

The Social World and Play Life of Thai Muslim Adolescents

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FOLKLORE AND PLAY STUDIES

Folklore is being increasingly recognized as a promising area of investigation into several facets of human behavior and culture. For example, the folklore genre of play, studied within the context of adolescent development and adolescent culture, is contributing to an understanding of adolescents' social life, their social behavior (Allison 1981; Anderson and Condon 1984), and, as playing involves interactions between players, their interpersonal relations. Also, since male adolescents' interactions in play can be studied in comparison to those of female adolescents, and the settings where males and females interact with each other in play can be unobtrusively observed, the issues of sex differences and cross-sex interactions can be pursued. The analysis of the play life and the processes by which adolescents' social life in general evolves on Nipa Island, southwestern Thailand, is an example of such a study.¹ The findings represent a combination of folkloristic, anthropological, and developmental approaches. Specific research methods employed, both qualitative and quantitative, are stressed to show the close relationship between research methods and results that is inherent in any study of this type.

As a starting point on the study of Nipa Island adolescents' play life and social behavior, it is necessary to discuss the definition of the terms: "play," "game," and "sport." Combining the definitions of Huizinga (1950) and Caillois (1961), games are defined here as free and spontaneous activities; game players have the freedom of choice to play or not to play if he/she does not feel like participating. In sports, the athletes have no such choice once the date and the time of the com-

petition have been set. Games are, in addition, governed by rules and the outcome of the games is not known in advance; one party may be the winner and the other party, the loser. Games are also played out within a definite limit of time and space; each game has its rules specifying when the game comes to an end and what kind of play space is required for playing. For example, the well-known game "Drop the Handkerchief" terminates or completes its first round of playing when the It player's role has been passed on to another player. The game "Tag" requires that a fairly large play place is available for the players to run around to escape being tagged, whereas the game "Hopscotch" requires only the space sufficient enough to draw the Hopscotch diagram. Games sometimes involve make-believe, such as taking the roles of policemen and robbers in the game "Cops and Robbers." They may also involve an exchange of game pieces, like rubberbands, but on the whole they are unproductive in terms of wealth or monetary gain. Sports, a type of play activities, share some of the characteristics of games. Sports also differ from games in that they are "institutionized," formally organized by a specific institution such as a school, an athletic club or a professional sport organization (Loy, McPherson and Kenyon 1978, 81).

Play scholars generally use the term "play" to cover the whole genre of play, that is, all facets of playing activities, from games, sports, non-competitive play, humor, word play, gambling, leisure activities and a host of activities where the element of play is present. When the Association for the Anthropological Study of Play was formed in 1974, the term "play" was defined in this broad sense. In this article, however, only four facets of play are discussed: games, sports, non-competitive play, and gambling, and the terms "play," "play behavior" and "play activity" used in the article imply play in this broadest sense. For clarity, the term "non-competitive play" will be used for activities such as playing house which is an uncompetitive playing activity. If soccer players play at kicking the soccer ball into the goal, but no score is kept or if it is a free-for-all type of soccer, it is defined as play or uncompetitive play.

As for the concept of "adolescence," I shall use Sullivan's (1953) developmental definition. Sullivan defines adolescence as a period when interest in members of the opposite sex begins to develop. Boys begin to appear more interesting to girls, and girls, all of a sudden, also look prettier to boys. When one looks at adolescents in non-Western cultures, the question arises whether this developmental sequence, originally evolved from research in America, is also manifested in non-Western adolescents, and if so, to what extent. Further, during adolescence,

gender identity becomes an important issue with critical implications for personality formation (Erikson 1968; Gilligan 1982). Adolescents' interaction in play provides a set of social settings from which one can gain some deep insights on how the concept of gender is similarly or differently played out, portrayed, and managed by male and female adolescents.

