

FIELD AND NETWORK IN ISAN

Thesis for the Degree of Ph.D.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
CHARLES C. LANTZ
1971

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FIELD AND NETWORK IN ISAN
A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF FACTIONAL
DISPUTES IN A MARKET TOWN OF
NORTHEAST THAILAND

presented by

Charles Chapman Lantz

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in Anthropology

Alfred Bacon Hudson

Major professor

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ABSTRACT

FIELD AND NETWORK IN ISAN
A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF FACTIONAL
DISPUTES IN A MARKET TOWN OF
NORTHEAST THAILAND

By

Charles Chapman Lantz

The problem considered herein is concerned with the nature of factional conflicts among the leadership elite of a provincial community in northeastern Thailand and the relationship of this elite and their conflicts to the national government officials who are concerned with administration of this municipality and province. The conflict analysis will be further related to the broader questions and interests of anthropology principally in the areas of political anthropology, factional analysis and the sociology of transitory (or quasi-) groups.

The primary data used in the analysis of my problem were derived from an 18 month, intensive study of conflict cases among the business elite of Changwat Town (a pseudonym) in northeast Thailand. The main methods of gathering data were through observation and extended, unstructured key informant interviews. A network sociogram was also developed based upon friendship choices of interviewees. The data concerning the conflict materials

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is here analyzed by the theoretical orientation developed by Marc J. Swartz, Victor W. Turner, and Arthur Tuden in their book Political Anthropology and later amplified in Local-level Politics by Marc J. Swartz. The purpose of this analysis is to see to what degree this theoretical orientation might be a suitable tool of analysis and to what degree it should be modified or rejected. Regarding the social structure of the conflict, the theoretical positions of Ralph W. Nicholas and J. S. Yadava on factionalism were applied to the analysis of the data in order to test their adequacy as theoretical tools. Thirdly, the results of the network sociogram are considered for their bearing upon the "loose structure" concept long so prevalent in studies from Southeast Asia.

The political model of Swartz and others is found to be largely applicable to the data developed, but I submit that the usual discussions of political analysis presupposes an active and large scale conflict or involvement in the political process. I introduce the concept of latent supports as a necessary addition to the discussion of supports in political conflict situations in which the field of conflict is highly circumscribed.

In the field of factional literature, I demonstrate that the structural characteristics of factions as developed by Ralph W. Nicholas, using only one of the modifications suggested by J. S. Yadava, are most applicable to the analysis of the factional data discussed. However, it is shown

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Charles C. Lantz

that in the general literature on factions insufficient attention has been paid to the scale of the conflict, and, therefore, I propose that the nature of the conflict constraints must be known, and I further propose two new analytic categories to apply to factional conflict. These terms, elite and arena factions, are applied to narrow and broad scale factions respectively. Finally, I suggest that network sociograms give promise as a useful tool for the purpose of analyzing the degree of looseness or tightness of social systems.

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NORTHEAST THAILAND

By
Charles Chapman Lantz

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Anthropology

1971

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CHARLES CHAPMAN LANTZ

1971

FOR JOANNE

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the rites of passage of which this Ph. D. thesis is a tangible symbol, there are a variety of obligations that the emerging scholar accumulates. Some of these are of a most practical kind, others are highly personal, even intimate, yet others are of an intellectual kind, and all of them are most difficult to reciprocate, except, perhaps, to pass on to others as full a measure of assistance and support that I received in my passage. Nevertheless, I certainly wish to attempt to acknowledge some of the more outstanding kindnesses which I have received being fully aware that by this act alone I cannot express my feelings deeply enough nor my thanks fully enough.

To my family and especially my wife, Joanne, I wish to express my thanks first of all. So much of what you will see before you as you read these pages are only here because of the assistance, support, and sacrifices that my wife has unstintingly and undemandingly given. Through two graduate schools, two periods of residence in Southeast Asia, and as a member of both an academic and a "Foreign Service" family my wife has shared in all that has led to the final completion of this thesis. She has provided intellectual criticism, suggestions of great social insight and perception, advice concerning a variety of practical

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matters, editing services, copyreading, typing at many stages, and, throughout, companionship and enthusiasm for daily life wherever it has been.

In the training of a scholar, clearly teachers are most important for the development, guidance, and stimulation of the individual. And certainly I have been fortunate to, not only, have excellent teachers but to be able to count them as friends as well. To Dr. Stanley P. Wronski and Dr. Marc J. Swartz, both of whom have served on my Graduate Committee at various points in time, I have a considerable sense of gratitude for their assistance and support in a variety of ways. Beyond, this I am much further indebted to Dr. Swartz's intellectual contributions to the field of anthropology, for his conceptual framework is very important to the approach taken in this thesis. Dr. John D. Donoghue has also a special place with me. To him I wish to express particular thanks for his early and continued support throughout my early training at Michigan State University. Further, in him I have seen a person of keen intelligence attempt to apply his training and insights gained in academia to the problems which persons face in their daily life. In many ways both Joanne and I are indebted to Dr. Bernard Gallin and his very charming wife, Rita. They have provided to both of us models not only of academic scholarship and skills, but examples of gracious and friendly human beings always willing to make a space in their circle of students for those who, even though they may

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Dr. Ralph W. Nicholas' assistance, particularly in taking over the chairmanship of my Graduate Committee upon my return from the field and seeing through the initial draft of this thesis with his many comments and suggestions, is most gratefully acknowledged. However, my debt to Dr. Nicholas goes much further, for he has in a variety of ways as a teacher aided me in crucial phases of my training. Unfortunately, Dr. Alfred B. Hudson was not a member of the Department of Anthropology when I was engaged in my course work prior to going into the field; however, I am deeply indebted to him for assuming the chairmanship of my Graduate Committee during the final stages of the completion of my thesis. Certainly, many of the improvements incorporated in the later stages of this thesis are due in large part to his detailed and critical reading of the manuscript. In the most kindly of fashions, Dr. Hudson has pointed out and questioned all of those areas where there were problems with my analysis or presentation, and while some still remain, it is through no fault of his. Further, he has gone far beyond the requirements of the student teacher relationship and has treated me in many ways as if I were already a colleague.

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Interchange Between East and West as an International Development Fellow and as a Predoctoral Internship (Grant E-10) of the Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities administered through the Office of the Director of the Institute for International Studies in Education, Michigan State University. The support and assistance from these institutions and their staffs is hereby gratefully acknowledged. The financial support of these institutions does not in any way make them responsible for the statements in this thesis, for this the author is solely responsible.

I especially wish to thank Dr. John Singleton of the East-West Center for his helpfulness in making possible the flexibility which allowed me to receive Thai language training at the University of Hawaii, for his personal interest in my project, and for the many other kindnesses which he extended to me while at the East-West Center and while in the field. To Dr. Cole S. Brembeck, Director of the Institute for International Studies in Education, I have a very special debt of gratitude. He has always been most helpful and supportive in all of my dealings with him. He was particularly encouraging to me when I first approached him in regard to my association with the Thailand Project and did much to help me find and receive the necessary financial assistance in order to carry out my intended field work. Further, he was most encouraging to me while in the field and yet allowed me to work in a manner quite

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distinct from others within the project. One must attribute this to the broad scope of his intellectual perspective as a scholar and his fine capabilities as an administrator.

Within Thailand, I must give special thanks to the officers and staff of the National Research Council of Thailand for their assistance in approving my application for study in Thailand and facilitating my work while in their country. In this regard, I must particularly thank Major Ahkom Pattiya, chief of the Social Science Division. Many other persons could be singled out for special thanks for their valuable assistance and kind interest in my work, but unfortunately they must go unrecognized for many are well known and are residents of Changwat Town. However, I must cite for special expression of my thanks both of the men who filled the position of governor during my stay in Changwat Town. Both of these men were most helpful to me in my work. Also, I must mention the director of the provincial hospital. This man is one of the most capable and forward looking of the many such Thais I have met, and, at the same time, he has lost none of the humaneness which is supposed to mark the traditionalist, the person uninterested in change. And, finally, to the two bankers of Changwat Town I owe a great burden of debt. Both, while quite different in temperament, were always generous of their time and knowledge. One person I feel I can safely name for special thanks is Khun Sanga Uttisin. Khun Sanga worked as my field assistant for over a year, and my debt to his

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patience, intelligence, insightfulness, tact, and charm is deep. Khun Sanga more than anyone else was my teacher in many ways of Thailand, and, while quite young, he was then about 22 years old, he demonstrated a wisdom and perceptiveness far beyond his age. All in my family remember him with great affection for his joy in life, his loyalty, and his great humanity.

Also, in Thailand there were many Americans who aided and assisted us far beyond even one's most generous expectations. In this category I wish to single out Dr. Herbert P. Phillips, who at that time was working on research dealing with the Thai elite, and Dr. Toshio Yatsushiro, research anthropologist for the technical aid mission of the United States. Both of these men gave me many helpful suggestions and were willing to give generously of their time.

In the Northeast we have fond memories of Scott and Judy Duncan, the regional representatives for the Peace Corps. And within Changwat Town, the Peace Corps couple who were assigned to the English language program in the boy's and girl's secondary schools were our closest friends, but we remember the rest of the official and unofficial Americans with great fondness as fellow passengers attempting, in our own ways, to understand, analyze, explain, assist or teach, depending upon our reasons for being in Changwat Town, the Thai people amongst whom we lived; in short, to reach out and encounter these persons and their

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Finally, I have saved the last of my remarks to acknowledge the obligation of gratitude that I feel for the Thai people and particularly the people of Isan. These persons, of whatever socio-economic level or ethnic background, extended to my family and myself a great measure of hospitality. Always tolerant, always forgiving, they suffered the questions from a far too inquisitive foreigner with good spirit and a good share of humor. The life in Isan, is not easy by any means, and while there are people of considerable wealth, the economy of the region is one of the poorest in Thailand. While the economy is low, the population is large and so the Northeasterner is often forced by necessity to seek employment outside the region where he is then often exposed to the ridicule of others for his poverty and illiteracy. But through it all the Northeasterner comes through as a person who is industrious, alert, patient, willing to make the best of a bad situation, and always willing to exert himself to take advantage of opportunities which are available to him. All of this is done with a native grace and sense of joy in life such that one cannot help but feel proud to have been the guest of these gracious people.

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INTRODUCTION

We were on our way to another son lieng--one of those oft recurring, often boring farewell banquets in honor of a departing high official. The evening air was still cool for the hot season had not yet begun and the oppressive waves of heat and softly sifting dust were only just beginning their assault upon the people; we thought how nice if we could just avoid these for once and all. But the old fear crept across our minds. What if people decided that we weren't important and they didn't have to answer our embarrassing questions? No, we had to go. We had to make sure that we were invited. We had to be seen.

We turned the corner and the headlights of our jeep played over the side of the provincial meeting hall, so significant a building for the conduct of government and the recognition of prestige. The windows were wide open to catch any fitful breeze and the light from inside spilled out upon the heads of the children looking into the hall, upon the softly scented frangipani planted near the building, and finally upon the ground. "Who are we honoring tonight?" I said as we pulled to a stop. Jo, my wife, sitting quietly next to me in the evening's darkness, said, "The district chief of police and the community development

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officer." With the mention of the one (Major Satien) I smiled as I thought of him--short, husky, slightly wavy hair and large nose, his pleasant smiling face, his good humor, his interest in learning English; I thought of him out late in the evening in his leather jacket patrolling the streets in his jeep, of seeing him eating a bowl of noodles with his driver when most of the town was already in bed, and of his personal characteristics of charm, strength, competency, and honesty. One couldn't help but feel good to be going to a farewell dinner for him and to join in expressing our thanks and wishing him Godspeed.

And then the other. If I had felt gladness, warmth, and a sense of well being, now I thought of the other and my spirit shrank a little. Sympathy replaced my buoyant mien; I chilled slightly; there was Khun Chang with his sensitive face with its vague sense of being lost, of drowning, of clutching at straws, of incompetency. Jo and I talked a little of the possibility of the Peace Corps couple in his office having something to do with his transfer and demotion, and we hoped that his new assignment might be more satisfactory for him. "Okay, let's go," and we swung down from the jeep and walked across the grassy field to the building.

The town elite were there ahead of us rapidly filling the tables. There, near the front of the hall where an area had been cleared for dancing, was the front table with the governor, several high officials, one of the bank managers,

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a few of the other more important businessmen, and a few wives. Nearby at smaller tables were other important officials and businessmen, and there were several tables at which the ladies sat, among whom were the deputy governor's wife and various high ranking women whose husbands sat with or near the governor. One of the ladies signaled to Jo and she joined them while I moved towards the rear of the hall. Here were the middle range provincial officers who were required to appear at these functions, but were not high enough in rank to sit near the governor. Further back were the people who preferred to drink rather than to dance or participate actively in the entertainment, whatever it might be. I took a seat at the table where the manager of the other major bank, a good friend, had already seated himself. Nearby was a table at which sat the provincial and the deputy provincial police chiefs.

The banquet was served, in the customary manner, and, as the final course was being eaten, the governor rose to begin his speech of thanks and praise for the officers being honored. At the conclusion of his speech, the governor presented a gift to the community development officer. The latter, in his turn, made a most polite speech in which he touched only indirectly upon his plight in saying that he hoped a day would come when a person would be judged upon his total qualities as a human being rather than upon some remote, arbitrary and limited standards of performance. This speech was expected and well received and was much in

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chief's direct superior
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The police chief
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He rumors that they
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the tradition of what Phillips (1965:66), in discussing politeness in Thai culture, has termed a social cosmetic.

As events moved on in their usual, enervating manner, one could not help feeling fortunate that there would come a time when it was no longer necessary to be seen, when it would no longer matter whether one could say that he had been at the latest son lieng; in short, a time when there were no more speeches. As these thoughts were making their way through my mind, Major Satien began to speak. The mood of the gathering changed abruptly, the air became electric, and for the first time quiet descended upon us; even the persons sitting at the backmost row of tables were silent and listening. To be sure, there were murmurs and, as the speech got under way, even a shout of encouragement, but there was no doubt that the audience was with him. Although the Thai put great store in taking even the most perturbing situation calmly without outward show of emotion, some of the audience appeared visibly affected by the Major's farewell. As my eyes moved around the room, I could see that the face of the deputy provincial police chief, the speaker's direct superior, was strained and obviously moved by the words flowing over the gathering.

The police chief was making a calculated and dramatic breach of etiquette. He told the gathering not to believe the rumors that they might hear. It was he who requested this transfer and no one had had him transferred. He requested the transfer because, "I could not do my work here

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in its proper manner." The Major stated that there were only a few law breakers who stirred up trouble and carried on illegal activities in the district, but that intervention from above prevented him from arresting them. "Without the authority to make arrests, and, thereby, being unable to carry out my work, I have requested the transfer which I have now received." However, he indicated that he would be happy to return to Changwat Province as the provincial chief of police so that he would be free to rid the town of those unlawful elements which now plague the community.

The air in the hall was warm and humid by the time the Major finished speaking, but the response to his speech was not the usual sparse scattering of handclaps preceeded by the drone of gossiping voices from the back tables. Instead, rapt attention was broken by enthusiastic applause and cheers from the audience. All that followed on that evening was anticlimatic. The dances, the conversations, except on this particular topic, were empty. Only, in the future would we see the ramifications of the events begun this evening. We returned to the jeep wondering about the speech and anxious to follow its effects.

The purpose of the above description is not to begin the analysis of Changwat Town--Chapter Three will begin with a more extended description of the above events--but rather to give the reader some of the flavor of the type of contests (the analysis of which is the objective of this manuscript) that take place in Changwat Town. Very clearly,

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conflict takes place among the elite of the community and it has widely ramifying effects for the community and even implications for the wider social system of the country. Certainly, this description raises some questions in the mind of the reader: such as, what exactly is the meaning of this conflict? Why is it that the local agents of the central government, which during the period of my field work had dictatorial powers under the Provisional Constitution, are unable to resolve the conflict presented here? One is led to ask, what is the nature of the national and local government? And more fundamentally, what is the nature of the community leadership itself? To whatever extent one can answer these questions, we are led to ask, what is the relationship of these data and these questions to the broad range of questions and interests of anthropological research?

As provisionally stated, the problem which will be considered herein is the nature of conflict among the leadership elite of a provincial community in Northeastern Thailand and the relationship of this elite and their conflicts to the national government. This material will be related to certain general theoretical trends in anthropology.

For at least some ten years anthropology, and, for our purposes, most notably ethnology, has been undergoing a search for new directions, new methods, and new techniques, in order to break through into some more productive, more

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precise, and more scientifically powerful areas of research and analysis (Stern and Bohannan 1970). There has been a variety of attempts to seek out these new and more powerful modes of analysis of our subject matter, man. Heavily influenced by the methods and techniques of linguistics, one mode of analysis is the attempt of very detailed ethnographic analysis; this has been associated with the concept of componential analysis. Another approach similarly related to linguistics, is the area of semantic analysis. If linguistics has provided us with models for guiding our work, so has the area of engineering and computer programming in the work of those influenced by what has become known as the systems approach. Other approaches taken by ethnologists have emphasized the traditional subject matter areas of anthropology with increasing degrees of rigorousness of technique and sophistication of methodology. I call to mind the work done in the field of values as demonstrated in Variations in Value Orientations by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961). Further, one can see this search for new approaches reflected in the growing use of terms such as economic anthropology, political anthropology, and psychological anthropology. These titles reflect the interest of anthropology in the interdisciplinary implications of its work and the need to focus research to accommodate the growing sophistication of our field and that of the relevant sister disciplines. The work to be presented will follow some of these lines in an attempt to introduce an analysis

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The first line of consideration is the question of conflict and its importance for the conduct of the community life. As I indicated in the case of the Major's farewell, this question has implications for both the local community and that of the wider social system of which it is a part. Further, inasmuch as the subjects of study are the business elite of a provincial capital, a not altogether unimportant sector of Thai life, our focus is directed exactly at that point in the socio-cultural world in which the national, and the provincial elite articulate. The material which we will consider will include the nature of this articulation as it revolves around certain "trouble cases."

The nature of the conflict in the community became apparent relatively early in the course of the field work undertaken and I focused much of my research interest on this area. It will become obvious as the reader progresses, that I am dealing with a very narrow range of the total behaviors which are possible areas of concern to the social observer. While this is true, I hold that this is defensible and, in fact, required by the nature of the type of problem and the inherent need for close observation of the processes involved. The study of this crucial segment of the community highlights the relationship between the local inhabitants and the national government.

As our concern is with conflict among a business elite,

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we must ask in what way does conflict manifest itself and whether there are any regularities in the behavior of both those who are actually involved in the conflict and those others who, at any given time, are aware of the events but not involved in them. We will see in the data to be presented, that conflict is organized around factions which have features not ordinarily described in the literature on this subject. In the final three chapters, the nature of these factions and their particular characteristics will be explored. In this analysis I will attempt to relate my data to two closely interrelated streams of analysis and research--the processual approach and a concern with factional conflict. Also, I will present a subsidiary analytical tool in the form of a sociogram, which, in turn, will be related to the general concept of network analysis.

In the presentation of my conflict data (Chapter Three), I present the evidence in three cases of conflict; these cases will first be analyzed by the use of the processual model--presently being developed in the field of political anthropology by M. J. Swartz, V. W. Turner, and A. Tuden (1966)--with the expectation that such a model will provide explanatory power for the actions which were recorded in the field, and that the attempt to analyze the data in this manner may, perhaps, lead to some sharpening of the focus of the processual model. Second, two other, but closely related, theoretical approaches will also be used in the analysis of the data. These, J. A. Barnes'

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(1968) and A. C. Mayer's (1966) use of the network concept and R. W. Nicholas' (1965) and J. S. Yadava's (1968) works on factions, are also applied to the data.

As for the method pursued in the conduct of the research, I used the key informant method in which extensive interviews were conducted over periods of one to two hours with persons who were very knowledgeable about local happenings. These interviews were in the nature of an unstructured conversation. Notes were often taken during the interview unless the subject seemed to be of a delicate character, in which case, I would write up the interview from memory as adequately as I could as soon after the interview as was practical. Most of the interviews were conducted in either Central Thai or Lao--the dialect of the Northeast--whichever was most comfortable for the informant and my assistant. While I have a fair working grasp of the Central Thai dialect, I could not conduct interviews by myself in either dialect, and, thus, I used an assistant to aid me in a number of ways--sometimes including the conduct of independent interviews when required--one of which was to act as an interpreter. While I could follow the interview, my Thai did not reach a sufficient level of fluency to conduct a wholly unaided interview.

The mode of my initial contacts and my solicitation of information was to cast myself in the role of being an anthropologist, i.e., to state that I was a student of human culture, and to ask for information about the history of the

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community and customs of the people. As I became better known to the principle informants with whom I worked, I could ask more pointed questions and I could ask questions regarding the day to day happenings which became the central focus of my research.

As for the way the people in the community regarded me, I believe they did not see me as dangerous in any manner. There was at the time of my study a local inhabitant, about 40 years old, who was at that time working towards a Ph. D. degree in law in Germany and his example enabled people to understand that I was doing similar work. Also, there were other Americans resident in the town. There was a missionary family, two or three Peace Corps families and individuals, and, as time went on, some families who were part of the United States economic aid mission to Thailand--USOM Thailand as it is called. The missionary family was completely isolated from the community, with the exception of the few Christians who lived in town; therefore, we, my family and I, were not identified as missionaries. The Peace Corpsmen were much involved with the community, at least in their professional role, and the USOM personnel were somewhat involved. It appeared to be that we were identified as some kind of Peace Corpsmen. In fact, one person, in giving directions to our house, described us as Peace Corpsmen with a jeep. Whether people identified us, thereby, as some kind of United States government official, I don't know, but I think it is quite possible. However,

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to be so identified is not necessarily to be looked upon with suspicion or out of the ordinary, for most of the professional personnel in Thailand are in government in some fashion or another. Thus, for instance, nearly all the ethnically Thai students studying abroad are government officials (teachers, doctors, lawyers, economists, etc.) who are being sent abroad by their own government or a foreign government for training and education. Therefore, my role as a student in Thailand could be quite consistent with being a civil servant and would lead the average Thai citizen to regard me as having heightened status. (See the discussion beginning on page 75 below).

The organization of the materials to follow is in four parts. The first chapter deals with a brief description and the history of the region which was the site of the field work reported herein. The second chapter provides a picture of the field work community. The third chapter provides specific cases of conflict situations which are the main data for the analysis which appears in Chapters four, five, and six. These last three chapters, which together form a unit, are the fourth part of this work and represent the analysis section. Chapter Four deals with an analysis of the conflict data in terms of the processual model. Chapter Five presents a network diagram in the attempt to further amplify the conflict analysis and to consider the relevance of network concepts to the data. Chapter Six is concerned with the preceding data and concepts from chapters

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CHAPTER ONE

CHANGWAT TOWN IN PLACE AND TIME

NORTHEASTERN THAILAND

The fieldwork on which this dissertation is based was carried on in northeastern Thailand from December 1965 through May 1967. The site of the research is Mueng (city of) Changwat Town, Amphur Mueng,¹ Changwat Province, Thailand.²

The northeastern part of Thailand, called Isan and literally meaning the northeast, is a large section of land, approximately 30 per cent (60,000 square miles) of the total area of Thailand, which juts eastward towards the country of Laos. It is this easterly thrust which causes Thailand to form not only the western border of Cambodia but also part of its northern border. The population of Isan is about one third of the total population of Thailand (about ten million persons). The area is considered to be the most economically impoverished of the Thai regions. Added to this is the fact that the majority of the Northeasterners are ethnically distinct, speaking a dialect of Thai called Phasa Isan (literally the Isan language) or simply Lao.

The Lao language which is native to Isan is similar



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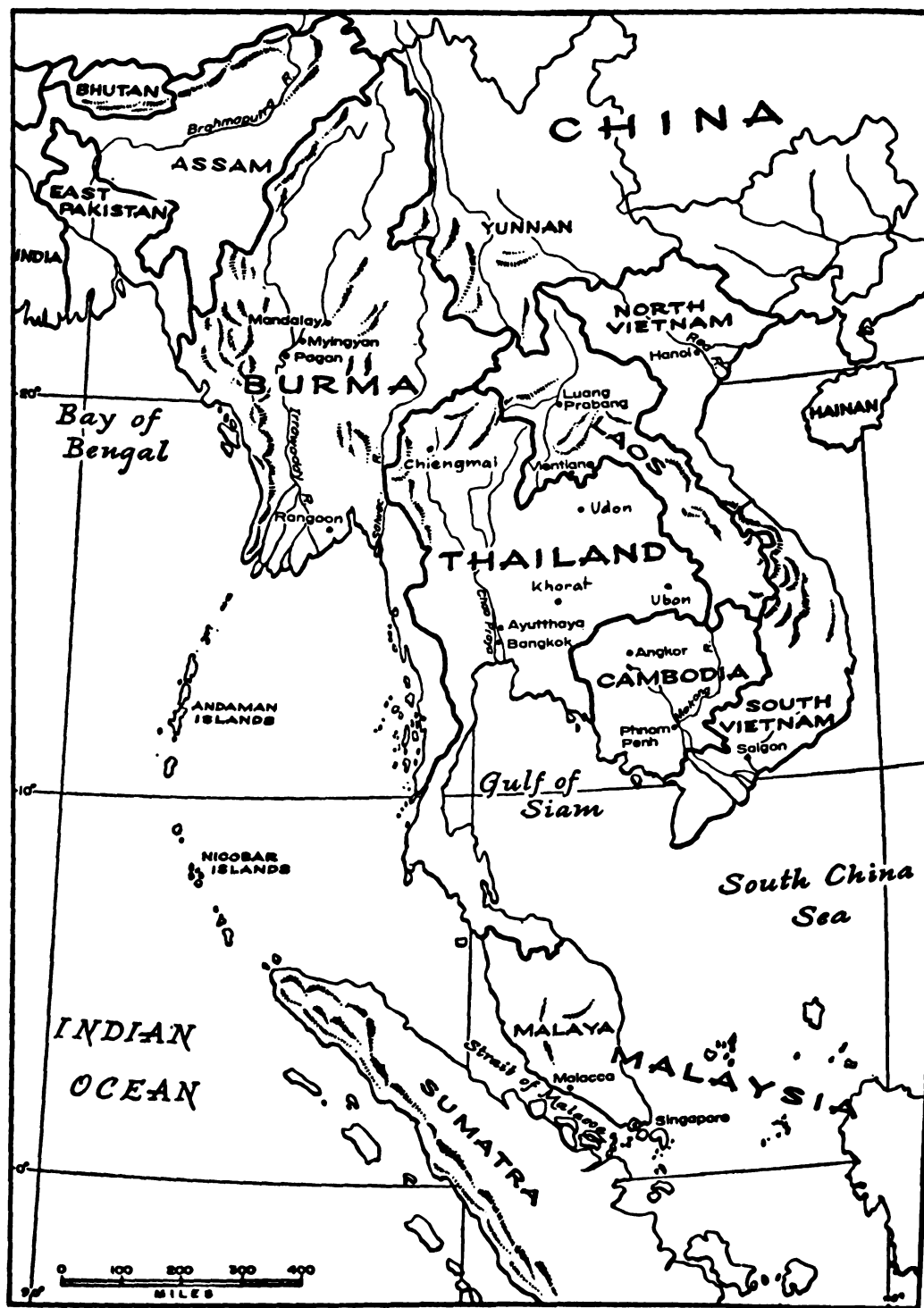


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to the language of Laos itself and is properly called Lao; yet, there is considerable variation in regional dialects of Lao and this is as true for Isan as for Laos. However, Phasa Isan is clearly Lao rather than Thai. Of course, Thai and Lao are not entirely mutually unintelligible; the question of their intelligibility seems to depend in part upon their differential prestige. Thus, the central Thai speaker claims not to be able to understand the Lao speaker but the claim is not mutual. For the purposes of this report, the language of Isan will be referred to as Lao.

The inhabitants of Isan share more than a dialect with the Lao. They also have close historical ties, kinship, and a variety of cultural patterns which set them apart from dominant Thai speakers. As a result of these differences, and the general poverty of the area, the central Thais look down upon the Northeasterners, thinking of them as unintelligent, lazy, and, perhaps, disloyal.

Changwat Province is located near the center of the Northeast Region (Isan) of Thailand. This region is distinctive geographically by being set off from the other regions of Thailand inasmuch as it is located on the Khorat Plateau, an old sandstone block slightly uptilted to the south and to the west. The plateau is bounded on the west and south by mountains and to the north and east by the Mekong River. Drainage of the plateau is generally to the southeast towards the Mekong by the Mun and Chi river systems. Along the northeastern margins there is a northwest-southeast trending set of hills. Thus, near the Mekong,



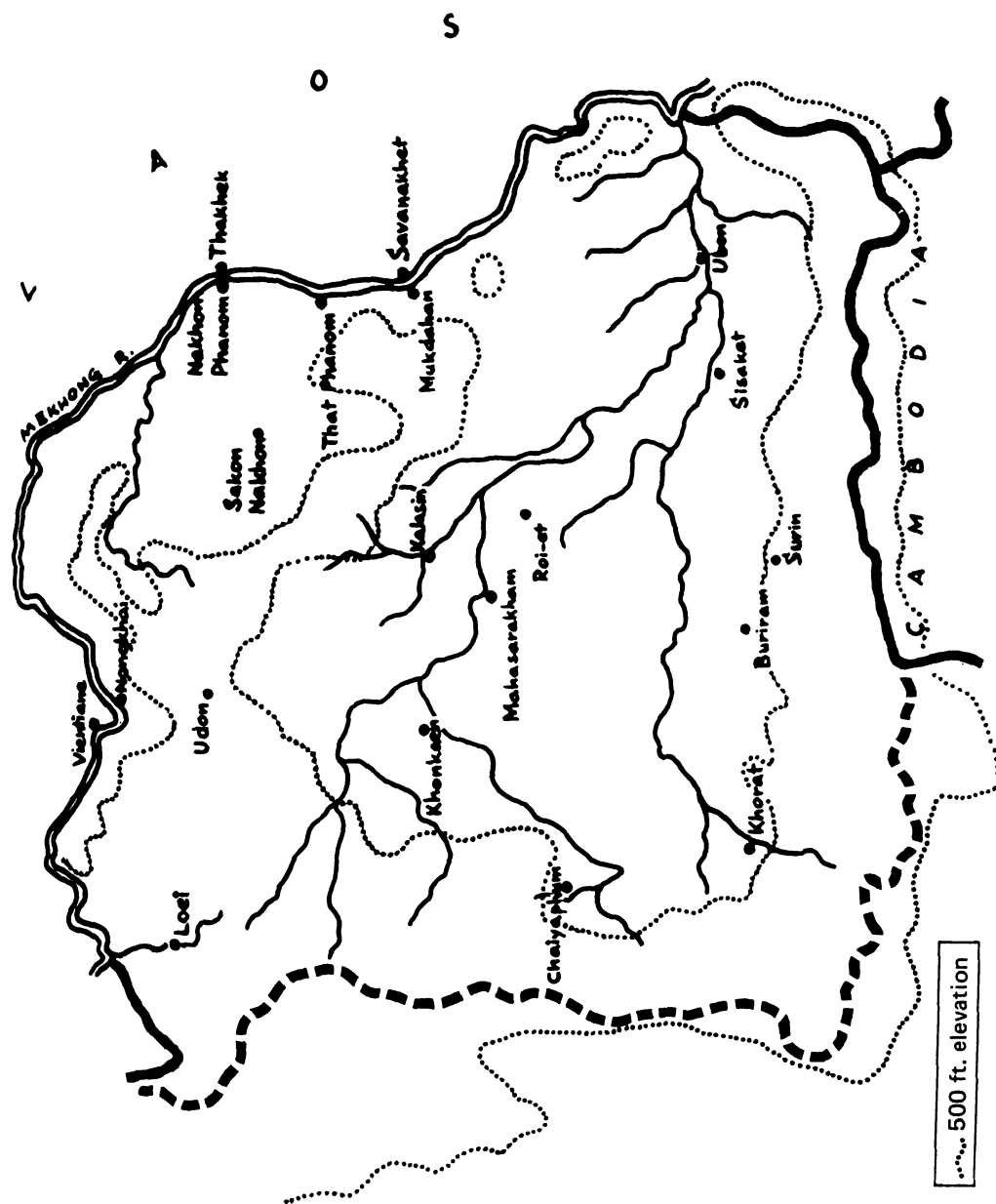


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If we think of the plateau as being a quarter circle, with a northeastern arc, the vertical and horizontal parts represent the western and southern boundaries, while the arc opposite the right angle represents the Mekong. The space near the arc, roughly from one o'clock to three o'clock is the hill area.

The Khorat Plateau, drained by the Mun and Chi River, is more than 1,000 miles from the sea through the Mekong River and is only about 500 feet above sea level; therefore, the drainage gradient is shallow. As one would suspect from its elevation and the surface flatness of the plateau, the land is quite amenable to wet rice agriculture and does not require elaborate and costly terracing. The one drawback to this physical setting is that large areas of the plateau tend to become flooded when exposed to above average rainfall, a not infrequent occurrence.

Rice culture does suffer because the plateau is located inland and is partially affected by the mountains to the south, west, and northeast. Thus, the Khorat Plateau lies in a partial rain shadow as far as the effects of the Southwest Monsoon weather system are concerned. The rain shadow effect for the Northeast Monsoon is assured by the Annamite Chain of mountains, forming the boundary between Laos and Vietnam, which lie to the east and the northeast of this region. Therefore, the monsoonal pattern is less regular

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for this area, and cyclonic weather patterns have a more pronounced effect as do the fluctuations of the monsoon pattern itself. Thus, the rainfall over the Khorat Plateau, while generally sufficient for rice cultivation, varies considerably and periods of flood and drought alternate with periods of adequate rainfall.

A second major problem for farming is the highly permeable nature of the geological substructure. Because the plateau is basically a sandstone formation, water percolates downward easily through the soil causing considerable problems for the farmer should he require standing water after the rainy season has passed. Standing water is a necessary requirement in the production of kenaf--an important, upland crop resembling hemp or jute, which produces fibers used for the manufacture of burlap.

Even though this may not be a problem for the rice grower, as there is characteristically only one rice crop a year in the northeast, it certainly becomes a personal problem for him as the water table drops lower and lower during the cold season and the dry season. During the post monsoon seasons in certain villages, the very existence of farm animals, if not people themselves, is called into question. In one village near Changwat Town there is only a single well, located $\frac{3}{4}$ of a kilometer from the village's edge, which retains water during the entire year. During the height of the dry season, the well might take as many as one to two hours to collect enough water for the characteristic load

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Naturally enough, such permeability of the soil has implications for the construction of irrigation tanks--small reservoirs--and irrigation systems. In an area of low physical relief, and high rates of surface water evaporation due to the tropical location, the question of water loss due to percolation through the soil becomes even more important. This last factor adds considerable difficulty to the question of constructing such tanks.

These two problems of erratic rainfall and low soil water retention add up to a great problem for the northeastern farmer. Certainly, his reliance upon only a few crops whose growing seasons are concentrated around the wet season is understandable.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CHANGWAT TOWN

Changwat Province is centrally located in the heart of the northeastern region and is drained both by the River Chi and the River Mun. In fact, part of the northern boundary is formed by the Chi River while part of the southern boundary is formed by a tributary of the Mun River. The Mun River gradient is quite gradual in this area so that with the commencement of the monsoon a very large area rapidly floods; therefore, no crops can be cultivated using local, non-mechanized methods of cultivation. The provincial

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agricultural officers and the local United States foreign aid advisor have recently discussed some new methods of cultivation which might allow agricultural exploitation. However, these have yet to be introduced.

This flood plain notwithstanding, Changwat Province, according to the 1960 census, has one of the highest population densities in the Northeast, 220 persons per square mile (85 persons per square kilometer). This can be ascribed largely to the age of settlement of the area and its generally favorable geography for rice cultivation. The largest part of Changwat Province is flat, only slightly rolling land so that wet rice cultivation is achieved with minimal water control systems and terracing. There is little terracing to be done after the initial forest is removed. Furthermore, a great deal of land can be devoted to rice cultivation.

The other factor, age of settlement, is associated with the general movement of Lao speaking peoples into the area from the southeast. That is, people have moved into the area presumably from the Mekong River area following the drainage patterns of the Mun and Chi Rivers. This is attested to by the history of Changwat Town which states that the founders migrated from East Changwat.³

At the time of settlement, approximately 400 years ago (Vickery 1970:869), Changwat Town was an uninhabited site, although previously inhabited as indicated above, but by the 1960 National Census, Changwat Province was seen to have

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contributed a substantial amount to the interprovincial migration noted in the census of that year. Information collected on the province of birth of respondents in Isan indicated that many individuals had been born in other provinces than that of their province of residence. Many individuals recorded their province of birth as elsewhere in the Northeast, with many indicating Changwat Province as their province of birth. There are also further citations within the literature on the Northeast in which villages report that the founding family came from Changwat Province. Thus, as land became scarcer in the longer settled areas, some of the village population migrated to other areas where land was available.⁴ The general direction in this migration is upriver into the more heavily forested or otherwise less desirable areas for wet rice cultivation. Of course, the availability of land and the knowledge of its availability are the crucial elements determining to where a move will be made.

The general history of Changwat Town is one of the migration of two sons of the chao mueng (roughly equivalent to ruler or prince of the province) of East Province with certain followers to set up a settlement in the general area of Changwat Province during the middle of the 16th century. At first, they moved upriver from East Town, the administrative center of East Province, settling within Changwat Province but not at the exact site of Changwat Town; in fact, they originally settled some distance away.

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Historically it is not clear why the two sons decided finally to locate at Changwat Town. Perhaps it was a question of defense, for at the site of Changwat Town there was already in existence a moat with an earthwork wall on the inner side of the moat containing an area about one mile square. As stated before, there is no information concerning the previous, pre-Lao inhabitants of this area. There are monuments of Khmer design located some four or five kilometers outside of Changwat Town but there are none of this type within the confines of the moat.

Another puzzling question about the choice of this site is its distance from any permanent waterway; thus, while the town is located within the area of the Chi River drainage it is some three to four miles from the river. As part of the moat, there is a shallow intermittent stream (wadi) which forms the northern portion of the moat and which was dammed to maintain the level of water in the moat. But this wadi dries up during the dry period leaving only occasional ponds where the water table comes to the surface. Presumably there is an underground flow but it obviously has no irrigation potential and no transportation potential except during the rainy season. However, this stream does provide water for consumption, for there are wells dug near it and in its bottom.

In general, the water table is high in the area and can support a reasonable density of population. Whether there is sufficient ground water to support the 10,000 to

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12,000 population which lives in or very near to the moated area is difficult to tell. In order definitely to say, one would have to have a ground water survey which to the writer's knowledge has not been done. From present evidence, it is hard to tell what the maximum population might be for the area without the use of modern water systems. Presently, there is a municipal water system for the town which depends upon a Royal Irrigation Department irrigation tank about two miles from town. Incidentally, the demands of the municipality require so much of the water from the tank that there is little or no irrigation carried out by the farmers. During the dry season of 1966 the water in this reservoir was entirely exhausted. The writer believes, therefore, that the likelihood is small that the normal ground water resources could support the present day population without an extensive waterworks including dams and aqueducts. However, the moat itself might have acted as a reservoir when it was in good repair.

Whatever the reason for choosing the site of Changwat Town, it has been continuously occupied since its second settling. During this period, and, of course, for an even longer time span, Southeast Asia has been in a continual state of warfare and flux as the various major kingdoms have waxed and waned in power. The Khorat Plateau, being central to no kingdom, neither the Central Thai, the Cambodian, nor the Lao kingdoms, has been an area in which a great deal of local autonomy was exercised by the local

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princes (chao hua mueng). That is, each local prince held a certain area under his control and he, in turn, was controlled under the suzerainty of one or other of the major kings of the surrounding areas. The shift in control of the area from one kingdom to another had little effect upon the local princes because of difficulties in communication and the implications these had for the maintenance and protection of an appointee of some distant kingdom. I would judge that this had some considerable similarity to other systems of government which existed in Asia at this time.

Whatever the exact nature of the relationship between the chao hua mueng and the freeman, the political organization of Isan was marginal to that of either the Lao kingdoms (Luang Prabang, Vientiane, or Champasak, or their predecessor kingdom of Lan Chang) or the kingdom of Ayutthaya. Keyes, who has compiled the most complete, if brief, history of this region, states:

Lan Chang and Ayutthaya, however, shared a common interest in maintaining the Khorat Plateau as a wide border area between their two kingdoms. In wars between the Lao and Siamese kingdoms, first under Fa Ngum in the mid-1500's [sic]. . . and later at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries, the Khorat Plateau, by virtue of its intermediate location, formed a major battleground. To prevent such confrontations between the Lao and Siamese kingdoms, there was some effort exerted at various times by both sides to recognize the Khorat Plateau as a boundary region.[1967:7]⁵.

Because of the lack of reference to the Northeastern Region of Thailand in the historical record until the period of the 17th century when King Narai (1656-1688) of Ayutthaya

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established the fortified outpost of Nakorn Rathasima (Khorat) on the southwestern edge of the Khorat Plateau, we may assume, following Keyes, that there was little interest in the area of the Khorat Plateau by the neighboring kingdoms. At the time the Siamese presence was beginning to be asserted in the Northeast, the unity of the Kingdom of Lan Chang had declined to such a point that in 1707 it split into the kingdoms of Luang Prabang, Vientiane, and Champasak (Viravong 1957:109).

Keyes (1967:9), basing his analysis on Archaimbault, indicates that at this time in history Champasak absorbed the region in which Changwat Province was located when it laid claim to the region upstream along the Chi and Mun Rivers. This included the regions from Khone Kaen to Ubol and could, in effect, have included at least some of the modern provinces of Sisaket, Surin, and Buriram. It is believed that much of the area herein covered was left largely to itself except for periodic displays of loyalty and, most likely, payments of tribute (tax) in the form of local products and corvee labor. By the reign of King Taksin (1767-1782) the local elite and the local peasantry of the Northeast were grouped into local principalities call hua mueng⁶ which essentially were composed of a central village and its subordinate hua mueng or villages. The hua mueng were ruled by their own local elite, but the Thai throne now assumed the right to "appoint" (actually confirm) the chao hua mueng and the three other ranking officials who

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Such a system appears to have prevailed during the first 300 years of the existence of the principedom of Changwat Town. The chao mueng (the more usual term for a chao hua mueng) were the descendants of the original founders of Changwat Town and they were ruled by various kingdoms, but I do not know what kingdoms and for what periods of time because the information is presently not available to answer these questions.

As Southeast Asia entered the nineteenth century there was a gradual working out of the boundaries of the nations which exist today. The Thai Kingdom particularly became increasingly powerful. Having adopted a characteristic policy of appeasement and compromise towards foreign powers, especially Europeans, while their aggressive neighbors were exhausting themselves in fruitless battles with the encroaching colonial powers, the Thai were able to consolidate and build their national unity and to safeguard their boundaries by skillfully manipulating the rivalries of the British and French--this policy reminds one of the foreign

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policy of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the recently overthrown ruler of Cambodia, in which he tried to develop his country through the acceptance of aid from the Chinese, the Russians, and the Americans without becoming a client state of any of them. Thailand was able to minimize the demands of England and France by referring each to the threat of the other. This strategy was particularly applied to the encroachments of France upon the territory of Thailand. The British were earlier willing to concede the territorial integrity of Thailand, perhaps because Great Britain had already assumed the dominant imperial position in the race for colonial empire in Asia, and the Thais were able to maneuver an accord between the two European powers to recognize and guarantee the political integrity of Thailand.

With such policies prevailing between Bangkok and the spreading power of the western imperialists, though these were to become most fully developed in the 1890's and early 1900's, King Anuvong (r.1804-1827) of Vientiane, the middle of the three Lao kingdoms of Luang Prabang, Vientiane, and Champasak, attempted to take control of the Khorat Plateau and assume suzerainty of the area in 1827-28. The Thai armies were able not only to crush this threat but effectively to raze the capital of Vientiane and finally to subjugate it to the status of a tributary state of their kingdom.⁷

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forces, particularly French expansionism westward from the Vietnamese kingdoms, and the near autonomous nature of the local princes, particularly in the North and the Northeast, the Siamese decided to develop the system of montons, or administrative circles, as a part of a general reorganization of the provincial administration of Thailand. The montons were administrative centers which extended the services of the central government to a group of about three provinces (hua mueng) through centrally appointed civil servants. This was, then, an attempt to bridge a part of the gap between the central government and the people. Also, on the level of the province--the modern term changwat replacing the term hua mueng--the chao mueng were appointed as governors with annual salaries, thereby becoming civil servants within the newly created Ministry of Interior.⁸ Under this system of Administration, Changwat Province was a monton center and was administered through a regional office located at East Changwat.

After the 1932 Coup in which a group of civil servants and army officers overthrew the monarchy and democratic rule was implemented in Thailand, the monton system was abolished and the central government undertook to staff and finance the provincial government personnel and activities. This is essentially the administrative policy that has remained in effect until the present.

