From Chaona to Khon-Ngan

The Growing Divide in a Central Thai Village

by

Ananya Bhuchongkul

Thesis Submitted for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

at

The School of Oriental and African Studies

University of London

1984

ABSTRACT

This thesis is an attempt to focus on the process by which a village society in Central Thailand, once predominated by chaonaa (peasants), has been transformed into one in which a large number of villagers are now khon-ngaan (wage-labourers). To comprehend this it is necessary to set it against the wider context of the particular path of development taken by Thailand as a whole, with emphasis on the roles of the agricultural sector and the state.

Fieldwork was conducted in Theparaj village, Chachoengsao province. The village was established in the 1880s after Thailand had become integrated into the world economy. The early years of settlement witnessed the abolition of "slave" labour and the replacement of the traditional rights over persons with property rights over land as well as the increasing presence of the state in rural areas.

In the ensuing years, up until about 1960, agricultural growth was based on the incorporation of new land into production with little change in technology and small peasant production predominated. In the finance and distribution of rice, merchants and moneylenders featured dominantly, profiting as a result of the peasants' growing indebtedness.

The agrarian basis of production was greatly transformed from the 1960s onwards when more

branches of capital began to enter agriculture on an increasing scale, with the aid of the state's policy to promote industrial investment. The agro-business of modern capital-intensive poultry-farming was introduced into the village while at about the same time, rice production also became more intensified with the adoption of double-cropping and the various ingredients of the "green revolution". The village economy has thus become more tightly linked than ever before into the international economic system with the dominating presence of multinational corporations.

This has created new areas of accumulation in the village. A handful of merchants and moneylenders have turned themselves into capitalist poultry-farmers who operate with the use of wage labour. A few rice-farmers have also entered into the new business but on a much smaller scale and most need to form dependent ties with the larger poultry-farms.

Rice-farmers have generally prospered after the adoption of double-cropping. The relatively better-off have benefited from the state's programmes of subsidy while the poorer farmers continue to rely on local merchants and moneylenders. The use of wage labour in rice-farming is now also predominant and exchange labour has disappeared.

Although the majority of the village population are better off materially in absolute terms, benefits of recent developments have been disproportionately concentrated among the highly capital-intensive enterprises, particularly the larger poultry-farms and to a lesser extent among the other already well-off households, and this has significantly increased income and wealth disparities in the village. Concommittantly, the very wealthy poultry-farmers (ex-merchants, moneylenders or millers who hitherto had remained largely outside the village political arena) have now asserted themselves politically and assumed a position of leadership within the village.

For My Parents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deep gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Ruth McVey, whose warm encouragement and constant support were largely responsible for the completion of this thesis and whose valuable criticisms and suggestions have saved me from many serious errors. I am also especially grateful to Dr. Andrew Turton for sparing me his time to read through parts of my work, to render me countless constructive comments and to generate further food for thought for me.

I must also express my thanks to the Rockefeller Foundation which helped sponsor part of my research efforts.

At all stages of my thesis-writing, the sympathetic understanding and patient help that Peter Ungphakorn gave me was fundamental. Not only did he read through the entire manuscript, help clarify many of my ideas, he also provided me with the essential moral support.

Thanks are due also to Lorraine Haber who took on the task of typing this thesis and bravely and efficiently tackled my chaotic manuscript with all its strange words.

Last but by no means least, I wish to thank sincerely the people of Theparaj whose hospitality and co-operation have been invaluable. Without their co-operation this thesis would not have been possible, but I have learnt much more than that from them and made many friends.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

There is no uniformity in the transliteration of Thai words although an official standard does exist. Mary Haas' (Haas, 1947) phonetic system and its varients are sometimes used, but for the reader who is unfamiliar with such systems, some of the vowel and consonant representations can be confusing: for instance "oo" is not pronounced as the English speaker would expect (as in "room") but closer to "or" (with silent "r"), in other words a longer version of "o" (as in "pot"). However, Mary Haas's practice of doubling a vowel to lengthen its sound is useful in some cases, such as "a" and "aa" which respectively are short and long versions of "ah", and can be read as such comparatively intuitively, whereas the use of "ar" would raise questions about whether the "r" is pronounced.

The transliteration used here, therefore, is an attempt to compromise consistencey with the ability to pronounce intuitively, at least from an Anglo-Saxon point of view. In the case of proper names, however, more conventional transliterations are used (e.g. the fieldwork area is written as "Theparaj" instead of "Thebpharaat") in order to correspond more closely to transliterations that appear elsewhere in other texts, in maps or on signposts, etc. As can be seen, on the whole the differences will be small.

It should be noted that the "th" sounds as used in English do not exist in Thai. "Th" represents a normal English "t", whereas "t" usually represents a sound

sometimes written as "dt" (midway between "d" and "t", more like a French or Italian "t"). Similarly, "ph" is not pronounced like "f" but as an English "p" with "p" usually representing a "bp" sound. "K" is usually like a hard "g" with "kh" representing the English "k". "Ch" is used as in English, and not as "j" except in some proper names. With regard to vowels, as mentioned above, "a" and "aa" are short and long versions of "ah". "U" and "oo" are also short and long versions of the same vowel, and so correspondingly are "i" and "ee". With most other vowels it was decided that the distinction would be too confusing, so for instance, "oe" is both versions of "er" (with mute "r"), "ue" is both versions of a vowel non-existent in English but approximating to "ue" in German, and "o" has to suffice for both versions of two different vowel sounds (approximateing to the vowels of "hop" and "hope"). No attempt has been made to represent tones.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

There is no such thing as a typical village despite what some writings might suggest. The history of a village is not the history of a country, any more than individuals' stories are those of a nation. And yet the whole and the parts cannot be totally divorced from one another.

The initial impetus in researching and writing this thesis was to trace the process of change that has taken place in a village in one of the most commercialized and technologically advanced agricultural regions of Thailand. But in examining the changes it has become evident that in fact there is more than one story to be told, that the village's social history is incomprehensible unless the more general national development patterns are also included in the account. The histories of the village and the nation are also in many instances parallel, in the sense that they do not always meet. For, events that are important locally are not necessarily important at the wider level and vice versa. Nevertheless, the mutual influences are there.

The studies of both the specific and the general are essential in enhancing our comprehension of change and the one also complements the other. The fact that different countries and even different regions within the same country experience varying concrete conditions, have undergone and are undergoing the transformation process,

more often than not, in varying ways and degrees, renders the study of a specific village particularly illuminating for it can take account of the differing pre-existing social relations before commodity relations became prevalent or before industrialization was launched, of the varying responses and adaptations of local social forces and forms of production to the increasing commoditization process, of the differing strategies introduced by the state into the various regions, or the differing effects the same strategy may have on different regions, etc. On the other hand, changes that have taken place in a village society would be incomprehensible if they were not placed in the wider context of the overall national development patterns, of the increasing incorporation of the rural producers into the world capitalist economy; because the internal organization of a village society is very much contingent upon its relationships with a much larger entity, upon the forces of capital accumulation within their society and at the international level; because the conditions of the villagers' production and livelihood are significantly circumscribed by forces outside the local community itself, particularly the logic of capitalism, the activities of the Thai state and the changing class alignments in society at a wider level.

While the emphasis on the differing concrete conditions under which change has taken place makes generalization an awkward if not seemingly a contradictory task, and while the thesis concentrates on

being empirical in character, nevertheless, a very broad framework for organizing the research materials necessarily exists.

This thesis focuses on the socio-economic and political changes that a village society has experienced from a historical standpoint, particularly the process whereby capitalism has penetrated increasingly into an economy that was once predominantly small peasant agriculture. It considers the transformation process in relation to wider development issues. I have chosen to emphasize the specific historical conditions and local circumstances in which Thailand's development has taken place, which differs in many important aspects from the agrarian transitions that have occurred in the West and which may not necessarily take the same paths as those taken in other Third World countries.

With this point in mind, the overall argument adopted will be that the expansion of commodity production in agriculture should be seen as part of the wider process, in which pressure exists to mobilize resources from this sector, in order to generate the capital accumulation which makes possible industrial development. In this process, the manner in which the agricultural sector becomes incorporated into the world system of capitalism and the production of commodities, can assume many different forms, depending on the pre-existing social relations which were previously prevalent , the role of the state, the period of world capitalist development, etc. Different branches of

capital, for instance, merchant/usurer capital, finance capital, productive capital, often with the help of the state, penetrate agrarian society, attempting to gain control over the conditions of production and the distribution of agricultural produce, in order to extract surplus from the agricultural producers through a variety of mechanisms , through unequal exchange, rent, usury and the exploitation of wage labour. Such opportunities to accumulate capital are restricted among certain sections of the population within the agrarian sector itself as well as within the country as a whole. It is the dynamics of this interaction that impart specific characteristics to the nature of the transformation.

Apart from this, another major agent of structural change in society, is the state. Programmes and policies that are adopted by those who are in control of state power can work in favour of the interests of different forms of capital at various times: they can facilitate or quicken the pace of transition towards capitalist agriculture (e.g. by giving various investment incentives to agro-industrial enterprises, by encouraging the use of capital-intensive agricultural inputs, etc.). Often its policies act differentially on constituent groupings and classes in both the rural and wider society, benefitting certain forms of production and certain groups of people, usually those who are already well-off, thus exacerbating the existing inequality still further. Added to this, attention must also be paid to the changing alignments of the various social classes, the relative strengths and

weaknesses of different classes in society at various conjunctures, which play an active part also in shaping the character of the overall transformation process. The manner in which socio-economic and power relations in a village society have changed, under varying concrete conditions and in the context of national-level development patterns, constitutes the subject of empirical enquiry in the subsequent chapters. (Of particular relevance to the theoretical framework are the works of H. Bernstein, 1977; H. Alavi, 1972, 1980, 1982; J. Banaji, 1976, 1977; U. Patnaik, 1971, 1979; D. Goodman & M. Redclift, 1981.)

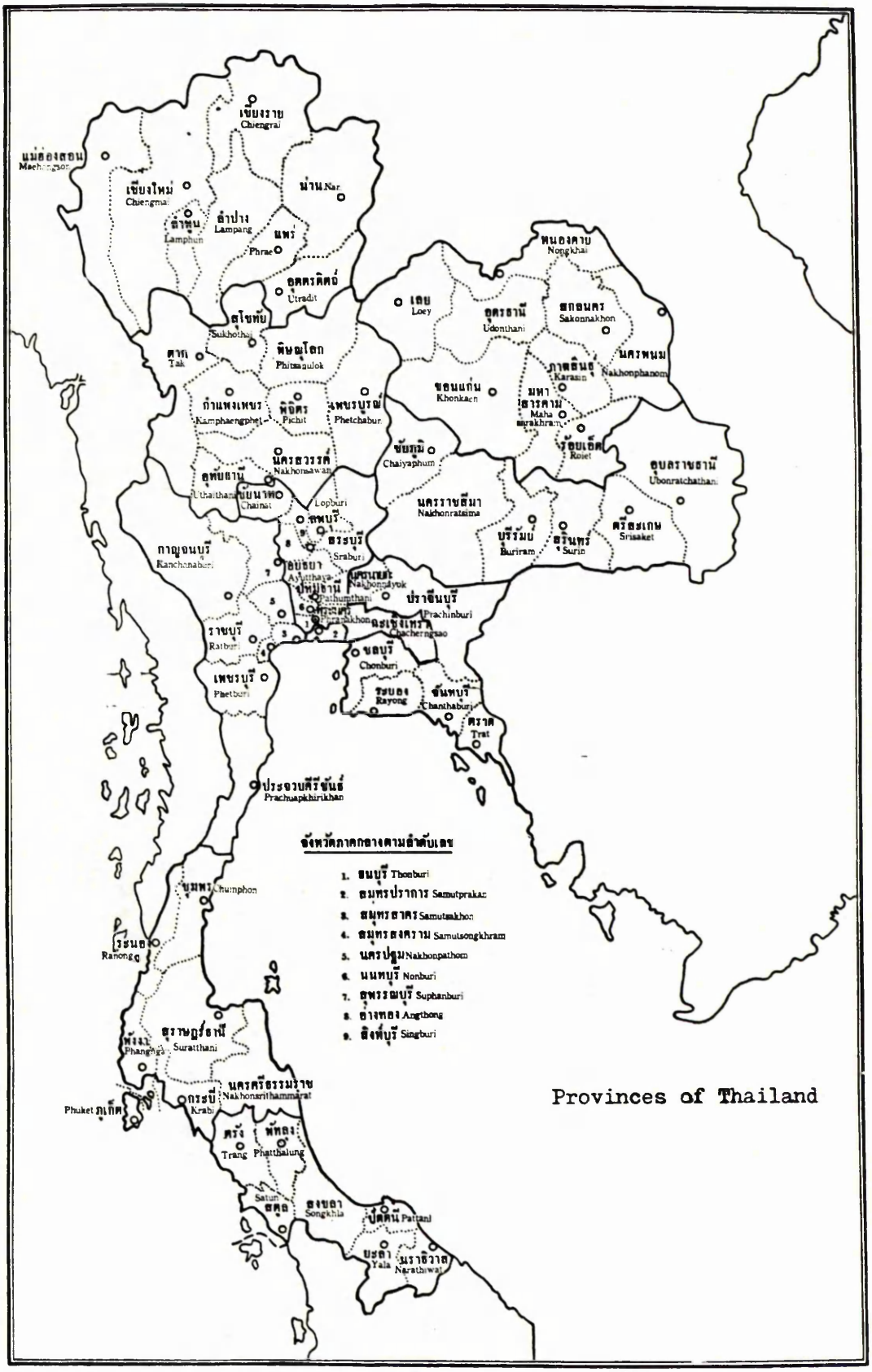
Theparaj

The village researched for this thesis is Theparaj in Amphoe (district) Banpho, Chachoengsao province. The province lies about 70 kilometres to the east of Bangkok. It is sometimes included in the Eastern Region, sometimes in the Central Region of the Thai kingdom. For this particular study, I have chosen to place the fieldwork village as a part of the Central Plain, chiefly because it belongs to the part of the province which extends from the central rice plain towards the east without any change in its character as a rice-growing lowland with alluvial soils. Here, rice fields predominate and the well-irrigated land generally secures good rice harvests, providing a constant surplus of rice which is transported to Bangkok and provinces to the east. The province's topography changes its character, however, particularly

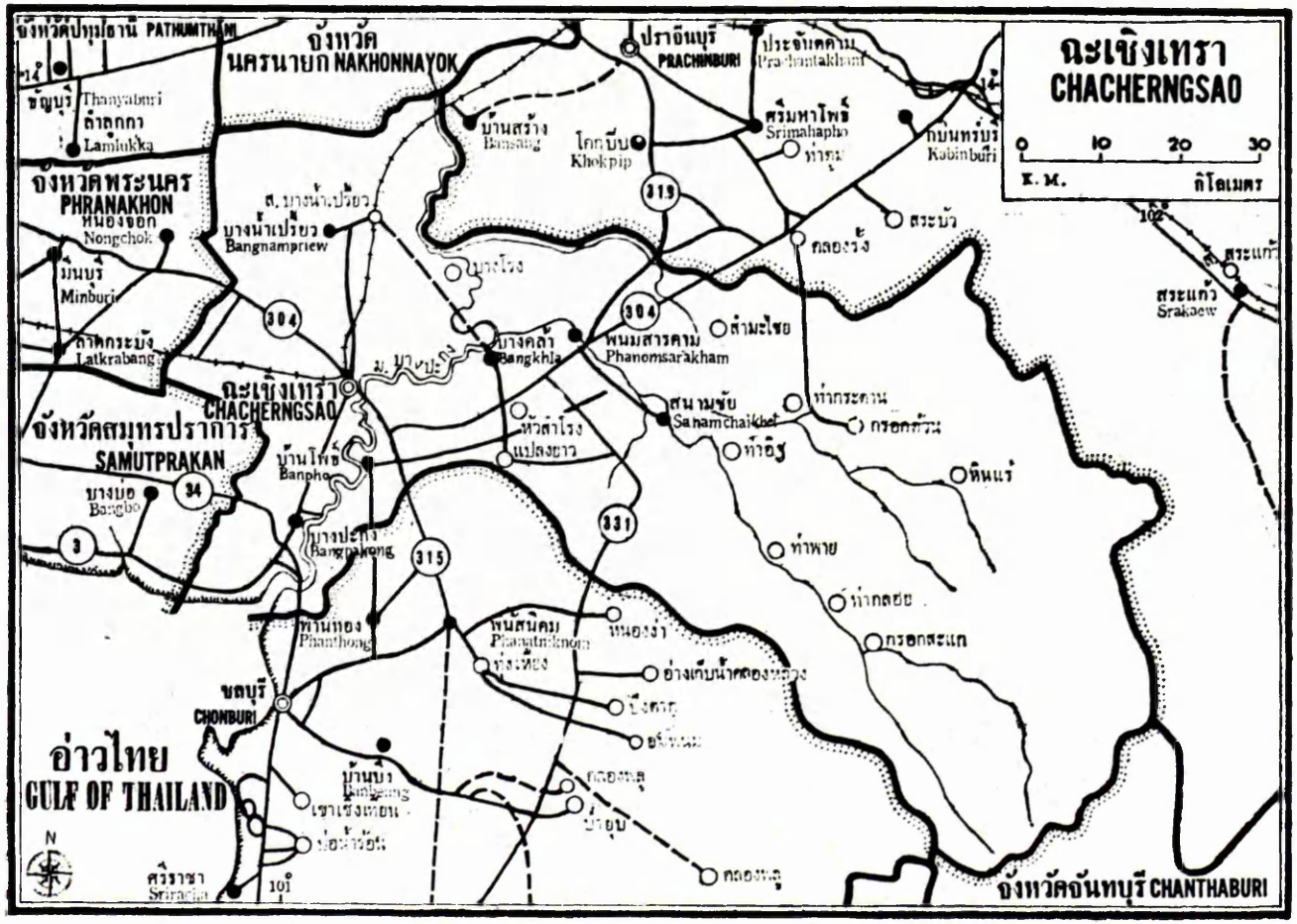
beyond Amphoe Phanom Sarakham to the east where the domination of rice cultivation disappears and more elevated areas, higher terraces are found, and the marginal soils are partly planted with upland crops and partly covered with forests.

Administratively, Chachoengsao province is divided into 7 amphoes (districts), 2 "semi-amphoes" (king amphoe), namely amphoe Mueang, amphoe Ban Pho, amphoe Bangkhla, amphoe Bang Nam Prieo, amphoe Bangpakong, amphoe Phanom Sarakham, amphoe Sanam Chaikhet, king-amphoe Plaeng Yao and king-amphoe Ratchasarn. In amphoe Ban Pho where the fieldwork village is situated, there are 17 tambons (sub-districts) including tambon Theparaj which is further divided into 6 moo baans (villages).

Amphoe Ban Pho is in the southern portion of the western salient of the province, surrounded to the north by amphoe Mueang and amphoe Bang Khla, to the south by amphoe Bangpakong of Chachoengsao province and amphoe Phanthong of Cholburi province, the west by amphoe Bangpakong (Chachoengsao) and amphoe Bang Bo of Samutprakarn province. It has the Bangpakong River flowing through it. While two-thirds of the tambons, together with the amphoe office, lie on the eastern side of the River, Theparaj and a few more tambons are situated on the western side. Amphoe Ban pho is a lowland area predominantly planted with rice while a small part of the area is planted with orchards. At


เชียงราย
Chiengrai
แม่ฮ่องสอน
Maehongson
เชียงใหม่
Chiengmai
ลำพูน
Lamphun
ลำปาง
Lampang
น่าน Nan
แพร่
Phrae
อุตรดิตถ์
Utradit
สุโขทัย
Sukhothai
ตาก
Tak
พิษณุโลก
Phitsanulok
กำแพงเพชร
Kamphaengphet
พิจิตร
Pichit
เพชรบูรณ์
Phetchabun
นครสวรรค์
Nakhonsawan
อุทัยธานี
Uthaithani
ชัยนาท
Chainat
ลพบุรี
Lopburi
สิงห์บุรี
Sraburi
กาญจนบุรี
Kanchanaburi
อยุธยา
Ayutthaya
ปทุมธานี
Pathumthani
นครนายก
Nakhonnayok
ราชบุรี
Ratburi
เพชรบุรี
Phetburi
ปราจีนบุรี
Prachinburi
ฉะเชิงเทรา
Chacherngsao
ชลบุรี
Chonburi
ระยอง
Rayong
จันทบุรี
Chanthaburi
ตราด
Trat
ประจวบคีรีขันธ์
Prachuapkhirikhan
ชุมพร
Chumphon
ระนอง
Ranong
สุราษฎร์ธานี
Suratthani
พังงา
Phangnga
นครศรีธรรมราช
Nakhonsrithammarat
กระบี่
Krabi
ภูเก็ต
Phuket
ตรัง
Trang
พัทลุง
Phatthalung
สตูล
Satun
สงขลา
Songkhla
ปัตตานี
Pattani
ยะลา
Yala
นราธิวาส
Narathiwat
หนองคาย
Nongkhai
เลย
Loey
อุดรธานี
Udonthani
สกลนคร
Sakonnakhon
นครพนม
Nakhonphanom
ขอนแก่น
Khonkaen
มหาสารคาม
Maha sarakham
ร้อยเอ็ด
Roiet
ชัยภูมิ
Chaiyaphum
นครราชสีมา
Nakhonratsima
อุบลราชธานี
Ubonratchathani
บุรีรัมย์
Buriram
สุรินทร์
Surin
ศรีสะเกษ
Srisaket
จังหวัดภาคกลางตามลำดับเลข
1. ธนบุรี Thonburi
2. สมุทรปราการ Samutprakan
3. สมุทรสาคร Samutsakhon
4. สมุทรสงคราม Samutsongkhram
5. นครปฐม Nakhonpathom
6. นนทบุรี Nonburi
7. สุพรรณบุรี Supbanburi
8. อางทอง Angthong
9. สิงห์บุรี Singburi
Provinces of Thailand

Districts of Chachoengsao Province



Roads and Railways in Chachoengsao

present in the tambons on the western side of the River, together with the tambons in the adjacent amphoe Mueang, rice-fields are interrupted by poultry-farms, particularly frequently along roadsides.

Tambon Theparaj is located in the west of amphoe Ban Pho and consists of 6 administrative villages known as Villages Nos. 1 - 6 (moo 1 - moo 6). Village settlements are of the ribbon type with houses built along both banks of the Prawetburirom Canal and paddy fields stretching back from the houses. The tambon is accessible via both road and canal. From Bangkok one can get a boat, (with an hourly service) from the end of the Phra Khanong Canal and travel eastward along the Prawetburirom Canal which flows past tambon Theparaj and goes on to meet the Bangpakong River. But the most convenient, commonly used and fastest form of transport is by road. The two main routes from Bangkok are from Bangkhen via Minburi on Highway 304 and then on to the Chachoengsao-Bangpakong Road (approximately 75 km.), or alternatively from Bangna on Highway 34 and also along the Chachoengsao-Bangpakong Road (approximately 80 km.). Then one needs to turn into a dirt road for 4 - 5 km. to get to the fieldwork village. There are regular bus services (every hour and half hour) operating from Bangkok (Ekamai Road and Talad Mohchit bus stations) to Chachoengsao town and from there one can get a baht-bus with an hourly service into Theparaj. Apart from the road and canal one can also travel from Bangkok to Chachoengsao by rail on the

Bangkok-Aranyaprathet line, descend at Paedriw station and then get a baht-bus into Theparaj.

The area chosen for fieldwork is of particular interest because of the rapid and spectacular changes that it has undergone over a relatively short span of time. It is an area where technology in rice-farming is among the most advanced, while at the same time a new form of agricultural production, i.e. capital-intensive poultry-farming agri-business, has been making its impact substantially felt, rendering agrarian relations increasingly capitalistic in nature. And although a village-based study necessarily has to bear in mind the specific conditions and characteristics, the general trend towards increasing proletarianization and more capitalistic relations of production, together with the increasing role the state has been playing in the lives of the rural population, which can be gauged in Theparaj society, is a trend that other rural areas of the country are also experiencing, though not necessarily in the same manner or degree.

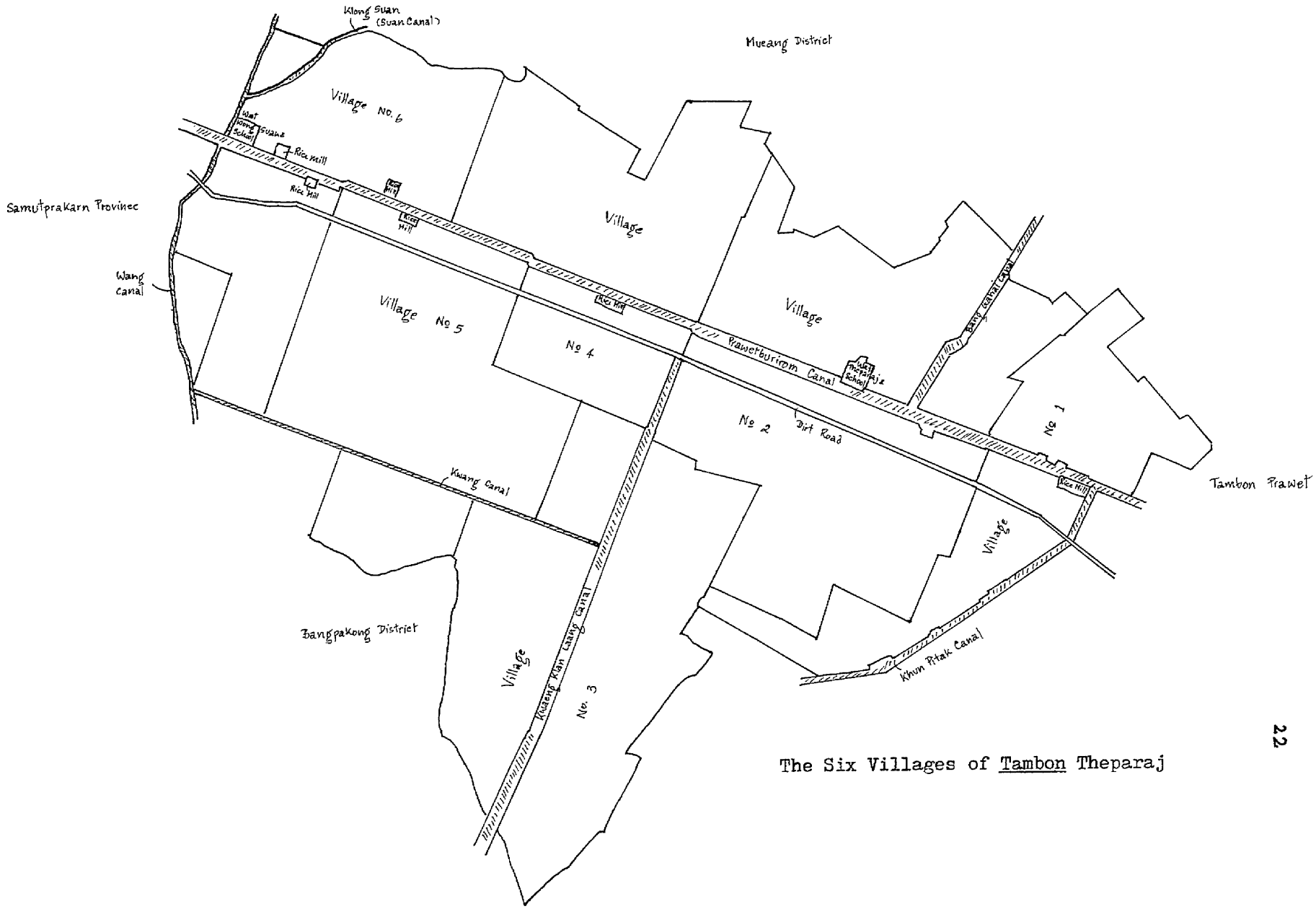
The particular village in which the fieldwork was carried out is known as Village no. 2 (moo 2). My choice of this village may have been arbitrary and no claim will be made that the village is more "typical" than any other village in the area. To my mind, Village no. 2 is of particular interest because different features are combined within it. Significantly, it contains poultry-farms of all sizes (whereas village no. 1 has a proportionally larger number of big farms). Furthermore,

among the rice-farming population of this village there exist both categories - owner-occupiers and tenants - while its wage-labourers are found working in a variety of jobs, for instance, in poultry-farms, in rice-fields and in rice mills; and members of their families are working in factories, hospitals, restaurants, etc., in Bangkok. Some households derive their income from self-employment. The fact that my intention was to learn particularly about the process of social change that a village has undergone over several years, and the fact that the adoption of modern poultry-farming, in my view, constitutes a highly significant development in certain parts of Thailand's rural areas and its trend need to be accounted for, makes Village no. 2 an apt choice. Certain households in Village no. 2 have taken part in the development of poultry-farming from the very beginning, and this enables me to trace back the change in a more comprehensive manner. In this respect this village is better than Villages nos. 3, 4, 5 and 6 where poultry-farming is not yet a significant feature . At the same time part of the population of Village no. 2 are still engaged in rice-farming which has also undergone radical changes in recent decades. This village thus renders the opportunity to study developments in rice-farming and how this has affected the villagers' lives and relations with one another. From this aspect Village no. 2 compares more favourably than Village no. 1 where rice-farming is quickly receding and is very much

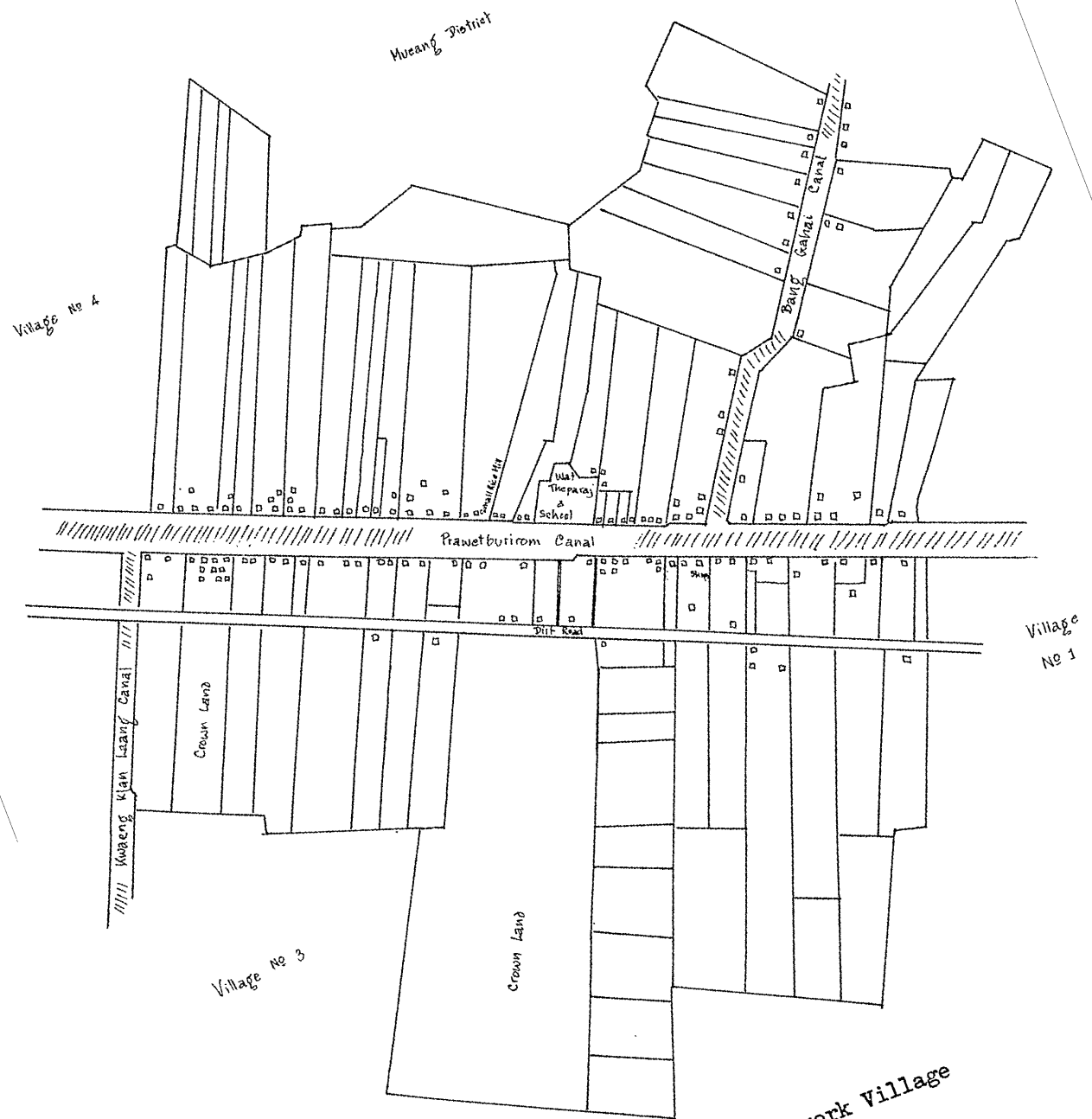
overwhelmed by the increasing presence of the new poultry-farming agri-business.

Hence, if the visitor turns off the Chachoengsao-Bangpakong Road into the dirt road that leads into Theparaj and on into Samutprakarn province, initially he or she sees rice fields frequently interrupted by poultry-farms as the road passes tambon Prawet and Village no. 1 of tambon Theparaj. In Village no. 1 large and medium-scale poultry-farms are predominant and out of 80 households or so, 18 own poultry-farms, 15 are engaged in rice-farming, 6 are involved in trade in one farm or another and the rest derive their income from wage labour by working either in poultry-farms or in rice-fields. Then the road passes villages nos. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 consecutively. And the farther the visitor proceeds along the dirt road, the fewer the number of poultry-farms to be seen. Villages Nos. 3, 4 and 5 are predominated by rice-fields, while in Village no. 6, where the big Klong Suan market is situated, the majority of households are engaged in store-keeping. This village also has a few repair shops for farm machines, one small factory producing two-wheeled tractors of the type used in the area, 4 rice mills. Rice-farming households account for less than 20% of the households and there is no poultry-farm in this "village of shop-keepers".

With regard to Village no. 2, as with neighbouring villages, most houses are built along both banks of the Prawetburirom Canal and a smaller canal called Klong



The Six Villages of Tambon Theparaj



Village No.2: the Fieldwork Village

Bang Gahai, with rice-fields stretching back behind the houses. On the south-west side of the Prawetburirom Canal where the dirt road runs parallel to the canal, there are a small number of houses and poultry-farms along the roadsides which only grew up during the past few decades, whereas the old type of settlement is only confined to the canals' banks. People who live on this side of the Prawetburirom Canal thus find it more convenient to travel into town as there is an hourly bus service during the day. Those who reside on the other side of the Prawetburirom Canal and on Bang Gahai Canal need their boats for mobility. If they want to travel into Chachoengsao town, they normally have to tie up their boats on the opposite side, at their friends' or kinsmens' houses, and walk to the dirt road to get the bus. However, those who live near Theparaj Temple (Wat Theparaj) can use a footbridge to cross to the "road-side".

With regard to the number of people and households in the village, according to the official household register there were altogether 160 households in 1981 - 82 with a total population of 1,108. The records are not very accurate, and some households are found to have long moved elsewhere although their names are still kept on the register. Or certain households are found to have moved into the village but have not taken the trouble to report officially their moves, their names remaining still in the registers of their former villages. In some cases the children have married and have set up their own

houses but they are still registered under their parents' households. A further complication which proves to be quite significant involves the fact that the households of these workers who actually reside inside the big poultry-farms are seldom contained in the official register. In this study I shall employ the official statistics as a rough guideline only and shall adhere to the statistics that I myself have collected during the course of my fieldwork.

If one leaves out resident-workers employed by the big poultry-farms, the number of households in Village no. 2 would total 173 (compared with the official figure of 160). However, as labourers in poultry-farms tend to work there on a long-term basis and a number of them are living inside the farms together with their families, the inclusion of them in the overall population of the village might present a more accurate picture, especially when dealing with the question of wage labourers in the village. However, to include them also presents a further accounting problem. If all the labourers employed on the farm were entered under that farm's own household, the definition of a "household" would be very much distorted. In reality a big poultry-farm is more like a small factory than a household. Furthermore, labourers in these farms are divided into different categories. Some are local people who travel from their own houses to work daily and who, in this case, would already have been accounted for as members of their respective households. To include them as members of a

poultry-farm as well would amount to double-counting. On the other hand, a number of labourers are living inside the farm itself. Among the latter category, some cook their own food while living in the accommodation provided by the farm-owner, others are living inside the farm with full-board arrangements, i.e. they are provided with the accommodation as well as the meals. Although the latter are living under the same "roof" and are eating from the same hearth as their bosses, they could hardly be said to belong to the same households and to lump them together seems to be an unsatisfactory way of resolving the problem. A more acceptable solution may be to treat the workers as belonging to separate households. Some of the poultry-farm labourers are living inside the farms as families in any case and problems would not arise there. However, there are workers who have come from the northeast to seek work as individuals and not as families. In order to include them in the analysis the most viable way out may be to treat them as belonging to single-member households. Accounted for in this way the number of labouring households residing inside the poultry-farms amounts to 26 in all. Moreover, apart from workers in poultry-farms, there are 2 other households of resident labourers who are employed by a timber merchant and a small rice-miller based in the village. Consequently, when these 28 households are added on, Village no. 2's population amounts to 201 households in

all, while land in the village totals around 3,300 rai.[1]

Methodology

The bulk of empirical data for this study has been collected in a social-anthropological fashion. Intensive field study was carried out at one village in particular, and the main intention was to look at the process of change that has significantly affected the socio-economic and power relationships within the village as a consequence of increasing capitalist penetration into the rural society.

I spent approximately 15 months in Village no. 2, from March 1981 to June 1982, living with the family of a small tenant rice-farming-cum-wage-labouring household who works on 11 rai of rented land. Information was gathered exclusively through personal interviews with one or more members of all the households in the village, while at the same time attempting to cross-check one set of information with another for accuracy.

However, my attention is not focused exclusively on the internal social organization of the village, but

---

[1] rai: unit of land measurement
1 rai = 1,600 square metres or about 0.4 acres

rather to link the changes that the villagers have experienced with major changes that have often been initiated at levels much wider than the village society, to focus on the encapsulation of the village society by the outside world. As such, I also spent part of my time outside the village, in the town, at the amphoe and provincial offices of Chachoengsao, in the National Archives and other university libraries in Bangkok in order to gather additional information that is relevant to the concrete developments undergone by the fieldwork village.

Nevertheless, the information gathered unfortunately has limitations for people's memories tend to be selective and tend to pass through certain stages of interpretation and re-interpretation. Wherever possible, I tried to cross-check their accounts by asking as many people as possible the same questions, or by going through written records. For instance, many of the accounts given by elderly people about events in the past could be cross-checked with records kept in the National Archives, and information on a person's landowner or the amount of land a person has, can be cross-checked with the actual records contained in the land title deeds.

On the whole, I was able to secure the full co-operation of the majority of the villagers particularly after 5 - 6 months of my stay when people felt much more relaxed with me and were talking quite freely. However, some problems were also encountered, particularly with the big poultry-farm owners, some of

whom were reluctant to reveal the true sizes of their farms possibly because of their fear that I might be connected in some way with the tax office! In such cases I had to check the accuracy of the information they gave by asking for the same information from their own workers or from other poultry-farmers. In contrast, the poorer people in the village, the wage-labourers in particular, were very receptive, open, and eager to talk. In this respect the situation is well-summarized by the phrase often heard uttered by the latter group, "Please don't mind our shabby homes. We may not have much to offer you (in material terms) but at least we do not lie. We have nothing to hide."

Organization of Contents

The chapters in this thesis are largely organized in chronological order. However, the manner in which the chapters are divided up is not strictly according to clear-cut dates but is rather based on the different nature of the development trends or historical watersheds which roughly mark one period off from another. Consequently, the actual times may overlap when one chapter ends and another chapter starts.

In the chapters that follow, Chapter 2 sets out a broad outline of the historical context of Chachoengsao society before Theparaj was established. Important characteristics of the early Bangkok social organization are discussed. The argument put forward is that contrary to the widely-held view that Thai society before the

signing of the unequal treaties with the West was largely static, founded on self-contained village communities and engaged mainly in subsistence production, certain important changes were already taking place in the early Bangkok period which are indications of development and change in a society that was still pre-capitalist. A section of the Chachoengsao population were thus not totally umfamiliar with production for the market and its intermediaries while certain industries were developing along with the growth of towns.

Chapter 3 deals with the impact of Thailand's incorporation into the world capitalist economy under the West's intervention. As a result of these changes rice cultivation was greatly extensified, with the state facilitating the development of commodity production by various measures which released the peasantry from the old feudal bonds in order that they could participate fully in the market economy. This chapter describes the establishment of Theparaj, who the first settlers were, the extent of their involvement in the market, the elite-mass relations that prevailed in these early days when the impact that the outside world had on the village was still relatively limited.

Chapter 4 describes the further involvement of the village society in the market economy. The fuller effects of Rama V's administrative reorganization which largely eliminated the local pockets of power, the changing realignments of those who controlled state power in the 1930s and subsequent agricultural policies, the

consolidation of the merchants' and moneylenders' economic positions at both national and local levels, the increasing alienation of land from the hands of many local villagers.

Chapter 5 examines the changing trend of Thailand's development with an emphasis being placed on rapid industrialization and on the intensification of agricultural production, the state's crucial role in promoting such a trend, the expansion of the agro-industry and the introduciton of modern capital-intensive poultry-farming into Theparaj, along with the various ingredients of the "green revolution" that have boosted the productivity of rice-farming, which groups of local people have been able to take advantage of the new opportunities, and other effects of these recent developments.

In Chapter 6, the present-day situation is set out and the process of growing differentiation among the village households together with the changing nature of power relationships between elites and masses under the changing context and the increasing incursion of state institutions into the rural society are assessed.

The following account thus opens with the situation before the establishment of Theparaj in 1880 with a look at Thai society and at Chachoengsao in the early Bangkok period.

CHAPTER 2

THE SAKDINAA SOCIETY OF THE EARLY BANGKOK PERIOD, AND CHACHOENGSAO BEFORE THE BIRTH OF THEPARAJ

This chapter attempts to establish elements of the historical context of Chachoengsao society prior to the establishment of the fieldwork village of Theparaj in 1880. The establishment of Theparaj village and the subsequent developments which the village society has undergone can best be comprehended by a historical perspective which takes into account the pre-existing characteristics of the sakdinaa[1] form of social organization, the peasantry's relations with the state and the specific manner in which Thai society as a whole was developing.