ETHNOGRAPHIC SETTING

Among important factors influencing the nature of human interaction are, first of all, the local physical, economic, and social environments, such as physical landscape, population density, economic pattern, education, and religion. Nipa Island (fictitious name) is a tropical island, situated 600 miles north of the equator at the eastern edge of the Andaman Sea, on the southwestern coast of Thailand. Unlike the Baso Nayu-speaking Thai Muslims on the southeastern coast of Thailand who see themselves as culturally closer to Malays, Thai Muslims on the southwestern coast, including Nipa Island, speak the southern Thai dialect and consider themselves Thai of the Islamic faith. The island, approximately 400 acres in size, has a population of a little over a thousand Thai Muslims. How long the Thai Muslims have lived on the island cannot be ascertained, but if the family history of one reportedly old family can be taken as representative, then the most recent generation of descendants of this family is the fifth generation of Nipa Island residents. Their male ancestor, a son of a Buddhist Thai Thalang warrior and a Thai Muslim mother, led his family to settle on the island as refugees from the Burmese attack on Thalang (present-day Phuket) in 1784, during the reign of Rama I of the Rattanakosin Period.

Economically, Nipa Island is regarded by the local people as a fishing and farming community. During adolescence, at the age of fourteen or fifteen, male adolescents begin to work as cash income earners, serving as hired hands on deep sea fishing boats, owned by Chinese businessmen in Krabi, the administrative center of the province. Nipa men with sufficient capital invest either in shrimp fishing boats or motorized taxi boats, which enables them to be somewhat independent economically. Both the shrimp-fishing and taxi boats are built locally on the island, also known for its skilled boat-builders. Women, in addition to being responsible for household tasks and taking care of children, are the principal rice cultivators. Except for building the rice paddy field bunds, tilling the field with motorized tillers, and carrying baskets of harvested rice back to the granary, women in work-teams of extended family members and friends organize and carry out all of the tasks needed in rice cultivation. Adolescent girls who are no

longer in school become young members of this task force. Nipa Island women have a vast knowledge of rice farming. They plant as many as seventeen varieties of rice annually, each selected for its productivity in soils with different moisture, fertility, and salinity characteristics. About half of the land on the island, amounting to 214 acres, is utilized as rice-farming land. The yields are mostly for family consumption. Supplementary family income is brought in by a number of housewives, unmarried women, and adolescent girls who sew thatch roofing sections on contract, run variety stores, restaurants, coffee shops, foodstalls, or who sell snacks from house to house. The food stalls and stores are set on the ground floor of the two-storied house or built as an open, thatch-roofed stall, spread out intermittently all over the island. They become significant social settings in which many adults can be found daily, eating and chatting and gossiping for several hours. Adolescents, during off-school hours and on week-ends, also frequent these shops and stalls. It is a social setting where male and female adolescents can legitimately meet and chat, while nearby, in an open space, children and pre-adolescents may be seen playing a game of "Hopscotch" or "Marbles."

Nipa Island has a six-year elementary school attended by all children on the island. Several of the graduates from this six-year compulsory education continue on with secondary education in Krabi, which is about eight minutes away by taxi boat, pier to pier.

Islamic education is also considered important on the island. Attendance to K'oranic classes, held every evening except Thursday, starts around the age of twelve and continues for many years, depending on each individual's inclination. Nipa Island has its own mosque, built and administered by the residents themselves. Some adolescent males and females attend service every Friday, usually with their family, but sometimes with their own age group. Modern health delivery system in the form of a public health clinic, maintained by the government and with a staff of two nurses, provides primary health care and family planning program, but major health problems are handled at the main hospital in Krabi.

METHODOLOGY

The study of adolescent play life on Nipa Island is part of a larger series of cross-cultural studies of physiological, social, and psychological aspects of adolescent development in eight communities around the world, directed by Professor John W. M. Whiting, Professor Beatrice B. Whiting, and Professor Irvin DeVore of Harvard University. The sample unit for each country is the primary social unit, or PSU, defined as

a homogeneous social unit whose members have a group identity, interact frequently, and possess temporal and/or spatial stability (Whiting and Whiting *et al.* 1981). For Nipa Island, because of its large population size, the PSU was restricted to 82 households with 482 residents in the main socio-economic center of the island. Among these, 116 were adolescents who formed the core of the studied group.