Through all of this description concerning governmental organization runs the thread of imposition of greater and

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greater control over provincial government by the central administration. This is motivated at least in part by the divergent ethnic identity of the Thai-Lao people. Thus, as the Isan people are not central Thai and their ethnic identity is closer to that of the adjacent Lao kingdom, there has always been a concern about the loyalty of this large minority. These fears have not been ungrounded inasmuch as separatist movements have sprung up from time to time in the Northeast. Certainly, recent history is a good example; the communist movement continually calls the attention of the Northerner to his close ethnic and even kin relationships to the Lao people. Prior to World War II, the French likewise stressed the relationship of the Thai-Lao to the Lao (Keyes 1967:12-13,50-58).

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CHANGWAT TOWN--AN INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER TWO

SOME STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CHANGWAT TOWN

In this chapter I shall describe Changwat Town in terms of its main structural characteristics which will include the major occupational categories and the social system of the community, particularly in the commercial sector. I will also include a brief consideration of the geographical setting of Changwat Town. Thus, this chapter will have four main divisions. The first division is concerned with presenting an introduction to the community in terms of the occupations which are observable, and there is a brief discussion of the geographical setting of the town. In the second division, I outline what may be called the services of the community; these services are seen as fundamental organizations of the community designed to satisfy the needs of the population. The third division is a discussion of the folk model of the social system of Changwat Town. Finally, the fourth division is a brief picture of the commercial section of the town.

CHANGWAT TOWN--AN INTRODUCTION

Rice, kenaf (Hibiscus cannabinus), pigs, chickens, watermelons, raw silk fiber, and kapok are the main exports of Changwat Province. The agricultural nature of the

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province is clear. There is little processing of materials (except rice and kenaf) for market. All of these products are purchased usually through middlemen by a merchant who consolidates the product and ships it to Bangkok or sells it to a buyer from Bangkok. There are four major rice mills in Changwat Town itself. These mills buy unhusked rice from small buyers in 220 pound (100 kilogram) sacks around harvest time and store them until prices are favorable. When the miller receives an order, he mills the rice, meaning he takes the appropriate type of rice (ordinary long grain and a long grain glutinous rice are the major or usual types), removes the hulls, polishes the kernel (that is, removes the bran), grades the rice in terms of quantity of broken and unbroken grains, places the rice in burlap sacks of 220 pound (100 kilogram) weight, and finally ships it to the buyer usually in the Northeast but often in Bangkok.

In the case of kenaf, essentially the same process is carried out. That is, the basic steps have been taken by the farmer but the product is still unsalable on the market. The kenaf processor further cleans, grades, and bales the kenaf fibers for sale to an agent who will sell it on the world market.

The activities that go on are largely those of production of plants and animals and basic processing--although for livestock this is essentially a matter of collecting and perhaps some feeding--in order to prepare the product for sale to some other merchant or, rarely, even

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There is some manufacturing activity in or adjacent to Changwat Town. This takes the form of a distillery which produces local whiskies--though it is probably more correct to call them rums for they are made from molasses--of second and third quality, two ice plants, and a mill producing silk and cotton cloth. During the time of my field work, only the distillery operated for the full period. Most of this same time, one of the ice plants was inoperative, because of equipment failure, and the second ice plant and the cloth mill were put into operation during the last part of my study.

Beyond the farmers, the buyers, the associated occupations of agricultural processors, and the small but growing manufacturing activities of the community, there are other occupations which we might single out. Closely tied to that of the farmer and processor is the occupational category of transportation. Changwat Town is a center of communication for its province; all of the provincial roads are basically oriented towards Changwat Town. Also Changwat Town itself is located at the juncture of two national highways--one of which is a major highway of the Khorat Plateau. Thus, there is a transportation network which is made up at the base by small independent operators who own one or two trucks.

These trucks are usually very small, often smaller than a Jeep, and they have a small flat bed in the back like a pickup truck over which is built a roof. Along the sides of the

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bed are two wooden benches upon which people sit and face inward; their possessions are placed on the floor of the truck bed and upon the roof. The truck can either carry passengers or goods or both, and it is rare to see any of these vehicles which isn't overloaded. The small truck owner often operates between and through several villages and ultimately connects with a district town. Here is often found, if there is a satisfactory road to Changwat Town, a truck-bus company with larger trucks built to the same plan which will operate between the district town and Changwat Town. Finally, in Changwat Town, the transportation industry becomes functionally more specific by the division into two types of companies which concentrate either on the movement of goods or of people. Thus, at the provincial level there are trucking companies and bus companies.

A third category of the overall occupational structure is composed of those engaged in trade. Generally, these are people who range from itinerant peddlers to shop-owner agents. The former are individuals who travel around through the small villages selling the small number of items that they can carry with them. The latter are the more affluent of the trader group. These are men who have substantial capital and can invest it in goods, which they then put out to smaller merchants either within Changwat Town or in the villages nearby. The most sophisticated of this type of trade is the cloth business in which the agent-trader receives cloth on thirty to ninety day terms, and puts these

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goods out to smaller merchants on similar terms. One large cloth merchant in town places cloth on consignment not only in Changwat Province but in the neighboring provinces of Western Province and Northern Province. In order to carry out such activity he owns a Nissan Patrol, a four wheel drive vehicle like a short pick-up truck. Between these two extremes lies a host of part and full-time traders using a variety of methods and selling a wide range of products.

We may distinguish another occupational category which can be called a service industry. Changwat Town, being a central urban center for Changwat Province, provides a number of services for the urbanized population, the traveler, and the fun seeker; they all can satisfy their various needs in the several hotels, barber and beauty shops, dry cleaning establishments, snack shops, restaurants, bars, cinemas, gambling houses and houses of prostitution.

Another set of services that can be distinguished as a distinct category of occupations is that of professional service. As a main center for governmental and economic institutions, Changwat Town has a major concentration of persons providing banking, legal, educational, medical and insurance services. Many of these services are provided through governmental programs by civil servants. The preponderance of medical doctors are in the civil service, as are educational personnel, and a certain number of banking services are performed by the government.

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above, can be classed as another clearly distinguishable category of occupations. These include the usual governmental services of police protection, public works, public education, public health, tax collection, post and telegraph, administration of justice, and research in and dissemination of information concerning economic topics, principally in agricultural fields. It also takes on what are sometimes called "nation building activities"--the intentions of which are as much to develop political security as they are to carry out their stated purposes of economic and social development--such as, Community Development Department projects to raise chickens, weave cloth, improve production and distribution of handicrafts, etc., and projects under the Accelerated Rural Development program.⁹

The penultimate occupational category that I shall mention is composed of the construction trades including contractors, craftsmen, and laborers. Along with this group one would include craftsmen and mechanics who either build or repair machines and others goods for use by the community.

Finally, one should mention the most noticeable occupants of all of an occupational category in a mainland Southeastern Asian state, the Buddhist monk. Almost nowhere can one go without seeing a monk. On the streets, in buses, in restaurants, and in private homes, one meets or sees monks. Their numbers are large; they have considerable freedom to travel; they enjoy great respect from the

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All of these occupational categories can be observed in Changwat Town for the simple reason that it is a governmental center as well as a trade and transportation center in a populated area. Usable land brings farmers; they support religious centers; agricultural processors and merchants are attracted by resources and the chance for profit; populations and productive enterprise attract roads and government. The preceding, in turn, calls for more merchants and service occupations, and all attract more population because of the growing urban character of the setting. Such is the evolution of a provincial center like Changwat Town.

The Geography of Changwat Town

As remarked earlier, Changwat Town is an important trade center, an administrative center, an agricultural center, and a communication center. As a center of communication, Changwat Town is located at the juncture of a national highway (although the title is imposing, with the exception of some thirty kilometers, it is a highway in name only) which runs to the provincial capital of South Changwat and another national highway linking the provincial capital of East Changwat to the main highway which runs between Bangkok and the Thai border opposite the capital of Laos. This latter highway running through Changwat Province passes on through East Changwat Town and eventually reaches Laos.



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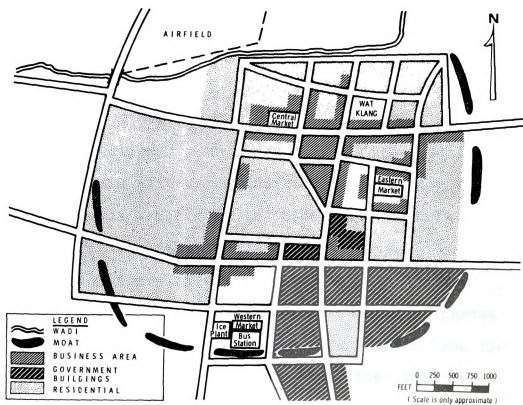


FIGURE 3

GENERALIZED MAP OF MAIN AREA OF CHANGWAT TOWN

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Besides lying on a junction of two highways, Changwat Town stands at the center of a network of provincial and lesser roads and trails linking the various towns and villages of the province to Changwat Town. With few exceptions, if a person in Changwat Province wishes to travel to any other part of the country, the most convenient and comfortable means to do so is to first travel to Changwat Town and then proceed on his journey from that point. This is to say that the national road network is designed to link provincial capitals with each other and particularly to Bangkok; provincial roads have the same function relative to the provincial capitals as the national network has to Bangkok. It is often easier to reach a not too distant spot in the province by taking a longer route which passes through Changwat Town just because the roads which link the two places to the provincial capital are better than the road (if any) which directly links the two places.

Geographically, Changwat Town lies on a slightly elevated piece of land on a very flat plain. There is virtually no relief except for the site of Changwat Town itself. The major relief in the skyline is not buildings, hills, or mountains, but trees. The landscape varies by the height, density, and type of trees which dot and cluster its face. Thus, even in the midst of rice fields the single, tall yang (rubber) tree rises over 100 feet in the air. In some places there are palm trees, and at others there is a variety of short roundish trees (Dipterocarpus tuberculatus), often growing on termite mounds, dotted over the

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Along the north side of the town runs a wadi, an intermittent stream, which forms part of the ancient moat surrounding the site of Changwat Town. The central part of the business district is formed principally to the west of a low hill upon which is located the Wat Klang, a few stores, and some residences. North of the business district and to the east and west of it are general residential areas. Southwest and southeast of the business district are some secondary business areas and residences, but directly to the south land is given over, in large part, to government buildings and houses reaching as far as the moat

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SERVICES OF A PROVINCIAL TOWN

In this section and the four sections immediately below I wish to introduce the concept of community services as a means of making a partial description of Changwat Town. As I see the concept of community services, it is not unlike the concept of function in the usual structural functional analysis of anthropology. That is, structures are those analytical constructs, such as the institution of the family, which are distilled from more or less persisting groups of individuals organized around some common core of understandings which guide their manner of interaction internally within the group and externally without the group. These structures are conceived of as making an important contribution, called their functions, towards the maintenance, survival, and change of the total society of which the structure is but a part. Functions, then, are the contribution made by the operation of the structures (institutions) towards the survival of the system (society).

I have chosen to use the term services, rather than functions, as a means of avoiding confusion with the more usual manner of employing the concept of functions in anthropology. Thus, I will apply the term services to certain occupational areas, or sectors, of the society and it will be understood to describe the importance of these

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sectors to the population of the community. However, as my interest will be focused upon the analysis of conflict data to be presented in Chapter Three, I only wish to use the presentation of services to indicate some of the principal reasons for the existence of the community in its present condition. Also, as my intention is primarily to give the reader only sufficient information to visualize the nature of Changwat Town, so that he will be able to place the main body of the materials of this work in proper perspective, I will select for discription only the most important services.

The first services to be distinguished below are agricultural services. These are largely concerned with the collection, processing, financing, and sale of agricultural goods. The second set of services are the distribution services in which goods and others resources are brought in from the outside for distribution, largely through the process of selling and buying, to members of the community or to be further distributed throughout Changwat Province. A third set of services to be distinguished is that of communication. This is concerned with the movement of persons and the transmission of information into and out of Changwat Province. Finally, government is the last set of services performed by Changwat Town. As a provincial capital and as an urban center, Changwat Town is a center of government administration both for the province and for the urban center itself; therefore, a main activity of the community is

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Agricultural Services

We have already mentioned the general occupational groupings of the community and we shall here concern ourselves with the problem of outlining the closely related, but nevertheless different, subject of the service areas of a northeastern provincial town. The first set of services which we can isolate very clearly is that of servicing the agricultural economy of the region. Thus, in Changwat Town there are four large rice mills. There are also three large jute mills; however, one of these became bankrupt during 1967 and was not operating during a portion of the time of this study. One of the jute mills also processes kapok for shipment to Bangkok. There is a pig buyer's cooperative and several independent pig buyers in the town. There are also cattle buyers, chicken buyers, and silk buyers, whose function is to ship their respective items of trade to Bangkok or other markets for trade.

Also, farm suppliers may be included under our heading of agricultural services. Thus, there are two major suppliers of seeds, fertilizers, and insecticides in the community, but there are several additional stores which supply one or more of these items as well. Most notable is the sale of chemical fertilizers. Before 1964 there were virtually no chemical fertilizers for sale on the local market and an equally low demand for such items. However, during that

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year one of the most successful development projects of the Royal Thai Government, acting with the assistance of the United States Government, got underway. A program was started to encourage the use of chemical fertilizers by farmers in this province.

The strategy of the program was to sell fertilizers below cost through government channels to farmers who were members of the rice farmer's clubs or the farmer's clubs and give them instruction in their use. These clubs are formed by the provincial extension services of the Rice Department and the Agriculture Department respectively, both of the Ministry of Agriculture. As it turned out, this was an extremely effective way to encourage the use of chemical fertilizers. Two years later, the local bank manager estimated that 300 tons of chemical fertilizers were used in Changwat Province in that year alone. This occurred after only the one subsidized sale by the government. The government has, since that initial year, continued to distribute fertilizers, but on a cost basis--which is after all a kind of subsidization--and only to the government clubs. After government supplies have been exhausted, non-members, and members also, must purchase the fertilizers from commercial sources. After the first year there were claims that black markets developed in sales of the government fertilizer because the demand was so great. The members of the clubs were claimed to have sold some of their share of fertilizer to non-club members because of the price differential

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between the government price and the market price and because supplies on the commercial market were also in short supply.¹⁰

The above discussion calls our attention to the aspects of the community which are agriculturally oriented but are noncommercial in nature. Thus, much of the government involvement in the province is connected in some way with the agricultural activities of the dominant population. Leaving aside the regulatory and administrative functions for the moment, there are several programs of the provincial government aimed directly at this part of the economy. There is a rice officer, an agriculture officer, a livestock officer, a land cooperative officer, a cooperatives officer, and a Royal Irrigation Department officer (but this office to the writer's knowledge is not under the control of the provincial authority) and an agricultural experiment station (which is also independent of the provincial authority). There is a program of Community Development and an Accelerated Rural Development program both of which have some interest in rural agricultural activities. All of these offices have as their purpose, or one of their purposes, the improvement of some aspect of the peasant's life or livelihood.

A special problem for farm development is the availability of agricultural credit. There is a system by which agricultural credit is advanced through the cooperative office. Credit is also available through the Farmer's

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Clubs of the Agricultural Department, Rice Farmer's Clubs of the Rice Department, and certain kinds of credit through the Community Development office. However, none of these are general systems; all restrict their activity to club members, or, in certain instances, a wider but usually geographically restricted area. The two most general systems of credit available to any farmer are through the buyers of farm products and through the merchants with whom the farmer deals. There are also money lenders, but the writer's impression is that they deal principally with businessmen rather than farmers; however, there are village money lenders who do give credit to farmers.¹¹

A very interesting and apparently successful commercial experiment for agricultural credit was being initiated by the manager of the City Bank branch in Changwat Province. This seemed to be a very promising program indeed. During the first season (1966) of the program, a special officer, including an assistant, was placed on the bank staff to supervise the handling of agricultural credit. The senior person in this instance was a former agricultural extension officer. His method of operation was to select certain easily accessible villages and announce that the City Bank was planning to form farmer's clubs for the purpose of providing agricultural credit. Those who wished to participate were required to form a club with not more than ten members and to agree to guarantee each others loan from the bank. That is, each farmer could apply for a loan for certain

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carefully limited purposes--for the initial, experimental period the bank intentionally restricted the things that they would loan money for to essentially the purchase of fertilizer, seed, and draft animals in the growing of water-melons and rice--which were written up in the loan contract, and each and every other member of the group signed the contract as a co-signer. Thus, the members of the club were responsible for bad management on the part of the borrower--crop failures due to natural causes would not cause the loan to become delinquent--and the bank manager (Khun Thong Daeng) held that the joint responsibility of the membership would prevent mismanagement of a member, would prevent poor farmers from being enrolled within the club, and would bring the members of the club to assist any member who became involved in some kind of difficulty. Periodic meetings were held and the bank loan officers attended the meetings to observe and see if any difficulties were being experienced by the members and to try to assist them in meeting their problems.

While I was not able to persuade Khun Thong Daeng or his staff members to give me specific cost benefit data, I was assured by the bank manager that the program was a success, and that in the following season he was planning to expand the program to form a considerable larger number of clubs, from the ten in the first season to thirty in the second season. Certainly, this indicated that the first season was, indeed, a success, or, at least, a success in

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the eyes of Khun Thong Daeng. He even stated that in the future he hoped to have his clubs take on storage and marketing of their agricultural products as an additional activity.

Distribution Services

Changwat Town also serves as a center of distribution. Here we find a number of businesses in which Changwat Town merchants serve as suppliers and agents for Bangkok firms. As previously mentioned, particularly in the cloth trade the larger cloth merchants follow a system of putting out cloth on a 30 to 90 day credit basis. In the cloth trade, these merchants are suppliers of goods and credit but they do not have exclusive agents' rights. The same is true of the bicycle trade so that the bicycle trader supplies smaller merchants in the district towns but has no sole agent's rights. However, in the petroleum products and the soft drink trades, the local agents usually have an exclusive right to supply their products in the province or at least some particular trading area.

There are also a number of products, mostly motorcycles and major electrical appliances, which are presently limited to the various towns in their distribution and sales but whose use is increasing rapidly. A particular brand will be handled only by a single merchant and it is not unreasonable to expect at least the larger and more expensive items will be handled on an exclusive agent basis.

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fields in which the sales force comes directly from Bangkok and sells directly to the consumer as well as local businessmen, thus bypassing the distribution potential of Changwat Town in part. This is particularly noticeable in the field of drugs of a proprietary type and the sale of soap and toiletries.¹²

Changwat Town also serves as a commercial center for a very wide range of goods and services. There are very few items of daily use which cannot be purchased in Changwat Town at a given time or which can't be ordered through the enterprising merchants of the commercial community. Even some luxury goods can be purchased, particularly if they have some utilitarian justification. Such items are the motorcycle and motor scooter. For example, the writer finds it very difficult to know how to classify the use of a 60cc Honda by a twelve or thirteen year old high school student, other than luxury consumption. There might be someone in the household for whom such a vehicle might be a real utility, but for a young boy to ride back and forth to school on one--the same distance a boy from a poor family walks on foot--is a singular display of conspicuous consumption. For really major purchases one must generally go to Bangkok, although there is an English Ford agency in West Changwat Town and there are considerably larger towns (Kherat, Udorn, and Ubol) where some major items such as automobiles might be purchased.

The one area in which the commercial sector is weak is

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in food marketing. That is, there is not a consistent and adequate stock of perishable foods available in the market as there is in larger and more centrally located markets. The fresh market¹³ in Changwat Town is extremely variable in its offerings. During the year there are many days when only the fruits and vegetables grown locally are available, or rather, the imported fruits and vegetables are insufficient for the demands of the market and disappear quickly from its stalls. This contrasts sharply with the fresh market at Northwest Changwat Town some hour and a half drive from Changwat Town. Northwest Changwat Town is a much larger town and lies on both the Friendship Highway and the Bangkok-Nongkhai rail line. Therefore, transportation facilities are excellent and because of its centrality it serves a much larger hinterland. In this market there is always a profusion of all the fruits and vegetables that are commercially available in Thailand.

Communication Services

Changwat Town serves as a center of communication. Some of this has already been considered above in the description of its geographical place. What this means in terms of physical features and social organization I will attempt to outline here. As indicated earlier, Changwat Town is the hub of a road network for the province. It stands as a center for a number of services notably those of agricultural marketing, government and transportation itself. Thus, we find that there are a number of small

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truck-bus intraprovincial lines which terminate in Changwat Town and larger bus lines of an interprovincial character which either originate in or pass through it. There are also several trucking companies which provide intra and interprovincial services. Of all the interprovincial services, the most frequent are those which connect with Bangkok. For only 50 Baht (\$2.50) a traveler can purchase a ticket for Bangkok and be there in about 11 hours. Trucks run daily to and from Bangkok. To Bangkok they carry animals or other farm products and on the way back they carry a wide assortment of general goods. Also, there is a taxi service which operates for shorter runs between major towns. The taxis operate for a somewhat higher price, but one has the somewhat dubious advantage of arriving at one's destination a bit faster, if at all.

There is no railroad which services Changwat Town; however, there is a projected rail line from Khorat to Mukdaharn on the Thai border with Laos which, if built, will pass through or near Changwat Town. There is no systematic use of water transportation owing to the distance to the Chi River, the closest navigable river, and the efficiency with which the road network has developed.¹⁴ In any case the Chi is a rather small river and cannot, except at high water, handle large craft.

Changwat Town does have an airfield located just beyond the moat on the north side of town but it is completely unimproved except for the runway, approximately 2,500 feet

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long, which is laterite surfaced with ditching for drainage. Also, there is a sala constructed nearby. This is a building with open sides in which a few people can sit and wait. However, this air strip is not used by commercial craft and there are no facilities for fuel and no aircraft are kept here.

There are other systems of communication for which Changwat Town serves as a center, or node, in a larger system. Thus, on the smallest scale there is the broadcast system of the municipal government which disseminates local and national news in the Thai language and music during the day. This is done by placing loudspeakers on telephone poles at various intersections in town and attaching them by wire to the broadcast room in the municipal building. There is also a telephone system in town with approximately 100 instruments. This is not connected to any larger system but will be in the near future. Changwat Town receives regular postal service with one mail delivery and pick-up per day. This system distributes mail nationwide and thus mail can be sent anywhere in the country as well as abroad. Service between Changwat Town and Bangkok is generally one day service. The time required to send a letter to a remote village even within Changwat Province is extremely variable and surely takes longer than the run to Bangkok.

Inside the postal building are telegraph facilities which connect Changwat Town through the telegraph system to any provincial or district town in Thailand. Messages are

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Changwat Town also has an army radio station of 5,000 watts power which broadcasts news and entertainment programs. Time is purchased by regular commercial users and consequently any given time period is richly laced with commercials. Language used is usually Thai although there are programs in the Lao language as well. Government news and programs tend to be propagandistic, particularly in regard to anti-communist themes. However, because of fear that commercially hired broadcasts were being used to transmit concealed information, broadcasting of commercials and privately produced shows was forbidden nationwide in 1966 by order of the government. Only government programming could then be broadcast, thus restricting radio transmission to the limits of the sponsor's budget.¹⁵

The above discussion has concerned itself with the communication networks which originate in Changwat Town or pass through it. There are communications nets centered elsewhere which include Changwat Town. For example, the television station in Khonkaen can be received clearly in Changwat Town as can various radio stations operating on the standard broadcast band, such as the Air Force station in West Province. Likewise, there are clandestine radios which broadcast antigovernment propaganda that may also be heard. There are official shortwave radio telephones

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available to various agencies of the government for communication, but these are only for official messages of the department concerned and are not for public use nor can they be heard by the normal standard or shortwave radio.

One should note that there are a variety of daily and weekly newspapers regularly received in Changwat Town. Most of these newspapers are printed in Bangkok, although one weekly is published in Khorat, and they are usually, the Khorat publication included, either in the Thai or Chinese languages. There are also a variety of weekly and monthly magazines, also in the Thai language, which are read frequently by persons in town. Some magazines carry news while others carry articles about movie stars and romance and yet others carry short stories.

When viewed from the special perspective of northeast Thailand and the general political situation of Southeast Asia at this time, it is more than appropriate to speak of governmental organization in the Northeast as a communication system. This perspective is proposed in light of the contributions of the field of communication theory to the general view of administrative structures,¹⁶ and because the potential of guerrilla insurrection has forced upon the Thai government the need to carry out unusual efforts in order to prevent further deterioration of the image of the central government in the minds of the local inhabitants of Isan. Not only is the government involved with the dissemination of ideas of assistance to the population of the sort that

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is familiar to anyone from the western world, it is actively engaged in the process of modernization and rationalization so characteristic in the "developing" world; that is, the government is very self-consciously attempting to bring about development of the society. In Thailand, and particularly the Northeast, modernization is very heavily freighted with anti-communist propaganda, and much of the rationale for the programs carried out by the government is phrased in terms of their anti-communist goal. Thus, while there is a rice officer and staff who are concerned with the dissemination of information of value to rice farmers such as ideas about the application of fertilizers, new types of seeds, new techniques of growing rice, etc., there is also a Community Development Program for the province which marks this province as a special security area. Even more telling is the fact that Changwat Province has an Accelerated Rural Development (ARD) program. Only fifteen provinces have such projects and the principle criteria for selecting provinces for establishing such a program is that it be an area in which communists are either engaged in active insurrection or on the verge of such activity.

We may see, then, that in considering communication services, the government is engaged in the normal process of disseminating information that is generally associated with public institutions, e.g., education, health, agriculture, etc., but it is also heavily engaged in attempting to shape the ideas of the people in terms that are favorable

to the national government and to weaken the position of the subversive propagandists and the strength of their arguments.

Governmental Services

In discussing community services, we must deal with the institution of government. In Changwat Town, four levels of government are represented. Working from the top down there is, first of all, the apparatus of the national government not controlled locally. This is rather small indeed. This level is represented principally by the army unit which is located on the northern boundary of the town which comprises the radio station, already mentioned, and an army stable and, presumably the air strip which lies next to the army post. There is also a race track which is contiguous to the camp, or perhaps, within it, which has horse races conducted by the municipality each weekend during the dry season. The horses which run in the race appear to be owned by private owners. To my knowledge there are no government horses run; of course, it wouldn't be out of character for some of the army horses to be entered in the races.

Located a few miles outside of town, there is an agricultural experiment station which conducts research in such areas as sericulture, improvement of mulberry stock, fruit tree culture, coconut culture, watermelon culture and corn culture. This is also outside the jurisdiction of the provincial Governor. During the time of the study there

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Finally, both the municipal water system and the local electrical authority are organizations which function outside the normal authority of either the provincial government or the municipal government. In the case of these divisions, while they are of provincial or smaller scope, they receive their budgets from the central government and local officials have little influence over their operation except through "whiskey-soda" coordination (Riggs 1966: 203); that is, informal personal relationships.

However, the major superior branch of government represented in Changwat Town is the provincial government. The main activities of this unit are to supervise and carry out national government programs for the entire province. In some cases this means that programs are carried out in or from Changwat Town, as in the case of the judiciary in which the only courts are located within the town boundaries, or as in the case of ARD programs which are initially supervised and directed from Changwat Town. But the more usual and standard practice is for the provincial authorities to supervise the individuals who are actually carrying out the project on the district level or lower. For instance, the Provincial Education Officer is charged with the educational program for the province but the actual teaching is done at the village level for the lowest

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elementary schools. Also, the Agriculture and Rice Officers supervise workers located on the district level.

The major units of the provincial government are the judiciary, which is independent of the other arms of the provincial government; the police, in theory subordinated to the governor but more or less co-equal in rank; and the units of the regular civil service. The latter include the offices of ARD, Community Development, Agriculture, Rice, Livestock, Land Cooperatives, Cooperatives, Statistics, Education, Army Recruiting, Finance, Revenue Tax, Excise Tax, Government Savings Bank, Land Records, Public Health, Malarial Eradication, Provincial Hospital, Forestry, Post and Telegraph, Royal Highway and Royal Irrigation. The titles in this list are rather self-explanatory concerning the function of the office. They basically include the categories of fiscal management, collection of revenues, public works, health, education, and various kinds of specialized assistance to the rural and farming population.

One should mention the lack of any legislative body. There is, in fact, a provincial council (called the Sapha Changwat) which meets twice a year, advises the governor, and, subject to his review, does have a budget which it may apportion to various projects; however, this is an appointed body. The governor recommends the membership to the central government with the final approval being made by the Ministry of Interior.¹⁷

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Changwat Town is the district level government (see note one). This contains those branches of government already seen at the provincial level which extend below the provincial level. However, as the district office has little involvement with the municipality, we shall not consider it here further except to note that one of its concerns is the maintenance of vital records, and that this is its main function for citizens of the municipality.

Finally, the lowest level of government is the municipal government. The municipality is a unit of government very directly under the control of the provincial officials and through them by the central government itself. However, under the Civil Service Act of B.E. 2497 (A.D. 1954), municipal officials are not members of the national civil service system with the exception of the paladt tessaban (the chief administrative officer--the city clerk) and perhaps one or two others (Office of the Prime Minister 1965: 599 and 85). Besides the paladt tessaban, there is a mayor, and there is an executive council called the Kana Tessamontri which is composed of the mayor, who is also the deputy governor of the province, the nai amphur (district officer) of Amphur Mueng, and the provincial chief of police. The executive council, and principally the mayor, has the full responsibility and authority for the municipal government.¹⁸

There is also a municipal council, the Sapha Tessaban, which advises the mayor and his executive committee and

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passes on the draft budget submitted to it by the mayor. Should the municipal council refuse to ratify the budget of the mayor and the executive committee, the mayor and the executive committee must resign. This latter part is the system as it existed prior to the 1958 Coup and the institution of the Interim Constitution; various informants believe this to be the system at present.¹⁹

The municipal government is charged with the operation and provision of municipal services such as paving roads, water drainage, fire protection service, market management, sanitation services, and some welfare service. To carry out such activities, the municipality is granted some rights for the collection of taxes and other revenue raising techniques. Generally for the system of municipal government, and for Changwat Town in particular, the rate of taxation, and possibly the ultimate source of the taxes, is economically inadequate to raise the monies required to operate at the very modest level of services which the municipality of Changwat Town provides. In any case, for any capital improvement of a substantial nature, the municipality must apply to the central government for a loan to meet the cost of the project. For instance, in the case of the market built in 1963 the municipality had to borrow over one million Baht (\$50,000) in order to carry out the construction.

The municipal government is divided into a financial section which is concerned with the keeping of the financial records of the municipality as well as the collection

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and disbursement of funds, a central administrative section which maintains the records required by the government such as house cards and a register of persons living within the municipal boundaries, and a public works section which generally means the maintenance of surfaced and unsurfaced roads and drainage. The latter section is in charge of supervising construction of public structures for the municipality and inspection and acceptance of projects built for the municipality. Street lighting and sewage system construction and maintenance are also part of the responsibility of this section. There is a municipal public health officer; however, the position is vacant and the functions usually associated with a public health activity are fulfilled by the provincial health office. The municipality also provides fire protection and rubbish pick-up. Water and power are not municipality functions but are services provided by a central government agency.

Throughout this description of the institutions of government present in Changwat Town, it is clear that there is little in the way of local autonomy within the framework of the formal legal system. This is, of course, the way the system was designed following the promulgation of the Interim Constitution of Thailand in 1959.²⁰ The purpose of the Interim Constitution, or, more fundamentally the new government, was to rid the political scene of political dispute and to solve problems related to a worsened economic situation (Hall 1964:859). The removal of the



local members of councils and the reconstitution of these councils on a purely appointed basis was designed to facilitate the unification of the rule of government within the hands of a small group of persons. Thus, the working out of such a policy on the local level is demonstrated by the procedure of appointing the provincial and municipal councils through the office of the Ministry of Interior and strictly limiting the budgets of these councils.

We can now see that this form has some predictable effects from the point-of-view of meeting the needs of the local community. First of all, as formed, the organization of municipal functions, as with the provincial functions, are just bits and pieces of the central government administration. The services of municipal water, which is an entirely local system, municipal power and the telephone system, which are strictly local in scope, are not even under the control of the provincial administration let alone the municipal government. Each system receives a budget from Bangkok, submits programs and plans to Bangkok, looks for supervision, personnel, and promotions from Bangkok and usually individual officers want to be transferred to Bangkok. Secondly, this pattern of centralized control removes the possibility of rapid response to local needs. Thus, any major capital improvement must be sent to at least a regional office and usually to Bangkok before approval can be granted. Thirdly, the need to respond, or interest in responding, to local needs of the community is

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significantly reduced, and the reduction is proportional to the degree that the central government sees its role as teaching or leading, particularly in the area of "political responsibility", rather than serving the people.

We will see that, whatever lack of responsiveness the formal municipal government, by the very nature of its organizational form, has built into it, elements of the local population are highly interested in receiving services from it. There is at least a small group of the local level elite who are sophisticated in both legal and extra-legal means by which to get response from the national government on the local level.

CHANGWAT TOWN AS A SOCIAL SYSTEM

Let us now turn to a discussion of the more general picture of the social system of Changwat Town. Certainly one may discuss the nature of the community as being urban in character. As indicated above, there are considerable functions which the community performs which make it an extension of the central system of government, the national economy, and the national system of communication. In these terms the community of Changwat Town is an extension of urban culture, a sort of outpost.

The leadership of the community as represented by the outstanding merchants, politicians and government servants is oriented outward and towards Bangkok. For the middle range of persons this national orientation is also apparent. At the lowest occupational levels one would expect

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to find considerable variability ranging from those who are quite parochial to those who are very interested in national and even international events. However, in the case of this particular study specific research was not conducted on this question and only incidental information was collected concerning this point.

When asked to describe the community the most consistent response which is received is that it is divided into three parts.²¹ These parts are government officials, merchants, and farmer-laborers. If one attempts to push this tripartite division further, one gets a finer division of the occupational structure of the town. For instance, there is a differentiation between the sellers of general merchandise as opposed to the sellers of jewelry, etc. The point is that the informant tends to classify people in terms of their place in the occupational structure. However, there is a classification which cuts across the occupational categories. This classification is that of "little people" and "big people". Here the division is between the poor and the rich or powerful. Individuals are placed in the latter category even if they are not particularly wealthy or powerful if they have the potential of becoming so. Likewise, if a person associates closely with such persons he is also placed in this category.

Another distinction might be made which separates outsiders from long-term residents. However, while it is

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apparent to the observer that one can classify peoples along these lines, it does not seem to be an important category for the members of the local community. That is, it is not the same magnitude of importance as in the traditional societies usually studied by the anthropologist. Thus, while individuals are aware of whether a person was born in the community and thus is a representative of an older family, this is not a significant category for dividing the community from the point-of-view of the inhabitants. There appears to be nothing which is denied a person who is not a native of the community.

Such is the nature of Thai society that the lack of socio-cultural integration is quite understandable. It is clear from the writings of students of Thai culture that the open nature of Thai society lends itself to the ready assimilation of newcomers into a community. The concept of social mobility is an important part of Thai social relations as the concept of geographical mobility is also a valued and often practiced activity. Thus, Embree (1950: 191) in speaking of the Thai student abroad states:

The Chinese and Japanese drive for learning is not a Siamese characteristic. There is, however, a prestige associated with study in Europe or the United States; and then, travel is pleasurable. . . . Thai students when they return home after a period of years abroad, find it difficult to readjust to Thai life. . . . Many of these returned students enter politics or try to manage an import-export company or, better still, obtain a government appointment overseas. . . . Each man rather tries somehow to exploit the prestige values of his foreign residence so as to obtain a pleasant post.



Keyes also notes the existence of considerable migration of Northeasterners, particularly in their temporary migration to Bangkok and then their return home. Thus he states:

Among those who poured into Bangkok were large numbers of northeastern peasants in quest of wage-labor in order to supplement the subsistence endeavors of their families. . . . Although Northeasterners were by no means the only immigrants to Bangkok, the place of the Isan peasants in the Thai capital was unique. For one thing, most of the migration of Isan villagers to Bangkok was (and is) "temporary". That is, migrants come to Bangkok only seasonally, between harvest and planting time, or, at most, spend only a few years in Bangkok before returning to settle permanently in their home villages. . . . Secondly, most rural migrants are young, unattached (or temporarily separated) males between the ages of 20 and 29. . . . Finally, most of the peasant migrants enter the unskilled labor force . . . [Keyes 1967:37].

The nature of such migration is not well studied but what has been gathered indicates that, on the village level Thais usually are short term migrants. Thus, the quotation above from Keyes indicates the temporary nature of the move. Later Keyes states, "In the village of Ban Nong Tun in Mahasarakham, in which I carried out field work, for example, 49 per cent of the men twenty years of age and over 67 per cent of men between 30 and 39 had worked in Bangkok (only one woman had even worked in the Thai capital)" (1957:38).

Geographical mobility is an element so taken for granted that the standard Thai greeting is not "how are you?" but rather "where are you going?" The reply to this greeting which is socially standardized is "pai tiaow" or "going around (sightseeing)." This greeting symbolizes a very fundamental value in Thai life of touring or sightseeing. Thus it is not unusual to find people who have

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been to many areas outside of Changwat Town either to visit relatives, friends, or to go on a pilgrimage to a shrine. They regard such activity as fun. Likewise, such traveling is often combined with the search for wage work during the dry season when there is a lack of agricultural work in the village. Farmers take jobs in towns near home or perhaps in Bangkok. In a conversation with an official of the United States Information Service, it was stated that Northerners were even known to have gone to Laos to fight with the Royal Lao Army not in response to Thai government policy--Thailand is reported to have its own military units operating in Laos in support of the Royal Lao Army--but as an extension of the pattern of seeking employment in the dry season, and, of course, the not unusual interest of young men to seek excitement and adventure.

The point of the preceding quotations is that the Thai culture on all levels, both the elite which Embree mentions and the poor northeastern peasant which Keyes discusses, regard travel as fun, a most important value in Thai culture, and thus it must follow that there are accommodations made for this pattern in the lives of the people. That is, the thrust of the cultural system is such that the individual easily finds acceptance in the community and that it just as easily accommodates to an outsider who may even fill a position of very high power. In the case of the isolated village this might not fully apply, but for the provincial town this is very true. In fact, if we look at



the merchant category of society we see that outsiders claim a great deal of power, and, as we shall see, they command the heights, or at least the near heights, of the community. In terms of the administrative structure, the government officials who dominate it are all outsiders inasmuch as they are members of the civil service, are sent to Changwat Province upon orders of the central government, and expect to be reassigned by the central government at some later date. Membership of the Municipal Council generally reflects community power realities as seen through the eyes of the civil officials.

Thus, the outsider-insider dichotomy doesn't appear to have any great meaning as a native category in that there appears to be no overt signs that outsiders were resented or somehow kept apart from the insider community. Should there be any dichotomy along this line it will more likely take a regional, ethnic, or racial basis other than native born basis for the community. That is, the inhabitants of Changwat Town, and Thailand in general, are very aware of the question of who is or is not a native Thai, or who is native to one's region, and there are certain antipathies which find expression in daily life which we would expect to serve as a basis for distinguishing groups within the community.

The preceding discussion touches upon an important part of Thai life which is associated with a phenomena which has come to be called the "loose structure" of Thai society.



This concept has long been of interest to students of Thailand and to a variety of social anthropologists studying in other parts of Southeast Asia and other areas of the world (Cunningham 1969:106-108). While there has been considerable interest in this concept, little success has been achieved in the attempts to arrive at a common understanding of it, or, in fact, to reach agreement as to whether it is even a useful concept. In Chapter Five I will consider a promising line of social enquiry developed by Barnes (1968) and others--see Chapter Five below for additional bibliography--which has come to be called network analysis. I shall apply network analysis concepts to some of my field data in order to consider the relationship of this newer line of analysis to the loose structure controversy.

The most obvious distinction that residents of the community see is the visibility of non-Thai ethnic groups. Perhaps the most omnipresent, clearly noted, if not the most distinctive group, is that of the Chinese. There is a considerable population of ethnically Chinese people who, while they are most often either native or naturalized Thai citizens--there are only 647 Chinese citizens out of 668,193 persons who comprised the total 1960 population of Changwat Province (Central Statistical Office 1960:9)--are in clearest evidence in Changwat Town because of their predominance in trade.

The merchant stores line the street with the family dwellings in the back or the first floor above the building,

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so these buildings are naturally larger than those of the single family residences in other parts of town; thus, the effect is to make the merchants as a group more visible. The majority of businessmen, perhaps 75 to 80%, are ethnically Chinese in that others regard them as Chinese. Their visible Chinese characteristics of clothing, speech, sign over their building, worship, etc. all may have been discarded but the person may still be labeled as Chinese. In such a case, the evidence for identifying the person as Chinese is that one knows he is a businessman and that most businessmen are Chinese. Businessmen are not given high status in Thai society at least in its ideological model; however, we shall see below in our consideration of Changwat Town as a social system that businessmen have a high order of importance in the immediate model of the inhabitant of Changwat Town--for a discussion of these types of models see Ward (1965).

Governmental officials, most of whom identify with and are identified as ethnically Thai or Thai-Lao (even though they may be as Chinese in their descent as the businessman who is identified as Chinese) and peasant agriculturalists, all of whom are Thai or Thai-Lao, often speak disparagingly of these Chinese businessmen. This attitude on the part of the local inhabitants is mirrored and reinforced in official Thai government policy which, while it has varied from time to time, has taken an increasingly active interest in control, and regulation of businessmen who identify with

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Chinese culture and in the displacement of "Chinese monopolies" in certain fields, notably transportation. The response that the non-Chinese local inhabitant makes to the businessman is one of politeness, even in the face of rudeness from the shop owner, because Thai custom calls for polite behavior generally and particularly to those who are richer, and, therefore, more powerful. However, it is politeness borne of custom and respect for power not of respect for the individual or his culture. The ethnic Thai or Thai-Lao harbors no great feeling for the ultimate value of the Chinese or their culture.

There are also other ethnic or racial groups in Changwat Town. In the business community there are some small numbers of Vietnamese, perhaps six or seven families, and a like number of "Indian" traders—that is, people whose descent is South Asian, usually Sikhs of Pakistani origin though of mixed nationality. There is also one family of resident American missionaries, usually two to three American families of United States economic aid mission employees and seven Peace Corps Volunteers including married couples. In all cases these groups lead lives which are generally separate from the rest of the community except for the Vietnamese (and the "Indian" traders, to a lesser degree) who interact with their neighbors, who, in any case, are other businessmen, on a more sustained basis. Once again the characteristic Thai-Lao pattern of politeness is displayed towards these minor ethnic groups as well even

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Finally, there is a distinction drawn by the people of the Northeast between themselves and the central Thai people who live amongst them. Thus, for instance, in Changwat Town there is a section which was named for a while Krum Thai — or the Thai section (neighborhood). This occurred because a group of people from Khorat had come to live in Changwat Town and had settled in that part of town. Khorat, while geographically part of the Northeast, is peopled largely by non-Isan people who are considered to be central Thai (LeBar 1964:205).

Certainly, when we consider the case of regional differences we find that the Northerner is regarded by the inhabitants of Bangkok as lazy and ignorant and that Isan is not a pleasant place to live nor visit. Except perhaps for the qualities of the area as a place to live, the Bangkokian's regard for the Northerner and the Northeast is not unlike the image of Southerners and the South in the mind of the urban dweller of the North of the United States. And, while the educated native born Northerner, perhaps, does not share entirely the same stereotype of Isan as the Central Thai, he is, or often appears to be, in an ambiguous position. That is, he often rejects the stereotype intellectually, but he has often internalized it psychologically.

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and who it is that holds power, at least, in the form of the government structure, we find that it is just this very same Central Thai or educated Isan man who fills these high status government positions and most often holds the same unfavorable opinion of the Isan area. This unpleasant attitude on the part of the incumbents of positions within the governmental hierarchy is not lost to the inhabitant of Isan. The one situation in which the Northerner has been able to express his feelings in some significant way about this distinction is in the political field. Here the response has taken the form of opposition politics during the period of political activity particularly after World War II until the 1958 Coup of Field Marshall Sarit. After 1958 there has been increasing insurrectionist activity in the Northeast and this, to the extent that it is supported by the local populace, is based on its appeal to the Northerner to overthrow the central Thai government without calling for an ouster of the King (Keyes 1967:61).

Also, Keyes sees that the present insurrectionist activity assumes the integrity of the present geographical boundaries of the Kingdom of Thailand, so that the appeal made to the local population is not for Isan to separate but rather to work within the Thai culture for a modification of the existing social and political system (not unlike the moderate Black leadership in the United States who, however, do not want the sweeping economic and political changes implied in an armed revolution). Thus, the



insurgents would keep intact the territorial boundaries of the Thai state and even maintain the Thai king in his place "at the apex of the socio-cultural universe" (1967:60).

The effect of this is to demonstrate that the Northeasterner is very well aware of the regional differences in Thailand but for the moment he is not desirous to separate from the larger Thai political unit, whatever his notion is about how this political system might be organized and how its international alignments might be effected as a result of any changes in the governmental structure.

In the end, none of these distinctions of racial, ethnic and regional character seem greatly to color the structure of the community. While these are distinctions which the Northeasterners of Changwat Town make, they are submerged, for purposes of daily life, under the values of hospitality for strangers, the realities of the power structure, and, perhaps, even a sense of their own inferiority, i.e., acceptance of the stereotype. They remain as latent distinctions which, under the appropriate situation, can be called forth but which at the moment do not bother the calm surface interactions of the racial, ethnic, and regional groups residing in Changwat Town.