---

[1] sakdinaa: literally "power of fields" (Wales, 1934: 49). Its original usage refers to the legal system of hierarchical allocation of social rank to the whole population in the Ayuthaya up to the early Bangkok period (1350 to the late nineteenth century). Later the term has come to be used to refer to Thai "feudalism". The ongoing debate on the "feudal mode of production" and the "Asiatic mode of production" still needs more empirical findings to enable any satisfactory conclusions to be reached. For details of the debate see, e.g. works of Chit, 1974; Elliot, 1978; Siriluk, 1981; Somsak, 1982; Songchai, 1981; Suvit, 1981; Turton, 1980 and 1984.

It will be argued that certain significant changes, although limited in extent, were already taking place in the early Bangkok period (from 1782) before the signing of the Bowring Treaty in 1855, and that certain sections of the population were beginning to become involved in production for the market. Nithi Eowsriwong's celebrated thesis which convincingly describes this period as one which was witnessing a marked increase in the volume of trade with foreign states, a recognizable change in the nature of the products being exported, a marked increase in the Chinese population which partly resulted in an expansion of towns, and the emergence of a small number of town-based industries. Such developments in turn necessitated production of staples, particularly rice, for the consumption of the non rice-producing section of the population.

Nithi's thesis accords well with the recorded development of Chachoengsao which was significantly affected by the sugar boom during certain stages of the early Bangkok era, and experienced a big increase in its Chinese population as a result. The Thais, still very much bound by the sakdinaa obligations, seemed to have been involved in production for the market to a much lesser extent although a number of them, too, were found producing paddy and sugar for sale on a small-scale basis.

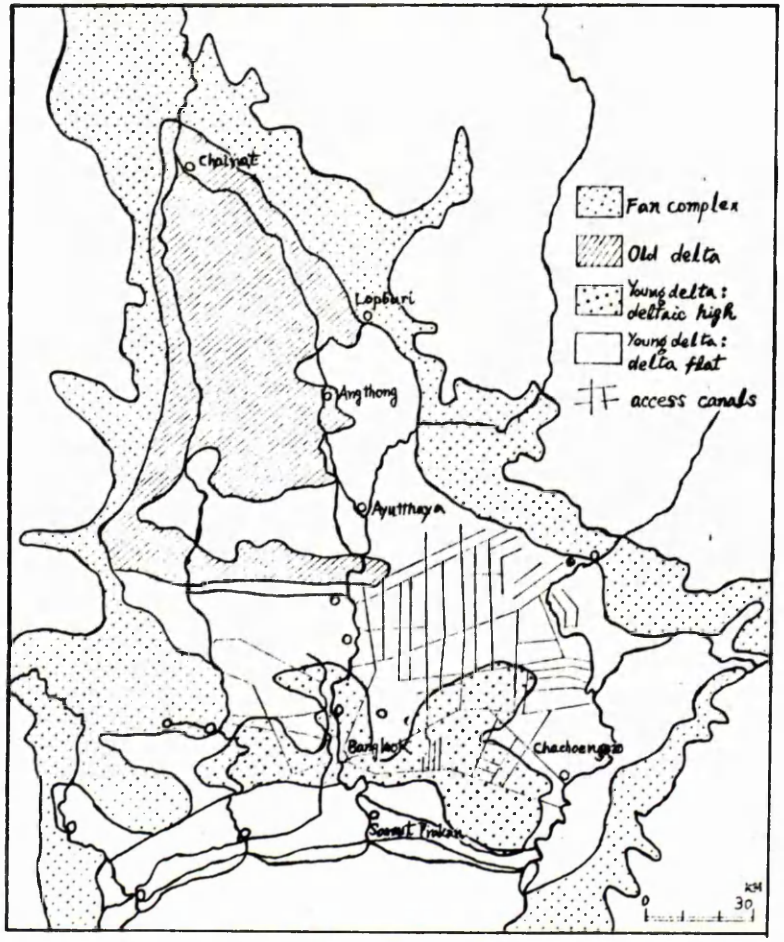
The Sakdinaa Setting

In the late 1850s a traveller recorded his trip along the Bangpakong River as follows, "...cultivation is restricted to a strip of land on either bank at first and then occurs only at intervals, the inhabitants are few and poor and nothing that can be called a village is met with until you arrive at Pachin.[2] Here immense tracts of land are lying idle for the want of a labouring population..." (King, 1860: 178). Thailand was then very sparsely populated. A large part of the country was a mere wilderness and not more than one-fifth of the whole territory was cultivated (Parkes, 1855: 14). Settlement was heaviest in the heart of the Central Plain, around Ayuthaya and its neighbouring provinces (Johnston, 1976: 5-6), which constituted the flood plain of the old delta. The area to the east of Bangkok which was part of the young delta [3] was peripheral. Unlike the Upper Chao Phraya Delta area which received regular flooding from the rivers, in the young delta

---

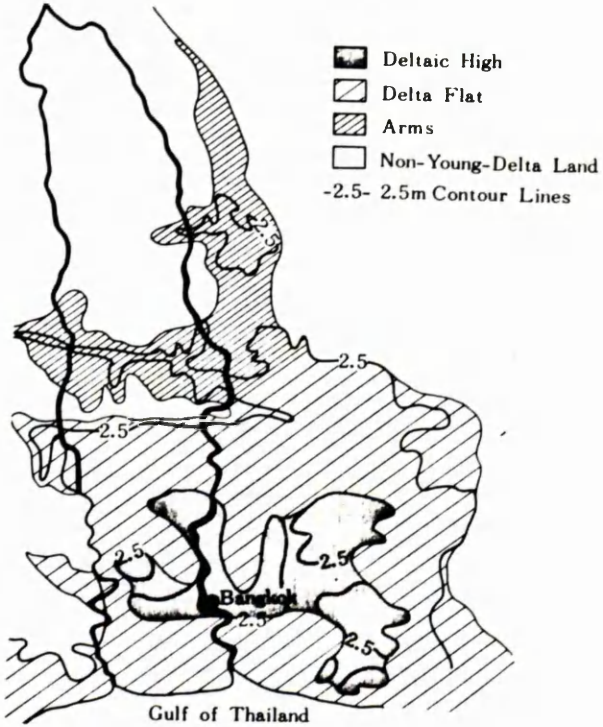
[2] Now known as Prachinburi.

[3] The old and young deltas are categories adopted by Takaya (1971, 1978) to describe the physiography of the Chao Phraya River flood plain. The old delta being the older part of the flood plain extends from Chainat down to Ayuthaya and Suphanburi provinces and is one of the earliest inhabited areas in the Central Plain of Thailand. The young delta refers to the area from Ayuthaya down to the Gulf of Thailand and was not densely settled until the latter half of the nineteenth century. For details of the areas' geography and topography see Takaya, 1971: 375-397; 1978: 171-191; Tanabe, 1975-76: 70-94.



Physiographic Regions in the Chao Phraya Delta

Source: Tanabe, 1975-76: 92



The Young Delta

Source: Takaya, 1978: 174

> elevation is generally less than two meters, and in the rainy season the land is completely submerged. Conversely, in the dry season most of the young delta dries up completely, becoming a vast desert of clay. The severity of this environmental cycle would render the young delta utterly unfit for human inhabitation were there not certain features that alleviate the rigors of life under such conditions and moderate to some degree the drastic changes,

like the existence of large rivers and the scattered islands of higher land (Ishii 1978: 33-34). Hence, although the township of Chachoengsao, lying in this area, might have been created in the early Ayuthaya period (Uthaiwan and Phongphan, 1968: 42-43), its importance was strategic more than anything else. The state's preoccupation with constant warfare with its neighbours was reflected in Rama III's order to excavate Saen Saeb Canal joining the Chao Phraya and Bangpakong rivers in order to facilitate communication between Bangkok and its troops fighting in Cambodia in the 1830s. The canal cut through a great plain filled with tall grasses and scrubby bushes, "unclaimed except by wild animals". The secondary effect of the canal excavation was to open up land along the canal to cultivation for the first time (Johnston, 1976: 42-43; Hanks, 1967: 251). However, according to Hanks, the Thais themselves preferred to live along the Chao Phraya and its tributaries; and land along the Saen Saeb Canal which was given to distinguished public officials was cleared and settled by Moslem prisoners of war (Hanks, 1967: 251).

The essence of the <u>sakdinaa</u> system, which was in force during the Ayuthaya and early Bangkok period, lay in the capacity to deploy power which existed in the form

of rights over persons. In a state where land was plentiful and whose main preoccupation was constant warfare with its neighbours (itself a means of competing for an increase in population), the control of manpower was crucial and the whole sakdinaa society was organized largely around this need. So, although rights were expressed in terms of land (Kotmaay Traa Saamduang or Law of the Three Seals Vol. 1, 1962: 277; Wales, 1934: 50; Akin 1969: 22-23), in actual fact the rights existed not in land per se. A person's sakdinaa expressed in terms of land units signified the social status he had in society. And in a society where there was no scarcity of land, the person's status was signified by the amount of labour he had at his disposal which was in correlation with the amount of wealth and prestige that he could acquire (Akin, 1969: 22-23, 98; Tomosugi, 1980: 110-111).

The ruling class of the sakdinaa society consisted of the king himself together with princes and nobles who were duty-bound to maintain military contingents available at the service of the king. The ruled classes, on the other hand, were made up of the phrai (freemen) and thaat (slaves) who constituted property of the king

or of the individual naay (masters) and who could be transferred or inherited.[4]

Under this system, each able-bodied adult male who was not an aristocrat, an official or a monk, was required to register with a naay, and his labour service was requisitioned by a naay for 6 months a year for personal service in the case of phrai som or public service in the case of phrai luang. His duties were determined by the position of the official to whom he was assigned; for instance, supervising elephant herds, farming royal land, engaging in various forms of public construction works, etc. (Akin, 1969; Khachorn 1971: 111-162; Johnston, 1976: 7-9). In this matter John Crawfurd observed that there existed no such thing as "free labour", for the labour of every individual was appropriated by some naay or other. The naay had the right to command and the power to affect their phrai with corporal punishment. A phrai could be imprisoned and/or fined if he refused to obey orders. This form of

---

[4] It should be noted that the phrai and thaat do not constitute "property" to the same extent. While a phrai has to contribute his unpaid labour to the master for fixed periods each year, a slave could be sold outright to an owner or mortgaged indefinitely. However, economic and social differences existed among thaat themselves as among the phrai, and a thaat may be seen as having a similar social existence to a phrai despite occupying the lowest legal stratum in society. See Turton, 1980.

property in persons can also be seen from the fact that a thaat could be sold by a naay who was in financial difficulties and the consent of the thaat was not required by law (Turton, 1980: 265). The phrai who were unable to provide services were required to contribute highly-valued produce to the state in lieu of services. These contributions were called suay and the phrai were known as phrai suay. In the latter years of the Ayuthaya period the phrai were allowed to commute the corvée service by paying khaa raatchakaan (Akin, 1969: 57; Tej, 1977: 10).

Under this system the phrai could suffer a great deal of hardship and oppression, particularly the phrai who had unkind naay, and the phrai luang, who had to take part in various public works. The use of physical force was often the order of the day. The burden of the corvée service led many phrai to seek various ways out, such as being ordained into monkhood, fleeing into the jungle, trying to change their naay, or selling themselves into slavery to get out of the phrai status (Warunee and Anchalee, 1976: 56).

Apart from surplus being extracted in the form of corvée labour and suay the peasantry were also required to pay a number of taxes, namely: jangkob, a tax amounting to one-tenth of the cargo and was levied against passing boats and oxcarts; aakon, a tax levied against the peasants' agricultural produce, said to be one-tenth of the harvest; and ruechaa, fees. In addition the masses also had to pay taxes on their land, fruit

trees, boats, fishing tools, gambling, alcohol, etc. (NA 5, M 50/4, 1896-7; NA 6, M 23/1, 1913). Often, payments amounted to multiple taxation and commoners found themselves being taxed in their capacities as producers, sellers, and also as buyers at the same time (Warunee and Anchalee, 1976: 56). The officials in charge were allowed to appropriate part of the goods and services supplied by the commoners as fees for performing their services. The rest was passed on to the capital and constituted an important economic base for the ruling class. Products which were over and above the latter's own requirements were often exchanged for imports of luxury goods (Chatthip, 1981: 1).

The system devised to administer the sakdinaa society in the Ayuthaya era was essentially organized along military lines. "We can compare the organization of the society to that of an army in which every male in the kingdom was a soldier" (Akin, 1969: 54). At the pinnacle of the hierarchy was the king, and below him ranged different levels of princes and nobles also headed the krom and their subunits, the kong, which made up the central government. At the provincial level the descending order ranged from the town, district (khwaeng), sub-district (tambon), village (moo baan) (Akin, 1969: 66-76; Tej, 1977: 23). And the stipulated duties of officials working in this administration were the registration of men under their command, the mobilisation of their manpower for corvée works or for fighting in wars, collection of taxes and forwarding them

to the central government, the maintenance of public peace and order.

Although the exact date of the establishment of Chachoengsao cannot be ascertained, there is evidence to believe that the town was in existence in the Ayuthaya period during which the conditions described above prevailed (Uthaiwan and Phongphan, 1978: 42-43). The town was a centre for recruiting manpower to fight in wars, and in the early Bangkok period, being in the vicinity of the capital, Chachoengsao was categorized as a fourth-class inner province under the Samuha Naayok's (Prime Minister for the civil administration) line of command (Maha-Ammatayathibodi, 1976: 123). Despite its proximity to Bangkok, the structure of power was still much localized. The linchpin of the sakdinaa system was the local nobility who directly controlled the peasantry, extracting from it labour services and taxes, part of which they retained. By its own admission the government managed to administer directly in 1891 only the provinces of Pathumthani and Nonthaburi to the north and Phrapradaeng and Samutprakarn to the south of Bangkok. Provinces that lay outside this small centre were governed largely by the local nobles. In theory, although the ministers in the capital had the power to appoint governors, in practice governors who were appointed were often strongmen in the area.

Owing to this relative autonomy at the provincial level, the power of the governors was considerable. These provincial officials were allotted a number of men

from whom they could demand either service in labour or commutation tax and were allowed to retain part of the tax revenue and judicial fees, for in those days officials had to "make a living out of their jobs" because they received no salaries. Consequently, a governor might be engaged in commerce or farming, in which case he could rely on his official position to gain an advantage over other people. For instance, if he carried out rice cultivation he could ask the citizens of his province to contribute their labour on his land; a business would run more smoothly and make more profit if the governor was a partner to the deal, and a tax-farmer would find that his collection of taxes would be better facilitated if he allowed the governor to have a share in the revenue. If a governor was engaged in trade, he could make it difficult for outsiders to set up rival businesses in his province, or he might tax his rivals to the full and not tax himself. A governor also had judicial independence and was thus able to interpret the law to his liking. Moreover, he could and usually did build up his power base by recommending his relatives for the posts in the local administration (Tej, 1977: 21-24). Not only was he able to fortify his power base but his economic base could also be built up by retaining revenue intended for the central government, by protracting legal proceedings for the sake of judicial fees, etc. (Tej, 1977: 99).

The fact that officials obtained part of their income by collecting taxes from the people under their

jurisdiction sometimes led to disputes among governors themselves over the extent of each governor's jurisdiction. There occurred an incident in the early 1890s when a number of peasants submitted a petition to the authorities complaining about the abuse of power by the governor of Samutprakarn, a neighbouring province. According to the petition, the Samutprakarn Governor had dug a canal through their rice-fields and ventured to charge them for the cost of canal excavation. Moreover, he also claimed that the area was under his administration and collected land tax from them as well. The peasants were therefore forced to pay the tax twice by both the Samutprakarn and Chachoengsao authorities (NA 5, K 9.2/4).

Similar to the centre-province relations, the pro vincial government did not intervene directly in the affairs of the lower levels of its administration. A governor usually appointed local strongmen to be district, sub-district and village headmen. A district officer needed to send in a minimal amount of commutation tax because there was no one to check on him. He was allowed to judge minor and sometimes serious disputes (Tej, 1977: 24). Sub-district and village communities likewise enjoyed relative autonomy and a headman of the old days was usually an elderly villager whose status was well recognized by the people in the community. He

usually had close connections with the local strongmen (nakleng[5]), to whom they turned for assistance and information. Sometimes the nakleng themselves were appointed to the posts of headmen.

As regards Chachoengsao's population, being a peripheral area outside the rice-growing upper delta heartland of the Central Plain, its population might have been very sparse and settlements were likely to be scattered only along the banks of the Bangpakong River while a large part of the interior was merely wilderness. While most of the population would have been phrai som and phrai luang, there must have existed a number of phrai suay as well, since officials known as naay kong nawk were stationed locally, responsible for collecting the suay of gold, cardamon, iron, etc. and for overseeing the ethnic minority groupings and the border posts (Wilson, 1980: 52-54).

---

[5] nakleng has a variety of meanings, e.g. a rogue, a knave, a true sport, etc., (McFarland. 1944: 447). As individuals or collectively - loosely or in gangs - the nakleng in the old days could wield considerable influence. Some were recognised as local "godfathers"; some were elected headmen. Their power stems much from their control over the use of violence at a time when the central government's authority was not yet widely felt in the countryside. The nakleng's authority took on ambivalent forms. This is briefly discussed in the following chapter. See also in particular Johnston, 1976: 137-197.

Like their counterparts elsewhere in the country, the majority of the Chachoengsao population must have been composed of self-sufficient peasants, who grew and processed their own rice and cotton, and made their own equipment and clothing. A variety of food was there for the gathering - wild greens, fish, etc. One observer noted, "No portion of the world is more plethoric with fish than the waters of this favoured land, its gulf, rivers and canals teaming with them..." (Child, 1892: 58). There is even an old tale told about the fish in "Paedriw", the local name for Chachoengsao. When the fish, plaa chon (murrel), is dried it is sliced in such a way that it can be spread out still as one fish, each slice called a "riw". A normal plaa chon is sliced 4 - 6 times. The saying is that the plaa chon in Chachoengsao were so large that eight (paed) slices (riw) were made (Uthaiwan and Phougphan, 1978: 42; Thailand, Chachoengsao Provincial Office, 1981-82?: 1).

Self-sufficiency was by no means absolute and participation in a wider economy existed in varying degrees. Rice-growing villagers might find it necessary to produce a small surplus of paddy to be exchanged for necessities that they were unable to produce themselves, such as salt, the metal tip of a plough, buffaloes, etc., but by and large the majority of the peasants produced most of what they consumed and engaged in only a limited amount of trade (Johnston, 1976: 15-18). And the little trade that existed was carried out on a barter basis as the use of money was very limited (Chatthip, 1981: 1).

The peasants were allowed usufruct rights to the land they cultivated despite the fact that in theory the king was owner of all the land and people in his kingdom. However, the right to occupy a plot of land was restricted to its immediate utilization by the cultivator and if he should move elsewhere, that right would automatically be relinquished. However, long before land rights were recognized by law at the beginning of the twentieth century, land began to acquire the character of private property as early as in the late Ayuthaya period as society became increasingly involved in commercial activities. By then, the previous legal prohibition on land transactions was superceded by a recognition of land buying and selling, although the transactions were still few and far between (Tomosugi, 1980: 106-114).

The fact that these peasants were composed of the phrai and their families means that their livelihood was constantly disrupted by the corvée services demanded by the state or by their naay. The 6-months-a-year corvée service necessitated the men to leave whatever cultivation the family was engaged in to the women, children and the elderly who stayed behind while their labour was required by the state or the naay. Sometimes they were ordered to do the very same cultivation work but on the governors' rice fields (Suvit, 1978: 117-118).

Such were the conditions which prevailed within the Ayuthaya state whose involvement with international trade was brisk and was called by some the "commercial state"

(Ishii, 1978: 30-33). Exports were composed mainly of forest produce such as ivory, aloes-wood, resins, skins and hides, swallow nests, etc., while imports came in the form of silk cloth, spices, gold, silver, cotton products which were mostly for the court's use (Tomosugi, 1980: 111). More importantly, Ayuthaya's involvement in international trade was its role as a sort of entrepôt passing foreign-produced goods on to yet other countries (Nithi, 1982: 79). The fact that trade with foreign states was in primary products involving no processing means that the impact of such trade on society at large was not very significant. The system of suay collection was sufficient to keep the state's trading going and there was a relative lack of the development of cities as centres of trade and commerce.

The sakdinaa system, which was based on the self-sufficient economy of the village and a localized structure of power was by no means free from its internal contradiction. Tension was manifest at all levels. The king had to struggle constantly to curb the power of the princes and nobles which at times got out of hand as they were able to challenge the king's power by building up the manpower and resources under their disposal. Various measures were devised at various times to maintain the monarch's power. For instance, laws were enacted to forbid high-ranking officials from having private contact with one another so as to prevent them from joining forces (Akin, 1969: 25); the nobles were given non-hereditory status with descending rank, while the

princes inherited rank in a declining sequence which caused their descendents to merge with commoners after five generations, and various attempts were made by the central government to manipulate the tensions and rivalry in provincial politics to its own advantage, with the governors' attempting to do likewise vis à vis lower-level politics (Tej, 1977: 1-50). Paradoxically, although the struggle between the central government and the provincial power-holders was a constant state of affairs, at the same time the administration had to depend on the latter's support. Symbolically, the local leaders needed to be reminded of their subordination to the central government by attending the ceremony of the "drinking of the Water of Allegiance"[6] twice a year in the capital.

A similar paradox was also evident at the lower levels of administration. The main concern of a local noble or a naay was to maintain his control over the commoners under his jurisdiction, and this in turn set a certain limit to the degree of coercion and exploitation that he could inflict on them without the risk of driving his retainers away to a more tolerant master. For this

---

[6] In this ceremony each official was required to drink holy water and swear a mighty oath of allegiance to the king. The main object was to "deter mendacious and treasonable conduct" of officials, to "exact obedience and proper behaviour from officials". It can be seen as a form of ideological instrument of control (Siffin, 1966: 27, 28).

reason, a naay tended to display a paternalistic attitude towards his phrai, and their relationships were significantly reinforced by the ideology of patron-client reciprocity despite the fact that the naay appeared to have had almost complete control of their phrai's services (Akin 1969: 77-89).

Prelude to the Vast Changes under Western Colonialism

Although still rooted very much in the sakdinaa system of social and economic organization, the early Bangkok period prior to the signing of the Bowring treaty in 1855, was beginning to experience certain significant changes in the basis of the sakdinaa society. There was a substantial increase in the volume of international trade and in its contents, which signified a beginning, albeit limited, of production for the market as opposed to self-sufficient production. It also saw the surplus extracted from the population being demanded increasingly in monetary form.

Nithi Eowsriwong (1982) has put forward a convincingly-argued thesis that during the early Bangkok period, the state concentrated its attention on, and intensified its involvement in, international trade more than ever before. The declining years of the state of Ayuthaya and its final dissolution had left both the economy and the bureaucracy in a shattered state (Nithi, 1982: 70; Ishii, 1978: 35). Nithi observes that the state's machinery was not functioning as effectively as in the early Ayuthaya era. Control of manpower was lax

(Nithi, 1982: 70). Tomosugi observes that after the fall of Ayuthaya in 1767 it became difficult to carry out public works (and a lot of works needed doing since most temples, etc., were destroyed) because the peasants evaded their onerous corvée duty by seeking the protection of various powerful local figures. Some officials, responsible for manpower registration, excluded peasants from the registers in order to make personal gains. The state tried to remedy the situation with such promises as a reduction of corvée service to three months a year, freedom from prosecution for those immediately returning to their moo (group) and a reward to anyone who apprehended evaders (Tomosugi, 1980: 115-116). These measures, including the introduction of the marking and tattooing of the phrai (Akin, 1969: 57) were also the king's attempt to curb the growing power of the princes and officials.

The difficulties of exacting corvée labour, and the inefficient administration, might be the factors which led the state to turn increasingly to hiring the unskilled labour of the Chinese and the skilled labour of the Chinese and the Thais. Certain businesses of the state also involved the skill of the Chinese that could not be obtained from the phrai system, such as ship-building, navigation and trading. As a consequence of this increased hiring of labour, together with the need to buy foreign weapons, the state had to find ways to acquire more income and hence its growing attention to international trade (Nithi, 1982: 70, 76-77).

Junk trade, especially with China and also with the straits settlement, reached its peak in this period (see Sarasin, 1977: 140-159). The expanding international trade not only replenished the coffers of those individuals who participated in it, namely the king, the nobles, the Chinese, it also constituted a major revenue source for the government as such. Nithi quoted Ruschenberger's observation that in 1835 (in the reign of Rama III) the government's revenue which was collected internally (in the forms of suay, fees, taxes) amounted to over 400,000 baht, whereas profits from the state's foreign trading were over 1,900,000 baht (Nithi, 1982: 72). The sheer volume of trade with foreign states had increased many times over since the Ayuthaya era.

The nature of products traded in this period deserves some consideration. According to Nithi, the list exported now contained some, but not many forest products while the rest were products that had to undergo some sort of processing; for example, sugar, rice, salted fish, coconut oil, animal hide, ships, pepper, wax, etc., (Nithi, 1982: 77-79).

Not only was there a significant increase in the volume of international trade, but there was also a change in emphasis on the means of surplus extraction from trade. In the Ayuthaya period, revenue from foreign trade was derived through the king's trade monopoly, while in the early Bangkok period revenue extracted from producers in the form of taxes came to assume an increasing prominence. This also explains the

overwhelming presence and significance of the tax-farmers from Rama II's reign onwards, together with the stipulation of 38 and 48 new taxable goods in the reigns of Rama III and IV respectively. The increasing role of tax-farming in raising the state's revenues made it possible for the king to relax and to lift his monopoly on the trade of numerous products (Nithi, 1982: 93, Siriluk, 1981: 43-44). As regards the tax-farmers themselves, most were Chinese but some were Thai officials and individuals who would bid to win the concessionary right to levy taxes on the various products. The tax-farmers were free to exercise their power within their domains and in some circumstances were endowed with the power to adjudicate tax cases (Siriluk, 1981: 43-44). The tax-farmers were in a position to misuse their official status, to make their own profit by collecting considerably more than that which they had to pay to the state coffers (Tomosugi, 1980: 117).

The fact that trade had gained prominence in the economy also means that money had come to be increasingly demanded by those involved in it. Money was needed by the state to pay for the Chinese hired labour that was increasingly employed in place of corvée labour. At the same time it became possible for the people to pay the state in money instead of undertaking corvée service and certain taxes in kind, e.g. the rice tax, were replaced by money taxes. All these were initiated in the early Bangkok period along with the expansion of the internal communication and transportation system and the limited

development of production for the market (Nithi, 1982: 121-126).

These changes were made possible by the existence of the immigrant Chinese population in Thailand. The need to revitalise the economy led the early Bangkok kings, from Taksin onwards, to encourage the immigration of the Chinese (Skinner, 1962: 20-27; Ishii, 1978: 35; Nithi, 1982: 106-121). A section of these successfully assimilated themselves with the ruling class and built up much of their initial wealth by participation in the royal monopoly trading and by becoming tax-farmers. Some later colluded with members of the ruling sakdinaa class and began to channel their resources into certain industries such as mining, sugar-milling, ship-building, logging, etc. Another section was hired as wage-labourers, while the rest scattered over the countryside and became engaged in trade, mining, sugar cane and pepper production, shipbuilding, craft production, etc., (Skinner, 1962: 99-118; Nithi, 1982: 106-121).

The flourishing trade in goods that had undergone a certain degree of processing, the replacement of tax in kind with money tax, the increasing number of towns and size of population in towns, the reduction of the corvée service, must have had some impact on the lives of certain sections of peasants, especially among those living near the capital and other major towns. According to Pallegoix, the population of 3,000 in Chainat province were engaged in the cultivation of rice, tobacco, betel

nuts and cotton, all of which were taxable products that found their way to both the internal and external markets (Pallegoix, 1963: 83). As regards rice, the area that saw an increase in its production was the Upper Chao Phraya delta around Ayuthaya and it was this area that supplied rice to the growing town population (Paitoon, 1978: 19-20, 31). However rice did not become a major export commodity until after the signing of the Bowring Treaty in 1855, partly because of the government's policy to retain a reserve stock for internal uses but nonetheless rice production was greatly increased in this period, particularly in the Upper Chao Phraya Delta, to keep in step with the steady increase of both the Thai and Chinese populations, particularly of those living in the capital, and engaged in trade and in certain industries (Crawfurd, 1915: 141; 1830: 221; Skinner, 1962: 80-82).

The principal agricultural item that involved production for export in the early Bangkok period was not rice but sugar cane and it was in this respect that Chachoengsao had been affected by the country's increasing involvement in international trade. Well before 1855 the sugar industry had attracted the attention of a number of foreign observers who visited Chachoengsao. It was noted that sugar cane was widely planted in Chachoengsao, Nakorn Chaisri and other central provinces (Pallegoix, 1963: 74-75; Crawfurd, 1967: 422-423; Bowring, I, 1857: 203-204). In 1838 Pallegoix observed that apart from rice-fields and fruit-orchards,

Chachoengsao was also well endowed with sugar cane fields (Pallegoix, 1963: 74-75).

This means that a section of the Chachoengsao population had begun to produce sugar cane for sale in the market as a response to a growing demand. It is noted that in the 1830s sugar was the most important export of the country (Sarasin, 1977: 201). While Crawfurd noted that the cultivators of sugar cane were mostly Thais (Crawfurd, 1967: 422-423), other ethnic minorities seemed to have been involved in sugar cane cultivation, too. This can be seen from the fact that in 1867-68 the government attempted to persuade the Chinese from other provinces to settle in Chachoengsao on a permanent basis so that they might practise agriculture and set up sugar mills (NA 5, M 1/87). Earlier in 1843, the Nakorn Chaisri governor received an order to "plan and arrange for the Chinese, Laos, Khmers and the populace to grow cane more fully" (Nithi, 1982: 108).

This growing trade necessitated the existence of traders at various levels of the market. The internal trade which was carried on mainly through barter was in the hands of the Chinese traders who, unlike the Thai population, were neither restricted in their movement nor bound by the corvee service even though they too, had to pay for the commutation in money. And

> by 1850 the Chinese seemed to have gained almost complete control of the inter-regional trade of Siam. They carried goods into the regions accessible by water transportation and, to a lesser extent, even into the remote interior villages, exchanging them there for money or for the produce of the people (Ingram, 1971: 19).

The sugar boom increased the government's tax revenue to such an extent that in 1858 Rama IV needed to divide the sugar tax-farmers into three groups, each with their own zones of operation, Chachoengsao was in the eastern zone which was composed of 9 towns. Moreover, the government of Rama III also tried to reap profits from sugar in a more direct manner. At one stage the king ordered the governor of Chachoengsao to launch a sugar plantation scheme and to set up a state sugar mill. Of note was the substantial amount of money expenditure. It was recorded that the government had to purchase land from people, had to hire labour both to excavate canals and to work the plantation, and the labour force was composed exclusively of the Chinese. However, the scheme failed because of mismanagement and official corruption (Nithi, 1982: 107-108).

Other parties seemed to have been more successful in making gains from the sugar industry. According to Johnston, sugar, as it continued to promise large profits, attracted significant investment from both foreign and native sources up until the 1860s and 1870s. And as early as 1838 Pallegoix noted the existence of no fewer than 20 sugar mills in Chachoengsao, some of which employed up to 200 labourers, and all of which were owned by the Chinese (Pallegoix, 1963: 74-75). The technology then employed in the milling of sugar was based mainly on animal and human labour and the fuel used was wood that existed in abundance (Nithi, 1982: 107).

However, by the 1860s the demand for sugar on the international market began to drop as importing nations were becoming self-sufficient in sugar, and subsidized production of beet sugar in Europe contributed to a decline in sugar prices. Coupled with this trend was the fact that by this time rice was becoming a major export alternative; cultivators quickly shifted from sugar to rice.

> Chinese who had worked the sugar mills in Chachoengsao and Nakorn Chaisri flocked to the newly opening rice mills of Bangkok, and farmers happily planted their old cane lands with paddy. By the mid-1870s at least, it was clear that rice, not sugar would provide the foundation of central Thailand's participation in the world economy. (Johnston, 1976: 30-31).

The extent of sugar production during the early Bangkok period implied that a section of Thailand's population was already involved in production for the market. A certain amount of money was being used as a means of exchange as can be seen from the fact that King Rama III spent a great deal of it on land purchase and on hiring labour. Moreover, the period also witnessed the channelling of capital accumulated by the king and the Chinese, who had profited from the previous era of royal trade monopoly and tax-farming, into the processing of agricultural produce, namely sugar-milling.

However, the production of sugar on plantations seemed to have involved the Chinese more than the Thais, who were still tied to the sakdinaa bondage and whose corvée labour, as opposed to the hired labour of the

Chinese, was reported to have continued to be used in such traditional services as construction, public works, war, production of suay, and not in the new sugar business (Nithi, 1982: 158). But reports that some Thais grew sugar cane indicates that they, too, were involved to an extent in production of sugar, as well as rice, for the market, albeit as small-scale producers.

The expansion of international trade in general and of the boom in the sugar business in particular had therefore had a significant impact on the economy, administration and demography of Chachoengsao during this early Bangkok period. The Chinese population in the area increased in number to such an extent that posts of Chinese district-officers had to be created by Rama III, while Rama IV established for the first time the post of Kromakaan Jeen, a sort of commissioner for Chinese affairs subordinate to the provincial governor, who advised the latter on matters concerning the Chinese. According to Suparat Lertpanichakul (1981), these moves were necessitated by the fact that the Chinese were forming secret societies as a means of self-defence against Thai officials. This was because under the sakdinaa system of government the authority of officials was considerable, highly arbitrary and often oppressive. A Thai phrai might have been able to turn to a naay for protection against an official's excessive behaviour. A few Chinese might also have managed to acquire the patronage of a powerful noble in the area, but the majority of them were left vulnerable. The forming of

secret societies was thus their means of self-defence and this had been an old practice adhered to by the Chinese of the mainland.

The fact that the Chinese made up a large proportion of the Chachoengsao population, and the existance of their secret societies, gave rise to certain problems which might have been peculiar to this province. In Chachoengsao there occurred a number of well-known riots carried out by the secret societies. The most serious took place in 1848 after an unjust arbitration by the governor himself. The Chinese involved in this incident numbered 1,200. Troops from Bangkok and nearby areas had to be called in to quell the disturbance. Apart from conflict with local officials, many riots were also between factions of the Chinese themselves who belonged to different societies in the eastern provinces and are said to have been at their peak in the reigns of Rama III and IV when the area constituted a centre for sugar-cane and pepper production and also supplied the market with some other forest produce. However, the societies became less active in Rama V's reign when there was a decline in the Chinese population caused by out-migration, especially among Chinese labourers as the sugar cane industry collapsed, while tin-mining in the southern provinces and rice-milling in other central provinces began to attract more labour (Suparat, 1981: 35-44, 66-120, 276-282; Skinner, 1962: 139-142, 143-144).

Some members of the Chinese secret societies were engaged in robbery. It was reported that both Thai and

Chinese citizens who did not belong to the societies were attacked and robbed (NA 5, M50/1-4). Ancestors of some Theparaj villagers had to sell their land by the River and moved to Theparaj because they were raided by the Ang-Yee (Triads).

However, by the 1860s and 1870s a large number of the Chinese flocked to the Bangkok rice-mills as the production of sugar collapsed with the drop in international demand. And by then, ancestors of the Theparaj villagers who had been residing in the "sugar cane area" were said to be growing rice on a small-scale together with fruit, and the small surplus of both were marketed.

Evidence of the changes that were taking place before Thailand's signing treaties with the west negates the view of pre-1855 Thailand as a static "traditional society" lacking any internal dynamics for development and the complementary view that it was only the shattering impact of colonialism that generated new forces of change in Thai society. However, such changes were at the same time checked by various factors, thus their impact ought not be exaggerated. The limited amount of money in circulation greatly restricted the further development of trade, and the relaxation of the corvée system was by no means jeopardizing the basis of the sakdinaa society itself. According to Anchalee,

> Even though the phrai system of the early Bangkok period was ineffective to such an extent that certain of its rules required alteration, nevertheless the changes which did take place were

> attempts to maintain the phrai system in existence (Anchalee, 1981: 219).

The ruling class continued to hold on tenaciously to the manpower under their command, and tended to use the corvée labour in the traditional manner. While increasingly taxing people in money rather than in labour service, the state still found it beneficial to maintain its control over the manpower although this was becoming increasingly difficult as the phrai began to move about to find new land to clear. Chachoengsao, too, was faced with a depletion in the number of registered commoners and in 1867-68 the governor of the province was ordered to try and bring back those under his company who had fled and hidden in other areas and to bring those untattooed to Bangkok to have their wrists tattooed (i.e. to be registered) (NA 5 M 1/62).

The changes described above can thus be said to have taken place where the sakdinaa relations still retained their hold on the majority of the country's population. As Somsak Jiamthirasakul (1982: 152-155) has pointed out, the changes that occurred in the early Bangkok period through the substantial increase in the country's involvement with international trade was largely confined to the sphere of distribution, rather than in the sphere of production. Changes that might have taken place in the latter sphere, for instance, a higher level of technology, were confined among the industries that involved the Chinese rather than the Thai population, e.g. sugar-milling, mining, ship-building, while the

Thais continued to produce on the pre-existing level of productive resources and technology. The use of wage labour, too, was confined among the Chinese while the Thais continued to be subjected under the forced labour system. Nevertheless, such changes which also implied some capital investment by certain fractions of the ruling class (the king. some princes, nobles and the wealthy Chinese) signifies that the limited capital accumulation in this period was internal to the Thai society. This necessarely differs from the path of development that emerged subsequently which was of a dependent nature and which fundamentally altered the structure of relationship between the peasantry and the ruling class, and the social relations of production. Such structural changes were marked by the signing of unequal treaties with Western colonial powers.

CHAPTER 3

THE BIRTH OF THEPARAJ AND THAILAND'S INCORPORATION INTO THE WORLD ECONOMY

The marked increase in the country's involvement in international trade during the early Bangkok period was made possible by the presence of Chinese immigrants. a greater concentration of the population in towns, and a limited relaxation of the corvée system. It involved a small section of the population in production for the market. These changes set the scene for more fundamental transformation that was to take place from the latter half of the nineteenth century onwards. Under the pressure of the western colonial powers, Thailand's was incorporated into the international division of labour and this led to a progressive breakdown of Thailand's subsistence economy, with the majority of the population especially in the Central Region becoming specialized producers of rice.

This chapter considers the impact such transformation had on the village society of the Central Plain, and in particular on the fieldwork village in Chachoengsao in the period up to the turn of the century, as well as the state's role in facilitating the development of commodity production, while at the same time it was trying to assert a centralized control over the rural population.

A Major Break in the History

Thailand's already increasing involvement in international trade greatly accelerated after the signing of the Bowring Treaty with Britain in 1855 and of subsequent treaties with other colonial powers, but this time it resulted in fundamental changes both in Thailand's position in the international balance of power and in the whole socio-economic structure of the country. The treaties marked the legal incorporation of Thailand into the world market, centered on European interests and laid down a dependent path for the subsequent development of the society. The treaties established extraterritorial rights for the Western countries' subjects, they set the import duties for nearly all commodities at the negligible level of 3 per cent, export taxes were both simplified and dramatically reduced, the western countries' subjects were granted the right of free trade in all ports (Ingram, 1971: 34-35). The impact of these treaties was enormous. Thailand's economy was to undergo profound structural changes in the years to come. The structure of relationships between the peasants and the ruling classes, the social relations of production, together with the economic and power relations within village society, were fundamentally transformed as a consequence.

Apart from representing a substantial surrender of Thailand's sovereignty, Thailand was henceforth transformed into a source of raw material supplies, a new investment outlet, and a market for the colonial powers'

manufactured goods (Chatthip, 1981: 7). This led to fundamental changes in the economic structure of Thailand's society which had previously been based on a more diversified self-sufficient economy and resulted in an unavoidable transition to a commodity-producing economy, albeit along a different path from the developments that had taken place within the metropolitan societies themselves.

The integration of Thai society into the global economy resulted in the country's production pattern becoming increasingly geared towards international market conditions. In the case of Thailand, it turned the country into one which was predominated by rice monoculture with the subsequent decline of local manufacturers. The expansion of rice production was mainly a response to a high demand from western colonies in Southeast Asia as the expansion of western plantation and mining activities in these countries produced an increased demand for rice to feed their immigrant labourers. At the same time, Thailand was also forced by the conditions of the treaties to guarantee the investment and trade of the colonial powers in Thailand's teak and tin. Concurrently, cheap manufactured imports from the colonial countries began to pour into the country competing with the locally manufactured products.

The Central Plain, which was the area where the impact of change was most strongly felt, began to experience a rapid decline in the local textile production as the peasants there were now devoting more

time to rice production and found it more profitable and convenient to buy imported cotton products with the proceeds from their paddy sales (Chatthip, 1981: 3-4). Consequently, "cotton fields were perhaps used for rice or abandoned in favour of land suitable for rice" (Ingram, 1971: 36).

This also means that money was coming to play an increasingly important role in the economy, and that the peasants were becoming increasingly dependent on the market. But the market where the product was traded was farther away from the village, and the greater the distance, the more essential became the role of the intermediaries. These trading and middleman functions were performed by the Chinese, who were not restricted by the corvée system, while western merchants participated in trade largely at the wholesale level and the Thais participated hardly at all.

The expanding trade gave rise to new and/or greater possibilities for capital accumulation by certain groups within society. At a wider level western capital came to feature prominently in teak, tin industries, as well as in shipping, import-export trade, agricultural processing and banking. And a section of the Chinese who already became economically powerful from their position as tax-farmers from their involvement in the state's trading monopolies in the previous period, began to take on the compradore role, "providing the essential link between the foreigners and the local economy" (Hewison, 1981: 396; Siriluk, 1981: 113-143), and also to enter into

timber and tin processing, tin-mining, banking, and gradually to gain prominence over the country's internal trade. At the same time, the king and factions of the ruling class were found to be channelling resources into a number of the new enterprises, often in collusion with the wealthy Chinese, as well as to be taking on the roles of moneylenders/bankers and landlords (see Siriluk, 1981: 84-92).

As regards the majority of the peasant producers, they responded to the expanding market opportunities, particularly to the large demand of the international market for rice, by intensifying cultivation. The extent of the trend towards specialisation in rice production can be gauged from the volume of export. In 1890 only some 5% of the rice crop was exported, but by 1907 the proportion of the rice crop exported had risen to about 50%, and at the same time the area planted in rice had risen from about 5.8 million rai in 1850 to 9.1 million rai by 1905/6. And yet the population rose from 5 or 6 million in 1850 to about 7.3 million in 1900, which meant that the surplus available for export grew substantially despite there being more mouths to feed. Between 1855 and 1934 the rice exports increased 25-fold while the population roughly doubled (Ingram, 1971: 37-43).

And geographically this expansion was concentrated in areas where the clearing of new land could proceed most rapidly, that is, where "the existing network of canals and streams provided cheap and convenient means for transporting rice and paddy to Bangkok, the major

port" (Ingram, 1971: 44), this meant land in the Central Plain, especially in the proximity of Ayuthaya, and by the 1880s there remained little unclaimed land suitable for expansion in the area, so people began to move into marginal, less suitable districts (Johnston, 1976: 36, 38-40).

