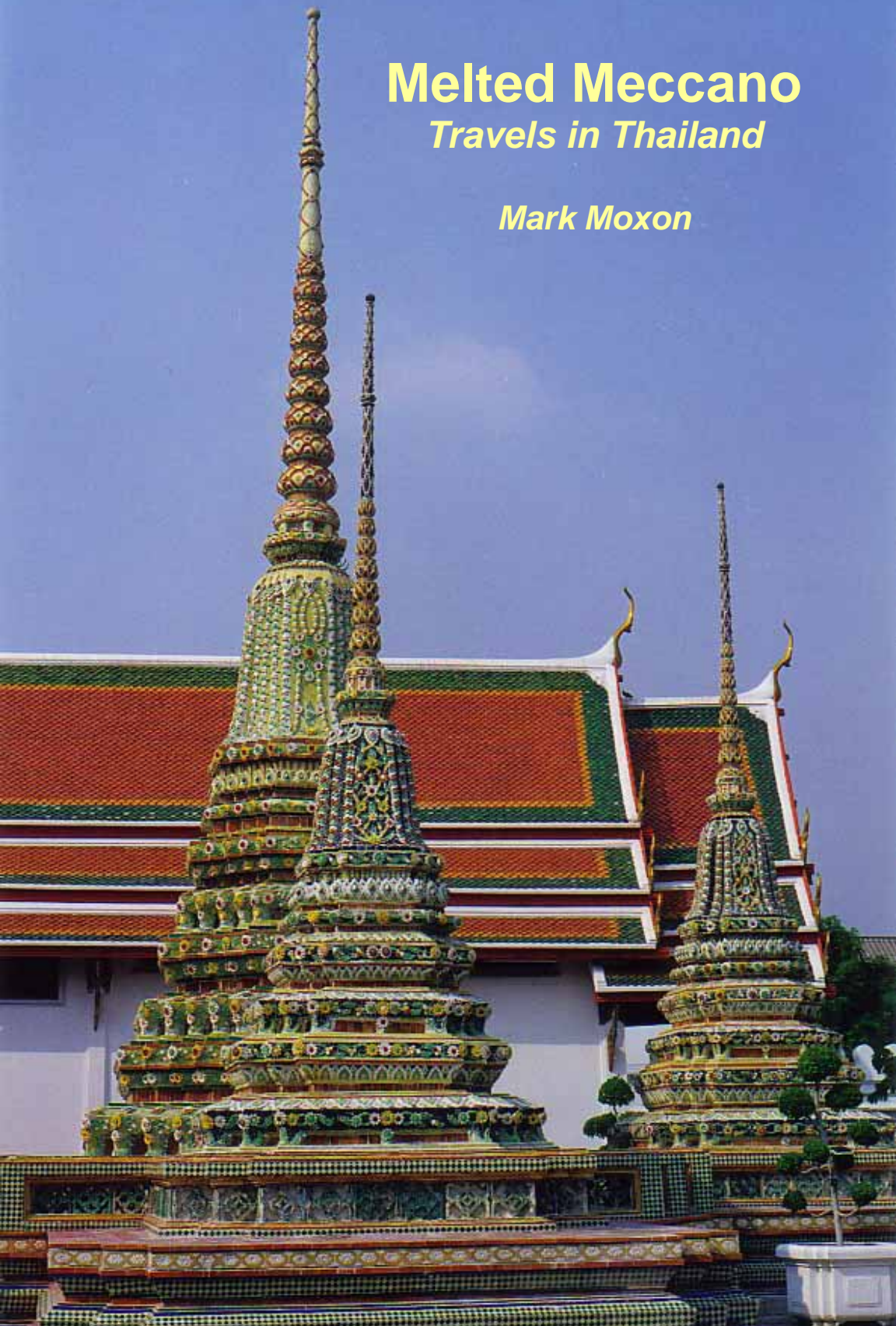


# Melted Meccano

*Travels in Thailand*

*Mark Moxon*





C O M M O N S D E E D

## Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 2.0

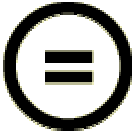
You are free to copy, distribute, display, and perform the work under the following conditions:



**Attribution.** You must give the original author credit.



**Non-commercial.** You may not use this work for commercial purposes.



**No Derivative Works.** You may not alter, transform, or build upon this work.

- For any reuse or distribution, you must make clear to others the licence terms of this work.
- Any of these conditions can be waived if you get permission from the author.

**Your fair use and other rights are in no way affected by the above.**

This is a human-readable summary of the Legal Code (the full licence), which is shown at the end of this work.

*Melted Meccano: Travels in Thailand*  
v1.1, September 2004

Cover Photograph: Wat Pho Temple, Bangkok

# Contents

<b>Foreword .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Map .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Thailand.....</b>	<b>8</b>
The Currency Crisis.....	8
The Thai Language.....	12
Hat Yai to Phuket .....	14
Ko Samui .....	18
Beach Bums of Thailand .....	23
Bangkok.....	29
Chiang Mai .....	35
Thoughts on Leaving.....	39
<b>Further Reading .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Copyright Notice.....</b>	<b>43</b>

# Foreword

This book is a collection of writing from the road, covering a one-month trip I made to Thailand in 1997/98. This was part of a much larger, three-year journey that took me through Australia, New Zealand, French Polynesia, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, India and Nepal, from 1995 to 1998.

The travelogue for all these countries and more can be found at my personal website at **[www.moxon.net](http://www.moxon.net)**, where you can also find travel tips, recommended journeys and further free books for you to download. If you enjoy reading this book, then I'd be delighted if you would sign my website's Guestbook.

I've released this book and its companions via a Creative Commons Licence, which means you are free to distribute it to everyone and anyone, as long as you distribute it on a non-commercial basis and make no changes to it. If you know someone who might like this book, please pass it on; I make no money from it, but I do enjoy the thought of people reading it and recommending it to their friends.

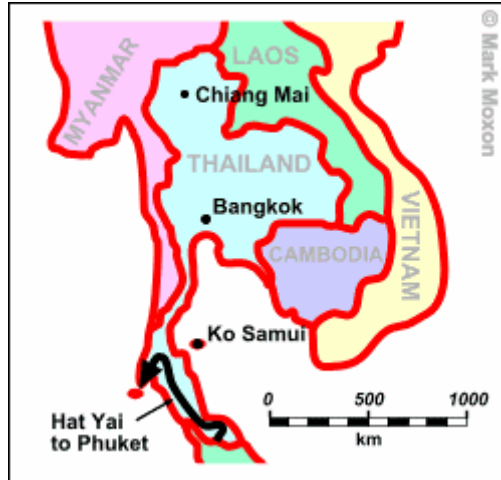
Finally, please be aware that this book is highly satirical, which means there's a slight chance that it might cause offence those who think my sense of

humour is amusing as a puddle of mud. On top of this, some parts will be out of date – which is why each article is dated – and others will betray the naivety of a traveller who discovered his way in the world by throwing himself into it headfirst. It is, however, an honest account of how I felt as I travelled the world for three years, and as such, I hope you enjoy it.