The model of the social system which I present here is consistent with the position of the protagonists of the "loose structure" argument,²² but I will not use this concept at this time. This model at the very least must include three classes of persons based upon the three major



occupational groups within the community. Thus we have the position of farmer, merchant, or government officer. Generally these positions are ranked by the Northeasterner with the farmer at the bottom and the government official at the top. However, there are persons whose position in this simple ranking might be placed lower than other persons but who are, in fact, considered more important than men in the next higher range. For instance, there are many minor government officials who are considered much less important than are several businessmen in town. All this is to say that, while certain occupational categories are more highly valued in the ideational model--Ward's ideological model (1965:135)--individuals are ranked in the society in terms of a complex of elements of which membership in an occupational class is only one, albeit, the central one. That is, in the "real" workings of the system, the immediate model, one must take account of more than just the formal statements of the members of the culture under study.

The main distinction often made by the inhabitants of Changwat Town which cross cuts these occupational groups is between "big people" and "little people" by which is meant that some people by virtue of wealth, education, friendship, kinship, or some combination of these attributes are more able to have their own way in the world, and these people are called "big people". That is, they have power over events in life. They can control wealth or people, or, at least, so influence a situation that the outcome is the

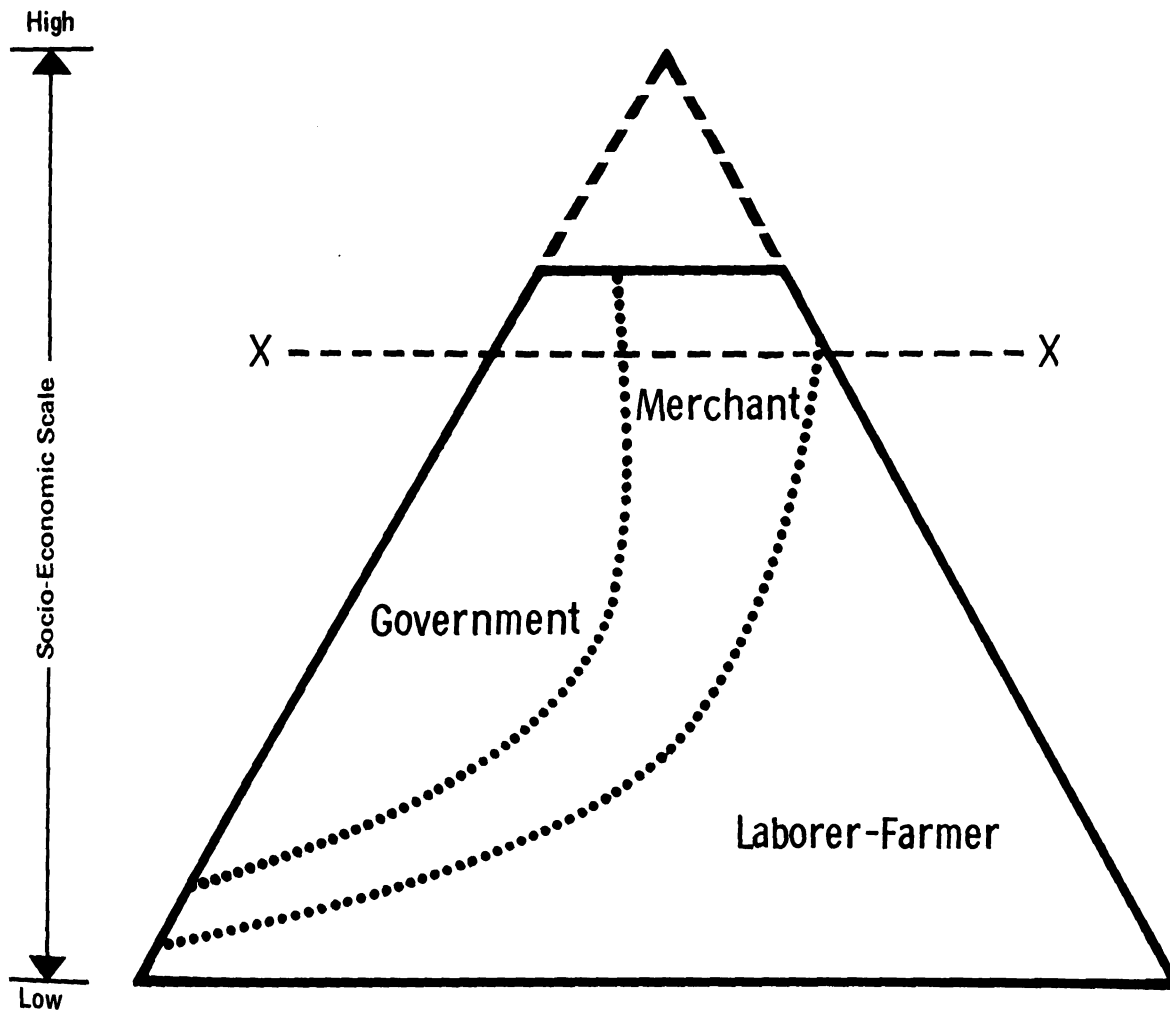


FIGURE 4

MAIN CATEGORIES OF THE SOCIAL SYSTEM OF CHANGWAT TOWN



one that they desire. "Little people" on the other hand are poor and weak and can control but few if any resources whether it be money, material or human. To the extent that the "little people" have any power at all, it is in association with a person who is in the "big people" category. A convenient way to diagram this model is presented in Figure 4.

The diagram presented depicts the way in which the inhabitant of Changwat Town sees the social organization of his town; that is, this is a representation of a folk model of the community. The diagram indicates the three major social-occupational categories, the government, the merchant and the laborer-farmer (working class) categories. The boundary between "little people"--"big people" is indicated on the figure by the dotted line X- - -X. Those above the line are considered "big people" and those below are "little people". The area of each of the three categories is roughly equivalent to their numbers in the community. The overall form of the figure is the shape of a truncated triangle, with the apex completed by dotted lines, in order to emphasize the fact that Changwat Town is a community which is only part of the larger Thai society, thus signaling that important decisions are sometimes made outside the community and these decisions are implemented by persons within the community or by persons coming from the outside. Also, the members of the community seek the involvement of persons outside the community in order to

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use the outsider as a resource in shaping events in that sphere which would normally be the community's alone if this were the encapsulated society more often the subject of ethnographic study. That is, Changwat Town is a town in a modern, though developing, nation-state and its social organization, and the inhabitants view of their social world, must take account of the fact that they are only a part of a larger society.

We can see that the model of community structure that the inhabitant of Changwat Town holds is, in effect, based upon power or influence over the various categories specified. The basic assumption implied in the model is that it is based on the answer to the question of who has power over one. Also, the distinction between the "big people" and the "little people" which places the second rank businessman on the same rank with the first rank government official is likewise a question of power. Who has power or influence in the community is the question, and the answer comes back, "the phu yai" (the big man).²³

The reader will note, of course, that the writer has presented a very static geometrical figure. This type of presentation is justified on the basis, first, that this is a small scale map from which to read only the main landmarks that the inhabitant of Changwat Town knows. Second, a diagram of truly three dimensional character and of greatest similarity to the real situation would be extremely difficult to render in a manner suitable for presentation here;

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and thirdly, it is at this time beyond anyone to present such a model. We have, therefore, a design which provides us with only a static model which does not depict fully the fluid character of the reality it represents.

It is true that the society of Thailand is of a particularly fluid nature in which a knowledge of the social structure of the society does not provide us with clear cut and highly predictive statements about the probable course of an individual's behavior. There is, then, a sort of lack of congruence, or isomorphism, between the social system on the one hand and cultural and personality systems on the other, as discussed by Kirsch (1969:49ff), but just such a situation is not easily placed upon paper in any satisfactory manner and I wish to show only in brief form the outline of the structure of the society. The very geometric nature of the model I present should alert the reader to the artificial nature of the symbol. Further, while the symbol is artificial and simple, the model which it represents is an overt model which the inhabitants of Changwat Town actually use. It is based upon conversations about the nature of the community and this is the way my informants responded to questions and discussions which touched upon questions of the nature of the community and how they saw it.

In regard to Kirsch's position above, the lack of congruence, or lack of predictive power, of the social system with its two related systems, the cultural system and the

personality system, accounts for much of the problem associated with the use of the term, loosely structured social systems. That is, the usual prediction of behavior about a Thai individual in a given situation is fundamentally a negative statement which will posit that the person will act in a highly individualistic fashion, if he should act at all. This kind of picture gives little comfort to the structuralist, and an argument often ensues about whether there are such things as loosely structured societies. In Chapter Five I shall present some data which will have bearing upon the empirical delineation of the degree of looseness of a social structure.

A further point should be made concerning the consideration of the nature of the community and the way in which major problems are solved. As pointed out earlier the purpose of this work is to consider cases of conflict which revolve around the commitment or uses of public resources in order to consider the processes by which people carry out their life activities. That is, the main thrust of this study is not to build an analytical model which is composed of relatively concrete structures with clearly demarcated boundaries but rather to focus upon the more fluid ebb and flow of the society's life. We are more interested, then, in seeking a means by which to approach this more dynamic aspect of the social life of a group of people. Thus, the community and its internal parts may be viewed as having permeable boundaries through which persons

pass and interact in a variety of ways. This is partly due to the cultural perspective, that is, the value orientations and world view of the members of the society, and partly due to the more structural features of the society which reflect and are reflected by the cultural patterning of the society.

Such an approach will be presented in the following chapters. In Chapter Three, I will discuss selected cases of community conflict and in the following three chapters these cases will be analyzed in an attempt to approach a more dynamic view of Thai society. I shall call this the processual approach. For the moment, however, I am concerned with the problem of presenting the more traditional structural aspects of the society.

In this brief review of Changwat Town, we have considered what I have called the services performed by the community in which Changwat Town is seen as a center in a kind of network. That is, I have tried to point out what Changwat Town does for its inhabitants and how it links these inhabitants to others outside the province and inside the province. Next, I described a generalized model of the social system of the community as the inhabitants describe it. However, I have avoided discussing a very noticeable part of the community, the priesthood. While the priesthood is most noticeable in their saffron robes and the roofs of their temples, with bright colored tiles, standing out above the rooftops, the monks are strangely apart from the

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community. Nevertheless, no discussion of the social system of a Thai town can ignore them.

The Priesthood

One final subject on the question of the general social structure of Changwat Town should be discussed. As indicated above, a sizeable group of residents has not been included in our consideration of the social structure in the preceding section. This has been done advisedly. This group is the adult resident membership, including both the long term and short term personnel of the various²⁴ wats in town, that is, the monks, or Sangha.²⁵ These persons have been excluded from the analysis inasmuch as they are not considered part of the society in many respects by the Thai. Perhaps a more truthful reading of the social system would be that the institution of the temple and its associated personnel are in a somewhat higher, parallel but interpenetrating distribution to that of the other elements of the social system that is outlined in Figure 4 above.

The Sangha is apart in that the person who is a member of the temple is exclusively so and may not have other roles outside the institution of the wat. For example, a government officer might also be a merchant or a farmer, a father and husband, but the monk is excluded from filling these and most other positions. The occupational roles are mutually exclusive with that of the monk as are the family roles as well. These positions are denied the monk who, in fact, renounces the world for a life of meditation

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and service basically in the pursuit of his own salvation and in the reciprocation of obligations incurred by being born and raised by his family.

The local members of the Sangha are distinguished from the rest of the community by living within the well defined space of the wat ground, often surrounded by a fence or hedges, upon which are located the structures listed in note 24 above. Thus, the monks are physically separated from the community they serve while they are likewise set off in terms of the dress they wear and a number of other customs which distinguish between the layman and the leity. The thrust of these customs is to separate the world of the Sangha from that of the everyday secular world. The Buddhist religion calls for the members of the order to set an example for the leity in the proper manner of conduct, to sanctify the notable occasions of a human being's life throughout his existence in the world of the living, and to assist him in preparing himself for his next life through the process of making merit. Therefore, the monk contacts the lay person on numerous occasions but in ways which are often highly circumscribed by the nature of the ritual occasion.

This element of the relationship between the monkhood and the leity is important in ways not altogether easily understood by the members of western culture. Most simply expressed, we can distinguish, at least for analytical purposes, two social constructs in the Kingdom of Thailand.

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The first is a secular construct of power and occupational definition, in which the King, at least until the recent past, was the highest figure in the hierarchy. The other is a sacred construct based upon the attainment of merit in which the ultimate position in the earthly system is occupied by the King himself. Thus, the two constructs are united at the highest position in one person. The King is, then, a figure who is important in terms of both a temporal system of power and one of a magico-religious system. In fact, David Wilson (1962:87) finds that the Thai concept of kingship can be analyzed into four aspects. First, there is the ideal of the king as father of the people, second, the king as the "wheel-rolling" king or emperor, third, the god-king, and fourth, the splendid and majestic king of great power who is called "lord of the land."

The wheel-rolling king is the idea of the king as a virtuous king who upholds the kingly virtues, and rules through the observation of moral precepts only. The god-king concept is most closely related to the Hindu concept of the king as the reincarnation of a god. This has been carried over into Buddhist conceptions in the manner that various Buddhist kings claimed to be, not gods, but embryo Buddhas or Bhodisatva, that is, a person of such great merit that he is merely ". . . a stage, albeit a long one, short of Buddhahood, a Buddha-to-be, . . ." (Humphreys 1955:158).



The point to be made here is that Wilson's four analytical elements of the cultural conception of the king, while more numerous than the pair of constructs presented here, are quite similar to the concepts which underly the view of the society presented above. That is, the king is seen as occupying, in the role of the god-king, a religious and magical place in the society. This is reinforced by the concept of the virtuous king who performs within the set of expectations of the later Hinayana tradition. However, this later concept of the wheel-rolling king lies on a more ethical and abstract plane which, while it might appeal to a person long steeped in the traditions of Buddhism, is not as appealing to the peasantry as the awesome and terrifying reincarnation of an actual god.

The final characterization of the king as the lord of the land in which he symbolizes the very center and pinnacle of the society again reinforces the dual constructs which are capped by this single individual. It is this conception which marks the king as being of great power and authority. Wilson states:

Splendor and majesty were the primary qualities of the Thai throne in this sense. . . . Ordered by and serving to manifest the magical and religious character of the throne, the pomp and ceremony that filled the life of this distant and superhuman king comforted the popular mind with faith, awe, and wonder [1962:90].

Later in summarizing the position of the king Wilson states, "Splendid, mysterious, partaking of the

supernormal and the superhuman, final arbiter of life and property, the king was the nexus of society" (1962:91).

The point to be kept in mind is that the dual nature of the Thai world view into secular and sacred parts is postulated here for analytical convenience more than to hold that this is, indeed, exactly the way that the members of Thai society view their world. As for the position of the king in this argument, he is, then, the keystone of the two constructs through which they are maintained as integral within the society.

While, in theory, everyone occupies a position in both models, the most conspicuous and most highly organized parts of the sacred model are the Sangha. The Sangha interact with the rest of the society almost exclusively in terms of performing ritual of a supernatural nature, whether it be derived from Buddhist tradition or not, in support of the day to day requirements of the secular life. For instance, the usual procedure for opening a new office building, or starting a new business, or meeting the various crises of the life cycle is for one to invite monks to bless the establishment, business, people, etc. To this extent the Sangha enters into a wide variety of situations in the life of the people but the monks are excluded specifically from practicing any kind of business transaction, farming, even apparently from working directly with lay religious organizations. The purpose of the participation of the monks is to ensure the most favorable circumstances

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for let us say, a business, but there is no question of the monkhood interjecting themselves into running the business even in terms of the moral conduct of the business.

An example of the limited nature of the participation of the monkhood in secular matters is embodied in the events related to the initial steps in the formation of a chapter of the Young Buddhist Association in Changwat Town which took place just before the close of the field work reported herein. This organization is a national organization designed to promote Buddhism and its tenets among the young, to inculcate morality and good behaviour on the part of the youth, to guide youth in the proper use of their spare time, and to engage in social welfare work and public service (Wells 1960:261). The idea was initiated by the governor through calling a meeting to discuss such an organization. The Chief Abbot for the province as well as the Chief Abbot for the district were prominent members on the initial list of persons invited to discuss the development of the local chapter. When the writer inquired about the nature of their (the Abbots') role in the development of the constitution and the workings of the organization once it was formed, he was assured that they would have nothing to do with these questions beyond this initial meeting, nor would any other member of the Sangha, as such involvement would be most improper. The informant most strongly assured me that only laymen would work with this organization and that it would be most improper for the

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This illustration points out most precisely the circumscribed role of the Sangha in relation to secular matters. In the western world it is often the minister who is the prime mover for development of church related organizations and activities. To be sure, the minister does not do the work himself but rather delegates it to a lay group, but in the end he, by the nature of the organization, is most directly concerned. In Changwat Town it is considered improper that the Abbot be involved in such activities in any ways more than in the most indirect of fashions. In the illustration cited, the governor has taken the most initiative and appears to be the most involved at least in the initial phase.

It is true that in Bangkok, during the duration of the study, there was some inclination, on the part of persons in Bangkok involved with social issues, to see the Sangha as an important and neglected element in the community, and to attempt to involve them in the various projects and programs designed to develop the rural communities on a self help basis. Thus in early 1967, there were some training classes held in Ubol to familiarize the local members of the Sangha with the various programs being conducted in the Northeast for the purpose of social and economic development.

Writing at an earlier time, Wells, discussing the continuing development of Buddhist educational institutions,

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The establishment of two Buddhist universities to produce teachers, and the effort in 1960 to make more use in public schools of monks with teacher's certificates indicate a continuing expectation among lay men that monks participate in social concerns. The Sangha being large, there is room in its membership for both the activist and the aloof contemplative [1960:258].

The difficulty with this statement is that it refers to the traditional role previously played by monks in the society. Prior to the establishment of a national educational system (1898), the only established source of education was in the temple and it was not until 1921 that a compulsory school law was passed requiring the attendance of students between the ages of seven and fourteen. During this time, the period 1921-1931, a large majority, over 70%, of the schools were conducted on temple grounds and with large numbers of monks doing the teaching (Wells 1960:18-19). However, the present concern of the Young Buddhist Association as outlined above and the training classes in Ubol go considerably beyond the traditional role of the monks in receiving pupils on the wat grounds for the purpose of training them in the rudiments of reading, writing, arithmetic and religious instruction. Also, those (both Thai and foreigners) who would wish to see the Sangha involved in community development and other activities do so for the much more conscious goal of bringing about the material development of the country, and often they associate development with the idea of preventing the spread of communism (Niehoff 1964).



This principal of the monk leaving the wat in order to become involved in the social and economic betterment activities taking place in the wider community is not acceptable to the majority of the members of the elite of Changwat Town as either wise or desirable. Only in regard to the question of helping resist the spread of communism, might they accede to such involvement of the Sangha.

But while Buddhist values are agreed to as most proper and right, most of the members of the community would feel it quite unusual and unwarranted for the Sangha to try to interject themselves into the ongoing activities of the community. Unless a priest were asked specifically by a person for his ideas on a certain set of events, he should not point out how such activities might disregard Buddhist teachings.

In summary, the Sangha has been excluded from Figure 4 and from consideration as part of the community in any real fashion because they themselves are excluded from most secular affairs by the community itself except in a very special manner. One should, however, emphasize that the Sangha and its teachings are generally held in very high regard by the members of Thai society for the very reason that they have successfully transcended the mundane world in many ways, and their teachings are an intimate part of the Thai because of the many occasions both great and small in which the monks enter the life of the average Thai. So, while the monkhood is separate from the community in terms



of worldly affairs, it is, on the other hand, an essential part of the total structure of society and interpenetrates the system thoroughly.

CHANGWAT TOWN--A PICTURE

As a final facet of the description of Changwat Town, it is informative to have some of the general flavor of life particularly as it is carried out in the market area.

As indicated earlier, Changwat Town has a residential area merging into farm land at the edges of the nucleated area of the community. As one proceeds towards the geographical center of the town, one moves along one of the many dirt roads or trails, or occasionally on one of the few paved roads of the town, past the homes of the townspeople. In much of the residential area, the homes are quite similar to those found in any typical village. That is, the homes are on posts six or seven feet above the ground. Usually the homes have numerous trees and bushes surrounding them, providing them with shade, and often screening them from the road and neighbors. The homes, it is true, are often much more substantially built than the village home, but their basic plan--a large rectangular platform built on stilts with a roof covering much of it, walls on one long side and the two ends which meet a wall running the length of the platform slightly beyond the midline of the transverse axis making a long rectangular room enclosing slightly more than half the platform and leaving the rest to act as a veranda and living space--is the same.

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Along the paved roads and in the more substantial neighborhoods there begin to appear buildings of one or two stories built on thick concrete slabs resting on the ground. Usually these buildings have a wooden frame but some may have a concrete framework with brick walls on the first floor and a wooden frame second floor. Some of the more expensive homes are completely of concrete. These buildings are more characteristic of the business or professional families. In the residential areas the latter type of building is not numerous, so these areas appear very much the same as those in a village of comparable wealth.

Most house plots even add to the rural-like character of the setting by having a pigpen and chicken coops under or behind the house. Thus, while the husband might be a government school teacher who goes to work with a necktie, white shirt, dark slacks, and leather shoes (often without hose), the wife stays at home dressed in the traditional village paasin (the Thai ankle-length skirt) and blouse feeding the pigs and chickens.

When we reach the commercial or government areas of town we find the people engaged in business and government activities dressed in western clothes (except for the women in the shops who tend to wear the more traditional dress, either Thai style or, more often, the white blouse and black silk pajama type pants of the Chinese woman) and appearing, in their slacks and sport shirt or government uniform, much like any person of comparable occupation in a western

society.

While the transition from the residential area to the commercial or governmental area of the town is easily enough made, the contrast is remarkably sharp. For, from the sleepy suburbs which follow the rhythm of village life, we move into areas geared to the pace of the modern world. In this limited space of a few blocks we find reflected for us the very contrasts which so clearly mark the route of developing nations in the twentieth century. However interesting the suburban section of town and the people who live here might be, it is the commercial and governmental sectors of the community that I have chosen as the concern of this work.

In Changwat Town, the preponderance of the commercial population of the town is considered by townsmen and villagers to be ethnically Chinese. That is, while people engaged in trade, particularly as shopkeepers, are often Thai either by birth or naturalization, they have most frequently descended from Chinese immigrants at some time in the not too distant past and their fellow townsmen continue to regard them as Chinese.

It is true that there are a number of petty traders in the "fresh" market who are considered to be completely Thai in their ethnic origin, but they are of relatively little importance for the business community. They are not unlike the petty traders of the pasar described by Geertz in Peddlers and Princes (1963). That is, they are people of



limited capital who sell in the marketplace along with a number of other similarly poorly capitalized traders. They usually sell one or a few types of items and some even sell their products along side the market building in the open, either on the sidewalk or in a little bare muddy plot of ground adjacent to the building in the back. Such sellers are the poorest of the vendors and often come from the villages rather than the local community. These sellers are mostly, though not entirely, of Thai ethnic origin.

The reason for the correlation between size of trades and ethnicity is relatively easy to state. The Chinese have traditionally been tradesmen in Thailand and now Chinese immigration has been severely limited since the Communists came to power on the mainland of China, and particularly since the early 1950's (See Coughlin 1960 and Skinner 1957). As the economy of Changwat Province developed over the years the group of traders initially filling the small trader niche rose to engage in more important business activity in the community; the major source of recruits for the petty trader position became the native born Northeasterner or an occasional offspring of a Chinese commercial family. In the latter case, this person fills a position which requires more capital. Such a person might become a pork seller, who is required to pay a higher rent for a larger space in the market and, more importantly, who must pay out a larger sum for purchase of his stock, in this case the slaughtered animal.

Of greater importance for our study is the area around the fresh market which, as mentioned before, is simply called the market. In this area, covering some five blocks of the town, is concentrated the majority of shops and homes of the economic elite of the community. Here, in a series of narrow store front homes, are located the important business people of the community.

Some stores are wooden frame, single story buildings built on a concrete foundation generally with another building located in the back which serves as the home. Sometimes wooden buildings may be two story but generally the two story buildings in the commercial area of town are made of reinforced concrete construction in which case they may be multi-story or they may have a concrete lower floor with a wooden structure for the second floor. In all cases the lots on which they are built are narrow and relatively deep. Generally a store is built on a base comprising fifteen foot modules. The majority of the stores have fifteen foot frontage on the street with a lot approximately sixty feet in depth. Many lots are deeper and, of course, some are less deep. If a larger store is desired, and there are several such stores, then two or more lots are put together so that the store might be thirty feet, or, perhaps, forty-five feet wide.

The town streets are narrow, slightly more than two motor cars wide with parking lanes bounded by a rather deep brick and cement lined ditch. This ditch, which is covered



by boards or small cement slabs, accomodates house drainage and rain runoff. This ditch may carry some sewage, but the latter more generally runs into individual, closed septic tanks maintained for each home. The street is bounded by a narrow sidewalk, formed partly by the drain cover, which is generally obstructed by various objects and people, e.g. motor bicycles, bicycles, chairs, children's toys, merchandise, babies, and children. Sometimes there is an awning suspended over the sidewalk from an overhanging eave. This awning is a split bamboo or canvas curtain which is rolled up when not in use. If cloth, it is used for advertising and has a message painted on it. The bottom edge of such a curtain is attached to a large diameter section of bamboo which is quite heavy and weights the curtain. This also impedes use of the sidewalk, for should a person walk into it, it can give one quite a bump on the head. Beyond the sidewalk comes the store front itself, which is just a room with a removable front wall of either wood or collapsable steel grating. The front wall is kept open during business hours and closed at other times. Should the store be closed but the family not yet retired, the door will be left slightly open so callers might have access to the living quarters located at the rear or on the floor above.

Because of the various impediments, few pedestrians use the sidewalks even if they want to. Instead, people move in the streets, either on foot or by samlor, a peddle operated tricycle which is also used for transporting



goods.²⁶ Besides samlor, there is a multitude of bicycles, and a rapidly increasing number of motor bicycles with the Honda 65's and 90's predominating amongst this class of transport.

There are various small cars in town, generally of Japanese make with a few European types as well. There are also seven or eight Mercedes Benzes in Changwat Town. However, the automobile population is greatly outnumbered by a variety of small and large trucks. The smaller trucks are Jeeps, both military and commercial types, Land Rovers, Toyotas and a number of former military 3/4 ton Dodge trucks. The larger trucks are almost entirely Izzuzu, diesel engined, 2 1/2 ton trucks.

All of this pedestrian-vehicular traffic competes for street space which is won in accordance with two rules; first, the person or object in the space first has the right to it; second, the larger and more dangerous object has the right of way over the smaller and less dangerous. There are two general values in the game which effect the players. They are: one, that players should move as fast as possible, except for pedestrians, and, two, that players should not kill or injure each other. The goal of the game is to get to one's destination as fast as possible. The strategy of the game, then, is to move into any open space before anyone else and to do so with little regard for whom- ever else might want to occupy the same space, unless the other is a larger vehicle, particularly a truck. "Right

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of way" rules prevail for occupying open spaces.

With the rules of competition in mind, a street scene in Changwat Town should be easy enough to imagine. In the narrowest areas, traffic will be very slow moving and generally blocked by parked vehicles of all sorts and pedestrians walking slowly. However, should there be the least bit of space open, say for 20 or 30 feet, there will be an immediate increase in speed by all players except pedestrians, led by the largest trucks. In such a case, pedestrians generally move somewhat rapidly to the side of the road. If this description stresses the dangerous aspects of a street scene, one must say that is is one of activity and whatever dangers are inherent in it seem to be borne lightly by the players who can rarely be seen to express anger. Surprisingly, there are not the number of accidents that one would predict. The rules are clear enough and if one plays according to them, then, one is likely to minimize the dangers for oneself. In short a street scene in Changwat Town is generally active, not too crowded, and full of interest.

Inside, the stores contain whatever fixtures are necessary for the conduct of business: booths, tables and chairs, counters, bins, shelves, etc. There is a partition at the back of the store beyond which is storage space, and, perhaps, someone will sleep in this area as well. If the merchant is wealthy, the dwelling will be located behind the store building separated from it by a

cement courtyard. In the patio, one can find some potted plants, a well, though this is usually unused now that there is a municipal water system, and perhaps a tree and some flowers planted in an open spot. If the merchant is less wealthy he may, instead, live on the floor above the store or even just behind the store in the storage area. In the case of the poorer merchant, there won't even be a garden connected with his store.

I will now give a brief description of a day in a merchant family's life. Within the store and its adjacent quarters, the storekeeper and his family work and live out their lives. Generally, a store is operated by a nuclear family, that is, usually an active male, his wife, and their unmarried children. Occasionally, there are older males or females, a grandfather or aunt, for instance, but these individuals stay in the background as do the younger children. Teen aged children are more in evidence, usually helping out in the operation of the store.

The shop is the center of the lives of its inhabitants and the rhythm of life is set in response to those of the marketplace and the customers who compose the clientele of the shop.

Usually the shop opens early in the morning, so that one can make transactions as early as 7:30 in the morning. Often the wife, accompanied by a daughter or a maid, will go to the fresh market in order to do the morning shopping which will include buying the foods necessary to prepare

the day's meals. Since there is little refrigeration in the home--the wealthy merchant will have an Italian or Japanese electric refrigerator but the poorer merchant will have only an icebox or nothing at all--and none in the market, there is a need to make purchases daily. In any case, the chance to go to market is an opportunity to exchange some gossip and to see friends, for the market is crowded with people. One may buy meat, fish, vegetables, fruits, spices, staples, flowers, and various kinds of prepared foods and condiments. Also, the housewife may wish to buy some article of clothing, a small kitchen utensil, or a child's toy; all of these items can be purchased in the fresh market as well.

By the time this shopping is taken care of and the wife returned, the store is open for business. On her return she will be concerned with preparing the food for the late morning meal but she is also likely to be required to mind the store as well, for her husband is likely to have gone out for coffee at a local coffee shop. Here the husband visits for an hour or so exchanging gossip and ideas about local and even national happenings. In the coffee shop are one or more newspapers subscribed to by the owner, and the news and stories reported in the paper are often the topic of conversations. These coffee shops have their standard clientele and often vary by the language spoken in them. Usually, either Chinese, teochiu is the most numerous dialect of Chinese in Changwat Town, or

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pasa Isan is spoken. Appropriately in the coffee shops in which Chinese is spoken, both Chinese language and Thai language newspapers are available. The shop owner will return to his business by about 9:00 and his working day will continue until seven or eight in the evening. However, if the business day is long, the shop owner is often away from his store, and his wife, a teen aged child, or another adult will take over the chore of minding the store.

While the husband is having his breakfast and conversation with fellow merchants his children are preparing to go to school. For girls this means that they put on their uniform of a white blouse and royal blue skirt. The boys wear a white shirt and royal blue shorts or long pants. One day a week the boys wear the uniform of the Boy Scouts (called Luk Sua or Tiger Cubs) to class. When the children set out to class, the younger children often walk but the more wealthy parents have the younger children driven to class in a samlor. Older children ride their bicycles and those of wealthy parents ride Honda motor bicycles. Certainly this is one of the more obvious examples of conspicuous consumption in the community, for there is only one school which is more distant than a mile from any of the central business areas.

Often, there are special rituals, such as those connected with births, marriages, and death, to be performed in the life cycle of a household in Thai culture. These rituals are carried out in the context of a social gathering made up not only of the household concerned but also of the

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friends, neighbors, and relatives of the household members. It is not uncommon for the members of a household to be invited to participate in the ceremonial occasions of others. Most often these rituals are concerned with blessings or prayers offered by monks in the household. A certain number of monks, depending upon the occasion, are invited, and, as a kind of reciprocation of their goodwill in coming, the hosts and guests feed the monks. After the monks have left, the guests who have assisted and participated in the ceremonies also eat. Thus, we might find the storekeeper and his wife invited to attend such a ritual on this day. Early in the morning, after the wife has taken care of her shopping, she will go to the host's house, taking with her some freshly cooked rice, where she will actively engage in assisting the other women of the household in preparing for the occasion, usually by helping make food and decorations. Later on, the husbands of the invited families will arrive in order to participate in the formal activities of the ritual. After the monks have departed and the guests eaten--the men and women will have eaten separately--the storekeeper will depart separately from his wife.

Such rituals take place in the morning, because the monks are not allowed to eat in the afternoon. Thus by noon, the adult members of the family are back at the store. In the afternoon the merchant will attend to business at his store or, if required, will call upon other merchants. If he must go out his wife will again mind the

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store; however, this is a time that wives often call upon one another. Business is usually slow, as this is a time when people often nap or rest during the heat of the day. In the afternoon the children return home from school to help in the household and to do their schoolwork. By the late afternoon there is some increase in activity in the store, for government workers and others come into town to shop for various items. Usually, the business day is finished by nightfall and the shops, with the exception of restaurants, and other places of entertainment, are closed. This means the steel grates or wooden slates that cover the front are put into place with the exception of a space left open for visitors who might come to call.

After the early evening meal, the members of the family might visit their various friends, they might go to a motion picture show, often accompanied by their friends rather than going as a family or a couple, or, as so often happens, there might be a son-lieng at the Hall Prachum. In this case, the merchant will attend the banquet, perhaps accompanied by his wife but not necessarily.

While the above is only a brief description of the daily activity of a merchant and his family, one can understand that there is a considerable emphasis upon the needs of the business which is so central to the lives of the merchant and his family. During working hours, the businessman and his wife are not far from the business itself. The merchant's singleness of purpose is very prominent and

his lack of outside interests are also associated with the emphasis on business activity. I should note here that this concentration on his business activities and the relatively narrow range of his interests make the cases which will be discussed in the next chapter all the more compelling for him, not only because of the inherent interest in the actions of other businessmen, but also because these cases involve events which are within this restricted focus of his daily activities.

Another point that stands out clearly in the description above is the nature of the independent character of the action of the husband and wife. Thus, they go much their own way because of the high degree of sexual division of activities. The very clear exception is the operation of the store in which the husband and wife work in close concert, and the wife appears to be very much the equal of the husband in making decisions, at least about the retail operation of the store. In fact, the wife seems to be a somewhat harder bargainer than the husband. The husband is usually willing to lower his price slightly to meet a customer's request for a more favorable price, but a woman shopkeeper is rarely willing to do this.

Finally, as indicated earlier, the shopkeepers are usually described by local inhabitants as being of Chinese ethnic origin. There are a few Thai exceptions to this pattern but they are economically unimportant. Also, there are a few ethnically Vietnamese merchants, but once again



they are, with the exception of the two leading photographers, relatively small merchants. There are also three Indian merchants in town, of whom, two are quite successful.

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CHAPTER THREE

FOUR CASES OF CONFRONTATION

In this chapter I will present four cases of confrontation as the basic data for an analysis of the nature of the political dynamics of a Thai provincial business elite. Until now, I have concentrated on presenting background material helpful for placing in perspective and understanding the cases which will be presented in this chapter. The preceding discussion was necessarily static, but now I shall attempt to present data which will provide life, action, and perhaps a bit of drama. If the preceding has been merely setting a stage, then I hope that what is to follow will put into motion, at least some of the actors that the stage setting has led the reader to expect.

Not only is this chapter designed to present a human drama, it is designed to present case material which, through its analysis, will add to the discipline of anthropology. Therefore, I will present in some detail four cases of what may provisionally be called factional conflict--although the first case might not be strictly a case of factional conflict, it arises in part from the other factional conflicts described later--in which a

small number of businessmen attempt to shape events in such a manner as to affect both their own private interests and the public scene. The end that I hope to achieve is to see whether this data will test and perhaps enhance existing theory. Therefore, in the chapters to follow I will consider the accounts to be given shortly to see whether they will yield to the processual analysis developed by Swartz and others (see Introduction and Chapter Four); whether they, and some additional data to be presented in Chapter Five, can perhaps be turned to the long standing controversy of the structural looseness of Thai society; and, finally, in Chapter Six, whether they can add to our understanding of factions.

The first case to be discussed will be the one which was briefly given in the introduction. The next case will concern the dispute of two groups over the control of two new public market places which had recently been built in Changwat Town. The third case of conflict surrounds competition in the sale of ice. Finally, the fourth case revolves around the possible centralization and control of local bus lines in the community.

A BREACH OF ETIQUETTE

An indication of the nature of the problems which occur in Changwat Town and which we will discuss in future parts of this work can be conveyed by a relatively brief case.²⁷ For the purpose of helping to make the material



presented below clear, the following is presented:

Dramatis Personae

The community development officer	Khun Choie
The chief of police of Amphur Mueng	Major Satien
The leader of the malcontents (as indicated by Major Satien)	Khun Keo
The leader's first younger brother	Khun Silor
The leader's younger brother-in-law	Khun Ma Tao
The factory manager's son	Khun Yai

We start at the Hall Prachum,²⁸ which is a large rectangular hall oriented in an east-west direction with a stage across the west end of the hall and a slightly elevated floor at the east end. This allows the room to be used as a meeting hall, banquet hall, or auditorium.

It is the custom of Changwat Province officials to honor high ranking government officers on their departure for new assignments with a banquet (kin lieng or son lieng). Sometimes important community members may also be honored in this fashion. These banquets usually require the presence of or a contribution from each official in the provincial government, and both contributions from and the presence of important persons in the community. Generally there is a preponderance of men at the banquets. Among the government officials, at least one person from each office is expected to go as are the higher ranking officers and their wives. The dinner consists of several courses, catered by a local Chinese restaurant, accompanied by drinks. There is often entertainment consisting of singing



and dancing, usually organized and presented on stage by the local school teachers, younger office staff members, or students. After the dinner, there is a speech by the governor or his deputy in which the guest of honor is praised and thanked for his work in the province, and at the end of which he is presented a gift. He then responds with a speech in which he thanks the people present and speaks encouragingly to the guests and wishes them well. People are very appreciative of good speeches, and yet there is always the rumble of conversation from the back tables where the persons who drink more heavily are seated, and who, being further from the governor and their own supervisors, feel freer to converse. After the speeches there is dancing of both western and Thai, modern and traditional dances. When the dancing starts, a large number of the persons feel free to leave.

On the occasion of the banquet honoring the provincial community development officer and the chief of police of Amphur Mueng (therefore, also the Changwat Town municipal chief of police),²⁹ there was a considerable break in the etiquette of such gatherings. The provincial community development officer had, in response to his gift, given the usual speech in which the expected niceties were observed. The only notable inclusion was his wish that there would come a day in the future when persons would be judged upon their total qualities of humanity rather than some arbitrary and remote system of performance--he was



being demoted and transferred to a less important position in a less desirable province.

The police chief, however, started his valedictory speech far from the usual form. He warned those present that they should not believe rumors that someone or some group of persons (one could easily judge that he meant Khun Keo and his group) in town were having him transferred. Quite the opposite, he had requested his transfer because he was prevented from doing his job due to intervention from above. This intervention had not permitted him to arrest certain malcontents in the community who were engaging in illegal and trouble making activities in general. According to the police chief, it was this group which was causing the trouble in the community; if they were arrested and properly dealt with, Changwat Town would be a law abiding community. Since he could not effectively carry out his job, he requested the transfer but he would remember the community. He would appreciate returning as the provincial chief of police, so he could carry forward the necessary police work as required by law.

Needless to say, there was very little talk during the Major's speech. There was, however, some applause and one of the more vociferous opponents of Khun Keo, being more interested, shouted his encouragement during one place in the speech.

There was no question what group the police chief was referring to even though he did not refer to anyone by name.



Obviously, Khun Keo and his associates, particularly Khun Yai and the junior brother-in-law of Khun Keo, who operates the illegal gambling casino in town, were the ones that the police chief had in mind. In fact, Khun Keo seemed to think this himself as he filed a lawsuit against the Major for defamation of character.

The above case is extreme in the public expression of Major Satien's dissatisfaction with his superiors, his open airing of community problems, and the expression of these sentiments with the full knowledge that foreigners were present at his address. More important, because it is more fundamental from a cultural sense, is that Major Satien violated a major value of Thai society. This value has been discussed by Phillips (1965:66) under the concept that politeness may be viewed as a social cosmetic. Thus, Phillips discusses the Thai use of the cosmetic of politeness as occurring in a variety of forms, and he goes on to state,

The term "social cosmetic" is used here because it embraces at one time all these varying usages. A cosmetic not only makes one appear more attractive and conceals one's blemishes, real or imagined, but permits one to deal with others more easily and comfortably. . . . Thus, although politeness is aimed at keeping social relationships smooth and uncomplicated, it frequently results in a lack of spontaneity and in the inhibition of genuine feelings. A cosmetic is supposed to enhance one's natural qualities, but inevitably it also conceals them [1965:66-67].

In a further passage, Phillips goes on to discuss some of the behavioral features characteristic of the cosmetic user, when he states:



The avoidance of embarrassing topics--even when the airing of such topics may be crucially important or beneficial to one of the parties concerned--is one of the most pronounced facets of village social life. To a Westerner accustomed to outspokenness, the types of situations that villagers define as embarrassing and the lengths to which they will go to avoid them sometimes appear to border on the sado-masochistic [1965:69].

In Phillips' data developed from the administration of a sentence completion test, we find statistical verification of the more generalized characterization in the quotation above. Thus, Phillips reports the following responses to questions designed to elicit data on the Thai response to aggression:

The overwhelming response of the villagers to both experiences is to avoid action and to respond internally with emotion and feeling. This is the response of 66 percent of the sample to "When people annoy me, I . . ." and 69 percent to "When he insulted me, I . . ." Even when villagers do act out their responses in behavior it is mainly to flee, avoid, or get away from the annoyance (20 percent) or to improve themselves in order not to merit the insult (14 percent). . . . Only three villagers indicate any propensity to retaliate against others (and, by definition, deal with them directly and overtly: they scold their annoyers) while another three, in inimitable Thai fashion, hedge their retaliations with conditions, or phrase them as intentions ("I would scold them if I could"; "I would like to rail at them, but I am not sure I can.") [1965:190-191].

It should now be apparent how enormous a transgression the Major made in his speech.³⁰ The Thai response to aggression is to withdraw, to remain passive, not to respond openly. But in the Major's case, in response to the aggressive and self-aggrandizing rumors, spread apparently by Khun Keo, Major Satien spoke publicly about his "feelings from his heart." This was a major insult which could



not be avoided. It had to be responded to and, indeed, it was. Almost immediately Khun Keo filed his lawsuit.

With this case, we can begin to see the situation which prevails in Changwat Town. On its exterior surface we see a town which is changing slowly along with the developments of the region, but which gives one the impression of a somnolent community oblivious to much that is going on around it. However, when one observes the behavior of the members of the community, one begins to note that there is an active pace of life indeed, and some members of the community are very alert to the opportunities for enhancing their own or the community's wealth, to events within the political, administrative structure which allows one to benefit in some manner, and to the events which are occurring within the region of Southeast Asia which could have crucial effects upon their lives and those of their countrymen.

The Major's speech gives us some data about the type of person mentioned above. The illegal events of which he spoke were illegal gambling, an activity well known throughout Thailand. The rumors of which he spoke were spread by Khun Keo to project his image as one who can control the transfer of government officials who do not play ball with him. Major Satien had staged two or more unsuccessful raids on the gambling casino — the owner of which is Khun Keo's younger brother-in-law, Khun Ma Tao noted on page 108. All of this indicates a considerable

sophistication on the part of Khun Keo in manipulating his image in terms of events, which if we believe Major Satien, are fortuitous. Or, if the rumors are closer to the truth, we see a man who is able to influence police decisions on at least the regional level³¹ if not the national level.

With the case of the Major's farewell in mind, the stage has been set, some of the cast of characters introduced, and the curtain raised upon a community within whose boundaries a play will run its course, a play in which actions, dialogue and sound effects are often concealed or muted, but are, none the less, real and full of passion.

With the above material and that which will be presented below, we are lead inexorably to ask such questions as: "What is the nature of the leadership of Changwat Town?", "What are the goals they wish to achieve for themselves and for the larger community (if any)?", "What is the nature of the relationship of government officials to the community leadership?", "What are the processes by which the system of Changwat Town operates?", and "What are the implications of the data that will be developed for Thai studies and for anthropology in general?"

A CONFRONTATION OVER MARKETS

In the forthcoming sections of this chapter will be presented some more detailed cases of the operation of the administrative system and the attempts to control it for the purpose of effective political action by members of the

local community. The purpose of this chapter will be to consider the question of local level control of a centralized state organization.

The question, then, is whether there is possible in a system of centralized administration an effective means of realizing the aspiration of some or all of the local population. In order to consider this question, certain cases of political dispute among the business leadership of the community will be presented.