Before these far-reaching changes could take place the peasants had first to be released from the bonds of the old sakdinaa system, in order that they might participate fully in the expanding economy. "By 1905 all forms of slavery had been eliminated and the corvée system had been given up in favour of paid labour" (Ingram, 1971: 58). By then, "the vast majority of central Thais were no longer subject to conscription for corvée labour," as a monetary capitation tax was increasingly paid instead. This meant that a farmer could plant a larger crop without fearing that he would be called to governmental service before he could harvest and market it and it also "required him to have at least a minimal amount of cash available and this in turn could be obtained only by producing a marketable surplus." To achieve this

> many farmers migrated substantial distances in search of open lands for cultivation, and the migration was made easier by the abolition of the corvée, which had been an important obstacle to geographical mobility. (Johnston, 1976: 24-25).

Added to this was the gradual abolition of slavery beginning in 1874 during Rama V's reign, and many who had been freed from their old bonds must have participated in

the expansion of the rice economy. These actions taken by the state to release the population from traditional restrictions really amounted to a gradual elimination of rights over persons. From then on the power over the peasants was reconstituted in the form of property rights over land. The ruling classes' access to the surplus produced by the peasants no longer depended on the organization or employment of direct coercive force. The peasants were now increasingly subjected to the economic coercion experienced by those who became dispossessed and had to turn to landowners for access to their means of livelihood or to sell their labour power.

Moreover, the state also enthusiastically encouraged this trend. Rama IV decreed that newly cleared lands would be exempted from taxation and would be assessed at reduced rates during the initial years of cultivation, while Rama V made further inducement by charging no land tax on new lands for the first three years of cultivation (Ingram, 1971: 76-77). Apart from this the state also undertook some public works to assist the production of rice. Rama IV continued to expand the system of canals in the Central Plain for transport use and for the distribution of floodwaters over the paddy fields and this continued into the reign of Rama V. It is in the context of Thailand's response to the growing world demand for rice and the subsequent restructuring of the state and society that Theparaj, the village in Chachoengsao chosen for my fieldwork, came into existence.

The qualitatively new emphasis on the export orientation of agriculture in the second half of the nineteenth century had resulted in a rapid expansion of rice cultivation into the young delta of the Chao Phraya River basin, i.e. the low-lying flat part near the river mouth. The main characteristics of the young delta are its low elevation and minimal relief. This means that the volume of water it receives from the upper part of the river system is enough to submerge the land completely, "in places giving the illusion that the sea has invaded" (Takaya, 1978: 176). In the dry season the effect of the tide is much greater than that of the flow from upstream. The Bangpakong River carries a considerable volume of water even in the dry season although abundant water is limited to the immediate vicinity of the river and waterways. At the end of the dry season many creeks and canals are almost dry and people must find water by digging large shallow ponds (Takaya, 1978: 174-187).

Before the expansion of rice cultivation was underway, Chachoengsao province, which is situated in this young delta, was sparsely populated. Uncleared land predominated as can be seen from a traveller's account of a trip along the Bangpakong River, published in 1859 and 1860 (King, 1859: 365 and 1860: 178). According to King, large tracts of good land remained uncultivated. Cultivation was restricted to a strip of land on either bank at first and then occupied only at intervals, the inhabitants were few and poor and nothing that could be

called a village was met with until one arrived at Pachin, which was the governor's residence.

However, in the subsequent decades, Chachoengsao province experienced a rapid expansion of riceland reclamation. According to official records on taxes on paddy fields in 1895, paddy fields in Chachoengsao amounted to 136,232 rai and these increased to 172,450 rai and 205,774 rai in 1897 and 1898. The 1899 report states that the area of land under rice cultivation in this year had increased from the previous year by 125,222 rai (NA 5, M 50/1-4). Towards the second decade of the twentieth century the rate of expansion appears to have slowed down which might have been due to the effect of the 1905-12 recession (Johnston, 1976: 102). By 1912 the area planted with rice amounted to 525,609 rai (NA 6, Ag. 13/747).

As regards the province's population, from the limited materials that I have been able to examine, the following table can be compiled:

	No. of Households
1897	7,750
1899	12,794
1901	21,118
1911	35,770
1912	35,801

(NA 5, M 50/1-4; NA 5, M 2, 14/3; NA 6, M 23/1)

The number of officials increased with the growing population. In 1897 it was reported that there were 34

subdistrict headmen (10 of whom were Chinese) and 280 village headmen. By 1901 the numbers of the former increased to 96 while the latter numbered 1,183 in the same year (NA 5, M 50/1-4).

The 1897 report which contained the population figure also noted that half of the 7,750 households were Chinese. The Chinese population must have been of significance then since the report specifically stated that among the 34 sub-district headmen (kamnan) in the province, 10 were Chinese, and that there were 4 Chinese temples in existence (NA 5, M 50/4). Later, the Chinese population seems to have declined, for in 1912 while the Thai population numbered 75,746 there were 15,702 Chinese. The presence of a large number of the Chinese in the province was largely due to the prospering sugar industry in the early Bangkok period as has been described earlier. The decline in the Chinese population might have been due partly to the subsequent decline of the sugar business as well, particularly after the 1870s, when the Chinese moved to Bangkok to find work in rice mills there. Those who remained in Chachoengsao might have been engaged in trade or hired by the few rice mills in the area. According to Child's account of 1892 (Child, 1892: 145-146), there were then 25 steam rice mills in Bangkok and 3 in Chachoengsao. Apart from the Chinese, other ethnic minorities in the province were the Khmers, the Mons and the Malays.

In the closing decades of the nineteenth century it was reported that the majority of the people were engaged

in the cultivation of rice while other products planted were betel nut, coconut, fruits, vegetables. Rice was planted on the west bank of the Bangpakong River (Theparaj is on this side of the river), while fruit orchards were mainly concentrated on the east bank (from where a number of the ancestors of the people of Theparaj came). It is stated in the reports that the province "exported" to other areas of the country rice, betel nut, fish, sugar, some fruits, teak, and "imported" such products as preserved vegetables/fruits, brass products, cattle, crockery, cloth. One report mentioned that not a great deal of handicrafts existed. A number of people were engaged in cloth, mat and basket-weaving, making carts and roof thatching but these products were only traded to a very limited extent and shortages in them sometimes occurred (NA 5, M 50/1-4).

This occupation pattern continued into the opening decades of the twentieth century. In 1913 there was a detailed report on the number of Chachoengsao people engaged in various occupations. Out of the total population of 104,872 it was reported that 40,956 were in rice-cultivation, 12,523 in fishing, 7,476 in commercial activities, 5,191 in wage labour, 3,885 in fruit and vegetable cultivation, 2,245 in cash cropping, 510 in rice transportation, 440 in rent collecting, 380 in government employment, 342 in tax [1], 276 in mat-weaving,

---

[1] This could possibly refer to tax-farming.

353 in weaving, 97 in saw-milling and 63 in rice-milling (NA 6, M23/1).

Trading was reported to be very brisk and one report remarked that in 1896 there were steam-boats that carried goods and people betwen Bangkok and Prachinburi 6 times a day despite the high running cost (NA 5, M 50/1-4). By 1913 there were 19 steam-boats and 1,269 cargo boats operating in Chachoengsao.

The Establishment of Theparaj

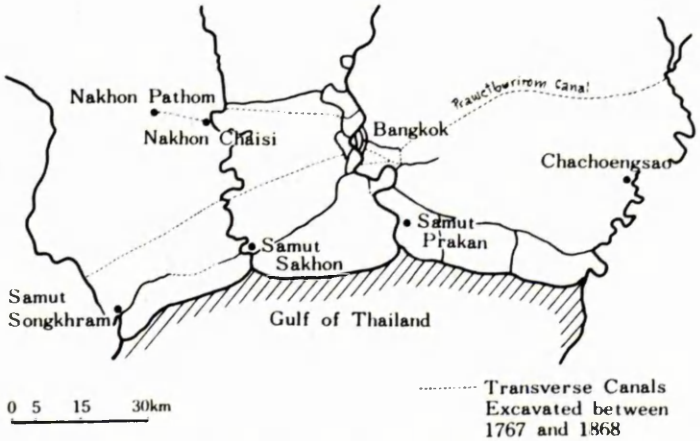
The area in Chachoengsao where Theparaj was to be situated was still uncultivated before the 1870s. In order to open up the vast expanse of this land to agricultural cultivation, trunk canals were needed. Such canals would then serve the double irrigation purpose of carrying water on to the fields from the Bangpakong River, while at the height of the rainy season they would discharge into the River drainage water from the cultivated area (NA: Ag., Van der Heide's monthly report, 1902), and the canals would also serve as an important means of conveying commercial goods.

In the 1870s the state began to adopt policies for the establishment of riceland that hinged on the excavation of canals. It also adopted a vigorous programme of canal maintenance. In the 1870s and 1880s a

number of land establishment projects were then undertaken both by the government and by private entrepreneurs (Tanabe, 1978: 58-67).

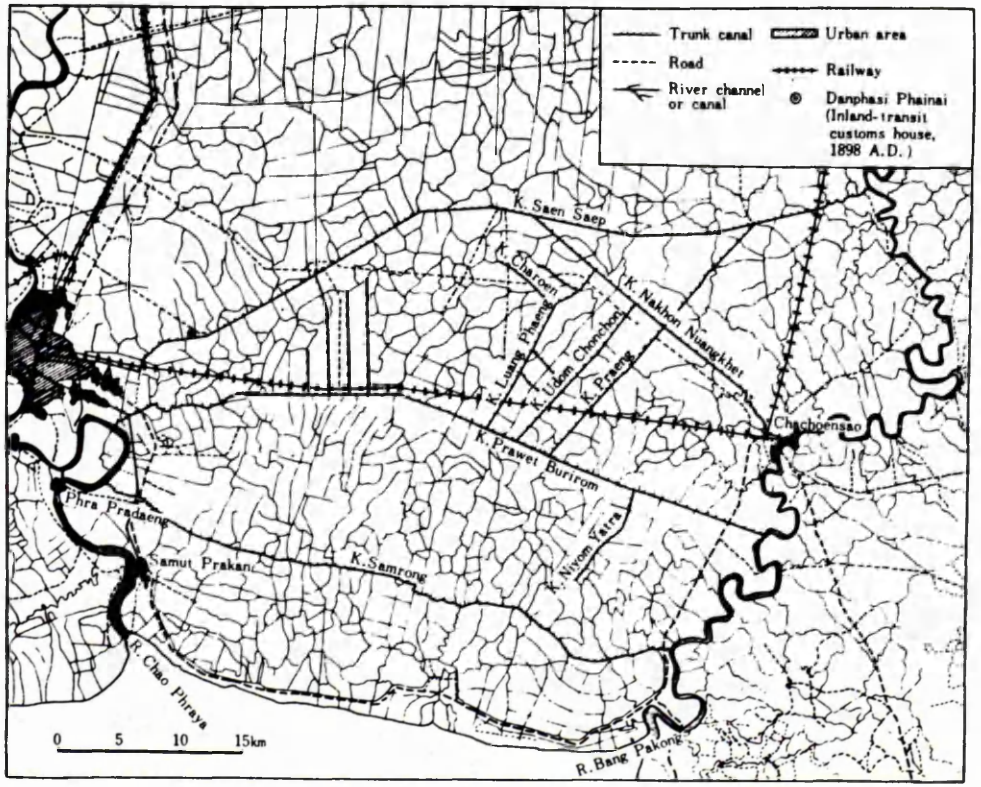
Prawetburirom Canal, on whose banks Theparaj was built, was excavated in the late 1870s. It was the first canal project under the 1877 Regulation on Canal Excavation which stipulated that the cost of the excavation was to be borne by individuals occupying the land and would be in proportion to the value of the land occupied. Furthermore, to encourage land-clearance by the peasants, the validity of the traa jong (title deeds) was extended from three to five years and cultivators would be exempted from riceland tax or garden tax for three years. But if the land was not made productive within three years, the government reserved the right to revoke it (Tanabe, 1978: 63).

Prawetburirom Canal, colloquially known as "Khlong Prawet", was completed in 1880 and ran from the end of Phra Khanong Canal, south of Bangkok, eastward to join Bangpakong River south of Chachoengsao, for a distance of 46 kilometres. Land along its banks was sold at 0.50-1.50 baht per rai (Johnston, 1976: 49-51). The number of people applying for it and who were also prepared to contribute towards the excavation cost was so great that there was not enough land to distribute and it was decided to cross the main canal with four small feeder canals. When land beside the new canals had all been claimed, further canal diggings were undertaken in neighbouring areas (NA 5, Ag 4, 67/1800; Johnston, 1976:



LONG-DISTANCE CANALS CONSTRUCTED BETWEEN 1767 AND 1868

Long-Distance Canals Constructed between 1767 and 1868
Source: Ishii, 1978: 39



Trunk Canals on the East Bank of the Chao Phraya River

Source: Tanabe, 1978: 62

51,67). In the excavation of these canals Chinese labourers were hired - yet another sign that the corvée system was being given up in favour of paid labour. Part of the wage paid to these Chinese labourers was opium (NA 5, Ag 4, 67/1800).

The scramble for land, together with a poorly administered system of land registration, led to numerous and serious land disputes in the area. An official observed in 1898 that along Prawetburirom Canal "the uttermost confusion reigns, there is a dispute about almost every holding..." On a single plot of land different claimants might possess land tax receipts or certificates issued by different assessors. "The natural sequel is a dispute which eventually ends in the land being forcibly worked by the stronger or more influential party to the dispute." (NA 5, Ag 4/1794).

These fierce land disputes were related to the general economic expansion of the time, especially in the boom period of the 1890s. The underlying cause of the problem was the fact that "for the first time land was taking on real value as a commodity necessary for the production of a marketable rice surplus." Land prices soared at the turn of the century from one baht per rai in 1880 to 37.50 baht in 1904 (Johnston, 1976: 121).

The Early Decades of Theparaj

Prawetburirom Canal was completed in 1880, and soon after, Theparaj was established. Old people recall how their ancestors described it that to inspect the

land one had to stand up on the back of a buffalo, as the area was covered with tall jungle grasses, hedges and thick bushes. The woodlands were full of wild animals such as deer and snakes.

Unlike the pioneers of Bang Chan and Bangkhuad who were displaced families from Bangkok (Sharp et al, 1953: 23; Hanks, 1972: 74-75, 94; Kaufman, 1976: 14-15), the first settlers of Theparaj consisted of families who migrated from areas along the Bangpakong River or thereabouts. They tended to come in groups, each group comprising families of related kinsmen who had previously been residing in the same village. Elderly villagers recall the stories told to them by their parents and grandparents that when their ancestors were living by the banks of the Bangpakong River, they had been growing fruit for sale, such as sugar cane, betel nuts, coconuts, etc., while at the same time they would also cultivate rice for their own consumption. By the time they moved to Theparaj the people were already familiar with production for the market. From the time they settled in their new homes the people had turned themselves into cultivators specialising in rice production to the exclusion of all other crops.

The first few years of land clearance were the toughest, with only hand tools available. The dense jungle grass and brush were cut with stout knives, left to dry and then burnt. The cleared patches could then be planted with rice. The pioneers were faced with numerous natural hazards. The young delta has been

described as having "extremely difficult conditions for human existence, conditions which, at their most difficult, mean that life is impossible" (Takaya, 1978: 187). The land is completely covered with water in the rainy season, followed by drought in the dry season. However, during the dry season, when the water level is affected more by the tide, the canal water becomes saline. At that time in some years when there was little annual rainfall, the water from the main rivers would flow swiftly into the sea with little remaining in the fields, resulting in the destruction of the whole crops. Sometimes the seedlings had to be resown repeatedly because those planted previously failed to grow for lack of water. This frequently led many people to request permission from the governor to build small temporary dams across the Canal in order that water might be retained to feed the plants. In some years orders even came from the Minister of Agriculture himself requiring the governor to conscript the citizens' labour and/or the labour of some phrai to build the temporary dams if rainfall happened to prove inadequate (NA 5, K 9.3/1, 1891 and 1892; NA5, K 9.3/12, 1903). In some years crops failed because too much rainfall drowned them. And apart from the unstable water supply, the canal itself often silted up, rendering both the cultivation and the general transportation difficult (NA 5, K 9.3/19, 1908; NA 5, Ag 4/1799, 1898). There were occasions when swarms of rats descended on the ripening plants. More common attacks came from birds and weeds. At times these problems

proved too much for some who chose to abandon their holdings and migrate elsewhere. In 1898 it was reported that a number of people moved out of the Prawet Canal area to the Rangsit area (NA 5, Ag 4/1799, 1898).

The cultivation of rice in these early years relied very much on the rains which would gradually fill the canals, but abundant water was limited to the immediate vicinity of the waterways. The fields further away from the water source needed to be fed through the ditches dug at right angles to the canals. For this reason transplanting was restricted to the fields that were near to the source of irrigation, while fields that had no access to irrigation were broadcast. In these early years, only a few miles from the village lay vast tracts of land that were unowned and unclaimed due to their inaccessibility.

The farmers in this area, unlike their counterparts in the upper delta, had to rely on some means to draw water up from the canal, since the area was very flat and the lack of relief precluded water being drawn by gravity. In these first years their water-drawing devices consisted mainly of the hand-operated water-scoops (chang long), more frequently used in the seedling nursery beds where particular care and regular supply of water was required, and the foot-operated treadle pumps (jak theep), which constituted the means of feeding water to the transplanted fields. The jak theep was a labour-intensive device and members of the household had to take turns to perform this tedious task.

"A turn lasted as long as it took to burn one incense stick," I was told. Moreover, it could only be worked when there was a sufficient level of water in the canal, otherwise its propellers would not be submerged. This limited capacity thus proved restrictive to the amount of water that could be drawn. Consequently, transplanting could only be practised on the land lying close to the canal while fields that were situated further inland had to be broadcast.

Apart from these water-drawing devices, other principal instruments of production were: wooden ploughs with metal shares, wooden harrows, sickles, knives, mortars and pestles for pounding the paddy, baskets and buffaloes. The draught animals were bought from the northeasterners who would herd them down to be sold every year (see also Johnston, 1976: 227-228). As for other farm implements, the people still made a lot of these themselves except for such things as metal goods which were bought from those who came in their boats from places where these products were made.

As regards land, one of the most important factors of production the pioneers, as has already been mentioned, sold their holdings near the River and bought land along the Prawet Canal at 0.50-1.50 baht per rai and they also contributed to the cost of the canal excavation. Once on the land, the pioneers had to try to clear and subsequently cultivate as much land as they could in order to confirm their rights over it. In the 1880s when land disputes abounded, and when land

certificates had not yet been issued for the newly-claimed plots, a way to ensure one's right was to put the land into cultivation, to pay tax on it, and to use the land tax certificates as proof of ownership. During these years when cases were brought to court, it was recorded that the court ruled that the holders of land tax certificates were the rightful owners and it was not until 1898, when land ownership became more clearly defined, that a land register map was attached to the land certificate (Tomosugi, 1980: 121-122).

The amount of land a pioneering household could clear depended very much on the amount of labour it had at its disposal. The majority relied on the labour of their own family members but a number of households made use of the thaat's labour. Despite the fact that the gradual manumission of slavery was proclaimed in 1874 (Suvit, 1978: 190), thaat labour continued to be used in Theparaj until the end of the century. A few households might have had a number of thaat before they moved to their new land. Others did not but they were well-off enough to take over thaats' debts and thus transfer families of thaat from other people, which to some signified their relatively successful participation in the market economy prior to their migration to Theparaj. Some households managed to acquire their thaat through reactivating their connections with certain officials who would obtain prisoners for them to use as their thaat. A few of the thaat were of Laotian origins, possibly the descendents of war captives.

According to the elderly villagers, in order to clear 100 rai of land, 6-8 people were needed and a household relying solely on its family labour might be expected to have around 100 rai of land. On the other hand, a household with 2-3 families of thaat at its command was said to be able to clear and claim over 300 rai of land.

Land clearance and settlement proceeded fast and by the mid-1880s "much of the land along Prawetburirom Canal was already cleared for cultivation" (Johnston, 1976: 100) although there might still have been patches of land being left fallow for lack of manpower to cultivate them.

The few households which had acquired over 300 rai of land could thus run short of manpower to cultivate all of it, possibly because some of the thaat might have fled. As a result, the land over and above the amount which their manpower could cultivate might be rented out to tenants, but these were very few in number since new land was still available to be cleared and since the tenants, faced with the unstable conditions of the area, tended to move elsewhere, particularly when the Rangsit area had been opened up in the late 1880s where cultivating conditions were better.

The majority of the households could thus be called owner-cultivators. Those who relied on their own families' labour might be cultivating 80-120 rai of land, depending on the size of the househods. Those who commanded a few families of thaat could be cultivating 300-400 rai of land. However, there appeared to be one

household that was owning several hundred rai of land. This was a household of the first Khwaeng [2] of Theparaj, Khwaeng Klan.

Khwaeng Klan gained ownership over a lot of land because while in office he managed to obtain the official permission to dig two feeder canals leading from Prawet Canal which are still known by his name. He was thus able to claim the newly-opened up land along these canals. It was said that Khwaeng Klan used the money he had handsomely won from gambling to hire people (Thais) to excavate the feeder canals. By undertaking such canal-excavation projects, Khwaeng Klan undoubtedly was able to make huge profits by sale of the land along the canals to the peasants while the land he cleared for himself could also be rented out. The fact that the state gradually relegated such public works as canal excavation to private individuals including royalty, nobles, officials, and companies, created a handsome opportunity for them and for locally-based people like Khwaeng Klan, with his semi-official position, to accumulate land, especially where water resources were good and to earn profit from land-renting.

---

[2] Khwaeng, strictly speaking, means district, while a district officer is called muen khwaeng, although people usually refer to district-officers in the old days simply as "khwaeng" rather than as "muen khwaeng".

However, the period before 1900 was also witnessing another type of tenant, i.e. those renting royal riceland or naa luang. The naa luang, which was owned by the king and cultivated by phrai luang, greatly increased in Rama V's reign during the development of the delta canal system. The origins of naa-luang in different areas might have varied (see Tanabe, 1978: 67-82), but what happened in Theparaj seemed to constitute another peculiar case. According to elderly villagers, the land presently known as naa luang once belonged to private individuals who migrated to Theparaj to settle. They decided to sell their land to the government when news spread to the area that a railway line was to be constructed through their land. Hence, it was fear of outright land requisition by the state that led a number of households in the village to sell off their land hastily, the total amount of which was 507 rai out of over 3,000 rai of land in village no. 2. (The total amount of naa luang in the whole of tambon Theparaj was 960 rai in all). Since then these households who had stayed on had been cultivating the same plots but in a new capacity i.e. as tenants. This account of the villagers corroborates with the written records of petitions that were submitted by a number of Chachoengsao farmers to the governor of the province in 1907, stating that they sold their land to the state in 1892 when they heard about news of the coming railway. In their petitions, the farmers were requesting to buy back their

land since it now transpired that the railway did not take that route. Unfortunately, on this issue the governor of the monthon [3] was of the opinion that this land had appreciated a lot in value and the petitioners were trying to seek a profit from the offer to obtain the land at the old price. The petition was therefore turned down (NA 5, Petitions Vols 19, 21). The peasants thus remained tenants on the royal riceland and had to pay the rent to the state via the naay kong, the agent who was charged by the state with the collection of rent. The naay kong responsible for the naa luang in Theparaj did not seem to be local residents.

Although all the land in the area had been claimed, Theparaj then was still sparsely populated. The settlement pattern was such that houses of closely-related kinsmen would be found clustered together on the banks of the canal. Behind the houses lay the stretches of land that they cultivated. Elderly people say that these clusters of houses were scattered at considerable distances from one another, not unlike the

---

[3] monthon or administrative region, sometimes called "circle". The creation of monthons in the 1890s by Prince Damrong was part of the overall attempt to reorganize and centralize the whole administrative system. Superintendent commissioners were appointed and sent to head various monthons, each of which contained a number of provinces. They thus united the centre with provinces and towns and provincial governors who hitherto had enjoyed considerable autonomy in their provinces began to be placed under the direct authority and supervision of the central government officials in the persons of the superintendent commissioners. See Siffin, 1966: 69-78; Tej, 1977: 99-125.

settlement pattern of the Rangsit area (see Johnston, 1976: 117).

As regards the households' access to labour, the majority were relying on their own family labour to cultivate the land, but a small number of households were using the labour of their thaat. Hence, although one could witness the ascendence of commodity production during the latter half of the nineteenth century, the old vestiges of the sakdinaa system still remained and its form of forced labour was exploited in the colonization of this frontier region in order to take advantage of the new opportunities opened up by relations with the market.

Numerous stories were recounted about the harsh treatment that a lot of the thaat had to endure. They were ordered to perform every kind of task both in the rice fields and around the house. They had to go around exchanging labour with other households on their masters' behalf. And the manner in which they were treated was not much different from the treatment that prisoners received. The naay were at liberty to beat and whip the slaves. The latter were chained most of the time in case they might flee and those who were prone to fleeing were even chained while working. In some households both the mother and her children were in chains. When a house was attacked by bandits, the slaves could be heard wailing, for their fear was heightened by the fact that they were chained and immobile.

When a child of a slave was born, some naay added to the original debt "the hearth cost" (khaa hua taow fai.)[4] There is an often-cited case of a particularly cruel naay who vowed to the spirits that if the latter could bring back a fleeing slave, she would offer him the slave's blood. When the slave was finally recaptured, she did cut the slave's face and fulfilled her vow. According to the villagers, her action (karma) eventually caught up with her and a minor cut in her body attracted a swarm of worms which covered her whole bo-dy even before her death.

However, the employment of slaves did not continue for lòng in Theparaj. People who were born around the year 1900 no longer witnessed the slaves' presence. The system had been replaced by the use of paid labour. Some of the freed slaves continued to remain with their former naay, especially the Laotians, for "they did not know where to go," but they now received annual payment.

The vestiges of the sakdinaa system were not confined to the possessions of the thaat only. Villagers who were phrai were still bound by the sakdinaa obligations. Some were said to be phrai

---

[4] Khaa hua taow fai: the cost of keeping the hearth burning. This refers to a traditional practice after childbirth when fire was used to give the mother warmth and was thought to help bring her womb back to normal. The cost that a thaat was charged could be interpreted as compensation for her loss of labour during the post-natal period.

luang and all of them had their wrists tattooed. Most were paying capitation taxes in lieu of corvée labour, but some had to perform their 3 months' corvée service. However, in this period, unless there was war, conscripted labour was increasingly employed to carry out local public works, such as building temporary dams, digging and deepening canals, etc. The system of corvée labour, like slavery, was also dissolved at the turn of the century when the new military conscription law was promulgated in 1905 (Suvit, 1978: 254-255).

Hence, towards the end of the nineteenth century, work in the fields was seldom disrupted by the obligation of corvée service as the extraction of surplus by the ruling class increasingly took the form of money taxes. Towards the end of Rama V's reign, the share in the total revenue of capitation tax, which was paid in lieu of corvée service, increased from 2% in 1892 to almost 7% in 1900. At the same time taxes in kind were also replaced by money excise taxes (Chatthip, 1981: 29), and these ranged from taxes on land, fruit trees, boats, fishing tools, gambling, alcohol, etc. (NA 5, M 50/4; NA 6, M 23/1). Some of these were farmed out to the Chinese, others were collected by officials. The collectors retained part of the revenue before passing the rest on to the capital.

As regards the actual cultivation of rice, the people residing in the area which is now Village no. 2, whose land was irrigated by water from the Prawet Canal, planted rice by the transplanting method. Work in the

fields usually started between the month of May and July depending on the rains, when nursery beds were prepared by breaking and harrowing the ground until soft, then irrigating them and sowing sprouting seeds on to them. After this the farmers began to plough the rest of the fields, followed by harrowing, uprooting the seedlings, transplanting and weeding. The variety of rice with an early-maturity period would be ready for reaping in November while the late-maturing variety would be harvested in January or February.

Every step of farming was accompanied by certain rites and ceremonies. The "first ploughing," "first sowing " ceremonies, the invocation of the Rice Goddess, the merit-making at the threshing floor, were strictly adhered to. In those days when hazards and disasters abounded and when there was a feeling of helplessness against the forces of nature, people would turn to the supernatural to ensure good crops, and explanations of their fluctuating fortunes would often be sought in the supernatural realm also.

While the majority of tasks in the rice fields were accomplished by household labour (the well-to-do would be using their thaats' labour), big tasks that needed to be done against time and required more labour than was available within the household, would be carried out with exchange labour. Such tasks included uprooting, transplanting, reaping, threshing and milling. The exchange was carried out on a daily basis i.e. a person would work on his/her neighbour's field for a day and the

latter would likewise return to him a day's worth of his work. The labour exchange arrangement was an important means of grappling with the constant problem of labour shortage of those days. Apart from this, the villagers would also try to time their planting in such a way that their peak demand for labour would not coincide with that of their neighbours. They would plant different varieties of rice that would mature at different times and this also contributed a means of spreading risks.

People now often look back to the practice of labour exchange of the old days with nostalgia. They often reminisce on the fun and jollity of the occasions when they worked on the same field in big groups. Work, although hard and arduous, mingled with play. Sometimes competitions were held to decide who could work fastest. Young men and women might be working side by side, talking and teasing one another. The host family, meanwhile, would be busy preparing lunch for their guest workers. They would all feast and drink together at midday before work started again in the afternoon. When work was over, some games might be held on the wide "threshing floor" area to finish the day in jovial mood. Community spirit and values were thus constantly reinforced by such modes of work and play.

At the end of the harvest, traders, mostly Chinese, would come in their rice boats to buy paddy from numerous individual households. When their hulls were full, they would float them to the mills in Chachoengsao or in Bangkok. Villagers recall that a few well-to-do Thai

farming households, including Khwaeng Klan, were also engaged in a small-scale rice-trading, although not long afterwards this seemed to be abandoned probably because of failure to compete with the more systematic organization and well-connected commercial network of the Chinese traders. The same Chinese traders might not confine their business only to trade in paddy, but might come into the area also with a variety of consumer goods and farm implements to sell to the villagers.

The harvest was not totally sold off. Every household would retain a portion of paddy for the rest of the year's consumption needs and for use as seed grains for the next season's planting. Well-to-do households might prefer not to sell the whole amount of their "for-sale" crop but, instead, to store it in their barns in order to wait for the rise in price later on in the year, the peak of which was usually reached in November. It is said that the traditional varieties of rice could be stored for up to 1 - 2 years. Hence, the well-to-do households with large crop surpluses and large storage barns could afford to withhold their sales of paddy until the following year if they considered the price offers unsatisfactory. On the other hand, the majority of households undoubtedly enjoyed smaller crop surpluses or none at all in some years and therefore were not so well placed as to indulge in such price speculation. Instead, after retaining part of the paddy for their consumption and for seed grains, they tended to sell the rest of their paddy immediately after harvest. Unlike the

better-off villagers, the majority of the households did not normally have much reserve to fall back on and whatever "extra" paddy they might have stored in their more limited barn space might easily have been used up when unexpected crises struck; if not, it might have been used as a means of exchange to obtain other goods from the passing-by traders later on in the year. In these early years of settlement when the cultivators were at the mercy of the fierce natural viccissitudes, those households with little or no reserve to fall back on were often forced to borrow from their better-off relatives or neighbours in order to see them through the rest of the year. In such a situation, the crop would be hurriedly sold off right after harvest in order to repay their loans. Some might even be driven to mortgage or khaay faak [5] their land for loans, but the practice might not have been widespread in the first years of the settlement. And the few dealings that took place were often carried out among a person's close relatives so that the land would remain in the possession of the kinsgroup and with a more likely chance of it being redeemed.

In terms of borrowing, one common form was loans in kind which better-off kinsmen or neighbours might lend to

---

[5] Khaay faak: Salė of land with the right of redemption.

the poorer villagers to help them out in bad times. However, there were also years when the crops were severely damaged and some households were forced to take on large loans from moneylenders who might be the wealthy people in the local community. In 1900 it was reported that in the Prawet Canal area two successive bad harvests in 1896-97 left people with little to start off production in the following season, and they were forced to borrow money at a very high interest rate of up to 67% per annum, and the loans were often secured by land mortgages (NA 5, K 3.1/9; Johnston, 1976: 392-393). In the words of the farmers in an eastern province "when rice was borrowed, it had to be paid back double. We had to do this or else the rich would never give out loans" (Chatthip, 1981: 427). Moneylending was thus becoming such a lucrative business in some rural areas of the central plain as to warrant this official's comment:

> Profit is acquired literally without need to invest. It is better than the necessity of involvement in the construction of buildings or shophouses when sometimes it might take a year for them to be completed and for collection of rent to commence, such rent being no more than fifteen percent. Consequently accepting land in mortgage provides money speedily on the one hand; and on the other, the land is a secure surety. When the owner fails to reimburse the capital and the interest at such times as they are due, the land may be seized as provided by the contract. (NA 5, Ag 3.1/9)

However, in normal years because land along Prawet Canal was fertile, farmers in Theparaj were able to produce a surplus for sale. Paddy produced and traded in this area prompted an official to observe in 1898 that

the Prawet Canal was very much frequented by both local and through traffic and rice was the major produce traded in the area. A busy juncture had been established at Hua Takae (about 15 kilometres northwest of Theparaj), where all the boats travelling to and from Bangkok and Prachinburi had to make a stop (NA 5, Ag. 4/1799).

Apart from trade in paddy, the villagers found themselves buying from the market some farm implements such as metal tips for the ploughs and more importantly, the buffaloes which were bought from the northeasterners, as has been previously mentioned. Farm implements as well as a still somewhat limited variety of consumption goods, such as cloth, fuel oil, tobacco, salt, sugar and a few other foods could be purchased from the boats that sailed from places where the goods were produced, or from Chinese traders who often acted as paddy traders at the same time and thus tended to visit the area after harvest (they would sell the few articles they brought along and filled their boats with paddy on their return trip). These boats would normally anchor at Klong Suan market (which was about 4 km along the Prawet Canal to the northwest of the village) for a few days before continuing on their journey. Food for daily consumption was seldom purchased, as a small patch in the household's compound was usually devoted to growing a few vegetables or fruit trees while a few chickens were kept for their eggs. The majority of the people were thus relying mainly on the free food that was in abundant supply. The canal was full of fish, prawns and shrimps from which the

people could make for themselves the main condiments of Thai cooking, such as fish sauce, shrimp paste, as well as dried fish and shrimps, that would keep for the rest of the year. The abundant supply of food such as fish gave rise to an expression that a person could start making the chilli paste for the curry even while another was catching the fish, because they could be 100% certain that the fish would be caught in no time.

Apart from this, the villagers also processed the rice they ate themselves by pounding it with a mortar and pestle, which was normally carried out in the evening. Labour was often exchanged among the majority of households while the few well-to-do households would employ their thaat to do the job. During this period there was no rice mill in Theparaj or the nearby areas. The mills that were in existence in this period were situated farther away - in Chachoengsao town itself. As was recorded in Child's account of 1892, "there are now 25 steam rice mills in Bangkok, one in the course of construction and three in Patriew [6],..." (Child, 1892: 145-146).

---

[6] "Patriew" or "Paedriw": a colloquial name for Chachoengsao

The Increasing Control of the Central Government in the Rural Areas

The impact of the incorporation of Thailand into the world economy under colonial pressure had fundamentally changed the self-sufficient village society which was at the base of the sakdinaa society. The peasantry of the Central Plain gradually became producers of rice for sale in the world market. This process was enhanced by the state which actively encouraged the peasantry to claim and clear new land, by itself undertaking canal excavation projects or encouraging private individuals or groups to do so, by giving the peasantry tax incentives, by attempting to regulate land claims to some extent, etc. Rama V's measures to abolish gradually slavery and the corvée system could also be seen as part of the state's role in facilitating the intensification of commodity production.

Apart from this, village society also began to witness changes in its political relationships with the central government, when it became increasingly subjected to the centralised control of the latter. The fiscal reforms, the improvement and expansion of communication and transportation networks and the complete reorganization of the whole administrative system based on a functional Western-style administration in 1892, represented changes in the overall power structure towards a centralisation of political power and control.

Rama V's Reformation started in 1874 and reached its culmination in 1892 with the reorganization of the whole

system of administration. Previously, the provincial nobility were allowed to enjoy a considerable degree of administrative, financial and judicial independence within their provincial domain. They were entitled to demand the service or commutation tax from a number of phrai, to settle legal disputes and retain judicial fees, to keep a portion of the various taxes that were levied on the population, and to have control over the appointment of their subordinates. The Reformation gradually deprived them of their former sources of wealth and power as it attempted to turn them into salaried officials. This meant that their traditional sources of income, such as the judicial fees, the various taxes, tax-farms, inland transit duties, etc., were now directly appropriated by the central government while the abolition of slavery and the corvée system deprived them of the service and commutation tax they could previously demand from the phrai. At the same time, their judicial and administrative authority was gradually eroded as decisions on these issues gradually came to rest with the centrally-based ministries (Tej, 1977: 99-184; Siffin, 1966: 42-63).

However, it took a few decades before the centralized system of administration could operate with any effectiveness and the reforms could only be carried out in a gradual manner. Shortage of qualified officials as well as lack of funds to pay for the officials' salaries led the government to allow a number of provincial nobles to assume the official posts in the

newly-structured administration. Although in 1893 Bangkok dispatched the first high-ranking official to take up the newly created post of superintendent commissioner to supervise the administration of monthon Prachin in which Chachoengsao province had been incorporated, most of the subordinate posts were filled largely by provincial nobles. Between 1899-1915, out of the 29 officials of the monthon Prachin headquarters, 24 were members of the provincial nobility (Tej, 1977: 165). Moreover, the move to wrest power from the local nobles was far from smooth as the latter were trying hard to resist the changes that served to seriously undermine their economic and political power. The second commissioner of monthon Prachin, Prince Alangkarn, stated in 1899 that the notables who had been appointed to the new official posts were unwilling to implement regulations that affected their established vested interests. It is also recorded that in 1895 the Ministry of the Interior could not immediately abolish the phrai's service and introduce commutation tax into monthons Prachin and Ratchaburi because of the strong influence that the provincial nobles were enjoying and because some appeared to have "not only provincial but metropolitan support and influence"; thus "honourable retirement on a pension became the most tactful method of displacing the nobility from the governorship in a gradual manner" (Tej, 1977: 169-170). Only gradually then were officials from Bangkok posted to fill the positions left vacant by deaths, dismissals or forced retirements.

Similarly, at the lower levels of the provincial administration, i.e. from the district down to the village, the impact of the Reformation was only very gradually felt. In fact "implementation at lower levels lagged behind even that at the monthon and jangwat (i.e. provincial) levels" (Tej, 1977: 200). A localized structure of power remained the order of the day for many years and the government, both at the central and provincial levels, hardly ever intervened in the affairs of the village. As the village society continued to enjoy its relative autonomy, the power and prestige of its elite were still very much locally-based. A powerful or a wealthy man could seldom rely on outside law or force to protect him. Instead, his position was mainly legitimized by the recognition of the local community itself. To attain such recognition he would try to win personal friends and followers by distributing to them part of the resources that were needed for survival and well-being of which he had more at his disposal than a lot of his fellow villagers. And many of long-standing social values which reinforced the community values, mutual help and co-operation to some extent still operated to put pressure on the better-off members to share out some of their wealth.

In the Theparaj of the early years, those who emerged as wealthy and powerful were the few pioneering households who were able to claim and cultivate large plots of land because they had the extra labour service of the thaat at their disposal whereas the majority of

the households relied basically on their own family labour. The village elite in those days were able to build up their wealth by taking advantage of the possibilities opened up by market relations and by utilizing the personal ties they had managed to cultivate with certain influential figures in the province. Most might have been able to accumulate a certain amount of their resources by participating in the expanding trade even before they moved to Theparaj and this had enabled them to take over the debts and thus control of families of thaat because they were "on friendly terms" with prison officers who could make available to them a number of prisoners to be used as their thaat. And in the days where labour was scarce and land clearance and cultivation involved labour-intensive techniques, those who managed to gain access to labour over and above that of their household members was thus able to generate more surplus. Hence, while the recently-opened-up market opportunities were beginning to turn land into another valuable resource on which wealth and status were to be based, the informal patron-client relationships between commoners and influential officials, as well as the employment of forced labour prevalent in the sakdinaa society, continued to be reactivated as a means also to build up wealth and status.

The heads of some of these well-off households were soon able to add power and status to their wealth, to gain the community's recognition, by distributing some of the resources of their command to poorer fellow

villagers. When the pioneers had to face an ecologically harsh and hostile setting, when natural vicissitudes could plunge them into destitution and where the commoners were still subject to the arbitrary use of force and authority by the naay class, those with extra resources at their disposal could help out the poorer kinsmen or neighbours by providing them with the minimum necessary to tide them over bad times. The goods and services a patron could provide his clients were wide-ranging. He could provide them with access to his land and agricultural implements, he might lend them his buffaloes when his own household had no more use for them, he might lend them paddy or money to see them through to the following harvest, he might be able to give them some protection against the excessive demands and maltreatment of the local nakleng. Such relationships between the patron and his clients were commonly perceived by the people themselves as relationships based on reciprocity and mutual help. In return for the patronage, a client would contribute a repayment in terms of labour services. He/she might work a few days on the patron's land, might be called in to help when the patron was staging various social and religious ceremonies, to help repair the patron's barn or tools, etc. Such relationships took on a personal and paternalistic form and sheer force was seldom used to secure the clients' compliance. In fact, as labour was in those days still hard to come by and was a valued item in production, coupled with the fact that there did not

exist a single patron who had a monopoly over the resources needed by the clients which meant that the clients could turn to other patrons for help, the clients' service and support were mainly secured by perceived gestures of benevolence. However, such "reciprocity" took place between people with differential access to wealth and power. Relations that usurers and landowners had with their clients and tenants, although couched in patron-client terms, were in fact exploitative in nature. With increasing social differentiation within the village society, the communal solidarity and spirit became increasingly less fragile and "patron-client relationships" gradually acquired a more explicitly mechanical and contractual nature.

Among the leading figures in Theparaj of this period, Khwaeng Klan might serve as an illustration of a well-recognized local patron. Klan's household was among the very first to settle in the area. His family was already well-off before their migration to Theparaj and their wooden houses in the old village were built in a long row with their open balconies stretching from one to the other so that "a chick would not fall off" if it tried to flutter from one to another. He sold off his land in the old village and moved to Theparaj to claim and clear several hundred rai of land with the use of thaat labour. From his better-off position, he was able to distribute his patronage resources to the less fortunate kinsman and neighbours in the area. Apart from helping them out by renting their land and lending them

buffaloes, other farming implements and paddy, Klan's ability to handle the local nakleng also meant that he could provide his clients with a certain degree of protection against the prevalent theft and buffalo-napping or he could help them retrieve their hard-earned, valuable buffaloes or other goods when these were stolen. A patron such as Klan was thus in a position to provide his clients with a certain degree of protection and security against the natural and social elements faced by the villagers in those days.