The study of adolescents' folklore and play life in 1982-1983 was preceded by an earlier content and contextual analysis of the sociocultural components of the play repertoire of Nipa Island (Anderson, in press) and the study of the children's interaction with the physical environment (Anderson 1982). These two studies, although not focusing specifically on adolescents but on children of all playing ages, served as the data base from which the research design on adolescents' play life was developed. The aim of the design was to bring to light as many dimensions of the adolescents play life as possible through a combination of both qualitative and quantitative data gathering methods, each serving to supplement, to crosscheck, or to validate the other. The data thus collected were also to lend themselves to comparisons across the different cultural and ecological settings of the eight societies studied by the research teams of the Harvard Adolescence Project—thence, the "random play observation" protocol for observing adolescents in all the known play settings.

One hundred and five play observations were recorded over a period of six months on Nipa Island by the investigator and the other two members of the research team, Douglas D. Anderson and Visid Mayacheo. The observation protocol designed prior to the fieldwork consisted of seventeen variables to be observed, based on play characteristics, play behaviors, and environmental factors identified by the two earlier studies. As the actual observations of adolescents progressed on Nipa Island, other salient characteristics were identified and additional variables were incorporated. Since some variables were added towards the latter part of the field season, we ended up with missing data on some variables which would have otherwise yielded informative findings. Eventually, twenty-seven variables for which we obtained complete data were analyzed to discover the major characteristics of Nipa Island's play and adolescents' playing behaviors here reported. To identify male-female sex differences, similarities, and cross-sex play interactions in which males and females play together, sex was categorized as all-male, all-female, and cross-sex playgroups. Age was computed by an analysis of variance statistical procedure to establish the age range and mean age of each type of playgroup.

RESULTS

My first study of the play culture of Nipa Island, conducted in 1979 among 12–13 year olds (Anderson 1982) showed the presence of a rich indigenous play and games tradition. How old this repertoire is cannot be determined since no earlier information on the play life of Nipa Island exists. From the 1979 study, however, it was possible to identify the resemblances of a large number of non-competitive play and competitive games on Nipa Island to those of the Buddhist Thai game tradition studied in Ban Klaang, Samut Sakhon Province (Anderson 1980; 1985) in their basic playing steps. Others were closely tied to the local socio-economic settings. For example, one variant of what is generally known in the West as “Fox and Geese” depicted shrimp-fishing, one of the major occupations of male Nipa Islanders, and in the other variant, the theme was one of maternal love, with Mother Shrimp begging the Fisherman to free her Baby Shrimps from capture. Playing games in which the socio-economic roles are enacted is a milieu by which children are enculturated and socialized to these roles in the culture (Anderson 1980). The games are also of both the team game type and the individual-against-individual competition game type, like in the games “Jacks” and “Hopscotch” in which the skills of an individual are matched against those of another individual. A total repertoire of 83 plays and games was then collected, half of which involved enactments of socio-cultural roles within the culture and a predominance of the use of natural objects within the physical environment. Another observation that can be made from comparing Nipa Island play culture with those of other cultures is that children’s play life in traditional cultures (Anderson 1982, Forbes 1982) and in rural areas around the world, like Nipa Island, where Westernization and modern technological changes do not proceed at an accelerated speed, tend to be less dependent upon commercially-made toys and play equipment than those of modern, industrialized societies. The impact of modernization on Nipa Island in terms of the use of purchased, commercially-made equipment was minimal. Only 2% of non-competitive play and games required the use of equipment that had to be purchased. Most of the equipment was acquired or made by the players themselves from cultural artifacts or from the flora and fauna of the area, such as shells, seeds, and parts of bamboo stems. Nipa Island children played the local version of “Jacks” with shells and a pebble or a marble. Another game called *Luuk Baa* was played with either ten *luuk baa* seeds, rocks, or pebbles, and two *huukwang* pods as game pieces (Anderson: in press). Like the parents who, as farmers and fishermen, were in tune with the earth, the tides, the winds, and the storms to stay alive and succeed, the chil-

dren's play behaviors, as a whole, showed a high adaptive tendency and an intense interaction and familiarity with their own environment. Bruner (1975, 81) regarded play as an activity that facilitated learning and/or practice of specific behavior. Play made possible the practice of sub-routines of behavior that later come together in useful problem solving. Applying Bruner's concept to Nipa Island children's play behavior, one may say that their learning about the physical environment in play and their adaptation of the physical environment for their play purposes were learning and adaptation practices which were later developed and expanded beyond the island world of play to encompass the physical environment of the work place, where they as adults had to learn how to live with and earn their living.