Mark Moxon, September 2004

**[www.moxon.net](http://www.moxon.net)**

# Map



# Thailand

## The Currency Crisis

*Written: 19 December 1997*

We entered Thailand on Friday 19th December, heading for Christmas cheer on the islands off the southern coast. Not only did it sound like a good spot – many travellers congregate in this area for Christmas, and it's never nice to be alone in the festive season – but the Thai currency crisis meant my dollars could buy a lot more festive spirit down the pub. Listen to this for a story of mismanagement and corruption with a distinctly Asian flavour.

Thailand's economy is pretty screwed, along with most of the rest of Southeast Asia, but where Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines suffered from a domino effect, Thailand started the whole thing. It's a classic case of government dishonesty, bad planning, a desire for instant westernisation, and a bursting economic bubble.

In the mid-1970s, the Thailand economy started to grow from its post-war Third World status, thanks to Japanese aid and investment, and by the late 1980s the country had made remarkable progress: Thailand was one of the world's leading rice exporters and Southeast

Asia's biggest producer of cars (from Japanese-owned factories). The dream of financial affluence was becoming a reality. In the last few years of the 1980s foreign investment skyrocketed, in the early 1990s the world discovered the Asian stock markets, and in 1993 the Thai government set up the Bangkok International Banking Facility through which companies could borrow money from abroad. This latter facility really took off, with foreign bankers more than willing to lend money to a country whose currency was tied to the US dollar (as were most Southeast Asian currencies then): between 1993 and 1996 about US\$50 billion poured into the country in loans.

This money was supposed to be spent on improved roads, more modern industrial facilities, better education, AIDS awareness and so on, but none of this materialised. Instead it was spent, among other things, on building more cars and trucks (which were never bought), expensive condominiums (which were never sold), heavy industry (which failed to interest overseas investors), and private hospital beds (which were never filled). Private citizens built up huge debts on credit cards, and the Bangkok Bank of Commerce spent a fortune on propping up the currency, rather than face devaluation – money it could ill afford seeing as the government had had to bail out the bank itself to cover bad loans.

Then there's Thailand's amazingly corrupt governmental system: current MPs include 'oil smugglers, alleged traffickers in drugs, investors in casino businesses, suspected traders in contraband and others involved in illegal logging and cross-border trade', according to one economics professor. The method of getting votes is to buy them (in 1996, US\$1 billion was spent on buying votes) so it's hardly surprising that the government's policies had less to do with improving the country than improving its individuals' portfolios. Consider that Thailand has had 21 coups since 1932, and seven prime ministers in the last nine years, and you begin to see the instability built into the system.

All it took to bring down this house of cards was a slide in exports in 1996: soon currency traders around the world were speculating that the currency would have to loosen the tie between the Thai baht and the US dollar. The government didn't want this to happen, spent a fortune on propping up the baht, and eventually the foreign debts were called in, the bubble burst and the currency was suspended.

The effect of all this on the traveller is that if you have your money in something like US dollars, then you'll get upwards of 50 per cent more bang for your buck than before the crisis, across most of Southeast Asia. A concurrent devaluation occurred in Indonesia,

Malaysia and the Philippines, because foreign investors saw similar economic set-ups and therefore similar potential risks, and money was pulled out... so the rupiah, ringgit and peso tumbled too. Only Singapore survived the crisis, because it has a much more stable government and financial system, and indeed, Singapore has been pouring aid into its neighbours, because it knows how important the local financial system is to its own economy (and how important political goodwill is).

It's too early to see a real effect on the man in the street, but the strict economic plan imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF<sup>1</sup>) as part of its US\$17 billion aid package has affected everyone; the prices of fuel and food have gone right up with increased taxation in an attempt to cut budget deficits. The large numbers of go-go girls, poverty in the

---

<sup>1</sup> The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is the sister agency to the World Bank; the former helps out developing countries whose economies have gone disastrously wrong, while the latter funds development projects in the Third World. Here are a few figures to put things in perspective: Thailand is getting US\$17 billion from the IMF; Indonesia about US\$23 billion; South Korea maybe as much as US\$60 to US\$100 billion; by comparison, Mexico's bailout three years ago cost US\$48 billion. The hope is that stalling the Asean crisis and that in South Korea (the world's 11th largest economy) will stop the crisis moving to Japan, who is having economic problems of its own. A Japanese crisis would hit the USA, which could trigger a global collapse, and that's the last thing we all need. It's all quite ironic when you consider that in 1963/64 the USA borrowed US\$600 million from the IMF to bolster its own diving currency and restore investor confidence; the USA is now the largest contributor to the IMF's funds, having donated 18 per cent of the US\$200 billion reserve the IMF has to throw around. History is circular, after all.

countryside and shocking traffic and health infrastructures aren't anything new, it's just a travesty that these issues weren't addressed when Thailand had the money to do so.

So I might be getting lots more baht, rupiah and ringgits for my dollar, but it makes me feel slightly guilty; simply by being paid in a different currency from the man on the street here, my money goes further. However you look at it, it feels unfair, even more so because nobody I'm likely to meet can do *anything* about it...

## The Thai Language

*Written: 19 December 1997*

The strange-looking script of Thailand's language made me feel as if I was somewhere completely alien: you get used to seeing the hieroglyphics of Chinese quickly enough, and even if you can't understand Malay or Indonesian, at least you can read it. Thai, on the other hand, will probably always remain a mystery to me: it looks like a combination of Spirographed Russian and melted Meccano.

However, there are quite a few western transcriptions of the language around (like on street signs) so idiots like me can actually read what's written even if we still don't understand it, but the

pronunciation of these transcriptions is really confusing. Phuket, for example, is pronounced ‘Poo-ket’; yes, I thought it was pronounced ‘Fuck-it’ as well when I first saw the name, but an ‘h’ after a consonant in Thai just means breathe out, rather than radically changing the consonant as it does in English. The pronunciation rules for speaking Thai are complex because it’s a tonal language – the pitch at which you say something alters its meaning – but most travellers just learn the numbers, hello, thank you and please, and manage quite happily with sign language. With only a month in the country, that was my plan too, though I started making an in-road from day one, trying to learn my 1-2-3 and basic formalities. I rather enjoyed the challenge.

To an Englishman with an Englishman’s refined sense of toilet humour, though, there does appear to be a pre-occupation with ablutions in the Thai language. As mentioned above, the most popular beach resort in Thailand is pronounced ‘Poo-ket’. Then there’s the national dish, fried rice, which in Thai is *khao phat*, pronounced ‘cow pat’. And check out the word for ‘yes’: it’s *khrap*. On top of that, as a politeness you should end every sentence in conversation with *khrap*, at least until the conversation has progressed, when you can drop it. There’s a joke in there somewhere about talking shit, but I’m not going to make it...

I felt as confused when it came to Thai cuisine,

especially after reading the section in my phrase book on all the goodies available. Try *phat phak bung fai daeng* (morning glory vine in fried garlic and bean sauce) or *plaa dak phat phet* (catfish fried in fresh chilli paste and basil), especially when the menu's in Thai script and your pronunciation is liable to bring you lightly grilled cockroach testicles braised in a sauce of lizard's eyeballs. It's all part of the fun, though, and if you like food that's hot enough to burn a hole in the back of your throat, you're unlikely to end up with anything inedible; and if it isn't hot enough for your tastes, every table has a container of chopped chillies that are dangerous enough to be a health hazard.