Dramatis Personae

Khnum Sai (first group)

Leader of Khnum Sai	Khun Keo
Khun Keo's next younger brother	Khun Silor
Khun Keo's youngest brother	Khun Sanit
Khun Keo's older brother-in-law	Khun Achan
Khun Keo's younger brother-in-law	Khun Ma Tao
The factory manager's son	Khun Yai

Khnum Khwa (second group)

Leader of Khnum Khwa	Khun Khao
Owner of a rice mill	Khun Thong
His brother-in-law, a navy captain	Khun Thahan
Local branch manager of the City Bank	Khun Thong Daeng
Lawyer for Khnum Khwa	Khun Rongrem
Local branch manager of the Country Bank	Khun Chang

To come to the case of our merchants, when I arrived in the community I observed that next to the bus station,



which is located in the southwestern part of town, there was a market building, henceforth the western market, standing vacant except for a few people who would rest in its shade or sleep there at night if they did not have another place to sleep. A little to the east of the main section of town, the writer discovered another newer market, which shall be called the eastern market, equally vacant. At the same time, in the center of the city the only fresh market operating was much too small and overcrowded. These two expensive, spacious, vacant monuments (the eastern and western markets) symbolized a division in the commercial sector of the town that is long standing and of dramatic impact upon community politics in this non-political state.

Initially, it was not clear exactly what the vacant market structures meant for everything about them required questions and explanations in order to understand their meanings. But as the story came to light, one could make out that there was, in fact, real importance in them. As the story unraveled, it appeared that all three markets were owned by the municipality, but the eastern market, which at the beginning of my study had not yet been completed, was to be operated by a concessionaire upon completion. Of the two completed markets, the newer western market was built in Buddhist Era 2506 (1963 A.D.). Upon completion of the new building, the municipality, attempting to operate it as the sole fresh market for the town,



closed down the central market. However, this attempt was short lived as the sellers and buyers returned to the old market. The western market was soon deserted and, two years later, stood vacant as described above. The municipality had been unable to force the population to switch to the new market even though both markets belonged to it. The city government had bowed to the desires of both the buyers and sellers and reopened the old market. No attempt was made to operate the western market simultaneously with the old.

The immediate impact of this series of events was that a considerable investment of government money was made with no return. Further, certain actions were taken by individuals in the community in expectation that the western market would attract increased commercial activity to its part of town, and they made plans to develop the land around the market for shops and a new movie theater to accommodate this increased demand and to profit thereby. These hopes were frustrated by the market failure. To fully understand the importance of these frustrations, one needs to know some of the history of the western and eastern markets, and their relation to one another and to the central market.

Some two or more years prior to the building of the western market, the question was raised about the inadequacy of the central market and the need for a newer facility. Two different groups of people put before the



sapha tessaban (the municipal council) two proposals for the building of a new market at two different sites in town. These proposed sites were the exact sites upon which the present markets were constructed. The two groups each offered to give, at no cost to the municipality, land to be used for the market site. Each group, however, owned an even larger amount of land around the market site offered, and they planned, therefore, to benefit by the increased value which the building of the market would impart to the area.

It should be noted that while the development of Changwat Town has gone on steadily and there are several families who own either ice boxes or refrigerators, the basic pattern of shopping is a daily trip to the fresh market for one's perishable supplies such as meats, fruits, and vegetables. Furthermore, since the availability of fresh market commodities and their prices are so variable from day to day, housewives find it necessary to shop daily in order to ensure that they have adequate variety in their diet and to do so economically. One can see that it is economically beneficial to have a store near the fresh market, for such a location means that a very large percentage of the Changwat Town's household shoppers will pass by one's store during the day.

Likewise, one can easily understand the interest of each group to have a fresh market built on its land. In the end, the municipality agreed to build fresh markets on

both pieces of land. First, a sum of money was requested from Bangkok in order to fund the construction of the western market.³² At that time, money was not requested for the eastern market.

It is not entirely clear why the western market was funded first, but some informants claimed that Khun Keo, the leader of the group which proposed the western market, used undo influence with the local authorities. Whatever the cause, the western market was built and the attempt was made to operate it, as described above.

Meanwhile, the city went ahead with the eastern market, but, instead of requesting funds from Bangkok to construct it, the sapha tessaban went ahead with building the market from the normal budget. Lacking adequate finances, the quality of the materials for the building was very poor. Khun Khao, the leader of this group, refused to permit the city to build these "chicken coops," as he called them. However, the municipality clearly did not have enough money to build a concrete building similar to the western market. The reason, apparently, was that it would have been impossible to request an additional allocation of funds from the Department of Local Administration for two similar projects in such a small town.

Khun Thong (on whose land the eastern market was being built) and Khun Khao and his supporters countered that they would be willing to build the market and give it to the municipality providing they could manage it for a token



rental payment for a period of ten years as a means of realizing their investment. This approach appeared to be a satisfactory method for getting a market of sufficient standard to satisfy both parties (Khun Khao's group and the municipality), so a contract was made to this effect between the municipality and the land owners.

In the meantime, the western market, which was built on the Khrum Sai's former land, was completed and the events mentioned above ensued with the result that it stood empty in its allotted space. The leader of the Khrum Sai, was understandably concerned with the fortunes of this market. He proposed to the sapha tessaban that he be permitted to manage the market on a long term contract to the municipality. It appears that this proposal was satisfactory to the council and the mayor, and the proposal was forwarded to the governor for transmittal and approval in Bangkok. However, this approval was not immediately forthcoming--this amounted to a wait of one year to two years. In fact, Khun Keo claims it was held on the desk of the then governor until the new one was appointed. As it turns out, it was not until the new governor was appointed and took office that the question of bidding for management of the western market was seriously raised.

Before the end of B. E. 2508 (1965), the eastern market had been finished but it was not at first able to operate because there were not adequate roads to the market. The Khrum Khwa argued that this was the responsi-

bility of the municipality. In the end, the Khrum Khwa had to put in these improvements as well, because there were insufficient funds in the municipality to cover these costs, and it would be impossible to operate a market without them. When the roads were completed, the Khrum Sai, angered by the belief that the Khrum Khwa was preventing government action on their request to manage the western market, charged that the eastern market did not have adequate drainage. This resulted in an investigation by the provincial public health officer who reported favorably for the market, but he indicated some further drainage had to be installed. When this was completed, once again at the Khrum Khwa's expense, the market stood ready to be inaugurated in late B. E. 2509 (1966). Somewhat prior to this time, in the fall of the same year, B. E. 2509, the question of calling for bids on the western market had been granted, and was ready to be acted upon by the municipality. At this point, the government officials and others who had knowledge of the question were agreed in stating that all the parties to the dispute had compromised on a formula to let the Khrum Sai win the bid for "its" market, the western market, and that the Khrum Khwa would, of course, by the terms of its contract manage "its" market. In fact, Khun Khao, unhappy because of the complaint about drainage facilities, submitted a bid for the management of the western market which was higher than the Khrum Sai's bid. This so angered Khun Keo that he vowed



that the Khrum Khwa would never be allowed to open "its" market.

Because of the bad feelings between the two groups, municipal officials worked out a compromise in which the bids were invalidated and new bids called for. In this situation, the Khrum Khwa allowed the Khrum Sai to win by submitting a very low bid. Upon winning, the Khrum Sai opened its market immediately. However, the leader of the Khrum Sai was not mollified. Still claiming that he had been unjustly treated by Khun Khao, he complained to the mayor and the governor, which ultimately involved the Department of Local Administration in Bangkok, that the contract between the municipality of Changwat Town and the Khrum Khwa was illegal.

This forced a suspension of local government activities to compromise the problems between the two groups until the central government could investigate this charge. The result of the investigation was a decision that the eastern market also had to be put up for competitive bidding; whereupon, the Khrum Khwa called for compensation for their investment should they not win the bid. Their claim was for 1 million Baht or \$50,000 (20 Baht = 1 dollar U. S.).

Khun Keo now protested the value placed on this market by the Khrum Khwa by complaining that the western market was constructed of concrete while the eastern market was only made of wood with a concrete floor and yet the values



claimed were equal. This protest was lodged first with the municipal government, but, when they judged that the value was fair, a complaint was lodged with the Department of Local Administration in Bangkok, and a committee was sent to appraise the value of the market. The Bangkok committee likewise decided in favor of the 1 million Baht figure. Finally when all of the legal machinery had been exhausted, the municipality was able to proceed with the process of calling for competitive bidding for the eastern market. It was a foregone conclusion that no one else locally could win the bid except the market's builders as another winner would have to pay the full value of the market to the Khrum Khwa shortly after winning the bid. The Khrum Sai was particularly unable to compete in this bidding because of the capital return provisions of the contract.

The final result of the entire process described above is that, at the end of several years, the Khrum Sai has a long term contract to manage the market located on land donated by it to the municipality, and, likewise, the Khrum Khwa manages the market built on its former land. However, there is much more than this to the struggle outlined above, for it was conducted with vigor by both groups of antagonists and it is clear that the Khrum Sai was intent upon the economic destruction of the Khrum Khwa, and, if the Khrum Khwa was less sanguinary, it was by very little.

Before going on to a consideration of my third case,



I would like to pause and focus our attention on the personnel involved in the two cases described above. Next, I will present a brief analysis of these cases, reserving the more detailed analysis for the three following chapters, and then I will return to a presentation of further case materials.

In order to analyze these cases even briefly, I believe that it will be helpful to discuss the persons involved in the events described. We now have two cases with many of the same personnel, so let us turn to a consideration of the groups and the relationship of the persons within them (also see page 167 below for some biographical information about Khun Keo and Khun Khao).

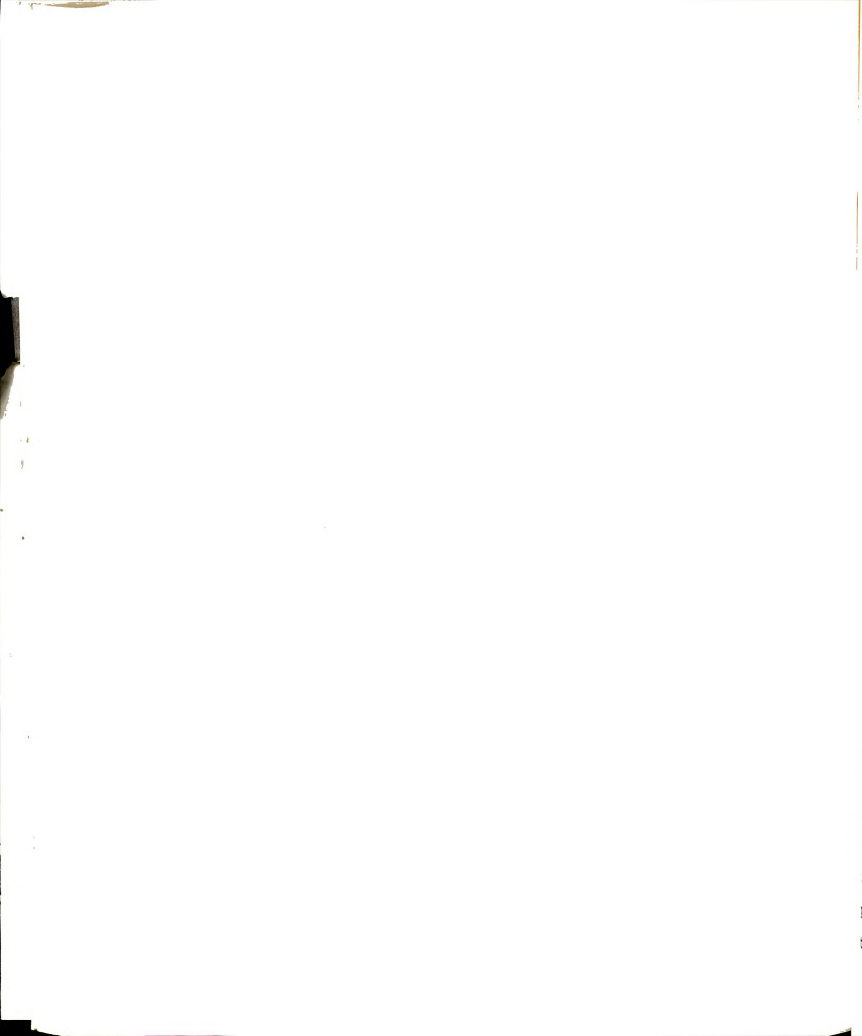
In the Khrum Sai, Khun Keo, the leader, is a native born Chinese who subsequently became a naturalized Thai citizen. He is generally aligned with his two younger brothers who are both native born Thais, although they, like most businessmen, are considered Chinese. The middle brother, Khun Silor, is in his late 30's and manages the bus station in Changwat Town next to which is located the western market and the ice plant. The youngest brother, Khun Sanit, is the manager of the local office of an insurance company and a hotel in which the office of the insurance company is located. The hotel is leased from another family which is not actively engaged in the market case. Another member of the group is Khun Ma Tao whose older sister is married to Khun Keo. Khun Ma Tao is in his



early 40's and is the operator of a well known gambling house in Changwat Town. Gambling is illegal in Thailand except under certain circumstances but this is clearly an illegal and open operation. This man is also aligned with his older brother, Khun Achan, who owns a school and was formerly a Deputy from Changwat Province in the National Parliament. Two other persons are important in this group. They are, first, Khun Yai, the son of the manager of the local factory and, second, a lawyer who is the son of a long term resident of the community.

At first glance, one might say that the primary bond between the members of this group are the affinal and agnatic kinship ties which exist between a number of the members. Secondly, one would posit common interests-- gambling, in the case of Khun Yai who is reputed to be a frequenter of Khun Ma Tao's casino, and business, in the case of the lawyer as the secondary bond that draws the group together and maintains it. While accepting the argument of common interests as important for maintenance of this group, in Chapter Six, page 226 ff., I will argue that kinship is not so important as it appears, and in truth the personality of Khun Keo is more important.

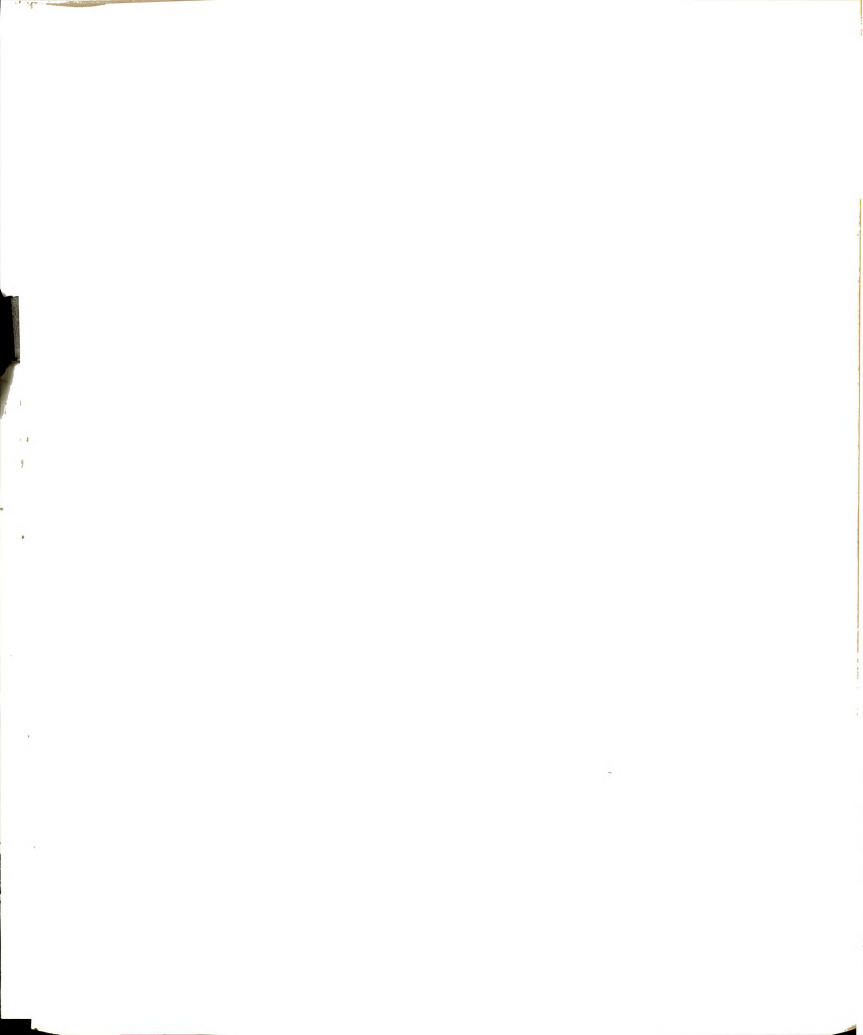
One other role that Khun Keo fills in the community, though at present not actively, is that of compradore for the local branch of the Country Bank.³³ Khun Keo's inactive status was brought about by his guaranteeing loans in excess of the agreement between the bank and himself.



This was brought to light when certain of the loans for which he was guarantor were defaulted and the extent to which he had gone beyond the terms of his agreement with the bank became clear. Since these facts became known he has not been permitted to act as compradore, though presumably he will be allowed to act once again in this role when the outstanding liabilities against him have been liquidated--an unlikely event according to the popular accounts regarding Khun Keo's fiscal solvency.

We then see on one side a small group of closely knit individuals held together primarily by the force of Khun Keo's personality (or, perhaps, by kinship and marriage ties) and secondarily by mutual interest. That these men are particularly tightly knit is evidenced by their continuation of support for Khun Keo in a number of tactics which are considered to violate general community norms.

The other side in the market conflict is composed of a group of individuals who do not compose such a tight-knit group as that of Khun Keo. That is, in considering cases of dispute other than that mentioned above, we do not necessarily find the same individuals engaged; however, in this case we will identify some individuals as followers of Khun Khao and at a later time we will be able to discuss why this is so. In considering the Khrum Khwa, two individuals must be singled out, at least as a starting point, even though we can not say they are the leaders of this group. One man, Khun Thong, is the owner of a rice



mill located within the confines of the old city wall and immediately adjacent to the eastern market. The other man is his brother-in-law, Khun Thahan, a captain in the Thai Navy who is not a resident in the local community. These two men are major principals in the case under consideration, for it is they who are the owners of the land on which the eastern market is built.

Associated with these two men are several others who share in the investment in the eastern market and associated buildings. The principal person, Khun Khao, is in effect the leader of this group and he is, like Khun Keo, an owner of a drug store, compradore of a bank--in this case the Changwat Town branch of the City Bank--and a naturalized Thai of Chinese birth.

Khun Khao, in contrast to Khun Keo, has a very impressive drugstore building on the major north-south business road. The building is four stories high, is made of concrete and is built in an area of town which was not long ago destroyed by fire and is therefore not completely rebuilt. Interestingly, Khun Keo also has a drug store on the opposite side of the same street as Khun Khao and only a half of a city block further to the south. In a very real way the very location of their respective businesses reflects their competition and their relative success in this competition.

Khun Keo, like most merchants in the community, lives in the rear of his store. From the street we see that this



is one of a unit of several stores built adjoining each other and that, unlike many of the business establishments in the market, it is only a single story high. This marks these buildings as some of the oldest in town. These buildings are made of wood frame with the exception of the other walls which are made of what appears to be a mud brick construction with a wooden frame wall on the inner side. There is generally a low ceiling, perhaps seven feet high, and above this an inside roof with a four or five inch mud layer on top of it. Above this there is a dead air space of about a foot, over which is built another roof made of the almost universal galvanized iron roofing sheets. This style of construction dates back to the time when roofs were made of thatch and were easily burnt. Mud roofs gave fire protection and provided additional insulation making for a cooler living and working space than one would ordinarily have in a single story building.

Such construction, along with the fact that all of the inside construction is of dark unpainted wood, that they do not use the new custom of having bright electric lights to illuminate their stock of goods, and that they use drop awnings to shade their west facing store front from sunlight causes the interior to look dark and dreary as contrasted to the brightly lit and modernly displayed stock of goods in Khun Khao's store.

Perhaps this comparison is overdrawn for, in fact,



Khun Keo has a branch drugstore at the bus station which is every bit as modern as Khun Khao's store in town. Nevertheless, the majority of the population sees this distinction constantly held before them and this is reinforced by the widely held belief in Khun Keo's insolvency. Khun Khao is likewise a compradore at the City Bank which is one of the most successful business ventures in the community as measured by its opulence in having a large and impressive building and one which is noted in Thailand as having great economic wealth and powerful political and economic leaders. One might contrast this also with the local branch of the Country Bank of which Khun Keo is an inactive compradore. This particular bank was created by the government through a merger of two banks to prevent the financial collapse of one or both of them. Further, the local branch mirrors this problem on the local scene for it is housed in a far less impressive, but nevertheless substantial concrete building; it is further stigmatized by having had the financial problems associated with Khun Keo's manipulation of his position of compradore, and it has had other financial problems as well. Therefore, Khun Keo's financial position is itself clouded and the bank with which he is associated is likewise clouded.

To return to Khun Khao and his group, we find that there is another very important person within the group. This man, Khun Thong Daeng, is manager of the City Bank



branch and has worked a considerable period of time in other branches in the Northeast. He had originally come to Changwat Province from the staff of the bank in East Changwat Town with the express purpose of establishing the branch in Changwat Town. He has apparently done this with a great deal of success for he has been chosen to establish a new branch in the capital town of Northwest Changwat which is an extremely important community in Northeast Thailand. His linkage to Khun Khao is clear because of their shared financial interests through the Bank, and their shared direct financial investment in allied investments to the market; however, it was not possible to ascertain whether this included direct investments in the market.

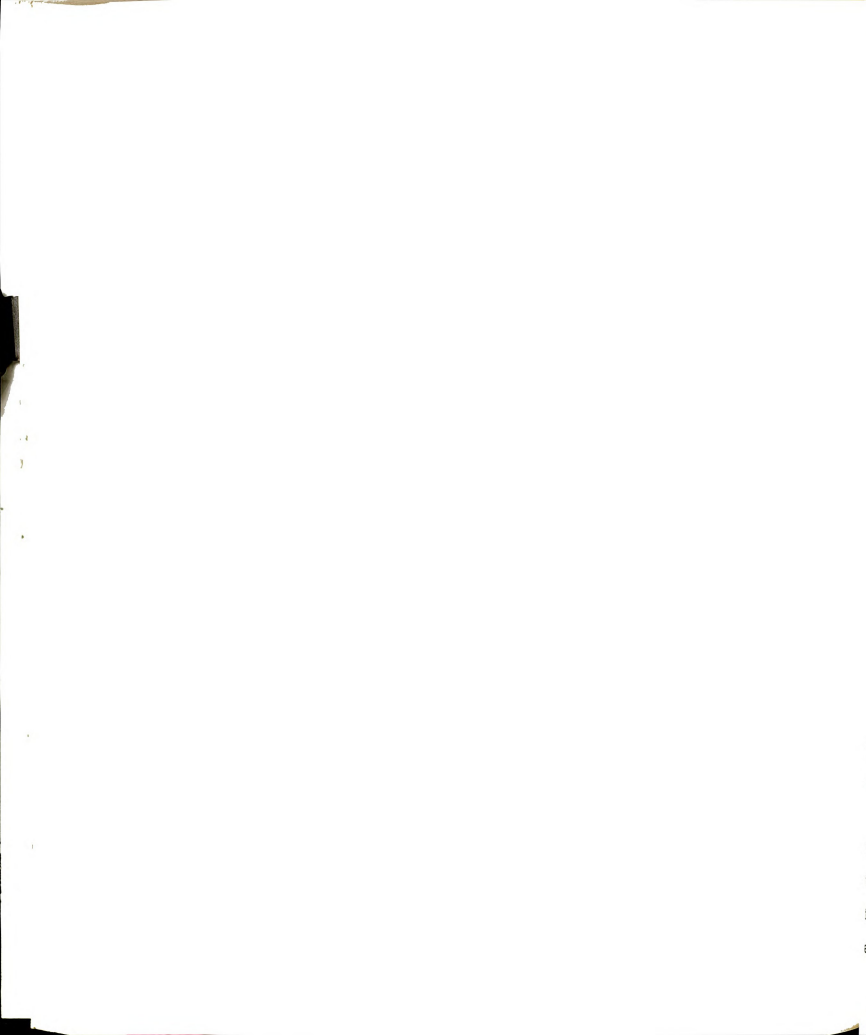
Equally a member of the Khrum Khwa is Khun Krung, who is related to the group in a way that appears to be primarily through friendship with Khun Khao. These two individuals, Khun Khao and Khun Krung, are almost inseparable. It is very clear that they are quite close but the basis of the relationship beyond that of simple friendship is not clear.

A last member of this group is a lawyer named Khun Rongrem. He represents the group in terms of legal dealings. Khun Rongrem is a former elected Deputy to the National Parliament, operates a large lumber company, and is building a hotel opposite his lumber yard. The lumber yard and hotel are located near the eastern market.

To summarize the characteristics of the Khrum Khwa, we see a cohesive group which opposes the other group, Khrum Sai, in a protracted series of financial maneuvers, and within which the major bond is business--rather than kinship-based. Within the Khrum Sai, personality, kinship, and marriage relationships provide the major bond.

When we review the membership of the Khrum Khwa, we find that, indeed, there is an affinal relationship linking two of the group, Khun Thong and Khun Thahan. But the one common thread that appears to tie the members of this group together, is a connection with the City Bank as compradore, borrower, manager and, in the case of the lawyer, a professional tie required by the legal maneuvering in the market case.

There are, of course, other reasons which one might wish to postulate as the main bond among the members of either group. Depending upon one's position in the community, knowledge about the affairs under consideration, and one's own personality, there are other plausible hypotheses suggested by information gathered in Changwat Town. Certainly, one consideration is that the members of each group like each other much better than they like others outside their group. Another hypothesis exists to the effect that a particular group represents persons of evil intentions, most often attributed to the Khrum Sai, and, therefore, the opposite group represents the forces of good. There might even be other interpretations about



the nature of the two groups which are recognized by the local inhabitants which we could consider. However, suffice it to say, that I have given you some of the interpretations that have been made by various persons. Later on we will return to these considerations after we have had a chance to consider some of the other case materials which will be offered.

I may now make some tentative statements concerning the nature of the market dispute and the implications for our further consideration. First, it is quite clear that only a few individuals were involved in this dispute in any active fashion; however, it is equally true that actions involved in the dispute were well known by the commercial sector of the community which was naturally interested in this kind of activity. This dispute generated a great deal of social gossip in the coffee shops and the various activities of the two opposing leaders and their groups were watched with some interest. The outcome of the contest between the two groups was equally widely discussed, but the fact remains that the involvement by the majority of the members of the interested community was only indirect.

Second, the majority of persons who held positions in the community similar to those of the leaders of these two groups very specifically stated that they were neutral in the conflict; that is, they wished to give the appearance of being separated from any dispute of this nature.



However, at least two individuals with whom the writer later discussed this case, although they professed neutrality, were not at all neutral in their feelings as to who was right and wrong in the events under discussion. Nevertheless, they always initially stated that they were neutral in this situation.

A third feature that should be stated here is that the writer feels that the majority of the business community supported, at least indirectly, the position of Khun Khao as opposed to that of Khun Keo. Thus, the general picture is that Khun Khao is acting on his own, that is, with little use of government intervention in the work of developing his market, and it is Khun Keo who seeks and is claimed to pay for the intervention of the government in order to harass the legitimate activities of those with whom he is in competition. It was often said that Khun Keo was the one who stirred up trouble in the community and that he used the technique of paying the police or other government officers to ensure that he would be able to bring about the objectives that he sought.

With these brief analytical remarks, I shall now turn to a consideration of another case in which we shall see that there are others, not associated with the Khrum Khwa, who are in competition with Khun Keo and his friends.

THE CASE OF THE DISPUTED ICE MARKET

Dramatis Personae

(In addition to those already introduced)

Owner of Sukit Hotel and father of Khun Visoot	Khun Sukit
Owner of the new ice plant	Khun Visoot
Brother-in-law of Khun Visoot	Khun Paitoon
Mobil Oil Agent for Changwat Town	Khun Aree

Directly to the west of the bus station and the western market lies an ice plant. This ice plant appears to be a rather old building and, in fact, during the first year of the field study was the only ice plant in the community; that is, ice was sold at the plant but it wasn't made there. As it turned out, the ice was bought from the nearest towns which had operating ice plants with a surplus of ice and resold by the ice plant to the users in the community. This meant a drive of at least 50 miles over poor, but all weather roads.

Ice is used most often by food and coffee shops to cool bottled drinks like Coca-Cola and 7-Up and to place in iced coffee or tea. Some of the longer established shops do chill beer or soft drinks in an electric refrigerator but they will usually serve the drink, exclusive of beer, with a glass of crushed ice to further cool it. Also a number of drinks, such as coffee and tea which are hot when made, are iced by pouring the hot mixture over a glass full of crushed ice. The amount of ice required



in an individual glass is high and the consumption of cold drinks in the summer is high, so the only economical source of ice is from a commercial ice plant. The electric refrigerators in use are standard household types of medium size; they are no real alternative source of ice. Individuals also buy ice occasionally. They do so by going to a nearby coffee shop to buy it, or they send one of the children on a bicycle to the ice plant if they live in its vicinity. Ice is delivered to commercial and regular users by truck.

The reason given as to why ice was not made at the local ice plant was that the machinery was broken down and could not be repaired. During the rainy season of 1966, it became known that Khun Visoot, a young man from a wealthy family in town, was going to build another ice plant and produce ice. This man is the elder son of Khun Sukit who owns the newest, but medium sized hotel in town, the Sukit Hotel, and also has the Esso dealership for Changwat Town which includes owning a gas station on the east side of town and operating an auto parts store in town opposite his hotel. His hotel is located just about 200 feet south of Khun Keo's drug store.

When questioned about his projected ice plant, Khun Visoot stated that he had made a survey of the ice supply and had learned that there was a chronic shortage of ice during the hot season because the suppliers could barely meet the demands of their own localities and, therefore,

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they could not sell much ice to meet the needs of Changwat Town. Only in the winter when ice was not in such great demand could Khun Keo purchase ice easily. Also, Khun Visoot found that a bar of ice, weighing perhaps 200 lbs., could be bought for 25 Baht (\$1.25) from a supplier and sold for 54 Baht (\$2.70) in Changwat Town. Because the cost of transportation and wages are relatively low the unit profit from such prices would be high. He had received a cost estimate that led him to believe that he could produce a bar of ice for a direct cost of between 8 to 12 Baht (\$0.40) to (\$0.60). He then said that with a plant with a peak season production of 200 bars of ice, 100 bars below the design capacity of the plant he intended to build, with a sale price of 25 Baht per bar, he could completely pay for the plant in four years or less with an average profit of 25% on his investment.

The next question was what would be the reaction of Khun Keo, who owned the existing ice plant, to Khun Visoot's plans. The latter said that he was prepared to compete on a no holds barred basis, but that he was also willing to discuss the division of the market and price regulation in order to limit competition, but that Khun Keo would have to come personally to see him about it. He was not going to see Khun Keo on his own. He also mentioned that Khun Keo had sent his oldest son to see him to discuss these questions, but Khun Visoot told the son that Khun Keo would have to come himself.



This did not happen, and it soon became apparent there would be a strongly contested competition for the ice trade of Changwat Town. This seemed strange indeed, for Khun Keo's plant had long stood silent and the economics of the ice trade as then being carried out in Changwat Town decidedly favored Khun Visoot over Khun Keo. Visoot, having estimated that he would have an annual return of at least 25% on his investment when his product sold at the same price that Khun Keo buys ice from a producer, would be undercutting Khun Keo's price by not only Khun Keo's profit but by his entire investment of labor and transport as well. Khun Keo's costs of transportation, shrinkage, storage, and distribution were all in excess of Visoot's selling price at the factory. Obviously, if Khun Visoot wished to wait a little longer for his return he could sell for a lower price than Khun Keo could buy ice.

The chance of success of Visoot's enterprise was beyond serious doubt of anyone observing the initial moves in this struggle. There are some additional factors to be considered as well. It has been pointed out that Khun Keo was not an active compradore in the Country Bank because he had overguaranteed loans. Thus, he himself was obligated to repay these loans and when they exceeded his guarantee deposits with the bank then he was personally liable to repay these defaulted loans. At the time of the field study he was in the process of repayment, and it was well known information that this was the case.



Because of this, all those opposed to Khun Keo said he was no longer able to get credit from drug suppliers for stocks in his drug stores and that he had to pay cash for his supplies. When this was coupled with the further information that he was borrowing money at very high rates of interest to repay other loans that had come due, then it can be seen why Khun Visoot and many others were predicting the rapid decline of Khun Keo from his position of importance in the business community. One should point out that Khun Visoot displayed very evident glee when he predicted the imminent decline of Khun Keo.

However, as Visoot's ice factory steadily took shape during the beautiful, clear, and cool days of the winter season, Khun Keo was not unmindful of the threat to a useful source of profit, and he took measures to combat this problem. First, prior to the actual start of Visoot's plant, there was a threat which took the form of letting Visoot know that he could never get government permission to build his plant. Such a threat has significance because the law requires that the Ministry of Industry must approve major capital investments as a means of maximizing development of the economy by not allowing overinvestment in a particular industry or area. Such a threat from Khun Keo, would cause any person pause because of his widely known reputation for having powerful friends in the government--although no one is quite sure who these friends are. Whether such friends actually exist or not is difficult to



say but it is well known in the community that Khun Keo actually attempts, through entertainment of visiting dignitaries and the giving of gifts, to develop close relations with high ranking national officials, the governor, and other high officials in the community and thus to ingratiate himself with people of power.

Khun Visoot and his brother-in-law, Khun Paitoon, did not seem to be bothered by this particular threat and Khun Visoot, with his particular boastfulness, said that such a threat was of no importance and did not disturb him in the least. Later Khun Paitoon related how they handled the issuance of the permit. They had a friend in the office which issues such permits and they took him and several of his associates out for a complete night's entertainment in Bangkok, for which Khun Visoot and Khun Paitoon paid the full expenses. This was all they paid except for the standard government fee for this permit, approximately \$200. Otherwise, Khun Paitoon said that they would have had to pay more than 100,000 Baht (\$5,000 U.S.) in addition to the official fee for the permit if they had not had a friend in the office.

The next tactic of Khun Keo was to prepare to actually compete in the production of ice. Thus, he called for an engineer to come from Bangkok and check the machinery of the ice plant in order to repair the system. As it turned out, the machinery was in essentially good condition and required only the replacement of some parts in the power-

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plant. In the early part of 1967, at the beginning of the hot season, and only a few days before the opening of Khun Visoot's brand new plant, Khun Keo placed his ice plant in operation. Naturally enough, this caused some surprise as the financing of the repairs was considered to be beyond Khun Keo's ability.

Whatever the source of the financing, whether it was from credit extended by the engineering company, from profits from Khun Keo's various other enterprises, or some other source of capital, Khun Keo was now able to compete on a more equitable basis in the ice market. Obviously he has some advantage by having a long established plant and having been the sole supplier of ice in the community and its surrounding service territory; by virtue of this position he knows the market well, he has a more fully amortized plant, he has a better location than Khun Visoot, who is located approximately three kilometers to the west of town, while Khun Keo's plant is located within the town limits, and he has a group of employees who are used to dealing with people with less attention to the niceties of the Thai code of behavior.

Khun Visoot, on the other hand, has some advantages in this competition, but they are of longer range value except for the fact that he has a larger and newer plant which presumably allows him to produce ice at a lower unit cost. There is one possible feature of short range value which is, in fact, the obverse of Khun Keo's first two

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advantages cited above. This advantage is that persons buying ice will have mixed feelings about Khun Keo for they have heard about the conflict and they can understand the way in which they were systematically exploited by Khun Keo. Thus, there is a certain degree of good will which accrues to Khun Visoot for having driven down the price of ice. Over the long range, Khun Visoot has the advantage of having a more secure capital base than Khun Keo. This coupled with the assumed greater economy of operation of his plant should give Khun Visoot a very good competitive position.

The events which unfolded must, unfortunately, be truncated for I was not able to stay in the field to see the full outcome of this competition; however, the opening moves of the struggle to sell ice will be related. On the first two days of operation, Khun Visoot gave away free ice to any comer at his plant. After this he charged 32 Baht per bar at the plant which was the same price for the other plant. Like Khun Keo's plant, he also sold ice in town but instead of delivering directly to the user he delivered to agents in town who would then sell it to the ultimate consumer who would come to pick it up. This was necessitated by the fact that Khun Visoot had a smaller staff and his truck was used for hauling water to the plant as he had not yet gotten a well on his land.³⁴

Khun Keo struck at two points, the sale of ice in town and the sale of ice at the factory for communities

outside Changwat Town. The first thing that Khun Keo did was to dispatch some of his men to the distributors in town and threaten them with physical violence if they didn't stop selling ice for Khun Visoot's factory. This had an effect upon some of the agents who complied with the threat.

The second point of attack was at the bus station. Khun Keo's brother, Khun Silor, manages the municipal bus station, and he must see to it that proper order is maintained at the station. He has available legal sanctions to carry this out in the form of a police detail which is stationed at the bus station. It is widely held that the manager pays these police a supplementary salary indirectly through a high ranking provincial police officer. This payment is to ensure that the police are willing to carry out their regular duties and, of course, will carry them out more or less under the direction of the manager.

When a person outside of town wants to buy some products in town regularly, say a bar of ice, he does not go himself; rather, he makes an arrangement with the local bus line that serves his community for the driver to pick up what is required in town. This is the way the daily order of ice is handled for merchants in outlying communities. To complete the sequence of events in this case, Khun Silor knew who would be ordering ice, and, through what bus line and driver. If the driver did not buy it from his plant but had orders to buy from Khun



Visoot's plant, the manager, Khun Silor, merely had the driver arrested for an infraction of one of the many regulations which govern the operation of a public conveyance. These regulations are regularly ignored by both police and drivers, but they can be used to harass drivers and bus owners through their selective enforcement. Another alternative pattern of harrassment is available to the manager through the manipulation of the queue. That is, there is a stall at which the buses of each line wait for loading prior to departure. However, most buses generally have a period of an hour or more during which the bus must wait outside the station--thereby not being allowed to take on passengers--until it is its turn to enter the appropriate loading area at which time the manager signals the driver to take his place. If the driver doesn't take his place promptly he may lose passengers to other lines which pass through his community or to another driver on the same line. If the manager wants to make difficulty for the driver, he does not give him his proper turn in the queue or just does not allow him to enter the queue. Theoretically, the abused driver may complain to the station police, but this is felt to be of no use because of the money they are said to receive from the station manager. The driver's only recourse is to escalate the question beyond the confines of the bus station. This is risky because it involves one with very powerful people, the provincial chief of police or his deputy, which, be-



cause of their reputed financial arrangement with Khun Keo and Khun Silor, is likely to be no help. Thus, the driver or owner feels he will be required to go outside the province to receive a fair hearing. Indeed, this is a risk one does not take lightly (the next case will review a situation where such a course was followed).

The result of these two strategies had dramatic effects upon the sale of ice at Khun Visoot's ice plant. The sale of ice fell precipitately, and, for the remaining two weeks of the writer's stay in Changwat Town, Khun Visoot was to be seen going about with a long face but ultimately expecting to win in the struggle for the ice market.

Remarkably enough at the end of this time, Khun Aree was beginning to lay plans for opening a third ice plant in the community. When this news reached Khun Keo, he, on his part offered to assist Khun Aree in any way possible. The obvious reason for Khun Keo's different response to another potential competitor was that Khun Keo's youngest brother, Khun Sanit, is the local manager of an insurance firm and manages the hotel in which the offices of his firm are located--this hotel is rented from Khun Aree's family. Therefore, highly aggressive action against Khun Aree would have lead to the termination of the lease on the hotel and end a lucrative source of revenue.

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THE CASE OF THE PROVINCIAL BUS MONOPOLY

There is one final case that will be presented.

This case will be useful in describing the means by which the bus station ploy above could be countered by the bus drivers.

This case also concerns the use of the bus station as a means of leverage. In Thailand, the interprovincial bus lines are monopolized, that is, they are subjected to governmental regulation through the Transport Company, a government company within the Ministry of Communications (Silcock 1967:312) with which bus owners must register and receive permission to operate on a particular bus route. In so registering, they are then subject to regulations regarding standards of operation, maintenance, price, and schedules. This procedure was designed to introduce order and reliability in the operation of interprovincial passenger transportation and to diminish the preeminent position of persons of ethnic Chinese background in this aspect of transportation. Charges are also made to enter into the bus business which help to limit the number of bus owners. Perhaps such limitation ensures a greater degree of fiscal reliability, dependability of operation, maintenance, etc.

This system has worked very creditably in nearly every area of concern. One finds throughout the towns and cities of Thailand a network of interprovincial buses which provide rapid, cheap, convenient, if not altogether

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safe, service to the provincial cities as well as other major population centers in the country. One can go to the local bus station and find a well organized physical layout with well marked points of departure for the various routes. The buses which operate along these routes are large Mercedes, diesel engined buses which are painted a uniform orange color and are marked with the destination and origin of the bus as well as route and owner's identification. The driver is uniformed and has an additional crew of one or two uniformed men to act as ticket takers and to assist passengers to load and unload baggage which is stored on the roof. The bus stations are policed by uniformed policemen and have numerous shops which sell food and other goods, such as clothing, which might be of use to the traveler.

Compared to the interprovincial buses, the intra-provincial systems are quite primitive. Most often the bus is really a truck ranging in size from a jeep, converted to a pick-up type truck rear bed with a roof built over it into and onto which some 15 persons can be squeezed, to regular trucks which also are roofed over and in which people and cargo can ride. Most such trucks, whatever their size, have wooden benches which are built along the side walls with the passengers facing inward and, thus, each other. In the space between are loaded the goods which people are carrying such as rice, animals, or practically anything else; on top of these goods other people



might sit. If there is nothing in this open space people will simply squat down with the heels of their feet placed flat on the floor. If crowded, additional passengers and cargo ride on the roof. The truck-bus is usually old, dented, and rusty and has a general appearance of not being well maintained. The driver and crew reinforce this haphazard appearance, being dressed in old and dirty clothes of a very nondescript character. One always wonders whether the bus will get anywhere at all, let alone to its destination. The concern that the driver and the ticket taker display in making sure that they have one's money long before the bus leaves the station gives one the disquieting feeling that they are not altogether sure that the bus will work, and they are taking pains to ensure that they have collected enough money to pay for the repairs necessary to get it operating again. Unlike the interprovincial buses, the first stop the bus makes after leaving the station is at the gas station where it is gassed and oil, water, and tires checked. Then the driver returns to just outside the bus station to pick up any late comers, a decided imposition upon the traveler which is borne with no show of impatience. All of this stands in sharp contrast to the interprovincial bus operations, and, thus, one gets the surface impression of strength, reliability, and good management on the one hand while on the other there are just the opposite characteristics.

During the latter part of 1966, it became known that



the constituent assembly was considering a bill which would require the monopolization of the intraprovincial bus lines into a single company per province. This company would then be required to maintain better schedules, standards of operation, equipment, maintenance, and driver responsibility. Presumably, all of this would flow from the greater financial benefits which would accrue to the remaining company through the decline in competition. Khun Keo, seeing this opportunity opening, considered it a chance to merge a number of companies and control them, and he quickly moved onto the scene. He formed a company which appeared to have as its sole capital investment an old style Jeep station wagon (panel truck) with the company name painted on the side. His youngest brother, Khun Sanit, was most often seen driving this vehicle. Then he, Khun Sanit, approached the various bus operators--the usual bus operation is one or two men with one, or perhaps, two busses--and asked them to join him in his company. They would provide the buses and operating personnel, and apparently he would provide the management of the company and his skills and connections with officialdom.

Khun Keo was successful in getting some of the bus owners to cooperate with him, especially the Northeast Amphur owners, but the others did not agree to pool their equipment and to join his company. Nevertheless, Khun Keo was not to be deterred from his goals, so he used the

tactics which were to be applied successfully in the case of the competing ice plant. He had the bus drivers harassed by having the police enforce regulations against non-cooperating bus lines. As we saw in the description of the ice plant controversy, there is little recourse for the bus line operator because the station master is essentially using or directing the power of the state to apply pressure on the bus owners. Obviously, the first stage of complaint for the bus operator is to the provincial chief of police; however, it is widely held that he too accepts money from Khun Keo. Thus, it is unlikely that bus operators would do so, and, in fact, they did not. They went, instead, to the governor and complained about the harassment they were receiving in the bus station. However, the governor was unable to do anything to stop the activities in the bus station. Since the drivers saw their complaints could not be met and they had used up their only avenue of protest, they could only escalate their attack. They did this by contacting a former native of Changwat Town who works on a Bangkok newspaper and gave him the full story of the happenings in Changwat Town and these details were then published in the Bangkok newspaper. After this story appeared, the harassment in the bus station stopped. Unfortunately, I was unable to learn exactly how it came to a stop. That is, it is unclear whether Khun Keo called off this activity, whether under pressure the provincial police chief refused to allow his men to co-

operate, or whether there was an order given from above to stop this action. However, it is clear that the newspaper story was crucial in stopping the harassment, and, most importantly, it illustrates an avenue that can be taken to redress grievances.

Before we go on to analyze these cases in more detail in the following, we should note the relationship of power between the offices of governor and of the provincial chief of police in Thailand. The occupants of these two offices are both members of the Ministry of Interior, but they are members of separate departments; the Department of Local Administration and the Department of Police. In theory, in provincial administration the governor has ultimate control over government officials in the province (see for instance Siffin 1966:202) but this is not the case in fact. The governor, in reality, has very little control over the police in the province. These are essentially autonomous positions because the governor can not determine whether the police chief is rewarded or fired nor can he control his budget or effect it in any substantial way. This is, of course, an analysis based upon knowledge of the formal regulations governing the structure and procedures of the Thai bureaucracy. But fundamentally more important to a consideration of this problem is that the history of the constitutional period of Thailand indicates that there are three groups who have consistently alternated in their control of the



Thai government. These, the civil service bureaucracy and politicians, the police, and the military, have been the most successful holders of power through the years; the reason being of course that they can ultimately draw upon their forces of disciplined and, in the case of the military and police, armed men.