During the 1982-1983 period of fieldwork that focused on the study of adolescence, Nipa Island adolescents' social life appeared to follow, for the most part, a traditional pattern, although a number of new, modern entertainment media, brought about by social changes in the city of Krabi, began to be incorporated into their social repertoire. Occasional trips to cinema theaters in town became the major off-the-island entertainment attraction throughout the year. Thai films attracted the highest attendance and Chinese martial art movies, with Thai language subtitle, were second in popularity. Back on Nipa Island, however, children continued to play their traditional non-competitive play and competitive games, and older male and female adolescents, like their parents, still spent a great deal of their leisure hours visiting, chatting, gossiping, and exchanging the latest news. Close friends and relatives formed informal social groupings which frequently led to functional, cooperative workgroups when such needs arose, for example, for rice-harvesting, for rice-planting, and for ceremonies and feasts connected with the rites of passage such as the circumcision ceremony, wedding, and funeral.

Social Dimensions and Sex Differences. Adolescents' play, a part of their social life, varies with both age and gender. The result of our physical development study has pinpointed the mean age of menarche of female adolescents on Nipa Island at 13.4. Concurrent with the onset of this physical maturity and in response to the culturally expected behavior of girls who are considered "no longer children," girls around the age of twelve or thirteen cease to participate in active play activities. During recesses at school, when they are not watching younger pupils playing, they tend to sit with one or more close friends and chat. It is a period when a great deal of sharing of thoughts, ideas, and exchanges of emotional support take place, as one adolescent girl wrote of her best friend

as the person who “thinks with” her and “gives her advice and suggestions” when something bothers her or when she is unhappy. At home, adults increasingly treat them as adults and gradually socialize them to female adult roles by entrusting them with more household responsibilities. Often female six-graders are found after school to be helping their mother with cooking, doing the dishes and the laundry, and to be taking more active roles in caring for younger siblings.

The result of the analysis of variance of the random play observations, looking at age and gender, supports these ethnographic findings. The mean age for females who are still active in their playlife and participate in all-female playgroups is only 10.9, while for the males it is higher, that is 12.6 (Table 1). When we look closer at the range in age of players in each type of play group, we find a further significant difference. Even the oldest player in the all-female playgroup turns out to be a great deal younger than the oldest player in the all-male playgroup, that is twelve years old in the female playgroup versus twenty-five years old in the male playgroup. Obviously, active playlife for males on Nipa Island does not terminate around puberty as it does for females. Male six-graders still play at games of physical skills and strategy such as miniature pool, kite-flying, and sports such as soccer and kickball (*takraw*). Males continue to play as adults. Ethnographic observations, in fact, show that they continue to enjoy matching their strategic skill in checkers well into their sixties. One of the villagers favorite social gathering places is around the pier where three restaurant/coffee shops are located and there is generally a number of people sitting around, waiting for the taxi boats to take them into the city. Here one deserted house with no walls left has been converted into a checkers game's meeting ground where elderly men as well as younger men match their skills at a game or two of checkers on home-made checker boards. A few middle-age men also enjoy the risks and excitement involved in traditional sports, such as the weekly cockfights on and off the island, and the bi-monthly bullfights in town in which they frequently engage in betting. Thus, in general, males have a more active playlife. Of all play sessions observed, 55.2% are those of male playgroups. The culturally expected behavior of grown-up females combined with increasing household responsibilities as discussed above leads to less time given to play by female adolescents. All-females play sessions constitute only 17.1% (Table 1), and of this, the largest portion of time available for playing turns out logically to be during lunch recess at school (44.1%). Holidays and semester breaks afford the next convenient opportunities to play (27.8%). It is important to point out that even during these periods, they still play less than males whose



Fig. 1. A male adolescent making crab traps.