I always piled loads on.

## **Hat Yai to Phuket**

*Written: 20 December 1997*

Although a two month Thai visa was only going to cost me US\$10, on entering Thailand I was still suffering from the attitude problem that had struck me halfway through my Indonesian visit: I wanted to head over into India, and I felt I was just 'doing time' until I could hit the subcontinent.

On the other hand, after the pleasant surprise of Malaysia, I wasn't going to dismiss a whole country just because somewhere else happened to have fired my

imagination. Thailand is a well-known travel spot, and it's got enough variety to keep even a fussy sod like me occupied. Beautiful beaches, mountain areas, forests, culture, cities, cuisine: Thailand does it all pretty well, so despite my disposition I found myself getting fairly interested in the whole prospect.

After the border, the first stop Charlie and I landed up in was Hat Yai, following an easy bus ride direct from Penang and across the border: customs didn't even bother to look at our luggage, and the automatic 30-day visa was granted without any fuss.

Hat Yai wasn't exactly attractive, so after changing some money at a wonderfully advantageous rate, we hopped onto the bus and headed east to the coast at Songkhla, a town by the beach. This was only to break up the journey: a direct trip north from Penang would have been an all-day effort, and we'd have had problems finding an open bank on our arrival, so we took in a break along the way. Surprisingly there were hardly any westerners in Songkhla, and it made a nice change from the white-faced mishmash of west coast Malaysia.

Southern Thailand is extremely constricted. A thin peninsula joins Central Asia to Peninsular Malaysia, and although most of the peninsula is part of Thailand, Myanmar takes a pretty large chunk out of the western coast. This leaves a very thin strip for Thailand, so everyone travels pretty much the same route between

Malaysia and Bangkok, with the only real choice being between heading via touristy Phuket on the west, or the less touristy but still ridiculously packed island of Ko Samui on the east. We decided Ko Samui would make a lively, if tacky stop for Christmas: the beer is cheap, there are pretty beaches and there are loads of people. What more could Santa wish for?

### **Thai Bus Problems**

On Saturday 20th we struck north, aiming to get to Ko Samui in one journey. Things didn't go exactly according to plan, however, and by the end of the day we were stuck on the wrong side of the Thai peninsula, some eight hours from our starting point and still four hours and a long ferry trip from Ko Samui. It seems that the simplicity of Malaysia had lulled us into a false sense of security.

Thai transport is good, but it's good in the same way that Indonesian transport is good: there are lots of buses, but they're not that flash. However, the Thais are even more flexible than the Indonesians in their definition of 'truth', so when you get on a bus and the conductor says it's going to Surat Thani (the ferry terminal for Ko Samui) and charges you accordingly, you might be entitled to think that the bus will actually go to Surat Thani. Think again, sucker: we ended up in Krabi, miles from Surat Thani, where the conductor said

we could change here for Surat... except the last Surat bus for the day had already left. Connection? I don't think so.

Perhaps it was all part of a scam, because the touts at Krabi were very keen that we go with them to stay the night in a lovely hotel they knew, and from where we could catch the Surat bus in the morning, but something about the whole thing stank, so we decided it would be better if we got back on the bus and stayed with it to Phuket, a better bet for accommodation and a bigger terminal than Krabi. And I could have sworn I saw a bus marked 'Krabi-Surat Thani' pulling out just as we drove off for Phuket. Thailand? Lie-land, more like.

Phuket, though, turned out OK, if only because we were there for just one night. It's a major, major tourist spot – package holidays galore head out here during the peak seasons – and this makes survival easy, if a little uninspiring. Still, after a whole day of tarmac surfing you don't want language barriers, and Phuket fitted the bill. The main attraction of Phuket – which is technically an island, though the bridge to the mainland is pitifully short – is the collection of beautiful beaches where white people go red. We, however, missed out on this exciting egg-and-chips experience and only saw a snippet of Phuket town, so I'll leave out any disparaging remarks I might have otherwise made about beached-whale tourists from the north of England, holiday reps

called Gary, and disco nights down the authentic ‘Beach and Beer Glass’ British pub. I’ll save them for Ko Samui...

There was one point of interest though: on the way, at Phang-nga, we passed the beach where the action scenes of *The Man with the Golden Gun* were shot. That’s the James Bond film where Christopher Lee, the bad guy, builds a high-tech destructor beam on a paradise island in the middle of nowhere, threatens to destroy the world, and Roger Moore saves the day by tracking down the weapon of mass destruction and disarming it. Well, the beach off Phang-nga has a couple of surreal limestone islands where the destructor beam was supposed to be, and these islands reflect the surrounding landscape in microcosm. The drive up from Krabi to Phuket was simply stunning, and a pleasant bonus after the other screw-ups.

## **Ko Samui**

*Written: 5 January 1998*

Sunday saw us scrabbling to get to Ko Samui in time to find a room for Christmas. The journey was long and hot, but by early evening Charlie and I were ensconced in a beach bungalow on Samui’s east coast, within earshot of the beach, and just a five-minute walk from the bustling tourist Mecca of Lamai. Ah, Christmas in

paradise. Again.

Well, not quite. My previous two Christmas' were entirely different: one was classic, with a family atmosphere, exquisite food and a hot climate, and the other was simply breathtaking with the mountainous sunset and sunrise over the glacier, and the thrill of being miles from the nearest other human beings. As a change, I decided that this Christmas I'd hit a real tourist area, if only to make sure that I wasn't going to be alone at the festive time of year. And besides, I figured it was about time I let my hair down and partied, after the budget-consciousness of the last few months.

I felt my brain start to go soggy around the edges after, maybe, three or four days. The routine: I'd get up around ten and saunter down to the hotel restaurant for a breakfast of scrambled eggs on toast, served by the surly and downright grumpy old granny who ran the place. Cheered up immensely from my morning mood by seeing someone even crabbier than myself, I'd get my beach gear together and wander down to the sand, a 30-second journey from our bungalow.

Sunbathing has never really appealed to me, but for some unknown reason I became totally engrossed by this mind-numbingly insipid pastime. Perhaps it was the fact that, sitting up from my solar slumber, I would fall in love at least five times a minute as the most amazingly beautiful girls wandered up and down the

waterfront (inevitably with boyfriends in tow, but hey, you just don't look at the boyfriend). Perhaps it was the addiction of a number of excellent books, from the aforementioned *A Suitable Boy*, through Alexandre Dumas' classic *The Three Musketeers*, and on to Umberto Eco's *The Island of the Day Before*... not to mention my new purchase, a guidebook for India, a tome that made me want to hop west more and more with each turning page.

Perhaps it was the simplicity of life after such a psychological struggle through Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia: when your day consists of wake, eat, beach, eat, beach, eat, movie, drink and sleep, the stress level is fairly low. Perhaps it was the fact that, after sporting a tramper's tan for so long – brown forearms, legs and neck, white shoulders, torso and feet, making you look like you're wearing white underwear when you're actually naked – I was beginning to go brown all over, and combined with removal of my on-the-road beard, I felt as young as ever. Or perhaps it was the endless fascination of the other people on the island. Most likely it was a combination of all these reasons.

