



*The
Russian Revolution
in the Eyes
of a Thai Royal*

Presented by **Mr. Jeffrey Shane**

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In 1974, a cremation ceremony was held in Bangkok in memory of a certain Mom Chao Surawutprawat Thewakun. As is customary, a cremation volume was prepared and distributed to the guests. The title of the volume was *Kanpatiwat nai Ratsia mua songkhram lok khrang thi 1 [The Russian Revolution at the Time of the First World War]*. This obscure volume, of which only four copies are believed to have survived, contains a first-hand account of the Russian Revolution, written by Surawutprawat Thewakun almost a century ago, while studying at the Aleksandrovsky Cadet Corps in Petrograd, Russia. It is believed to be the only autobiographical account of the Russian Revolution ever published by a Thai, or for that matter, any Southeast Asian author. The talk will examine this extraordinary account and the previously unknown chapter in Thai history it reveals. It is the history of Siamese-Russian relations during the sixth reign. More specifically, it is the story of a young Siamese royal who found himself caught up in the violent upheaval of the Russian Revolution. The importance of this memoir, however, lies not so much in its contribution to the historiography of the Russian Revolution, for in truth it contains few revelations of any real significance, but rather, what it tells about the author and the refracted light it sheds on the history of Siam, its political culture, and the worldview of Thai privileged society in the early 20th century.

Free and open to the public.

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