* Seminar on Governance, Effectiveness and Legitimacy. Available at: ruc.dk

BROWDER, J. O., BOHMAN J. R., 1995. Patterns of development on the metropolitan fringe. *Journal of the American Planning Association.* Vol. 61(3) pp. 310-328

CORNWALL, A., 2003. Whose voices? Whose choices? Reflections on gender and participatory development. World development. [Online] Vol. 31(8) pp. 1325-1342. Available at: www.elsevier.com

DAVIES, B., 2006. Building a new platform for growth. *Asiamoney.* [Online] Vol. 17(aug) pp.10-12. Available at: EBSCO Host http://web.ebscohost.com

Department of city planning, Bangkok Metropolitan Administrator, 2002. *History of the DCP* [Online]

Available at: http://www.bma-cpd.go.th/eng-about.html
[Accesed 24 September 2009]

DOUGLASS, M., et. al. 2001. Urban Poverty and the Environment - Social Capital and State - Community Synergy in Seoul and Bangkok. *Livable cities,* H2 pp.31-66. Berkeley: University of CaliforniaPress.

FERNQUEST, J., 2006. BTS corporate governance: Conflicts of interest, nepotism, and a lack of transparency? *Bangkok Post,* [internet] 28 November. Available at: http://www.readbangkokpost.com/business/corporate_governance/the_bts_debt_restructuring_con.php [Accesed 11 October 2009]

FLOWERDEW, R., D. MARTIN , 2005. *Methods in Human Geography*. 2nd Edition. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited. ISBN: 0-582-28973-4

FRAZER, E, 1992. Thailand: A family planning success story. *In context*. [Online] Spring 1992 (31) pp. 44-46. Available at: http://www.context.org/ICLIB/IC31/Willson.htm

Government Housing Bank, 2008. Low and middle income condominium development in Bangkok: Interview with Opas Sripayak. *GH Bank Housing Journal.*[Online] Vol.2 (2) pp. 49-55. Available at: http://www.ghb.co.th/en/Journal/Vol2/12.pdf

GRAAFLAND, A., D. HAUPTMAN (eds), 2001. The impact of the new technologies and globalization on cities. In: LeGates R.T., F. Stout, 2003. *The City Reader*. 3rd Edition. London: Routledge. pp. 212-220.

GROSS. M., 2005. To be young and hip in Bangkok. *New York Times* . [internet]. 20 November 2005. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/20/college/coll20bangkok.html?pagewanted=4

HAMNETT, C, 1991. The blind men and the elephant: the explanation of gentrification. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers.* [Online] Vol. 16(2) pp. 173-189. Available at: http://www.jstor.org/stable/622612

JENKS, M., 2003. Above and below the line: Globalization and urban form in Bangkok. *The Annals of Regional Science,* Vol. 37(3), pp.547–557

KATHARANGSIPORN, K., 2009. Soi Ari condos defy grim market. *Bangkok Post business*. [Internet] 10 April. Available at: http://www.bangkokpost.com/business/economics/14845/ [Accessed 25 November 2009]

KETRAUNGROCH, P., 2008. *The effect of mass rapid rail transit in residential location pattern in Bangkok*. Master thesis. Bangkok: Thammasat University.

KITTIKANYA, C., 2004. Bangkok, Thailand, Mass Transit System Wants Fair Price from State for Skytrain. *Bangkok Post.* [internet] 12 May. Available at: http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-118310398.html [Accessed 11 October 2009]

KRANTON, R. E., 1991. *Transport and the Mobility Needs of the Urban Poor*. [Online] (Report INU 86) Washington DC: Worldbank. Informal publication. Available at: http://www-wds.worldbank.org

LAQUIAN, A. A., 2005. Metropolitan governance reform in Asia. *Public Administration and development.* [Online]. Vol.25(4) pp. 307-315. Available at: Wiley Interscience http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/112091976/PDFSTART

LEA, J. P., J. M. COURTNEY, 1985. *Cities in Conflict: Studies in the Planning and Management of Asian Cities.* [Online] (10089) Washington DC: World Bank. Available at: http://www-wds.worldbank.org/

Lifewindow 365, 2009. *Villa Market Bangkok Thailand*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.lifewindow365.com/thailand/ari-bts-station/ [Accessed on 11 April 2010]

LINDEN, G., H. Voogd, 2004. *Environmental and Infrastructure Planning*. Groningen: Geopress. ISBN: 90-71971-71-6

MAAS, B., 2009. *Bangkok, een knooppunt van kansen en knelpunten.* Master thesis. Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam (UvA).