Meanwhile, Ko Samui managed to excel in lots of other areas, with great food – *pad thai*, *khao pat*, red and green curries, *tom yam*, stir fries, great seafood, copious cold Cokes, hot chillies on the side and even baguettes – good music (which made me quite homesick, but in the

nicest possible way), lots of astoundingly cheap alcohol, loads of people out for a good time, dance clubs with no entry charge, plenty of books to read, and heaps of leisure time in which to read them. And on top of all this there was the festive season...

## **Christmas in the Sun**

Christmas itself went with a bang. Abandoning myself to the vices early on Christmas Eve, I managed to get startlingly drunk as the evening progressed, dancing my legs down to the knees at the main nightclub while drinking 60 baht (80p) *piña coladas*, and eventually staggering home at 4.30am while the party continued on without me.

Christmas Day itself was a feast of Thai food and more Thai beer – this time to the performance of live rock bands, not dance DJs – and the wee hours snuck up once again before I finally wilted. Charlie, in his supporting role as a relatively sober observer, kept me company in fine feckle, especially as I must have been talking complete bollocks by midnight.

Events conspired to make our stay a longer one. After the Christmas parties had evaporated (but not the general party atmosphere), we checked out buses to Bangkok: the first seats we could get were on 5th January, and although we could have simply taken the ferry back to the mainland and made our own way by

public transport, we simply couldn't be bothered: infused by holiday slackness, we took the easy option and decided to stay for the New Year celebrations. Besides, I'd already decided that Thailand was going to be a fairly low-key event for me, as the Indian subcontinent beckoned ever louder.

One day we wandered to the neighbouring beach of Chaweng, a more popular but pretty crappy resort area, where the rubbish piles up, the bodies are laid out on the beach like pork chops under the grill, and the night clubs are more numerous, bigger and less intimate than the ones in Lamai. I was glad we'd ended up where we were.

New Year went crazy, much like Christmas, and I celebrated the coming of the year 2541 in style<sup>2</sup>. It was a long night involving Charlie retiring to bed soon after the New Year arrived, and me wandering around on my own, drunk as a skunk, making friends with people like Fred from Germany who kept buying me bottles of Beck's, and the sausage vendors who cured my midnight munchies and provided me with a major chilli kick at four in the morning<sup>3</sup>. Stumbling in at six, you

---

<sup>2</sup> The Thai calendar is based on Buddha, not Christ, so they're 543 years ahead of the West. I'm sure this didn't make any difference to the millennium celebrations in 2543...

<sup>3</sup> Chillies get me incredibly high. I am not alone in this, as people get addicted to curries for the same reason, but give me a few dangerously hot chillies, and I'll float off to the sky for a couple of minutes. So Thailand, with its pot of serious chillies on every restaurant table, was

could say it was a superb celebration, though New Year's Day wasn't such a hoot.

But finally, we managed to break free of the addictive hedonistic sloth of Ko Samui by jumping on the overnight Bangkok bus on Monday 5th January, due in the capital the next morning.

## **Beach Bums of Thailand**

*Written: 5 January 1998*

I thoroughly enjoyed my trip to Ko Samui, but for different reasons to most of the beer-swilling lobsters around me. I enjoyed it because it reminded me exactly what it was I hated about the traditional two-week beach holiday, with its incessant drinking, sitting on the beach, eating steak and chips, and inevitable sunburn in the attempt to get a tan in time for the flight home. Ever since a holiday from hell in Gran Canaria I've been incredibly wary of beach resorts, but both Charlie and I looked at Ko Samui in utter horror, and revelled in it.

Where can I start to describe the anathema of Lamai? Perhaps the first shock that springs on the unwary and unassuming traveller is the standard of the tourists – for some reason, even the normally disparaging word 'tourist' seems too classy to apply to the clientele of Ko Samui. Everyone is either English or

---

considerably entertaining at meal times. I *think*...

German, with a few minority appearances from other European nations: I do not exaggerate when I say I heard no other accents except Cockney, Mancunian, Liverpudlian and German. It was amazing.

But not as amazing as the bodies these people flaunt. I'm fairly used to seeing travellers in shorts and T-shirts, because that's the standard dress, but very few of them have potbellies or that pale, north-European skin that reminds one of flaccid, plucked chicken. The world is different on Ko Samui: the possession of a beer belly is almost an entry requirement, and if you don't have the requisite waistline, it's expected that you'll do something about it in the myriad bars scattered around. One exception to the Fat Bastard Rule is if you have a tattoo, in which case you're instantly accepted as one of the gang: if you're fat, pale *and* have a tat of a rose enshrined in barbed wire at the top of your left arm, you're practically a deity in these parts.

But who is going to hang out with these disgusting slouches? (They're all single, because if they were married the expense of keeping a wife and kid in TV and nappies would absorb the cost of the air fare to Thailand, and besides, the wife would rather go to Ibiza or Majorca with her friends from the housing estate, where they can all keep an eye on their erring husbands.) The answer lies in the cultural make-up of the Thais, to whom prostitution is a legal and perfectly

respectable profession: many Thai women head off from their country villages into the cities to solicit for a few years (mainly in their late teens and early twenties), and return to the country when they've earned some money, where they are fully accepted back into society without the taboos and class bigotry inherent in western society. As a result, there are plenty of willing Thai girls floating around Ko Samui for the beached whales to try to land: I'm not saying everyone is a pro – there are plenty of girls who just want to entrap a rich westerner to take them away from all this – but there's enough willing Thai girls around to ensure a high score rate for the waistline-challenged visitors.

And it's a sorry sight. Old, balding men; young, fat drunkards; even slick dudes who could pull any white girl on the beach if they wanted to... they're driving round on their rented motorbikes, Thai chick on the back, and goodness only knows what they actually *do* all day (well, apart from the obvious). I do know they go to restaurants and end up making very little small talk, mainly with the man talking rubbish and the Thai girl smiling sweetly, if a little falsely, at every nuance of the conversation, if such a conversation can be said to have anything as sophisticated as nuances. Then, of course, it's back to the room for sex and an account to settle.

How can anyone with a self-respecting streak in their cranium act in the way that the tattoo brigade do?

They live for getting pissed as farts, eating curries, and the premier league results. They cut their hair in astounding fashions that make them look even more stupid than they really are. They hate all Johnny Foreigners, unless they sell them ecstasy or draw, in which case they're pretty damn cool, you know. They're sexist pigs – women are only there for one thing, and it ain't the cooking – and two weeks on the beach getting slaughtered and dancing 'til six at the rave clubs on the beach is their idea of heaven. Wicked!

But they do manage to pull (outside of the Thai girls, that is) because there are plenty of idiot women around who have just as many mental screw-ups as their Neanderthal sexual opposites. The big difference is that a lot of the women on holiday in Ko Samui are stunning: they have bodies that defy gravity, tans that defy skin cancer, and bikinis that defy the law. But they also have brains that defy belief, and although I'm there with all the other red-blooded males gawking at the Venusian peaks on the beach, as soon as these girls open their mouths, any stirring in the nether regions deflates as quickly as if I'd thought of Thora Hird in a swimsuit (a useful tip for those who suffer from P.E.). From the mouths of babes idiocy flows, and although the girls might not have the tattooed chicken skin of their friends from the dangling sex, their brains are just as liquid. Thank God they get together with each other and save

the rest of us from making the biggest mistake of our holidays.