Fig. 2. A round of checkers, a favorite game of strategy among males.

Table 1
Play Patterns

Mean Age of Participants	
Male playgroup	12.6
Female playgroup	10.9
Cross-sex playgroup	10.7
Mean Size of Playgroup	
Male playgroup	4.6
Female playgroup	4.8
Cross-sex playgroup	6.0
Playing Frequency	
Male playgroup	55.2%
Female playgroup	17.1%
Cross-sex playgroup	27.6%
Play Equipment	
From environment	46.7%
Purchase equipment	29.9%
Equipment not required	23.4%

50.1% of their play life takes place during the leisure hours of holidays and extended semester breaks. Even with no classes to attend, female adolescents still have less time to play because of the demand of the household tasks.

Social change, as a process, does not necessarily have a uniform impact on all members of the society. Even as adolescents, male and female participation in social change differs. The type of play, games, and sport which females select to play contrasts sharply with the type selected by males in that female adolescents are more traditional. Of females' play activities, 94.4% of their play activities are traditional, competitive games such as *Luuk Baa* in comparison to 63.8% of males' involvement with traditional play activities (Table 2). Females also play without the use of equipment more often (33.3%). Thence, females appear to be stronger preservers of traditional play culture whereas males appear to reach out and want to come more into contact with the changes occurring in the outside world. Possibly owing to males' higher involvement with soccer, *takraw*, kiteflying etc., 37.9% of male play activities require the use of purchased equipment, compared to 22.2% of female play activities that use purchased equipment ($p < .05$, Table 2). It appears that at this age and in their playlife, males are already bigger spenders than females, a tendency which later in their life is facilitated by the income they can earn themselves as fishermen. The image of male bachelors as spendthrifts is encapsulated in the words of a father, "One can only hear them, but never see their money."

Table 2
Social Dimensions and Sex Differences

	Percentage		Significance Level
	Male Playgroup	Female Playgroup	
Game-Playing Choices			p > .001
Traditional	63.8	94.4	
Introduced	36.2	5.6	
Play Equipment			p > .05
From environment	50.0	44.4	
Purchased	37.9	22.2	
Equipment not required	12.1	33.3	
Adaptive Behavior			p > .01
Equipment not required	12.3	33.3	
Direct use of equipment	71.9	61.1	
Modified equipment	15.8	5.6	
Social Grouping			p > .001
Kin-based group	4.8	71.4	
Kin and friends	40.5	28.6	
School friends	54.8	0	

Despite tendencies for males to play more and to be more of a big spender, Nipa Island men enjoy the reputation of being skilled craftsmen, especially in boat-building. A developmental trend with respect to manual skills and craftsmanship appears to manifest itself even in their play behavior during adolescence. When methods of using play equipment are closely examined, more equipment (15.8%, Table 2) used in male playgroups than in the female playgroups is found to have been modified in some manner to make it into the required shape, size, and function. Two little wooden wheels, attached to a long bamboo pole, cut from a bamboo clump on the island, become a make-believe bicycle or a motorcycle which many boys show up at school with in the morning. A square wooden board, a straight stick, and a few marbles become miniature pool game equipment. Whether one chooses to call such behavior "a male tendency to tinker" or in psychological terms "adaptive behavior," the fact remains that a number of Nipa Island males continue to develop these behavioral skills and reapply them to advantage in their occupational career as craftsmen.