Ministerie van Economische zaken, 2008. *Thailand bevolking* [Online]. Available at: http://www.evd.nl/zoeken/showbouwsteen.asp?bstnum=5836&location [Accessed 5 April 2010]

MUTH, R. F., 1969. *Cities and Housing: The spatial pattern of urban residential use*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 0-226-55413-9

MURAKAMI, A. et. al. 2003. Trends in urbanization and patterns of land use in the Asian mega cities Jakarta, Bangkok, and Metro Manila. *Landscape and Urban Planning.*Vol 70(3-4) pp. 251-259. Available at: ScienceDirect.

NARAYAN, D., R. CHAMBERS, M.SHAH, P. PETESCH, 1999. Global sythesis, consultation with the poor. Poverty Group, Worldbank.

REED, M. S., et. al. 2009. Who's in and why? A typology of stakeholder analysis methods for natural resource management. *Journal of Environmental Management.* [Online]. Vol. 90(5) pp. 1933-1949. Available at: Science Direct http://www.sciencedirect.com

ROSS, H., A. POUNGSOMLEE, S. PUNPUING AND K. ARCHAVANITKUL, 2000. Integrative analysis of city systems: Bangkok "Man and the Biosphere" programme study. *Environment and urbanization*. Vol. 12(2) pp. 151-161. Available at: SagePublications

SATTHERTHWAITE, D. 1997. Giving the urban poor a voice and a choice. *HABITAT*. United Nations. [Online] Vol. 4(4). http://ww2.unhabitat.org/mdg/global_articles.asp

SCHWANDL, R., 2007. *Urbanrail.net, Bangkok.* [Online] Last updated 2007. Available at: http://www.urbanrail.net/as/bang/bangkok.htm [Accesed 9 October 2009]

SMITH, N., 1986. Gentrification, the frontier and the restructuring of urban space. In: Fyfe, N. R. and J. T. Kenny, 2005. *The Urban Geography Reader*. London: Routledge. pp. 128- 137. ISBN 0-415-30701-5

STRICKLAND, R., 1993. Bangkok's urban transport crisis. *The urban age.* [Online] Vol. 1(2) pp. 1, 4-6. Available at: Worldbank (17442) http://www-wds.worldbank.org

StickmanBangkok, 2009. *Saphan Kwai, a buffalo safari.* [Online] Available at:
http://www.stickmanweekly.com/StickmanBangkokWeeklyColumn2009/SaphanKwai.htm
[Accessed on 10 April 2010]

SUEBSUKCHAROEN, N., 2009. Condo boom to continue. *Bangkok Post.* [Internet] 29 November.
Available at: http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/investigation/28329/condo-boom-to-continue

SUWANARIT, A., 2005. The skytrain in Bangkok. *Topos*. [Online] 2005(53) pp. 45-48. Available at:
https://www.topos.de/PDFs/1151936401.pdf

SWIFT, R., 2006. The lease of life. *New Internationalist.* [Online]. No. 386 pp.10-12. Available at:
Encyclopedia http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-147228599.html

TORFING, J., E. SØRENSEN and T. FOTEL, 2009. Democratic anchorage of infrastructural governance
networks: The case of the Femern belt forum. *Planning Theory.* [Online] Vol 8(3) pp. 282–308.
Available at: http://plt.sagepub.com.proxy-ub.rug.nl/cgi/reprint/8/3/282

PARK, R., E. W. BURGESS and R. D. MCKENZIE, 1969. The Growth of the city: An introduction to a
research project. In: LeGates R.T., F. Stout, 2003. *The City Reader*. 3rd Edition. London:
Routledge. pp.156-163. ISBN: 0-415-27173-8