The overall result is an insight into a culture – a part of western culture, I might add – that just makes me dumbstruck. That party of Boyz from East Landahn who have been sitting next to me on the beach for the last few hours gets up to hit the bars, and leaves behind it three plastic bottles, two Fanta cans, and a scrunched up packet of cigarettes. A couple of older men, who are obviously just ancient versions of the younger love machines walking down the street, are sitting outside the 24-hour supermarket ploughing through a bag of beers, wondering why they're single. A lone American, with a boxer's nose, a week-old cut across his cheek and the bleary eyes of the excessively drunk, sits at the end of a bar, staring at the game of American football on the TV, by turns leaping up and shouting, 'Yes! Yes! Yes!' when his team scores a touchdown, and burying his head in his hands when the opposing team crosses the line: he's drunk enough to have alienated the few friends he originally made in the bar, and his loneliness is both loud and painfully obvious. An old couple walks hand in hand along the road, staring at the pick-up joints and tacky rock bars with a look of slight incredulity, wondering at the youth of today and bemused but amused at the available entertainment; they're an ocean of sanity among the craziness, and you can't help

wondering if they booked the wrong holiday by mistake. The hotel's food and drinks menu has all the usual foodstuffs – lots of rice dishes, Chinese cooking, Thai curries, wonderful fruit drinks – and tucked away at the very end is an entry, highlighted in red, that says, 'Magic Mushrooms, 200-300 baht,' and they mean it, too. This place is a dream.

Even the Thai culture is totally based round tourism (of course). Hawkers stride the beach, selling kimonos, sarongs, hammocks, food and drink, and even Indian mysticism<sup>4</sup>. The Thai masseurs on the beach do their stuff, but the massage parlours in the conurbation manage to add a certain dimension to massage that can only be performed behind closed doors. The restaurants do western food and, if you're lucky, a few Thai dishes, though it was heartening to note that there were a few

---

<sup>4</sup> A young man approached me on my first day on the beach, introducing himself as an Indian mystic from Kashmir who read palms. I told him I didn't want to know about it, but he insisted on taking my palm and jotting down some details anyway: when he came to the bit where he asked me to put some money in his hand to get my fortune, I told him I'd already made my fortune, but it was back at the hotel and he wasn't getting any of it. He got the message and left. The next day, he came back, and failing to recognise me, he started with the same spiel. This time I interrupted him and told him I didn't want my fortune told, and that I still didn't have any money on me, and he looked rather hurt and said, 'But I haven't asked you for money. I tell you what: I will tell you the first name of your mother, and if I am right, you can pay me, and if not, you don't have to.' I told him I already knew the first name of my mother, and I didn't need to pay someone to remind me. Faced with such irrefutable logic, his brow wrinkled and, before long, he'd wandered off down the beach, a mystified mystic. He never bothered me again.

*warung*-type places around, where I ate almost exclusively. The shops sell western goods at outrageous prices – outrageous for Thailand, that is – and everywhere English reigns. Of course, this is an inevitable result of tourism, and I'm not criticising the set up in Ko Samui: it's just that I could have been anywhere in the world, not necessarily Thailand.

So, Ko Samui, you were good for Christmas and New Year: the beer was cheap, the sun shone, the beach was extremely beautiful, I got a tan, the sea was crystal clear and warm, the food was plentiful, the bungalow near the beach was pleasant enough, and there was plenty to look at. Yep, I thoroughly enjoyed the freak show of Lamai, and it made me almost glad to get back to the stress and strain of travelling. In this respect, Ko Samui was a complete success.

## **Bangkok**

*Written: 10 January 1998*

As I hooked up my computer to the public phone just off Bangkok's Khao San Road, I noticed that everything had stopped. Despite it being 8.30am and the height of Bangkok's morning rush hour<sup>5</sup>, everyone on the street

---

<sup>5</sup> Where, of course, the traffic *doesn't* rush, it sits. Perhaps a better phrase for Bangkok would be 'crush hour', judging by the number of dents and near misses I witnessed from my phone booth cocoon.

had stopped moving, the horns had stopped blaring, and even the most manic drivers had stopped trying to fit ten cars into the space of one: the national anthem was being played, and in this country where the King is revered almost to the point of deification, everyone stops and stands to attention when his signature tune is played. It's just one amazing thing among many in this crazy city.

I had first seen Bangkok some 26-and-a-half months before – in transit on the way to Sydney – and I couldn't believe that one day I might travel there. Looking at the flooded streets from my window seat and seeing the sprawl of Asian town planning from a safe distance above, the thought of actually *being* down there scared the living hell out of me. Add to the mixture the somewhat scary reputation that Bangkok has in the West – drugs being planted in your baggage, sleazy sex bars<sup>6</sup>,

---

<sup>6</sup> Check out this article, which I spotted in the Indian paper *The Asian Age*, dated January 30th 1998. It's illuminating.

*Thailand's politicians can't fathom the furore over the sex scandal surrounding US President Bill Clinton, with one suggesting Mr Clinton move to the Southeast Asian kingdom should he be impeached. 'Great leaders are always very good at sex, like Cleopatra, Genghis Khan, Napoleon, Mao Zedong. Mr Clinton is also a capable leader so it is normal for him to be very good at sex,' Mr Pan Phuengsujarit, a former government spokesman, was quoted as saying in Thursday's The Nation newspaper. 'We know this kind of thing is normal among Thai politicians,' he added.*

*Not all Thai women are as accepting of their husband's infidelities. Last year one housewife made headlines when, after discovering her mate had a minor wife [a second wife, not strictly legal, but socially accepted], she sliced off his penis with a kitchen knife, tied*

AIDS epidemics, economic crises and the like – and it wasn't really surprising that I, a novice traveller, was worried. When I actually turned up in Bangkok, I'd travelled long enough to know there was absolutely nothing to worry about.

## **The Khao San Road**

The Khao San Road is Bangkok's backpacker centre, and everything the traveller needs is there, from cheap accommodation to travel agents to bars, and it wasn't long before my passport was at the Indian embassy, being processed for a six-month visa, and I was the proud owner of a ticket from Bangkok to Calcutta (at an incredibly low cost of 3400 baht, or about £40, a symptom of the crashing Thai economy). Flushed with bureaucratic success, I decided to let my hair down.

On the bus from Ko Samui I'd met an Irishman called Gary, and after a long day sorting out tickets and visas, we decided to go for a beer. Now, as every self-respecting alcoholic knows, 'a beer' isn't the singular of 'beer', it's the plural, and as one bottle led to another we settled into the bliss of Bangkok. Somehow we managed to recruit another liver-pickler, a lively Scottish lass called Mo, and together we moved on to the Thailand

---

*it to some balloons and watched it float away. Such acts of revenge are so common that one Bangkok hospital has a special unit devoted solely to reattaching male sexual organs.*

equivalent of the Oblivion Pill: Sang Thip whisky. In my long years of research I haven't found a spirit that manages to destroy sensibility quite as comprehensively as Sang Thip, and by 10pm we were in another world. It's a hazy memory, but I recall taking a ride in a *tuk-tuk*<sup>7</sup> to a nightclub, where we were almost the only punters, and rather quickly taking a taxi back to bed.

