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Re-imagining the refugee camp

Sovereignty and time-space formation along the Thailand-Burma borderland

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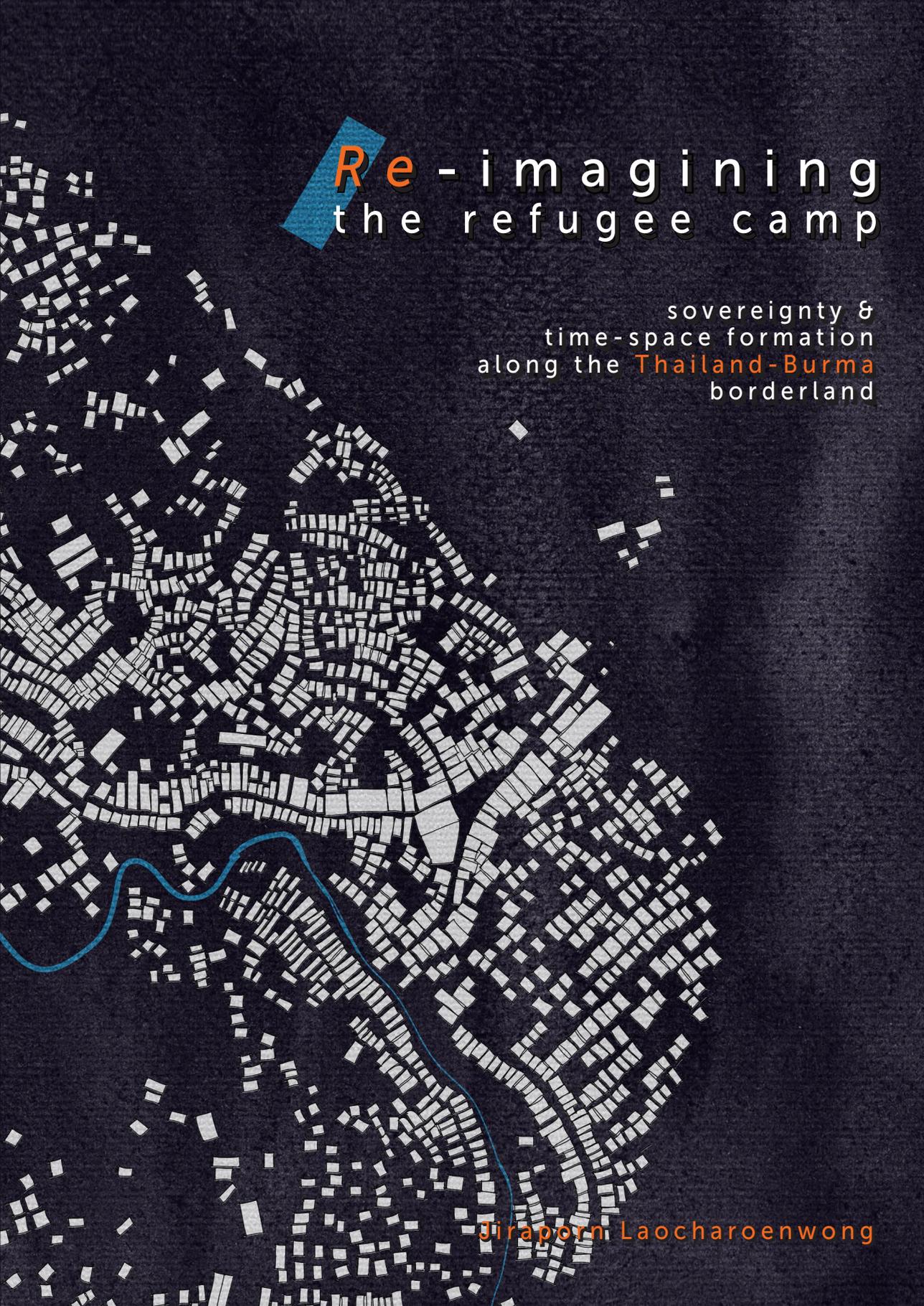
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Re-imagining
the refugee camp

sovereignty &
time-space formation
along the **Thailand-Burma**
borderland

Jiraporn Laochaoenwong

Re-imagining the refugee camp

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Jiraporn Laocharoenwong

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Re-imagining the refugee camp

Sovereignty and time-space formation along the
Thailand-Burma borderland

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3 We live here

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GLOSSARY

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <i>Ba-Kaw-Ba-Kae</i> | A refugee or a sufferer in Sgaw Karen language. Karen refugees use this term to refer to themselves. The word is influenced by the Buddhist notion of 'suffering'—that the life that one is born into is suffering. This applies to the life and state of being a refugee. |
| <i>Ba-Kaw-Ba-Kae-Dekka-Wor</i> | A refugee camp in Sgaw Karen language |
| Burma/Myanmar | Burma is the former name of the country. It referred to one particular ethnic group, the Burman. The military junta changed the official name to Myanmar in 1989. However, other ethnic groups, such as the Karen, still prefer to call the country Burma as an act of resistance. This thesis will use the name Burma. |
| Burman/Burmese | 'Burman' is used to refer to the dominant ethnic group in Burma, the Bamar, making up approximately half the population. 'Burmese' is used as adjective for things related to the nation-state of Burma, such as Burmese citizens or the Burmese state. |
| Displaced persons | Thailand did not sign the 1951 Refugee Convention. Instead of using the term 'refugee', the Thai government refers to refugees from the Indochina war and refugees from Burma as displaced persons. |
| Guested sovereignty | Configuration in which a de jure or formal sovereign lends (part of) its sovereignty to another actor in a particular territory, with the implied assumption that the host-guest relationship is temporary. |