It is obvious that only one group can hold ultimate power in the government, but the existence of the other two as possible usurpers, and particularly the other armed branch, causes the group in power to make substantial concessions to them. After all, in all likelihood, they are only temporarily out of power. Thus, the army holds the reins of government as a result of the Coup d'Etat of 1958. However, when there is a dispute between a governor and police chief it is not easy to predict the outcome. Such a dispute is a very important matter and must be decided at the highest levels in Bangkok. Most informants felt that such decisions as were made more clearly expressed access to political power figures (i.e. the outcome of the dispute would most clearly reflect the disputants closeness to wielders of public resources) than to any question of inherent rightness or wrongness of their respective positions as judged by some abstract principles of justice or administration.

With the above in mind, it is easy to see why the governor was unable to act to stop the harassment of the bus drivers in the bus monopoly case. An attempt on the

part of the governor to intervene on behalf of the bus owners would be an extremely delicate operation, for it would require the governor to imply to the provincial chief of police that things were not all right in his particular area of jurisdiction and that in fact illegal, or at best unethical, activities were going on among his subordinates. This, obviously, is a very insulting accusation to make, and, as the value of subordinating personal feelings to the requirements of the job³⁵ is weak, it is very difficult for a Thai to make such a complaint.

The governor did exactly what most Thai would do in such a position--nothing. Good working relations between these two individuals are too important to risk over the relatively unimportant economic advantage of two groups of businessmen.

Or we may look at this in another way and call it the maintenance of structural distance. Inasmuch as the basic requirement of each of the two roles within the social system is the maintenance of the on-going system, yet there is no clear hierarchical arrangement between the two offices, and conflict between the office holders will cause disturbance in the social system, then the only available applicable norm is the minimization of possibility of friction through the separation of the workings of the two offices. Therefore, the governor and provincial chief of police maintain friendly but formal relationships with considerable distance between their



personal and private activities.

In the following chapter we will analyze the preceding case materials in terms of the theoretical orientation discussed in the Introduction and consider the contribution that these data provide us.



CHAPTER FOUR

AN APPLICATION OF PROCESSUAL ANALYSIS

SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Now, let us turn to an analysis of the three main cases which have just been described in order to seek for generalizations which the analysis can yield for an understanding of Thai urban culture and the operation of local-level politics. Some of the questions which we can expect to be answered, in whole or in part, by such an analysis are as follows: What is the meaning of these conflicts? Why is it that they are allowed to continue? What is the relationship between national level officials and the local leadership? What are the means for establishing and influencing public goals? Finally, we can ask how does the material presented herein relate to the field of Thai studies and to anthropology in general? These and related questions will be treated in this and the following two chapters.

As part of my attempt to answer these questions, I will utilize the political theory presently being developed by Swartz and others (Swartz, Turner, and Tuden 1966 and Swartz 1968). It is my contention that the theoretical



position taken by these researchers, based as it is on a processual approach toward conflict situations, will be applicable to the data I have presented, and I intend to use it as a means of guiding my analysis with the expectation that, at the same time, this application of the theory will act as a preliminary test of the theory itself.

While this approach is directed at political problems, a great deal of the implicit approach of Swartz deals with the general use of the concept of process in a society as an ongoing system. Thus, the editors cited above consider the political process in a very broad framework and explicitly note, in their discussion of it, that what might be called government is indeed diffuse and, in fact, "every society need not have a government" (Swartz, Turner, and Tuden 1966:12). The concern of the political anthropologist can range widely through the society's repertoire of behavioral forms from elections to religious ritual as long as he focuses upon the political processes involved--just how one can identify political processes will be discussed below. We can see that the whole range of a society is open to analysis from this point of view. In a similar vein, if we focus upon some different aspect of the social life of man, say the economic sphere, we can employ the processual approach as well; then the decisions and allocations which members of the particular economic field make in regard to conditions emanating from within and without the society are regarded as economic



anthropology, providing they deal with goods and, presumably, private goals. The statements of leaders of the "processual school" might lead one to think that they are rejecting the structural approach. In fact, they are very aware of normative systems in society and are adroit in their manipulation. Therefore, they build upon the earlier structural approach in anthropology by adding particularistic case materials in the hope that these cases will increase the explanatory power of their work (cf. Barth 1967). As I indicated above, I will apply this approach to the data which I have gathered in Changwat Town in order both to analyze this material and as a means to make a preliminary test of this approach as well.

We may now turn to a consideration of the major concepts to be used in the analysis of our cases. I will follow Swartz in the basic definition of politics, as follows: " 'Politics,' as I use the term, refers to the events which are involved in the determination and implementation of public goals and/or the differential distribution and use of power within the group or groups concerned with the goals being considered" (1968:1). I will not pursue the ramifications of this definition beyond noting that inherent within it is the means for identifying political processes; any situation in which public goals are contested or power is differentially distributed in relation to public goals is a political situation. This view is considered at length in the introductory chapters



of the two works on political anthropology cited above.

Most important for our consideration here, are some of the analytical concepts developed by Swartz to deal with case studies of political process. The central concept is the field-arena as the major social-spatial element of analysis. At the core of the analysis is the field which is composed of the actors who are directly competing for power, that is, the control of influence over public goals, and resources which are used in the conflict. The actors in the field so act as to maximize their access to power and, thus, to win the conflict. Surrounding the field, in one or more concentric asymmetrical layers, is another group(s) of actors and resources which can potentially be drawn into the field and to which is given the name arena. As indicated, there may be more than one arena, existing perhaps as a matter of distance, either spatial or social, from the field and particularly the conflict within the field.

Normally, the field is the place of conflict; however, there is a very permeable boundary between the field and the primary arena, for the actors in the field draw upon the resources, material or human, of the arena if it appears that they might profit thereby. The secondary arena, because it is occupied by persons and things more remote from the field, is not so easily drawn into the field and may not ever be a part of the field--just as the congressional candidate from one state is very

unlikely to enter the field of local issues in a campaign in another state; potentially he might become involved, but it is not very likely. In the end, this division into the field and the arena is heuristic and arbitrary; it is a matter of convenience, both of analysis and presentation, and is a means of simplifying and clarifying our analysis.

The dynamic of the system is generated by the actors who marshal the resources in pursuit of power or the development of support for public goals, and carry out the various stages in the contest; they are the engine which drives the system. These are goal directed behaviors, of whatever nature the goal might be whether widely or narrowly shared. The fundamental goals might be idiosyncratic--and one would be remiss if he accepted the public goal statements as being the only motivation for action within the field--but they must be translatable into and be thought of by others as public goals. It is largely these public goals which are the basis upon which large numbers of people, say in an election, base their decision, or, at least, they invoke these goals to explain and justify their actions at a later time.

Obviously, if there is one approach to a problem or to the allocation of power, there is at least one other approach of a contradictory nature, and it is in this context that the field and its associated arena(s) come into existence. It is, then, in the above context that we may analyze the cases previously presented.



One other point must be noted before we turn to our data; that is, the questions of distinguishing boundaries between arenas and arena and field and when they are breached or changed. While not discussed by Swartz specifically in these terms, one can view the discussion of boundary problems and changes from one social-spatial category as brought about through the expenditure or conservation of energy. In order to induct a person into the field, energy must be expended either on the part of members already in the field or on the part of members in the arena, or by both. Also, of course, one may leave the field through the conservation of energy. That is, by not expending the necessary energy which is expected of a field member, one breaks the interaction and reverts to membership in the arena.

FIELD AND ARENAS IN CHANGWAT TOWN

The preceding has been a very brief paraphrasing of only the main elements of the conceptual system as presented in the references cited above. As such, it is far too simplified to do justice to the original sources; nevertheless, this brief sketch will suffice to enable us to begin the consideration of the previously presented case materials. As I develop this analysis section further, we can consider other elements of this theoretical construct. The first area of interest is the nature of the field about which we are talking. From the cases above, we see that the number of actors in the field is very few. In the

market conflict the major participants are listed, and we can see they form two rather well demarcated groups with a high degree of participation between the members, particularly the members of Khun Keo's family. The opposing group of Khun Khao is not so clearly distinguishable inasmuch as kinship relations are not as prominent a feature in this group, and there appears to be a greater degree of interconnections with other members of the business community. In the ice plant case the Khrum Sai is again active, but the opposition to the Khrum Sai is much smaller than in the market case. Finally, in the bus monopolization case, the data is incomplete because the composition of the group in opposition to the Khrum Sai is not fully known.

A reasonable explanation for the smallness of the groups is the fact that we are dealing first of all with a conflict in what may be called an economic domain (Swartz 1968:42). As we have seen, the limitation of the processes of conflict to the economic domain is a continuing attribute of these cases because conflict in other domains is "not allowed." That is, the regime, in this case the national government, only allows conflict and competition to occur in this domain, and, very explicitly, prohibits it in the domain of the usual political activities, such as, the elections, formation of political parties, etc. Therefore, only a few persons have a direct economic stake in the outcome of the conflict. As a result of the restrictions placed upon the nature of the expression of conflict,



informants, outside of field contestants, interviewed about the markets, say that they are neutral even though they are obviously sympathetic to one side or the other. They will not commit themselves to being on a particular side. A large part of this is a desire to avoid involvement in a conflict which they can, in fact, avoid because they are not under pressure from the contesting groups to expend energy to try and develop broad based support in the community. These persons are, then, a classic example of arena resources. They exist within close proximity to the field contestants but do not become involved within the processes of the conflict. Perhaps, inasmuch as both sides have something to gain at the public expense through the operation of their respective markets and nonoperation of the market of the opposing faction, they are better served by reducing public involvement to the barest minimum.

Nevertheless, the faction members do talk about their activities to non-involved persons but only to the extent of explaining their actions so as to appear to have acted properly or justifiably, that is, within the context of the norms and values existent within the arena as they relate to the public goals which are in dispute. In a sense this is the development of support, but it is really more a question of developing an image of legitimacy for themselves in regard to the public goals under dispute--a kind of latent support. Swartz does not deal directly with this aspect of oppositional tactics, apparently because the



cases dealt with in the two works in which his theoretical position is developed are cases in which the conflict sequences are quite active and are usually cast in the mold of an election process. Whereas, during this period in Thailand, there have been no elections or serious attempts to refer governmental actions to a broad base of suffrage. Therefore, we may say that this is an early part of the developmental sequence which is titled "mobilization of political capital" (Swartz, Turner, and Tuden 1966:32).

I should point out that Swartz does use a concept of "indirect support" which appears to have similarities to my category of latent support. However, if I understand his concept of indirect support, the basic nature of the concept of support is active, and, thus, indirect support is essentially the same as direct support except that it comes to the object of support through some intervening agent or object. Swartz writes, "Basically, direct support differs from indirect in that direct support is not mediated through an additional process or entity" (1968:19). The point of my argument is that latent support is not designed to be useful in the field contest in any immediate manner. It is a sensitization of members outside the field, i.e., within the arena, who might at some later date become important to the conflict, but their support is not requested. I propose to call this type of support "latent support" because it seems to be designed to protect the

field contestants from the unwanted involvement of arena members on the side of the particular contestants' opponents. That is, the development of latent support is a defensive tactic rather than an aggressive tactic.

There is no reason to mobilize the population as a resource in this conflict because the population can do no good for the competitors within the field. There simply is no relevant way in which the public might affect the actions going on within the field; there are no elections nor referenda nor any of the other devices for the registration of the popular will which we usually associate with democratic political institutions. Likewise, there are no spontaneous or externally fomented political activities of any public significance, such as subversive actions, which have any bearing upon the field in question.³⁶ However, it is claimed by the Khrum Sai that Khun Khaw had used the fear of internal subversion in the early 1950's to denounce Khun Keo as a communist in order to try to win an earlier dispute with Khun Keo.

Before we go further, let us consider the various arenas at the intersection of which exists the particular field we are analyzing. There are three potential arenas that exist and have relevance to our discussion. The first arena is that of the business community of Changwat Town, minus those already in the field. These are the persons who, potentially, can be involved in this conflict without any basic changes in the rules governing such contest,



i.e., the primary rule consists of an understanding that pre-eminent commercial figures, as the main contestants, will enter into competition and open conflict for the highest prestige positions in the community through conflict in the economic domain. Their involvement would require merely the extension of the opportunity to make an investment in the specific enterprises under discussion. Of course, the person would have to actually invest, but once he had invested he would be directly and intimately involved in the field. That is, he would have taken on a tangible interest in the controversy and have given positive support to the leader of one or another of the conflict groups.

One might wish to distinguish, within the primary arena, such individuals who are basically neutral towards contesting groups from those who are sympathetic to one side or another; however, I think this introduces too great a refinement in the model because it would be too difficult to find data of sufficient fineness to make the required distinction. I have in mind that as long as the full efforts of the field contestants are not exerted on the members of the primary arena, it would be very hard for the anthropologist to predict the choices that a person will make when he is subjected to the full force of conflicting pressures that dedicated members of the field might bring to bear. Such pressures would be far different than the defensive "putting a good face on it" rationalizations that the field contestants project to develop what

I call latent support.

The second arena that we shall consider is the rest of the community which is actually geographically located surrounding the members of the field and the first arena. The second arena consists of minor entrepreneurs, government officials, and below them the farmer and wage workers of the community. This arena, as indicated above, is not significant in the calculations of the chief protagonists because there is no political process, such as elections, by which it might have some significance for the outcome of the conflict under discussion. Likewise, there is no activity on the part of the conflict groups to involve this group in other ways, for instance demonstrations, boycotts, riots, vandalism, or any other kind of action which would strengthen one side and weaken the other.³⁷ However, the community is a resource for field contestants when their economic power can be manipulated or effected, as will become apparent in the discussion of the ice plant case.

The third and last arena which can be analytically distinguished is composed of all those people, both governmental and non-governmental, living outside the local community. Members of this arena, as we have seen in the description of the cases above, were actively engaged in the field that we are here considering; for instance, in the case of the two markets, there was the question of letting the management of the western market out as a concession which had to be decided on the national level, also there

was the determination of the fair value of the eastern market which also required Bangkok intervention. In the case of the monopolization of the intraprovincial buses, not only were higher level government officials involved, in this case the governor, but also individuals outside the government. Foremost among the non-governmental, non-local persons is the newspaper reporter who wrote the story about the bus problem; also, the readers of the story were brought into the field by being alerted to the problem which was occurring in Changwat Town. This is a form of mobilization of resources.

We may now recapitulate our description so far. First of all is the field itself, which is quite small and composed almost entirely of businessmen and senior government officers formed from the elite of the local community. This is surrounded in turn by a small arena, also composed of business men and government officers, which can be called the primary arena. We may also consider the rest of the local community on the one hand and those living outside the community as constituting a vertical axis of the field and arena described already. The upper arena is composed of the non-local government and civilian personnel and may be considered the secondary arena while the lower arena is made up of the remaining large percentage of community members and is a tertiary arena. As we have seen, the field is enlarged as the various contestants seek the help of those within the arena--often the secondary arena--thereby

drawing them into the field for the moment. Bearing this general conceptual scheme in mind, we may now turn to a more detailed consideration of the data.

SOME HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All of my informants agreed on one version or the other of the story which I shall relate concerning the life histories of the two protagonists, Khun Keo and Khun Khao. Both of the parents of the two men came from the same village in China and knew each other before they immigrated to Thailand. In Changwat Town, Khun Khao's father became the acknowledged leader of the Chinese business community. By leadership is meant a generally recognized place of seniority in the business community for community-wide activities (primarily concerned with the annual presentation of the Chinese opera in the community and, historically, the operation of the Chinese language school) and as a spokesman or senior contact with the Thai government officials.

During that time both parents operated drugstores near each other as their sons do today. As the boys were growing up, they returned to China, as was customary at the time, to study in the Chinese language and to learn business practices. During this period, Khun Keo made better marks in school and Khun Khao's father often spoke of this to his son and encouraged him to study harder. At about the end of the Second World War, Khun Khao's father died, and it was expected that Khun Khao would assume his father's position of community leadership which he did in



attempting to organize the collection of relief supplies to send to China and to reopen the Chinese language school which had been closed during the collaboration with the Japanese. In these two projects, Khun Keo opposed the group headed by Khun Khao in both instances because, according to my informants, he wanted to aid the communists. This is not likely to have been true, but it was certainly stated as being true. Two schools were actually opened in competition with each other and, like so many of their predecessors in upcountry Thailand, they both failed for financial reasons. Later, in the early 1950's, the Thai government became very concerned by both the Nationalist Chinese and Communist Chinese attempts to win adherents and support for themselves amongst overseas Chinese. During this period, there was considerable government suspicion of Chinese organizations and active repression of the activities of the local agents of the two Chinese governments (cf. Skinner 1957:324). During this time, Khun Keo was denounced as a communist and was actually imprisoned for a short period of time; however, he was released later as there was no real evidence that he was actually a communist. According to my informants, it was at this time that he became concerned with developing good relations with government officials and particularly those of the police.

A further example of this continuing rivalry may be seen in the following case. At the end of my field study,

mid-1967, there were three commercial banks in Changwat Town, two of which have the office of compradore. These two banks are the local branches of the City Bank and the Country Bank. Prior to 1964 the Country Bank, represented by a branch bank of the Plowman's Bank, one of the two predecessor banks of the Country Bank, was the only commercial bank in the community. Some time previous to the establishment of the City Bank, Khun Keo made an unsuccessful attempt to become compradore of the Plowman's Bank. When he failed here he then attempted to persuade another major bank, the City Bank, to establish a branch in the community with the expectation that he would then become one of its compradores. This also was unsuccessful, and he renewed his efforts to become compradore of the single commercial bank. He finally succeeded in this and was appointed the third compradore joining Khun Khao and a relative of Khun Khao in this role. Khun Khao and his relative now set out to persuade the City Bank to establish a branch in Changwat Town, which it did. They then became the two compradores for this new bank and Khun Visoot became the compradore along with Khun Keo in the Plowman's Bank.

In the above case we see Khun Keo's attempt to achieve a position of equal economic importance with that initially held by Khun Khao. Khun Khao then regarded this as a challenge to his position of pre-eminence and at once set about producing a situation which resulted in an institutional rivalry through the establishment of a branch of a second

bank, a feat which Khun Keo was unable to perform. We have seen the outcome of Khun Keo's attempt to manipulate his new position of economic power through the over-guaranteeing of loans.³⁸

THE PRESENT SITUATION

A major case of Chapter Three is the case of the disputed markets in which Khun Keo sought to take advantage of the condition of the crowded market situation and to drive his antagonists into irrevocable loss. Khun Keo, then, continues to challenge Khun Khao in the business community, and it is apparent that he is striving for leadership of the business elite or, at least, a position in which projects which he initiates, or arise from his group of friends, are dominant in the community. This challenger aspect is very plain in the case of the disputed markets. While it was never clear which of the two groups actually first proposed the idea of building the additional market, the presumptive evidence would indicate that Khun Keo was the person. I say this because one, it was this market which was actually built first³⁹ and two, because of his early actions in attempting to control the intraprovincial bus companies.

The historical cases outlined above, then, are useful in demonstrating Khun Keo's role of challenger and his characteristic attempt to seize strategic power through the introduction of new elements, which were here the unsuccessful attempt to operate a Chinese language school

and to bring a new bank into the community. His use of the bus station in the ice plant case is a more successful example of his ability to control a strategic institution in the community.

On the other hand, Khun Khao and those amongst his group represent an active element in the community to resist the challenge of Khun Keo's attempt to gain a position of pre-eminence in the business elite. As indicated above, the larger majority of businessmen profess neutrality in the conflicts as they occur and it is clear enough that they do this in part because there is no clear threat to their position in the community inherent in the actions of Khun Keo. That is, there is no direct threat. No one but investors will suffer if one or the other of the new markets fail while all the others in the community might benefit from the increased convenience of having one or more additional "shopping centers" with their fresh market and attendant stores. There is, of course, the possibility that the tactics, used by one or both groups, might have such an effect upon the quality of public life, and especially upon the political process, eg., Khun Keo's all too close association with the police, that the members of the community would feel so threatened, that they would enter the field. Such a situation arises in what has been called the "showdown phase" of the political phase development scheme and perhaps comes closest to what is called deployment of adjustive or redressive mechanisms" (Swartz,

Turner, and Tuden 1966:34-36).

However, even in societies where democracy has long been practiced such long range and indirect causes rarely activate strong interest nor sustain it for any length of time. One can appreciate that in Changwat Town this is a question which is discussed only by the most politically sensitive people and only as a comment upon the passing scene, for they recognize that there is little they can do other than express a concern as there is no mechanism of action open to them other than informal commentary. To be sure, this informal mechanism is used and to some effect, but, in a community of 12,000 persons or more, the lack of elections and other forms of democratic expression reduce the feeling of effectiveness of the individual. There is no chance short of very unusual and therefore dangerous practices to mobilize and register public displeasure with the operation of the political system.

We now see a well organized, cohesive group as a challenge faction which is actively attempting to achieve a dominant economic and political position in the town and province. Opposed to this group, in the market case, is the Khrum Khwa group lead by Khun Khao. This group appears to act in a manner more in concert with the majority of the business elite, and it appears to have a great deal of support from the business community. Nevertheless, if the Khrum Khwa is a de facto representative of the business community, it certainly doesn't feel it necessary to enter

each and every potential conflict situation. At times Khun Khao will organize to compete with Khun Keo and at other times not. An example representing the latter situation is the police chief's farewell, as described earlier. Here, the police chief was describing a widely held view of the nature of community problems, vis-a-vis illegal activities, for which he was promptly sued by Khun Keo. Neither Khun Khao nor his allies tried in any way to aid Major Satien. There was widespread praise for the major's forthrightness in speaking his mind so openly, but there was no organized effort to try and keep the major from transferring, and no effort to support him before the regional chief of police--it was widely held that Khun Keo had lodged a formal protest with the regional chief of police. The former police chief was on his own in speaking out, on his own to face the charges against him before his regional chief, and on his own to face the charges before the court. He did receive a great deal of verbal support from persons in the community particularly those associated with Khun Khao. But the main point is that while the major was speaking for the general welfare he received no formal and organized support on the part of the community leaders who, in theory at least, stand to benefit by the public vindication of Major Satien.

Opposing Khun Keo, Khun Khao is involved in the case of the markets, but he is not involved in the case of the rice plant struggle nor in the bus company problems.

However, Khun Thong Daeng, manager of the City Bank, indicated an interest in establishing a second bus station in Changwat Town which would be near the eastern market. He stated as the reason for needing a new station that the town is now so large that it is difficult to get from one place to the other conveniently--the distance between the two new markets is about one mile. However, it is the feeling of the writer that the importance of the bus station in the facilitation of commercial activity around the western market had become obvious, for the western market is, if not flourishing in trade, at least a going concern while the eastern market is much less well established. Also, this statement was made while the ice plant problem was going on and after the problem concerning the monopolization of the intraprovincial bus lines was settled. The writer feels, that this statement reflects the realization of the centrality of the bus station in the communication and marketing patterns of Changwat Town and particularly in Khun Keo's power base. As we have seen in the ice plant dispute, a very important control on the out of town customer results from the practice of ordering goods through the bus driver whose central livelihood does not depend upon the faithful carrying out of commissions but rather upon the proper working of his transportation occupation, and, specifically, his good relations with the bus station manager and the station police. Thus, the thinking of the Khrum Khwa, with Khun Thong Daeng acting as spokesman,

is to pry this level of police power out of the hands of the Khrum Sai by forming a competing bus terminal.

Another point which I believe to be part of the thinking behind Khun Thong Daeng's suggestion is at least a partial understanding that the person who organizes the intraprovincial bus organization will have, in the model of the Teamster's Union, extremely powerful economic leverage on trade within the province, that is, by setting transportation rates and carrying or refusing to carry goods. Khun Thong Daeng, by being bank manager of a very progressive bank, is extremely sensitive to the question of development of trade throughout the province and the key role that transportation plays in such development. As we have seen, the station manager has great possibilities here for influencing the way this organization of the intraprovincial bus monopoly might proceed.

If we now return to the problem of Khun Khao's non-involvement in the other main cases, this may be explained by the fact that the nature of the market place is one of a high degree of independence with the larger family groupings, so characteristic of Southeastern China, not effectively operative in Thailand. It is true that family connections are a factor in the Khrum Sai but they are not particularly important in the Khrum Khwa. Even for the Khrum Sai, the kinship pattern is ambiguous, that is, the Khrum Sai is composed principally of two sets of brothers in which the two sets are linked together through a

marriage tie.⁴⁰ Thus, the basic social unit appears to be the household unit which carries out its own business relations independently of other family households in the community. But there is a tendency for brothers, and brothers-in-law, even though they head independent households, to cooperate together. This, of course, varies depending upon the situation and upon the would-be leader's ability in manipulating whatever pre-existing bonds between himself and others there might be. Thus, one of Khun Khao's close relatives who is the other compradore of the City Bank along with Khun Khao has remained strictly neutral in these various conflicts. Likewise, other relatives have also played the neutral part though to my knowledge being in sympathy with Khun Khao's actions. Therefore, it is not surprising why Khun Khao does not involve himself in the ice plant conflict. There are no kinship bonds which might be exploited to bring him into the conflict and there is no economic bond either; it is simply not his problem. On the other hand, he has a very personal interest in seeing Khun Keo defeated in his attempt to open the western market and to make it profitable. The interest of Khun Khao in the establishment of the new bus station is an outgrowth of his intent to weaken Khun Keo. However, in the case of the ice plant Khun Visoot and Khun Paitoon are on their own.

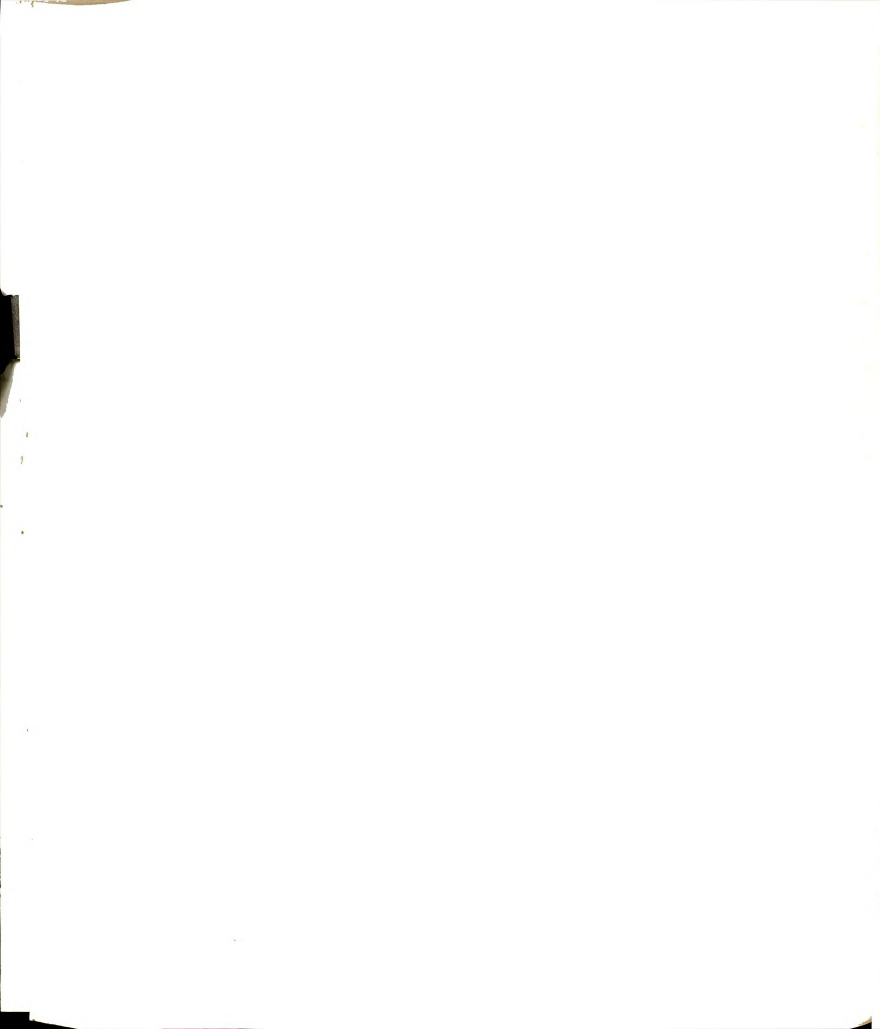
Thus, the picture of the market elite becomes one of individual families, with perhaps the addition of an adult son and his family, working together to operate a business.



The head of the household makes alliances with other similar household heads to carry out business activities and conduct factional rivalries, but these alliances are based upon friendship and mutual interest rather than upon kinship per se, although there is a bias towards brother and brother-in-law cooperation. The most obvious situation is that there is little working together in any event. Most families work as a closed unit and expect to take care of themselves through their own actions. The general feeling is that a family must stand on its own and that the individual must demonstrate his own ability to succeed. However, such an outlook might, as in our society, coexist with the principle that cooperation is needed to carry out certain kinds of activities necessary for social life. If this were the case, we would expect to find the multiplication of voluntary organizations that exist in our society particularly among the middle and upper classes. However, this is not true in Changwat Town as was pointed out earlier. There are very few voluntary organizations and so the family, albeit somewhat larger than that of the middle class family in the United States, stands out as a relatively encapsulated social unit which must work towards its own salvation. This is particularly true for the field of our study, for it focuses upon the business element of the community which most importantly must operate within a climate of strong competition where group effort is of little value. We can see that Khun Keo, by forming a

rather tight knit group, has been able to have considerable impact upon the community, but the idea of uniting to fight him or to form groups to regulate this and other behavior has not been brought into effect.

One of the strong pulls towards the formation of more formal groups is the increasing size and heterogeneity of a community brought about through greater communication and a general increase in the rate of development of an area. These factors are present in Changwat Town, but an even more important factor is the expectation that disparate individuals can work effectively toward a common goal, and, that, if they so work, there will be recognition of this and some reward to be gained from the social-political system. These two elements are basically lacking in Thailand. The government does not allow the formation of groups for the purpose of carrying out political action and would severely deal with groups which would form to carry out political-like activities. Groups formed to carry out non-political goals, such as the Chinese language schools, are suspected of political interests however innocent they may be. Also, characteristic of the larger Thai society, and seemingly reflected among this group of businessmen, there is a low degree of expectations of reliability--partly countered when each member makes such a heavy investment that their behavior is a good deal more predictable--on the part of their fellows. The exception here is the challenge group which has been



discussed previously. As for the others involved in the cases which I have described above, such as in the bus case, many are outside the business community of Changwat Town, and they are, therefore, not part of the primary focus of this research. They are important only in as much as their case illustrates the manner of operation of Khun Keo and their tactics present a method for countering his advances. In the ice plant case there are two important persons, Khun Visoot and his brother-in-law, Khun Paitoon, who are the principle investors in the development of the new ice plant. They work on this project entirely separately from any other individuals or groups and appear to prefer such a situation above that of working in a group. Khun Visoot once said that he preferred to own something himself rather than share in its control with others. Khun Paitoon is the trustworthy assistant to Khun Visoot, something in the manner of a foreman or manager. These two represent the generalization very well. That is, there is little interest in working in a group, there is no attempt to side together with Khun Khao in defeating Khun Keo with the market, nor does Khun Khao side with Khun Visoot in the fighting over the ice plants. Khun Visoot sees the opportunity to gain economic advantage through the ice plant and prefers to work this by himself, reaping the full reward of profit and prestige in winning a battle with Khun Keo.

While I shall summarize my conclusions for this and



the following chapters at the end of Chapter Six, I would like to make a few points at this time. In this chapter we have seen that the processual model of Swartzian analysis is an effective tool for dealing with the data on factional conflict which I have presented. I have explored his repertory of concepts in order to see if they would adequately characterize the data, and we have seen that, in general, they have proved to be most useful for this purpose. Where his concepts have not adequately covered my observations, I have introduced the concept of latent support as a means of expanding Swartz's basic categories of direct and indirect support.

Also, we have seen that Swartz's model has required us to focus our attention on the actors in the contest and thereby to consider their goals, their strategies in action, and the supports that they are able to mobilize. The processual mode, and the theoretical constructs developed by Swartz and others, may clearly be seen to be a powerful tool for guiding research and the later analysis of data.

CHAPTER FIVE

A NETWORK ANALYSIS

In this chapter I will present a partial network display of some of the personnel that I have discussed in the cases and the analysis that has followed Chapter Three. A fuller presentation of the network diagram, a discussion of the instrument,⁴¹ and the method employed in its use will be presented in the appendix. For the purposes of this section, I shall give only a brief description of the techniques used and, of course, the results from this application of network analysis as they are appropriate to our discussion.

In Figure 5 is presented a partial network diagram of some of the subjects of our discussion. Not all of the persons that we have discussed in the cases are indicated on the diagram due to the way it was developed; however, several of the important personalities and their pseudonyms are indicated. Others while important in the community have not been central to the discussion of the cases but do appear on the sociogram, and these individuals are indicated by the title of their office or merely as a basic circle.

The basic idea of the instrument from which the display



in Figure 5 is developed was to see if a tool developed along the lines of a traditional sociometric test (cf. Moreno 1960) would be useful in supporting the material I had already gathered by the more traditional field methods of extended interviews and participant observation. Inasmuch as this instrument was conceived of and employed in the latter stages of my field study, (from January to March 1967) I wished to spend only a minimal amount of time on the project. Therefore, as I saw its place as a minor part of my project, I did not follow the usual textbook procedures for designing a research instrument; thus, there was no pre-test, and there was no attempt at rechecking the instrument at a later time.

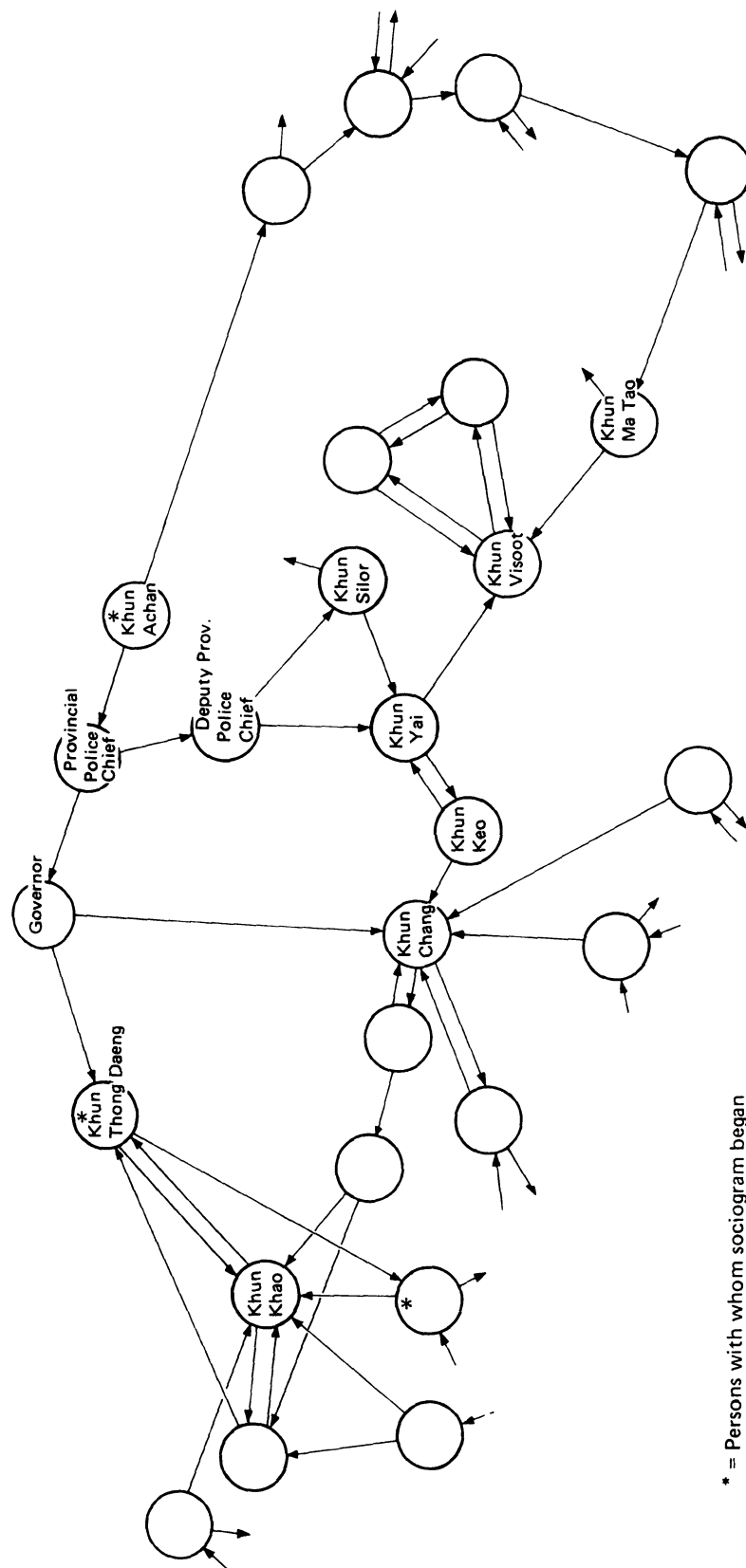
Basically, the data was gathered by the method of arbitrarily choosing certain persons in the community in whom I was interested, usually one of the members of the various factions that have been discussed or some other prominent individual. I told the respondent that I was attempting to make a kind of road map of friendship patterns in the community and I would like to ask him who his three best friends were in town. Later, this was modified to include a short list of questions at the end of which was placed the friendship question accompanied by the same explanation. The reason for the change was that persons who knew me only slightly had some anxiety about answering the question when this was the first question.

By way of explanation of what I meant by friend, I

indicated a person with whom the respondent liked to spend his time, would ask advice of, would be willing to discuss problems with, and generally felt would treat him as a close friend. I did not ask him to rank them in any way.

My assistant and I wrote the answers down in our notebooks and later on the interview schedule. At the end of the day we would enter the Thai and English names on a card and draw the person in on a provisional network diagram. The individual named would then be contacted and the same question asked. As I indicated, I thought that this would not take much time; however, it took better than two months of the time of my assistant and myself, and at the end we still had 16 more persons to contact.

In terms of the development of the instrument and the presentation in its present form, Figure 5 is a representation of the choices made by various members of the community in response to a question to name their three⁴² best friends. Therefore, the figure presented above is not of the same nature as those presented by Barnes (1968) and discussed in Mitchell (1966), Mayer (1966), and earlier writers in this tradition. Rather, as described above, this instrument is constructed more along the lines of the original development of the sociogram (Nehnevajsa 1960). Thus, while the population of Changwat Town is, from the point of view of the outsider, a potentially unbounded network in that there are no boundaries imposed by the researcher beyond requesting names of persons in Changwat Town only, the nature of the



* = Persons with whom sociogram began

FIGURE 5. A PARTIAL SOCIOGRAM MADE IN CHANGWAT TOWN FEBRUARY-MARCH 1967

question is to discern the boundaries which the subjects themselves have developed, at least in regard to the answer to the question asked. The assumption underlying the use of this device is that, in response to the question asked, the subjects will provide answers which indicate the boundaries of groups in which there is greater social interaction than between themselves and some other individuals. This approach differs from that developed by the British social anthropologists noted above in that the method of sociometric construction is more explicit, is based on a very limited set of behavior of the respondent--his answer to the question--and is thus not such a totally embracing concept. The social network concept, arising as it does from the stimulus of both Moreno and Radcliff-Brown, is used in the hands of the social anthropologists as a theoretical model for explaining a society rather than as a methodological tool for analyzing the society (cf. Barnes 1954 and Epstein 1961). Thus, the construction of the network is one which is done by the researcher on a multiplex basis and is rarely mapped in any manner except in the most schematic method with no clear referral to data. The network may be seen to be a logical construct around which we can organize our thinking about a particular society or community, but one which can not be built up inductively from observed phenomena, or, if it can, the writers cited have not made clear their methodology in doing so.⁴³

The basic design of the sociogram may be seen to be

entirely conventional in which circles represent individuals and the arrows connecting the individuals are the choices made by the respondents. This directional information is important for the relative lack of reciprocation of choices in many of the indications giving a chain-like effect to the diagram. Arrows which lead away from a circle but do not point to another circle are connecting choices to the larger sociogram of which this is a part. The small plus sign within the circles indicate persons with whom the questioning was begun.

The network test used, while simplex in character, can easily be duplicated and the methodology is straightforward. Accordingly, the diagram constructed from it is of far less analytic power than the multiplex networks developed by Mayer (1966) and others. It is based upon limited data and is, of course, of limited use. However, I intend to apply it in only a very limited sense; that is, the sociogram is presented here as a means of confirming some of the statements made by informants and conclusions which I have made. As I have said, the choices which are represented here are an indication of the response made by informants to the question which I posed, and I shall assume these indicate their actual feelings of close friendship towards some other. Further, one may also measure by this method the rate of interaction between persons by assuming that lines linking two persons indicate some degree of reciprocated social interaction; thus, one arrow linking two persons is less



strong a relationship than two arrows.

When we return to Figure 5 and we view the triangular group, which includes the Deputy Provincial Police Chief, just to the right of the vertical trending choice line of the governor, we note that this set of friendship choices parallels the statements made by informants regarding the process of payments between the bus station manager, and police officials. Such a choice in the sociometric test suggests that the path of payment goes along this line between Khun Silow and the deputy provincial police chief, or, perhaps, his immediate superior. The deputy's other choice is also significant for Khun Yai is one of the persons implicitly implicated in Major Satien's farewell speech. Khun Keo is, of course, the person who filed suit and the deputy and the provincial police chief were Major Satien's immediate superiors who were also faulted in the speech. Khun Ma Tao is the gambling casino operator upon whose casino Major Satien had, according to reports, attempted several raids without success. Another interesting feature of the diagram is that the link between Khun Ma Tao, is Khun Visoot, the principal in competition with Khun Keo in the ice plant case. Of course, Khun Yai and Khun Ma Tao are good friends of Khun Keo and support him in the market competition, but in this case they choose Khun Visoot apparently because he is a frequenter of the gambling casino, and possibly because they know that I often spoke with him.

At the bottom of the diagram, near the center, we can



see that Khun Chang, the manager of the Country Bank, is chosen considerably more often than the others indicated in the sociogram, and his position is intermediate between the two leaders, Khun Khao and Khun Keo. He is a prominent member of the community, having been an elected representative for the province several times in the national legislature, a former school teacher, a rather well placed government official, and, at present, he is in the very prestigious position of bank manager. These are all important positions in the Thai social scene and account for his higher numbers of choices. This placement in the display adequately reflects his intermediary role between the two groups, for he is used by the government officials to act as a go between with Khun Keo. They are in close business contact in the bank, but Khun Chang has the trust of the government officials and the respect of the community generally, as evidenced by his successive elections to the national legislature.

One can also note that the governor, the highest ranking government official in the province, chose the managers of the two principal banks in town. I believe that the reason for choosing Khun Chang is largely his accumulated prestige in the community, but the reason for choosing Khun Thong Daeng is, in part, the importance of the City Bank in Changwat Province, and Thailand in general. I believe the choice is made for two more important reasons. First, Khun Thong Daeng makes a considerable effort to ingratiate

himself into the favor of the governor and other government officials. Also, he is extremely interested in the economic development of the province. Obviously such development is good for the economic activities of the bank, and the City Bank, as a policy, attempts to encourage such development nation wide; Khun Thong Daeng reflects this interest in his efforts in Changwat Province. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, he, on his own, has developed a farmer's loan program which is the first to be tried by his bank in Isan; to be sure, similar programs are being initiated in the central region of Thailand but to impliment such a program in Isan is far more risky due to the very marginal character of farming in the region. This program demonstrates his very high interest in development and his initiative in putting his ideas into operation. Since this is exactly what the objective of the Thai government is, particularly in those provinces which, like Changwat Province, are classified as security sensitive, the governor and Khun Thong Daeng have a high degree of identity of purpose.

I think one of the more interesting contrasts on the diagram is the contrast between the number of choices received by Khun Khao and Khun Keo. Five persons chose the former while only one person chose the latter. Largely this represents the leadership position that Khun Khao has in the business community and is only exceeded by the number of choices received by Khun Chang, the popular and powerful banker. Khun Keo is, on the other hand, less often chosen

because he is not a friendly figure. He is a powerful figure who does not attempt in the usual manner to find friends. He is a more solitary and imposing figure than Khun Khao, and people are frightened of him and his followers. It is a strong and fearless man who would claim to be Khun Keo's friend.