The next day was a repeat performance, but without Gary this time, as he'd flown back home. Mo and I managed another bottle of Sang Thip, and ended up spending the next day recuperating, before she struck north. I'd managed to spend three days in Bangkok, and the whole thing was a debauched daze. Not surprisingly, I felt pretty rough afterwards, and that's when the flu virus that had been incubating inside me for five days broke. God, I felt miserable, and in my incapacitated state, I calculated that since I landed in Indonesia, I had been ill on average every 14 days (and by 'ill' I mean diarrhoea, temperature, vomiting, flu symptoms, or a combination). This could help to explain the emotional rollercoaster ride I'd had over the previous four months,

---

<sup>7</sup> A *tuk-tuk* is a three-wheeled taxi that's open to the elements, and therefore provides a much more thrilling ride than a conventional taxi. *Tuk-tuks* are named after the noise they make with their hopelessly out-of-tune moped engines, and the pollution they churn out is simply amazing. They're everywhere, they're driven by shameless touts, and they're a great way to get around the city. The fact that *tuk-tuks* look like golf buggies and are about as fashionable doesn't stop the Thais fixing garish stickers and garlands to them... and why should it? It's no worse than go-faster stripes...

but it wasn't going to stop me checking out the more cultural side of Thailand's capital city.

## **Exploring Bangkok**

Bangkok is a fascinating place. The images of Thailand's capital are all accurate: it's heavily polluted, incredibly crowded, very noisy, amazingly sleazy and endlessly interesting. It didn't freak me out as much as I'd thought it would, though: it is, after all, just another Asian city, and although it's a particularly bustling version, it's conceptually no different from Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and so on. It's just crazier.

Against popular perception, Bangkok is a pretty clean place – at least as far as visible pollution is concerned. There's precious little rubbish on the street, and indeed there's a strict penalty system for dropping litter. Combine this with the Chinese obsession for sweeping outside shop fronts and watering down the pavement to keep the dust down, and the place is relatively rubbish-free: sure, there are plenty of overflowing bins around with their distinctive rotting vegetable smell, but the rubbish isn't at floor level. It's at nose level.

The air pollution in Bangkok has to be breathed to be believed. Every city has air pollution, thanks to the internal combustion engine, but Bangkok has turned particles-per-cubic-metre into a tangible concept.

Policemen, *tuk-tuk* drivers and even street stall owners wear face masks as a matter of course: the Indonesian forest-fire haze didn't reach as far north as Bangkok, but that's because it didn't have to – Bangkok already has a resident haze. If you're feeling beyond help in Bangkok, don't go to the trouble of buying a garage, a car and a hose pipe; all you need to do is sit on a sidewalk and breathe deeply, and if the fumes don't get you, you could always try crossing the road...

In typical Asian style, Bangkok is home to millions and millions of shops. Finding what you want is another matter altogether, but walking down the streets is a lesson in pack-'em-high that the western world doesn't even come close to. There are shops dedicated to selling metal strips, shops that sell compressors, shops that sell bulk incense, shops that sell bottled oxygen, – are bang in the middle of town, tucked between the noodle restaurants and the banks. Bangkok is one big department store with millions of different departments and no air conditioning. It's a buzz.

And dotted around the city are hundreds of *wats*. *Wat* is Thai for temple, and as far as Buddhism goes, Bangkok is a major centre for *wats*. Among the hundreds of *wats* are Wat Intharawihan with its huge golden statue of a standing Buddha; Wat Benchamabopit, a marble complex with canals, bridges and a beautiful interior; Wat Traimit, with its pure gold

statue of Buddha; and the most amazing of all, Wat Pho, with its colossal statue of a reclining Buddha, where the feet are as wide as a man is high. I spent a whole day sweating round the streets of Bangkok, and although inhaling all the exhaust fumes did wonders for my sore throat, it was well worth the effort.

That night Charlie and I decided to buy tickets to Chiang Mai for the morning – after all, I had a week to kill until my flight, and the excitement of my drunken Khao San Road sessions were wearing thin. As if to rub in the Bangkok vibe, I received an email telling me that one of the people I'd met in Melbourne and had gone pig hunting with had died just before New Year from a heroin overdose. To say I was shocked was an understatement, and I thought Chiang Mai would be a pleasant place to get away from the bad news. How wrong I was...

## **Chiang Mai**

*Written: 15 January 1998*

After an excruciating 12-hour journey, the Bangkok bus arrived in Chiang Mai. As with most long bus journeys, it was uncomfortable and fairly unpleasant, but luckily Charlie had discovered some sleeping pills in his travel medical kit, and miraculously they worked.

Unfortunately they didn't kick in until after the

obligatory full-volume Thai-dubbed American movie – arguably the most difficult part of any long bus haul in Thailand – had melted my brain. Still, with sleeping pills, eye shades and ear plugs it was a bearable event, and our arrival in Chiang Mai and the discovery of a place to stay wasn't exactly difficult, as the bus ticket included a free night's accommodation in one of the many guest houses dotted around. Yes, Chiang Mai is a serious tourist trap.

Its main attraction is the trekking. I'd had absolutely no intention of going on an organised trek – an oxymoron in my book – but on arrival at the guest house, a thinly disguised tour booking operation, I began to reconsider. After all, the secret to a good trek is to go with a good group, and the bunch off the bus were as good as it gets. Before I knew it, I was booked on a three-day trek into the hills of northern Thailand.

The trip was quite excellent. The trekking was tame, to say the least, and although it was pleasant wandering through the paddy fields and river valleys of the north, it was nothing terribly different from central Sulawesi or any other Southeast Asian country. However, the extras made the whole expedition worth the effort: we rode on elephants for one leg, drifted down a river on a raft for another, and spent the nights in delightfully basic huts, sleeping on the floor and huddling round fires as the moon rose, breath frosting in the cold nights of the

north. Finally we drove to the top of Doi Inthanon, the highest peak in Thailand at 2565m, and home to a wonderful pair of *wats* built in honour of the king and queen.

## Opium Dens

But the one thing that made the trek different from the normal experience was the local drug culture among the tribes. The hill tribes of northern Thailand are famous throughout the world, but not necessarily for the best reasons: they grow some of the best marijuana in the world, and the area is a major source of opium. It's obvious why; people in northern Thailand are not rich, and if they can survive by growing drugs, then who can blame them?

When I visited the northern hills, there these drugs were technically illegal, but in practice were decriminalised, much like marijuana is in Amsterdam<sup>8</sup>. Was it any wonder that the organised treks through the hills were so popular?

On the first night of the trek we watched a real live

---

<sup>8</sup> Things have changed since this was written in 1997. It seems that the drugs problem in the north has been seriously tackled and a lot of work done to reduce it throughout the country. It is now totally illegal for people smoke opium while on a trek, and although there will always be some exceptions, many of the trekking agencies have been diligent in ensuring that guides and trekkers do not get involved in opium smoking. There was also a serious case of a westerner smoking too much opium on a trek and eventually dying, which might explain the speed of the changes.

opium den in action. It was an education. The smoker lies down on his side, and the opium man lies down on his, so that they're facing each other. The dealer then goes through a long procedure of mixing the pure opium resin with aspirin (to make it a smooth smoke) and with more, less-refined opium, grinding it all up in a little dish and pounding it into a black paste the consistency of Plasticine. Finally he pokes a little into the end of a pipe, and hands the end it over to the smoker.

