

## Stuck At the Crossroads! Spirituality On the Move

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### **Abstract**

The spiritual landscape in Thailand exhibits a profound richness and diversity, characterized by various religious and cultural influences, including Buddhism, Hinduism, animism, and indigenous customs. Throughout the course of millennia, the spiritual landscape has undergone adaptation and assimilated various influences. Recently, a novel spiritual entity, Kru Kai Kaew, has notably emerged within Thai spirituality. The spiritual beliefs of Thailand encompass a deep reverence for many deities, spirits, and benevolent supernatural entities. Buddhism, notably Theravada Buddhism, significantly influences Thai attitudes and behavior. The purpose of this study is to investigate the sudden emergence of Kru Kai Kaew, factors contributing to his emergence, beliefs associated with him, and his place in Thai spirituality. This study aims to analyze the influence of popular culture, folklore, and religion on the widespread acceptance and devotion of new spiritual figures.

The present study will seek to inquire into the underlying motivations that drive individuals to seek solace or empowerment through establishing connections with animistic beings and the implications this phenomenon holds for Thai spirituality. This study aims to shed light on the evolution of Thai spirituality by employing anthropological investigation, interviews, and the examination of cultural artifacts. Analyzing Kru Kai Kaew's initial appearance as a spiritual being facilitates comprehension of how spiritual traditions adapt to a rapidly evolving world.

**Keywords:** Buddhism, Beliefs, Kru Kai Kaew, Spirituality, Thailand