I will not dwell further on the analysis of the diagram other than to discuss a few of the more general points about it and some of the limitations in its use in this work. First of all, in asking the question who are one's three best friends, the respondent was given a definition of friend to the effect that it is a person with whom the respondent would like to be--one from whom the respondent could seek advice and assistance and share problems as well as good times. The definition notwithstanding, it is clear that some used quite different selection criteria than I had in mind. The provincial chief of police is a case in point. From my observations there appeared to be no particular love lost between the chief of police and the governor; yet he chose to name the governor as one of his close friends. I believe his choice was influenced by the formal organization and ideology of the governmental system. In the traditional system, as stated earlier, the governor is the highest ranking governmental official in the province but at the present time these two statuses are essentially equal in real power and often conflicted in actual conduct of the offices by incumbents in other provinces. Therefore, I believe his



choices are an indication that he was thinking along the lines of the formal structure of governmental hierarchy and the ideal relationships between the two incumbents rather than friendship realities. Also, he chose his immediate subordinate, who might wish to ingratiate himself into the close friendship of his superior but did not reciprocate the police chief's choice. This second choice also fits the assumptions that the provincial chief of police's choices reflect the formal governmental relationships and do not reveal his actual friends, if any. Therefore, the first problem in the use of the device is the standardization of the response. The only reply to this is that this device is only for the purpose of supplementing the evidence gathered through key informant interviews and we will have to assume an uneven quality in the responses.

A more interesting problem which arises in attempting to interpret this presentation is the question of whether the chain effect mentioned is an outgrowth of the nature of this type of network analysis, or some nexus between the cultural system of the respondent and his perception of the situation. I feel clear that there is enough evidence to indicate that there is considerable variation in the responses of individuals, and that some have indicated friendships, however defined, while others seem to have used some other calculus in determining how to make their response; compare, for instance, the choices of the provincial chief of police and his deputy. Beyond this problem is the



question of why so many of the respondents choices were not reciprocated by others, that is, why do we have the chain-like effect? One of the answers which comes readily to mind is that this is an example of the loose structure concept materializing out of the empirical data. This, of course, can only remain a hypothesis until some further research can be carried out to test this hypothesis. Nevertheless, we might consider this idea a bit. A possible alternative which might be adduced to explain this phenomena is that choices are highly situational, and that they tend to follow office hierarchies when both individuals are government officials. Certainly, this was distinctly my impression when we interviewed one man, who is not represented on this partial sociogram, in his office; when we finished explaining what we meant by a friend, he looked up and said, in effect, "let me see." He looked around the room and he named his friends from persons working in that office. As neither my assistant nor I knew this man to any extent, we can not say whether these men were in fact his close friends, but I certainly doubt it.

Another plausible alternative hypothesis is that the individual names those persons whom he wishes to have as his friends but who are not. However much this might be the case for the Provincial Chief of Police vis-a-vis the governor, it seems hardly likely that this would apply to his choice of his own deputy. We might, of course, apply some of the convoluted reasoning from the field of psychology to

the effect that the deputy represents a child substitute and the chief wants the respect and love of him as if the deputy were his own child. But I am far less eager to apply this kind of reasoning before the more straightforward hypotheses from social anthropology are tested. I would be more willing to entertain the idea that what we have here is in fact a demonstration of the loose structure of Thai society.

For the moment I will explore this idea. The introduction of the "loose structure" concept in the field of anthropology has generally been credited to John F. Embree when he wrote an article entitled "Thailand--A Loosely Structured Social System" (1950). And appropriately enough, the concept was developed for the purpose of analyzing Thai society. Since the original publication of Embree's paper, this concept, and the associated ones of loose interpersonal relationships and openness of society, has seen considerable service, not only in the analyses of anthropologists, but also political scientists, historians, and economists--see Cunningham, 1969. I will refer the reader to the Cunningham discussion for a brief summary of the literature concerning the use of this concept and its related conceptions.

Fortunately, in the recent past a major symposium was held on this subject in which the loose structure concept was discussed by both anthropologists and sociologists. This symposium has now been published in revised form by Hans-Dieter Evers (1969) and it represents an important introduction to the realm of interdisciplinary discussion on a



limited but salient theoretical problem.

For the purpose of the discussion we can rely upon the reader to consider this basic document depending upon his interest. I shall only summarize some of my observations concerning these papers. First of all, when observing the papers in this volume, one is immediately struck with the differences between the writers along a behavioralist-structuralist continuum. We find on the one hand Mulder stating:

In all social interaction, in Thailand as in any place else, people meet as occupants of social positions, or roles, that can be clearly defined in structural-functional terms; there is nothing "loose" about that. If it were otherwise in Thailand, sociologists and social anthropologists might better avoid Thai society [1969:20].

And on the other hand, we find Phillips stating:

However, I must argue that ultimately our concern is not and should not be structural analysis but rather the study of the behavior of Thai peasants: how they act, how they deal with and feel toward one another, and what they give to and derive from such dealings. To me, social structural principles are merely constructs abstracted from the stream of behavior which may aid in understanding such behavior [1969:26; author's italics].

Of course, Phillips' statement is a definition of how one develops the categories which we call social structure but it indicates his specific bias as a behavioralist. Thus, Mulder and Phillips are quite clearly opposed in their basic position and remain so, more or less as polemicists for their particular viewpoints.

A second continuum is the question of macrosociological and microsociological analysis. Punyodyana raises the issue



of whether community level analysis can stand for the society as a whole. He writes, "Thus research findings derived from community research are in a very weak position to represent the reality of the entire social situation. . . " (1969:84). Or again he writes, "A difficulty inherent in community or village studies conducted in Thailand . . . is that the fieldworkers seem to confine their operation excessively to the limits of the village boundary" (1969:85). A major criticism of anthropological research has always been the small population size of its research units and their representativeness of a total culture, especially when the generalizations derived from the study of small villages are held to apply to a total society. Punyodyana's arguments are particularly within this framework. In this vein, information is presented which demonstrates that some considerable decline in social mobility has occurred at the higher levels of Thai society. This is a crucial argument, for basic to the loose structure argument is the strongly held belief that social and geographical mobility is central to the belief structure of Thai culture, and the anticipation of such mobility is one of the main dimensions of the set of expectations of individuals which cause them neither to be particularly reliable in their behavior nor to have a high expectation of others' reliability. Thus, when Thai society is observed from the viewpoint of the total society and the classes, estates, and institutions with which sociologists concern themselves, rather than



"anecdotal" village level studies, this crucial assumption of social mobility is badly eroded. Thus, Punyodyana argues that with declining mobility the Thai society is becoming more structured, less loose.

If we consider the source of one of his more important statistical materials he indicates that among 60 high ranking government officers in two government ministries there appears to be less upward mobility from the lower social ranks. One might wonder about the other ministries; is the pattern consistent with those of the two reported? One might also question whether this is simply not reversing the position from which he criticizes anthropology? Is he just arguing from a similarly small sample at the other extreme of the social structural continuum? In order to be fair, I should point out that Punyodyana does quote statistics from a cross-sectional random survey of intergenerational occupational mobility which seem to indicate that Thais express a value for hard work in order to achieve a high position. On the other hand, he also shows that the same survey indicated that Thais tend to be satisfied with their present position; however, the study should be able to indicate data on whether there is intergenerational mobility, but, curiously, Punyodyana does not cite the findings (1969: 99-102).

When one comes to appraise the set of papers presented, one has the distinct feeling that there is considerable agreement on many aspects of Thai society. This is clearly

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stated by Moerman, the author of the summary comments for this volume:

If one takes account of the useful distinctions between interpersonal and institutional sociology . . . and between folk-normative and behavioral-statistical models. . . , these papers, despite their occasional asperity, record surprising agreement about the peculiarities, properties, and problems which Thai society presents to social scientists [1969:128].

If there is substantial agreement there is also considerable area in which little agreement is possible, for the critics, largely the sociologists, criticize the anthropologists for not doing social structural studies when their sub-discipline interests are in culture and personality. Thus, in a way, the sociologists talk past the anthropologists. Their arguments are, nonetheless, important and they point the way to areas of research interest which have been little studied by social scientists. One must extend a note of appreciation for their efforts in this regard. For the part of those who defend the concept of loose structure, one must note that however weak this may be as a theoretical tool, it certainly appears to have explanatory, even if it lacks predictive, power for the numerous examples cited in the literature of those employing the concept in interpreting interpersonal behavior. Certainly, I can employ it in helping to explain behavior from my own field experiences. Therefore, if one grants a usefulness to this idea, and at the same time one allows that the criticisms of it are not altogether wide of the mark, can one not ask for better data from both sides, or, at the very least, clear directions of



where to look for such data and how to gather it? It is here that one notes a definite lack in this symposium in that there is little attempt at outlining some of the specific research projects and the nature of the research implements to be used in the field. It is true that Moerman does, in his very brief paper, discuss some of the directions and areas in which research will prove fruitful, but this work would be greatly enhanced to have some further discussion of problems and methodology beyond the defense and attack that the collected papers amount to.

In light of this point of view, I should point out that exceedingly little was said of any comparative analysis except in the case of Cunningham who made some brief references to the usage of the loose structure concept in analyzing other societies within the area. This symposium leaves one with the feeling that it does not, except in the most tentative ways, deal with comparison of Thai society and thus it has failed in setting "Thailand in Comparative Perspective". It must be remarked, however, that the tentative suggestions made are tantalizing in their briefness.

Lacking, in large part, comparative data from previous research, one can ask that there be more concern with distinguishing actual areas requiring research and means by which to accomplish such projects. In regard to this latter task, I would suggest that the sociometric test described above shows promise as a specific tool for getting at the question of loose structure. It is true that there are



problems remaining to be resolved in the application of such a technique, but there appears to be considerable potential in such a device for demonstrating in a quantitative way the degree of interaction between persons, and thus to arrive at a specific measure of whether interpersonal relations are indeed loosely or tightly structured. If such an attempt appears to be satisfactory within a culture, then it should be applicable cross-culturally. At least the attempt should be made to devise techniques by which the use of this tool can be made sensitive across cultural boundaries.

The basic problem in the use of this sociometric technique is the question of the specific data to be gathered and how it should be arrayed. The data I have presented here is the response to the question, "who are your two best friends?" While I have discussed the problems associated with this approach above, I will consider briefly some of those which I encountered in the field. Certainly, working with an interpreter, as I was required to do, diminishes the amount of primary contact one can have with the person one is interviewing. Further, it decreases the ability to evaluate the response to questions; however, the use of a tool such as the network instrument I used does, by its simplicity, reduce the amount of error that can be produced between the translator and the investigator. Another problem encountered was the situational nature of responses. I always had a suspicion that the nature of



the surroundings in which the interview took place had a great deal to do with how the informant answered the question. And, of course, there is the question of the informant understanding the terms used to ask the question and the interviewer fully understanding the response from the informant. Also, in order to adequately employ such a device as an important part of the field repertoire one should exercise adequate controls over the collection of data. Thus, I think it would be mandatory to pretest the instrument and perhaps check the reliability of the data by conducting a repetition of the same test after a period of six months. Other controls would suggest themselves as the design of the instrument progressed.

After returning from the field, I later found references to studies of a similar kind but using different techniques.⁴⁴ Some of these studies in network analysis have been mentioned above, see page 183. One study not cited above, but which is quite interesting, is by Dr. Elizabeth Bott (1957). In this work Dr. Bott, as well as the previously mentioned authors,⁴⁵ looks to the network as including the total set of relations which a person has or, in the case of Dr. Bott, the family has with some other individuals. Thus, in theory, any network which is developed out of the application of this approach will include all of the (significant?) relationships rather than being arbitrarily limited, as in my work, by forcing the interviewee to distinguish only two or three persons with whom he has social relations.



It would appear that the magnitude of such an undertaking, the task of characterizing the total network of a community, particularly an urban community in a densely settled area, would be very great without some means of limiting the sample size. It seems clear that some technique must be used if one is not going to be involved with all the theoretically possible links which tie all mankind together. Certainly, Dr. Bott's technique of limiting her observations to only twenty families is one means of doing this. It is true, as Barnes states, that Bott does not give an exact measure for her close and tight knit networks, but she does give us some insight into the technique used in her work when she states:

If possible it would be advisable to interview several members of a network, following the links of interaction from one person to another, instead of relying on what each couple say about their network, as I have done. Precise definition of connectedness would require quantitative analysis of the total network, of the independent networks of husband and wife, of their joint network (the people with whom they have joint relationships), and of that part of the total network composed of kin, that composed of friends, and that composed of neighbours. But the data of the present research are not consistent or detailed enough to permit such quantitative analysis [1957:61].

This seems to me to be quite an accurate statement of the optimal data that one would like to have before one could make a quantitative statement with the highest possible accuracy; however, it will probably be apparent that it is necessary to settle, as Bott herself did, for something less than the maximal data possible, but there may very well be some sampling technique which will be appropriate for



solving this problem.

Another point which will have to be considered in the future, when such a device is perfected for application in a particular culture, is the question of making it sensitive cross-culturally. This is, then, the question of construction of a tool which is equally valid in one society as in another. Thus, in my device, the characterization of what the word "friend" meant presented a considerable problem which was not altogether satisfactorily solved in the field situation. Nevertheless, I believe this problem would best be attacked after this technique is further refined in a single society, that is, once there is some consensus for its worth in the analysis of social networks.

Recently Barnes has developed a means of measuring whether networks are more or less dense, i.e., whether they are tight or loose knit. If these terms are the same as those which apply to loose and tight structure, then we may have a means of dealing with questions about the difference between societies. His measures of density are applicable to such a network diagram as mine, and I will demonstrate how we might measure the density of the partial network I have presented in Figure 5. However, before I turn to this demonstration, I wish to consider briefly whether loose structure might be measured by the density of a partial network.

If we assume that any kind of a network diagram delineates data in which there is a structure, then it would



seem that a measure of density in the network data would test the tightness or looseness of the structure presented. The question that I must answer is whether the network diagram I have presented displays any kinds of data in which there is a structure. It is true that these are the choices of persons who are attempting to make a selection of their two best friends from all of those that they have. Also, we see that the choices are not evenly spaced over the display, but they show clustering and give us a picture which suggests boundaries or clines of greater reciprocation or less. Certainly to my way of thinking this reflects a structure of choices. Therefore, to the extent that our network display varies in density it will be either looser or tighter, and thus, it will present a picture of loosely or tightly structured choices. While this will not definitively show us whether or not Thai culture is loosely or tightly structured, it will give us a measure of one of the ways that persons can structure their behavior. I will now turn to Barnes' example.

Barnes (1968:115-116) has proposed that a measure of density of a network, or a part of one, is the degree to which the members of a network are in contact with each other in relation to the total possible contacts between the members of the network. Actually, he worked with zones of contacts which are all those persons in contact with a given ego (his term is Alpha), or, depending upon the order of the zone, a certain degree of remove from Alpha (a first order



zone is composed of all those "relationships between two persons, each of whom is either Alpha or one of his contacts" while a second order zone is "all the existing relationships between two persons, each of whom is either Alpha or one of his first-or second-order contacts"), which I take to be a part of a network which may be delineated by an egocentric approach--in my presentation, I will choose an Alpha on an arbitrary and heuristic basis. That is, for a zone of individuals, one counts the number of actual contacts between the members and expresses this figure as a percentage of the theoretical possible contacts between the members. This may be stated in the following manner:

$$D = \frac{100 R_a}{R_t} \quad \text{where:}$$

D = density of network (zone),

R_a = actual relationship contacts between members of a sociometric segment in which only one contact between any two individuals (P) may be counted,

R_t = total theoretical relationship contacts between members of a network (zone) in which only one contact between any two individuals (P) may be counted,

P = an individual person in the network (zone),

n = total number of P 's in the network (zone),

and:

$$R_t = n^2 - \left[\frac{n}{2} (n + 1) \right], \text{ or } \frac{n}{2} (n - 1).$$

It should be noted that Barnes was working with



undirected systems and thus any contact is considered reciprocal—earlier we noted the directional character of the choices made by informants, but at that point we ignored this directed aspect of the sociogram--therefore, we must modify the equations presented above. In directed graphs, the contact lines between any two persons may be at least two with one line going from P_1 to P_2 and another returning from P_1 to P_2 . We shall ignore the question of strength of contacts between any two persons (P). Therefore, depending upon how many choices are reciprocated the quantity R_a could be as much as twice the number in the formula above and R_t would be exactly twice as large as in the undirected graph system. However, in the question I asked my respondents, I limited them to a choice of only two friends. Thus, the equivalent to R_t in a limited, directed graph (LR_t) equals $2n$, while the equivalent to R_a in a limited, directed graph (LR_a) is equivalent to the total number of directed choices between any two individuals (P), provided that the total not exceed two choices composed of one choice each directed in the opposite direction, P_1 to P_2 and P_2 to P_1 . The formula is written thusly:

$$LD = \frac{100 \text{ } LR_a}{2n} \quad \text{where:}$$

LD = density of a limited choice network.

In the partial network presented in Figure 5, there are 23 individuals who each make two friendship choices of persons, some of whom do not appear in this display. This number, 23, will then be used to calculate the total theoretical

choices for this limited, directed choice, network (LRT). In this partial network the actual choice relationships are directed towards individuals within the network 38 times; therefore, actual choice relationships (LRa) equals 38. Substituting in our formula we derive the following results:

$$LD = \frac{100 (38)}{46}$$

$$LD = \frac{3800}{46}$$

$$LD = 83\%$$

Thus, we may say that the density of this limited, directed choice, partial network is 83%. When compared to the examples presented by Barnes, this percentage appears to be rather high when calculated in this manner, but it is largely due to the way in which I abstracted this data from the larger sociogram which I constructed from my total data.

If, instead, I make an analysis of the density of the second order zone of Khun Keo, which I present in Figure 6,⁴⁶ I find the density of this second order zone is a lower figure than the density in Figure 5, but it still appears to be rather high. I believe this to be largely due to the limiting factor built into the manner in which the data was collected. By restricting my informants to only two choices, I drastically curtailed the theoretically possible relationships between this set of individuals--LRt is 22 in the above calculation, while the Rt for the same number of individuals (11) is 110, and in a directed choice sociogram it is 220--while if we had gathered data of the actual total



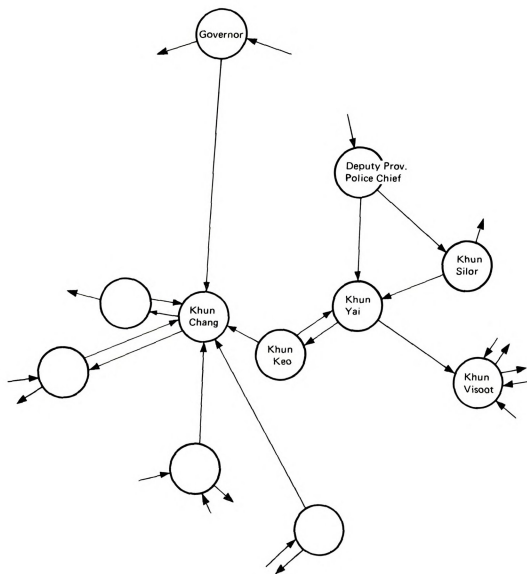


FIGURE 6. KHUN KEO'S SECOND ORDER ZONE

number of choices these individuals would have made, perhaps from a list or by some techniques of observation, I believe this would have produced an even lower density figure. This kind of argument becomes stronger as the number of individuals in the network increases.

Of course, the assumption here is that the networks that one depicts represent structures of a more or less transient character. If this is true, then the nature of the interaction density represented by the density within the network diagram is a measure of the looseness or tightness of the structure depicted. Of course, in the case material which I presented, the structure is forced by the response to a question in which the response may or may not reflect reality, or even some folk reality. However, whether the response actually reflects friendship patterns can be verified by other types of observations. If it does reflect the actual friendship relationships, then the measure of density within the interaction pattern can be compared cross-culturally to see whether there is a difference in densities between loose structures and tight structures. After all, Barnes has proposed this as a test, but, to my knowledge, no one has yet applied this technique in a field situation.

I shall end this discussion of the network diagram at this point by saying that we have here a quantifiable technique for measuring density of social networks which, once the problems in its use are solved, has promise of being



applicable intra- and inter-societially, and, thereby, producing a comparative measure of the tightness of social systems.

CHAPTER SIX

PROCESSUAL ANALYSIS AND NON-FORMAL GROUPS

In the past, socio-cultural studies have tended to be highly descriptive in nature with relatively little analysis of a dynamic character. This is not to say that descriptive studies were unnecessary, nor that the analysis, often of a structural nature, resulting from such studies was not of high quality. Frequently, in fact, the work is brilliant, but the nature of knowledge is cumulative, and, thus, what were virtuoso performances are now considered to be landmarks, but somehow dated. Little by little our knowledge has accumulated and we have gone on further with new perspectives towards research and the data with which we deal. Thus, I find it interesting that two articles appearing recently in the American Anthropologist talk on the one hand of attempting to find new ways to deal with the questions of change--which, after all, is central to the fundamental aim of the scientific endeavor, prediction of future events (Barth 1967)--and on the other hand of the defense of the equilibrium model in the study of social change (Gluckman 1968). It is exactly Gluckman's argument that strikes the eye, for it is he who feels compelled to answer critics of the structural-functional approach in anthropology by

stating that while the equilibrium model appears to be dealing with stationary or static society models it is, in fact, only a first step in the analysis of society. When we have described the fundamental equilibrium model we will have a base line, as it were, against which to judge changes that actually go on within the system. I do not intend to go further with this description other than to note that Gluckman, a major proponent for methodological innovation with his extended case study approach, is, perhaps, the person most able to argue for the usefulness of the earlier model.

The point I wish to make is that Barth and Gluckman are speaking, only partly, on different sides of the issue, to the point that the older methods of social anthropology are inadequate for the study of social change and the question of prediction. Thus, Barth states, "I would therefore argue that it is unfruitful to explain a social form, a pattern, directly by hypothesizing a purpose for it" (1967:663). This is just one example of the reservations that present day workers express about the older methods employed so successfully in the past. The method of structural-functional analysis and its implicit, if not explicit, use of the equilibrium model is the main problem. The application of this method of analysis is seen by its critics as producing an analysis which tends to characterize the culture under study in a static, normative, or ideal-typical manner without giving sufficient data to

enable one to surely develop an understanding of change.

Thus, Barth writes:

Because of our general unwillingness to abandon well-established routines, studies explicitly addressed to the investigation of change have been prone to contain descriptions of a social system at two points in time --or even at one point in time!--and then to rely on extrapolation between these two states, or from the one state, to indicate the course of change. . . . Our contribution as social anthropologists must lie in providing such primary materials for understanding the processes; it lies in our powers of observation out there where change is happening today, and not in producing secondary data by deduction and extrapolation [1967:661, author's italics].

While Barth directs the main thrust of his argument towards studies of change, it is clear that within the current context of anthropology this is a generally held view of the limitations of current socio-cultural anthropology.

The concern with the problems of the "new anthropology" and the changing circumstances in which we find the world community, have tended to develop a variety of new methodologies, concerns with less studied areas of social systems, and the development of new theoretical positions. One of the interests that anthropologists have cultivated to an increasing degree--though apparently not enough to suit Dr. Punyodyana, if we can judge from his comments concerning anthropological studies in Thailand (see page 195 above)--is a concern with part societies--communities in close contact with larger, often national, societies. Workers in this type of problem area have generated a number of ways by which to approach their data in order to produce theoretical models which meet the requirements of

scientific theories of predictability, parsimoniousness, and elegance. One approach is that exemplified by Phillips (1965), Piker (1968), and others who stress the culture personality approach. This perspective appears to give us a good insight into how individuals go about adapting to the society whether it be relatively traditional or rapidly changing--for a very apt case see Hanks and Phillips (1961). In the Hanks and Phillips article we can trace the life history of an individual Thai from early youth in a rural village to the city of Bangkok and back to the village again. There is, to be sure, considerable data for us to work with, but, unfortunately, it pertains to only a single individual, hardly enough for the usual social anthropologist let alone the sociologist! But it is exactly the basic method of such a study that makes it so attractive; that is, in the case study of an individual we receive many of the answers we would like to have to the question that we all want to answer, why do people act as they do? The life history method, sometimes called the case method, appears to be highly rewarding when applied to the individual; therefore, it is reasoned to be similarly rewarding to the social anthropologist if it can be applied to a large enough sample of persons, over a suitable period of time, with the appropriate amount of data, and a set of observations of behavior of significant value.

Indeed, such a notion has in fact been proposed for the field of sociocultural anthropology by Professor Max

Gluckman. Gluckman (1965:235), in discussing the work of younger anthropologists who have in their work presented more than " 'apt and isolated illustrations' " but detailed cases "analysing the development of social relations themselves, under the conflicting pressures of discrepant principles and values, . . .", has provided us with the term the "extended-case method." As indicated, this is a fuller description of events much along the lines of the case history of the individual, but the purpose of such description is not to present a history of events but to use these more detailed descriptions for the analysis and the formation of sociological laws. Thus, it is hoped such type of work will aid in the understanding of the dynamics and process of social life.

One may question, however, what will come of the application of such a perspective to the data that is derived from observations of behavior in Thailand. For instance, let us consider what we can expect to find through the application of the extended case studies in a loosely structured social system; that is, if behavior is very individualistic and the individuals are not deviants, can we expect to be able to derive any generalizations about why people act as they do in a loosely structured social system? In other words, we return to the question of what is a loosely structured social system.

The answer would seem to lie in a type of society in which individual options in any social situation are many

and the freedom to exercise one's options is widespread, so that behavior will be less predictable. On the other hand, the view of a tightly knit society is that one's alternatives for action are rather closely circumscribed by normative rules and the social structures of the society. That is, I would anticipate in the loose structure system that there would be relatively fewer specific norms and greater reliance on general norms to guide a person's actions in any social situation; whereas, in the tightly knit structure, the general norms would be superseded by more precise norms. If these are the characteristics of loosely and tightly knit societies respectively, we must then look for ways which will demonstrate these features in comparative terms in order that we may have qualitative or quantitative measures of the difference. At this time, there are no such measures.

As a first step, we should begin to look at such studies which appear to hold promise for developing differential criteria for loosely and tightly structured societies. The studies might consider questions on the social structural, personality, or cultural levels of the social system providing that they appear to have potential for differentiating the character of the two types of systems. However, before a tool can be fully operational for the task of comparative analysis, it must be sharpened through the development of sufficient refinement of concepts as to be able to discriminate one type of society from another.

Keeping in mind the idea of refinement of the concepts involved, I will attempt to consider my conflict data in terms of the work on factionalism and other non-permanent groups.

One outcome of those students using the perspective of the extended case method and attempting to focus upon the dynamics of leadership in village society has been some very interesting work in the field of non-kinship, non-formal groups. Such interests have produced studies of factionalism on the part of Nicholas (1965) and others, as well as studies in the more general category, the quasi-group (Mayer, 1966), and related phenomena. In this section, I propose to consider what contribution the data presented above can make to the study of factionalism.

The importance of non-kinship groups in social anthropology has long been recognized; however, it has tended to be overshadowed by studies of social organization which have stressed kinship studies. In fact, Bohannan (1963) assigns the credit for the recognition of the importance of such groups and the blame for the prevention of their study on a single individual, Robert Lowie. Bohannan claims that Lowie by insisting that non-kinship groups not be analytically subdivided--in order not to engage in sterile classification unconnected with the natives' own folk-view of the groups nor to lose sight of the basic similarity of such groups--and by assigning a single term to them as a class so confused the anthropologists' under-



standing of them that they ignored the study of such social units (1963:149). From the 1950's onward, anthropologists have made some considerable progress in such studies.

The study of non-kinship groups and the increased concern with questions of process in the study of cultures generally has led to the consideration of less formal groups during the 1960's. By less formal groups, I mean those groups which give the appearance of being temporary in nature as indicated by their goal, the make up of their personnel and their means of interacting, their usual lack of any kind of capital resources, and their lack of anything resembling a charter. Such groups have been called quasi-groups by Mayer (1966:97), see discussion on page 221 below, and I shall use this term in the future to refer to the general class of non-formal groups.

A particular type of quasi-group which has become prominent in anthropological studies is the faction. There are several definitions of factionalism. Siegel and Beals (1960a:108) define it as "overt, unregulated (unresolved) conflict which interferes with the achievement of the goals of the group [*italics theirs*]." Nicholas (1965:27-29) characterizes factions simultaneously as conflict and political groups, but they are not corporate groups. Furthermore, he notes that the faction membership is recruited by a leader and that this recruitment takes place on diverse principles. Recently, Yadava (1968) has briefly reviewed the literature on factionalism and presented a slightly

different set of characteristics than those presented by Nicholas. In most important points he agrees with Nicholas and also includes a bow to the work of Siegel and Beals. Below, in columnar form, I present the most appropriate quotations from each of the three works in question so that the overlapping nature of Yadava's characterization of factions is clearly apparent and the best features of each work may be pointed out:

Nicholas (1965:44-46)

1. Factions are conflict groups. . . . Factions appeared as groups (or, perhaps better, as quasi-groups) only during conflict. . . .

2. Factions are political groups. . . .

3. Factions are not corporate groups. . . .

4. Faction members are recruited by a leader. . . ; there is neither structural principle nor common interest to hold together faction members in the absence of a leader. . . . It was seen that separate factions continue to be distinct from one another even when they are in alliance. . . .

5. Faction members are recruited on diverse principles . . . [author's italics]

Yadava (1968:908-909)

1. The factions are "quasi-groups" of interacting type, which in conflict situations become ego-centered "action-sets."

5. The field of operation of factions is not confined to the political level alone.

4. The composition of the factions is flexible. A faction is essentially ephemeral in character, lasting as long as the immediate goal of the members remains unattained.

2. The leaders of the factions recruit the members and make coalitions and alliances with other factions having similar interests in order to oppose another faction or group of factions on specific issues.

3. The membership of the faction is acquired on a basis different from those of kin and caste.

Siegel and Beals (1960a:112)

The situation most likely to lead to the development of factionalism is one in which a dominant external society selectively influences the group in a manner which is covert [stress] and which tends to accentuate existing cleavages [strains] within the group . . . [author's italics].

6. Factionalism has been stimulated by rapid social and cultural change. The role or status ambiguity in potentially competitive situations allows competition to become so intense that conflict results.

It is clear from the above that the delineation of factional features is quite similar between Yadava and Nicholas particularly when Yadava's features are rearranged so that they are juxtaposed to the most similar features in Nicholas' list. Further, the main point of the Siegel and Beals article may be seen to be paralleled by Yadava's point six.⁴⁷ We can note three main differences between the characteristics developed by Yadava from those of Nicholas. First, Yadava's point three is particular to the conflict cases he describes as occurring in an Indian village, and his statement is phrased in negative terms; Nicholas' wording in point five is the more general and, therefore, is preferable.

Second, Yavada makes a specific point in his item five that factions are not confined to politics alone. This is in direct contradiction of Nicholas' point two. However, if one closely reads the cases presented by Yadava one will note that they fall well within Nicholas' definition of politics, " 'the use of public power' " in which power is viewed as "command over resources and control over men"

(1965:44). In Yadava's cases, each one had to do in some way with public power in the use of resources or control of men. Thus, Yadava's dictum that factional conflict applies in areas of society other than politics is more a question of how one defines the areas of society, and, of course, this has a great deal to do with the problems which one focuses upon to study and one's overall theoretical position. One can, it seems to me, accept Yadava's point or not as one sees fit. However, to accept his point five there is one problem. That is, Yadava does not define exactly how we are to consider factions other than as "not necessarily political groups." He presents us with a negative category as in the case of the first point above, which, logically, cannot define factions for us.

The third feature is of some considerable significance for Yadava has made more explicit a feature of Nicholas' analysis which was only indirectly considered in his paper (see Nicholas' point one in the quotation above). That is, Yadava has set the concept of factionalism in clear juxtaposition to the body of concepts arising out of the work of Adrian C. Mayer. At the same conference at which Nicholas presented his work on factionalism, Mayer similarly contributed a paper (1966) on the quasi-group which Yadava has skillfully related to Nicholas' basic argument, so factionalism may now be seen as a class of behavior under the wider category of quasi-groups--I have pointed out that Nicholas actually used this term in



his first point cited above but did not extend his argumentation concerning this concept further. However, Yadava, in his presentation, makes a subtle shift in Mayer's definitions by defining factions in conflict situations as action-sets. He writes, "In a conflict or competition situation these 'quasi-groups' become ego-centered 'action-sets' . . ." (1968:907). My reading of Mayer indicates that quasi-groups are defined by action-sets and that quasi-groups are found in a variety of situations. Only when we observe quasi-groups in the political domain can they be called factions, remembering, of course, that there are other types of quasi-groups, cliques for one, that can also be distinguished in this type of domain.

Thus, Mayer writes:

When successive action-sets are centered on similar contexts of activity, personnel and linkages may also be similar. By 'superimposing' a series of action-sets, therefore, one may discern a number of people who are more often than not members of the action-sets, and others who are involved from time to time. Taken together, these people form a catchment for ego's action-sets based on this type of context. It is this potential membership which Bott calls a network; . . . Again, Epstein's network is of this sort, . . . But I think it may be well to adopt the word quasi-group, since this best expresses the sociological implications of this type of collection of people and suggests the qualitative difference between the quasi-group and the group [1966:115; italics added].

It is clear that quasi-groups can be found in many arenas of social activity. In politics, for instance, a succession of action-sets of the kind we have seen to exist in Dewas would add up to form a quasi-group which could be called a faction [1966:116; italics added].

Yadava makes another error which also needs to be

pointed out. In his statement discussed above, he has used the phrase "ego-centered 'action-sets' " which implies that at other times there are factions which are not ego-centered. To be sure, Mayer talks about cliques as factions, i. e., conflict quasi-groups, which are "not ego-centered bodies" (1966:116). However, he goes on to state that this does not represent a group as such but acts as a collective ego; "Thus, where the core becomes a formal group or a clique, it may be possible to take it, rather than an individual, as the central ego-- . . ." (1966:116). While Yadava's confusion over terminology may be excused by Mayers' somewhat difficult language, I think that careful reading indicates that Mayer sees factions as either individually or collectively ego-centered units, and, thus, both types properly classed in the domain of quasi-groups. One can say, then, that Yadava has introduced, at best, an unnecessary redundancy into his definition which, at worst, logically leads us to anticipate that one can find nonego-centered action sets (quasi-groups) among factions. If his wording was correct, Yadava would be making a significant addition to the work of Mayer; however, Yadava does not seem to be aware of the implications of his language, and he certainly does not present the material to justify the shifts in meaning that he makes.

It is necessary that such misapplications of terminology be noted and corrected so that confusion is avoided by other scholars, but the noting of such an error does

not negate the contribution of Professor Yadava. Whatever the misunderstanding of Mayer's terminology is on the part of Yadava, he has provided us with the basic analysis to link the theoretical models of Mayer to those of Nicholas; such an attempt makes the task of the student who follows later far easier; all he has to do is correct the error in terminology in order to make use of the now expanded theoretical tool.

I would now like to turn to a consideration of the case materials I have gathered and to view them in the light of our present discussion of factionalism. As I have argued above, I consider the various groups involved in the disputes described in Chapter Three as factions, most specifically Khun Keo's and Khun Khao's groups. Nevertheless, these are groups--we will consider below whether they are really quasi-groups--which are of a much smaller scale than the factions usually described in the literature; that is, there are an extremely small number of individuals involved on each side. Consequently, we must first consider whether they indeed fit the definition of factions utilized within the profession.

A brief review of the recent anthropological literature concerning factionalism discloses that Nicholas' characterization of factions has been widely used--cf. various recent articles in the American Anthropologist, e.g., Yadava (1968) and Schwartz (1969)--indicating general acceptance of his work. When we consider our data against

his criteria we can see that Khun Keo's following is definitely a conflict group and we see that it certainly is concerned with questions of public power. This latter point is clearly illustrated when we consider that it was public capital which was used to build the western market, it was the utilization of the bus station police to control the competitive situation in the ice plant dispute, it was the tactics of utilization of the mechanisms of government to prevent the opening of the eastern market, and it is the continual interest on the part of Khun Keo to utilize any new legislation for the purpose of expanding his control over transportation and marketing in Changwat Province that places his activity within the realm of political conflict. That is, Khun Keo is interested in achieving power over, and with, public resources, and to use these resources in clear disputation over public goals in the community. This behavior is well within the characteristics of politics as defined above, see page 156, and this definition that Swartz has adopted is not unlike that used by Nicholas, see page 219 above.

When we consider the Khrum Khwa, Khun Khao's following, we do not find the same degree of use of public resources as an element in the set of maneuvers which characterize this side; however, to deny that any exist is probably not correct. Certainly, Khun Keo's charge that his application to run the western market on a contract with the city was held up by the then governor until the new governor was

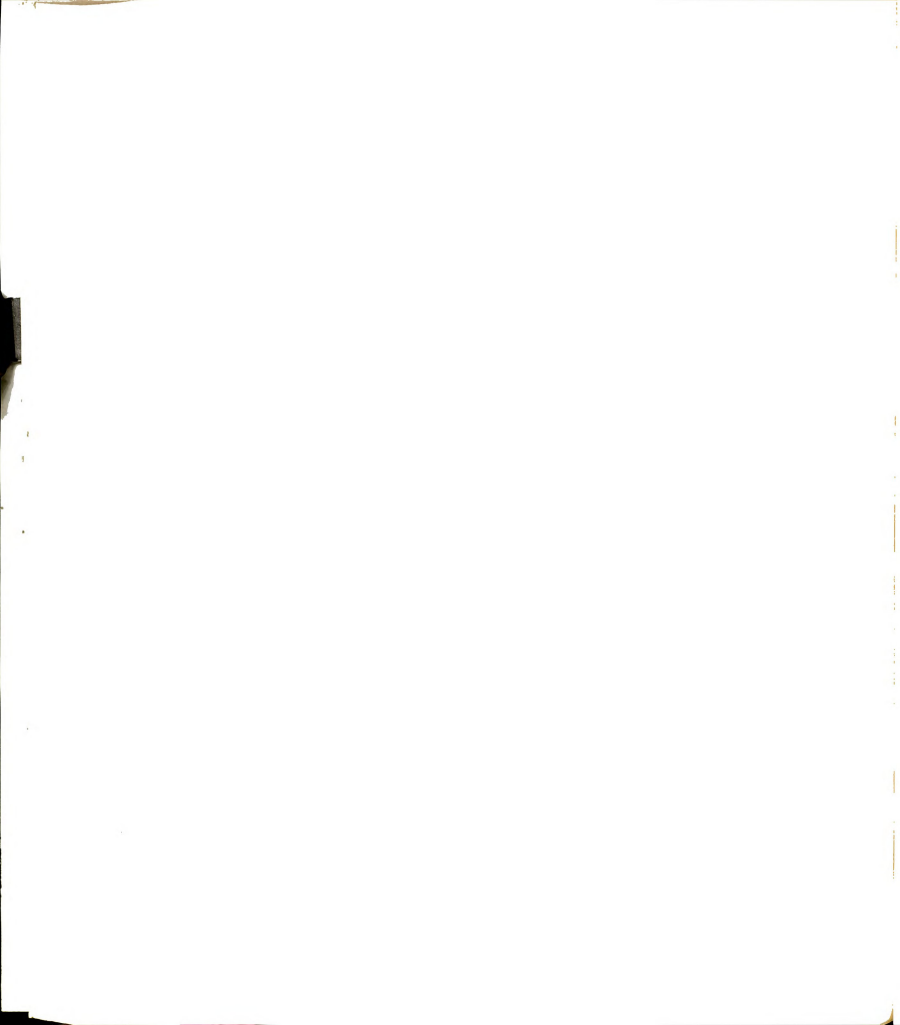


appointed seems to be borne out by the timing of events. The western market had remained idle for two years after its abortive opening but it was less than six months after the new governor had arrived that the approval was received from Bangkok and the first bids were called for. Also, if we take into account the previous governor's close relationship with the manager of the City Bank, Khun Thong Daeng, we can more easily accept this possibility. Further, the first bids on the western market were rejected by the city because of the violation of the agreement by the Khrum Khwa suggesting that this group was not unwilling to use strategems similar to Khun Keo. However, Khun Khao, as I have remarked earlier, generally does not resort to the use of influence as much, nor does he try to utilize public funds as greatly as Khun Keo. This I regard to be due to his stronger financial resources, his generally accepted leadership position in the community, and what I believe to be greater backing from government officials. Nevertheless, he is still involved with the question of public power and the allocation and distribution of resources when he becomes involved in disputes with Khun Keo.

For the moment I will pass over a consideration of Nicholas' third point that "factions are not corporate groups" and go on to his fourth item, that "faction members are recruited by a leader." That is, that there is generally a lack of common interests which would unite the group if faced with the loss of the leader. As we have

seen kinship appears to be most important in the Khrum Sai, accounting for a major portion of the members in their disputes. However, the question here is whether this group can have an existence without the continued leadership of Khun Keo. I feel that it is the spark of Khun Keo's personality, his personal need to replace Khun Khao as the business community leader, and his broadly innovative approach to reaching his goal that makes this collectivity a real challenge faction. It is his personality and drive that holds and commands the group and keeps those allied members such as the factory manager's son within the faction. Nicholas' fifth point is related to the above when he states that faction "members are recruited on diverse principles." It is true that the majority of Khun Keo's faction are members of his family or are affines; however, the factory manager's son, and--though I haven't named him in the discussion of the cases in Chapter Three--the lawyer for this group is not attached to the group in any like manner. When we contrast the Khrum Sai with the Khrum Khwa we find that kinship is of very little importance with the latter group--it appears that economic self-interest, friendship for Khun Khao, and hostility towards Khun Keo are the main motivating factors in the Khrum Khwa--and I guess that kinship is not the main factor in the Khrum Sai either; that is, that it is the importance of Khun Keo's personality rather than the family relationships.⁴⁸

One can argue that the nature of the role that the



Khrum Sai, as a challenge faction, must play in this field of conflict, limited as it is in capital and consensual support with its main resource being the audacity and intelligence of Khun Keo, is such that only a tightly knit unit has any chance to survive as a faction. In such a case, while I argue that Khun Keo's personality is the central feature of the faction, it may be that kinship is a resource which provides an additional element of unity and which makes up for the relative weaknesses that the Khrum Sai has in the area of community support and economic resources. If this is correct, it is the means by which the nucleus of the faction maintains itself and thereby becomes attractive to other nonrelatives, such as Khun Yai. I also see the mobilization and recruitment of relatives as either more costly or more difficult; otherwise, Khun Khao would have used this technique. Therefore, once again I see this as a support of my position that Khun Keo is an outstanding figure as a faction leader.

If we return to the nature of the differences as seen from the Khrum Khwa's perspective, we see here that this basically defensive faction having a wider resource base chooses to mobilize the less difficult (less costly) resources in recruiting on the diverse principals of economic interest, friendship, and perhaps a defensive reaction against the threat of an ascendant Khun Keo.

It is the third point proposed by Nicholas that is of great interest. This characteristic of factions--that

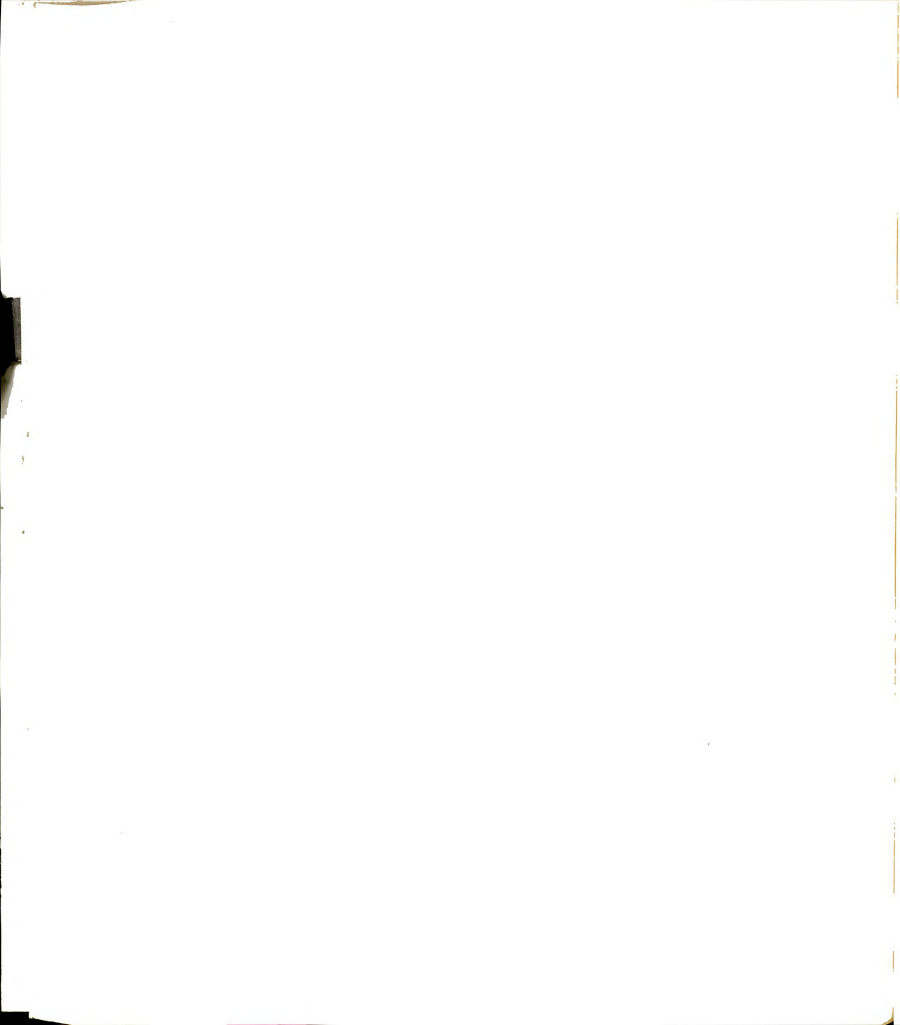


"factions are not corporate groups"--is the most important for the perspective of our present discussion. This item, as phrased by Nicholas, is a negative category and is not suitable for defining a term; thus, Yadava's presentation is preferable in this instance and I have chosen, then, to replace Nicholas' point three with the idea embodied in Yadava's point one, taking into account my discussion on page 222 above. Therefore, I would word Yadava's point one as, "Factions are quasi-groups which become apparent from the activities of conflict action-sets operating in a political domain." Note that I have dropped out the term ego-centered as a quasi-group is ego-centered by definition.