As the pipe is smoked, the dealer keeps the end over a little paraffin lamp until all the opium has disappeared, and that's it. At 20 baht a pipe (about 25p) it's an astoundingly cheap drug, and between five and ten pipes will see most people through, depending on your size and tolerance. Is it any wonder trekking in Chiang Mai is so popular, where the mountains are high and so are the trekkers?

But even without this interesting insight into a culture that shaped the East back in the days of the Opium Wars, the trek would have been well worthwhile. I found myself wanting to explore the northern reaches of Thailand more, but my ticket to Calcutta beckoned, and there I'd find a far trippier experience than in any opium dream...

# Thoughts on Leaving

*Written: 18 January 1998*

So, another country gets ticked off the list. I can't really comment too much on Thailand: despite being here for a month, I never really left the cosy confines of the tourist trail, and I have no idea what the real Thailand is like. In places like Chiang Mai, the Khao San Road and Ko Samui the locals are tainted by tourism, and as a result they're pretty miserable and offhand, and the service is terrible. However, I'm absolutely convinced that this is not representative of Thais in general: they're supposed to be incredibly friendly, and although I didn't experience it, I didn't exactly put any effort into exploring the *real* Thailand.

There is one thing that's true, though. For me – and statistically speaking, I'm in a minority with this opinion – Thailand is no big deal. Sure, there are plenty of places to visit, but none of them really filled me with a major desire to explore, and I could have omitted Thailand from my trip without any discernible tear spillage. I'm glad I came and did what I did, but compared to Indonesia it felt tame, compared to Singapore it felt backward, and compared to Malaysia it felt downright unfriendly.

On the other hand, Thai food is delightful, the landscapes are beautiful, and there's an interesting culture hidden somewhere behind the tourism. And it's a

perfect place to go if you want to take a break from hardcore travelling, because travel doesn't get a lot easier than in Thailand. Or more vacuous.

**THE END**

## Further Reading

This story is continued in another of my books, *Many Ways to Change Your Mind: Travels in India* (also available for free from **www.moxon.net**). If you enjoyed this book, you might like to know that there's a whole series of free books like this available from **www.moxon.net**, covering 16 countries and five continents:

- *The Back of Beyond: Travels in Australia*
- *God's Own Country: Travels in New Zealand*
- *Paradise Has Teeth: Travels in French Polynesia*
- *Hello Paul, What's Your Name? Travels in Indonesia*
- *Serious Fun: Travels in Singapore*
- *The Muddy Confluence: Travels in Malaysia*
- *Melted Meccano: Travels in Thailand*
- *Many Ways to Change Your Mind: Travels in India*
- *Roof of the World: Travels in Nepal*
- *Snaking Patterns of Sand: Travels in Morocco*
- *Snow on the Sun Loungers: Travels in Cyprus*
- *The Head and the Heart: Travels in Senegal*

- *A Million Mosquitoes Can't Be Wrong: Travels in the Gambia*
- *The Lapping of the Dunes: Travels in Mali*
- *A Town Full of Nothing to Do: Travels in Burkina Faso*
- *The Road to Jesus: Travels in Ghana*

If you know someone who might like any of my books, please pass them on; I make no money from this, but I do enjoy the thought of people reading my books and recommending them to their friends. If you've enjoyed reading my writing (or even if you haven't) I'd be delighted if you could sign my Guestbook at **www.moxon.net** – after all, it's the feedback that makes it all worthwhile.

Happy travels!

Mark Moxon, September 2004

**www.moxon.net**

# Copyright Notice



**Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 2.0**

CREATIVE COMMONS CORPORATION IS NOT A LAW FIRM AND DOES NOT PROVIDE LEGAL SERVICES. DISTRIBUTION OF THIS LICENSE DOES NOT CREATE AN ATTORNEY-CLIENT RELATIONSHIP. CREATIVE COMMONS PROVIDES THIS INFORMATION ON AN “AS-IS” BASIS. CREATIVE COMMONS MAKES NO WARRANTIES REGARDING THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, AND DISCLAIMS LIABILITY FOR DAMAGES RESULTING FROM ITS USE.

## *License*

THE WORK (AS DEFINED BELOW) IS PROVIDED UNDER THE TERMS OF THIS CREATIVE COMMONS PUBLIC LICENSE (“CCPL” OR “LICENSE”). THE WORK IS PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT AND/OR OTHER APPLICABLE LAW. ANY USE OF THE WORK OTHER THAN AS AUTHORIZED UNDER THIS LICENSE OR COPYRIGHT LAW IS PROHIBITED.

BY EXERCISING ANY RIGHTS TO THE WORK PROVIDED HERE, YOU ACCEPT AND AGREE TO BE BOUND BY THE TERMS OF THIS LICENSE. THE LICENSOR GRANTS YOU THE RIGHTS CONTAINED HERE IN CONSIDERATION OF YOUR ACCEPTANCE OF SUCH TERMS AND CONDITIONS.

## **1. Definitions**

- a) **“Collective Work”** means a work, such as a periodical issue, anthology or encyclopedia, in which the Work in its entirety in unmodified form, along with a

number of other contributions, constituting separate and independent works in themselves, are assembled into a collective whole. A work that constitutes a Collective Work will not be considered a Derivative Work (as defined below) for the purposes of this License.

- b) “Derivative Work” means a work based upon the Work or upon the Work and other pre-existing works, such as a translation, musical arrangement, dramatization, fictionalization, motion picture version, sound recording, art reproduction, abridgment, condensation, or any other form in which the Work may be recast, transformed, or adapted, except that a work that constitutes a Collective Work will not be considered a Derivative Work for the purpose of this License. For the avoidance of doubt, where the Work is a musical composition or sound recording, the synchronization of the Work in timed-relation with a moving image (“synching”) will be considered a Derivative Work for the purpose of this License.
- c) “Licensor” means the individual or entity that offers the Work under the terms of this License.
- d) “Original Author” means the individual or entity who created the Work.
- e) “Work” means the copyrightable work of authorship offered under the terms of this License.
- f) “You” means an individual or entity exercising rights under this License who has not previously violated the terms of this License with respect to the Work, or who has received express permission from the Licensor to exercise rights under this License despite a previous violation.

**2. Fair Use Rights.** Nothing in this license is intended to reduce, limit, or restrict any rights arising from fair use, first sale or other limitations on the exclusive rights of the copyright owner under copyright law or other applicable laws.

**3. License Grant.** Subject to the terms and conditions of this License, Licensor hereby grants You a worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive, perpetual (for the duration of the applicable copyright) license to exercise the rights in the Work as stated below:

- a) to reproduce the Work, to incorporate the Work into one or more Collective Works, and to reproduce the Work as incorporated in the Collective Works;
- b) to distribute copies or phonorecords of, display publicly, perform publicly, and perform publicly by means of a digital audio transmission the Work including as incorporated in Collective Works;

The above rights may be exercised in all media and formats whether now known or hereafter devised. The above rights include the right to make such modifications as are technically necessary to exercise the rights in other media and formats, but otherwise you have no rights to make Derivative Works. All rights not expressly granted by Licensor are hereby reserved, including but not limited to the rights set forth in Sections 4(d) and 4(e).