Being recognized as a powerful and well-to-do local figure who was also well-connected with influential figures in the town, the appointment of Klan to the post of khwaeng (district officer) by the provincial governor was not surprising. Because Klan became a khwaeng before the system of administration was restructured, he was not only empowered to maintain power and order in his area, but could also retain shares of the commutation and other taxes that had been collected from the populace, to settle disputes and arbitrate major and minor cases. Apart from this, Klan was also endowed with a duty to supervise the measurement of land in order to issue the cultivators with the land-survey certificates (NA 5, K 3.1/10). As such, his official position further enhanced Klan's power and prestige and created additional sources of patronage at his disposal, upon which he could rely to recruit more political followings. Klan's power and prestige thus overshadowed the other patrons in the area.

While in office, Klan was able to build up his wealth in land further by undertaking the excavation of two feeder canals leading from the big Prawet Canal. The two feeder canals thus kept his name and are still known as Kwaeng Klan Bon (upper) and Kwaeng Klan Laang (lower) Canals. Klan's ability to obtain permission to carry out such an undertaking also underlines the fact that his connections with influential officials were well-established. According to Johnston, when Rama V's government contracted out its traditional responsibility of canal excavation to private parties, "those who received land development concessions in the 1890s were all men with close ties to the government" (Johnston, 1976: 54).

Apart from legitimising their position through the forming of paternalistic ties with their less well-off fellow villagers, Klan and a few other well-recognised, well-to-do households also tried to add to their prestige by contributing generously to religious undertakings. They were found to be at the forefront of merit-making. The initiative to build the first temple in the area came from them, although contributions in various forms came from all the households within the community. The well-to-do households contributed land, building materials and money, while the poorer households contributed in labour. When the construction of the bot (monks' sanctuary) and the monks' living quarters were completed, Khwaeng Klan went back to his former village to invite a monk from the temple there to be abbot of the

new Wat Theparaj (Theparaj Temple). It is said that a grand procession was organized and the abbot-elect was carried all the way to Theparaj on a palanquin fit for the honour and prestige merited him. In such manner was the wealth of the leading households in the community traded for prestige and for the community's recognition.

Apart from the local patrons, there also existed in those days another figure of authority within the community, i.e. the local nakleng. However, unlike the more benevolent patron, the nakleng resorted to the use of force to appropriate revenues from the local people. They were thus outside the sphere of patron-client interrelationship. A local leader's authority was often enhanced if he could enter into some form of reciprocal ties and obtain some degree of co-operation from the nakleng. On the other hand, there were also cases when the nakleng themselves were appointed to official positions and were found to have grossly abused their power and to have subjected the villagers to oppressive demands through their use of force (see Chatthip, 1981: 434-444). The balance of power that prevailed in various areas might have varied according to the relative strength of the various groupings in the particular locality and the relative strength of the government's control over that locality.

Theparaj villagers say that in the first four decades of the village establishment, there were many house raids and cases of buffalo-napping. With good contacts with the local nakleng, it was possible to

retrieve the stolen goods, as all the nakleng knew their counterparts in neighbouring areas and were aware of all the operations that were carried out within their respective "realms". They usually prided themselves in their wide network of contacts together with the number of followers at their command as well. Hence, when a buffalo was stolen, the owner could try to contact a local nakleng directly to make enquiries about his buffalo. If not, he might have gone to the khwaeng or another headman who, like Khwaeng Klan, might have been a bit of a nakleng himself. Otherwise, the headmen usually had close connections with the local nakleng to whom they turned for information and assistance on matters concerning theft and disorder. It was normally possible for the stolen buffalo to be returned for a fee.

The villagers tend to perceive the nakleng's activities as having had some sort of a redistributive function. Not unlike the way they view the moral duties of the richer patrons to help out the poor in times of need, they also see the true nakleng as having been "men of principle" and their actions having been morally defined. According to the villagers, the nakleng or bandits only raided homes of the well-to-do and did not harm innocent people, although they would not have hesitated to hunt down traitors from amongst their own number either (cf Damrong, 1924). They also recount that sometimes a buffalo or a boat stolen from a well-respected household might have been returned quietly later, while goods stolen from "blood-sucking" households

would never have reappeared in the same manner and would have been sold off, or a stolen buffalo might have been slaughtered. The villagers also attribute the nakleng or bandits' activities as stemming from poverty, those activities having been carried out to satisfy their subsistance needs.

However, Johnston also cited the existence of another type of bandit who belonged to the "criminal underworld" and retained few ties with the rural society in which they operated. They might have been in charge of illegal gambling and opium houses. And bandits of this type, and their crimes, "aroused as much hatred among the peasantry as they did irritation in official reports" (Johnston, 1976: 150, 148-150). But Johnston concludes that in general, rural crime and banditry were a widely accepted system of income redistribution in the rural society (Johnston, 1976: 148-158). On the other hand, it is also possible that the image of the nakleng, or bandits of former days, was idealized so as to emphasize the morally defined obligations that the well-to-do were expected to have towards the poorer villagers in general: the nakleng were thus seen to right the wrongs. It is also possible that the idealized image is used to contrast this type of "just" activity with the individualistic and contractual nature of social relationships and the indiscriminatory nature of the theft prevalent in the present-day society (cf Scott, 1984: 161-210).

As such, the local nakleng and bandits constituted another source of power and authority as the rural society in those days and district officers or headmen usually had to cultivate some form of a reciprocal relationship with them in order to be able to contain their activities within certain limits. The headmen themselves might have found it necessary to form reciprocal, and not necessarily imbalanced, ties with the nakleng; they may have handed out some goods in the local nakleng once in a while in order to retain their co-operation, and they would also offer the latter some protection against the action of the state. To the local leaders of Theparaj these local nakleng and bandits were by no means their creatures, and their control over the use of force and violence rendered it necessary for the headmen, if they were not the influential nakleng themselves, to establish an alliance of sorts with this "other" source of authority.

Merchants as Beneficiaries of the Expanding Market Relations

The expanding market relations resulting from the opening up of Thailand to international trade had created possibilities of capital accumulation among people who were not necessarily members of the emerging landowning class, especially in areas like Rangsit and to a lesser extent, Theparaj. Very significantly, the opportunities were quickly taken up by the Chinese who assumed the role of traders and middlemen, linking the peasant producers

with the wider market networks, and profitting through the unequal exchange.

At levels wider than village society, certain groups of people who had already built up their economic base from earlier days were well-placed to take advantage of the expanding market opportunities, for instance, the king and factions of the sakdinaa ruling class, as well as the Chinese tax-farmers and trading agents. Chinese merchants came to function as a link between the paddy producers and the national and international markets. They dominated internal trade, buying goods from the producers to sell to the exporters in Bangkok and bringing imported products to sell to the rural producers. At the same time, Western merchants dominated the import-export business as well as shipping (Sirilak, 1981: 118-120). Both groups were also important investors in the newly-established industries like teak-, tin-mining, rice- and saw-milling, as well as in banking. Elements of the old sakdinaa ruling class also had a share in the newly created wealth, either through direct investment or by functioning as creditors to a number of the new businesses. At the same time, opportunities were also opened up for such enterprises as moneylending and landrenting.

Market relations that linked the village to Bangkok and to the international market had likewise created possibilities of accumulation in the rural area itself, notably among the merchants, rice-millers and landowners. In the early years of Theparaj the villagers did not have

a direct relationship with any rice-miller. Rather, it was the Chinese traders who constituted the point of contact between the local commodity production and the wider market. They were thus able to extract the surplus from the paddy producers from this position. The capital they could accumulate was usually either repatriated to China or reinvested in their trading or in processing businesses. The resources at their command did not constitute a source of patronage vis à vis the rural villagers. Besides, their appearances in the village were still few and far between and the most likely period for them to have been seen would have been after harvest time. They did not reside locally but tended to be based in towns or at marketing centres far removed from the village. Added to this, goods other than paddy were still being bartered directly between producers and the overall volume of trade in those years was still limited. Thus, the Chinese merchants were beginning to make their presence felt in Theparaj society, their influence was as yet restricted and they had no place in the social and political affairs of the local community.

In short, by the time people began to settle in Theparaj, Thailand had become incorporated into the international division of labour, and its administration was undergoing a period of reformation. The first settlers in Theparaj had already become market-oriented, specialised rice producers. Some vestiges of the old <u>sakdinaa</u> system existed, along with certain other patterns of power and influence, but they were changing.

Chinese traders and middlemen had become predominant in linking the rice producers with the market.

These changes were to accelerate in the first decades of the twentieth century.

CHAPTER 4

FURTHER COMMERCIALIZATION AND THE STATE'S INCREASING IMPACT ON RURAL SOCIETY

In the early decades of the twentieth century, the peasantry's involvement in commodity production proceeded further, while the centralization of the administrative system which began during the late decades of the nineteenth century began to have significant effects at the provincial and lower levels of the bureaucracy. By this time, not only were the peasant producers' fortunes increasingly tied to the fluctuating price levels, but their lives and the level of production in the local community were also increasingly affected by decisions of bureaucrats and legislators in Bangkok.

The increasing need for money and the steady foreign demand for rice led the peasant producers to become fully-fledged specialist rice-growers. The scheme of rice exports showed a slow erratic rise up to 1870-74 and then rose rapidly to a peak of 25.7 million piculs in 1930-34. Between 1907 and 1940, exports ranged from 40-50% of the total rice production. The expanding production was accomplished by the continuing extensification of cultivation which led to the area planted in paddy, using from 9.1 million rai in 1905/6 to 34.6 million in 1950, coupled with the increase in population from 7.3 million in 1900 to 17.3 million in 1947. In fact, the area cultivated grew even faster than the population, which implied a rise in the ratio of land

to labour. And since there was little change in cultivation technique, Ingram concludes that the trend had been for "the agricultural population in general to give up leisure and other occupations for the additional income earned by working longer hours per day and more days per year in order to produce more rice" (Ingram, 1971: 55, 37-55).

Becoming full-time producers of rice for sale consequently means that the peasantry was also becoming more dependent on the market, that they now had to face not only the natural and social elements which continued to significantly affect their rice production, but they also had to face the fluctuation of the market. Consequently, after the boom period of the 1880s and 1890s, the years 1905-1912 could be considered as a setback somewhat, compared with the earlier decades. A series of disasters and other circumstances unfavourable to the peasant population took place. The period witnessed a succession of poor crops caused by excessive insufficient or unfavourably timed rainfall and flooding. In 1906/7 an outbreak of animal disease added to the trouble. Between 1902 and 1908 the baht currency appreciated in successive stages, which worked to the disadvantage of the rice exporting peasantry because it caused the domestic price of rice to fall (Johnston, 1976: 285-290; NA 6, M 3.4/8).

Concurrently, the state's extraction of the surplus from the peasantry was increasingly through taxation, as the extraction in the form of labour service was

gradually dismantled. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the whole system of manpower control itself had been dissolved. The phrai were released from the corvée system and the service obligation was converted into a money tax. In 1905, when the military conscription act was instituted, those who were conscripted no longer had to pay this capitation tax (Suvit, 1979: 189). Instead of having to contribute to the state and the naay in labour service, the population now had to contribute increasingly in terms of money taxes.

In 1900, as a result of Great Britain's eventual agreement to allow land held by the subjects to be taxed at rates not exceeding those charged in Lower Burma, land tax rates were raised upwards and the tax was now fixed according to the land fertility using yield per rai as the main criteria. Tax on top quality land in areas of heavy settlement increased from .25 to between .30 and 1.00 baht per rai which amounted to a 30 - 300% increase. The new land tax which was put into effect in 1905-6 yielded twice the revenue of the old one (Johnston, 1976: 296-297; Ingram, 1971: 77, 178). Taken together, the land and capitation taxes had increased their share in the state's total tax revenue from 8 - 12% in the early 1890s to 20 - 25% in 1910-1926. Besides these two taxes, there were also increases in other taxes, such as on boats and fishing implements, and cattle registration fees, etc., (Ingram, 1971: 177-178; Johnston, 1976: 296-297, 299).

The tax increases, along with the natural viscissitudes and the adverse export condition resulting from the currency appreciation, combined to make the period 1905-1912 a grim one. An observation by the minister of agriculture in 1910 sums up the situation. In a memorandum to the king, he cited as causes of the recession the "sudden rise of the land tax, the rise in cattle registration fees, the advent of capitation tax, boat tax, compulsory enlistment, the changing of silver to gold standard" which when "combined together with one bad season after another, has reduced the greater portion of the agricultural population to a state of indebtedness and hand to mouth existence" (NA 6, K 1/4, 1-19). The fluctuations in the peasants' fortunes continued with lower prices during the first World War, floods and drought in 1917 and 1919; while the end of the War saw a dramatic rise in rice price (e.g. an 8-fold increase in Bang Chan), and the 1920s was generally a prosperous period with high prices and a growing volume of exports until a drastic setback was brought about by the world-wide Depression in the 1930s leaving a great many households of rice-farmers in destitution (Stifel, 1976: 237-238; Hanks, 1972: 119-120).

Apart from modifying the tax system in line with the increasingly monetized economy, the state also attempted to come to terms with the effects of the increasing commercialization and seriousness of the land problems through the promulgation of the Land Certificate Act of 1901 and the subsequent Consolidated Land Act of 1908, so

as to institute a permanent system of land measurement, registration and the issuing of title deeds. The modern idea of land ownership was thus legally established to distinguish "factual occupancy from ownership" (Yano, 1968: 854) and this again was first implemented in selected areas of the Central Plain. As a result, the structure of the former economic and political system which was based on the ruling class's right over persons was gradually dissolved and reconstituted instead in the form of rights over landed property, while increasingly, power was exercised in a more indirect manner through the state apparatus and the rule of law, although the former personalistic ties and the concept of the rights over persons continued to persist and both the old and new forms of rights might be utilized to maintain and strengthen the position of wealth and power of a person. It was in the early decades of the twentieth century also that the impact of Rama V's Reformation, launched in the late nineteenth century, began to be felt concretely in the rural areas and the provincial administration was increasingly subject to the control of the central government. As Tej has pointed out, "a more than reasonable claim can be made that by 1915 the foundation for a centralized provincial administration had been laid in Siam" (Tej, 1977: 200). The previous independence of the provincial administration and the economically and politically powerful position of the provincial nobles was seriously curtailed. The provincial nobility was deprived of much of its former patronage as the

ministries in Bangkok took over the appointment of a number of important posts attached to the provincial headquarters. Its judicial independence was eventually taken away as people could now refer their cases to the courts instead of subjecting them under the nobles' arbitration. District officers were also forced to refer major crime cases to provincial courts and sub-district elders to refer minor criminal cases to district officers. The provincial nobles' economic base was also undermined when they had to accept salaries instead of being allowed to retain part of the taxes collected in their provinces. Gradually the posts at the provincial headquarters were filled by officials from the centre; among them were junior members of the royal family, a few army officers and also graduates from the civil service school. Hence, although a number of provincial nobles continued to retain their posts in the restructured administration, they had eventually to come to terms with the increasing authority of the central government (Tej, 1977: 99-176).

This period thus witnessed the state beginning to assume responsibility relating to aspects of the population's production and reproduction, although still on a limited scale; and some of the infrastructural projects had as their objective political control, rather than the improvement of production. The state undertook to establish a new communications and transportation system. Telegraph, postal and telephone networks were set up. Railways linking the main outlying regions of

the country with the centre had been completed by the 1940s and although the state's main concern was over the issues of security and political control, railways linking the centre with the North and the Northeast also facilitated trade and the development of commodity production, especially the expansion of rice production (Feeny, 1976: 163, 198-199; Anan, 1984: 147-148). Projects aimed directly to facilitate the growth of rice cultivation and to stabilize rice yields took the form of irrigation facilities, but these were carried out on a limited scale and on an ad hoc basis and were also confined to the Central Plain region. Apart from this the state also assumed responsibility for schooling and in 1898 the provincial headquarters were ordered to co-operate with the temples to spread elementary education (Tej, 1977: 180) and between 1885-1892 the government monastery schools for the general public spread over much of the country with varying degrees of success (Wyatt, 1969: 118, 110-117). After the Compulsory Education Act was passed in 1921, the children were then taught in schools (DeYoung, 1955: 164). Similarly in 1906, Prince Damrong asked the superintendent commissioners of the various monthon to accept responsibility for health service so as "to help to increase the population who would in time grow up to serve in the armed forces and to pay taxes to the government" (Tej, 1977: 182). Significantly also was the fact that the state was also attempting to establish its control over the internal order. In the opening

decades of this century the local pockets of power, the local bandits and nakleng, were thus experiencing their control over the use of violence, which was an important basis of their locally based influence, slipping from their hands as official policemen were sent out to station in or near their localities.

The expanding and increasingly monetized market economy, as well as the spread of the state's control into the rural areas, affected Chachoengsao and Theparaj, which lay close to the centre of trade and power. Increasingly, the extent of the population's involvement in the expanding market relations soon resulted in Chachoengsao outshadowing the rest of the provinces in the same monthon in trade as well as in the amount of crime. This led Prince Damrong to propose to the king in 1903 that the administrative centre of monthon Prachin ought to be moved from the township at Prachinburi to the township of Chachoengsao, as the latter was "a place where people gather and it provides more benefits than other towns and had more crime which could then be pacified". And Rama V's opinion on this matter further summed up the situation in Chachoengsao of the time: "When our ancesters established Prachin as a principal township, it was of a military cause. The transfer to Chachoengsao would be for reasons of trade". The administrative centre was subsequently moved to Chachoengsao in 1904 (NA 5, M 50/4).

Due to the fact that Chachoengsao was known as a "crime-infected" area in those years, the state's attempt

to grapple with the problem was swiftly carried out in practice. A local police station in the Theparaj area was mentioned in a report dated 1904 (NA 5, M 50/1-4). Soon after, in 1907, construction work on a railway line linking Bangkok with Chachoengsao began (Somjai, 1974). The same period witnessed the state's playing a part in the improvement of the technical infrastructure. The small-scale construction of watergates in the Prawet Canal area was reported to have been completed, resulting in the movement of goods and the general communication and trading conditions being better facilitated (NA 5, K 9.3/19). And, as a result of the establishment of the system of land rights registration, the Theparaj villages subsequently had the property rights over their land confirmed and the first set of title deeds were issued to them in 1907.

These developments naturally affected the socio-economic and power relations among the village households themselves and also relations between the village and the wider world. The villagers' involvement with the market was intensified and their need for money was not restricted to the purchase of goods that they could not themselves produce; they also needed extra money to pay for wider varieties of taxes that the state was now demanding. At the same time, the expanding market relations also led to certain groups of people acquiring a more advantageous position compared with the others because they had better access to the important means of production. Moneylenders, merchants and

landowners came to assume an economically and/or politically powerful role within the local community while the village households were becoming more differentiated. Whereas under the sakdinaa system the ruling class gained access to the labour service of and the goods produced by the peasantry, largely through its exercise and organization of coercive control and through the ideology of rights over persons, under the increasingly monetized market system the rights over persons was gradually superceded through the institution of property rights. Concommittant with this development was also the process of differentiation among the peasantry itself which meant that a section of the peasants gradually became dispossessed of their means of livelihood and had to turn to the landowners as moneylenders for access to their means or to sell their labour power, while their involvement in trade increasingly subjected them to the relationships of unequal exchange with the merchants.

In Theparaj, land had been claimed and occupied very soon after it was opened up. For the majority of the households the area claimed was closely related to the size of the household: a few pioneering households were able to claim larger plots than most because of their access to the thaat labour which was available until the turn of the century. By 1908 when all the land in the area was issued with title deeds, one can ascertain roughly the land ownership situation from the information contained in the title deeds which included information

on the amount of land a person owned, how it was acquired, the owner's place of residence. By 1908, some of the pioneering households had already divided up and distributed their land among their children, while others' land had been trasferred to new owners, possibly through debt foreclosures or involuntary sale. Out of some 3,000 rai of land in the village, there was the 507 rai of crown land which had been sold by private individuals to the king in the later years of the nineteenth century and which remained crown property up until the 1970s, when it was transferred to the state's Land Reform Office. Hence, this land can thus be treated as absentee-owned land at least until 1975-76 [1]. As for the trend in land alienation as regards the rest of the land in the village, aside from the crown land, by 1908, 3 title deeds were in the hands of absentee landowners, two were residents of the neighbouring tambon Bang Phra, while the third seemed to be an official (judging from his rank of luang), who was residing in Chachoengsao town. As elderly villagers say that there existed no absentee landowners in the pioneering days, because all the land was occupied by households that had claimed it, it may be plausible to

---

[1] From 1975-76 onwards, when this land became state-owned land under the management of the Land Reform Office, tenants have been given land rights certificates, have enjoyed almost total security over their land, and they are able even to rent out or sell their particular plots. Hence, since 1975-76, tenants on this land have acquired a position much more akin to that of owner-operators than of tenants.

assume that the 106 rai of land was probably acquired by absentee landowners through foreclosures or involuntary sales. If one sets aside the crown land, whose ownership remained unchanged, in 1908 land owned by absentee owners accounted for 3.3% of all the remaining land in the village. (If crown land is included then the percentage rises to 18.9%.)

Also by 1908, the wealthiest first settler in the area, Khweang Klan, who had claimed several hundred rai of land when Prawet Canal was opened up and when he himself had undertaken the excavation of feeder canals in the area, with the result that more land had come under his ownership, now found his fortune evaporating. Local people often attributed this largely to his obsession with gambling, as well as to the failure of his various ventures like trading, rice-dealing, gambling houses, theatre, etc. In this time he had sold off nearly all his land and he left little to his children after his death. While the fortune of Klan's family eclipsed, another local family rose to assume the leadership position in the community in terms of wealth and prestige, largely by operating successfully as moneylender-cum-landowner, while at the same time reactivating the old personalistic ties with the Bangkok high-ranking officials. This well be dealt with later on.

Concommitant with such developments was also a gradual population increase. Up until 1910, Tambon Theparaj had been situated in Amphoe Mueang which was

divided into 33 tambons and 409 villages, with a population of 33,142. Towards the middle of the 1910s, it was decided that this amphoe was becoming too large and that there ought to be two amphoes in the area. Consequently, a new amphoe called Sanam Jan was established in a "densely populated and crime infected area" and Theparaj came under the supervision of this new amphoe (NA 5, M 50/4).

Between 1900 and 1930, the trend towards greater differentiation was proceeding gradually. The fluctuation in the paddy prices, the mild recession and the natural viccisitudes earlier described led to several pieces of land being transferred between 1908 and 1930, either through sale or through debt foreclosure. During this period, 12.9% of the land changed hands due to debt foreclosure, 22.9% through sale and 17.4% through inheritance. During these years those who were lending money to some of the Theparaj villagers while demanding land as a guarantee, consisted of local residents as well as people who were based in other areas of Chachoengsao. In the latter group there were a few Thai moneylenders and a few Chinese who might at the same time be engaged in trading and milling activities, for the villagers say that people in those days often had to turn to "either the rich, the merchants or to millers" for loans. As for the local moneylenders who could give out relatively big loans with land title deeds as a guarantee, they were usually made up of well-off landowning households who did not derive their income from rice production alone but

were often lending out money and/or renting out their land as well. Their client debtors usually paid back the loans and interest in paddy after the harvest. Failure to keep up with the interest payment for most people meant that the unpaid interest would simply be added on to the original amount of debt. Hence, successive crop failures or unexpected illnesses or deaths of household members, sudden deaths of the buffaloes, etc., could plunge a household deeper into indebtedness and could lead to the eventual loss of the mortgaged land.

During the 1910s and 1920s, the size of plot a household cultivated still depended significantly on the amount of labour available to it. Its requirements tended to change over the family cycle, i.e. when the children were old enough to work the land the household might expand its holding by recalling the rented land from its tenants, or if it had no more land of its own it might rent in more land. Similarly, when the children had all married and moved out, the size of land cultivated would contract and some land might be rented to tenants, or if it was renting land then the terms would be given up. The picture of land tenancy cannot be presented here with complete accuracy because the information is incomplete. However, in the 1920s it could reasonably be assumed that there was a high demand to rent land in Theparaj as it was around this time that the villagers recall an increase in the amount of rent

charged by the landowner from 4 thang[2] per rai to 6 - 7 thang per rai. The rent of 7 thang per rai would account for 28 - 35% of the tenants' produce at the very least, since the best land in the best possible year would yield 20 - 25 thang of paddy per rai. At harvest time landowners would go around to their tenants in their boats to collect the annual rent in paddy, and a big landowner would have 5 - 6 boats with them. Some landowners were said to have two sizes of measuring baskets (sat) at hand - the smaller was used when their own paddy was sold, while the bigger one was used especially for rent collection. One local landowner was particularly well-known for his huge sat and his tenants used to name the basket "Old Grief" (Ee Sokaa) for its tears-inducing sight. Some landowners were more lenient than others. Lenient ones might postpone rent payment until the following year when harvest was poor. However, people say that for all landowners alike a reduction of rent in a bad year was a "rare phenomenon". And if rent arrears were accumulating, even lenient landlords would turn out the tenants from their land and replace them with new people.

---

[2] 1 thang = 20 litres

By 1929, rent and interest payments seemed to have become such a widespread problem in Chachoengsao as to warrant Prince Damrong's observation that in Amphoe Phanomsarakham, which was in Chachoengsao, out of its total population of 25,000, 5,000 owned land while the other 20,000 were non-owners; and only 150 people were without debt. He also commented that,

> Farming depends on the will of the weather. Sometimes there is drought, sometimes there is too much flooding. People have to borrow simply to provide for the daily requirements of living. They cannot occupy themselves in other ways because they are not knowledgeable enough, or because there is no one to employ them. No matter how much they produce it is all taken by landowners and creditors. And in order to start afresh, (the farmers) have to chase after (the benefactors) again. (NA 5, 2.28/16 - 33).

The figures he cited have to be treated with some caution since it is most likely that not all the population was engaged in rice farming and the figures of non-owners of land cannot be readily assumed to be the number of the tenants and landless farmers in the amphoe. However, his general comment on the tenants' problems, although somewhat sweeping, was much applicable to the Theparaj area as well.

A more detailed survey of the Chachoengsao farming population, in Amphoe Mueang in particular, was carried out by C. Zimmerman in 1930-31, when the people were beginning to feel the effect of the Great Depression. Zimmerman recorded that in Chachoengsao, the tenants who owned no land at all accounted for 42% of the total households, while in the Central Plain as a whole the

figure was 36%. And on the agricultural credit situation he reported that in the commercialized area, medium and large loans were often borrowed from merchants, paddy buyers and moneylenders, while small loans might be borrowed from neighbours. Loans were expended on such things as land purchase, farming costs and living expenses, and a property guarantee was needed for the loan. In the Central Plain, an estimated 49% of the households were in debt, paying an interest of nearly 30% per annum. Many creditors were also trading in paddy, and they often dictated the grade and the price of paddy for payment of loans, together with the measuring instruments to be employed when the loans were being settled (Zimmerman, 1931: 18, 25, 196-199).

A lot of the rice producers in this period were not only facing the problem of capital shortage and indebtedness; from the days of the first settlement in the 1880s up to the 1920s, labour shortage was often quoted as being a constant obstacle. As has been described earlier, the majority of the households depended on their own family labour to clear and cultivate the land, but a few households that managed to obtain thaat labour were able to claim relatively more land than their fellow villagers.

However, by the very early years of the twentieth century, Rama V's measure to abolish slavery had taken its full effect in Theparaj and henceforward these few households had to hire the labour they employed. In the first decade of the century, wage labourers were still

few and far between and very hard to come by. A few of the thaat who were freed remained with their former naay "as they did not really know where to go" and thus furnishing the latter with some extra hands, but a lot of the thaat chose to leave and joined those seeking some new land to clear and cultivate.

The fact that wage labourers were still small in number seems to agree with the information on the occupations of the Amphoe Sanam Jan's population, in which Theparaj was situated. According to the 1913 official statistics, the total population of the Amphoe numbered 13,205 and out of these, 10,480 or 79.36% were engaged in paddy-farming, 1,034 or 7.83% in wage labour, 820 or 6.21% in trade/commerce, 377 or 2.85% in fishing, while the remaining 3.75% of the people spread out thinly over nine other occupations (NA 6, M 23/1). Among the 1,034 wage labourers, probably not all of them were hired in the paddy farming sector and a number might have been the Chinese who were hired as coolies by the paddy merchants, and millers who numbered 67 in all or 0.51% of the total population.

In the opening decade of the century, big landowners managed to replace their thaat's labour by hiring northeasterners who came in groups to seek work on a seasonal basis (see also Johnston, 1976: 382-388), while the majority of the households continued to rely on their family labour, and all households alike had to depend on the labour exchange arrangement. However, as population expanded and began to fill out the fertile rice districts

of the Central Plain, as fragmentation of holdings proceeded another stage over the changing generations, as some households had lost their land through indebtedness so that by 1930, 42% of the Chachoengsao households were without land, towards 1930 a fertile district like Theparaj began to see an increasing number of people hiring themselves out as wage labourers. Referring to the fertile rice districts of the Central Plain in the period up to the 1930s, Johnston wrote, "It was probably such areas which produced the surplus labour which began to replace Lao workers in Central Thai agriculture at this time" (Johnston, 1976: 390).

As such, by 1930 the differential access to the means of production had become more pronounced. An increasing number of households had to turn to the landowners for land to rent while the more distitute had to resort to wage work. Many had to turn to their better-off kinsmen or moneylenders for loans. But although such relationships, especially between non-kinsmen, were becoming increasingly contractual and calculating in nature, they did not completely replace the personalistic and paternalistic ties. Many instances were cited when big landowners in the village were renting out small plots of less than 10 rai to their kinsmen and as the latter did not normally possess their own farming implements nor buffaloes, these were often borrowed from the landowners when the latter had finished using them. When times were hard, the poorer tenants would turn to their richer kinsmen for loans in paddy to tide them

through to the next harvest. As techniques of production continued to be labour-intensive, the extra labour that the clients were contributing in return to work their patrons' land was always welcomed. At the same time, the patrons' status and prestige were also very much enhanced when the social or religious occasions they staged were accomplished with many of these extra helping hands.

As the social relations of production were undergoing some changes, the technology of rice cultivation remained very much the same over the years. Theparaj farmers continued to use the transplanting method and the same farming implements. However, a few changes took place as regards water-drawing when a new device known as the jak lom replaced the treadle pump (jak theeb) in the first decade of this century. The new device utilized wind power and proved labour and time-saving when compared to the old jak theeb which required a person to work the propellers by foot. It also proved more difficult since, when used with the rahad or a dragon-bone pump (which consisted of a continuous chain of square wooden paddles operating in a square flume with a wheel at each end), it was no longer necessary to wait for the water in the canal to reach such a high level as before, since the rahad could draw water from a much lower level. Towards the end of the 1920s a few wealthy households began to replace the jak lom with the jang han (windmills), which enabled water to be drawn into the fields on a more regular basis. This, according to the villagers, was due to the fact that the

old jak lom was more or less fixed to its position and it required a relatively strong wind to blow directly into the sails for it to operate well, whereas the jang han had a device which kept it facing into the wind and because of this it would continue operating even when the wind was not so strong. Moreover, the jang han could also be connected to the mortar of the paddy pounding instrument and thus enabled the pounding of paddy to be accomplished with the wind instead of human energy. Those who were well-placed to take advantage of the nearby available technology tended to be the more well-to-do households since they were able to make enough surplus for reinvestment. The less well-off, on the other hand, often had to borrow money to buy the new devices, while the very small tenants could seldom afford even this and resorted to borrowing such devices, paying the owners back in the form of labour service. At the same time the adoption of the new devices also meant that a greater number of implements were bought from the market. While the jak theeb used in the former days was made by the farmers themselves, the new devices were not. The rahad and other devices were said to be produced by the Chinese based at the market centres in the area. However, most households continued to make and repair the other basic implements like the plough, harrow, etc., themselves.

On the whole, there was a general increase in the farmers' involvement with the market. By the 1920s, aside from the long-established Klong Suan market, one or

two shops could now be found scattered about the tambon. One was owned by an immigrant from China who married a Thai woman and another was owned by a couple who had 75 rai of riceland but chose to hire labourers to work it while they themselves ran the shop. Farm implements could be purchased from the boats which brought the products from their place of manufacture and which would normally anchor at the Klong Suan market for a few days before continuing on their journey to other places. Apart from this, food was often purchased by the big households in large quantities. Occasionally, members of these households would rise just before dawn and row down to the Bangpakong River where a floating market was held. There they would buy fruits and vegetables at low prices and in large quantities. "Non-perishable" foods like coconuts, pumpkins, boiled bamboo shoots, marrows, etc., would be bought in hundreds in order to last them a good part of the year. Other households in the village could obtain these from one or two small traders who paddled along the canal selling both fresh and dried foods. As for meat, the majority continued to rely mainly on fish which they caught from the canal themselves and other types of meat would be considered a treat. As such, a host who fed chicken curry to those who came on a labour exchange would be the talk of the village.

The villagers also found themselves spending money on such services as having their paddy milled, whereas before the 1920s, paddy was pounded and winnowed by households members themselves with the help of some

exchanged labour from the neighbours. At the beginning of the 1920s, the first rice mill in Theparaj was built. The mill was originally owned by the daughter of a high-ranking official working in the palace who later sold it to a Chinese man as the business was faltering. This Chinese man appeared to have owned several mills in the area. This seems to be in accordance with Johnston's assessment that Thais played an important role as investors and owners, particularly in the growth of provincial mills, although eventually the Chinese would come to dominate. The king also seemed to have been involved in repaying the debt on a mill in Chachoengsao and thus came to own the mill himself (NA 5, Special Register; 14, 1883). This is similar to the story of Prince Narathip's investment in a Rangsit mill, described by Johnston, whereby a loan was granted from the Privy Purse, but eventually the mill had to be sold because the prince failed to find reliable workers and personnel to man it (Johnston, 1976: 253-255).

It was around the time when local mills were established that Theparaj villagers recalled paying a fee to have their paddy milled at rice mills. Broken rice and rice bran were not retained by the mills as is normally done nowadays, but were given back to the farmers who used them to feed the animals raised in a small number in the house compound. The relationship between the villagers and the millers was largely confined to this. As for the sale of paddy, the farmers were not selling their produce direct to the rice millers

but to the Chinese middlemen who were present in a relatively large number and the latter would in turn sell the paddy to the various mills both in Chachoengsao and in Bangkok.

In this period, when more capital was being invested mainly in such spheres as finance, distribution and agricultural processing - those who were well-placed to accumulate capital were in such businesses as rice-milling, saw-milling, paddy and retail trade, moneylending, as well as land-renting. The Chinese who dominated trade and milling and at the same time played an increasing role in moneylending usually chose to plough the profit back into the business or remit part of the profit back to their relatives in China. However, capital was being accumulated by the wealthy Thais in the village, too, through moneylending and landrenting. But unlike the Chinese, the Thai counterparts did not usually venture into trade, commerce or processing (although a few had tried and failed), but often preferred to store up their wealth in the form of land and as valuables like gold or jewelry, or they might have spent it conspicuously as part of status or influence-building. A few were beginning to channel their investment into their sons' education with the hope that this might secure them a place of privilege in the expanding bureaucracy.

The story of one household which rose to become the most economically and politically powerful in the village in the first two and a half decades of the twentieth century and who succeeded Klan as kamnan of Theparaj,

may be illustrative of how wealth and power were accumulated in the local community. In the 1880s, Plueang's parents, like Khwaeng Klan, were among the very first settlers who migrated to Theparaj from a village by the Bangpakong River, where they had an orchard planted with betel-nut and coconut trees, together with another plot of land on which they cultivated rice for their own family's consumption. Family labour was employed to work both the riceland and the orchard and the household had no slave labur at their disposal in those days. When the excavation of the Prawetburirom Canal was completed, Plueang's parents sold their land in the old village and, together with a number of relatives, moved to Theparaj. It was then that they tried to acquire the labour of some slaves to enable them to claim a large area of land by redeeming one or two families of thaat from the debt they owed to their former naay. This indicated that Pleuang's parents, who had hitherto been producing various fruits for sale, must have been able to make a fair amount of surplus to be able to acquire the thaat. Hence, like Khwaeng Klan's family, Pleuang's parents were members of a relatively well-to-do household by local standards. They were able to take advantage of both the old and the new system in that they could exploit the forced labour of the thaat in their acquisition of land and in their production of paddy for sale on the market. With the thaat's extra labour, the household, together with a few others like them, had distinguished themselves from the rest of the village in terms of wealth and status.

Plueang's parents managed to claim more than 300 rai of land altogether. By the time the land title deeds were issued in 1907 and Plueang had succeeded his father as household head, the land he owned amounted to 380 rai. However, by 1930, Plueang's household had managed to build up their stock of land to 560 rai. All of the additional 180 rai of land was gained through loan foreclosures. According to the information contained in the title deeds, Plueang's household attracted the largest number of debtor clients, all of whom were local residents. Plueang himself very much assumed the role of patron and was also regarded by the other villagers as such. While the lending of money to fellow villagers was to him a profitable enterprise, the fact that he was prepared to be lenient distinguished him from the more "professional" moneylenders who "were only too eager to seize the pledged land or to add unpaid interest onto the original amount of debt". In Plueang's case he was not reluctant to see the mortgaged land being redeemed by his debtors and would sometimes postpone repayment dates if his clients were faced with difficult times. As for those villagers whose debt he foreclosed, they were normally allowed to continue cultivating the same plots as tenants.

After the thaat were freed, Plueang's households turned to wage labourers to work their land. In the early years of the century, when labourers were hard to come by, Plueang would retain land proportional to the amount of labour at his command and would rent out the

rest to tenants. However, by the 1920s, labourers had increased in number and it is said that Plueang's household was then employing about 15-20 labourers to perform tasks both in the fields and in the household and that they were hired on a yearly basis. In the labour exchange arrangement the labourers were sent to contribute labour to the other households in the village on Plueang's behalf. Neither Plueang nor his children undertook to work the land themselves. Moreover, a "supervisor" was also hired to manage the farming operation while Plueang merely made occasional inspection trips.

To the villagers of Theparaj, Plueang seemed to conform very closely to the ideal type of a patron. Part of his wealth was redistibuted among the less well-off kinsmen and neighbours in the local community while he would gain loyalties and the services of their labour in return. He was said to "give" 5-10 rai of land to his poor kinsmen to cultivate at no rent but the latter would pay him back in labour whenever their service was needed. He allowed some landless families to build their houses on his land, he advanced paddy or money to tide his clients over bad times, he sponsored the ordination ceremonies of other people's sons, sponsored weddings and funerals for those who served under his household. At the same time, a large part of his resources was also spent conspicuously. Apart from the gold and jewelry, Plueang's house was said to be filled with, all kinds of "modern" furniture and utensils that he purchased from

Bangkok, such as stylish cutlery, crockery, napkins, imported cloth, beds, a lounge suite, etc. And he would proudly put up the officials from the amphoes or the province who might occasionally come round on their inspection trips.

At the same time, Plueang can be seen to have invested some of his resources in the education of his two sons, by sending them to study in Bangkok. The sons were entrusted into the care of a monk who was the family's relative and who was based at a temple called Wat Saket. People say that every year after the planting season was over, Plueang would go to Bangkok in a boat rowed by four oarsmen. The boat would be fully packed with rice, shrimp paste, fish sauce, etc., and he would distribute them not only among his children and relatives, but would also offer them as gifts to a number of the jaao naay (people of high rank), whose patronage he sought. Such influential connections, coupled with the privilege of education that few were yet to receive at that time, contributed to the later success of both sons when they were appointed Rama VI's royal pages. Plueang also started his sons off in life with a house and some land for each and both sons were eventually married to "high class ladies" of Bangkok. The expanding bureaucracy that had resulted from Rama V's Reformation had thus been given rise to an opportunity of upward social mobility for members of the wealthy landowning households in the rural areas as well. And one category of officials consisted of those who were from families of

high-ranking officials or nobles, while the other consisted of sons of well-to-do provincial landed families who joined the civil service through patronage and who started as clerks and worked their way up, although a few succeeded in attaining high-ranking positions in the administration. During this time, Prince Damrong also instructed the governors and district officers to look for polite, quick-witted, clever men and persuade as many as possible to join the administration to be trained as clerks (Tej, 1977: 194).

As for Plueang's daughters who remained at the Theparaj home, they were also living in style, were magnificently dressed and always adorned with gold jewelry and expensive clothes. They had servants to wait upon them. Eventually, they were married off to men whose wealth and status were considered well-matched to theirs. Two of the men were from wealthy landed families from other areas and the other was a district officer.

Within the local community, Plueang also became patron of the local temple. Theparaj Temple was first built by the former Khwaeng Klan and a few other well-to-do local families. However, Plueang later chose to donate another 4 1/2 rai of land to the temple and proceeded to build a meeting hall, together with some more monks' living quarters. Symbolically, Plueang's wealth and influence had by this time overshadowed that of the temple's first founding member, Khwaeng Klan.

In his capacity as kamnan, Plueang's position resembled very much that of a leader whose power was

locally-based, rather than that of a government official. Although by the 1920s the state had begun to make its presence felt in rural areas, its impact was as yet indirect. One important impact might have been in the area of crime control and although crime and banditry continued, they had by the 1920s come under greater control of the local administration (Johnston, 1976: 395). As for the impact of the school that was first established in Theparaj in 1922, the first teachers were often recruited locally from among men who had previously learnt to read and write while teaching was carried out in the temple. As such, the teachers were hardly seen as government officials. The mass of the villagers therefore very seldom had any direct dealings with the officials and official matters concerning them, e.g. tax payment, land registration, etc., were carried out through the village and sub-district headmen. Important decisions concerning their livelihood or the affairs of their local community were still vested very much within the community. Plueang himself was not prepared to be bossed about by the state's officials either. At one stage he spoke up against the district officer and threatened to resign from his post of kamnan unless he received a more respectful treatment from the latter.

However, at the same time, the new duties of the kamnan regarding the collection of land taxes and the registration of land rights had also enhanced the

kamnan's power. Since a kamnan was said to be an "official with no salary" but instead was entitled to a percentage share of the land revenue and since the amount collected was not specified, the kamnan thus held the power to ask a little more money from one hamlet and a little less from another. In such a position, a kamnan was well-placed to build up a large following since such power over tax collection or the registration of land rights merely constituted another source of patronage at his command.

As for the post of village headman, the overall feeling of the office holders of the period was that the post was a troublesome burden, rather than a benefit. The exemption from commutation tax and other tax reliefs was seen as an inadequate remuneration for their efforts and many were reluctant to take up the post when they were selected by the other household heads. People recall that in those days there hardly ever existed competition for the post, unlike the situation today. It thus seems that, as in the former days, those who were elected headmen were men whose power and status were recognized within the local community and most were men who had built up their following through patronage ties among local villagers. However, under the new administrative system they increasingly came under the control and authority of representatives of the central government and were witnessing a gradual decline in their relative independence. The requirement to attend meetings, receiving orders from district and provincial

level officials, the general handling of official matters, the time and expenses involved, were thus cause for resentment and were often regarded as an unnecessary burden that they could do without.