I now want to turn to a problem which arises when we consider these materials as examples of factional conflict. The cases which I have presented have involved very few persons and this is quite divergent from many other accounts of similar conflict situations (cf. page 160 above). Therefore, I propose to consider the question of the scale of the field-arena as a heretofore neglected area. That is, I am here referring to the question of the number of persons involved with the questions in dispute both within the disputing groups and in the whole arena as such. I have discussed this above, and I hold that there can be considerable variability in the nature of the scale of the field and the various arenas. I argued above that involvement as a participant was costly to individuals and that



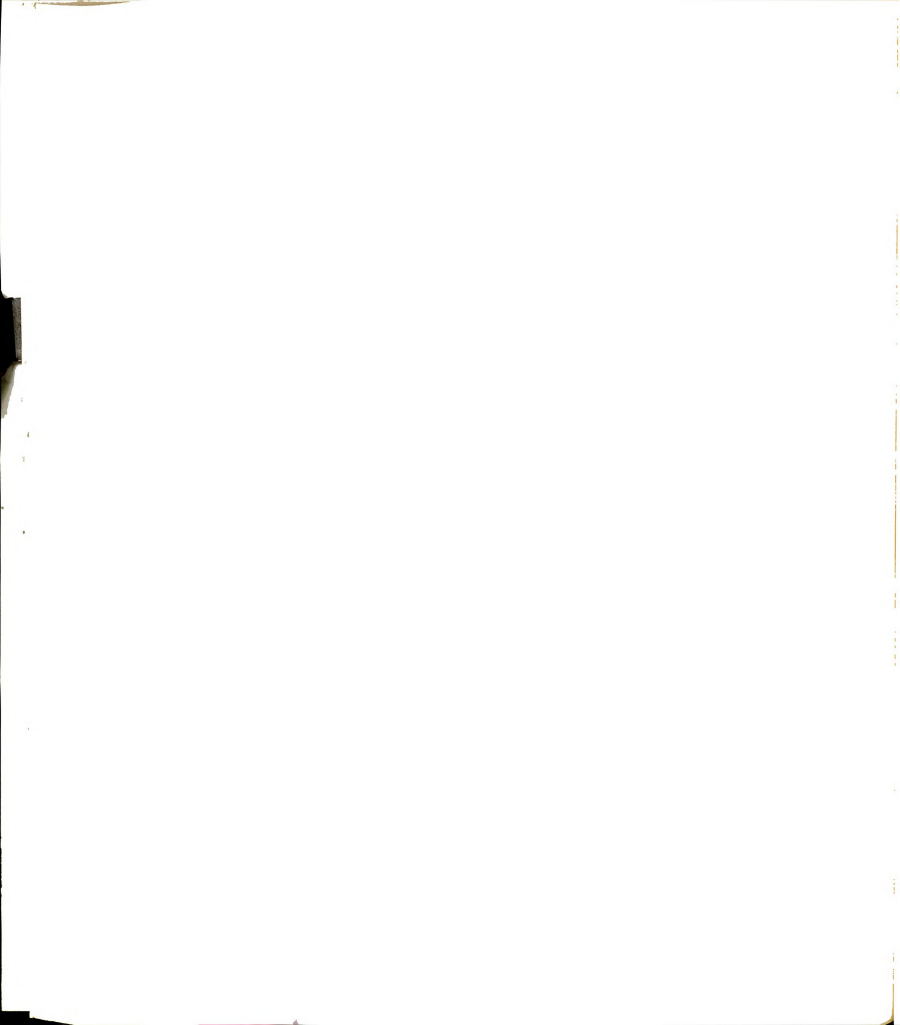
they tended to remain neutral. They were allowed to do so in that the problems at issue were of an economic character and there was nothing to be gained by attempting to draw large numbers of individuals onto the field because there was little, except their buying power, for the mass to contribute either as voters or fighters. That is, there is no democratic process available where elected officials might be required to make crucial decisions in the dispute, and violent confrontations between contending parties is not an accepted means for carrying out dispute. One should note an additional element associated with the latter point; inasmuch as the main contestants are of Chinese ethnic origin, both would likely suffer if their conflict was raised to such a level that civil order appeared to be threatened. I have already mentioned that the accusation of communism had been leveled against Khun Keo and this was worth a period in jail. In Thai society the automatic suspicion and envy that is directed at Chinese businessmen, as ethnically distinct as well as rich, can always be activated and tied to the questions of international intrigue and national security. Once such charges are made it is clear that no one is safe from them, and, whatever the actual situation of fairness and justice that one receives in the courts of Thailand, it is widely held that a person accused of communism can not receive justice. Therefore, this folk image of the workings of government is an extremely strong brake upon the recourse to violent acts and thus constrains our actors to work



within the legal means of the society to carry out their conflict. We may now look at this as a setting in which the cost of introducing coercive force, except as one can activate the agents of the state to use their power, is of such magnitude as to make this virtually impossible, and, furthermore, there is no need to involve voters for there is no franchise.

Before we return to the question of scale, I think it might be profitable to review why I consider this to be a question of factional conflict. First, the burden of my remarks most immediately above are to show how Nicholas' definition of factionalism generally applies to both groups in this instance. Secondly, there is a persistent quality in the conflict. Thirdly, Khun Keo is particularly eager to spread the conflict by recruiting new followers if there appears to be advantage to be got in the spreading. That is, he is quite willing to draw any person out of the arena into the field if there is something to be gained in the conflict.

Now, concerning the question of scale, I believe that I have indeed demonstrated that we may consider this properly as a question of factional dispute, but that it does not follow the implicit assumption made by students of factionalism of wide scale field conflict and broad disruption in a community. Thus, my consideration leads me to believe that some additional specification is needed in



the question of factional dispute. I have found in the writings of F. G. Bailey (1965) a useful pair of terms to apply to the problem which I face here. Bailey writes of elite and arena councils which are characterized by different approaches to the process of decision making. The elite council is essentially an oligarchy which feels a major cleavage between itself and the body which it rules. The arena council on the other hand represents major divisions in the community and thus acts on majority vote (1965:10-11). For our purposes we will merely borrow the terms and apply them to factions. There are parallels between Bailey's councils and committees and my factions that we might want to draw out, but this is, perhaps, a different problem. What I wish to do here is use his pair of terms to characterize factionalism of narrow and wide scale. Narrow scale factionalism I will call elite factionalism, and broad scale factionalism may be called arena factionalism.

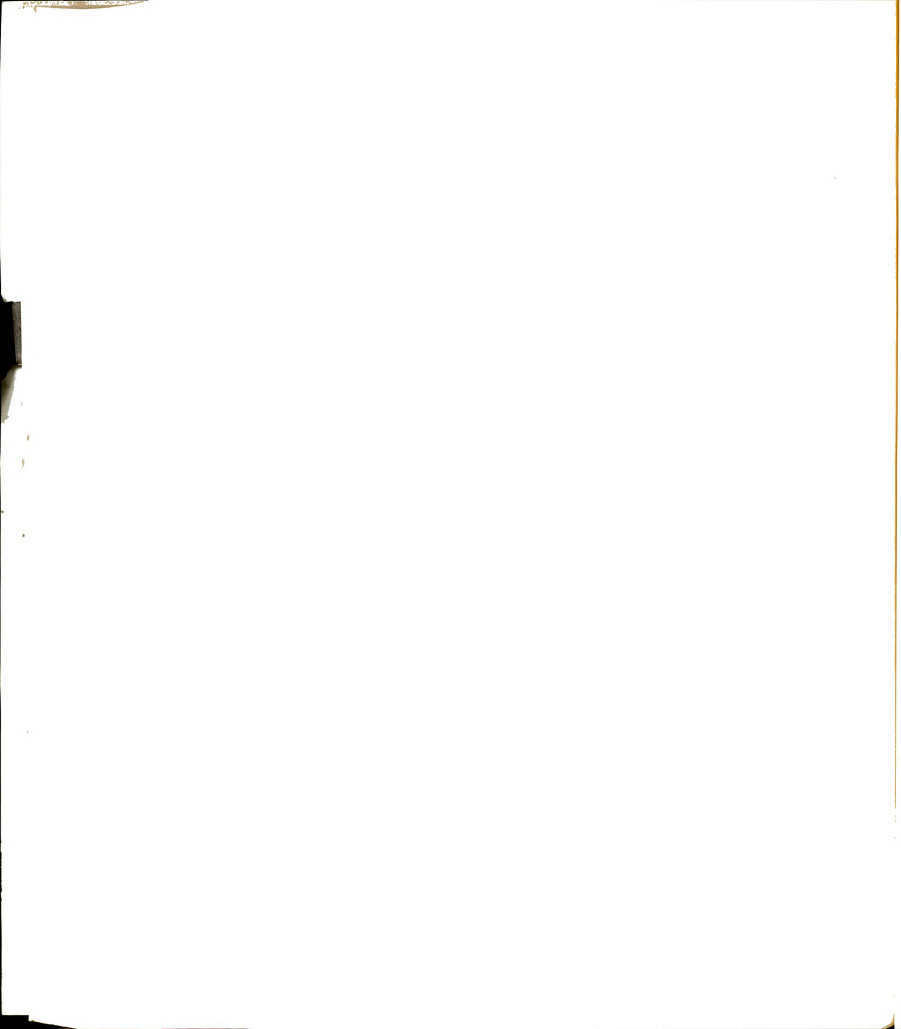
It must be more than apparent why I introduce these terms. The factional competition in Changwat Town is limited by the very stringent constraints discussed above, thus, bringing about a situation which has not been recognized heretofore in the literature of factional conflict. The government limits factional conflict to the economic domain and closely circumscribes any recourse to violence. Siegel and Beals have distinguished three different types of factionalism: party factionalism--which is periodically resolved by votes, arbitration, etc.--schismatic



factionalism, which is resolved by schism of the group, and pervasive factionalism, which continues over long periods of time (1960b:394ff.). The distinction which I wish to make cross cuts these types of factionalism, at least in part, by introducing the question of scale of the field of conflict. Schismatic and party factionalism are most likely, but not always, to fall under the rubric of arena factionalism; pervasive factionalism may be either broad or narrow depending upon the situation. Thus, to the basic points listed by Nicholas, I would add the statement that factions may vary in scale from narrow (elite) to broad (arena). We might further wish to characterize the levels and spread of coercion applied, but this might be more difficult. At least, factional scale has considerable significance in directing our consideration to problems which shape the characteristics of factional conflict in particular societies.

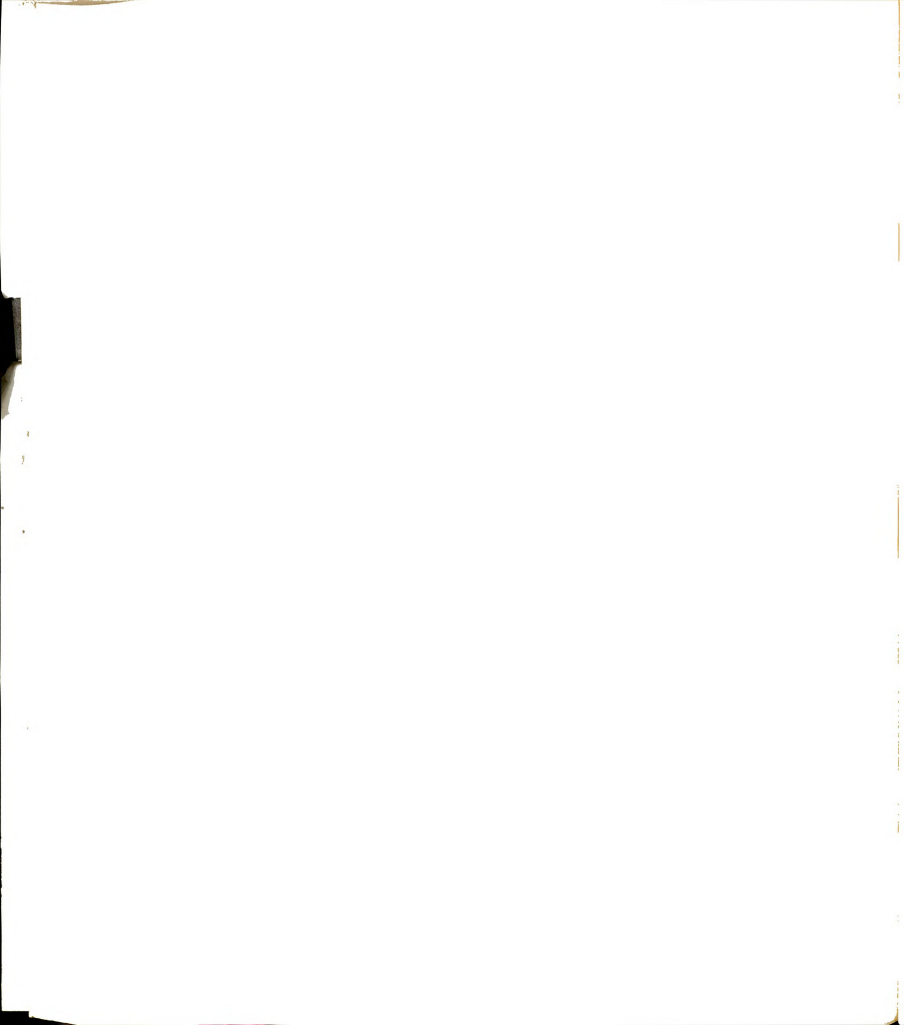
CONCLUSIONS

In this section I will summarize some of the points to be derived from the discussion presented in this and the preceding chapters. First, we will consider the political questions which I raised in Chapter Four. I have argued that the field-arena concept and the processual approach of Swartz and others are extremely useful in analyzing data of conflict on the local level. I have demonstrated that the nature of my case material can be seen as fitting Swartz's definition of politics, that the delineation of the field



throws into sharp perspective the nature of the moves that the contestants make in their conflict, and that the concept of the arena rather nicely characterizes the situation in which there are potential resources in the form of personnel and ideas (usually in regard to the law) which exist outside of the field but which can be brought into play should the contestants feel it is to their benefit to do so. Further, we can see the degree of success which the players' actions have in influencing the conflict. In considering all this, it is clear that viewing the history of extended cases of conflict helps clarify the nature of the political process at least on this limited level.

I have described here some examples of the nature of extended conflict cases, and, thus, we can make some generalizations concerning the nature of the response of the Thai government to the peoples of Thailand. We see that at the provincial level of operation government officials are extremely sensitive to the pressures of local issues when the contestants are sophisticated members of Thai national culture, that is, the contestants here look to Bangkok as containing important resources in their conflict. Their connections to important persons on the national level are seen as providing important tools in the process of conflict. In the bus monopoly case it was the connection with the reporter that was important and in the ice plant case it was friends in the office responsible for licensing industrial development that facilitated the opening of the new ice



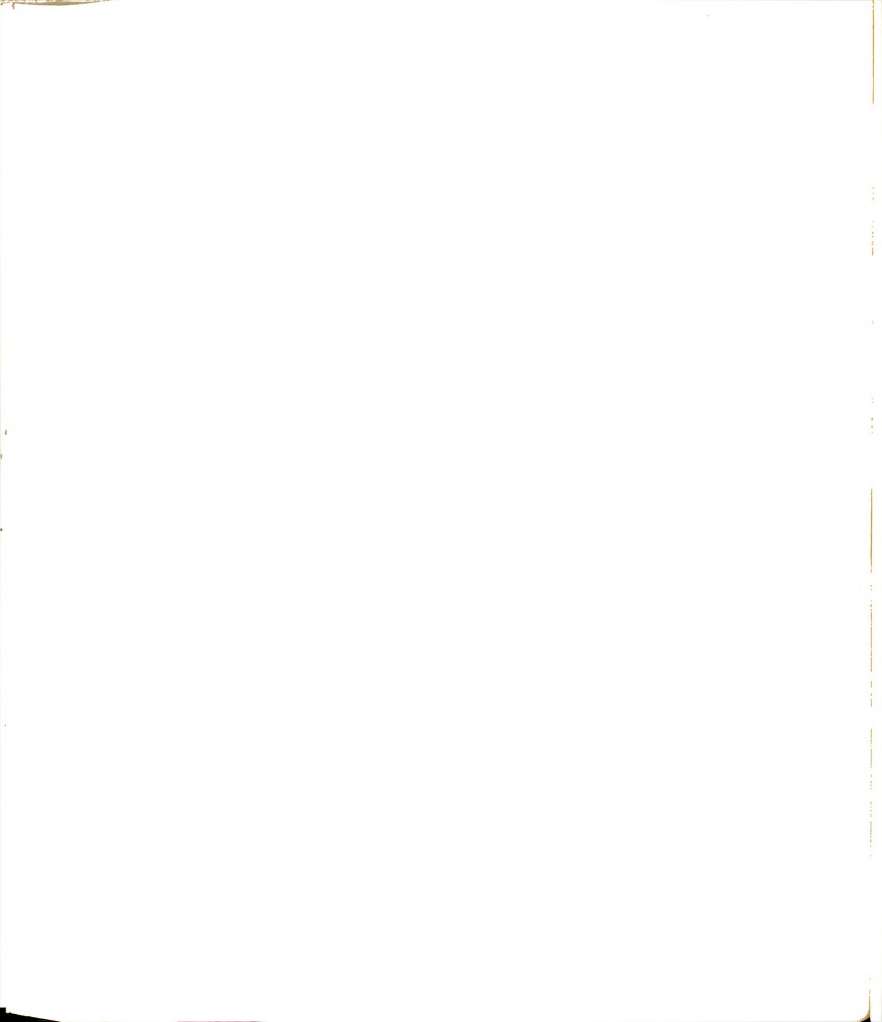
plant. We can see, then, that this level of local personnel are importantly connected to the national culture of Thailand and really represent an outlying part of Central Thai culture rather than a part of the indigenous culture of the Northeast.

While I did not directly gather material on the question of how the Thai government deals with even more local and rural questions, I believe that the cases I have presented give us a rather clear picture--there is very little concern. Witness the question that arises when we discuss arenas: are the local inhabitants of Changwat Town an arena resource? And the answer to this question is that, in fact, they are ignored by the field contestants because they are powerless with the exception that their buying power can be mobilized, as when the bus manager tried to prevent busmen from buying from the other ice plant. They are powerless because of the nature of the political system of Thailand as constituted at the time of the field study. The contestants effectively ignore them as a potential political resource because they are ignored by the government. This of course includes quite sophisticated persons as well as the laborers, low ranking personnel, and small shop keepers that make up the community of Changwat Town. Our cases have dealt with less than one percent of the population because only at the apex of the structure of the community elite can the government effectively deal with such questions that have been raised in these cases of



conflict. We can see that the government of Thailand as then constituted is largely incapable of responding to the needs of the local populace. I say this because, when one considers that there are several thousand villages in Thailand, probably half of them capable of supporting public markets, and all of the latter potentially capable of generating cases of a similar manner as those raised in my examples, we can see that the central bureaucracy would not likely be able to respond to the potential number of conflict cases that could be generated.

Another point should be made in terms of the use of the field-arena model. When we apply it to an analysis of data, it alerts us to questions which might not be so imperatively asked by another method of analysis. That is, in my presentation there are some very important data which are missing from my analysis of the field of conflict of the market case. This data concerns decisions which were made in Bangkok. Because of the limitations in the funding of my research and limitations in time, I was unable to gather data upon how the decisions, which were referred to Bangkok, were made. I do not know the degree of information that the various persons in Bangkok had about the situation in Changwat Town and what were the components of information, personal relationships, etc. that might have gone into affecting the decisions as they were finally made. The field-arena approach clearly points out this shortcoming due to its focus upon the dynamics of decision-making and



conflict.

The preceding chapter, Chapter Five, is composed of an analysis of the network diagram developed from friendship data I collected. I believe that I need only remark that such a tool holds promise, when developed, to become very useful for demonstrating structure in a more fluid social system and to give us a tool for the quantification of the degree of looseness or tightness of a social system.

Further, the analysis of social systems which have been labeled "loose" through the employment of a network tool, such as I have used, may lead to a better understanding of these social systems than that developed by the approach which we have used heretofore; that is, to characterize these societies as lacking formal structures without considering exactly what are the elements which tend to hold the society together through providing some means by which to orient the individual in making his way through the myriad alternatives and relationships presented by such a society.

Finally, in regard to Chapter Six, I have considered the case material in light of the discussion of factions as they occur in the literature. In this discussion I have emphasized, following Yadava and the principals themselves, the interconnection of the work of Mayer and Nicholas in the discussion of factions as a special type of situation of the wider phenomena of the quasi-group. Such a characterization, related as it is to the discussion of networks

and network analysis as discussed in Chapter Five, is particularly salient in the context of the data I have presented, for it places a discussion of factions in the general framework of social behavior. While I will carry through the implications of this relationship farther in future work, it has enabled me to see more clearly that the question of scale is an important dimension of all social groups, quasi or otherwise, and that its consideration has been lacking, because of the characteristics of the communities in which factions have been most usually studied. I have proposed, therefore, the addition of scale as a component of the structural definition of factions.

NOTES

NOTES

¹Amphur is the Thai word for district which is equivalent to our county level of governmental organization. That is, it stands on the next higher level of administration from the village, town, or city but is lower than the province (changwat). This is also the lowest level of national civil servants, with the exception of a very few officials in the city administration. Each amphur in the province is named usually after an important village or town in that amphur, however, the name of the amphur in which the provincial capital is located is entitled Amphur Mueng.

Mueng has a variety of meanings (see note 6), but in this case its use clearly indicates that it refers to the location of the capital within the amphur and, thus, to the aspect of the word which refers to cities. There is also, a formal classification of municipalities, one category of which is called a mueng, but this is independent of the system of naming amphur (following the Thai system, I will not add plural endings when rendering Thai terms). That is, the amphur in which the capital city is located is always called Amphur Mueng even though the city may be of the nakorn category.

²In accordance with customary anthropological usage, pseudonyms will be used throughout to refer to both persons and places. In regard to location names, the word changwat is the Thai word for province. Adjoining provinces will be referred to by their direction from Changwat Province. Thus, the province directly to the north will be called North Changwat, that to the west, West Changwat, and so on. Further, in Thailand it is customary to name the provincial capital with the same name as the province itself; thus, the city of Supanburi is the provincial capital of Changwat Supanburi. In order to distinguish the one from the other the name is preceded by the term indicating either a city administrative classification, such as mueng or nakorn, or the term for province — changwat. However, in customary usage these terms are only rarely used and the listener must judge from the context of the conversation which unit the speaker is talking about. The terms which are used herein will eliminate this bit of confusion.

³ It should be noted that Changwat Town was located within a moated area and was thus located on the site of a previously inhabited location--it would be wrong to think of the moat and earthworks as being only a fortification unconnected with a living site. There is nothing in the history to tell us who these earlier inhabitants were, but there are enough ancient Khmer structures dotted about the countryside that we wouldn't be wrong provisionally to assign the earlier inhabitants to such a cultural horizon.

⁴ One time while walking down the street my assistant pointed out a truck loaded with household goods and several people and he told me that these people were migrating to an adjacent province. He happened to know about this particular family as they were his relatives.

⁵ Fa Ngum (1316-1371) was the founding figure of the Lao kingdom of Lan Chang which can be dated as beginning in the year 1349, the date on which Fa Ngum embarked upon his expedition to conquer the principalities which composed Laos at that time. At the completion of his campaigns he had established a kingdom which unified much of what today is the present territory of Laos as well as the Khorat Plateau and other parts of Thailand and Cambodia (Viravong 1957:25-36 and Le Bar and Suddard 1960:9-12).

⁶ There is no very adequate translation for this term because of the varied meanings of the term mueng. Mueng is a word which can and is applied to the nation, a province, or a city. Hua means head and is, therefore, applied to the unit of administration composed of a central town or village and its subordinate villages, which can also be called hua mueng if they in turn have villages dependent upon them.

⁷ Vientiane had actually fallen under the domination of Siam with the invasion of the city of Vientiane by the armies of King Taksin in 1779, and thus the rising of King Anuvong in 1827 was an attempt to free his kingdom from the suzerainty of the Siamese (Viravong 1957:101-103).

⁸ It is interesting to note the variations in the description of the changes that took place at this time between an official publication and that of an outside observer using the usual western historical techniques. Thus, we find the following description in Thailand, Official Yearbook 1964:

Accordingly, the position of the provincial governor was downgraded from the traditional "Chow-muang," or "ruler of the province," to that of a career civil servant. This included a change in the official title of the provincial governor from "Chow-muang" to "Poo Warajakarn Muang". . . . The quasi-hereditary

nature of governorships was done away with and the power of appointment and removal was vigorously exercised by the central government, both in theory and in practice. In addition, the traditional practice of "Kin-muang," or "living upon the province," which allowed provincial officials to use their offices to live the "fat of the land" [sic] was discarded for a system in which the governor and other officials were paid regular salaries [Office of the Prime Minister 1965:73].

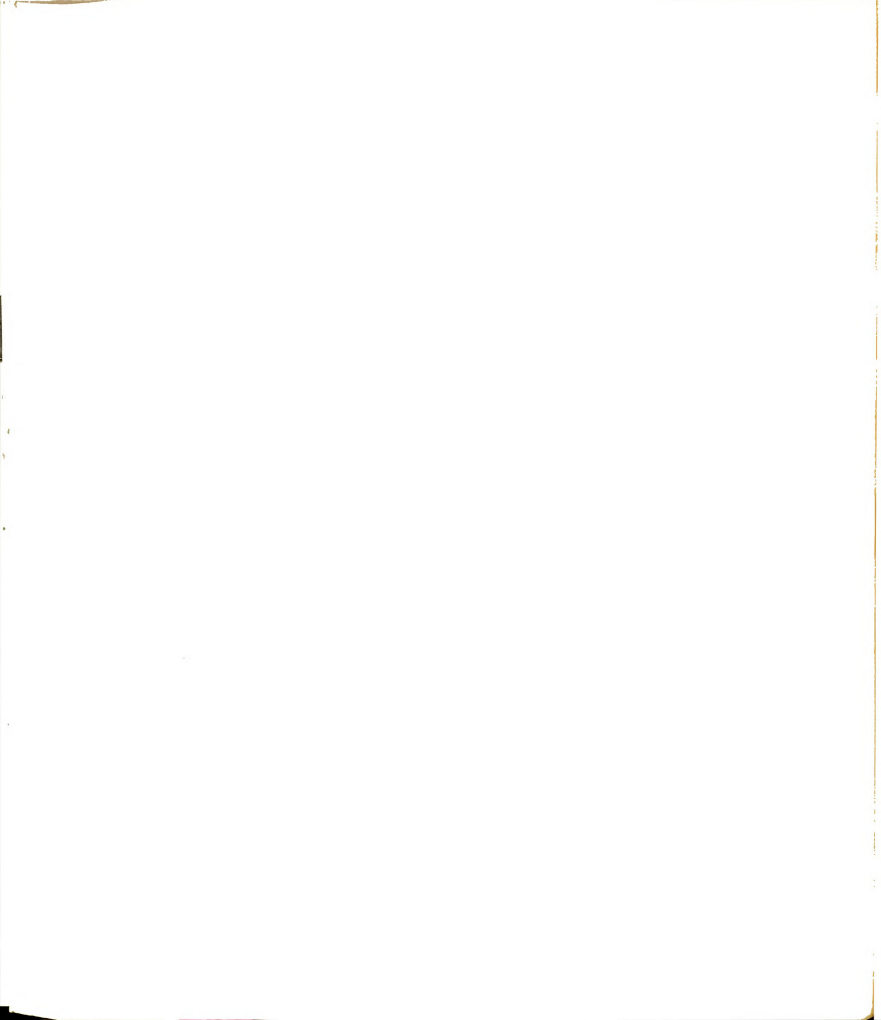
Keyes, on the other hand, presents a different view as it affects events in the Northeast:

The transformation of the kingdom from a partially centralized, partially decentralized system into a unified system was not completed in the reign of Culalongkorn. . . . As a cao muang passed away in one of the northeastern or other "outer provinces," he was replaced not in accordance with the traditional method whereby provincial officials chose the new ruler (usually from among the close relatives of the old ruler), but instead through an appointment made by the Ministry of Interior . . . [Keyes 1967:17].

⁹ Accelerated Rural Development is the name of a special joint Thai-United States program in political-economic development. This program is an outgrowth of the community development program of the economic aid mission of the United States and it is the most ambitious assistance project in Isan, and other border areas.

¹⁰ It is interesting to note that ten years earlier a prediction concerning the acceptance of chemical fertilizers fell far below the actual conditions as demonstrated in Changwat Province once favorable conditions were achieved. deYoung observes:

Rice-farmers do not use inorganic fertilizers. In various sections of the country, the central government has attempted to show the farmer the benefits of using chemical fertilizers by setting up test plots, but nowhere has the attempt been successful, even in the delta region where, conceivably, a well-to-do farmer could afford to buy fertilizer. Chemical fertilizers would benefit the northeastern region greatly but since this is a noncommercial farming area, the farmers here cannot afford them, and with over five million peasants in the region, the government cannot afford to underwrite, now or in the future, any sizable chemical fertilizer program. Thus, any discussion of a modern fertilizer program is somewhat academic, although it may have potentialities for the commercial rice growers of the

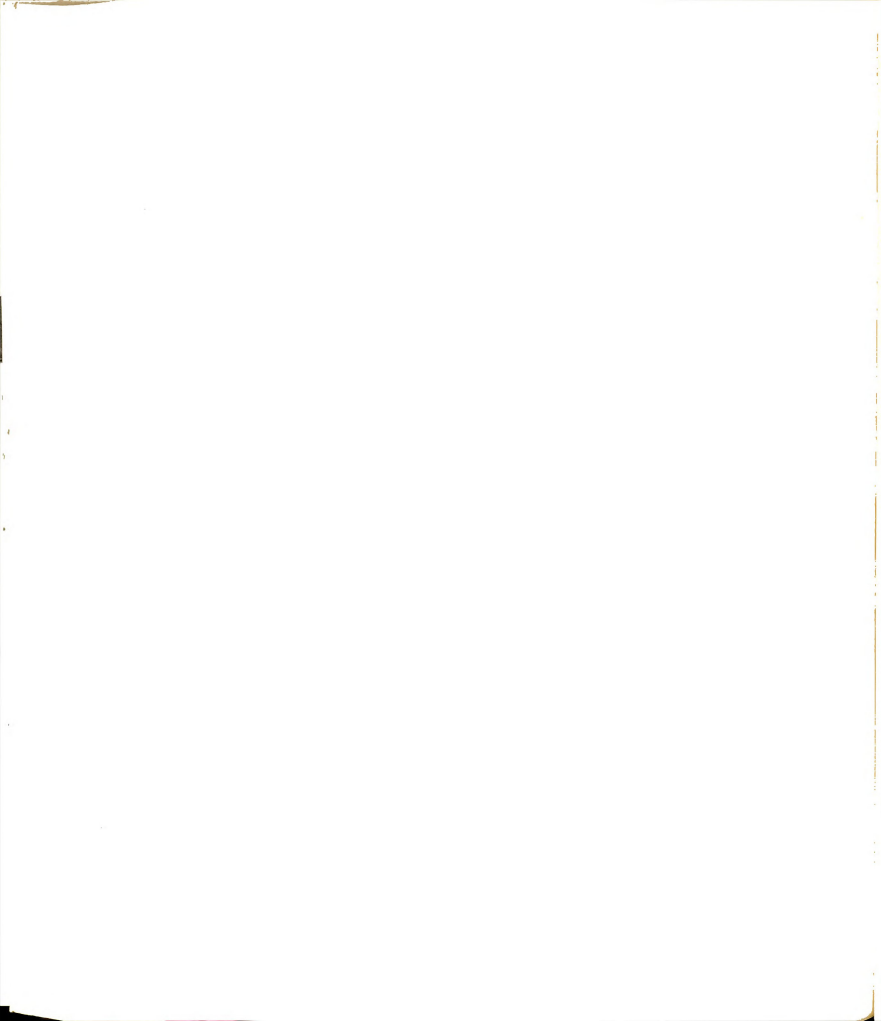


delta. A factor not taken into consideration by agricultural experts who stress the use of chemical fertilizers is that only a long, slow period of demonstration can convince the peasant that he will benefit from such a drastic new measure. . . . The Thai peasant is a long way from being able to use the techniques of scientific farming without direct supervision. This supervision the government is not prepared to give, even if it had the chemical fertilizer, for an agricultural extension program is almost nonexistent [deYoung 1955:191-2].

DeYoung was, of course, right in making this prediction at the time for he could not foresee the very great economic development of the country and the even greater concern of both the governments of Thailand and the United States for the welfare of the northeastern peasant. Also, during this period a great deal of general information became available to the farmer, who might be interested, about events in other countries. Not the least of these are propaganda programs of the various countries and governments involved in Southeast Asia. It stands to reason that some of the claims for agricultural development in other countries, or in Thailand, would tend to sensitize farmers to the possibility of change and thereby make them more willing to try innovations themselves.

¹¹The above description ignores a very important source of credit for the farmer which lies in his kinsmen and fellow villagers. While data was not collected on this, it is mentioned elsewhere in the literature on Thailand; cf., Long et. al. (1963:73) on interest rates, and Kaufman (1960:65-66) on labor exchange.

¹²The probable reason for bypassing the agent system is the more aggressive manner in which these items are sold. Many toiletries are produced, and the sales practices formulated, by subsidiaries of such world-wide soap companies as Lever Brothers and the Colgate-Palmolive Company. The sales organizations of these companies are highly competitive, trained, and backed by extensive advertising on television, in the movies, and in the printed media. It is quite surprising to see in a marketing situation which is otherwise low keyed, the sales activities that these two companies and a few others engage in. In practically any store in Changwat Town that has a small stock of goods for personal or household use, one will find these competing products displayed in a prominent location and full color posters in which the merits of the product are extolled in the manner of Madison Avenue decorating the walls of the shop. The local movie theaters also show advertisements for ten to fifteen minutes before the movies begin. Here one is extolled about the washday miracles of Breeze and Fab in vivid colors and at a decible rating

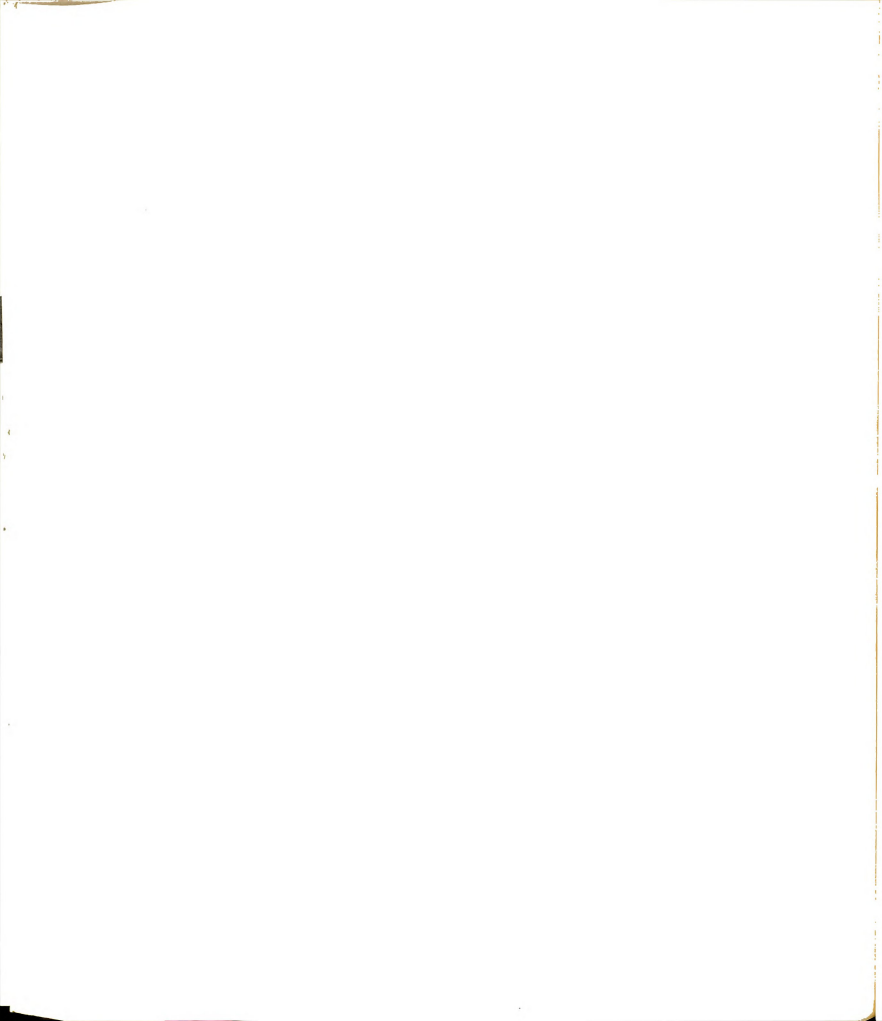


which appears to be considerably higher than the rest of the movie--a process, all too familiar to the television viewer in the United States, called overmodulation.

¹³ The fresh market, taladt sot--literally market fresh--is a place where fresh and prepared foods are sold. It is the basic market of a town and generally will have all of the materials necessary for operating a Thai household. Often acculturated Thais will describe it as the Thai "supermarket." It is usually a large roofed over area with high concrete tables upon which two or more sellers will be seated and their wares displayed. The area itself is a concrete floor with a high slab concrete roof overhead--if the market is quite large there will be skylights built in. There is one section of the market which is partitioned off into rooms and screened for the use of butchers. Here meat is cut up, usually on order, and sold to the customer. The rest of the vendors are likewise grouped by the nature of the products they sell. Thus, there is a fresh--often including live--and preserved fish section, one for prepared foods, one for vegetables, another for spices and betel nut chewing materials, and, if the market is large enough, there are sections with ready made clothes, trinkets, toys, cloth, etc.

¹⁴ Historically the Chi River was used for transport of rice from this area. The railroad line which was built eastward from Khorat to Ubol had its terminus in Sisaket Province and by 1928 in Ubol (Keyes 1967:18). At this time the first rice mill was built in Changwat Province east of Changwat Town on the Chi River. Here unhusked rice was milled and then loaded on boats to travel down the Chi until the meeting of the Mun River. At this point, the boats traveled upriver on the Mun until they reached Sisaket where the rice was off loaded and placed on the railroad for shipment to Bangkok. It was only after this that the road through Changwat Town was built and in sufficiently good repair (about 1939) that it could be used for regular truck-bus communication; however, it appears likely that irregular shipments were moving by road before this date. Of course now, virtually all shipments leave Changwat Town for Bangkok by road, and the Chi River is used for only local transportation with villages unconnected to the road network.

¹⁵ A variety of government agencies have radio and television stations, but the major agency is the Public Relations Department which has a nationwide network of stations; however, in Changwat Town the transmitter is an army station and in West Changwat Town the local transmitter, about 5,000 kw., belongs to the Thai Air Force.



¹⁶For example: Daniel Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East (1958); Lucien W. Pye, ed., Communications and Political Development (1963); and Everett M. Rogers, Modernization Among Peasants: The Impact of Communication (1969).

¹⁷In January 1968 provincial council elections were held throughout Thailand and represent, along with the municipal elections held in December 1967, the first significant step back towards democratic representative government for Thailand. There is considerable opinion that these elections were a means for the ruling officials to test the wind before taking any irreversible political step towards representative government, that is, to promulgate elections for the national government.

¹⁸This is the usual configuration for the municipal government; however, there are local variations which deviate from this pattern. For instance, in West Province the mayor is elected from the city council, and is not the deputy governor. This council, like all the others, was appointed in the usual manner, but the mayor was on the elected council which existed prior to the 1958 Coup. The main reason that the present mayor enjoys such an unusual honor is that his two brothers are highly placed in the National government.

¹⁹Obviously, forcing the deputy governor, the provincial chief of police, and the district officer to resign if the municipal council does not approve their budget is an unlikely prospect indeed. As such a move as this would severely embarrass the national government, the writer feels certain it would not occur unless there was some malfeasance on the part of the mayor or his executive committee which the central government wished to punish, and the central government officials used such a situation to prove their interest in democracy and their willingness to let democratic mechanisms run. In one case of dispute, here between the governor and the municipal council, that did arise in Udon province during 1966, the Ministry of Interior replaced both the governor and the municipal council.

²⁰In fact, prior to the 1958 Coup and the institution of military government, the municipal councils were composed of members half of whom were elected and the other half appointed; this system prevailed from the institution of the Constitution of 1933 until 1956 at which time all council members were elected. The reason for the earlier system was that the municipal government was seen as a means to "familiarize the Thai people with the parliamentary democracy" (Office of the Prime Minister 1965:84). Therefore, it may be seen that the present form of municipal government, that is, post 1958 Coup, is not so entirely

undemocratic as it might be if instituted in a western country, the use of elected councils and semiautonomy from the central government having only been instituted in 1933.

²¹In the following discussion, the writer will, for a time, ignore the role of the monk in the social structure of the community because of the way in which this social position is seen to lie outside of the main concerns of the material world. That is, the basic philosophy of Buddhism is that the individual seeks release from the world of life and the cycle of death and rebirth, and, to the degree that the monk does renounce the ways of the flesh through his life in the monkhood, he is regarded by the Thai layman as approaching his other-worldly goal. That is, he does not belong to this world and in many ways is not a part of the community. This will be treated further below.

²²As I stated earlier, in the anthropological literature concerning Thailand there has been considerable discussion of the concept of Thai society as "loosely structured". Ever since Embree (1950) wrote his famous paper in which he used this phrase, students of Thai culture have been bedeviled by its seductive quality of insightful characterization of Thai culture yet its imprecision as a scientific concept. While this term has great intuitive appeal, it must be abandoned for the purposes of this section of this paper for its lack of preciseness. Instead, at this point, we will substitute the concept of weak boundaries which surround the various groups in the society--however, in Chapter Five below there will be a consideration of the loose structure concept as it might be sharpened by the use of the concept of networks. Thus, Changwat Town persists as a physical entity because of a pre-existing allocation of human and monetary resources which were invested in building the community. But the personnel of the community are experiencing a heightened rate of replacement in the status positions present due to a generally high rate of mobility or, at least, expectation of mobility. It is exactly this concept of mobility which students of Thai culture have emphasized as occurring among the educated Thais, (see the discussion beginning on page 65 above).

²³One must hurry to state that there are other ways of classifying persons in the society which take account of their personality characteristics, and other features of their character, such as, achievements which demonstrate the piousness or charity of their personal life. This is, however, a different dimension of the life style of the society and not one which enters into the usual description of the society. Here the concern is with the religious facets of the society and is geared to an otherworldly, or nextworldly, concern. Thus, the person is rated in terms of an essentially different scale of values and norms.

For our purposes we may leave this for a brief discussion in the next section of this chapter.

²⁴There are nine wats within the municipal boundaries of Changwat Town. A wat is essentially composed of a bod in which rites for the monks are performed, a wihan in which most of the religious services for the people are conducted, one or more chedi which are large masonry structures in which a relic of the Buddha is buried, or, perhaps, a relic of some other person, that the donor wishes to honor, a sacred bo tree (ficus religiosa), and dormitories for the monks (Wells 1960:32 and Kaufman 1960: 97-100).