**4. Restrictions.** The license granted in Section 3 above is expressly made subject to and limited by the following restrictions:

- a) You may distribute, publicly display, publicly perform, or publicly digitally perform the Work only under the terms of this License, and You must include a copy of, or the

Uniform Resource Identifier for, this License with every copy or phonorecord of the Work You distribute, publicly display, publicly perform, or publicly digitally perform. You may not offer or impose any terms on the Work that alter or restrict the terms of this License or the recipients' exercise of the rights granted hereunder. You may not sublicense the Work. You must keep intact all notices that refer to this License and to the disclaimer of warranties. You may not distribute, publicly display, publicly perform, or publicly digitally perform the Work with any technological measures that control access or use of the Work in a manner inconsistent with the terms of this License Agreement. The above applies to the Work as incorporated in a Collective Work, but this does not require the Collective Work apart from the Work itself to be made subject to the terms of this License. If You create a Collective Work, upon notice from any Licensor You must, to the extent practicable, remove from the Collective Work any reference to such Licensor or the Original Author, as requested.

- b) You may not exercise any of the rights granted to You in Section 3 above in any manner that is primarily intended for or directed toward commercial advantage or private monetary compensation. The exchange of the Work for other copyrighted works by means of digital file-sharing or otherwise shall not be considered to be intended for or directed toward commercial advantage or private monetary compensation, provided there is no payment of any monetary compensation in connection with the exchange of copyrighted works.
- c) If you distribute, publicly display, publicly perform, or publicly digitally perform the Work, You must keep intact all copyright notices for the Work and give the Original Author credit reasonable to the medium or means You are utilizing by conveying the name (or pseudonym if applicable) of the Original Author if supplied; the title of the Work if supplied; and to the extent reasonably practicable, the Uniform Resource Identifier, if any, that Licensor specifies to be associated with the Work, unless such URI does not refer to the copyright notice or licensing information for the Work. Such credit may be implemented in any reasonable manner; provided, however, that in the case of a Collective Work, at a minimum such credit will appear where any other comparable authorship credit appears and in a manner at least as prominent as such other comparable authorship credit.
- d) For the avoidance of doubt, where the Work is a musical composition:
  - i. **Performance Royalties Under Blanket Licenses.** Licensor reserves the exclusive right to collect, whether individually or via a performance rights society (e.g. ASCAP, BMI, SESAC), royalties for the public performance or public digital performance (e.g. webcast) of the Work if that performance is primarily intended for or directed toward commercial advantage or private monetary compensation.
  - ii. **Mechanical Rights and Statutory Royalties.** Licensor reserves the exclusive right to collect, whether individually or via a music rights agency or designated agent (e.g. Harry Fox Agency), royalties for any phonorecord You create from the Work ("cover version") and distribute, subject to the compulsory license created by 17 USC Section 115 of the US Copyright Act (or the equivalent in other jurisdictions), if Your distribution of such cover version is primarily intended for or directed toward commercial advantage or private monetary compensation.

- e) **Webcasting Rights and Statutory Royalties.** For the avoidance of doubt, where the Work is a sound recording, Licensor reserves the exclusive right to collect, whether individually or via a performance-rights society (e.g. SoundExchange), royalties for the public digital performance (e.g. webcast) of the Work, subject to the compulsory license created by 17 USC Section 114 of the US Copyright Act (or the equivalent in other jurisdictions), if Your public digital performance is primarily intended for or directed toward commercial advantage or private monetary compensation.

## **5. Representations, Warranties and Disclaimer**

UNLESS OTHERWISE MUTUALLY AGREED BY THE PARTIES IN WRITING, LICENSOR OFFERS THE WORK AS-IS AND MAKES NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND CONCERNING THE WORK, EXPRESS, IMPLIED, STATUTORY OR OTHERWISE, INCLUDING, WITHOUT LIMITATION, WARRANTIES OF TITLE, MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, NONINFRINGEMENT, OR THE ABSENCE OF LATENT OR OTHER DEFECTS, ACCURACY, OR THE PRESENCE OF ABSENCE OF ERRORS, WHETHER OR NOT DISCOVERABLE. SOME JURISDICTIONS DO NOT ALLOW THE EXCLUSION OF IMPLIED WARRANTIES, SO SUCH EXCLUSION MAY NOT APPLY TO YOU.

**6. Limitation on Liability.** EXCEPT TO THE EXTENT REQUIRED BY APPLICABLE LAW, IN NO EVENT WILL LICENSOR BE LIABLE TO YOU ON ANY LEGAL THEORY FOR ANY SPECIAL, INCIDENTAL, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR EXEMPLARY DAMAGES ARISING OUT OF THIS LICENSE OR THE USE OF THE WORK, EVEN IF LICENSOR HAS BEEN ADVISED OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGES.

## **7. Termination**

- a) This License and the rights granted hereunder will terminate automatically upon any breach by You of the terms of this License. Individuals or entities who have received Collective Works from You under this License, however, will not have their licenses terminated provided such individuals or entities remain in full compliance with those licenses. Sections 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, and 8 will survive any termination of this License.
- b) Subject to the above terms and conditions, the license granted here is perpetual (for the duration of the applicable copyright in the Work). Notwithstanding the above, Licensor reserves the right to release the Work under different license terms or to stop distributing the Work at any time; provided, however that any such election will not serve to withdraw this License (or any other license that has been, or is required to be, granted under the terms of this License), and this License will continue in full force and effect unless terminated as stated above.

## **8. Miscellaneous**

- a) Each time You distribute or publicly digitally perform the Work or a Collective Work, the Licensor offers to the recipient a license to the Work on the same terms and conditions as the license granted to You under this License.
- b) If any provision of this License is invalid or unenforceable under applicable law, it shall not affect the validity or enforceability of the remainder of the terms of this License, and without further action by the parties to this agreement, such provision shall be reformed to the minimum extent necessary to make such provision valid and

enforceable.

- c) No term or provision of this License shall be deemed waived and no breach consented to unless such waiver or consent shall be in writing and signed by the party to be charged with such waiver or consent.
- d) This License constitutes the entire agreement between the parties with respect to the Work licensed here. There are no understandings, agreements or representations with respect to the Work not specified here. Licensor shall not be bound by any additional provisions that may appear in any communication from You. This License may not be modified without the mutual written agreement of the Licensor and You.

Creative Commons is not a party to this License, and makes no warranty whatsoever in connection with the Work. Creative Commons will not be liable to You or any party on any legal theory for any damages whatsoever, including without limitation any general, special, incidental or consequential damages arising in connection to this license. Notwithstanding the foregoing two (2) sentences, if Creative Commons has expressly identified itself as the Licensor hereunder, it shall have all rights and obligations of Licensor.

Except for the limited purpose of indicating to the public that the Work is licensed under the CCPL, neither party will use the trademark "Creative Commons" or any related trademark or logo of Creative Commons without the prior written consent of Creative Commons. Any permitted use will be in compliance with Creative Commons' then-current trademark usage guidelines, as may be published on its website or otherwise made available upon request from time to time.

Creative Commons may be contacted at <http://creativecommons.org/>