Hence, on the whole, in the period up to 1930, the Theparaj villagers were feeling the direct impact of the market system, as can be seen in the increasing vulnerability of rich and poor villagers alike to fluctuations of commodity prices, because they were more dependent on capitalist mechanisms of circulation, in the unequal exchange between town and countryside, between imports and exports, in the emergence of the infrastructure necessary for capitalist expansion. In the process, those within the local community who had better access to the means of production were better placed to take advantage of the existing market opportunities, be it through land renting, moneylending, producing large surplus paddy for sale or the combination of these avenues. At the same time, they were also in a position to build up their local power base by providing the less fortunate villagers with access to the means of livelihood and the previous form of paternalistic and personalistic relationship between the local elite and their clients was still maintained. Although the state had made some incursion into the countryside, its impact on the local community was as yet indirect and to the villagers its resources were of negligible importance to their livelihood and well-being when compared to the resources of the local patrons. And Plueang, who was the

best known patron of the period, was able to maintain and strengthen his economically and politically powerful position in the the local community, largely because of his ability to operate both the traditional ties (through establishing paternalistic and personal relationships based on patronage distribution, by being at the forefront of the local community's religious and social affairs, etc.) and also the social relationships under the new system (through his involvement in the market economy, in landrenting, moneylending, in the new education system).

On the other hand, the expanding market relations had also created potential "sources of patronage" among groups of people outside the local community, notably the Chinese paddy merchants, millers and the "professional" moneylenders, who resided elsewhere in another amphoe at market centres or in town. But on the whole, the relationships they had with the villagers were much more of a contractual nature and their involvement in the social and political affairs of the community remained minimal.

A Challenge to the King's Absolutism, Depression and World War

In the 1930s, important realignments among the factions controlling the state power took place. The main impact of Rama V's Reformation was the gradual elimination of the relative autonomy and insularity of the peripheral areas, as power and authority became

increasingly concentrated in the hands of the rulers in Bangkok. The king and his ministers who were at the apex of the newly organized and much enlarged bureaucracy, became the centre of power in a way hitherto impossible as the bureaucracy itself had become the core of the state power.

Moreover, at the same time, the move to restructure the administrative system was also sowing the seeds for a potential challenge against the absolutism of the monarchy itself, for the expanding bureaucracy had provided an unprecedented opportunity of upward social mobility, for members of the higher echelons of the bureaucracy, composed of both military and civilian bureaucrats, mounted a challenge against the sakdinaa rulers and was successful in replacing monarchical absolutism with a system of constitutional monarchy, and as a result, control over the centralized administration had now come into the hands of the top level bureaucrats. The ensuing two decades witnessed frequent changes of government, which on the one hand reflected the internal divisions within the coup group of the People's Party itself, and on the other it reflected the attempt on the part of the old sakdinaa ruling clique to win back its lost power. As the People's Party was composed of people with different ideologies and class affiliations, the priorities that the alternate factions in power had as regards the peasant population necessarily diverged. Inititatives that were aimed to benefit them directly often got thwarted by those whose vested interests would

be jeopardized. A few measures that got off the ground might alleviate the plight of the peasantry in the short-run, but they left the basic property relations and social structures unchanged . However, the change had opened the way for the politically powerful bureaucrats to amass economic gains through their control over the disposal of the state's resources. And further realignments among the people within the power bloc was to lead the country along the path of "state capitalism".[3] With further realignment of classes, which saw the increasing collusion between the top level bureaucrats and the merchant and industrialist classes, subsequently the government embarked on the policy of development through industrialization. The strengthening and the expansion of the merchant class, together with the rise to prominence of the industrial capitalists had a significant impact on the whole social formation. With respect to the rural agricultural sector in particular, such developments resulted in an increasingly intensified capitalist development, the emergence of agri-business,

---

[3] State capitalism: refers to the phase when the state takes over control and ownership of some enterprises while at the same time acting as the promoter of private enterprises, and the interests of the public sector are usually subservient to the existing private economic power. In the Thai case, the surge of economic nationalism might have prompted the adoption of this line but as it turned out, the state enterprises were much used to enrich high-ranking bureaucrats in power together with their supporters. (See Suthy, 1978; Elliot, 1978: 116-117.)

changing class configurations in the rural areas, and an exacerbation of the social differentation process. And a village society like Theparaj, which was affected more directly by such developments, was thus transformed almost beyond recognition (Thawat, 1972; Wilson, 1962; Narong, 1981; Chai-anan,1982; Landon, 1968; Suthy, 1978).

As far as the 1930s was concerned, not only did the 1932 coup take place, but the period also witnessed the onslaught of the World Depression. Rice prices slumped and the villagers found their income greatly diminished. According to Johnston, during this time middlemen offered only one third to one half of the pre-depression prices. The farmers tried to reduce their cash expenditure, some tried to diversify their income sources by growing vegetables, weaving baskets or cloth for sale, some had to take up work during slack periods, some migrated elsewhere to try their luck in upland-cropping, while many others had to resort to wage labour (Johnston, 1976: 406). "Official statistices of production, export and population thus lead to the conclusion that domestic consumption per capita declined rather sharply from 1920-24 to 1935-39..." (Ingram, 1971: 53). Petitions flooded in from the commercialized East Bank peasantry concerning the problem of severe indebtedness from which they suffered, while many petitions contained criticisms against landowners for foreclosing on land mortgages, and against middlemen for the excessive shares they were reaping. At the same time, they were asking the government to reduce the land tax, to declare a

moratorium on debts and to extend credit to them. The government of the People's Party responded by reducing land and capitation taxes. Land tax in particular was reduced by 20% in 1932 and the government found that it had to make a further reduction of 30% later on. This was carried out partly for fear that "farmers would be unable to pay and that the enforcement machinery would break down if faced with mass delinquency" (Johnston, 1976: 406; Ingram, 1971: 184).

The severe economic conditions during the Depression years resulted in the rate of involuntary loss of land in Central Thailand reaching its peak between 1930-1934, exacerbating the already persistent trend that had begun since 1919-1920 (Stifel, 1976: 247, 257). For Theparaj villagers, the years from 1927 to 1940 proved particularly hard. Elderly villagers recall that during the 1930s the rice price slumped drastically, and remained very low for 4 - 5 years in succession. A large number of the villagers had to borrow money to tide them over the bad years. The prolonged slump in rice prices meant that the land which some villagers had pledged as a guarantee against their loans was foreclosed by moneylenders because of their inability to keep up with interest payments, while other villagers had to sell their land to pay off their debts. These people thus found themselves joining the ranks of tenant farmers and wage labourers that were increasing in number. Based on the information recorded in the title deeds, between 1920 and 1940, 43.2% of all the land in the village changed

hands through sale or foreclosure of mortgaged land, and in the 1930s, the proportion of land transferred alone amounted to 25.9% of all land. Of the land trnsferred in this manner between 1920 and 1940, the loss of land through mortgage foreclosures accounted for 32.6% while the rest of the transfer was through sale. Notably, in the 1920s the transfer through loan foreclosures accounted for 42.4% of all the transfers while in the 1930s the proportion dropped to 17.9% and most land changed hands through sale. This might be partly explained by the fact that during the Depression, land values had fallen far below the amount of the original loans, thus making creditors unwilling to hand out loans that were secured by land, preferring instead to have other valuables, especially gold, as a loan guarantee. And most land that changed hands through sale in those years was sold to relatives who resided locally, at very low prices. But for the land that was foreclosed between 1920 and 1940, 58.3% fell into the possession of absentee landowners who were "professional" moneylenders, while the rest fell into the hands of local well-to-do landowning households, most notably Plueang's household which had gained an extra 134 rai of land during this period through loan foreclosures.

During the hard times of the Depression, the position of tenant farmers and wage labourers, who had little, if any, resources to fall back on, was even more precarious. Tenants found that rent was kept at the same rate. A lenient landowner might postpone the payment of

rent until the following season but when rent arrears were building up successively, the tenant eventually had to give up the tenancy and joined the rank of the wage-labourers. As for the wage labourers, they were faced with the situation whereby every household in the village was forced to cut down on its expenditure, including wage costs. They were even reverting back to making for themselves the various implements that used to be purchased from the market. Besides, the ranks of the wage labourer themselves were swelling up. In such circumstances, insofar as they could find work at all, the wages that they could demand were very much reduced; and at times this might be reduced to nearly half of what they were getting during pre-Depression days. Furthermore, by the 1930s the overall balance between land and labour in certain districts of the Central Plain, particularly the fertile and well-irrigated area such as Rangsit and Theparaj, was reversing. In the 1910s and the 1920s, uncultivated land had still been plentiful and labour relatively more difficult to come by. By the 1930s, in selected districts of the Central Plain there began to appear growing numbers of full-time agricultural labourers (Johnston, 1976: 389-390). It was about this time that Theparaj villagers say that labourers were increasing in number, and many local people were eager to hire themselves out. At the same time, there were also people from other districts who came seeking work in Theparaj in groups of 20 - 30 when work in their own areas was over.

The government of the People's Party, which in the 1930s was still dominated by its left wing led by Pridi Banomyong, took certain initiatives to alleviate the peasantry's plight. As has been mentioned above, the land and capitation taxes were substantially reduced during the Depression. Also significant was the promulgation of the 1932 law prohibiting the confiscation of farmers' property, which legally put an end to the sakdinaa rights of persons. As a result, the practice whereby a landowner was at liberty to confiscate paddy, tools, and even the persons of his tenants and their families as a means of debt repayment was thus made illegal (Pridi, 1970: 23). In 1939, with the institution of the new revenue code, land and capitation taxes, the vestiges of the old system, were abolished altogether and this was meant "to shift the burden of taxation from the rice farmer on to business and high income groups" (Ingram, 1971: 184). Other measures in this period included the 1933 Municipalities Act, which was "the first serious attempt at local self-government" (Wilson, 1966: 123), the 1936 Land Act specifying 50 rai to be the maximum limit of an agricultural holding (Ingram, 1971: 79), an attempt to standardize the unit of measurement and to promote the establishment of credit co-operatives. Apart from this, Pridi himself also put forward a proposal to reform the whole economy, including the land system, in his draft of the National Economic Plan in 1933. However, this was fiercely opposed by the various ruling factions. The Plan was branded

"communistic" and Pridi himself was forced to leave the country (Landon, 1968: 319-323).

The impact that the various initiatives had on the rural population varied. A lot of the measures never got off the ground and many were never effectively implemented. As far as Theparaj was concerned, apart from the reduction and eventual abolition of the land and capitation taxes which constituted positive benefits to the people as their burden was much lightened, the villagers recall the implementation of the standardization of the measurement unit. This has meant to improve the position of the farmers relative to the merchants, compared with the previous situation when paddy merchants, millers and landowners often took advantage of the farmers by specifying their own units of measurement. This might have remedied the situation somewhat but on the whole, in a circumstance whereby a tenant had to depend on his/her landowner for the means of livelihood which was becoming scarce, then the standardization measure might often have proved ineffective or else other means of abuse might have been adopted.

Another perciptible change that occurred in the 1930s was the emergence of a number of locally-based credit co-operatives. In fact, rural credit co-operatives were first established back in 1916 (Kirsch, 1981: 22) but did not seem to have met with much success. By 1929-30, Zimmerman reported the existence of 129 societies with 2,157 members in Central Thailand (Zimmerman, 1931: 210). As far as Theparaj was

concerned, it was not until the 1930s, with the government's promotion, that the landowning households began to borrow from co-operatives, with land as a guarantee. The first landowning household did so in 1934. Between 1930 and 1940, of all the land that was being mortgaged for loans, about 40% was mortgaged with a number of locally-based co-operatives while nearly all of the rest was mortgaged with moneylenders who were based outside Theparaj. The sizes of land in the first category ranged from 17 to 126 rai. The benefits of low-interest loans were confined among landowning households only while the landless tenants who existed in large numbers were left out of the scheme. On the whole, the emergence of co-operative societies during the hard times of the 1930s might have slowed down the pace of land alienation through debt foreclosures somewhat. However, the co-operative movement did not seem to have had any lasting success in Theparaj and by the 1940s it had more or less disappeared from the scene - and all the farming households alike once again had to turn to private moneylenders.

As regards the nationalist policy of the People's Party, after it took over power in 1932, the government attempted to reduce the dominant role of the Chinese and Westerners in the economy through the establishment of various state-owned enterprises. This trend was later greatly exacerbated when the government was under the leadership of Phibun. Between 1933 and 1943, the state attempted to intervene in various spheres ranging from

rice trading, banking, shipping, fishing to distribution. As far as its intervention into the rice industry was concerned, the Phibun government moved to set up the state-owned Thai Rice Company in 1938. It proceeded to force the hands of the Chinese rice-mill owners to rent out or sell their businesses to the state. However, the stated objectives to curb the foreign influence over the rice trade and to help the Thai farmers sell their paddy at higher prices were hardly met. Chinese millers had to be retained as managers of the state-owned mills, while Chinese merchants continued to supply paddy to the Thai Rice Company, although the previous foreign-owned rice-exporting companies were finding their market shares significantly reduced. As for the farmers, the profit of the state-owned Company hardly filtered down to them. Rather, the Thai Rice Company, together with the other state enterprises in this period, turned out to benefit members of the high-ranking officials and those who supported or who were closely connected with the centre of power, who were appointed to be on the state enterprises' boards of directors or whose businesses received special treatment and privileges, that the power holders were in a position to bestow. Furthermore, gradually high level bureaucrats and politicians also spread out their economic interests into the private sphere by co-investing their capital with the Chinese merchants themselves, while the Chinese, fearing persecution under the "Thaification" programme, sought protection for their businesses by inviting members of

the Party in power to be on their boards of directors (Sangsidh, 1983: 76-167; Silcock,1967: 160-161; Jacobs, 1971: 141-142).

During the Second World War, the state stepped up its control over the rice trade and rendered the state-owned Thai Rice Company at one stage to be the sole exporter, miller and dealer of all the country's rice, by ordering the closing down of all private mills. Consequently, the other traders, mainly the non-Thais, who previously had a share in the rice trade, suffered a setback. However, later on in the War years, the government of Field Marshall Phibun Songkram gave concessions to export Thai rice to two Japanese firms, this time rendering the Japanese capital to dominate the Thai rice export trade instead (Sangsidh, 1983: 21).

On the whole, the War years witnessed a great decline in trade and a great inflation of the baht. Shortages of all types of goods developed while the prices of those that were available soared to fantastically high levels. In 1945 the price of white sugar was 39 times, white cotton shirting 43 times, grey cotton yarn 29 times their 1937-40 averages. At the same time, rice exports drastically dropped from an average of 25 million piculs [4] in the period 1935-39 down to 7.5 million piculs in 1946 and 6.5 million piculs in 1947 (Ingram, 1971: 163-164, 38).

---

[4] Picul: a measure of weight. 1 picul = 60 kilogrammes or 132 pounds.

In the War years

> mills closed down, and grain moved no farther than the household storage bins....Aside from occasional black-market deals, nothing was available to buy or sell, except what people from the city brought to the cultivators' doorstep, perhaps a piece of cloth to be bartered for some eggs and a sack of grain" (Hanks, 1972: 122).

In Theparaj the memory of the War is still vivid. The villagers recall that all able-bodied men were conscripted. Men who wanted to avoid conscription would resort to bribing the officials in charge, while those who could not afford to bribe sought ordainment into monkhood. Women, children, together with those who remained behind, would carry on working the rice-fields. Many essentials were hard to come by, especially parafin, matches, clothing. Villagers had to buy cotton cloth, the only kind that was available, from the market and then they dyed it black. When thread was not available they used fibre from pineapple leaves in its place. The fibrous covering of the coconut was turned into rope and the lye obtained from soaking ashes in water was used as detergent. Those days thus saw a reversion back to the level very near to that of self-sufficiency.

Immediately after the War there was a desperate demand for rice from most other Southeast Asian countries. However, the upward surge of rice exports was largely checked because Thailand had to supply 1,500,000 metric tons of rice free of charge as war reparations for siding against the Allies in the War. The responsibility to procure and deliver the rice indemnity led to the

government's significant intervention in the rice trade. Rice exports came under the regulation of the newly-established state's Rice Bureau. However, the high world price of rice, the lower fixed price offerred by the government, together with the rapid rise in domestic prices and the shortage of imported goods in general, led to the hoarding and smuggling of rice and paddy. But by 1947 the preventive provisions were completely lifted and the country began to receive the same basic price as other exporters (Ingram, 1971: 87-88; Ammar, 1979: 167-169). The high rice prices in the post-war period largely brought about a sharp turn of fortunes among the rice-farmers, although a large part of the profits from the rice trade were appropriated by the government. Theparaj villagers recall that at the end of the war, conditions started to pick up and the sharp rise in the rice price, especially after 1947, enabled the farmers to obtain exceptionally high prices for their paddy. Villagers say that rice prices in the closing years of the 1940s were "equal to that of gold", as they increased nearly by 10-fold in comparison with the pre-war level.

In the post-war years the Thai government had thus gained a large new source of revenue. By taking advantage of its operations of the rice monopoly and exchange rate control, it appropriated for itself a handsome part of the rice export proceeds. After the stringent war indemnity conditions had been lifted, the government chose to retain its control on the rice trade. This was not to derive a handsome revenue alone, but the

control measures were also used to repress the domestic price of rice, to ensure that the urban and rural workforce, as well as those in the civil service, were able to subsist at a low wage level, while lower wages would in turn serve to attract foreign capital and stimulate import substitution at the same time.

In effect, the rice-farmers who had been relieved of the burden of land and capitation taxes since the 1930s, once again found themselves bearing a new form of tax burden from the post-war years onwards. In 1951 the rice-farmers were receiving about one-half of the paddy price which they probably would have received in a free market (Ingram, 1971: 91), while the Korean War boom sailed past them because much of revenue was being skimmed off by the government, although it was very profitable for much of the other exports (Ammar, 1975: 35). By 1950 the stage had been set for a new strategy to secure the necessary conditions for urban capital accumulation, which was subsequently pursued and particularly intensified from 1960 onwards.

By the mid-twentieth century the pattern of social differentiation became quite marked, particularly in the country's Central Plain where commercialization of rice production was most intense. From the late 1920s onwards there began to develop population pressures on land in the fertile areas of the Central region of the country. At the same time, fragmentation of landholdings through inheritance proceeded over generations, resulting in a gradual decline in farm size over the years from an

average size of 80-100 rai at the turn of the century to 38.8 rai in 1930-31 and down to 26.5 rai in 1953 (Tanabe, 1982: 154), while bad turns of fortune and bad economic conditions plunged into indebtedness those with few reserves to fall back on, and successions of bad years often led to eventual loss of land through mortgage foreclosures. Stifel found that land losses in Central Thailand became persistent from 1919-20 with the rate peaking during the Depression years and reaching a very high level in the war years (Stifel, 1976: 247). By 1930-31, the percentage of tenants was 36% (Zimmerman, 1931: 18). By 1948-49 in Bang Chan, 23% owned all Thai land, 33% were part-owners, part-tenants, and 44% were full tenants, while about 3-6% were receiving wages on a piece work basis (Sharp et al, 1953: 147-148, 154). By 1953, the land situation had worsened and farm operators had declined from 80 to 72%, while farm labourers had increased from 9-13% and petty traders from 2-7% (Janlekha, 1955: 43). In Bangkhuad during the years 1953-54, Kaufman notes a

> substantial variation in the wealth controlled by different households - a variation that is represented by the fact that some households have no land to cultivate while others have 200 rai or more; that 22% of all households plow no land while 18.5% plow over fifty rai...

More specifically, 12.5% of the households in Bangkhuad owned and rented out land, 18.5% owned rice fields and did not rent, 10.3% owned but also had to rent land, 34%

rented all their land and 23.7% were landless labourers (Kaufman, 1950: 55, 66).

The different classes also had differential access to labour. In Bang Chan, of the 104 households, 32 (or 30.8%) had a sufficient labour supply within the family and relied on exchanged labour at peak labour demand periods, while 70 (or 67.3%) hired labour. On the other hand, those who were hiring themselves out included both the wage-labouring households and farmers with "relatively small plots" (Sharp et al, 1953: 155, 204). Similarly in Bangkhuad, those with very small farms relied on their household labour to work the land and also were hiring themselves out; medium-sized farmers relied on the exchanged labour in peak periods while "farms of 20 or more rai are inevitably forced to hire help in addition to using ao raeng (exchange labour)" (Kaufman, 1960: 44,45).

Added to this, the ownership of the implements of production was also unequal. In Bang Chan there were only 5 gasoline engines among the 104 households, while only 19.2% of the households could afford to own the rather expensive winnowing machines in 1948-49 (Sharp et al, 1953: 128). In Bangkhuad, only one in two households owned dragonbone water pumps, although 90% of those with farms over 25 rai owned them, and only a very few households owned the engines to operate them. Those who could not afford to own them had to rent. Winnowing machines were owned by those with 10 rai or more and were also rented out to non-owners (Kaufman, 1960: 42, 46).

Having better access to the means of livelihood, a well-to-do farmer was thus

> in a position to exact pressure on many other farmers...It is to him that others must often turn in order to borrow and to rent tools, to obtain cash loans, and land to farm...At the other extreme are the landless farmers. These individuals feel constantly the economic pressure of being landless and at the mercy, each year, of the large landowners" (Kaufman, 1960: 36).

The previously dominant ideology of patron-client reciprocity had come to be increasingly expressed in terms of growing dependence and landowners were making demands for free labour from their tenants, who did not dare to refuse for fear of losing the right to rent their land. The exploitative relationship, based largely on commercial calculations had, in time, become more explicit. At the same time, relationships that were based on relatively equal resources such as the labour exchange arrangement, was declining in importance since the well-to-do could afford to hire wage labourers and the latter had no resources at their command to exchange with anyone else. Local landowners who were often related in some way to their tenants and were supposed "to help out" kinsmen and neighbours in time of need, often turned out to be less lenient than their absentee counterparts. And while the latter were exacting 5 thang of rent per rai, resident landowners in Bang Chan were demanding 6-8 thang of rent (Janlekha, 1955: 68). In Theparaj by the 1940s, a number of local landowners had begun to demand a cash deposit from tenants as "a

guarantee" that in case the latter failed to keep up with their rent payment, the deposit would be deducted accordingly.

The calculations of profits and loss had by now also entered the labour exchange relationship themselves. Previously in Theparaj, the exchange was worked out on a daily basis whereby a person would work on his neighbour's land for a day, and would be repaid with a day's worth of labour from the neighbour. Gradually, more and more households were increasingly dissatisfied with this arrangement and started complaining against those who dragged their feet, who turned up late and finished early, implying that the day's work that they had contributed was not being repaid fully. The arrangement was subsequently modified and exchange was worked out on a more exact area basis whereby a person would work a number of rai of his neighbour's land and in return, the same number of rai would be worked by the latter. But if the "debtor" was unable to complete the amount of rai he owed the neighbour, then a wage labourer would be hired to complete the work on his behalf. By 1950, exchange arrangements on this basis had become well-established, although by this time, too, it became more and more difficult to obtain help, so wage labour was increasingly used. For smaller tasks like rice-milling, the employment of exchange labour had completely disappeared by 1950 and those who could afford it had their paddy milled commercially by the local

mills, while poorer farmers who milled their own paddy had to rely exclusively on their own household labour.

By 1950, certain significant changes had taken place as regards the pattern of land ownership. Notable was the effect of the subdivision of land over generations and the increase in the share of land owned by absentee landowners as reflected in their becoming a relatively more important source of credit vis à vis the local wealthy households. In 1908, holdings of 70 to over 100 rai had by no means been uncommon. The top 20% of the landowners owning 45.4% of all the land were exclusively local residents, with Plueang owning most land totalling 380.5 rai gained in the days of land clearance by his parents, with the help of the labour of their thaat. The other large landowners similarly inherited land from their parents who also had some thaat at their command. Absentee landowners, aside from the Crown, with land amounting to 3.3% of the total land owned, seemed to have gained their land through foreclosing on loans. From 1908 to 1940 many households were plunged into indebtedness and lost their land either through loans foreclosure or through sale. By 1930 Plueang, who had previously built up his land ownership to 580 rai had divided it among his children and by 1940 his youngest daughter, who gained 410 rai both through inheritance from her parents and from the childless family of her uncle, and through loans foreclosure, was the largest landowner in the village. Her other sister, with 165 rai, was the second largest landowner who by now was

residing with her district officer husband in another province. This land she gained through inheritance, although an extra 42 rai had been acquired through the foreclosure on a debtor's mortgage, but by 1940 she had given the plot to her son. The third largest landowner was an absentee residing in Bangkok, who gained her 141 rai exclusively through loan foreclosure. Leaving out the Crown, among the top 20% of landowners in the village with 56.8% of all the land , three out of nine owners were absentee whose land accounted for 32% of the land owned by this top category and all of whom operated as moneylenders. Out of the nine, three were Plueang's children who gained most of their land through inheritance and managed to add an extra amount to their stock through debt foreclosures. Between 1908 and 1940, people were turning increasingly to moneylenders outside the village and by 1940, land owned by absentee landowners had increased from the 1908 figure of 3.3% of the total land owned, to 19.2%; nearly two thirds of this land was gained through debt foreclosures and the rest was the inherited land of Plueang's two children who resided outside the village. (If Crown land is included, land owned by absentee owners would be 18.9% in 1908 and 34.8% in 1940). By 1950, the share of land owned by absentee owners increased yet further to 25.2%, most of the increase in ownership having been gained through purchase (with Crown land included the share would amount to 40.8%). The top 20% of owners (excluding the Crown) owned 46.8% of all the land in the village. And whereas

in 1908 the smallest piece of land owned was 17 rai, in 1950 this was a mere 1.5 rai. While plots smaller than 30 rai accounted for 8.6% in 1908, by 1950 this share had increased to 30.8%. Between the same period, the share of plots over 100 rai declined from 22.9% in 1908 to only 5.8% in 1950.

The increasing socio-economic stratification within the village, along with the further incursion of state-level institutions into village society had, by 1950, resulted in relations of production becoming increasingly capitalized, while a good part of the resources of production and reproduction were now located farther away from the local community. By 1950 the traditional exchange of labour had declined in importance. Labour co-operatives in paddy pounding and winnowing virtually disappeared. Now, households with no land had nothing to exchange with their neighbours and were hiring themselves out for wages; poor farmers with very small farms tended to rely exclusively on their own household labour, while rich households were hiring wage labourers to perform most tasks and to participate in the labour exchange arrangements on their behalf only at peak labour-demanding times, such as transplanting and harvesting. Several of the wage labourers were from outside the village. Previously, poorer farming households were borrowing farming implements and buffaloes from their wealthier relatives after they had finished with their use, while those farming more than 10 rai had their own implements and animals. By 1950, 25

gasoline engines had come to replace the windmills and not many households owned them. Households that could not afford the cost of the new machinery were now finding themselves renting it from their wealthier neighbours. As costs of production increased with the introduction of new implements that required fuel to run and many households were finding themselves having to hire labour at one stage or another, while fluctuations in the prices of rice continued, all but a few wealthy households found themselves borrowing money at greater frequency and increasingly from non-residents or moneylenders based outside the village. At the same time, by 1950, the higher share of land owned by absentee landowners also meant that many tenants were no longer depending on the local landowners for their vital means of production. For those who were renting land from local landowners, their relationships with the latter were very much commercialized and many found that local landowners often imposed more stringent conditions than their absentee counterparts. Hence, while local landowners were charging rent deposits as guarantees against tenants' failure to pay the rent, absentee landowners whose major source of income tended to be from services other than landrenting, were adhering to the former arrangement of fixed annual rent payment. As such, the overall cohesiveness and communal ties and sanctions that once exerted a significant influence on all members of the village society alike began to lessen as outside commercial links increased, while relationships between

patrons and clients within the local community were themselves becoming increasingly contractual. The logic of capitalism, reflected both in the fluctuating price levels and in the equal exchange between agriculture and industry to which patrons and clients alike were subjected, increasingly came to determine the organizational principle for the production of the rural population and to overshadow the communal values and sanctions.

At the same time, by 1950 there had taken place further incursions of state-level institutions into rural areas. Many functions previously performed by patrons had now been transferred to the state. Increasingly, the mediation and handling of the local nakleng, the settlement of local disputes, came under the jurisdiction of the police and the court. Other agencies of the state had also increased their presence in rural areas, as the state assumed the responsibility to co-ordinate programmes for minimal health care, rural literacy, agricultural improvement and thus sent out its agricultural officers, veterinarians, sanitarians, midwives, teachers to be based at the lower levels of the administration. And as poor households were now much less able to count on a minimal level of support from their more well-to-do neighbours to protect themselves against natural or various elements, at the same time villagers found that decisions by legislatures and bureaucrats were becoming increasingly more important for relations of production in the local community. Thus,

the decisions of the patrons and the state's resources were becoming more important as determinants of the "moral economy" of the local households than resources of the local elite. As such, the position of the local leaders came to be defined less by their personal power and prestige deriving from local recognition per se, but more by the brokerage role they performed between the local community and the state bureaucracy. This tendency became even more pronounced from the late 1950s and 1960s onwards when many development projects began to be introduced into the village and the state itself began to have a direct impact on groups in the local community.

CHAPTER 5

INDUSTRIALIZATION AND CLOSER LINKS WITH THE AGRI-BUSINESS COMPLEX

Since the 1950s there occurred a change in emphasis in Thailand's agricultural development from the cultivation of new land towards a greater intensification of production with the increasing use of modern inputs. Capital began to enter into the relations of production on an increasing scale, creating new opportunities for accumulation. This change in the agricultural sector must be placed in the wider perspective of Thailand's overall process of industrialization and the state's role in consolidating this process.

The beginning of the change towards more intensified agricultural production took place along with a change in the international balance of power, resulting in the decline of the old colonial powers and the emergence of new ones, together with a new global form of capital accumulation characterized by the increasing entry of foreign capital into the sphere of manufacturing industries. Southeast Asia after the Second World War found Western Europe and Japan in need of reconstruction, together with the weakening of the grips of Britain and France on their colonies. The strengthening of the socialist bloc through post-war reconstruction and the subsequent addition of China into the bloc, the anti-imperialist movements in the various colonies and last but by no means least, the emergence of the U.S. as

the unrivalled dominant power superceding the old colonial powers of Britain and France. This restructuring of international relations has to be seen alongside the changing balance of forces within the Thai ruling class itself.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, foreign interests in Thailand were predominantly British with the Chinese as their compradores, and their activities more concentrated mainly in the sphere of primary product extraction and processing, import-export trade, and finance. As a result of the growing nationalistic and anti-Chinese sentiment and the trend towards "state capitalism" which accelerated in the 1940s and the early 1950s, foreign businesses encountered a temporary setback. A number of foreign-owned businesses were nationalized both before and during the war. The government's control over the other businesses of the Chinese was tightened and privileges were given Thai enterprises (Skinner, 1958: 186-199). At the same time, the civilian and military bureaucrats in power were using the expanding number of state-owned enterprises to promote themselves economically, whilst using their privileged position to set up their own private enterprises (Sangsidh, 1983). However, the setback for the Chinese proved to be temporary as gradually they succeeded in forming an alliance with the bureaucratic leaders by giving the latter directorships and shares in their businesses in return for protection. The war years not only witnessed an increase of Japanese business

influence but the eclipse of European businesses also gave an opportunity for several Chinese and Thai firms to replace European firms in banking and some parts of export trade (Suthy, 1980: 17-18; Kongchai, 1981: 32-33). The initial industrialization which took the form of "state capitalism" and the subsequent industrialization based on private capital was accomplished significantly through the state's increasingly active role in mobilizing the transfer of resources from the agricultural sector, particularly from the rice growing population.

The expansion of the U.S. economic and military power in the post-war period had important repercussions on the subsequent development of Thailand, as the U.S.' dominant ideology of "modernization development linked with the creation of an anti-communist bastion" was to find ready acceptance by the Thai military rulers (Bell, 1978: 58). In the early 1950s Phibun's policy of state capitalism continued, but at the same time the government also began to invest in various infrastructures such as power, irrigation, highways, schools, etc., which were financed partly by World Bank loans and U.S. economic aid. However, later in the 1950s, as a result of infighting among the ruling military factions, Phibun was ousted by Sarit who by now had established extensive private interests of his own and once in power proceeded to dismantle the state enterprises which constituted an important financial case for his rivals. Thereafter, the state's role as entrepreneur was de-emphasized; instead

it became protector and promoter of private investment (Suthy, 1978: 53). The first National Development Plan (1961-66), which was based largely on the World Bank Mission report and recommendation, clearly stipulates that "the state is not to engage in new enterprises in competition with private business" (Grit, 1982: 116). Furthermore, Sarit also set out to implement positive measures to create an atmosphere conducive to capital investment. Foreign laws and aid were acquired to establish and expand key parts of the infrastructure as well as to expand on the military and police to keep the country stable and secure from both internal and external "threats" (Bell, 1978: 64). Trade unions and strike actions were banned. An Investment Promotion Act was passed, giving promoted terms a 5 year corporate-tax note, an exemption from business tax and import duties on machinery and equipment, a reduction in import duties, a guarantee by the state not to expropriate the enterprises, while foreign firms were allowed to remit profits and dividends (Mingsarn, 1981: 42; Virabongse, 1978: 77-78). Later, with further incentives in the form of discriminatory trade policies, as well as the Second Development Plan (1967-71) with its encouragement of joint ventures between local and foreign investors, there followed a large-scale penetration of Thailand's industry by foreign capital. By 1974, foreign investment constituted 30% of the total registered capital with the U.S. at the forefront in the initial period, but by 1974 Japan was a leading foreign investor and the majority of

direct foreign investment took the form of joint ventures between foreign and local equity (Mingsarn, 1981: 42). Between 1957 and 1973 there was thus a great expansion and strengthening of commercial, financial and industrial businesses both in the form of joint ventures and of non-compradore independently-based ventures (Hewison, 1981; Narong, 1981: 98-106). However, whether they operated more independently or as joint ventures with foreign capital, the majority of the leading members of the various factions of the bourgeosie of the present day started as or were descendents of families that built up their economic base from trade and who later branched out into banking, finance and industry (Suthy, 1980; Krirkiat, 1982: 311). Some have also been assertive in the political arena, either as politicians or bureaucrats and the interests of the different factions of the bourgeosie at various conjunctures may not necessarily coincide. The role that the state plays at various periods partly reflects the conflicts or compromise and the changing alliances of the various dominant groups in society.

The urban industrial growth that began in the period of "state capitalism", and became fully-fledged privately-based capitalism, greatly accelerating after Sarit ascended to power, was to an important extent facilitated by the state's increasing intervention in the agricultural sector. From the post-war period onwards the state has never surrendered the active role which was originally thrust upon it by the allied war reparations

demands in the form of forced deliveries of rice. Since the lifting of these demands in 1947, the state has chosen to retain controls on the export of rice, first in the form of rice export monopoly and exchange controls, and from 1955 in the form of the rice premium, quotas, and the "rice reserve". The original objective of the imposition of control - the need to meet the war reparation demands - has thus shifted to a procurement of important revenue for the state, and a concern for keeping domestic rice prices low in the growing urban-industrial sector (Robinson, 1978: 1262).

> And in Thailand, where rice is the staple food, this has had the effect of holding down the cost of living, wage levels, and general prices. This in turn has reduced industrial production costs and to that extent allowed the formation of import substition industries and the development of export industries (Matooka, 1978: 321, 326).

The largest share of the new burden is borne by rice-cultivators. Significantly, such controls imposed by the state effectively constituted a redistributed transferring income from agriculture to the urban sector, shifting the terms of trade against the rice producers and thus creating an ever greater indirect economic subsidy to the urban-industrial sector (Ayal, 1965: 357). For this reason the Korean War boom, which was very profitable for much of Thailand's export trade and contributed to the growth in primary commodities in the early 1950s, by-passed the rice farmers as "much of the revenue (was) being skimmed off by the government" (Ammar, 1975: 35). Usher estimates that abolishing the

premium would have raised paddy prices at the farm level by 85% and the farmers were carrying a tax burden amounting to 22% of their income, while non-farm income was taxed at only 10% (Usher, 1977: 13, 20). Consequently, rice production was rendered a less profitable enterprise vis a vis other crops and this in turn encouraged production of non-rice cash crops when conditions permitted and a decline in the relative importance of rice in the export trade (Marzouk, 1972: 136-144; Bertrand, 1977: III-2-20). Along with this trend was the fact that from the late 1950s, the government began to put a heavy emphasis on the building and improvement of infrastructure in support of agriculture, on the intensification of agricultural production through the use of modern inputs, and the diversification of crop production, as had been recommended by the World Bank (World Bank, 1959). The declining importance of rice vis a vis other cash crops in the 1960s can be seen from the fact that in 1950-52 an average 87.5% of the total planted area in Thailand was in rice; by 1965-67, while the area of land cultivated increased by 55.6%, the area planted in rice increased by only 20.1%. On the other hand, in the same period the area of land in crops in rice experienced an increase of 410% (Matooka, 1978: 300-301).

Coupled with this was the continuation of the long-run trend towards a decline in rice yield per rai. In 1958-60, yield per rai (195 kg) was well below the average of 50 years earlier (293 kg). With the

acceleration in the population growth rate in the post-war period and the incorporation of poorer land under rice cultivation as the more fertile frontier was becoming fully utilised, total output of rice rose only a little, although it continued to keep in step with the increasing population pressure. From 1950-52 to 1958-60 output rose less (4%) than population (27%), thus reducing the amount of rice available for export (Ingram, 1971: 238) and exposing the limitations of "extensive" agricultural development. This means that pre-war rice production tended to be export-led; after the war, rice exports were principally an outflow of produce that was surplus to domestic requirements. Exports also fluctuated widely from year to year and viewed overall, post-war exports can be said to have stagnated (Matooka, 1978: 314-315). In a period when urban growth and industrialization are accelerated, reduced agricultural surplus means that export demand is no longer a major demand factor, whereas internal demand, due to the growth of the population is and it also means that there is a squeeze on the amount of agricultural surplus that can be transferred to finance the expanding urban industrial sector. In the long run, if the supply of staple food had actually fallen, this could have constituted a potential threat to the very basis of industrial accumulation by increasing the cost of the reproduction of urban labour, squeezing profit margins and reducing the amount of scarce foreign exchange available.

The general direction of the state's policies, particularly from 1960 onwards, should be seen in this light. Since then the state has played an active role in promoting intensification and technological innovation in agriculture through its investment in the agricultural infrastructure, its provision of production incentives in the form of agricultural credit programmes, and its promotion of the research into the new high-yielding rice varieties. At the same time, the state's measures to intensify agricultural production as well as measures aimed at promoting industrial investment, by both foreign and domestic capital, have led to close linkages being established between the agricultural producers and the agro-industry which supplies them with modern inputs. Other agri-businesses such as animal fed industries, poultry-farming, and large-scale plantations which have greatly expanded as a result of the state's investment promotion, have also absorbed a section of the agricultural population into the highly integrated system of large-scale enterprises. Changes that have taken place in the village society would be incomprehensible unless they are set in the wider context of the growing internalization and industrialization of the Thai economy, together with the development strategies adopted by the Thai state to consolidate the process, as well as the relationship among the different classes in society at various historical conjunctures.

As regards the intensification of agricultural production and the state's role in facilitating the

process, this started in the 1960s as can be seen from the fact that paddy yield per rai started to increase after a long period of decline. By 1968-69, yield per rai was 280 kg, compared with the 195 kg in the 1958-60 period (Ingram, 1971: 238). This increase was due not only to the improved infrastructure for agriculture, particularly irrigation, and the increasing use of new technological inputs such as chemical fertilizers, new rice varieties, pesticide and mechanization, but also to the expansion of agricultural credit facilities on the part of the state.

In the post-World War II period irrigation facilities, especially in the Central Plain, expanded rapidly and by the late 1960s the Greater Chao Phraya Irrigation Project, with the various ditches and dykes recommended by the FAO and many other irrigation facilities, were completed with foreign technical aid and capital loans. Improved irrigation resulted not only in the expansion of the irrigated areas, in output increase and in the stabilisation of main rice crops, but the improved water control system has also made it possible for techniques to be improved. Cultivation could now shift from broadcasting to transplanting. Irrigated land could also be applied with new inputs such as chemical fertilizers and herbicides which in turn could lead to more yields (Matooka, 1978: 310-312; Tanabe, 1981: 145).

The 1950s and 1960s also saw the creation of a nationwide network of highways and roads. Communications

vastly improved, rendering a further consolidation of a national unit and of political control from the centre. Although many highway construction schemes might have been developed with national security in mind, the 1960s also saw the successive opening of provincial roads in the interior of the Central Plain where previously there had only been water transport. This had the effect of facilitating the transportation of materials for rice production. For example, in the mid-1960s an 8 km dirt road, leading from the main highway through the villages of tambons Prawet and Theparaj to end at Klong Suan market, was constructed with the tambon council fund. The road has turned out to benefit people with direct access to it more than those whose access to it was barred by the canal, as transportation by road came to be increasingly preferred.

In 1950, intensive rice breeding began and a separate Rice Department was established in 1954 to identify high-yielding rice varieties. In the 1960s, close co-operation was carried out with the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines and resulted in new rice varieties that were fertilizer-responsive non-photoperiod-sensitive. Various efforts were made to disseminate the new varieties to the farmers - extension workers were sent out to be based at local levels to promote their adoption, pest control units were set up to assist farmers with insect and disease problems, demonstration plots and yield contests were organized, technical advice, fertilizer on credit, and chemicals

were provided to farmers who wished to participate. However, the initial attempts to launch the new varieties in 1969-70 met with little success because the period saw "the lowest rice prices and the highest fertilizer prices in Thailand since 1950" (Sopin and Welsch, 1978: 157, 153-158). In Theparaj, it was not until the early 1970s when rice prices were high that farmers began to adopt the new varieties and double cropping in large numbers.