Nipa Island males and females also create and select different modes of social relations. Females, generally assumed to be associated with home and hearth, create likewise in their social contexts of play a high proportion of kin-based social groupings. Usually, all-female playgroups are composed of siblings and relatives (71.4%, Table 2). It is

not uncommon to find an older sister playing in a home playgroup with a younger brother or a younger sister she is taking care of also joining in the game. The all-male playgroups—even at home—are most often composed of classmates and friends from other grades (54.8%, Table 2). Kin-based female social groupings and friendship-based male social groupings continue to characterize social interactional pattern of Nipa Island adults. Foster (1976), in his study of friendship pattern among Buddhist Thai and another ethnic group, the Mon, in central Thailand, finds that people with occupations outside their place of residence tend to have more non-local friend choices, especially in an endogamous village where most people are related. Nipa Island male adults, as fishermen and as males with greater spatial mobility, definitely have more social opportunities to form new friendships beyond Nipa Island, whereas female adults must rely on former home-based friends and kin the more they are tied to the home and children. The pattern prevails despite the fact that on Nipa Island, marriage is more exogamous than endogamous. A further conclusion that can be made from Foster's and Nipa Island's studies is that there exist more opportunities, thus more tendencies for Thai males to form new friendships beyond their village or their place of residence, regardless of whether they live in a predominantly endogamous or in an exogamous community.

It is significant to point out that, despite limited opportunities for Nipa Island females to extend their friendship networks to as wide a circle as males, it does not necessary follow that they lack the skill and capacity for sociability—behavior which creates and fosters friendly interaction (Whiting and Whiting *et al.* 1982). As adolescents, they form as large a social group as males, if not slightly larger. The mean size of the all-female playgroup is 4.8 in comparison to 4.6 of the all-male playgroup (Table 1). Nipa Island findings contrast sharply with Lever's findings on American fifth-grade, white, middle-class playgroups in which males were found to play in large playgroups more often than females (Lever 1976). The difference between the Nipa Island pattern of social groupings and the American pattern is apparent.

If motivation can be regarded as a compelling force to succeed, then Nipa Island female adolescents possess this inner drive no less than male adolescents. There is no significant sex difference in the degree of competitiveness. Female adolescents are just as competitive as male, playing relatively as many individual competition game types (Table 2), in which an individual's excellence is matched against another's. Nipa Island female adolescents also display a relatively equal capacity for leadership. In the cross-sex playgroups, for example, females as frequently as males are initiators of the games, organizing the playgroup

together, and selecting which games to play. It turns out that within other realms of Nipa Island culture, leadership is a quality required both of men and women. Men may be leaders in fishing and boat-building occupations. But in rice farming, which is primarily women's responsibility on Nipa Island, one or two female members of each family that owns a rice field must always assume leadership in planning, making decisions, organizing the workgroup, and assembling a cooking team to cook lunch and snacks to be served to the workers. The work needs to be accomplished both smoothly from the interpersonal standpoint and efficiently from the productivity standpoint.

Increasing interest in members of the opposite sex, as noted by Sullivan of Western adolescents, does not appear marked with Nipa Island adolescents in the domain of play, however. Cross-sex interactions show in only 27.6% of the play instances (Table 1). In a comparative study of Nipa Island adolescents' play with the play of Inuit adolescents in Holman Island, Canada (Anderson and Condon 1982), it turns out that cross-sex interactions in play of Inuit adolescents are markedly much higher (41.9%). Condon reports that Inuit male and female adolescents frequently get together to play tag, cards, and board games, such as monopoly. On Nipa Island, female participants in the cross-sex playgroups turn out to be mostly pre-pubescent girls who are not yet self-conscious about playing with the boys. The mean age of the cross-sex playgroup is, therefore, low (10.7 years old); the youngest player is five years old, and the oldest, eighteen years old.

Although Nipa Island male and female adolescents do not play together as much as might occur in other cultures, their playgroup is interestingly marked by the presence of players of varying ages. One familiar sight both at home and at school is the scene of players from different grades and of varying ages playing together, and as mentioned above, sometimes with pre-adolescent boys and girls present. The all-male and all-female playgroups are similarly characterized by participants of a wide range in age. Through the recorded data of the social relationships among players, it is possible to identify further that in most instances of the cross-sex playgroups (82.6%), the players are related as siblings, as relatives, and as school friends. There are, indeed, in the play context ample opportunities for younger children to learn from older children, from adolescents, as well as from young adults, and for the latter to instruct and to develop nurturant behavior which are culturally expected of them as parents and as adults which they are to become later on in life.