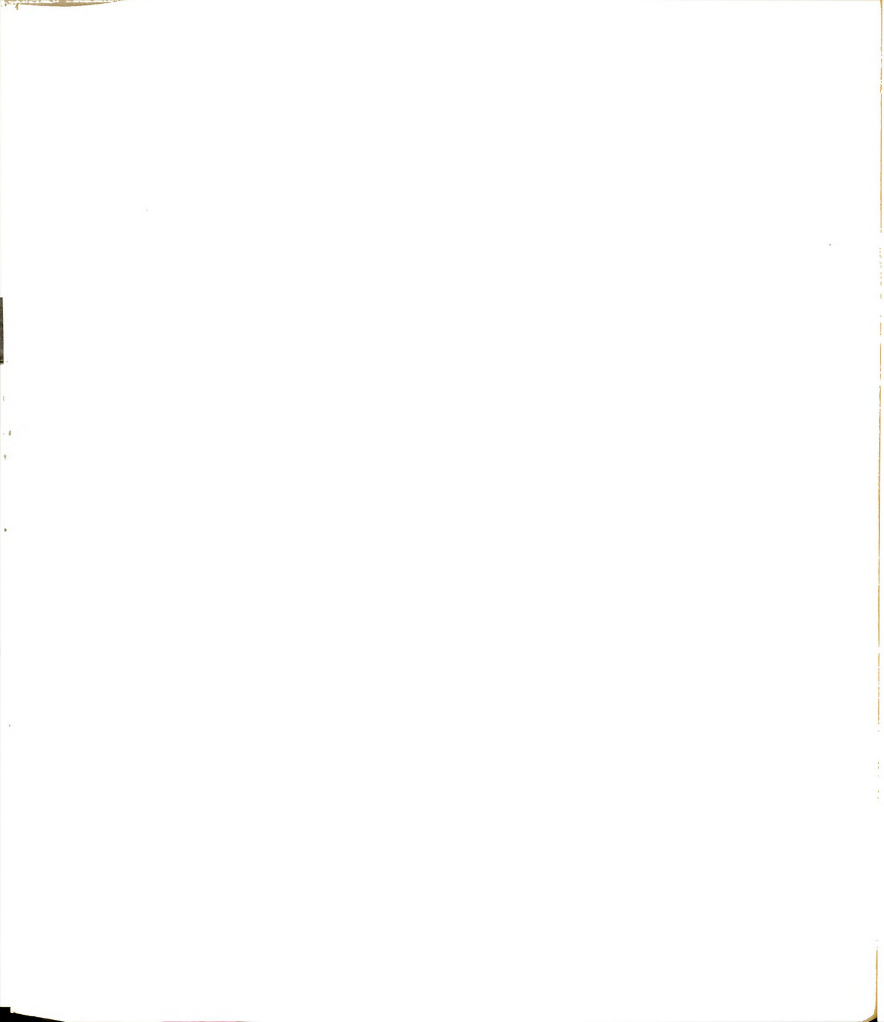
²⁵The Sangha is the order of monks of the Buddhist religion and refers to all who have been ordained as monks within it. The Sangha is one of the three gems of Buddhism which are the Buddha, the Dharma, or the teachings of the Buddha, and the Sangha. As for the Sangha, they are a monastic order and are not in charge of the laity as a parish priest is, but rather they are monastics whose chief responsibility is for "the property, discipline, and ceremonies of the Order" (Wells 1960:11).

²⁶The samlor is the equivalent of the Chinese pedicab but the design is local to Thailand. The driver is in front and the passenger(s) sits in the rear and all of this is mounted on a ridged frame. Generally there is a canvas top which is fixed to shade the passenger seat and which is collapsible should the sun not be strong. Textor (1961) provides a very good description of it and its history.

²⁷It should be pointed out that this case occurred near the end of the writer's stay in the field; however, this is not crucial for our presentation here. This example is placed here merely to give the reader the flavor of some of the events that transpire among the elite of a provincial town, and, only later, will we return to a consideration of this case in the perspective of the other materials to be presented later in this work.

²⁸The Hall Prachum is a meeting hall which is one of the provincial government buildings in which are held all sorts of meetings as required by the operation of the government, but it is also used for semi-official purposes in the performance of entertainment of officers who are on an inspection tour, and can be used for personal events such as weddings if they are of sufficient size. One such example is the wedding of the city clerk to the daughter of a very prominent, and rich pharmacist.

²⁹In the governmental structure of local administration in Thailand, the principal arm of government is the Department of Interior which includes civil service



officers who provide the senior local-level officers, that is, the governor, deputy governors, district officers (nai amphur), a certain number of their staffs, and the police. These two categories of officers, the civil service and the police, are presently of equal importance with neither being subordinate to the other. This reflects the general character of Thai government in which the civil service, the police, and the military have in one form or another been dominant groups in the leadership of the government since these three groups together forced the abdication of the monarch and the promulgation of a democratic constitution in 1932. In the 1959 Coup, General Prapat became Minister of the Interior in whose Ministry the Department of Local Administration and the Police coexist uneasily together. Having a high ranking army officer in charge of the Ministry leaves no clear superiority to either of the two remaining competing groups, thus, leaving the provincial police chief and the governor in an uneasy relationship in which there is considerable sensitivity towards the dignity of each other's office.

³⁰ But to be completely fair about this description, we should note that this course of action receives support also within Thai culture. Thus Phillips writes, "Their admiration for individuals who 'speak their feelings from their hearts' is occasionally unmitigated; but far more frequently, they speak of the 'kindness' and 'good hearts' of those who hide their feeling 'so as not to hurt others [1965:67]".

³¹ The Department of Police, like many other large size governmental bodies, has an intervening level of administration between the provincial and the national level. This regional level often does little else than to transfer decisions from and information to Bangkok; however, as Major Satien was transferred to another post within the region, this seems to suggest that the region has some competence for initiating transfer orders.

³² As stated earlier, the annual budget for the municipality is not sufficient to meet the normal operating and construction expenses let alone such a large capital expenditure. The market project did greatly exceed the budget for that year.

³³ A compradore is a position in the banking system introduced from Western Europe, perhaps Portugal, which is filled by a person who functions as a loan guarantor. This man enters into a contract with the bank to place a sum of money on deposit and he is then allowed to guarantee loans for individuals seeking loans with the bank. Should a potential borrower request a loan and the bank is doubtful about his ability to repay the loan, the bank refers the applicant to the compradore who will, if satisfied as to

the man's ability to pay back the desired loan, guarantee his loan to the bank. For this service the compradore is allowed a small percentage of the loan.

This position in the structure of the financial system of Thailand has now been curtailed in that new banks or branches may not have compradores. Thus, this position of possible economic exploitation has been eliminated. This change has a potential effect upon the rate of establishment of new banks, for the position of compradore allows a man to be close to the center of financial power of a community and borrow stature from connection with a national financial institution; the elimination of the status decreases the possibility that a person of means in the locality would be willing to provide the capital necessary to open a branch or an affiliated bank. Banks with compradores may continue to maintain this economic position.

The Country Bank is one of three commercial banks in Changwat Town. Of these three, the Country Bank and the City Bank both have compradores while the third, the Rice Grower's Bank, was established after the beginning of the fieldwork period reported herein, and, thus, is not allowed to have compradores.

³⁴ The local American advisor had carried out water divination by means of the water dowsing technique using a forked stick, but there had been no drilling based on this advice.

³⁵ This value is what Parsons (1951:58) would call one pole of the "universalism-particularism pattern variable." We might call this a goal orientation value in which immediate personal feelings and ends are considered less important than the goals of the group or organization of which one is a member. In such a system one can, in theory, correct a superior, providing it is done politely, and suggest a better way to reach a particular goal by using the value that both subordinate and superior bring to a particular job; that is, that personalities are not important in a situation but rather the most important aspect is the achievement of the particular goal that they accepted by joining a job oriented group.

³⁶ It should be noted that northeastern Thailand is supposed to be one of the most insecure areas of the country with active insurrection occurring. This is apparently quite true for the more mountainous and jungled regions to the north and east of Changwat Province but none is in process in Changwat Town. Peter Braestrup, writing in the New York Times Magazine, described the level of insecurity occurring in the Northeast at the time of this study. Writing of the provinces lying

generally to the north and east of Changwat Province, he states:

In 1965, the Front bands killed 30 Government supporters (schoolteachers, informers) and three Government officials (policemen, headmen, soldiers). In 1966, the figures were 70 and 36 and during the first nine months of this year, 138 and 78. The annual number of "clashes" rose from 20 in 1965 to 297 this year--a clash representing anything from a platoon firefight (rare) to a brief, harmless exchange of rifle shots at extreme range (frequent) [1967:50].

There may be some attempts by insurgents to mobilize political resources within the municipality, but this would be on a clandestine level. Whoever might be engaged in such activity does so for wider political motives and not for the very limited objectives and interests of those involved in the cases reported. Ideologically, involvement in these cases would not seem appropriate for realization of insurgent aims. However, tactically, one might seek to use this conflict if it would in some way pay off through embarrassment of the existing government. None of these persons involved here appeared to be engaged in subversive activity. Although, at an earlier time, one of the prominent individuals, Khun Keo, had been accused of being a communist.

³⁷ One should note that it was less than a year after this field work period that municipal and provincial elections were held; that is, in the winter of 1967-68 these elections were held for the first time since the 1959 Coup. Presumably such issues as the market, bus company, and ice plant controversies will come to have a more public airing and perhaps require more public involvement, at least, within the respective councils of these two levels of government since they are now composed of elected officials. One could easily see some of these issues becoming election issues.

³⁸ Khun Khao's fellow compradore and relative proclaims his neutrality vis-a-vis the conflict between Khun Keo and Khun Khao and this appears to be the case. The explanation for his move along with Khun Khao to the new bank is best seen in light of the fact that the City Bank is a much stronger institution than was the Plowman's Bank, both locally and nationally, and that he was able to exercise this relationship to his advantage, by renting a part of his building to the bank for their offices in the initial years of its operation in Changwat Town.

³⁹ The question of Khun Keo's undoubted influence with government officials would indicate that he could have exercised this influence even if he had entered the dispute

late; however, judging from Khun Keo's interest in new opportunities as a potential for control this interest suggests that he would likely initiate actions which were financially rewarding, and required little capital investment on his part.

⁴⁰ An alternative way of viewing this set of relationships among the members of the Khrum Sai might be to consider that the two families linked together by an affinal bond represent both the establishment of the first generation of the traditional lineage descent system of China and the grouping of the two in the ch'in tsu relationship as described by Gallin (1966:175-176). However, because of the lack of generational depth among the families I have described and the tendency of both the Khrum Sai and the Khrum Khwa to recruit non-kinsmen, I believe that this pattern of relationships follows the nature of the Thai family structure more than that of the traditional Chinese model.

⁴¹ I wish to acknowledge Professor Herbert P. Phillips' stimulating suggestion of gathering data for the construction of a friendship sociogram during the course of a visit to him while he was conducting research in Thailand. Naturally, I stand fully responsible for any shortcomings in design, execution, and interpretation of this aspect, as in all other aspects, of my research reported herein.

⁴² One will note, of course, that the diagram presented only records two choices per person. This reduction of choices was required by exigencies of the field situation, notably the lack of time available to follow out and to interview the third choice person.

⁴³ While this may be true for the Barnes publication cited above, the same statement does not hold for the article cited on page 183 (Barnes, 1968). In this latter article Barnes presents a very clear set of measures and definitions for analyzing networks. It is true, that he does not present actual data, for that is not the purpose of the article; however, in clarifying concepts used by himself and others and providing the techniques of measurements for network sociograms, he has clarified this area with the obvious intention of providing a sharpened analytical tool for inductively mapped social networks.

⁴⁴ As noted previously, I received the suggestion of making a friendship sociogram while I was in the field, so I was not able to carry out an exhaustive search of the related literature because of time limitations and limitations in library resources.

⁴⁵ I should note that there is a difference in perspective or viewpoint in how the various writers look at the network they deal with. Thus, Barnes writes:

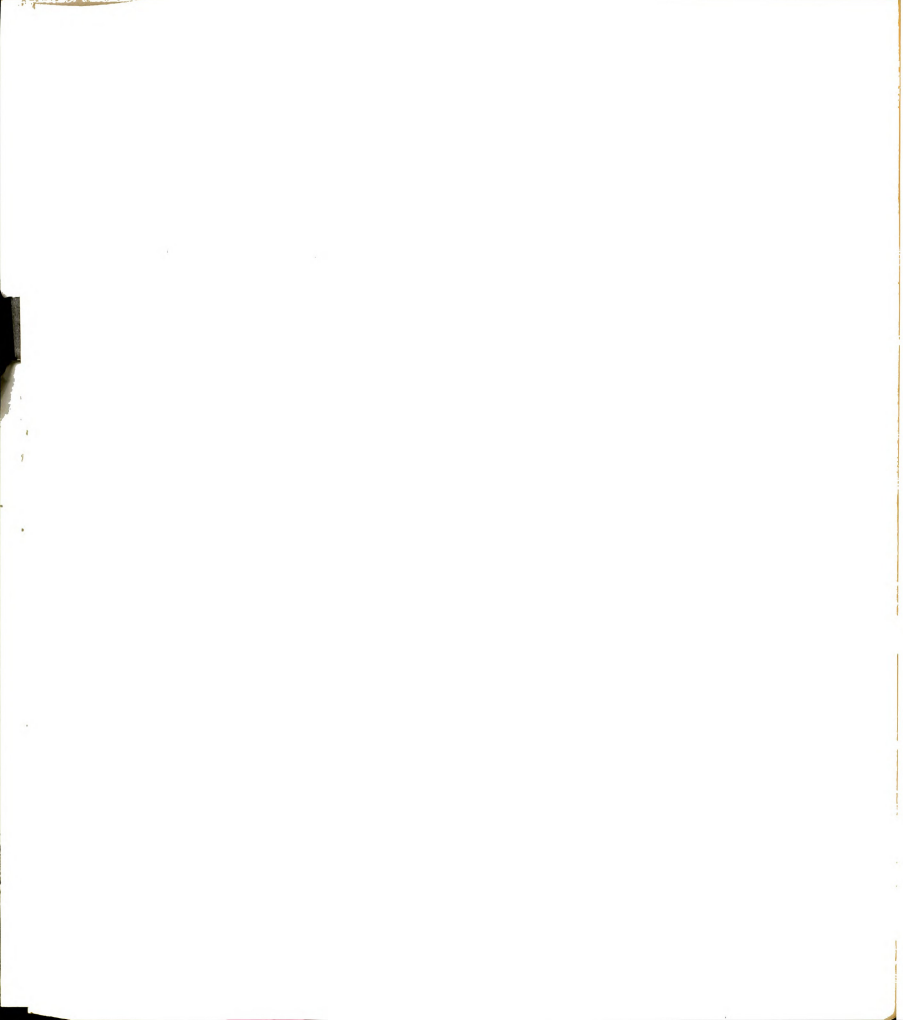
One contrast drawn both by Bott and myself has given trouble because of its uncertain status as either ego-centric and [sic] sociocentric. In her book and earlier articles, Bott wrote of loose-knit and close-knit networks, and I distinguished between networks with large and small mesh. I think we meant the same thing, but neither of us suggested an exact measure of the characteristic. Bott's study was based on twenty families, none of which was in significant contact with any other in the sample. Hence, in effect she saw each of twenty discrete sets of relationships through the eyes of only one married couple. Hence, her qualities of loose-knit and close-knit must refer to the properties of these sets of relationships defined with reference to the central married couples in each. On the other hand, I was concerned in my analysis with only one network, to which all of my informants, or rather my models of my informants, belonged. Moreover, in my crude analysis, I was concerned only with the network as a whole and not with differences in mesh between one part of it and another [1968:115-116].

⁴⁶ In order to complete Khun Keo's second order zone I have had to add Khun Chang's other choices, which are reprocrocated.

⁴⁷ In his description of point six, it is not clear whether Yadava took account of Nicholas' discussion concerning the origin and functions of factions. Inasmuch as I have organized my discussion around Nicholas' definition of factions--his is the prior and the superior statement--I have ignored Nicholas' discussion concerning the origins and functions of factionalism which is similar to Yadava's point six, but which he did not include in his characterization of factions; Nicholas was concerned with presenting "a sociological definition of faction"; however, Yadava goes beyond Nicholas, and beyond his own statement of purpose which is, ". . . to give now the characteristic features of factions [*italics added*] emerging from this case study of a Harayana village" (1968:908). He, thus, changes the realm of discourse from that of sociological characteristics to that of origin and dynamics. While quite proper, it is interesting that he seems not to have taken account sufficiently of Nicholas' final discussion of "factions and political change." Under this rubric, Nicholas noted that Siegel and Beals tend to emphasize factions occurring during times of rapid and massive change, thus implying a transitional characteristic

to factionalism. Nicholas' discussion of Iroquois factions points to the long standing characteristics of factions and their functional utility as a kind of political unit, thereby, casting considerable doubt on the transitional character of factional conflict.

48. There is an opportunity to use this feature as a test of the generalization that the Khrum Sai is a faction as Khun Keo died in early 1968; therefore, observation of the present state of group identification among the survivors would be instructive of the nature of Khun Keo's role in his faction. Did his regrettably early death put an end to the Khrum Sai or did it continue to perpetuate itself in his absence? Unfortunately, I have not been able to make the return trip so I do not have this data. Nevertheless, I suspect that the loss of Khun Keo ended the effective life of this faction.

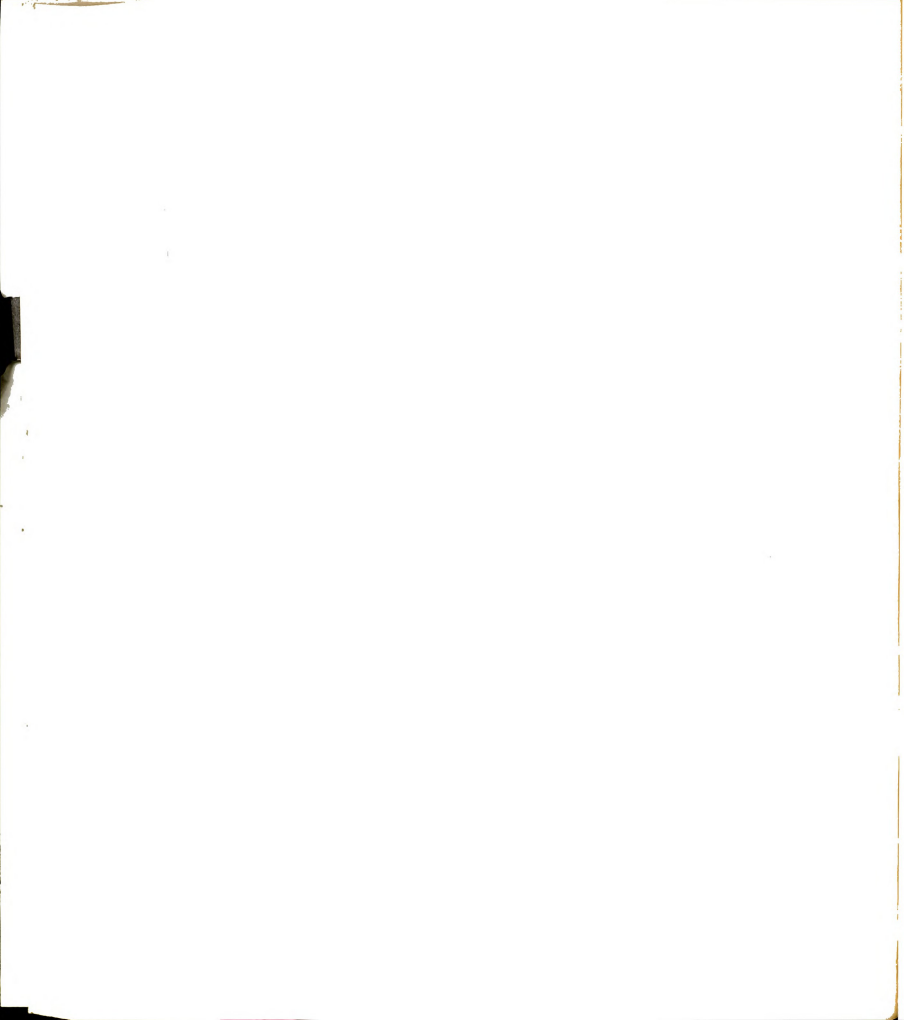


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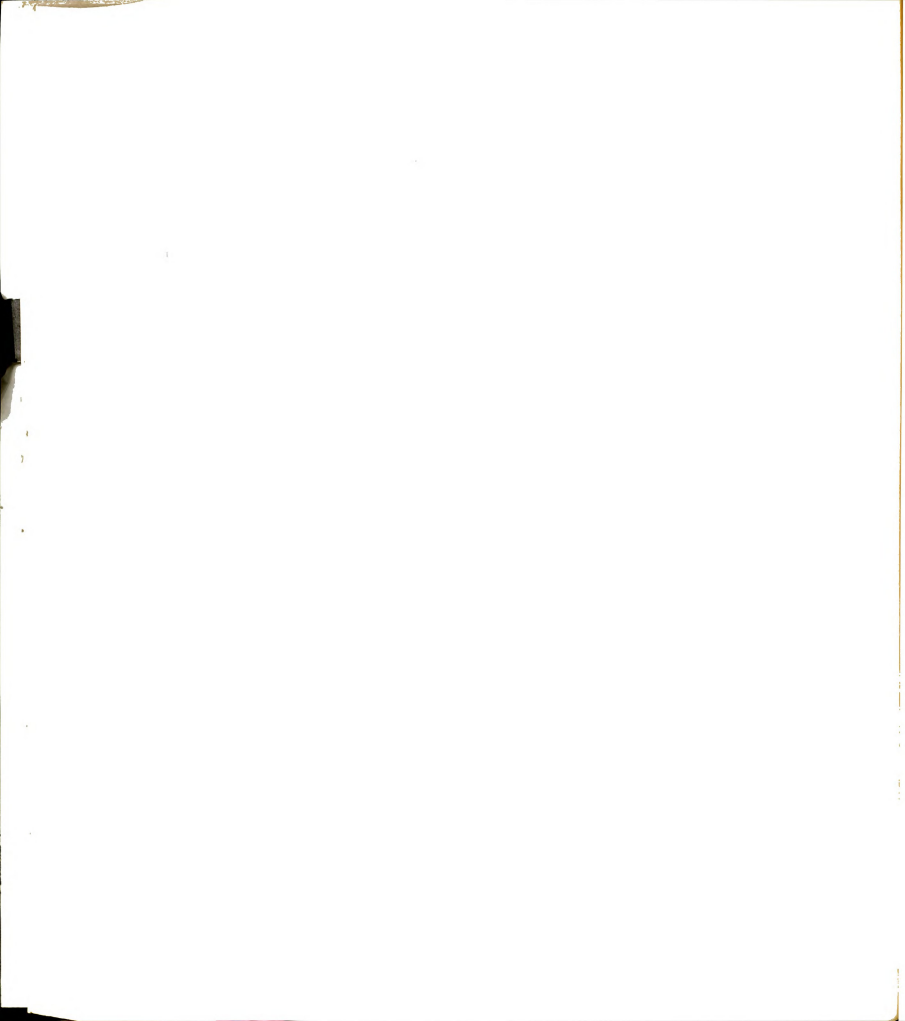
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APPENDIX



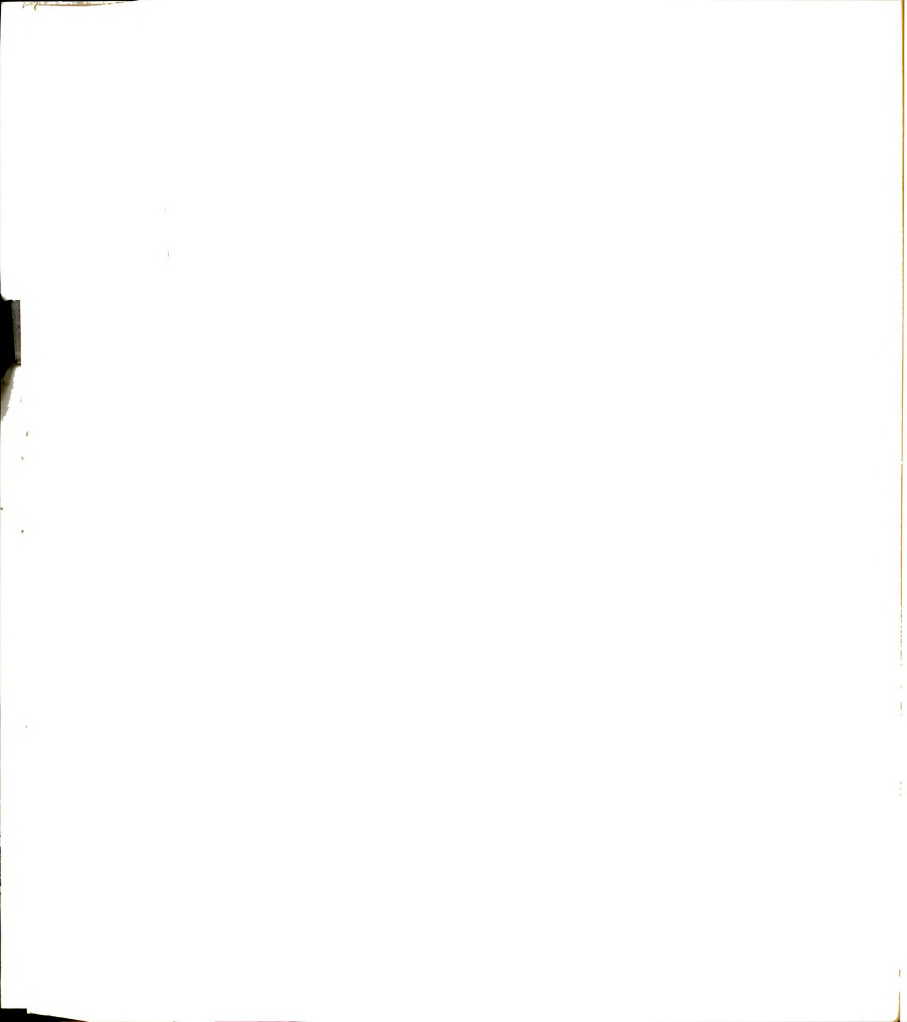
APPENDIX

In this section I will outline in some greater detail the method I used to develop the sociogram, a portion of which was presented in Chapter Five. The basic objective in gathering the data on friendship was to see the degree to which a sociogram might help to explicate the nature of the segment of the social system of Changwat Town with which I was working.

The data for the sociogram was gathered by asking individuals who were important members of the business and government communities of Changwat Town to answer the question, "who are your three best friends?" Those persons named, with the exception of the third person named, were then sought out and they were in turn asked the same question and the persons indicated in their responses were then sought out and so on. When a person was designated who lived outside town, I asked the interviewee to indicate only persons who lived in town. The names were finally arranged in a display similar to that presented in Figure 7 on page 264. I had hoped that the responses would tend to come full circle and present an essentially closed system--as we shall see that was not to be the case, at least within the time available.

There were at least three problems which arose in the process of gathering the data for the basic sociogram which is presented below. First, in the case of the basic question, there was the problem of translating the term friend. The Thai word for friend is generously applied to a variety of persons ranging from mere acquaintances to intimates. Thus the problem was how to obtain a common understanding to this question. This was resolved by describing the type of person that I had in mind as a friend, that is, one whom the respondent would like to share his leisure time with, be able to express his true feelings to, and to be able to rely upon in crisis situations. This became a sort of informal formula in explicating what we meant by friend.

A second problem arose as I began to ask persons for a response to this question. Initially, I went out to various members of the community I knew and began a conversation in which I told them I was interested in trying to make a sort of map of Changwat Town based upon friendship between persons and I was interested in knowing who they would designate as their three best friends. I indicated I would then ask those persons they designated the same question and that I would go on in this manner. There was usually no problem with supplying me the information requested. This procedure worked well enough while I dealt with persons who already knew me to some degree, but when I went to interview a well educated man who is a private doctor in the community, and who had seen me on



several occasions but with whom I had not talked, I found him very reluctant to give me an answer. He questioned me at some length, and only after some time did he become confident enough with me to give me the information.

Thereupon, I formulated a brief questionnaire which would ask questions about communications materials, such as magazines, newspapers, radio, and television which the interviewee might have in their home. At the end of the list of questions I asked my question about their friends. When I administered the questionnaire I received very good response from most of the respondents. Only one person refused to answer the friendship question. This young man was very suspicious of it and asked me many questions about it and why I wanted this information. Finally he said that he had no friends in Changwat Town. This man was the provincial prosecutor. I attribute his reluctance to speak to his profession which would normally make him suspicious of a person's motives. Also, he is a young man who was new to the community, thus, his response may have been quite factual.

Regarding the question of ethics about the formulation of a set of questions which I had only marginal intention to use other than as a setting for the question concerning friendship, I decided upon this course after some careful consideration of the propriety of this method. I reasoned that the population with which I was dealing was largely very knowledgeable about the world situation, about the

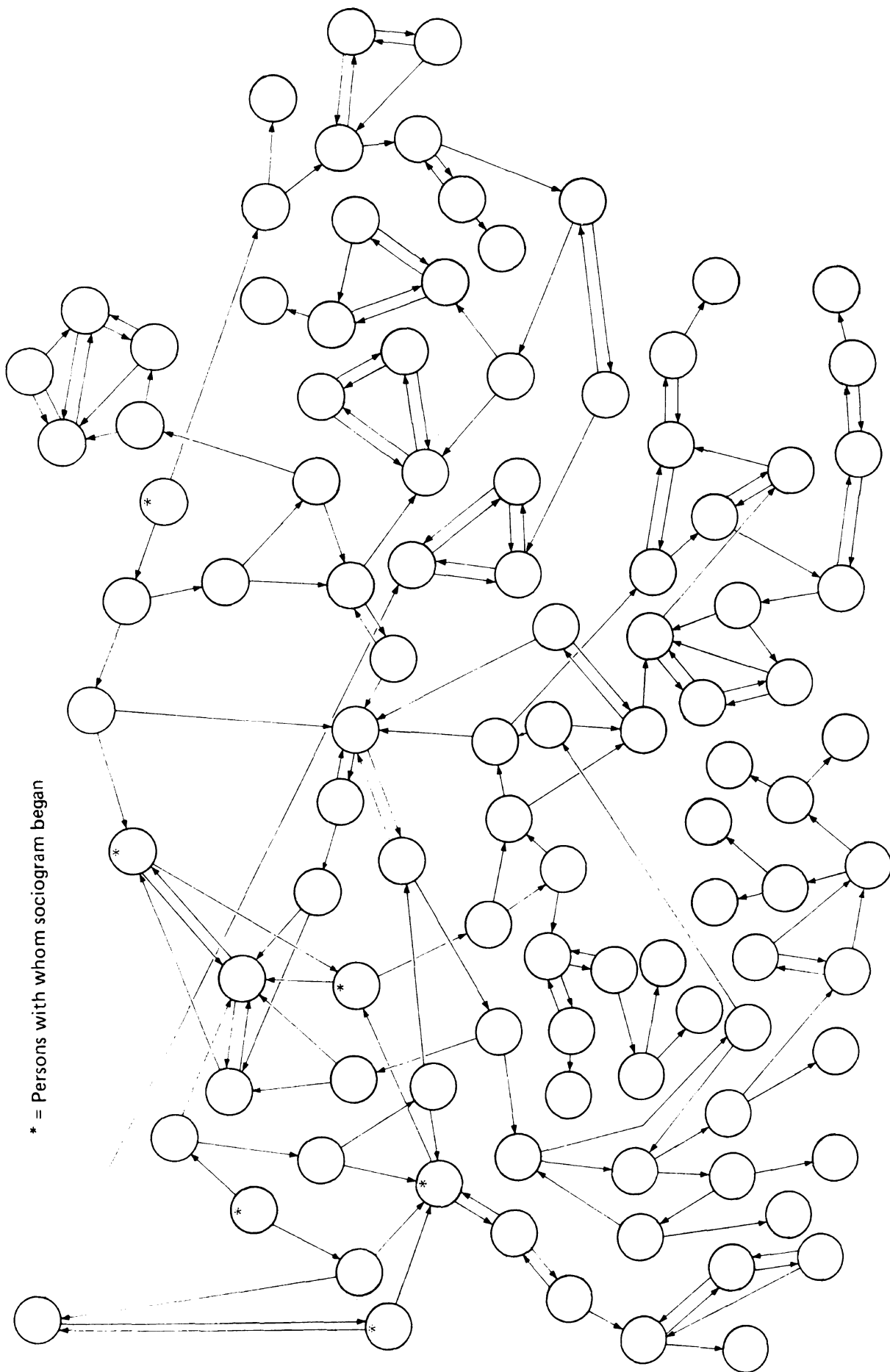
political realities of the day, and about the behavior appropriate to various occupational roles including social surveyors. At the time of my study there had been a census enumeration made on a house to house basis, there was a special economic census which had just been completed in the town, several agricultural studies had been or were in the process of being undertaken in the province, and in various places in the province the United States Information Service had conducted listener surveys using Thai pollsters. With this in mind, most of the persons whom I was likely to contact would probably have heard something about such surveys, would likely have been contacted in at least one of them or had a friend contacted, and therefore, would be aware of the role behavior of persons involved in such work. I concluded that, in having a questionnaire with specific questions on it, I would be recognized by the respondent as a person in a similar category as the native Thai surveyor, and I would only be a little more threatening by being a foreign researcher. Further, though the questionnaire was not central to my research objective at that point, I did attempt to ask questions which would be useful to me; therefore, the exercise of asking the questions and getting a response was not a mere empty gesture.

Another point should be made in considering the ethics of this strategy; I gave the ~~same~~ kind of information concerning the friendship question that I had given without

the questionnaire, so there was no attempt to distort the nature of the data I was seeking. The purpose, then, of the questionnaire was to place my actions in a form of behavior which was understandable to their particular cognitive patterns. This approach seemed to work well for I did not have this problem of suspiciousness to any great extent. I did have persons who were not at all anxious to answer questions and were obviously not pleased with me, for what reason I never found out, but in nearly every case they answered my questions.

The third problem arose in the process of following up the friendship nominees. When I began the process of this survey I had decided to ask for the names of a person's three best friends and then to go to these three persons, and so on. However, as I started out, I found that by contacting three persons each time, I kept enlarging the list of persons whom I had to interview; after some ten or fifteen interviews I concluded to drop the third person and concentrate upon the first two choices of the interviewee because of the limited time available to complete the project. This did reduce the number of persons whom I had to meet; however, I was never able to completely close the network of persons whom I had to interview. There were always some 16 to 19 persons left to be interviewed. Since the amount of time available for the completion of this phase was three months and it was inelastic --coming as it did at the end of my field study--I was unable



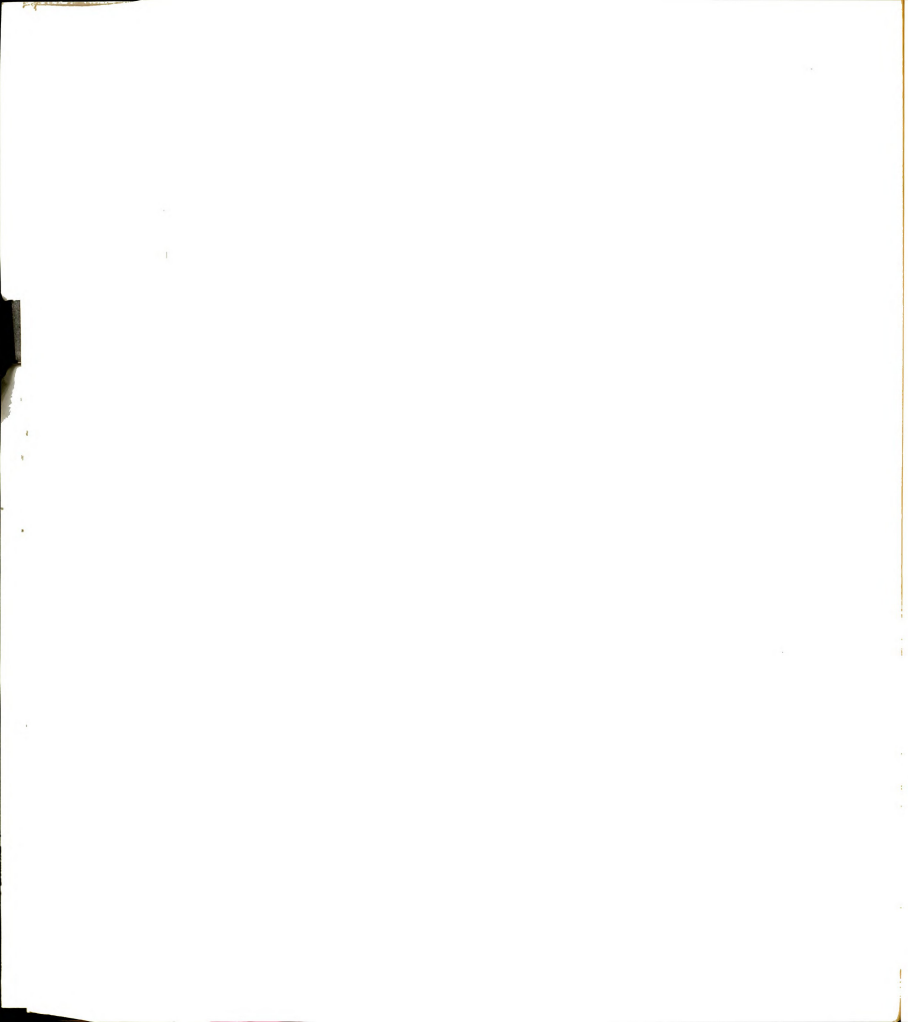


* = Persons with whom sociogram began

FIGURE 7. A SOCIOGRAM MADE IN CHANGWAT TOWN FEBRUARY-MARCH 1967

to pursue the problem further, leaving 16 individuals upon the sociogram uninterviewed--this is indicated in the diagram on page 264 by the lack of arrows emanating from certain circles. Of course, such a condition is not altogether unpredictable if one thinks about it; nevertheless, I had been sensitized to expect closure, for Dr. Phillips (see note 41) had indicated that his student in Kuala Lumpur, who was studying a lower class section of the city, had achieved closure in his study after thirty interviews; therefore, I was disappointed not to have gotten the same results. We will return to this question in our discussion of some of the features of the sociogram.

I will now turn to a consideration of the sociogram itself as presented in Figure 7. The most apparent aspect of Figure 7 is that I have not given names to the individuals indicated by the circles in the display. This has been done as a matter of convenience. Should any researcher, with a valid and legitimate need, wish to have the names of individuals indicated in this sociogram, I can supply him, upon request, with a copy of the sociogram with appropriate pseudonyms provided. As for the names indicated in Figures 5 and 6, these can be readily matched to the appropriate individuals in Figure 7 as this figure has been used as the base for the two earlier figures. Therefore, as in Figure 5 and 6, the arrows indicate the direction of choice of an ego for some other, and in each case there will be two such arrows emanating from each circle.



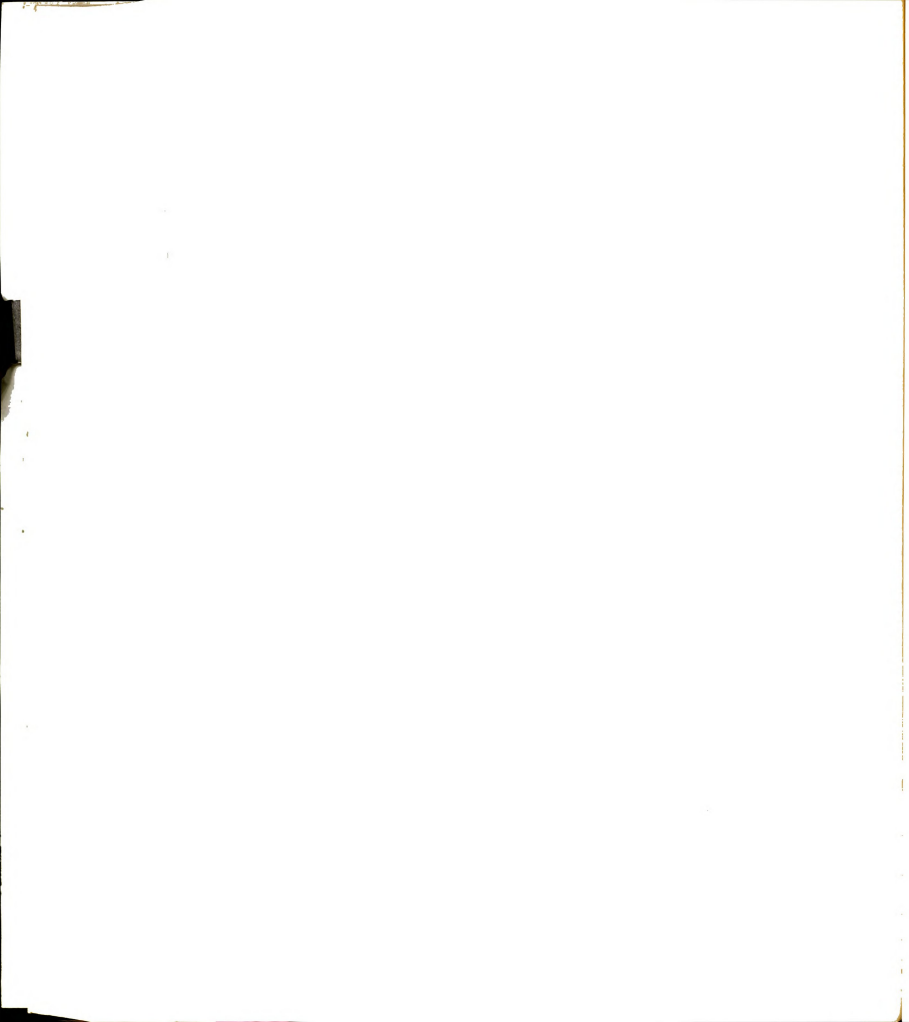
The number of arrows directed towards an individual will depend upon the number of choices of that person by others.

Regarded from the point of view of the various features which this sociogram displays, two points should be made. First, in the upper right hand portion of the sociogram can be seen several closed clusters of persons which appear as triangular or pentagonal groups. These may be contrasted rather sharply with the more complex character of the pattern of choices appearing to the left of the vertical trending line which marks the choice of the governor for Khun Chang. Second, the ladder or chain-like effect to be noted in the lower portion of the sociogram has been remarked upon in Chapter Five; however, I believe that this may warrant some further consideration.

The first point above regarding the contrast between the upper right and upper left hand portions of the display is important because I feel that these in fact indicate the nature of the different relationships among the persons interviewed. For instance, the pentagonal cluster in the upper right represents a very closely knit group consisting of the joint owners of two interprovincial buses and three members of their crew. This group is very tightly knit and prefers to spend much of their leisure time as well as their working time together. The star group centering around Khun Khao, on the other hand, displays the central position that Khun Khao enjoys; thus, the choices among the members of the star for each other are reduced and Khun Khao is more

often chosen giving him a more central position and a star shape to the group of which he is a part. While I believe these graphic displays fairly represent the social reality of the two sets of individuals considered, one must wonder what effect the inclusion of the third choices of the individuals into the study would have made upon the network display. Perhaps the distinctive pattern of the stars and clusters might be as consistently indicated, or, perhaps they might be organized in a more complex pattern.

When we consider the question of the chain-like effect which I have noted earlier and which I have suggested may be an indication of the loose-structure of Thai society, I will have to say here that this characteristic, as those of star and cluster, might be greatly modified by the addition of the third choice data. However, if the reader is willing to ignore this possibility for the moment and we return to the question of whether the chain effect is indeed an indication of the reputed loose structure of Thai society, I would argue that the chain effect does indeed show the characteristics that one might expect in a society in which there are few lasting and, therefore, well defined groups and quasi-groups. These chains occur because the nominators either receive only one or no friendship designations from their immediate nominees and none from those nominees more distantly but directly linked through one or more intervening nominees. Clusters and stars are formed in a somewhat different manner. It is the turning back on itself of a



chain, by the distant nominees choosing proximal nominees to whom they are directly related through intervening nominators, which forms a cluster. A number of individuals forming a cluster who nominate one of their number with some considerably higher frequency form a star.

Returning to the chain, the members composing a chain are indicating that they do not see themselves as friends of those who have nominated them, or in the case of the chains which are composed of reciprocated nominations (such that: A chooses B, who chooses A and C, who chooses B and D, who chooses C and E, but E will not choose either A, B, or C), the shape of the structure is highly suggestive of exactly the picture which one would draw if one were going to diagram a group of individuals in which only dyadic relationships existed between persons. That is, members of these chains of reciprocated nominations, or what I shall call double chains, seem to be indicating that while there is mutuality between any pair there are little if any shared relationships of friendship with third parties. An alternative possibility is that these chains are just the beginnings of chains which are organized in very large loops rather than the tight knit loops indicated by the triangles formed in the sociogram. That is, these chains would turn back upon themselves, or there are cross tying links which would have become apparent had I been able to follow up on the uninterviewed persons. Finally, I have to raise the question again of what the affect would be upon these chains



if the third choices were included in the study. The chain-like structures would be far less possible; one then has to ask, what is the affect of adding further friendship choices? If I had asked a person to nominate all his friends, where would he stop? How many friends would he indicate? But surely if a person lists more than just a few, wouldn't they have to be markedly different in degree of friendship? All of these questions I cannot answer at this point but they suggest areas in which study might be done to refine the network sociogram for the purpose of making a useful tool for network analysis.

In summary, then, the network display developed from the friendship questions asked suggests the applicability of sociometric network analysis to the problem of the nature of the social structure of societies and particularly to the problems of the tightness of their articulation and the nature of the more transitory interactions of individuals as discussed in the consideration of the quasi-group. The problem posed by my work is that of correcting the lack of rigor in research design through the application of the standard techniques in development of the test and in the use of a pretest. The more general problem is, of course, to use such a test as mine in a controlled experimental setting to see if it does indeed fulfill some of the promise so suggestively arising in my analysis. The next step would be to apply the test in cross cultural situations in order to see if comparable and useful data can be derived from its use.



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