The overall objective of increasing rice productivity without increasing the final price to consumers sometimes came into conflict with the more immediate interests that sections of the ruling elite had vested in the agriculture-related industries. The high prices of fertilizer went some way to offset the long-term aim of increasing the production of rice. The failure of the state-owned fertilizer company whose board of directors was filled with top-ranking military bureaucrats as well as financiers and industrialists, resulted in the influx of cheaper imported fertilizer through a handful of companies that obtained import licenses from the government in the early 1970s. This put the companies in a position to dictate the prices of fertilizers sold in the market and the lion's share of the profits were skimmed off by Srikrung Wattana business group which had dominated the fertilizer import trade and who entered into the business of fertilizer production itself on a joint-venture basis with Japanese capital, while the state-owned company was banned from involving itself in the new business. By 1981 this joint-venture

had become the sole producer of compound fertilizer in the country and was in control of Thailand's highly concentrated fertilizer market (Somphop, 1978; Krirkiat, 1982: 253, 331, 368). The fertilizer story can be cited as an instance of how large-scale commercial and agro-industrial capital have come to gain control of the marketing and distribution of modern agricultural inputs and how groups of merchant and industrial capitalists have gained control over the marketing and production of goods through their close links with people who had positions of power. By their increased use of chemical fertilizers, especially from the 1970s onwards, the farmers have thus entered into closer links with the agro-industrial complex which operate through the intricate multi-network of distribution based largely still on the already existing informal credit systems. The majority of the small rice-farmers are often not in a position to buy fertilizer in cash and are still very much under the control of such traditional agents as the local traders, shopkeepers and local moneylenders who advance fertilizer credit or credit in cash at the beginning of each planting season. Some of the local fertilizer traders in Theparaj are in turn receiving fertilizer credit from big dealers in Chachoengsao town. One of the largest dealers there is said to have some shares in the Srikrung Wattana Company whose associate companies together were taking about 70% of the national market shares in the fertilizer business in the 1970s.

As agricultural production has become more intensive, farmers have become more reliant on chemical fertilizers. In 1950, the very small quantity of less than 10,000 tons of imported fertilizer was consumed monthly by fruit and vegetable growers who employed a more favourable fertilizer: produce price ratio compared with rice growers. However, in the 1950s a handful of well-to-do farmers in Theparaj also began to apply chemical fertilizer to their fields in small quantities, but by the mid-1970s onwards, after high yielding varieties had been adopted, all rice farmers, rich and poor alike, had to use fertilizer and in increasing quantities over the years because of the fertilizer-responsive characteristics of the new rice varieties that they are now planting. By 1980 the overall domestic demand for chemical fertilizer has significantly expanded, as can be seen from the fact that in 1960, 51,704 million tons of it was consumed nationwide, by 1979 the amount increased to 792,002 million tons, while the area planted increased much less in proportion from 36,940,000 rai in 1960 to 58,971,000 rai in 1979 (Anuwat, 1982: 10).

Apart from this, the state also sought to re-organize co-operatives which, although first established as long ago as 1916, had met with little success. With the recommendation and financial aid of USOM (U.S. Overseas Mission), one of the first district-level co-operatives was established via Chachoengsao in 1960 with the dual objective of credit

provision as well as the expansion of agricultural production. Again the new co-operative turned out to benefit the higher strata of the farming population and 82% of its members owned some land while 18% were tenants. Since tenant farmers constituted 49% of the population, land-ownership restriction on co-operative membership meant that the poorer farming households' access to cheap institutional credit was thus barred, widening the differential access to credit among the different income groups within rural society still further (see Tomosugi, 1980: 140-143).

However, people from Village no. 2 of Theparaj did not become members of the new co-operative. The institutional credit which had become increasingly important to villagers of this area seemed to have come rather from other state agencies and projects. A state agricultural credit institution that has assumed increasing prominence over the years is the Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Co-operatives or the BAAC, which came into operation in 1966 as a result of a reorganization of the former Bank of Co-operatives. The BAAC's function was to support the agricultural production of individual farms, agricultural co-operatives and farmer's groups, as well as to provide funds for agricultural marketing and purchasing in co-operatives. Prior to this development, farmers were relying mostly on private moneylenders who might be their neighbours, relatives, traders, or landowners, for loans (Kirsch, 1981: 56-57). For instance, in 1957-58 a survey

carried out in 20 provinces of the Central Plain region found that 50% of the farmers were in debt and 90% of them were borrowing from moneylenders, many of whom were middlemen, at rates of interest between 16-55% per annum while only 10% obtained loans from financial institutions (Uthit, 1958). By 1978/79, the percentage of indebted farmers had increased to 63.07% and out of this, 60.27% were obtaining institutional credit while 39.73% were borrowing from private lenders (Witayakorn, 1982: 116-117).

Added to this in the 1950s and especially the 1960s, the Ministry of Agriculture encouraged the establishment of Farmers' Groups by granting them production credits. In Theparaj the Farmers' Group was formed in 1965 with the initiation coming from the amphoe-level (district-level) agricultural office. Each was to pay a registration fee of 20 baht, to hold at least one share valued at 50 baht and to be allowed to take up credit in direct proportion to the number of shares he owned. However, membership of the Farmers' Group also enabled the farmers to purchase chemical fertilizer on credit from the government. Moreover, the same year also witnessed the establishment of another similar group known as the People's Irrigation Association, this time at the initiation of the Ministry of the Interior. This association also aimed to provide members with chemical fertilizer, machinery, credit and improved irrigation facilities. Those who joined both the groups were mostly wealthy farmers who wished to gain access to low-interest

credits and inputs. In this period only the well-off rice-farming households were applying chemical fertilizer to their fields and a few took advantage of cheap loans to acquire the tractors that started to come onto the market. However, these associations merely lasted a few years and were later dissolved when a major portion of the credits were not repaid in due time and a great deal of funds embezzlements was also taking place. The two groups that were set up around the same time, more importantly reflected a competition that was going on among different government departments for shares in the large sums of development funds that were being designated to agricultural projects.

With improved irrigation facilities that contributed to a more stable pattern of yields, the encouragement from the state to innovate, through the intensification of agricultural technology, growing pressure on land because of the increasing population, together with a more short-run factor of favourable paddy prices, Theparaj of the mid-1960s began to witness a change towards increasingly capitalized cultivation techniques. By the 1960s the use and upkeep of buffaloes had become less and less economical as the progessive clearing of the land frontier meant that land that was once used for grazing animals was increasingly turned into arable land. The rice-farming villagers say that by this time it had become increasingly difficult for them to find grass to feed their buffaloes when the animals had to be kept away from the growing rice plants. They had to travel farther

and farther away from home, often to other amphoes to find some fallow land with grass on it. Several nights needed to be spent there before enough grass was collected. The situation got even worse in later years when straw had to be purchased. Coupled with this, they also cited as a reason for preferring tractors to buffaloes that the risk of the animals being stolen was becoming greater all the time, while tractors were easier to guard and the engines which were the most valuable component could be dismantled and kept inside the houses, thus rendering theft much less easy. Hence, when imported Japanese tractors were available on the market, they were an instant attraction. One of the first sales-agents of those tractors was a rice mill owner from a nearby amphoe who, through his close connection with the government officials involved, was trying to sell the products through the Farmers' Group and the People's Irrigation Association from which members could obtain credit to make the purchase. At first only those wealthy rice farmers in the village bought the 20,000 baht tractors to try them out while the rest retained their buffaloes. Gradually, more non-owners came to hire the machines from the wealthy few and also from people from other tambons who came into the village with their four-wheeled tractors for hire. Then, towards the later years of the 1960s when changes and more efficient models of two-wheeled tractors were available on the market and when the paddy prices started to pick up, more and more farmers replaced their buffaloes with the new machines.

The growing attractiveness of mechanized ploughing led a number of provincial-based firms to enter the business of tractor-manufacturing. A good deal of components and accessories, including the engines, used to be imported from industrialized countries, although the local farms have managed to redesign the machines to suit better local conditions and to produce them at cheaper prices. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, while imported tractors were costing anything from 10,000 to over 20,000 baht, two-wheeled tractors that local firms were turning out cost only 3,000-6,000 baht. In the early years the local firms tried to attract the rice farmers to their products in various ways, by organizing ploughing races at temple feasts to demonstrate the machines' working efficiency, by selling their products on credit and guaranteeing their performance, etc. The cheaper cost of tractors meant that it was possible for the small-scale rice farmers to possess the machines albeit through obtaining loans from private moneylenders, while the more well-to-do land- owning households often gained access to institutional credit. By the early 1970s very few buffaloes remained to be seen in and around Theparaj.

The adoption of mechanized ploughing has made land preparation a much lighter and much less tedious task for farmers. More significantly, both the labour and non-labour cost of tractor-ploughing proved cheaper than using buffaloes and at the same time a lot of time as well as labour is saved in land preparation and paddy

threshing. Previously, one buffalo and a person could plough approximately half a rai of land in one day. With mechanized ploughing, a person and a tractor could easily manage 5 rai or more within the same amount of time, due to the much faster speed and the longer hours that tractors could work, compared to the buffaloes with their slower walking pace and their tiring after 5-6 hours of work. Similar saving is possible at the threshing stage. According to a survey comparing the various methods of threshing, the cost per ton of threshing with buffaloes was 200 baht, while tractor threshing not only cost less, about 127 baht per ton, but also involved fewer hands (Sriaroon et al, 1977; see also Matooka, 1978: 309; Songsak, 1975: 29-32, 65-113). The reduction in the amount of labour required at these stages meant that labour hired by rich rice-farming households to perform such tasks could largely be dispensed with as they could be accomplished by family labour alone. At the same time, the time saved from using the machines also allowed farming households to turn to other tasks and allowed poorer rice-farming households to hire themselves out after work in their own fields was completed in order to earn extra income for their families. It was during the 1960s that wage labourers found that the demand for their labour was declining and a large number of members of wage-labouring and households left Theparaj to seek work in the various factories and construction sites that had sprung up in the nearby provinces of Samutprakarn and Cholburi and in Bangkok.

With the advent of tractor cultivation, which greatly reduces the time and labour in land preparation and paddy threshing, an opportunity was created to intensify the cultivation methods still further i.e. double-cropping became a real possibility. At the same time, increased mechanization in rice-farming also meant that farmers' relations with the outside world became closer still. With the traditional implements of production, such as plough, harrows, etc., farmers could resort to their own efforts to repair, maintain and even make the various tools they need. With more modern mechanical instruments, the farmers came to depend increasingly on the services and skill of people with specialist knowledge. Furthermore, farmers also found themselves becoming less insulated against the fluctuating market conditions, this time not only regarding paddy prices, but also the prices of the capitalized inputs used in production and the sharp increase in the price of imported fuel oil, especially since 1973, which has significantly affected the rice farmers' cost of production and income.

In Theparaj, the 1960s not only witnessed the widespread adoption of water pumps, gasoline engines and tractors in rice cultivation, but the period also saw the beginning of large-scale agro-industrial complexes gaining both direct and indirect control over the production of a variety of agricultural produce, of sugar cane, fruits and vegetables, poultry, pigs, etc., as well as their distribution and processing. With the

atmosphere suitable for industrial investment and positive industrial promotion drives on the part of the state, the 1960s saw a rapid expansion of agro-business in Thailand. Big merchant and financial capitalists took the opportunity given to channel their investments on a large-scale into various industries, including agriculture-related ones, and a large number have entered into some form of joint venture with foreign firms. At the same time, many of those large-scale agro-industrial enterprises have tried to gain vertically integrated control over agricultural production, processing and marketing in order to be able to regulate better the quantity and cost of the new material supplies, to exploit the economies of sale and to achieve a fuller utilization of their processing capacity. Most of the big pineapple canning factories operate under joint-venture arrangements as well as receiving promotion incentives from the Thai government. One of the largest companies, the Dole company (Thailand), a joint U.S.-Thai venture, operates its own plantations on several thousands of rai of land, employing thousands of labourers, while at the same time it controls a major share of pineapple-canning and the export of canned pineapples (see Narong, 1981: 110; OTC/ESCAP, 1979; Krirkiat, 1982: 87, 140-141, 177). Similarly, the biggest animal feed manufacturer, also operating in a joint-venture with the U.S., does not only confine itself to the production of animal feed, but has invested in poultry and pig raising farms, in large-scale plantations

of maize, mung beans that constitute raw materials for animal feeds (and for this they have been granted promotion privileges from the Board of Investment to help establish the plantations on 10,000 rai of land in Saraburi in 1979), as well as in mixed-farming plantations involving 1,200 rai of land in Amphoe Phanomsarakham, Chachoengsao and another 3,000 rai in Kamphangphet province (Witayakorn, 1982: 66; Narong, 1981: 114). Along with the marketing of animal feeds, chicks, piglets, etc., the company is also undertaking to buy the fully grown animals from producers and, with its own slaughtering and processing facilities it can then package the products and eventually market them both in the domestic and foreign markets. It is this latter agro-industrial complex that has reached out to involve several households in Theparaj in its multiple network, particularly from the latter half of the 1960s onwards, and the following section traces this process of involvement.

Early Poultry-Farming

Up until around 1960 the development that Theparaj village had undergone was largely synonymous with the social history of a rice-farming community. The population of the village were involved, in one capacity or another, in the business of rice, be it rice cultivation, rice trading, rice milling, etc. From the early 1960s onwards the picture of a homogeneous rice-farming community began to change, when poultry

farming was gradually adopted by an increasing number of well-to-do households in the village.

Raising a small number of animals in one's household compound had long been the common practice of the rural people since very early days. A household normally kept a few chickens and ducks for their eggs. Only at such a special occasion as a wedding, an ordination or a funeral would the animals have been slaughtered for their meat. And raising a small number of poultry and sometimes pigs in those days required no great effort. The animals were left to run loose around the house compound and were fed on rice bran and broken rice of which a household usually had a constant supply, since it provided for and winnowed paddy for its own consumption. From the 1920s onwards the practice of milling one's own paddy was gradually abandoned by an increasing number of households when rice mills began to appear in the area, and these households preferred to pay a fee to have their consumption paddy milled commercially. In those days the mill would hand back both the milled rice and the byproducts, namely rice bran and broken rice, and those were used as feed for the animals. By the 1940s, however, having one's paddy milled at a fee was no longer practised. It seems that as rice bran and broken rice came to be in increasing demand on the market, the rice-miller changed the payment method and instead of demanding a milling fee, villagers now allowed him to retain all the paddy by-products as his fee. And although the majority of the households continued to raise chickens, most now let them

fend for themselves while wealthier households which kept around 20-50 birds occasionally bought the bran to feed them. However, in the 1950s, and especially the 1960s, poultry-raising was to assume a totally different character i.e. that of a fully-fledged commercial agro-business enterprise.

The idea of poultry-farming on a modern basis is said to have been first introduced into Thailand around 1946-47 by the then Rector of Kasetsart University. Articles on the new enterprise were published in agricultural journals, encouraging people to put the new idea into practice. Poultry-farming was adopted gradually by a number of farming households in the provinces around Bangkok. By the mid-1950s the number of poultry farmers seemed to have been large enough to warrant an establishment of a feedmill company in 1954, known as the Charoen Phokphan Feedmill Company. The company branched out from a related concern, the Chia Tai Seeds and Agriculture Company, which in the 1920s was dealing in the import of agricultural seeds from China through Hong Kong into Thailand, and the export of pigs and eggs to the same market. Later, the company expanded its range of imported agricultural products to include chemical fertilizers, insecticides and herbicides as well (Business in Thailand, 1978: 32). Other feedmill companies that later came into being have similarly branched out from import and export trading concerns. The Sri Thai Pasusat group, which came to have an important share in the animal feed industry, has its

original financial base in a company importing seeds and crops and exporting eggs to Hong Kong (Bank of Thailand, 1983: 4). Other companies that have entered the animal feed business, like the Betagro and Centaco companies, have branched out from rice-exporting and textile-trading businesses (Krirkiat, 1982: 425-426; Narong, 1981: 115).

All the companies benefited from the state's industrial promotion policy, and their owners have had close ties with high-ranking politicians and bureaucrats. An instance can be cited relating to the Charoen Phokphan (CP) group which has the biggest share in the animal feed and related business. Thanin Jearawanan, owner of the CP business complex, and son of the owner of the Chia Tai Company, was adopted by Chamnarn Yuwaboon, a high-ranking official in the Interior Ministry and ex-Bangkok governor, who was a close aide of Prapas Charusathian, one of the few most powerful men in the 1960s. It was through Chamnarn that the CP company was able to approach successfully the Minister of the Interior, Prapas, who had also appeared on the name list of the CP company's shareholders (International Agrarian Studies Group, undated: 4-5). The development of poultry-farming in Theparaj took place alongside the growth of the animal feed industry and with the more general trend towards an expansion of industry at the national level.

As early as 1950, a teacher in Theparaj was attracted to the new idea and started to keep 30-40 chickens merely as a hobby. Towards the end of the 1950s, a few more villagers in Theparaj started up

small-scale chicken-farms as well. Most say that they started off with 50-100 birds. At this time the birds were kept in large cages which the farmers built themselves. Some say that in building these cages they were following the instructions published by the Ministry of Agriculture. Each cage was big enough to accommodate about 50 chickens. It is said that in the 1950s the number of chicken-farmers in Theparaj was still small, especially when compared with a nearby tambon, Bang Phra. However, the number of poultry farmers in the area must have been numerous enough to bring a handful of local chicken-feed dealers into existence. In the 1950s, feeds were bought from these middlemen in the form of single feed materials, such as rice bran, corn meal, soyabean and fish meal, etc., together with some minerals and vitamins and the farmers would mix these themselves. In the early 1960s, however, this type of feed began to be increasingly replaced by ready-mixed feeds that were being mass-produced by the expanding animal feed industry.

In the early 1960s, households in Village no. 2 of Theparaj that were raising chickens for sale in this manner accounted for approximately 10% of all the households in the village. All the farms were small in size with only 150-200 chickens, and all their owners were the well-to-do, rice-farming, owner-operators who continued to keep their rice-fields cultivated alongside their fledging poultry-farms. These households thus began to channel their surplus from rice-farming into the

new business although an initial sum of capital to pay for buildings, cages, various equipment, baby chicks and feed needed to be borrowed. A creditor therefore had to be found who would provide a farmer with feed credit to keep his farm in operation until the chicks had grown into hens ready to produce eggs. This could take up to 5 1/2-6 months. Then the eggs would be sold to the same creditor/middleman and the past season's account would be settled before further credit would again be advanced. During this time, most chicken farmers in the village were clients of a middleman who was a feed agent of a feed-manufacturing company and who was also running his own poultry-farm in the adjacent province of Samutprakarn, while a few households were clients of a local middleman-cum-poultry-and-rice farmer called Maay, who had been in the business of trading in chicken-feed ingredients for some years before he started off his own farm with 500 birds. His role as trader-cum-creditor enabled him to accumulate capital and to set up a poultry-farm on a larger scale, compared with his fellow villagers who had been engaged exclusively in rice-farming before entering the poultry business. He also had more reserves to fall back on when market conditions were unfavourable, and at the same time the surplus from his trading and poultry business was gradually ploughed back into the poultry-farm. By 1981 his farm was one of the large-scale farms in the village.

In the 1950s and 1960s although the poultry farmers in Theparaj were using the chicken feed that was being

manufactured by the animal feed companies, the link between the two parties was not yet as comprehensive as in the period that followed. The technique of poultry-raising in the earlier years was an adaptation of both the traditional method and the more modern ideas introduced by the Ministry of Agriculture. Chickens were kept together in large cages, coconut shells were used as water containers, chicks were hatched in the farmers' small makeshift hatchery units and some might buy the chicks from one of the big farms that operated hatcheries on a large scale.

Land and Capital Distribution in Theparaj

From 1950 to 1970 capital entered into the relations of production on an increasing scale. In Theparaj, a small number of well-to-do rice-farmers began to channel their accumulated capital into this new business as prices of poultry and poultry products were mostly more favourable than paddy prices, although many still retained their rice farms as a hedge against risk in the new business.

Hence, although the increasing capitalization of agricultural production created new opportunities for accumulation, the fact that the ability to take up such opportunities was largely restricted to the well-to-do households tended to render rural wealth and income more unequal. And the state itself was attempting to promote productivity growth without tampering with the existing income distribution pattern. Although a few laws were passed

intending to limit the maximum rent and size of holding, they remained dead letters. In 1950 the Land Rent Control Act was passed specifying the maximum amount of rent to be 25% of the produce and was meant to be enforced in 22 provinces of the Central Plain, the law was never really implemented (Krirkiat, 1978: 100-101). And in Theparaj tenants continued to pay 30-50% of their produce in rent. Moreover, by the time Sarit came to power, the 1954 Land Allocation for Social Justice Act, which specified 50 rai as a maximum amount of agricultural land that an individual could own, was abolished before it was ever enforced (Krirkiat, 1978: 103), thus opening the way for land concentration to increase, especially in areas where large-scale plantations of cash crops and agribusinesses had been established.

In Theparaj during 1950 to 1970, more land fell into the hands of absentee landowners. In 1950, land owned by absentee owners accounted for 25.2% of the total land owned; by 1970 this share had increased to 38.9% (if crown land is included, the percentages are 40.8 in 1950 and 54.4 in 1970). Forty-seven per cent of the land was transferred into the ownership of absentee owners through loan foreclosures and the rest through sales, indicating that mortgaging land for loans with non-resident moneylenders continued, and most former owners of such land were thereby turned into tenants, working on the very same plots. Of all the land transfers in this period, 68.6% of the land was transferred into the hands

of absentee owners while 31.4% into the ownership of local people, and the sizes of plots gained by absentee landowners tended to be larger (40 rai on average), compared with those acquired by local owners (17 rai on average). All the local people who gained land in these years each owned 50 rai of land in the village on average before acquiring the additional plots. One was operating a local shop as well as lending money while the rest were all well-to-do rice farmers.

Looking back over the years, the trend towards an increase in absentee lanownership continued. Setting aside crown land, which remained constant through this period, in 1908 only 3.3% of all the land in the village was owned by absentee owners; this increased to 19.2% in 1940, 25.2% in 1950, 33.4% in 1960 and 38.9% in 1970. However, this does not necessarily mean that land was being increasingly concentrated in the hands of absentee landowners. Many of the absentee owners who also had gained ownership of land in the Theparaj village, obtained it by operating primarily as moneylenders to the villagers. And most chose to sell it off when good prices were offerred, while some divided up their land among their children; thus concentration of land owned by them did not develop. However, for the whole province of Chachoengsao, a few families were well-known for their wealth in land, some gaining thousands of rai through loan foreclosures, although they, too, were deriving income from moneylending, trade, finance, and other enterprises, etc., and were not relying on landrenting as

an only or necessarily primary source of income. Furthermore, among absentee landowners with land in the village, some were once local residents who later moved away from the village and gained ownership of their land mainly through inheritance. Again, their major income source was something else other than landowning and they were among the more lenient landowners as far as the local tenants were concerned. Hence, insofar as an increasing share of land in the village had come under the ownership of absentee landowners, it signifies more the greater frequency of the local villages turning to outside moneylenders for loans, rather than a significant development of an absentee landlord-rentier class.

As such, from 1908 to 1970 the share of land owned by the top 20% largest landowners in the village did not exhibit a trend towards increasing ownership concentration. On the other hand, there occurred a trend towards increasing fragmentation of land ownership due to the inter-generational division of land. In 1908 the top 20% largest landowners owned 45.4% of all the land in the village; all were members of the pioneering families who managed to claim and clear large plots with the use of thaat labour, and it was Kwaeng Plueang who had the most land amounting to 380.5 rai. The smallest plot owned was 17.75 rai, while an average plot owned in 1908 was 77.5% rai per owner. By 1940 the share owned by the top 20% landowners had increased to 56.8% and among them was a number of absentee landowners who were operating as moneylenders. The largest landowner in the village was

Plueang's daughter, with 410 rai, most of which was gained through inheritance from her parents who in their time had gained a few hundreds rai of land through loan foreclosures, and a small part through her own moneylending venture. Her two sisters were the second and the fifth largest landowners in the village, and the households of Plueaug's children still retained the privileged economic and political position in the village in this period. By 1940 the smallest plot of land owned had declined from 17.75 rai in 1908 to 12 rai, while an average plot owned declined from 77.5 to 61.3 rai. In 1950, 1960, 1970 the share of land owned by the top 20% largest owners stabilized at 46.81%, 47.4% and 42.3% respectively, showing no increasing trend in land ownership concentration. By 1970 the largest landowner was an absentee one owning 126 rai. By this time Plueang's children had encountered a decline in fortune and had themselves lost piece after piece of their land through failure to repay loans. While in 1908 and 1940 all the land owned exceeded 10 rai, by 1970 19.5% of landowners in the village were found to own plots less than 10 rai, and many plots were only 1-2 rai in size which were bought or retained merely as housesites.

Elite-Mass Relations in the Village

As relations of production have become increasingly commercialized and capitalized, and as there has been a further incursion of state-level institutions into the rural area, vital resources of production are now located

farther away from the village. The base of patronage and the local elite's source of power are now external to the community. As more land has fallen into the hands of absentee landowners based in Chachoengsao town or in Bangkok, a large number of tenants in the village are thus no longer clients of the local landowners for the land they cultivate. For credit, the majority are now turning increasingly to merchants and moneylenders in market towns or in the province. A poor household is now hardly able to count on a minimal level of support from the local elite to protect themselves against natural or social elements. At the same time, the traditional exhange of labour has largely been replaced by labour hired on a contractual basis. Hanks, writing about Bang Chan around 1970, notes that by then most Bang Chan householders were maintaining a certain aloofness from their neighbours, that the relationship between a local landlord and his tenant had become mechanical and the farmer himself had to turn to wealthier relatives in Bangkok for loans.

> Later exchange between neighbours all but ceased some years ago, for people found it difficult to correct a neighbour doing a job badly. Now everyone in that part of Bang Chan hires his extra labor...This new distance is also maintained by tacit assumption of superiority without symbiotic liaison that a larger landowner feels toward a smaller one, or by the vocabulary of deference used when a tenant speaks to any landowner, not necessarily his landlord. The wage-laborer knows his place too, living in a makeshift house, eating less tasty food, and sending his children to school in patched uniforms. To be sure, each household, rich or poor, tends its own fields, sells its own crop to the agent from the rice mill on its own terms, gets rich, or subsides into debt by itself. (Hanks, 1972: 123, 124).

Likewise, kinship reciprocities had narrowed to include fewer people. And parents might advance repayable loans to their own children but rarely to the children of their siblings. In land-renting the children were required to pay rent to their parents like any other tenants.

As important resources were now located outside the local community and as the state resources came to assume increasing importance, one finds that the position of the local leaders came to be defined increasingly through their brokerage role, mediating between the villagers and the bureaucracy. Whereas before the power and prestige of the local elites were based largely on their own personal wealth, on their own resources that got distributed among the poorer villagers, increasingly it was the influence and control over the resources made available locally by the state that principally defined the position of local leaders. In the 1950s, projects like the saphaa tambon (tambon councils), the Farmers' Group, the People's Irrigation Organization, all of which were initiated by the state, began to make their presence felt in the rural areas. Those who were committed members of such projects, who tended to be rich villagers, not only gained better access to the state's low-interest credit, cheaper inputs, marketing facilities, they were also in a position to determine who the beneficiaries of these projects might be. Local leaders could retain their followings still, although to their clients their role as patrons became increasingly

linked to the access they could provide to the state resources, rather than their personal wealth per se.

Here, an instance of the working of the saphaa tambon (council) can be cited. The saphaa tambon was first established in Theparaj in 1956 as a result of the government's experiment to increase public involvement in rural development programmes. In Theparaj the saphaa tambon took up the responsibility of carrying out many local projects, such as the construction and maintenance of roads, canals, bridges, school buildings, as well as anti-pest measures and provision of other agricultural infrastructure, with funds deriving from local development tax and the government's grant-in-aid (see Morell and Chai-anan, 1981: 125-126). The projects' approval very much reflected the ideology and policy of "development" adopted at the national level, and money was largely spent on the building and upkeep of the basic infrastructures, while politically, the centralized system of decision-making remained with the central government officials. Final approval of funds and projects needed to be secured from the provincial administration first before their use and implementation could proceed.

The organizational structure is such that the naay amphoe (District Officer) was chairman of the council (although from 1965 onwards the kamnan (head of tambon) replaced the naay amphoe in this post), a local notable as vice-chairman, a teacher was secretary, while the rest of the council consisted of all the six village headmen

in the tambon, together with individuals "with qualifications" (later known as "Phoo Song Khunnawut") from each village as committee members. As such, half of the committee was made up of government officials at the central and the local levels, although members of the latter i.e. the local headmen, and the teacher may or may not have identified themselves with the bureaucracy, but rather with the local villagers. However, what had always been the case was that the council committee members also were locally based, be they local headmen or the "well-qualified" members, and always came from the wealthy section of local society. In the 1950s and 1960s, the man who was vice-chairman was described locally as "an old-style capitalist", indicating his notable activities in landrenting, moneylending and also rice trading, who later channelled his investment into a large-scale fish-raising enterprise. As for the other committee members who were selected from among the local notables in this period, five were rich landowning rice-farmers who had hired hands to help them cultivate their rice land and who also had extra land to rent out, while the sixth was operating a local boat transport service. As regards the headmen who became the committee members by right, they, too, were from well-to-do rice-farming households with their own land, although they were not necessarily the wealthiest men in their respective villages. An exception was the headmen of Village no. 6, "the market village," who operated as a trader as well as owner of a local boat transport

service. The kamnan who had been elected by and from among the six village headmen was also a well-to-do rice-farmer based in Village no. 4. He was seen by the villagers as a kamnan who exploited his office for his own financial gain and who identified more closely with the central government officials than with the local people. His notorious deeds were connected with his official duties, particularly the registration of births, deaths, migration, etc., of the people in the tambon. Villagers say that this kamnan always intentionally filled in inaccurate information, misspelt people's names in the registration forms so as to be able to extract more fees when villagers had to return to him again to have the various details corrected. Nevertheless, he was at the same time careful enough to maintain a group of his own following to whom he would render preferential treatment and whom he would help out of trouble, and thus prompted such a comment as "to his own clique he was good, beyond that everyone alike was squeezed when they acquired his service." Later on, after his retirement from the post of kamnan, he has been more or less ostracized and openly criticized by most villagers and it is often said that "nowadays he seldom dares to go out and about and largely shuts himself within the confine of his own home. He is paying a dear price for the misdeeds that he did while in office."

Projects undertaken by the saphaa tambon, financed from the annual funds of about 15,000 - 20,000 baht in the 1950s and 1960s, render access to committee members

to control and administer public funds, as each project was normally carried out under the supervision of a sub-committee consisting of selected members from the saphaa tambon itself. These members were thus in a position to make decisions on what projects were to receive the funding and even assigned also to supervise the actual disbursement of funds. They could determine who the beneficiaries of the projects might be, ranging from the selection of contractors to the choice of whom to employ as wage-labourers in the projects. When the first pesticide sprayers were purchased with the council's money for use in the tambon, the machines were deposited at the kamnan's house and it was very much up to the kamnan's arbitrary judgement to whom he would lend out the two machines and in what order. Access to public funds thus began to emerge as a new source of patronage for local leaders and at the same time it also gave rise to a possibility for officials and certain committee members to make private financial gain through embezzlement and misappropriation. It became increasingly important in the 1970s, when politicians tried to win rural votes by allocating an ever greater amount of funds through local bodies like the saphaa tambon.

"Blooming Democracy", Land Reform and Big Businesses

The economic growth in Thailand in the 1960s stemmed to a significant degree from the expansion of the sphere of influence of the U.S., in the world in general and its involvement in the Vietnam in particular, as well as from the fact that the military rulers of Thailand proved all too willing and eager to implement developmental programmes based on the advice of the U.S. and to attract foreign capital, especially American and Japanese, to Thailand as part of a means to consolidate their own rule. The U.S. spending accounted for some 50% of the GNP growth from 1966-68 (Turton, 1978: 106), and this did not merely take the form of massive military aid but also generated a rapid economic expansion, above all in the construction and service sectors, giving rise to new strata of nouveaux riches which included both a middle and a petty bourgeoisie. However, in the early 1970s the Americans had started to withdraw their troops from Indochina, there was an international oil crisis, and in Thailand there was rising inflation (15% in 1972, 24% in 1974), and rising the unemployment of educated young people as the bureaucracy became saturated. Thailand's economy was lagging badly behind. Dissatisfaction was building up among a wide section of the population, including the beneficiaries of the war-related boom (Anderson, 1977). Thus, when students and intellectuals staged demands for a constitution, civil liberties and voiced their criticisms against the corruption and nepotism of the military ruling clique, they enjoyed

support from all social classes including the new bourgeoise strata. This eventually brought down the military dictatorship and inaugurated a relatively liberal period when opportunities existed in relative terms for people, including the lower classes, to participate more actively in the country's politics while politicians themselves had to jockey for representation in the national assembly. The growing demands and articulation of them by students, workers and farmers created a significant pressure on the governments of the 1973-1976 period to commit themselves publicly to civil rights and liberties, and more importantly to the rights of farmers and workers to organize, demonstrate and strike. This period thus witnessed a series of strikes, the establishment of the Peasants' Federation of Thailand, the legislation of the Land Rent Control Act and the Land Reform Act, the initiation of programmes of free medical and transportation services for the urban poor. However, the coalition governments elected in this period contained a significant element of the financial and industrial interests. They largely carried on with the policies of furthering commercialisation and intensification of agricultural production and the promotion of foreign capital, especially agribusiness, and the expansion of agricultural credit with the banking system as an important medium. At the same time reforms and legislations that were passed as a result of persistent demands from the lower strata were by no means designed to affect fundamental structural transformation in society.

For instance, the 1975 Land Reform Law which placed an upper limit of 50 rai for an agricultural holding, at the same time left open the possibility for agricultural holdings to be up to 1,000 rai if they were owner-operated, thus providing an opportunity for big landowners, especially agribusiness and plantations owners, to hold on to their large landholdings. Moreover, implementation of the laws proved at best half-hearted, and the land under the Reform programme was mostly state-owned land or land which had already been squatted on by the landless. Very little private land was affected by the reform. And even if the Reform had met the government's claims, the stipulated area of land and the budget allocated for the reform in the 1976 programme would in fact have affected less than 1% of the poor agricultural households of the whole country. This is not to mention the fact that the very budget for land purchase under the reform programme was drawn largely from the rice-premium itself, which in effect means that the programme did not involve any redistribution of wealth income at all since the money used came from the very tax that the farmers themselves were paying to the state (Krirkiat and Rangsan, 1976: 30-31).

At the same time, as the state has been encouraging the development of agri-business, in recent years there has been a marked expansion and incursion of industrial capital into the sphere of agriculture. Large-scale plantations have been established, exploiting the large pools of the country's cheap labour and the favourable

investment atmosphere, producing a variety of cash crops both as consumers' products and as inputs for industries. The big agri-business interest has not been given merely industrial investment promotion privileges from the state, but they have also been allowed to hold a very large amount of land, thus revealing clearly the priorities the powerholders place regarding industrialisation and land reform policies. As such, in 1979, 19 large-scale agri-business companies which were set up with industrial production privileges were holding 243,540 rai of land, ranging from 2,000 up to 40,000 rai each and this does not include companies that were operating without the promotion privileges. On this point Krirkiat puts it very succinctly,

> When we turn to consider the manner in which landholding problem is being solved at present, we find that ever since the government began to implement a land reform programme in 1975, very little has been accomplished. The amount of land that the government has expropriated by compulsory purchase from private owners and brought under the land reform programme is even less than the amount of land the government has encouraged large-scale companies to hold" (Krirkiat, 1982: 142, 178-179).

The priority given to the promotion of industrial growth has resulted, especially in the 1970s, in a very rapid expansion of commercial banks, agri-businesses, import-export trade, various industries, and there had developed a trend whereby the ownership and control of a number of businesses have become increasingly concentrated. For instance, in 1967, assets of the 6 largest commercial banks accounted for 61.6% of the total

commercial banks' assets. By 1979 this had increased to 72.6%. The biggest bank, i.e. the Bangkok Bank, alone increased its assets from 23.4% in 1967 to 35.3% in 1979 while small banks found their assets gradually declining (Krirkiat, 1982: 44-45). Moreover, families that predominate in the banking business have also expanded their interests into various other enterprises, ranging from finance, construction, agro-industries, marketing, import-export, services, land, to a variety of industrial enterprises (see Hewison, 1981). Members of some big banking families are also in close connection with or have themselves joined or rendered support for certain political parties (Narong, 1981: 106-108). In the export business, very high rates of concentration are found in the export of rubber (the two biggest companies had a 56.3% share of the total rubber exported in 1979), tin (whereby one company has had a monopoly both in the export and the smelting of tin), tapioca products (whereby 3 foreign-owned companies controlled more than 70% of the total export in 1979), sugar (which was in control of only 2 groups). In industrial production, businesses that exhibit very high rates of concentration are petroleum products and oil-refining (which are under the control of 3 key multinationals), cement production (the largest company controls 80% of the domestic market), the motorcycle assembly industry (the two biggest firms had 66% of the total production capacity in 1979), the motor-car assembly industry, the chemical fertilizer industry. The animal feed industry, which in

recent years has come to have an increasing impact on the Theparaj society, is also found to have a high rate of concentration whereby the biggest, Charoen Phokphand Company, controlled about 40% of the total productive capacity (its development will be dealt with in more detail later on). Foreign capital has had an important share in this economic expansion and foreign firms have gained control over such industries as tin-smelting, oil-refining, tyre production, car assembly, electrical appliances, chemical industries, etc. As for the Thais who have come to own large-scale businesses merely all of them started off in trade and commerce first, and gradually expanded into import and export business. In the post-war period the government's attempt to curb the influence of foreign banking interests gave an opportunity for members of the merchant class to enter and gain control over the banking business, and in recent years they have also expanded into modern industries. The capital-intensive industries have to turn either to commercial banks or to enter into joint ventures with foreign capitalists to finance their business and some have tried to establish their own financial base by extending into banking and finance themselves (Krirkiat, 1982: 24-48, 79-141, 310-313; Narong, 1981: 108-120).

Against the background of a rapid process of industrialization, the benefits of which have been concentrated in the hands of large-scale enterprises, productive capital began to enter into and to gain some control over the production of certain crop-growing or

animal-raising sectors. Large-scale agribusiness began to strive for an integral control of production, processing and marketing was to gain more control over the cost, quantity and quality of their raw materials supplies and to achieve a fuller utilization of their processing capacity, thus exploiting the industrial scale economies to the best advantage. This has been the development of the animal-feed agribusiness which, in the late 1960s and 1970s was attempting to gain partial control over poultry-raising in areas like Theparaj by tying small producers to it through indebtedness and agreements covering sales of output, and at the same time instituting recommended practices, while itself avoiding production risks.

The 1960s and 1970s thus witnessed a change in the techniques of poultry-farming in Theparaj towards a more capitalized, regulated and standardized form of production, while at the same time relationships between the expanding animal-feed agri-business complex and the local poultry-farmers became more intense and the small producers subjected to more constraints from the feed companies. The development both of the biggest feed company that has made a significant incursion into Theparaj and its changing relationships with the small poultry- and egg-producers may prove illustrative at this point.

In 1970 the CP group entered into partnership with an agri-business multinational firm, Abor Acre International, which is a subsidiary of the International

Basic Economic Corporation (IBEC) in which the Rockefeller family is a major share holder. The Abor Acre Company was then trying to expand its investment abroad since the U.S. anti-trust law inhibited its expansion inside the U.S. itself. Together the two sides formed the Abor Acre (Thailand) Company with the U.S. partner's share accounting for 49% and Thais' for 51% of the company's total shares and the company's main dealing has been the import of grandparent stock hens together with the modern chicken breeding technology from the U.S. in order that further breeding of commercial-stock hens could be carried out in Thailand. The new imported breeds were found to produce higher yields. Compared with the native breeds of broilers which normally took 120-180 days to become fully grown, the new breeds of chickens take merely 45-55 days to raise. However, in order to produce high returns the new breeds also require a precise quantity and quality of feed intake (Bank of Thailand, 1983: 4-6; Business in Thailand, 1978: 32; International Agrarian Studies Group, undated: 4; Niphon, 1980: 5).

From then on the CP group had diversified into a whole host of business undertakings to try to achieve a vertically integrated enterprise that would make possible a significant reduction of production costs, would guarantee a constant supply of new materials, reduce risks, and all the various benefits that vertical integration would entail. The late 1960s and the 1970s witnessed a rapid expansion of its animal feed enterprise

and that of a few other big rival companies as well as the entry of new firms into the business, but the overall trend has been such that the business has become increasingly concentrated. The CP group, the most powerful in the business, in 1972 enjoyed 27.6% of the total animal feed production and its share increased to 37.5% in 1975, 40.8% in 1979 and 50.3% in 1981. By 1981 the eight largest feedmill companies accounted for 95.2% of the total amount of animal feed being produced, and their market share was 95.1% (Preecha, 1982: 29-33). Furthermore, the 1970s also witnessed the major diversification of the big animal feed companies into a variety of related businesses. By 1979 the CP group alone was operating 39 different companies while the other two big groups, the Liaophairat-Taephaisitpong and the Khanathanawanit, had 29 and 17 companies each respectively (Krirkiat, 1983: 419-420, 425-426, 435). The CP group's enterprises include the production of raw materials to supply its animal feed factories, e.g. its cropping projects include cultivation of mung beans, maize, soybeans, cassava, and jute, with companies handling trade including the export of these products as well as the import of seeds and other agricultural raw materials. Apart from this the group also has its own company producing fish meal and gunny bags to supply other companies in the group, together with companies that handle the import of machinery and spare parts for agricultural production and servicing. Then, CP is also involved in trading in chemical products, animal drugs,

plant fertilizer and insecticide, etc., the business of livestock breeding, of slaughtering and processing meat, as well as the trading of meat and animal products such as eggs both in the local and overseas market. Moreover, its owner and affiliated enterprises also extended to foreign countries and its trading, feedmills, finance and other businesses are to be found in Hong Kong, Indonesia, Taiwan, Singapore, etc., (Business in Thailand, 1978: 32-43; International Agrarian Studies Group, undated: 6-8). The group's ability to expand on such a scale has been facilitated by the conducive investment atmosphere, by the state's industrial production policy as a lot of its companies have been granted promotion privileges, and by the access it has enjoyed to overseas and domestic capital. The CP group has had close financial ties with the most economically and politically powerful bank in Thailand, the Bangkok Bank, which itself has held shares in some CP group companies. The scale of the credit the Bank is giving to the CP group can be seen from the fact that it has set up a separate department specially in order to handle the loan service exclusively for the Group (Preecha, 1982: 45; International Agrarian Studies Group, undated; 5-6).

Later Poultry-Farming in Theparaj

In Theparaj, the 1960s and 1970s witnessed poultry and egg commercial production consuming more and more inputs that were being turned out by the expanding animal feed manufacturers and their related concerns, while

production techniques were becoming increasingly uniform and regulated to meet the criteria and demands set by the modern industrial processing and large-scale marketing practices. Gradually, the poultry-raising method in the past, whereby 50 or 60 birds were kept in one large cage, was abandoned, the large cages being used only for keeping baby chicks. The new method, battery farming, dictates that the chickens be kept in individual cages which are set alongside one another to form a long row. The one side of the cages is attached with a feed trough, while on the other side a long water trough is attached along the upper half and a channel for alloting eggs is fixed along the bottom. The cages are housed in a wall-less shed with corrugated-iron roof and are placed about 1 1/2 metres above the ground. Chicken dung falls through the wire cages to collect on the earth below. The older hens are fed with manufactured feed ingredients mixed with feed grains (rice bran and broken rice) and the baby chicks are fed with different types of ready-mixed feed which are made to suit chickens of different ages. Gradually, home-based hatcheries in the area began to disappear from the scene when farmers increasingly turned to "high-yielding" breeds of hens produced by the large-scale, vertically integrated agro-industrial complex. In any case the commercial stock sold by the companies could not be used for further breeding by the farmers themselves. A number of farmers who tried to continue hatching their own eggs said that the eggs simply would not hatch. Hence, to adopt this

line of production the farmers are obliged to buy the chicks exclusively from one of the big companies, thus reinforcing their ties with the latter still further.