Culture Change. Change in play over time is also an index of the extent

of culture change and the impact that modernization has made on the play facet of social life. Culture change as indexed by commercially-made toys and play equipment had made only limited inroads into Nipa Island as of 1982-1983. Only about 1/3 of all the play equipment used, that is 29.9%, is purchased. The players were still active in manufacturing for themselves play equipment from materials in the environment (46.7%). Frequently, as in the games called " Daughter Abduction," " Ghost in a Bottle " and " One-legged Rabbit " which are different local versions of " Tag," they played without the need for any equipment (23.4%).

The two sports that consistently attracted the interest of Nipa Island residents were boxing (both Thai boxing and Western-style boxing) and soccer. Male adults and adolescents alike eagerly awaited the televised boxing program on Saturdays. Private homes and coffee shops with television sets were, during these hours, packed with excited, cheering, and betting spectators. Owing to this popularity, boxing, together with boat-racing, were the two sports organized by the village committee as part of the first-day of entertainment in the male adolescents' circumcision ceremony in 1983. At school, the most competitive sport took the form of a Western sport, soccer. Unlike schools in urban areas with well-staffed and well-equipped physical education programs, interest in soccer on Nipa Island appeared to increase or deteriorate with the presence or absence of a soccer coach. A surge of soccer practice was witnessed in 1981 with the presence on the island of a physical education student-teacher from Krabi's College of Physical Education. Grade school pupils practiced soccer during physical education hours as well as in the afternoon until dusk and were at times joined by other adolescents and adults. In 1982-1983, when the physical education student-teacher had to return to college to resume his studies and no substitute was sent, the number of soccer practices noticeably declined.

On our visit in 1984, roller skating was introduced, although to a very limited extent because of the high price of roller skates (Japanese-made). Only two adolescents were seen practicing roller skating on the small concrete area in front of the village school. We also discovered on the same occasion that soccer had made a comeback, especially with adolescents and young adults. Inter-village matches were organized and the Nipa Island team enjoyed the reputation that year of being the second best team in the province. Male and female adolescents enthusiastically travelled to villages where the matches took place to cheer their team. A few men took the responsibility of organizing the trips, chartering taxi boats and buses for the group. The trips provided them, at the same time, with good opportunities to meet other

young people and, for not a few, to see new places. A concomitant social change in the form of a new time and new places for the young people to meet, socialize, and possibly meet their future spouse was, in the Nipa Island case, brought about with the introduction of the inter-village soccer matches. The role of soccer as an agent of social change corresponds to the observation made by Blanchard and Cheska (1985, 229) that sport can subtly introduce new ways of doing things.

Random play observations recorded in 1982–1983 assisted in providing statistical support to the above ethnographic data. Limited Western influences are likewise indicated in that, of the 107 play observations recorded, Nipa Island adolescents are statistically shown to engage in traditional play activities more often (79.4%) than in Western or other introduced play activities (20.6%). When Western play activities are engaged in, these are mostly sports. Nipa Island adolescents' participation in sport, as a whole, is low (3.7%), however, because more time is devoted to non-competitive play and games. Non-competitive play, such as playing house, riding on make-belief horses made from banana ribs, receive even less attention from adolescents who regard these unchallenging play activities as "kid" activities.

CONCLUSION

With an increasing use of the special methodologies and wide ranging topics studied by folklorists, folklore is increasingly contributing to many different areas of social and behavioral sciences as well as of the humanities. The above study treats Nipa Island adolescents' play and social life as dynamic, evolving processes. The analysis has thus far yielded informative insights into the diversity and/or similarities of adolescents' social behaviors, patterns of interpersonal relations, aspects of personality development, and gender identity. As most cultures, traditional and modern alike, are facing the unavoidable impact of culture change in the future, the case study of Nipa Island adolescents is useful in showing developmental trends which adolescents in a traditional rural community within a developing country are going through at the moment. More studies from other cultures are needed to understand adolescents' social life, motivations, and behaviors. With non-Western cultures, what are the characteristics of adolescents' play culture, what kind of social life adolescents make for themselves, and what developmental trends they seem to indicate, indeed, deserve fuller investigation.

NOTE

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