PATEL, S., C. d'Cruz, S. Burra, 2002. Beyond evictions in a global city: People-managed resettlement in
Mumbai. *Environment& Urbanization.* [Online]. Vol. 14(1) pp. 159-172. Available at:
http://www.sparcindia.org/docs/sparcresettl.pdf

PLESSIS, J. Du, 2005. Evictions. Environment and urbanization. [Online]. Vol. 17(1) pp. 123-134.
Available at: http://eau.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/17/1/123

PORNCHOKCHAI, S., 2003. City Report Thailand. Global Report on Human Settlements. *HABITAT.*
United Nations. Available at: http://www.trebs.ac.th/Thai/Publications/HABITAT1new.pdf

UNITED NATIONS, 2003. *The challenge of slums /United Nations Human Settlements
Program (UN HABITAT).* [Online]. London: Earthscan Publications ISBN: 1-84407-037-9
Available at: http://www.unhabitat.org/

VERME, P., 2010. A structural analysis of growth and poverty in the short-term. *The journal of
development areas.* Vol. 43(2) pp. 19-39.

WEIBLE, C. M., 2007. An Advocacy Coalition Framework Approach to Stakeholder Analysis:
Understanding the Political Context of California Marine Protected Area Policy. *Journal of
Public Administration Research and Theory.* [Online]. Vol. 17(1) pp. 95-117. Available at:
Oxford Journals http://jpart.oxfordjournals.org//cgi/reprint/17/1/95

WILLIAMS, B., 199? Double Jeopardy: The link between transport and evictions. *HABITAT.* United
Nations [Online]. Vol 7(3) Available at: http://ww2.unhabitat.org/mdg/global_articles.asp

WONG, S. C., W. H. K. LAM, 2006. Planning and policy of public transportation systems in Asia.
Transportation. [Online]. Vol. 2006(2) pp. 111-113. Available at: Springerlink

WOO, K. I., 2008. Mass - transit –influence on housing development. *GH Bank housing journal.*
[Online] Vol. 2(3) pp. 36-40. Available at: http://www.ghb.co.th/en/Journal/Vol3/36.pdf

World Bank, 1975. *Urban transport*. Policy paper. Report no. 603. File no. 11024.

World Bank, 2009. *Urban transport and poverty* [Online]. Available at:
    http://go.worldbank.org/0DBJZELI10 [Accessed 11 November 2009]

YIN, R.K., 1989. *Case study research: design and methods*. Newbury Park, California: Sage
    Publications. ISBN: 0-8039-3470-X

ZHI, L., 2005. Transport investment, economic growth and poverty reduction. *Journal of transport
    and infrastructure*. Vol. 12(1) pp. 16-31. Available at: World Bank.

ZOU, W., F. ZHANG, Z. ZHUANG, and H. SONG, 2008. Transport infrastructure, growth, and poverty
    alleviation: Empirical analysis of China. *Annals of economics and finance*. [Online] Vol.9(2) pp.
    345–371. Available at: http://www.aeconf.net/Articles/Nov2008/aef090207.pdf

Articles without the author mentioned:
No author 2006. Skytrain extension work to start in '07. *The Nation,* [internet] 29 April. Available at:
    http://nationmultimedia.com/2006/04/29/national/national_30002832.php
    [Accessed 19 September 2009]

No author 2006. Democrats launch mass transit policy. *The Nation*, [internet] 28 August. Available at:
    http://nationmultimedia.com/2006/08/28/politics/politics_30012148.php
    [Accessed 9 October 2009]

No author, 2006. Expansion for Skytrain. *International Railway Journal*, [internet] 11 October.
    Available at: Higbeam research. http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-148480258.html
    [Accessed 11 October 2009]

No author, 2009. Adorable Ari. Bangkok Magazine. [Internet] 3 September. Available at:
    http://bkmagazine.com/feature/adorable-ari [Accessed 27 November 2009]

No author, 2010. Noodtoestand in Bangkok na actie betogers. *NRC Handelsblad*, [internet] 7 April
2010. Available at:
    http://www.nrc.nl/buitenland/article2519443.ece/Noodtoestand_in_Bangkok_na_actie_betoge
    rs [Accessed 8 April 2010]