In the early stages, however, the new poultry-farming enterprise in Theparaj by no means progressed in a smooth fashion. A sharp drop in the price of eggs could easily put out of business small farms with little capital to tide them over bad periods. And this was exactly what happened in 1964, when it is said that egg price slumped from 0.47-0.50 baht per egg in 1962 to 0.10-0.15 baht. All farms across the board suffered big losses. Most small-scale ones in the village abandoned the business altogether and returned to exclusive rice-farming as before, which they had never completely given up. After this bad patch only a few kept their chicken-farms going. Among them was Maay, who was better able than others to withstand unfavourable market conditions, together with two other small poultry-farmers who by this time had completely abandoned rice-farming and had rented out their rice land. A few years later, around the years 1966-68, as the market for eggs started to pick up, a number of households again took up egg-production on a small scale, while the relatively larger farms such as that of Maay's and a few others responded to the rising price of eggs by expanding their farms.

Already in the 1960s, the CP group company, with its aggressive approach to marketing, was seeking to gain a partial control over the technical basis of poultry and

eggs production and to secure a constant source of supply for its processing and trading firms by tying small-scale producers to it through contract farming. With this arrangement the company could tie small farmers to it through its credit provisions and agreements to buying the farmers' produce that meets certain technical criteria.

In the mid-1960s the company's appointed sales agent in Theparaj area was not doing very well and his business was suffering big losses because many of his clients to whom he had advance credit failed to pay up their debts. The drop in eggs and poultry prices around 1964, particularly, worsened his situation still further. This led the company to look for a new sales agent in the area to replace him. The company proceeded to approach a few owners of the relatively bigger poultry-farms in the area and eventually Liang, an ex-rice miller who had channelled his investment into his recently-established poultry-farm, agreed to become the company's new local sales agent. The arrangements adopted by the agro-industrial enterprises were such that the existing network between local merchant-cum-moneylender and his clients was retained and it was through this local middleman, who naturally had better knowledge of the financial stituations and credibility of potential clients than the company itself, that the company was expanding its control over marketing as well as setting certain constraints over the production process. The normal procedure was that the CP Company would sell feed

concentrate and chicks to Liang at a discount, and would offer also various facilities, such as its veterinary and technical services, medical supplies and certain financial assistance. In turn, Liang began to establish commercial ties with owners of small-scale poultry-farms by advancing feed concentrates and baby chicks supplied by the company at discount prices to his clients at the beginning of the raising cycle and afterwards buying the eggs from them and the outstanding account would then be settled. Liang was thus profitting in the form of interests on the credit advanced as well as from the differences between the price of inputs that he obtained from the company and their selling price. It is said that in the early years the dealings between Liang and his clients involved no written contracts although the latter were required to hand over their land title deeds to Liang. This procedure in fact did not amount to a legal mortgaging of one's land, although in the clients' understanding such an undertaking appeared to be binding. However, in later years this practice was completely abandoned and written contracts were drawn up instead to guarantee against the clients' default.

By becoming the CP company's sales agent, Liang saw his wealth and income soaring more rapidly than other well-to-do households in the area. His own poultry-farm underwent constant expansion and in no time became one of the largest in the province. Based in tambon Prawet, he had as regular clients the majority of small-scale egg producers in tambon Theparaj and other neighbouring tambons. However, Liang's clients were not restricted only to small egg producers.

They included also a large number of households who began to take up raising broiler hens on contract-farming. Both types of producers had been rice farmers and continued to cultivate their rice fields alongside their own poultry farms as a guarantee against possible failure of the new enterprise. Both were producing surplus in rice-farming that enabled them to start on the new venture, but they all had to rely on extra sources of credit to keep their poultry farms in operation.

Keeping broiler hens did not require as large an initial outlay as raising hens for their eggs. The birds were kept together in large sheds and an average shed might contain up to 2,000 chickens or more in some cases. No money needed to be spent on small individual cages and their attachments. People said that they had to fork out the money to build sheds and to buy the essential equipment themselves. Then they would go to Liang to ask if he could advance them with feed and chicks under the agreement that he would be paid back after the broilers had been sold. Here, Liang was operating still as agent of the CP Company and was implementing one of the Company's policies. According to this policy, the Company's, or in this case Liang's clients, would get a guaranteed price per weight for their broilers. In order to sell their chickens the farmers had to transport the fully-grown broilers to the Company's slaughterhouse themselves. Those with no pick-up trucks of their own had to hire one. It appeared that the buyers were not prepared to shoulder either the transport cost or the

potential cost incurred by the fact that the travelling would cause the chickens to lose some weight. When the policy was first put to practice it is said that farmers would try their best to fatten up the chickens and tended to go on feeding the birds until they reached a good weight before selling them. The later period saw the Company becoming much more strict. They started putting an exact limit on the number of raising days which means that the farmers had to hand over the broilers on specified dates. Nevertheless, the farmers say that they still managed to enjoy fairly good gains for a number of years. Some kept their broiler farm going for nearly 10 years before switching to raising egg-producing hens instead. Gradually people gave up broiler-raising. Some say that they were tired of putting up with the Company's stringent conditions. They think that the Company was being unfair when it drastically reduced the price it paid for crippled chickens, for chickens that had food left in their stomachs at the time of sale, and a low-price was paid also for birds that died while being transported to the slaughterhouse. Moreover, the Company was itself supplying birds with some physical defects and it is estimated that in each batch of about 1,000 birds, there would be about 25 birds that would grow up crippled. Some people say that they had to abandon broiler-raising because they were making losses when a large number of their chickens died of one disease or another. It is either for these reasons or for the fact that more favourable returns might be obtained from

raising egg-producing hens, that broiler-raising eventually disappeared from the scene and was no longer found in the area by 1980.

While a number of farms opted for broiler-raising, many more households started, some for the second time, to keep egg-producing hens during the second half of the 1960s. However, the scale of the operation was much smaller than the present day's. What was then considered as a large-scale farm was keeping around 1,000-3,000 chickens, while a small-scale farm was keeping mostly 100-200 birds.

Since Liang became the principal agent of the CP Company in the area around Theparaj in 1966, he has managed to secure the custom of an increasing number of regular clients. During these early days of poultry-farming his clients included not only those farmers who were operating small-scale farms, but also those with medium and relatively large farms who were newcomers to the business and who at this stage needed to rely on Liang and the Company to supply them with the chicks, the animal feed and all the services that the Company was prepared to offer. However, after a few years some of the bigger farms began to break away from Liang and to deal directly with companies other than the CP. At this time these other animal-feed companies were trying hard to gain their share of the CP-dominated market. Among the farmers who had severed their ties with Liang was the present kamnan of Theparaj. According to him, he started his farm at about the same time as

Liang in 1966 and was also approached by the CP Company to become its agent. He nevertheless declined the offer. When Liang became the Company's sales agent he, too became Liang's client and was advanced with chicks and feed while his eggs were sold to Liang and the debt settled. After operating on this basis for a few years, he decided to establish his own direct contact with another big animal feed manufacturer called Betagro and subsequently became that company's sales agent as well. He also started to establish his own circle of regular clients. He not only was dealing in the company's chicks and feed concentrates, but was also operating as middleman, independently of the company and was trading in rice bran and broken rice which were among the ingredients of the chicken feed. As with Liang the kamnan was buying eggs from his clients and was making a good profit of about 40 satang per egg in the early 1970s. Furthermore, the kamnan says that he also suggested to a few of his friends who were running fairly big farms to break off from Liang and establish direct links with the companies. This group of poultry-farmers did not need to rely on Liang's credit on a season-to-season basis in the way that small farms did; they thus did not find it too difficult to sever their ties with Liang. Moreover, the fact that all of them were comparatively well-off, with their background in business of one type or another, made the break much more viable since they could obtain their feeds at a cheaper price with their bulk-buying.

The business background of owners of what were to become large-scale farms gave them a far better headstart compared with their fellow villagers with background in rice-farming. Liang, whose farm is the biggest in the area at present, is said to have started off being very poor, earning his living as a lorry-driver. He was able to save up a certain amount of capital from trading on a small scale. He later used the money to rent and operate a rice-mill in tambon Prawet for nearly 10 years. Then, in the mid-1960s he decided to abandon rice milling in favour of poultry-farming. It seems he has never looked back since then. Having become the CP Company's sole agent in the area when poultry-farming was only beginning to catch on must have put him in an advantageous position compared with the others, most of whom still had to turn to him for the different facilities that the pioneering CP Company had to offer. From the 1970s up until the 1980s, his farm gradually expanded and by 1981-82 it was not only the biggest egg farm in the area with its stock of nearly 100,000 birds, but the farm ws also ranked as one of the largest egg farms in the country, second only to the CP Company's farm in Saraburi province.

The story of kamnan Prasit was slightly different. The kamnan, whose farm was second only to Liang's, was born in a rice-farming family. His parents owned about 80 rai of land in another tambon. But when the children got married and moved elsewhere and the rice land was rendering consecutively poor yields, Prasit's parents sold the land and moved to live in Rayong province.

Prasit was fortunate enough to have married the daughter of a well-to-do family in tambon Prawet. His father-in-law then owned a gambling house as well as a rice mill. Prasit rented the mill for some years but finally gave it up when the business was running at a loss. He then turned to pig-raising and had about 100-200 pigs in his stock. He says that during the time he also tried his hand at chicken-raising (in the mid-1950s) but this came to nothing and he eventually gave it up. His pig-raising took a long time to yield profits but when he managed to save up some capital he decided to set up a store selling a wide variety of merchandise. After a few years in the trading business he put his further savings, together with a sum borrowed from relatives, into chicken-farming once again. He started off, like many of his fellow villagers, as Liang's client but a few years later he managed to become the agent of another feed company and started to form a circle of clients of his own.

A few other big farms also had clients but none ever compared to Liang's as far as the number of clients was concerned. This was even more so from the latter half of the 1970s onwards when the majority of big poultry-farms began to cut down on the number of their clients. Only those clients to whom credit had already been handed out were kept on the lists, and new customers were turned away. Owners of these farms say that they would rather expend their capital on the expansion of their own farms than lend it out. With the price of eggs having been

relatively stable over a long period of time, income that could be earned from investing their money in expanding their business would probably be greater than the interest they might earn from advancing credit to their clients. Furthermore, farmers who had been handing out credit also complained about the risks of default, especially when small farms went bankrupt and were thus unable to repay all the debt. If this happened to be the case whatever buildings or installations the small farms possessed would be confiscated by their creditors. By 1981 Liang's was about the only farm left that was still advancing credit in kind to 20-30 clients although he, too, was trying to cut down on the number of such clients. Other big farms no longer had clients tied to them.

Between 1966 and 1981, production in the Prawet-Theparaj area thus expanded considerabley, slowly at first and then rapidly in the latter half of the 1970s. In 1968, when Larsen and Sarasup conducted their survey in 11 Central region provinces, they reported that hen egg production was concentrated in those provinces in particular, namely in Saraburi, Ayuthaya and Chachoengsao. They quote the number of egg farms keeping more than 500 chickens and the size of flock as follows:

	500-1,000 (chickens)	1,001-5,000	5,001-10,000	10,001-
Chachoengsao (No. of egg farms)	271	79	-	-
Angthong	294	130	28	-
Saraburi	25	12	2	1

(Sarasup & Larsen, 1968: 70)

By 1981 the Theparaj-Prawet area was said to be the biggest egg-producing area in the country. The scale of production had been significantly raised. A big farm in the Chachoengsao of 1968 was keeping 5,000 birds at the most while in Saraburi province, the CP Company's farm had over 10,000 chickens. By 1981 the largest farm in the Theparaj-Prawet area was raising nearly 100,000 birds and is still expanding. However, in Prawet and Theparaj one does not find poultry farms scattered over the whole area. In villages that are situated at the other end of the dirt road leading farther away from the highways, namely Villages nos. 3, 4, 5 and 6 of tambon Theparaj, very few chicken farms have been set up. It seems that in these villages, which are not so readily accessible to convenient road transportation, most of the people continue to engage themselves in rice cultivation, and chicken farms are few and far between. The majority of chicken farms in the area are concentrated in tambon Prawet, which had a highway as one of its borders and in villages nos 1 and 2 of tambon Theparaj which follow on from where tambon Prawet ends and are thus farther away from the highway.

Another noticeable fact with regard to the siting of the poultry farms is that farms situated on the west side of the Prawet Canal, where the dirt road cuts through, are considered to be much better sited than farms that are on the east side of the canal. This is possibly due to the fact that farms of the latter category are accessible only by boat transport. This means that owners of these farms have to pay extra costs for

transporting all their materials across to the other bank, since the animal feed are exclusively delivered by truck. When it comes to selling their eggs, these farmers again have to transport their eggs across the canal in order to get them loaded on to the trucks that are parked on the other side. Moreover, they also lose out on the possibility of selling their eggs to itinerant merchants who usually pay a higher price for the eggs but who invariably come round in their trucks at no regular times. The merchants can easily stop at roadside farms to ask if there are eggs to sell. This fact may help explain why all the large-scale farms are found only on the west side of the canal and along both sides of the dirt road. And since land along the roadside is much sought after, with the constant expansion of the poultry farms, it is also fetching correspondingly higher price.

Intensification of Rice Production

Not only has there been significant adoption of egg production among well-to-do households in Theparaj and nearby areas (the social background of the present-day poultry-farmers will be dealt with in the following section), but the 1970s also saw the widespread adoption of double cropping, high-yielding rice varieties and an increasing use of capital-intensive inputs in rice cultivation. Both developments constitute a major historical watershed in the memories of Theparaj villagers, since they have brought about many radical transformations in the relations of production,

techniques of production, general prosperity accompanied by a widening disparity between the rich and poor in the local community.

The 1970s up to the present time has witnessed the continuation of the various governments' concern to promote intensive growth pattern, technological innovation and capital-deepening in agriculture. Their strategy to promote industrialization in general (by providing investment incentives, by adopting repressive labour and wage policies and encouraging the internationalization of capital which has significantly increased its control in various major sectors) has led to the growth of large-scale, vertically integrated agri-businesses, like the animal-feed industry and its related enterprises, while a section of the rural population with sufficient capital began to channel their surplus into the new enterprises, and in Theparaj the particular capital-intensive enterprise is poultry-farming. More specifically as regards the policy to achieve productivity growth in rice production designed to meet urban requirements and generate an exportable surpluses, the various governments since the 1960s have set out to improve and extend the basic agricultural infrastructure, to research into new high-yielding varieties that would suit local conditions, to create agricultural extension services to help disseminate the new ideas and techniques, to provide incentives to producers in the form of cheap agricultural credit and subsidized inputs. However, at the same time,

the retention of the taxes on rice which is used to hold down the domestic rice price and has resulted in the lower prices that rice producers get relative to the going world market rates, together with high prices of modern inputs such as chemical fertilizer relative to rice prices, were among factors that worked against adoption of new technologies. Hence, the government's attempt to disseminate the new rice varieties in 1969-1970 when rice prices were low did not meet with much success. It was not until 1972-1973 when rice prices began to rise due to world-wide adverse weather conditions and the low supply of rice, did rice-farmers begin to adopt double-cropping and high-yielding rice varieties in a more widespread manner.

In 1972 a few well-to-do rice-farmers of Theparaj began to experiment in a dry-season crop for the first time as they heard that in neighbouring amphoe this was being practised with some success. The special varieties of seed grains that had short vegetative growth periods were required for the second crop and in these early years one of the traditional varieties called Phuang Naak was adopted. The pioneers bought the seed grains from a nearby amphoe where they were being planted by the people there and grew them on small plots of land with little fertilizer application and with no modification in cultivation techniques. As the second crop proved to be a reliable source of additional income while rice prices were on the increase, more and more rice farmers adopted the practice. With two crops a year, no sooner is the

wet season's crop harvested than the rice nurseries are again sowed for the second crop. When this was carried out with the transplanting method, it meant a marked increase in the demand for labour, particularly in tasks such as uprooting, transplanting and harvesting, thus benefiting poor households with surplus labour to sell, while rice-farmers complained that labour costs were becoming very high on their expenditure list. By this time, the mutual exchange of labour had more or less disappeared and even small rice-farmers needed to rely on hired labour during peak periods which proved taxing on their scarce cash assets; but at the same time poorer households with several members could earn extra income by hiring their labour on other rice-farms.

However, a few years after double-cropping was introduced, i.e. around 1974-75, Theparaj rice-farmers encountered for the first time a new disaster in the form of a virus plant disease which was borne by green and brown grasshoppers. In 1973/74 the crops were reduced by half, while in 1974/75 practically the entire crop was destroyed. A farmer with a 10 rai plot said that in that season his family managed to gather only two small pails of loose grains from the whole field, whereas in a normal year 200 thang of paddy would have been reaped. Seeing their crops discolouring and wilting and knowing nothing about the cause of the disease, some rice-farmers tried to salvage their plant by feeding it with more fertilizer which naturally did not bear any effect. Rice-farmers fell heavily into debt.

During the disease attack in 1975, efforts were made to re-establish the Farmers' Group in Theparaj. The man who was behind this move, who was later to emerge as one of the most important local leaders, is seen by villagers as a selfless person who has helped to advance the rice farmers' cause, including their farming knowledge, their livelihood and their confidence to act in concert. Kwanchai, son of a well-to-do rice-farming family and a Kasetsart university graduate, returned to Theparaj in 1974 when he decided to follow his father's profession and to apply what he had learnt to improve the practice and techniques of rice cultivation with the hope of bettering the rice-farmers' level of living and income. Confronted by the disastrous attack on the rice plant, Kwanchai undertook to redeem the defunct Farmers' Group from its old 2,000 baht debt with his own money so that it could register once again. If was on behalf of this Farmers' Group that Kwanchai contacted the various agencies such as the Weed-Pest Eradication Unit and the Technical Division of the Ministry of Agriculture. Some of the officials he knew in person since they were at university together. As a result, he managed to borrow a number of pesticide sprayers for the villagers' use but unfortunately these failed to save the rice crops. Nevertheless, it was through the re-established Farmers' Group that other government agricultural subsidies were channelled to the local rice-farmers and Kwanchai himself also invited officials to set up experimental plots in the area so as to learn more about the specific

conditions and problems of the area and to disseminate ideas about new techniques and inputs, such as the suitable application of chemical fertilizer, insecticide, herbicide, as well as the newly developed high-yielding rice varieties.

After these two disastrous years rice-farmers in Theparaj began to turn to the new high-yielding rice varieties that were being developed by the Rice Department (RD) which proved resistant to the disease carried by the green and brown grasshoppers. The RD varieties subsequently being adopted, which were modelled after those developed by the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines, are non-photoperiod sensitive, mature in 120 days, and in Theparaj the new varieties' yields were around 50-70 thang per rai, compared with the 20-30 thang produced by the traditional varieties. With the new varieties, rice plants needed to be densely planted and turned out to be more labour-consuming than ever before. With the traditional rice varieties a person could transplant about 2-3 rai in a day, whereas with the new varieties a day's work would complete only 3/4 rai. Since the rice population was denser with the cultivation of the new varieties, more labour was also demanded in the uprooting of the young plants and at harvest. During these peak labour demand periods rice-farmers were faced with the problem of severe shortages of hired labour. Competition to hire labour would develop and in turn drove up the prices of labour at peak times. Labour cost was ranked among the

two highest in the rice-farmers expenditure list, accounting for about 30-35% the total cost, with chemical fertilizer taking up roughly the same share of the expenditure.

Rice-farmers were thus eager to find ways to increase their profit margin by reducing their production costs. Reducing the amount of fertilizer used was not a viable alternative since the responsiveness of the new rice variety to fertilizer meant that yields would correspondingly decline. Thus, when news about a novel planting technique which was more labour-saving and which was being practised in another amphoe reached Theparaj, a few of the wealthy rice-farmers went all the way to amphoe Bangnamprieo in order to hire farmers from there to broadcast rice on their fields at a fee of 10 baht per rai. When the results turned out to be satisfactory, the wealthy rice-farmers proceeded to have all of their land levelled up to make way for an all-out adoption of the new technique.

Gradually, the new broadcasting technique spread and from 1977-78 onwards it became a predominant practice among rice farmers in the Theparaj and nearby areas for farmers to see that it could reduce their labour cost quite significantly from about 30-35% of the total cost down to 20%, while yields remained more or less the same. The new broadcasting method is generally called Na Waan Nam Tom, indicating a direct sowing of seed on to saturated but drained soil. The method does not require transplanting and farmers therefore no longer need to

raise seedlings in nursery beds or to uproot and transplant them, and this cut down the cost by about one-half, as it has done away with uprooting and transplanting which hitherto had been tasks that created peak demands for labour. With the new method the uprooted rice seeds are sown straight on to a prepared field. Then the water is drained and the field is left without water for 5-7 days for the seeds to take root. After this, water is pumped in, kept at a depth of 2.5-4 cm. and then gradually increased to keep up with the plant's growth. Essential to this technique, therefore, is the ability to control the water level in the field with required precision. In addition, a well-levelled field-surface is also another precondition for success. This has resulted in the landscape being altered somewhat. Fields were once divided into individual plots, each being surrounded by carefully-maintained dykes so as to hold water for the period of the plants' growth. With the new techniques of planting, it proves more viable to level out a wider area of land and most of the dykes were removed, leaving one dyked, big, extensive and well-levelled plot, that renders water control easier and more effective (see also, Tipaporn, 1976).

No sooner had the change in cultivation technique taken place than further mechanization was adopted. In 1977-78 rice-farmers in Theparaj began to abandon threshing their paddy with tractors when new rice-threshers came on to the market. The new threshing machine not only relieves labour during the busy period

when paddy needs harvesting, transporting, and threshing, it also shortens the actual threshing time which proves valuable when farmers are in a hurry to sell off their paddy and start preparing land again for their next crop, as well as doing away with the task of winnowing altogether, since the machine also separates paddy grains from straw. Further labour time and cost are saved as the preparation of threshing floor is done away with, and the movable thresher can operate right on the dry field or on the roadside, thereby saving labour time and the cost of having to carry paddy from the field to the threshing floor. Farmers say that not only can they save the cost of threshing by one-half with the use of the threshing machine compared with threshing by tractor, but the threshed grains also come out in a better condition, as tractors tend to produce a high rate of broken grains which in turn reduce the price. The success of threshing machines has led a small number of wealthy rice farmers in Theparaj to buy their own machines and rent them out to the rest of the rice-farming households after they have finished with their own threshing (see also Chirapha, 1980).

Like the two-wheeled tractors, the rice-threshing machines that are in current use by Theparaj rice farmers are being manufactured locally by firms located in amphoe Mueang of Chachoengsao province, some of which are already in the business of manufacturing tractors and other farm machinery equipment. The various versions of threshers have been developed and gradually modified to

suit local conditions by a government agency, the Agricultural Engineering Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives, which has been working in close co-operation with the International Rice Research Institute and has disseminated the newly developed models to local manufacturers.

The State

The large-scale transformation in the levels of rice production in recent years seems to have been possible both owing to and in spite of the state's policy, which aims at raising the productivity of rice production without increasing the final prices to consumers, so as to keep the level of urban wages low for the benefit of the industrial sector. The state's general bias in favour of industrialization, its policy of depressing the domestic rice price, its chemical fertilizers policy which has created a monopolistic control over fertilizer manufacturing and marketing, have all worked to the disadvantage of the farming population. Yet, at the same time, the state can also be seen to have strengthened the intersectoral integration between the forms of productive and institutional finance capital, and the modernizing agricultural sector. First of all, it has created the basic agricultural infrastructure, for instance, large-scale irrigation systems which have greatly expanded irrigated areas, stabilized water supplies and made water control more efficient, which has proved essential preconditions for the adoption of double

cropping and high-yielding rice varieties; its research and development of new high-yielding rice varieties, mechanized farming equipment, its agricultural extension and dissemination of the new technology, its anti-pest/weed programmes, etc., which together make up a basic framework in which further innovation and capitalization in rice production could take place.

Secondly, in a more direct manner the state has itself attempted to provide farmers with production incentives largely through its subsidized credit programme so as to facilitate the farmers' adoption of increasingly capitalized production inputs and techniques. Furthermore, from 1975, commercial banks, too, have been encouraged to earmark a portion of their funds as agricultural credit, and conditions have been set to secure a guarantee from newly established rural branches of commercial banks to extend no less than 20% of each branch's total deposits to local agricultural producers (APRACA, 1982: 9). The recent years thus witnessed an expansion of institutional finance capital (with the state and commercial banks as creditors) into the country's agricultural sector. This can be seen from the fact that in the Central Region in 1957, only 10% of indebted farmers obtained credit from financial institutions and 90% from private sources; by 1978/79, 60.3% were relying on institutional credit while 39.7% were obtaining non-institutional credit (Wittayakorn, 1982: 117). The amount of total institutional credit increased from 2,000 million baht in 1974 to over 19,000

million baht in 1979, out of which 44% was provided by commercial banks (BAAC Annual Report, 1979: 65). However, the institutional credit has always been selective by region, produce and farm size and its benefits have largely accrued to the wealthy section of the agricultural population. Thus, in 1977-78 the richest and more commercialized Central Region gets 40% of all the credit from the state's credit institution, the BAAC, and the poorest province of Ubolratchathani received 10 times less of the BAAC's agricultural credit than the wealthy province of Ratchaburi (Sornsan, 1980: 126-128). At the same time, within a particular area that has access to institutional credit, it has generally been the case that wealthy households with good collateral have been the major beneficiaries, while poor households have continued to rely on private loans with higher rates of interest. In Theparaj one finds that all the poultry-farming households, all the wealthy rice-farming households and 50% of the middle rice-farming households have access to institutional credit, while all of the poor rice-farmers have to rely on merchants and private moneylenders for credit in kind and loans.

In connection with this, the state's industrialization policy has provided investment incentives to agriculture-related industries as well as agribusinesses, again with direct benefits tending to be concentrated in the hands of large-scale enterprises. Since the 1970s up until now, there has thus been a

period of rapid expansions of industries processing food and raw materials from agriculture, agri-businesses such as animal feed industry, and in the marketing of such products, as well as a tendency towards a few big companies increasing their control over a particular industry and the market. Some of the new agri-businesses have attempted to take over the production of agricultural produce and raw materials themselves in order to achieve cost effectiveness and a close synchronization between harvest and processing, e.g. big pineapple and some other fruits and animal feed companies which operate their own large-scale plantation; while a large number of other agri-business enterprises have retained a more indirect control over agricultural production processes with producers retaining their land ownership, but the companies, through such a system as contract farming, have a mercantile control over production and marketing, e.g. the relationship between small sugar-cane growers and sugar factories, between animal-feed industries and small-scale poultry-farmers. At the same time, the recent agricultural development strategy has also given rise to new opportunities of further accumulation, for certain members of the rural rich in some areas also have developed themselves into capitalist farmers operating their farms with wage labourers, a high level of mechanization and capital intensive inputs, as is the case of the big poultry farmers in Theparaj. In turn, the increasing agricultural intensification has permitted a rapid

process of accumulation in industries producing agricultural inputs and farm machinery; some have also received direct promotion privileges from the state and some not, as well as marketing firms. The recent agricultural development strategy can thus be seen to contribute to the strengthening of the linkages between the modernizing agricultural sectors and productive capital.

However, the relatively more liberal political climate in 1973-1976 and from the end of 1977 onwards, giving more opportunity for the lower classes to air their grievances more openly as well as producing a series of general elections, has to some extent resulted in recent governments adopting certain policies that would win them votes of the rural masses, although the pronounced objectives of social justice and equality have had little effect in practice, with no fundamental changes in the existing socio-economic and power patterns. Important among their policies towards the agricultural sector is firstly the tambon development scheme, which was first introduced by the Kukrit government in 1975 and has since come to be known by various names, such as the "Ngoen Phan" scheme, the "Scheme for the Recovery of the Rural Economy Hit by Natural Disaster" (during the Kriangsak government) and the "Rural Job Creation Scheme" (during the Prem government), has the official objective of creating off-season employment for the rural population through direct grants provided by the central government to all

the tambon in the country. Large funds have been allocated for the purpose: 2,500 million baht in 1975, 3,500 million in 1976, 1980 and 1981. In general, benefits of the scheme tend to be concentrated among a small section of rich and powerful members of the tambon who usually assume positions of headmen or sit on local tambon councils, but in some localities there exist also local leaders who identify with the poorer strata of the people. What is certain is that the tambon development project has strengthened the power, influence and in many cases the financial position of the council committee members, who are in the position to decide on what specific local projects to undertake, to supervise the implementation to select outside contractors and labourers to be employed (see Krirkiat, 1975; Thongrot, 1981; Chantana, 1984; Anan, 1983: 366-569). In Theparaj, the projects carried out in 1975-76 involved many cases of curruption and embezzlement of funds, both on the part of some tambon council committee members and government officials who acted as advisers of the committee. Many villagers who were hired in some projects complained that they did not get paid at all for their work because the money was embezzled by committee members in charge, including the kamnan who were also getting additional bribe money from outside contractors, while those who were not involved in the projects complained that committee members were very biased in their selection of workers. In recent years Theparaj tambon council has been composed of more committee

members with "clean hands"; thus embezzlement and corruption have become much rarer, although members are still predominantly from the wealthy section of the locality, rich poultry-farmers, rice-farmers and traders. And projects still reflect and largely serve the interests of this group. At the same time, the fact that the tambon projects are still very much subjected to the supervision and approval of provincial administration and are to operate within certain uniform regulations set by the central government officials means that specific local conditions are often overlooked. Hence, in some years local workers are not prepared to take on the tambon council work because the wages being paid are less than the going daily wage they are getting. Such negligence can also be seen in the general policy of the governments, whereby the total tambon development funds are allocated to each tambon, regardless of size and wealth. As such the scheme, which can be said to constitute a new significant way to channel public funds directly to the rural areas, might have done little to alleviate wealth and income disparities either among the different regions and localities, or among the different socio-economic strata of people within each of the tambon.

Another policy which has been pursued by the recent governments is the rice price support/guarantee programme which is meant to help rice farmers obtain reasonable prices for their produce through the government's intervention in the marketing. The policy of rice price

support was first introduced in 1965-66, but until 1974 it had had very little effect due to limited funds being allocated for the purpose, lack of facilities, agencies and back-up schemes to render an effective implementation while at times the support prices turned out to be lower than what the market was offerring (Ammar, 1975: 243-244; Saneh, 1981: 30-32). From 1975 onwards, after the 1974 Farmers' Welfare Fund Act was passed, the rice price support programme has come to be financed by this newly established Fund, which is largely raised from rice and sugar premia, and the Marketing Organization for Farmers was established as a principal agency to administer the rice price support scheme. Hence, for the very first time since its introduction, the 80% of the rice premium was set aside as the Farmers' Welfare Fund and only 20% went to the Treasury, whereas previously the Treasury used to have the whole amount of the premium. In subsequent years from 1976 onwards, the total of rice and sugar premia has all gone to the Farmers' Welfare Fund. Between 1975 and 1979 the rice price support/guarantee scheme has most of the Fund's share, i.e. 42.15% and most of this has been spent on purchasing rice at a support price directly from farmers (Rangsan, 1980: 18-31). This measure , when effective, could yield direct benefits to rice-farmers and in 1975/76 when the Kukrit government's guaranteed price was higher than the going market price by a few hundred baht per ton, (Saneh, 1981: 50), Theparaj rice farmers who were lucky enough to take part in the scheme say that this was one of their

best years and began to think that rice farming could after all be a secure and profitable business, especially when they had two crops to sell yearly. However, in subsequent years from 1977 to 1981, the scheme has had little effect because the government's purchase prices have not been much different and at times lower than market prices, while the amount of paddy being sold at support/guarantee price has been very small. Only 2.23% of the total paddy produced came under the scheme in 1975-76 (Somphop, 1981: 69), 1.02% in 1976-77, 1.26% in 1978-79, and 7.86% in 1980-91 (Saneh, 1982: 38-44). The overall failure of this scheme has been compounded by the inefficiency of the government agencies involved, whose frequent delayed action means that farmers do not have any or much rice left to sell to the government by the time the scheme is launched. Meanwhile, benefits from the scheme seem more assured to other parties, especially the rice-millers on whom the government agencies depend for their storage barns to keep the rice bought from farmers, and who could profit not only in the form of brans and broken rice, by-products of the deposited rice that they are contracted to mill, but also from the various expenses they could charge the rice-farmers who sell them rice under this scheme, e.g. farmers have to pay for transport cost, conveyor belt fees, and deduction is made from the rice price for impurities, etc. This is why rice millers always try to get themselves involved in the rice-support scheme and are often prepared to bribe officials conceived to get the contract. As regards rice

farmers themselves, benefits that may be obtained from the rice support scheme by no means accrue to rice farmers across the board, but generally poor farmers who have to sell their rice to merchants right after harvest to pay off their debt are generally not so well-placed to participate in the scheme as rich farmers.

The process of industrialization and intensification of agricultural production, which has greatly accelerated, particularly since 1960, has to a significant degree been promoted and consolidated by the Thai state. This has given rise to expanding opportunities for both foreign and domestic capital to invest in a variety of new industries. Concurrently, the adoption of new capital-intensive technology in rice-farming and in poultry-farming has forged much closer links between agricultural producers and the agro-industrial complex. Owing to the pre-existing socio-economic differentiation, those who are well-placed to take advantage of the new accumulation opportunities are usually the merchants and bankers whose economic position has been entrenched from previous trends in Thailand's development. This applies to both the national and the village levels. In Theparaj, rich merchants, millers and moneylenders are the people who have been able to build up further profit by channelling their capital into the highly capitalized enterprise of poultry-farming. Among rice-farming villagers, those who have benefited most from the new situation tend to be the already wealthy villagers. Because of the pre-existing

unequal access to the various components of the modern capital-intensive type of agricultural production, the recent trend in Thailand's development seems to have set the rich and poor villagers of Theparaj more widely apart than ever before.

CHAPTER 6

THEPARAJ IN THE EARLY 1980S

The Theparaj of 1981-82 was thriving in an atmosphere of prosperity and optimism and villagers seem to be at one in their opinion that the major watershed in their local history has been the introduction of double-cropping and poultry-farming, and there is no doubt that since their introduction there has been a significant increase in the general wealth of local people of all strata, including the poor, who have also benefited from the overall increase in wage employment and in the level of wages, owing to the peak labour-demand periods in the double-crop cycle of rice cultivation. Much of this wealth could be readily seen. In recent years, the majority of the houses in Village no. 2 have had extensive repairs with new roofs, walls and floorboard replacing old ones, while many have been enlarged. A lot of the wage-labouring households recently acquired a number of modern luxuries like electric rice-cookers and television sets, while in an average rice-farming household, one can also find, apart from these, a refrigerator, a sewing machine and sometimes a stereo set as well. Furthermore, the recent increase in demand for labour also meant a decline in the number of members of poor households who left the village during the off-season to seek work in towns. On the contrary, in recent years a number of households that went to Bangkok and other big towns to hire themselves

out as wage labourers, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s, had returned to the village as they heard of the better prospect of wage work, both in the rice fields and in the rapidly expanding business of poultry-farming. At the same time, rice-farmers in the area found that they rarely needed to pledge their land for credit as before. And some tenants were even able to acquire land of their own. They found that the situation of chronic indebtedness which previously often resulted in land losses, was seldom the case in the 1981-82 situation, and that the loans in cash or in kind that they incurred at the begining of the crops cycle, they could generally repay at harvest. As for the better-off households who had channelled their investment into the even more profitable business of raising hens for eggs, the recent years saw their wealth and income increasing in leaps and bounds, particularly the few large farms which continued to expand the scale of their operation, and came to be the most outstanding landmark in the Theparaj rural scene by the beginning of the present decade.

Despite the general atmosphere of prosperity, the gap between the rich and poor in Theparaj seemed to be widening even further. However, the nature of present-day differentiation also differs from that of the pre-1960s in certain basic aspects. In the 1950s, when Theparaj was a predominantly rice-growing area and local people were deriving their income from activities connected with rice-farming in one capacity or another, differentia-tion was taking place in a general climate of

instability. Fluctuating rice production and rice prices that had often been kept down by various government controls, coupled with low production forces, meant that rice production generally offerred relatively uncertain returns as can be seen in the persistent problems of land loss tenancy and indebtedness. Then, the more profitable means of surplus investment for the well-to-do households in rural areas were rather moneylending, land-renting and rice-milling. On the other hand, the differentiation of 1981-82 which began in the late 1960s, took place in a setting of economic growth and prosperity. With the introduction into the area of double-cropping and various types of new technology associated with the "Green Revolution", the greatly increased yields and output of rice had made rice-farming more profitable, and yet it still compared much less favourably than poultry-farming, which in recent years enjoyed a largely stable, if not expanding market. As such, in the past decade or so, modern poultry-farmers has become an increasingly profitable means of surplus investment for the local well-to-do households and the trend has been for the local merchants and moneylenders with more accumulated surplus than others to channel more and more of their capital into the new poultry-farming enterprise, thus retaining and at the same time greatly strengthening their economically powerful position. By 1981-82 they were indisputably the wealthiest members of the local community and their wealth outshines that of the rice-millers, merchants and moneylenders in the area.

Seeing that poultry-farming offerred a more certain and profitable prospect, a number of rice-farmers who were regarded as well-to-do within the rice-farming community, had also entered the eggs production business but on a much smaller scale than the former, owing to the limited amount of surplus at their command. They had to enter into a form of dependent relationship with one of the large farms. All poultry-farmers had access to institutional credit, whether it be commercial or through state's banks, while their operations were highly capital-intensive. On the other hand, with rice farming, despite the recent adoption of double-cropping, and the new inputs and techniques which have resulted in a significant increase in productivity and output, the tendency for rice prices to be maintained at a low level means that there are no incentives to attract large-scale agriculture to the sector, as has been the case with poultry-farming. The rice-farming sector thus retained much of the former character. Merchants, local traders, moneylenders were still found to predominate in the financing and distribution of paddy. A large number of rice-farmers, particularly the less well-off ones, continued to rely on informal sources of credit. The differential access to various components of the new technological package, both the modernized method of rice-cultivation and poultry-farming, seemed to have resulted in a widening gap between the rich and poor strata in each sector, as well as between the sectors,

while wage-labourers occupied the lowest rung of the social ladder.

Occupational Pattern

In 1981-82 the occupation pattern in Theparaj was quite diverse. There were also households with mixed occupations, i.e. carrying out rice and poultry-farming at the same time, while a great many households derive their major income source from one job and supplement this with another. Classification of households in an exact fashion is by no means easy since incomes from agricultural activities fluctuate from year to year and within the same year. For instance, in a year when rice price is particularly high and the crop is good, a household with both rice and poultry-farms may earn more income from their rice than from their poultry. Moreover, the very different operations and organization of the two types of production make it even more complex to work out the income and costs and compare them, especially when a household may be expending its own labour, using common inputs in both activities, etc. Lacking detailed information on the precise pattern of income and expenditure, value of output, capital assets, etc., I try to rely more on what the villagers themselves say about the relative importance of the different types of their activities.

In 1981-82 there were 201 households in Village no. 2. Out of these, 19 relied on poultry-farming as their main income source, but the richest poultry-farmer also

operated a timber business, while 5 also worked their riceland alongside poultry-farming, one household head was a full-time policeman, and the smallest poultry-farming household in the village derived their income also from boat-building and operating a school food stall at the same time.

There were 60 households engaged in rice-farming. Out of these 13 households were working plots of less than 15 rai and always supplemented their income with wage work. Of the remaining households, some undertook wage work on an occasional basis, others supplemented their income from a variety of means, such as small-scale shop-keeping, duck-raising, being members of a traditional musical band and petty trading. Two households with the largest plots also raised 20-30 pigs and one of them operated a small rice-mill, milling local paddy for consumption.

Out of the 201 households, 97 can be said to have earned their living in wage-labouring. Of these, 3 worked in the local timber shop; 5 households were supported mainly by members who worked in Bangkok factories or as domestic servants; 3 were denuded households of old people who received some support from their children who were wage-workers, although they themselves tried to make ends meet by engaging in mat-weaving, fish-net sewing or broom-making; 3 were earning their income from bus-driving, sewing bulk orders of clothing and selling illegal lottery; 34 had work with poultry-farms; 9 households had members working in both

rice and poultry-farms; and the remaining 40 households mainly hired themselves out in rice-fields, although some supplemented their income from other activities in off-peak periods, ranging from mat-weaving, petty-trading, fishing, raising a few pigs, to playing in a local musical band.

As for the rest of the households, numbering 25, 4 were teachers' households (two of whom also supplement their income from small-scale moneylending and wage labour); 2 were merchants-cum-moneylenders; 4 were small shopkeepers who also turned their back rooms into gambling houses; 3 sold noodles and a small amount of household goods and food; 2 were old people who no longer worked but were well supported by their children; one was in fish-raising with rice-farming as a supplementary income source; one household raised fish on a small scale and supplemented its income from wage work; one was engaged in boat building and wage work, one helped his parents manage a big poultry-farm; one helped run his parents' small rice-mill; one ran a repair shop for rice-farming machinery; one was a small rice trader; one an owner of a timber ship; one a local baht-bus driver with his own vehicle; and one owned a local musical band.

Households in the same occupational grouping of course did not enjoy equal access to the various means of production and the same degree of wealth and status. The situation in an area like Theparaj where the "green revolution" and the agro-business of poultry-farming have been adopted within the past decade or so, is still in

the process of constant change as the effects of the recent changes are unfolding and it may be several years before the longer-term effects of such developments can be fully assessed. This factor, together with the incomplete information on the income, expenditure and output patterns of each household, make it impossible to carry out a detailed, accurate analysis of the wealth and income differentiation within the village except to comment on some important trends that are readily identifiable from the 1981-82 situation and to give a general idea of the pattern of wealth and power relations in the village.

Maybe the least confusing way to present the various households in their economic and social setting is to deal with rice-farming, poultry-farming, wage-labouring and the rest of the households separately at first, because the production of rice and eggs involves very different organizations, and different degrees of capitalization and labour utilization. Moreover, the differing patterns of daily routines between the two major productive enterprises have in some way created a growing social distance between the people involved in the respective sectors, and people from farm-owners to wage-workers often consciously identify themselves as being associated with either the rice or the poultry sector.

Poultry-Farmers

To deal first with the poultry-farming households. In 1981-82, 19 out of 201 households were operating poultry- farms of various sizes. The people involved tend to categorize these farms into large, medium and small, according to the scale of their operation. Looked at more closely, the different categories are found also to be distinguishable in terms of their reliance on wage labour, their background before entering into the new business, their differential access to credit, their relationships with other local residents and with outsiders, as well as their relative political position.