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Karen | The term 'Karen' encompasses about 20 subgroups of Karen-speaking people who come from diverse religious, cultural, and geographical backgrounds. The two dominant groups who share the common languages speaking are Sgaw and Pwo/Pow Karen |
| <i>Kawthoolei</i> | Karen homeland in Sgaw Karen language |
| Long-term camp | Refugee camp that has been in existence for more than five years |
| Main road | Refugees use main road to refer to the concrete road that runs from the center of zone C to zone A; along this road there are restaurants, offices, grocery and retail shops, an open market, schools, churches, temples, mosques. |
| <i>Or Sor</i> | Volunteer Defense Corps |
| <i>Phu-Lee-Pai</i> | In the Thai language this means that a person is fleeing from fighting. Etymologically, it derives from a Sanskrit term meaning a person fleeing from danger, or a suffering person who seeks help and shelter. |
| <i>Phu-Plad-Thin</i> | Displaced person in the Thai language |
| <i>Palad</i> | Camp commander |
| Sgaw Karen | The Sgaw Karen are the group of ethnic Karen who are mostly Christians and animists, usually living in the hill regions. Meanwhile the Pwo Karen which is larger group are Buddhists and living in the lowlands. The majority of the refugee population along the Thailand-Burma borderland are Sgaw Karen. |

Songteaw

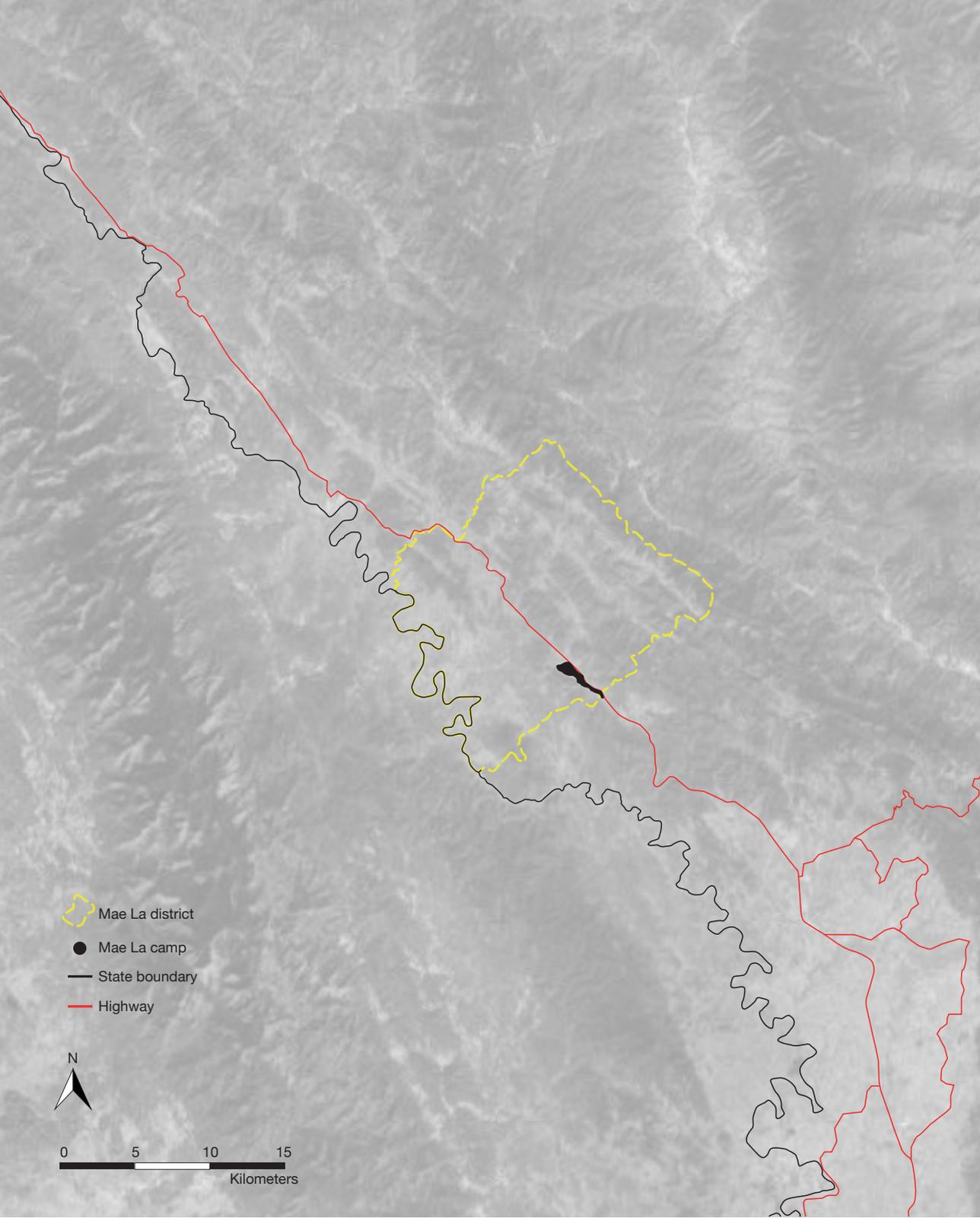
An orange public mini-bus run by local Thai people. Refugees take this vehicle to travel from Mae La camp to the border town of Mae Sot.

Temporary shelter

Thailand did not sign the 1951 Refugee Convention, instead of using the term 'refugee camp', the Thai government uses the term temporary shelter. In Thai language. 'พื้นที่พักพิงชั่วคราวสำหรับผู้หนีภัยจากการสู้รบ '

Mae La camp





-  Mae La district
-  Mae La camp
-  State boundary
-  Highway



Historical development of conflicts and refugee camps situation along the Thailand-Burma borderland

