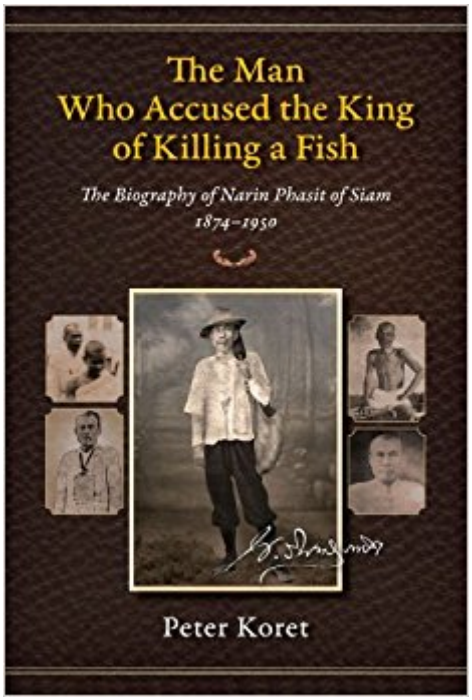
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The Man Who Accused The King Of Killing A Fish: The Biography Of Narin Phasit Of Siam, 1874-1950



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Synopsis

Narin Phasit was one of the most remarkable yet little-known figures in the annals of Thai history, a man who devoted his life to what the seventh king of Siam called "seeking a name for himself in a wildly inappropriate manner," and he himself preferred to describe as "working contentedly for my country, alone and despised by my fellow countrymen."For what reason was Narin so despised? During the period of the absolute monarchy, he insisted that government officials should be held accountable for their actions, and in the years that followed the revolution he spoke out strongly against the rise of the military. He also established the first line of female monks in the history of Siam and fought to abolish capital punishment. The place that he properly belonged, said the leader of his country, Field Marshal Phibul Songkhram, was inside a mental institution.Written as creative nonfiction, this is the engaging story of one man’s relentless attempt to build a more humane society. Often told in Narin’s own words, it is an unlikely tale of Buddhism, politics, and the creation of modern Thailand.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Peter Koret has taught courses in Buddhism and Southeast Asian culture and the Thai language at the University of California, Berkeley, and Arizona State University. He writes about Buddhism and politics in Southeast Asia with an emphasis on traditional Lao literature and Buddhist prophecy.

Peter Koret did a great job presenting someone I never heard of as a person worthy of study. A

fascinating life, well written about.

This book is a must buy for readers who:a) enjoy the intelligent use of wit and language in the detailed telling of a story;b) have an interest--or receptivity to cultivating an interest--in the modern social and political history of Thailand;c) might appreciate the example of a complex and often enigmatic figure who has the courage/audacity to devote his adult life to challenging people in power with accountability (frequently backfiring with its own twisted and injust accountability exercised against him);d) have an appreciation for nonfiction which reads as far-from-dry entertainment while at the same time is clearly the outcome of a depth of historical research into an obscure subject matter whose obscurity makes the throroughness and depth of the research worthy of the reader’s awe and gratitude;e) who are game for chewing slowly, savoring a book rather than hastily gobbling it down for sparkle and crunch.In short, this book is a delightful read, a fascinating portrait of a fascinating figure of the twentieth century in the country once known as Siam, where it is not considered polite--like in so many other times and places--to speak truth to power, relentlessly and with relentless charm which is found by those in power to be more relentless (and threatening) than charming. My recommendation is to buy it early and often.[I gladly disclose that I have known the author for years and was a reader of the book in manuscript form during its last rounds of editing. I have just finished reading, for the first time, the book in its final published form from start to finish. This review is entirely heart-felt, entirely unsolicited, entirely uncompensated, and entirely justified. I do not give a 5-star review lightly, even for friends.]

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