At first it may be useful to point out that with the business of poultry-farming where productivity of land and labour is very high, especially compared with rice-farmers, even after the latter has undergone a technological innovation, a large-scale farm with multi-million baht assets could be run on a relatively small piece of land. For instance, a farmer who farmed 32 rai of rice land while at the same time operating a poultry-farm on a 5 rai plot said that he usually made more profit from his poultry-farm although this obviously depended on the relative prices he could get from his respective produce. According to him, only when the egg price dropped to a very low level while the rice price was static, did his income from the two operations roughly equal one another. Similarly, a poultry-farmer operating on a few rai of land could be doing well by the village standard. A rice-farmer with a 5 rai plot had to

supplement his income from wage work. With poultry-farming, given the information available, the size of flock and the degree of wage labour employment may be better indicators of a poultry-farmer's scale of operation and economic position. These aspects are therefore dealt with first.

Big Poultry-Farmers

Of the 19 poultry-farming households in Village no. 2, 4 were in the large-scale category with the sizes of their flocks ranging from 37,000 to 80,000 birds. Enclosed by solid walls and barbed wire fences, these big poultry-farms stood out quite distinctively from the rest of the village landscape. Within the enclosed compound large chicken sheds, each containing over 3,000 birds, stretched out usually in two long rows with a narrow road running in between. Between the sheds were rectangular, man-made ponds which served for water storage and proved particularly useful during the dry season when water in the canal could drop to a very low level. The majority of sheds were used for keeping egg layers but every farm also had a few more sheds where they raised chicks of ages ranging from a few days old to 5 1/2 months old. When the birds were not yet laying they were kept all together in one big shed. Only when they began to produce eggs would they be transferred to individual cages. Besides the sheds for the chickens, all large farms also had a big warehouse-like building. After the eggs had been collected they would be sorted out into

various sizes and stored in this building, ready to be collected by the egg merchants. This warehouse was also used for storing the various feed ingredients and a feed-mixing machine.

Other installations that were essential to poultry-farming include a water pump and engine for drawing water from the canal into a storage container where chlorine would be added to purify the water before it was stored in elevated storage tanks. When water was needed, taps which were placed at one end of the water troughs beside the rows of cages could be turned on. Apart from these, other assets which called for large capital outlays on the part of the big farms were pick-up trucks and big trucks used for transporting materials, feed and eggs.

Such capital assets on their own would call for an enormous amount of investment. One shed that housed about 3,000 chickens cost approximately 110,000 baht to build in 1980-81. The 3,000 individual cages that contains the birds demands a further cost of around 80,000 baht. A 2-ton feed-mixing machine was priced at 35,000-40,000 baht in 1980-81.

Aside from the cost of such capital assets, the variable costs that a big farm had to bear were also considerable. A large part of such costs in 50-60% of the total variable costs were spent on feed ingredients and chicks. One farm-owner estimated that it cost him about 0.60 baht per day to feed one chicken at the 1981 feed price. At that time his farm had about 50,000 birds

in all which meant that the feed alone would cost him approximately 30,000 baht a day.

All the big chicken farms in the Prawet-Theparaj area deal directly with the animal-feed manufacturers. On all the farms, all of the feed for the chicks was obtained by purchase from feed manufacturers in the form of pellets and a certain amount of concentrate feed was bought for the adult hens. Big farms preferred to buy the various individual ingredients separately from different sources and mix them with their own mixing machines. It is said that up to the latter half of the 1970s, farms of all sizes were feeding all their birds, hens as well as chicks, with manufactured feed which the farmer would then mix with rice by-products that were locally available. However, one year towards the end of the 1970s, a majority of all the farms were encountering a severe drop in their production of eggs. Some farms were turning out as low as 20% of the normal level of productivity. The chicken-farming community as a whole seemed to have pinpointed the cause of this to the deterioration in the quality of the manufacutured feed mixtures. From then on, most farms turned away from the manufactured feed and preferred to buy the different raw ingredients from various sources and mix these themselves and to buy from the feed manufacturers only some feed concentrate. The sales of feed that the manufacturers once enjoyed in the area therefore had dropped considerably since then, although all the farms still continued to purchase pellet feed for their chicks as the

pellets were in the form that the chicks found easiest to consume. Even so, a big farm raising 70,000 or so birds is said to be buying 12 tons of feed concentrate weekly from a manufacturer, the cost of which amounts to over 100,000 baht.

As for the other raw ingredients that the big farms buy, they consist of rice bran, broken rice, maize, soya bean meal, fish meal, oyster shell meal, bone meal and salt. The first two ingredients, which are rice by-products, have always been bought directly from local rice mills. The rest of the raw materials are now acquired from a variety of sources. A lot of farms in Theparaj buy from Cholburi-based middlemen. Most of the feed ingredients are produced inside Thailand except for soya bean meal, vitamins, minerals and medicine which have to be imported.

However, for the supply of chicks, all of the poultry-farms need to rely on the same big feed manufacturers that control their production and marketing. In 1980, the CP Company group alone was producing 31.1% of all the baby chicks sold on the market while the largest four companies were supplying 62.6% of the market share (Amnuayphen and Piphit, 1978: 75). To acquire baby chicks, the poultry-farmers are normally bound by the "tie-in-sale" policy of the feed companies and are required to buy chicken feed from the same company. The five big feed companies compete keenly among themselves on sales maximization. Big farms are approached directly and tempted with various special

offers from a discount of anything up to 25%, free transportation of supplies and veterinary services, or even free trips to Europe or the U.S.A. once a year, provided that the value of the products bought from a company exceed 400,000 baht in a consecutive 6 month period (see also Niphon, 1980: 28).

As regards the sales of eggs, all the big farms sell their produce to different middlemen of their own choosing. These buyers are regular customers who come around to the farms to collect eggs every week. Often, some of the eggs are sold to itinerant merchants who make their appearance only at times when there is a great demand for eggs in the markets; they tend to offer higher prices than the regular buyers. Apart from this, some of the big farms also transport their eggs themselves to sell directly to wholesalers in Bangkok. Profits from the sale of eggs vary with the time of year and usually reach the lowest level about twice a year. But even when the farmers said that they got low prices, about .80 baht per egg, big farms still managed to scrape a profit of about .10 baht per egg. On the other hand, the price that big farms could sell for rose to as much as 1.35-1.38 baht in January 1982. On the whole, for the year 1982, prices averaged about 1.15 baht per egg. In the recent past, farmers said that they seldom encountered drastic falls in egg prices, and to big farm operators, seasonal variations in price has not been a cause for concern.

Instead, the main concern of all poultry-farmers has centered on the problem of animal diseases, as the spread of a disease could prove extremely costly, particularly when it leads to massive deaths among their flock. This occurred with much greater frequency in the past when farmers were still unfamiliar with disease control and prevention methods. A large number of Theparaj small farmers went out of business because of the deaths of almost their entire flock caused by sickness. Nowadays, the ability to handle this problem has greatly increased over the years and all the Theparaj poultry-farmers can now tell when a bird is not well and can promptly segregate it from the rest of the flock. They also vaccinate the chickens themselves against common diseases at regular intervals.

With a large-scale capital intensive operation to run, all the big poultry-farmers need to finance their operations with loans from commercial banks. Their multi-million baht assets (one big farmer estimated his total assets to be around 20 million baht in 1981) made them welcome customers. Two of the four big farms in Village no. 2 were also clients of the state's Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Co-operatives and were mortgaging their land with it in order to obtain long-term loans of up to 2 million baht per loan at 12-13% rates of interest.

All the big poultry-farms employ wage labourers to carry out all the work in the farms while the farm owners assume the role of owner-managers. The four

poultry-farms employed between 15-40 wage workers each on a regular basis. For each shed containing 3,000 birds or more, one full-time labourer is hired to look after that particular lot of birds. Their work routine include feeding the birds 3 times and collecting eggs twice daily, grading eggs, keeping records of the hens' egg-producing preformance; while occasional chores consist of giving treatment for or prevention against diseases, selecting non-layers for culling, and collecting chicken manure. Apart from workers put in charge of the chickens, big farms also hire an additional number of people to carry out other jobs as well. There usually is one worker who is responsible solely for mixing feed. In big farms, feed needs to be mixed two or three times a day since 70,000 chickens consume about 6 tons of feed daily. Added to this, a big farm also hire at least one full-time driver, as well as a few more people to do odd jobs such as repairing the sheds or the cages, building work, cleaning or deepening the ponds, etc.

The majority of workers in the big farms were local people, with the exception of one farm which hired in a number of northeasterners who were on the job-seeking registration list of the Department of Labour. They were paid lower wages and tended to leave at the end of a year. A number of poultry-farm workers lived in their own houses and travelled daily to work. Others lived in the huts provided by the farm-owners. The huts were built at intervals along the lengths of the side-fences.

Each was used to house one family or was shared among 2-3 workers. Living-in workers were said to provide an extra benefit to the farm-owners as they could act as watchmen against thieves at the same time. In 1981-82, workers who did not live and eat with the farm were paid 6,000 baht a month, while those receiving full-board accommodation got 600-800 baht. People who had been working for a long time or whose jobs demanded a greater responsibility were paid between 1,200-1,600 baht. As for the carpenters who were hired regularly to repair the various buildings and bird cages although this might not be every day, were usually paid on a daily basis, between 50 and 70 baht a day.

Big poultry-farmers have thus come to assume the role of rural capitalists who not only manage their farms with an extensive use of wage labour, a huge outlay of capital and enjoyed high productivity in terms of land and labour, they have also been reinvesting their accumulated surplus on their farms on an expanding scale. To ascertain who the main beneficiaries of the recent growth of the poultry-farming agri-business were, and why they had been able to take up the new opportunities created by the new enterprise, it may be helpful to look at the background of the big poultry-farmers.

The biggest poultry-farm in Village no. 2 belonged to a Mrs. Yee who operated two farms in the area, one in Village no. 2, the other in nearby tambon Prawet. In 1981-82 the two farms together contained over 80,000 chickens and employed between 30-40 workers. Yee herself

was born into a rice-farming family and her parents also traded in rice on a small scale. She began to build up her wealth after she was married to a self-made Chinese immigrant, who started off his working life in Thailand as a coolie hired by a timber merchant who operated on boats. By the time the couple got married her husband already managed to save up enough money to set up a small timber trade of his own. They then moved to another amphoe of Chachoengsao where they set up a saw-mill on a piece of land rented from one of her husband's relatives. The saw-mill prospered for over 10 years until it was burnt down by a fire. After that they moved back to Theparaj and rented two shops in Klong Suan market in Village no. 6 and resumed their trade in timber. They gradually expanded their business and started another timber shop in the neighbouring tambon Prawet beside the highway. At the same time, the couple were also entering into the rice trade and moneylending as well. She thus found herself lending out money to rice-farmers in the area and often preferred to retain their land title deeds as a guarantee against loans. At harvest time she would be seen going around with several of her boats to collect repayments on the loans and interest in paddy from her clients as well as to buy up paddy in her capacity as middleman. In the 1960s and the early 1970s, a large number of people in the area mortgaged their land with her and many also lost their land to her through loan foreclosures. In Village no. 2 alone more than 300 rai of land was mortgaged with Yee during the period

mentioned and of this, 150 rai came under Yee's ownership. The various plots were then rented out, some to the former owners. Hence, Yee was also operating as a landowner at the same time.

However, towards the latter half of the 1970s when Yee decided to start up a poultry-farm, she gradually gave up her rice-trading, preferring to concentrate both her capital and attention on the new business; although the timber shops had been retained and had been supplying her poultry-farms with cheap timber. Her first farm was set up in tambon Prawet and in 1977 Yee bought 35 rai of land along the roadside in Village no. 2 and had 18 poultry sheds built there. The previous owner of the land, a rice-farmer, was then in deep financial trouble and was forced to sell off the land in a hurry while the plot was filled with ripening rice plants. The manner in which Yee swiftly assumed possession of this piece of land created a great deal of bitterness, for no sooner had the contracts been exchanged than Yee had the land levelled and proceeded immediately with the construction of poultry sheds, thus destroying all the rice plants that were about to be harvested. Strong criticisms and complaints were voiced by the previous owner and finally Yee had to agree to compensate for the damage.

As her poultry-farming business proved to be highly profitable, Yee's farm had been expanding steadily. In 1980 she bought a 6 rai plot opposite her farm in Village no. 2, this time turning its former occupant into a wage-labourer. In 1983 she took possession of another 50

rai plot not far off by foreclosing on the loan that its owners failed to repay and the latter has since joined the ranks of the wage-labourers. By 1983 Yee was operating her poultry business on 90 rai of land. At the same time, with the riceland lying on the northeastern side of the canal with no access to road transport which she gained possession through loan foreclosures, she decided to sell of 75 rai to rice-farming tenants who used to rent the three different plots in 1979-80. Despite this recent sale, Yee was ranked the largest landowner in Village no. 2 in 1982-83, with 144 rai. Her role as a moneylender and landowner had recently been much less important as she was concentrating her resources increasingly on an expansion of the poultry-farm.

As for the second largest poultry-farm in Village no. 2, this had over 70,000 chickens in 1981-82 and was hiring 28-30 workers. Its owner is of Chinese descent and used to run his own rice-mill in Pichit province before moving to Theparaj after he got married to the daughter of a rice-trading family based in tambon Prawet, and decided to set up a poultry-farm. He thus entrusted the Pichit rice-mill to the care of his brothers while he and his wife bought 17 rai of land in the village in 1974. At first he started off on a small-scale with only a few poultry sheds and was relying on Liang, the CP company agent in the area, for credit in feed and chicks and selling to Liang his eggs. A few years later he broke off from Liang and started to deal directly with

the feed companies and middlemen who deal in other feed ingredients. In 1981, to expand their production, the couple bought another 59 rai of land opposite his farm, from an absentee landowner at 20,000 baht per rai and turned out the rice-farming tenant who used to rent the plot.

The third biggest poultry-farm with over 50,000 chickens and a work force of 17-20, belongs to Maay, who, like Yee and kamnan Prasit, was born into a rice-farming family, but later on entered into trade before switching to poultry-farming. Maay's grandparents were among the first settlers who claimed 110 rai of land in Village no. 2. His parents inherited only 26 rai of this land but was renting some 200 rai of the crown land at a low rent. It is said that his parents later fell into poverty because his father gambled away all their fortunes. However, Maay himself married two sisters of one well-to-do, long-settled family (he married a younger sister after his first wife, who was her elder sister, died), and the couple inherited 70 rai of land in Village no. 4 from the wives' parents. Maay's life story is of particular interest, as it goes some way to show that his decision to enter into trade and moneylending, instead of carrying on producing rice exclusively, enabled him to accumulate enough surplus to start a poultry-farm of his own on a much larger scale than his fellow-villagers who went from rice-farming straight into the poultry business.

When engaged in rice farming, Maay was among the first people to try out chemical fertilizer on his field after reading about it in an agricultural magazine. Meanwhile, he was constantly seeking various avenues to improve his livelihood as he began to think that there was no future in rice-farming. His frustration led him to try his hand at oyster-farming for two years in nearby amphoe Bangpakong. Failure in this new venture brought him back to his rice land for several more years. He finally reached the conclusion that rice-farming would give him no chance to get rich. When he looked around to see which occupation would generate a good income for his family, the answer was always trade. Since the number of poultry-farms was increasing in the 1960s, especially in the neighbouring tambon Bang Phra, he decided to start trading in chicken feed although other members of his family still continued with rice-farming at first. Maay operated as a middleman, buying rice bran and broken rice from local mills and selling them to poultry-farms in the area. At the same time he also acted as a sales agent for a firm called Por Charoenphan. His dealing in animal feed also involved him in moneylending whereby he advanced the feed to his customers and was re-paid with interest when the latter had sold their eggs. For some customers the eggs were sold to Maay himself and the loan was deducted from the sales proceeds accordingly. Maay operated as middleman for some years before starting a poultry-farm of his own in 1977 on 10 rai out of the 43 rai plot that he bought from an absentee landowner, the

rest of which he let as rice-fields. However, as he joined the recent wave of big-farm expansion, he had to turn out the rice-farming tenant from the 33 rai plot so that his egg production could expand to cover the entire 43 rai plot.

The fourth largest poultry-farm in the village employed about 13-15 full-time labourers and had about 37,000 chickens. It belonged to a grandson of Khwaeng Plueang, the well-liked kamnan of Theparaj in the 1910s and 1920s, called Amphai. Amphai's mother is Plueang's youngest daughter who inherited most of her parents' land and by 1940-50 was the largest landowner in the village with 410 rai. However, by 1960 she had only 100 rai of land left. People said that because both she and her husband knew very little about rice-farming, their rice-land was often mismanaged, while their ventures into other businesses such as transport services met with serious losses. Gradually, they had to mortgage their land and lost it piece by piece in the process. By 1970 the elder son, Amphai, was left with 23 rai of land, while their younger son, Amphan, inherited 100 rai. Amhpai was sent to be educated in Bangkok since he was young, and later joined the air force for several years. He eventually returned to Theparaj and was married to a local girl from a well-to-do family. Then, in the early 1960s, they decided to mortgage their 23 rai plot with the BAAC to acquire a long-term loan in order to set up a small poultry-farm, as neither of them had had much experience in rice-farming. The other brother, on the

other hand, married a girl from a wealthy rice-farming family based in another amphoe, and they decided to carry on with rice-farming on their 100 rai plot and also to rent more land from an absentee landowner to whom their parents had lost that same land. Over the years, the wealth of the two brothers had been diverging. While the poultry-farm business of one brother was expanding slowly and its owner was able to buy up 15 more rai of land, the rice-farm of the other brother did not meet with the same success and although he inherited more land, gradually he had to mortgage first a 25 rai plot and lost it through foreclosure of the loan in 1967. Then in 1983 they were forced by financial difficulties to sell off another 31 rai to the kamnan of the adjacent tambon Prawet who was a large-scale poultry-farmer at 50,000 baht per rai. At present, this latter brother is trying to secure some funds to set up a poultry-farm.

Medium-Scale Poultry Farmers

As regards medium-scale poultry-farms, five may be grouped within that category. While big farms had 37,000 to over 80,000 birds and made extensive use of wage labour, medium farms kept about 4,500-8,000 chickens and their owners were relying mainly on their own family labour, although 2 of the farms needed to hire in one full-time labourer each as they were both young couples with still very small children. These farms have basically the same equipment, buildings, etc., as the big ones, albeit on a scale complementary to their flock

sizes. In 1981-82 they obtained their supply of feed concentrate and chicks from one of the big farms, although they sold their eggs independently to middlemen. They all had access to institutional credit to finance their operations.

However, when they first started, all but one of them needed to depend on big farms for credit and marketing. The one that had been operating "independently" of any big farm from the beginning was a relative newcomer to the business, starting only in 1979. His household ran a medium-small rice mill in the village for the previous 10 years but had to give up because of failure to compete with bigger mills both in terms of less-efficient management, poorer marketing outlets and business contacts. The head of their household actually descended from a rice-farming family. His grandfather was a well-respected man of both wealth and status, who not only had more than 200 rai of land, but was also engaged in a certain amount of moneylending in the 1920s and 1930s. His parents then carried on with rice-farming on 54 rai of land they inherited. Later the 54 rai was divided up equally between his sister and himself. He and his wife managed to set up the rice mill with the help of his wife's family who was in the rice-trading business. In 1981-82 his poultry-farm took up about 7 rai of land. The remaining 20 rai of his land was rented out to a rice-farming tenant household.

Two of the medium poultry-farmers were children of a wealthy local shopkeeper-cum-moneylender in the village

and were operating on the land given to them by their parents. Their grandfather was an immigrant from China and used to keep a small shop but was later bankrupt. Their parents both had a poor start in life, working as wage labourers in ricefields and later as tenants. Then their father decided to own a boat-transport service with his own boat and not long afterwards to set up a small shop. He had since been successful in the business. In the 1960s and 1970s their parents were also giving out credit both in cash and in land to local rice-farmers and brought up some land totalling more than 100 rai. They gave some of the land, 25 and 15 rai, to two of their children to help them set up poultry-farms. Both children retained about 6 - 7 rai for their farms and were renting the rest of their land to rice-farmers in 1981-82.

The fourth farm belonged to the family of Maay's daughter who had also been set up with the help of her parents both in terms of land and credit, and had from the start been buying inputs and selling eggs through her father's farm. As for the fifth farm, the household descended from a well-to-do rice-farming family with over 200 rai and inherited over 70 rai of this land. The household used to engage itself exclusively in rice-farming, but was later to be among the first households in the village to take up poultry-farming, while carrying on with rice over 60 rai of their rice land at the same time. When the price of eggs dropped drastically in 1964 they gave up their chicken business

but started it up again not long afterwards. In 1981-82 they still conducted both types of farming because the two were thought to complement one another financially and risks were spread out, although, according to them, the general trend had been for the poultry-farm to support the rice-farm rather than vice versa.

Except for the first farm whose owners seemed to have had sufficient capital from their rice-milling venture to start straight off as a medium-sized farm in 1977, the other four farms had taken several years to expand gradually and reach their present size. While the farm of Maay's daughter had depended from the start on his father's large-scale farm, the other three farms when they first started, had to rely on Liang, the CP Company's agent, for credit in kind and were obliged to buy both the baby chicks and the feed from, and to sell their produce, to Liang. By the end of the 1970s, after a long stretch of good egg prices, they were able to expand their farms further and eventually started to reduce the ties they had with Liang. In 1981-82, although they were still buying feed concentrate from the latter, they bought the rest of the ingredients from various other suppliers, some from other big farms, to mix these themselves with their own machines. All said that they broke off the ties with Liang as soon as they could so as to increase their own profit margins. The prices Liang paid for their eggs were always lower than an average egg middleman by anything up to 0.03-0.04 baht per egg. In 1981-82 they were selling "independently" to

regular middlemen who came around to buy their eggs twice weekly. Prices of feed were also dear when bought from Liang, and a farm-owner with 4,000 birds said that she now pays up to 500 baht a month less than she used to. Moreover, it is said also that they often found the actual weight of the various feed ingredients bought from Liang to be short of the specified weight by a few kilogrammes per sack.

Small Poultry-Farmers

The story is different again when one comes to deal with small poultry-farms in the village. Out of the 19 poultry-farms, 10 were operating on a small-scale with the number of birds ranging from 1,200 to 3,000 and all of them relied wholly on their own family labour. They were able to set up their farms with a small number of chickens but still need to form dependent ties with one of the big farms to obtain a constant source of credit in kind. They have been relying on creditors who can regularly advance them with baby chicks and feed at the beginning of each season and they are obligated to pay back such loans in kind by selling their eggs to the creditors. Nine out of ten small poultry-farmers in 1981-82 were clients of Liang's who was the major CP Company agent in the area. The remaining farm was a client of his father's big farm (he was a son of Maay's).

Small poultry farmers are operating their farms at higher input costs and getting lower prices for their produce. While bigger farms deal directly with companies

and merchants and get discounts together with other benefits from bulk buying, small poultry-farmers are buying on credit at higher prices. As regards the sale of their eggs, they all spoke in unison that the price that Liang was paying for their eggs could be anything up to 0.04 baht an egg, lower than the price that bigger farms were getting and yet, they could not afford to sell their produce independently. Their relatively insecure position means that they were all anxious to ensure both a constant source of credit and a regular marketing outlet for their eggs. According to them, there were a few months in a year when the supply of eggs was saturated and the price dropped. They would have been left with their eggs unsold, which could easily drive them out of business, had they not been tied to Liang; although during such times Liang, too, was often reluctant to buy up their eggs and was said to have accepted only a small quantity of eggs at a time. In this respect bigger farms not only had secure marketing channels for their eggs with egg mechants and middlemen buying from them on a regular basis, but when demand for eggs was high and thus prompting numerous itinerant merchants to go around offering high egg prices, bigger farms could also choose to sell to the highest bidders. Small farmers, on the other hand, were not able to take advantage of this situation to the same extent.

All the farms in this category, except one, had their backgrounds rooted in rice-farming. Out of the 10 households, 5 were engaged in poultry-farming

exclusively. Before, taking up poultry-farming, like their parents and grandparents, they were rice-farmers working on their own land or on crown land over which they had security of tenure and which they either inherited or bought; except for one household who lost his land through indebtedness in rice-farming, had since been a tenant and later switched to poultry-farming. The sizes of their rice-farms averaged from 27 to 54 rai. All of them turned to poultry-farming very early on in the 1960s. They started off with 50-100 birds and gradually built up their stock to the present sizes of 1,500-3,000 birds, while remaining tied to Liang's big poultry-farm from the beginning up until now. At first they carried on with their rice-farming at the same time but a few years afterwards chose to concentrate on poultry-farming alone because of its better and more certain prospects. They had since retained up to 5 rai for their poultry-farms and rented out the rest of their land to rice-farming tenants. One of them once returned to rice-farming for one season after double cropping had been introduced but his wet paddy fetched low prices and he had since stuck to poultry-farming exclusively.

Of the ten households, 3 small poultry-farming households were still carrying on with rice cultivation simultaneously. Their rice plots ranged from 10 to 40 rai. Before taking up poultry-farming, they were operating on a part-owner, part-tenant basis on plots of 45-70 rai. Since their adoption of poultry-farming, the three had given up their tenancy and were cultivating

rice only on their own land which they all inherited from their parents. All of the households relied exclusively on their family labour as far as their poultry-farms were concerned. As regards their rice-farming, they needed to hire in wage-labourers to help them with more tasks than before since they were concentrating their family labour on poultry-farming. Therefore tasks like land preparation, which they used to do by themselves were performed by wage-labourers in 1981-82.

The remaining three of the small poultry-farming households engaged in some other occupations, although poultry-farming constituted a major source of their income. The head of one household was working as a full-time locally-based policeman. Another household did farm a 30 rai rice plot they inherited from their parents but gave this up in the 1970s after crop failures. They then turned to small-scale poultry-farming and had rented 25 rai of their land to their brother's family. In 1981-82 they were also engaged in small-scale duck-raising which did not require as much capital as poultry-raising. The remaining household also had their background in rice-farming, but inherited only 1 rai from their parents because the latter were forced to sell off their 27 rai plot in the 1950s in order to pay off their debts after crop failures. Since then the couple had earned their living from other occupations i.e. the husband had been engaged in boat-building while the wife had been running a food-store at the Theparaj School. After saving up some money they started to raise a small number of

chickens in the late 1970s. In 1981-82 their's and the previously mentioned household were the smallest poultry-farms in Village no. 2 with 1,300 chickens each.

It is not easy to generalize as to why some households had found it more economical to drop rice-farming altogether while others see benefit in the "balance" of diversity. In many cases, this seems to have been related to the timing of the decisions. Households which were exclusively in poultry-farming in 1981-82 tended to have started in poultry earlier and then dropped rice-farming at a time when, for them, the latter became less profitable. Those engaged in mixed farming might have started (or re-started) poultry-farming later at a time when the comparative benefits were different. Other significant factors in the complex picture were: the household's access to capital and credit, its composition (poultry tending to be less labour-intensive), etc.

Differing Socio-Economic and Political Statuses

The different scales of operations in which three categories of poultry-farmers engaged involved them in different patterns of economic and social relationships. Firstly, regarding the relationships between these farms and large-scale animal-feed companies with the companies' vertically integral business and their link with multinationals: the agro-industrial complex can be said to have gained a partial and indirect control over the modern poultry-farming production process as a whole. At

present a source of supply of eggs and poultry have been successfully created while the big agro-industrial companies themselves manage to avoid production risks and at the same time to institute some control over the technical basis of poultry-raising. Poultry-farming is required to meet certain technical criteria so that their produce reaches standard quality and uniformity. Through contract-farming which many poultry-farmers in other areas of Chachoengsao and other proivinces have entered into, and which the many poultry-farming households in Theparaj used to subject themselves to before they switched from chicken meat to egg-production, the big animal-feed companies enforce a partial control over production by binding small poultry-farmers themselves through indebtedness and agreements covering sales of output and via an informal credit network using local big farmers as their intermediaries. At the same time a few big animal-feed companies also enjoy an oligopolistic control over the production and marketing of some vital inputs for poultry-farming such as feed concentrate, baby chicks, medicine, etc., and can manipulate the market to maintain the high prices of their goods. One well-known instance took place in 1978 when the companies undertook to dump over 1.6 million baby chicks into the sea in order to reduce their supply and hence keep up the price (Thai Nikorn, 24/3/1978; Arthit, 28/3/1978). All poultry farms alike are subjected to this partial control over the technical basis of their production and over the

input supplies of the agro-industrial animal-feed complex.

However, compared with the earlier years of poultry-farming in Theparaj, the present-day big and medium poultry-farmers, many of whom used to be tied to the big companies' local sales agent, in 1981-82 were operating largely independently of the agri-businesses' financial and output marketing control. Their position had been increasingly strengthened over the years. They had liberal access to institutional credit from commercial and the state's banks and could choose to sell their produce to the numerous middleman who handled the marketing of eggs. On the other hand, the small poultry-farmers, although they were not subjected to the stringent forms of contract-farming of the past, and although they had access to the BAAC loans, still needed to form dependent ties with some local big firms for credit and marketing outlets. The agro-industry can thus be said in this case to make contact with small-scale producers largely by making use of the ongoing informal credit network, and the existing form of merchant/moneylender mechanism. A few big farms in Theparaj thus found themselves operating on the one hand as the manufacturer's sales agents and on the other as merchants and creditors to small poultry-farmers.

Secondly, a degree of collusion existed among many big poultry-farm owners in order to get high prices for their eggs. Big farm-owners are said to follow closely the fluctuations in the prices of eggs. When the demand

for eggs was high, they would agree to sell their eggs at 0.01 to 0.02 baht per egg higher than the going market rate. A large number of big poultry-farmers seemed to belong to the kamnan's circle and met on a regular basis at a coffee-shop in tambon Prawet to discuss the prices of eggs as well as other aspects of poultry-farming, such as various technical problems, the productivity of their hens, what medicine was good, etc. These meetings took the form of a social gathering with participants indulging in drinking and gambling at the same time. However, not all big farm-owners frequented such meetings. A few of the big farmers, such as Liang (the CP company agent), Yee and Maay (two big farm-owners in Village no. 2), were occasionally accused of acting on their own and making more profit by not adhering to the generally-agreed sale price.

The small and medium poultry farm-owners , on the other hand, never joined in at such meetings. According to them, big farm-owners were talking among themselves in terms of "hundreds of thousands of baht" while they can only talk in terms of "a few baht and satang". They did not meet on a regular basis like the big farmers but they discussed among themselves the various problems they were facing when they met one another at the local coffee-shop or at the market. While big farmers followed closely market conditions that affected the egg and inputs prices and kept up to date with the developments in both the domestic and foreign egg and poultry markets, the medium-scale poultry-farmers took the prices "set" by the

bigger farms as a guideline which they followed when they sold their eggs to the regular middleman clients. As in the small farms, the prices they got were largely set by their creditors, the farmers having no power to bargain.

Thirdly, big poultry-farm owners were much more outwardly oriented than the rest of the village population. The large-scale of their operation resulted in their direct dealings with the feed manufacturers, big bankers and merchants. Locally, these tended to socialize among themselves and had their own meeting places where other villagers were socially excluded. They went about their daily business and routine largely within the confines of their own enclosed farms and were far more inaccessible than other villagers. When they were not inside their farms, one might be lucky enough to catch a glimpse of them as they drove past in their cars or in their pick-up trucks. On the front gates of the big farms beside their farms' name plates were hung signs which read "do not enter if you have no business". Other villagers said that they "do not dare to greet them" when they come across some of the big poultry-farmers because of the social and economic gap that sets them apart.

Fourthly, increasingly, power and prestige were coming to be identified with wealth. In the annual thod kathin religious ceremony when an attempt was usually made to bring in large donations for the local temple, the honoured role of a major sponsor had often been entrusted with well-to-do relatives of local people who were usually based in Bangkok. In recent years this

prestigious role has been offerred to local big poultry-farmers as well.

Also in recent years, big poultry-farmers has become more actively involved in local politics. Those who have entered the politcal arena have themselves been elected to various positions. In 1981-82, the kamnans of tambons Prawet and Theparaj were both owners of large-scale poultry-farms. Other big farm-owners have been elected to various local committees. Big farm-owners tend to have "useful and friendly" relationships with government officials at the amphoe and province levels. Some are known to be able to influence important decisions of governmental committees at the provincial level. Others are said to have used their financial power to sway court verdicts to their advantage. This will be dealt with in more detail in the following section. Suffice it to say here that their poultry-farming production often derive significant benefits from these "useful" relationships. For instance, all the big poultry-farms had been involved in the purchase of illegal timber which was usually sold at half the normal price and many are said to have used their financial power to secure the co-operation of local policemen. As recently as 1981, Yee, the largest poultry-farmer in Village no. 2 was "arrested" for having illegal timber in her possession, but apparently the case never got to court. As it happened, a number of policemen were themselves involved in this illegal timber trade. The wood was said to have been transported from

the northeast to Chachoengsao and other nearby provinces. In Yee's case, certain highway policemen who spotted the timber truck decided to cut in on a share of the spoils. They thus followed the truck to Yee's farm and appeared before her after she had bought the wood to ask for 5,000 baht of hush-up money. Yee at first thought that the two local policemen based in Theparaj had betrayed her and in her rage announced that she would offer a reward of 100,000 baht for anyone who could get them transferred elsewhere. When news of the arrest was heard, other big farmers hurriedly hid their illegal timber by dumping it into the ponds or the canal. Other villagers observed that "money can buy everthing nowadays" and that "money not only generates more money, but money is also power".

The relatively stable and favourable price of eggs over the years, compared with an artificially depressed price of rice, has enabled the egg-farming community in the Prawet-Theparaj area, espcially the big poultry-farms, to become considerably better off than members of the rice-farming community. The handsome profitability of the new enterprise has furthermore attracted an increasing number of better-off rice-farmers to start raising chickens too, albeit on a scale much smaller than those whose background was in trade, or in the businesses of moneylending or milling. Nevertheless, there seemed to exist also a factor which has withheld some people from taking up poultry-farming. Certain households were in a position to start their own chicken-farms but refrained from doing so because they

regarded chicken-raising as a sinful occupation. Being devout adherents of the Buddhist fundamental precepts, they would rather continue with their rice-farming and be content with a moderate level of well-being. A few who were already in poultry-farming also said that they would give up raising chickens after they had saved up some money because they were under a constant pressure from their parents urging them to abandon their chicken-farms for exclusive rice-farming. However, people who thought along this line made up a minority of the village population and the trend was for those rice-farmers who could fork out some capital to start raising chickens, because the prospect was thought to be better than that of rice-farming.

Rice-Farmers

As regards rice-farming, the advent of double-cropping and the adoption of the high-yielding rice varieties and various modern inputs has resulted in a remarkable increase in productivity. Before the change, an average rai of land in Theparaj yielded about 20-25 thang, in 1981-82 the average yield was about 60-70 thang per rai. Hence, the same 20 rai plot could now produce yields 2-4 times larger than before. But such high productivity also means that considerable cash expenditure is now required in rice-farming. Before, to cultivate a 20 rai plot, people said that the essential factors they needed were a few productive labourers and buffalo. Little cash outlay was needed to start off the

cycle of rice-production. In 1981-82, the owners of a plot of the same size needed at least 20,000 baht of cash expenditure to see them through each crop cycle. Before, a household might expand its production by renting in more land or claiming back its rented land for self-cultivation when the children were grown up, hence adding to the number of productive labourers available. At present, even with many labourers in the household, production can no longer be expanded without also expanding cash expenditure at the outset. Most prominent on the expenditure list are such modern inputs as chemical fertilizer, fuel, herbicide, insecticide, together with labour. In the farmers' daily conversations on production, the word thun or "capital", which in this context is closer to the meaning of "cash outlay", cropped up all the time and every rice-farmer to a man was of the opinion that "rice-farming nowadays requires such a great deal of thun". The use of certain inputs, notably chemical fertilizer, herbicide and insecticide has also increased over the years. For instance, farmers said that when they first planted the new high-yielding rice varieties, they used only 5 kilogrammes of fertilizer per rai. A significant repercussion of the farmers' use of inputs with industrial origin is that it has linked them more tightly to the international economic order than before as mechanized farming equipment or most components of them, as well as bio-chemicals, have to be imported and their costs are assigned by the internal and international

markets. The farmers have thus become increasingly caught between the input and output markets, and their decisions regarding the allocation of their time, land, labour have become increasingly constrained by the current prices of the various inputs in relation to the price of their paddy. Hence, when the price of fertilizer soar, they might cut down on the amount used; but to make up for the decline in returns, they have to sacrifice their leisure time and put more of their labour into the various stages of cultivation. Some, like a number of rice-farmers in Theparaj, may decide to turn away from rice cultivation to adopt what they see as a more attractive economic activity, such as poultry-farming.

The significance of cash inputs in modern rice-farming means that the differential access to cheaper credit may have an important effect on the relative advantage that different households might enjoy. In Theparaj, most of the richer rice-farming households which hired in labour regularly had access to institutional credit with cheaper rates of interest, while all the poorer rice-farming households that needed to supplement their income from wage labour needed to rely on loans from private moneylenders which carried 25 -50% higher rates of interest. It also means that as the state agencies supplied cheap credit and some other inputs, households that managed to become their clients were also able to produce at relatively lower costs and thus able to generate a higher level of profit than

non-clients. These were not restricted to the richer households only, but about half of the households that relied on their family labour also had access to the state's credits. However, a lot of those who borrowed from the BAAC found that the amount of credit extended to them fell short of their requirements and they needed to turn to local merchants for credit in fertilizer. A few local rice-merchants based in Klong Suan market were making handsome profits by selling fertilizer on credit to rice-farmers at the beginning of each cycle at 6,000 baht per 50-kilogramme sack, while the cash price is 4,700 baht. The difference, which was taken as interest on the credit, was actually for a 3-4 month period only because the loans were then repaid at harvest when paddy was sold to the same merchant-creditors.

It is noticeable, too, that although rice-farming households needed to borrow regularly, chronic indebtedness which previously led to loss of land, was a rare occurrence by 1981-82. During the pre-double-cropping days, poor crops could result in a household mortgaging its land with moneylenders for loans, and successive poor crops might result in it losing the land or having to sell off the land to pay off its debt. Also, indebtedness often led a household to sell off paddy immediately after harvest when price was at its lowest, leaving an insufficient paddy stock to last it all the year round, thus forcing it to borrow again. Nowadays, high yields and two crops a year allow rice-farming households to have enough paddy for their

own consumption and have eliminated the necessity to borrow for this purpose. Now they are usually able to repay the loans at least in part at harvest time. Farmers who mortgage their land usually do so with the BAAC in order to obtain loans at low rates of interest to finance their operations, rather than being forced to do so through severe financial trouble. Mortgaging land with private moneylenders is no longer found among landed rice-farmers in Theparaj.

As such, land transactions in the past decade have therefore largely been through sales and not through foreclosures, as in the previous decades. Double-cropping and high yields had, up to 1981-82, generated in absolute terms greater wealth and prosperity among Theparaj rice-farmers. All of them agreed that since double-cropping, rice-farming had become a far more stable source of income and brought the farm operators more wealth. A lot of the old debt was paid off, and in recent years, a few tenants were even able to gain possession of part of the land they were once renting. Between 1977 and 1981, eight former tenants became either owner-operators or part-owner/part-tenants. Four bought their land from absentee landowners and the other four from local landowners. The total amount bought was 285 rai, with plot sizes ranging from 17 to 50 rai. Three plots were bought from Yee, a moneylender- cum-merchant turned big poultry-farmer. Of note is the fact that all the plots recently acquired by farmer-tenants are all situated on the northeastern bank of the canal. Land on

this bank was accessible only by boat and not by road transport, was not in demand by big poultry-farmers who were mostly competing to buy land on the road side. It thus fetched lower prices than the latter.

However, although the increased profitability of rice-farming has enabled some tenants to acquire land, the overall security of tenure on the part of existing tenants is increasingly threatened. Firstly, as the prospects of rice-farming has considerably improved after double-cropping, some local landowners have demanded their land back for self-cultivation. Unlike in the pre-double-cropping days when insufficient labour usually led a household to rent out some of its land to others, with the modern techniques of farming a household can now manage larger acreages given the availability of and access to capital and credit. Secondly, the recent expansion of big poultry-farms has both led to their formerly rented rice land being reclaimed for poultry-raising with rice-farming tenants being turned out of the land (as has been dealt with in the poultry-farming section), and also to new rice land being bought up. Between 1970 and 1983, poultry-farmers in Village no. 2 increased the amount of land they owned. Two hundred and twenty two rai of land in the village had been purchased by 7 of the present-day poultry-farmers. All except 14 rai lay on the southwest bank of the canal where the road ran through. Previously, all the plots were rice land and over half belonged to absentee landowners who rented it out to rice-farming tenants. The rest of the plots

sold to poultry-farmers used to be cultivated by owner-operators. Consequently, the recent expansion of poultry farms in the area has meant that a number of tenants had been turned out as the land was being sold off, while a few owner-operators saw their plots declining in size. On the other hand, the rising land value constituted a constant attraction for absentee landowners to sell off their holdings. At the same time, the rising demand for land by big poultry-farmers had also driven up land prices and made it increasingly difficult for rice-farmers with their much weaker purchasing power, but greater need for larger acreage, to obtain land. Added to this, the fact that land recently acquired by big poultry-farmers was all choice land alongside the road and near to the water source, means that the amount of the former prime rice land, particularly on the "road" side in tambon Prawet and Villages nos. 1 and 2 of tambon Theparaj, which were closely situated to the main highway had, according to the local rice-farmers, recently been "usurped" by big poultry-farms, leaving land with poorer access to transport or that was situated further away from the canal to be cultivated in rice.

Despite the remarkable increase in paddy yield per rai, the rent on most land had not increased appreciably. Before double-cropping, a fixed rent in kind of 10 thang was levied on a per-rai basis and this took up 30 to 50% or more of the produce. At present, the rent of 10-15 thang per rai accounts for 12-25% of the output. As

such, tenants who enjoyed this arrangement often said that "rent is not expensive" and it was still "levied on the main-season crop only, whereas the second crop is free of rent." This may be because these tenants were renting their relatives' or their parents' land or have been long-term tenants of absentee landowners who were not relying on land rent for their income source or who might themselves be related to their tenants. However, the rising land value has not infrequently tempted even the more benevolent landowners into selling off their land. Moreover, certain practice has been adopted by a number of landowners signalling that the screw was being tightened on the tenants and local landowners generally imposed much more stringent terms than absentee ones. Some landowners were demanding that the rent be paid at the beginning of the crop cycle instead of at harvest as before. This means that poorer tenants stood much less chance of gaining access to rented land for they could not afford the advanced rent payment collected in cash. An increasing number of landowners were demanding a lump sum of money to be paid as a precondition for renewing leases or for granting leases to new tenants. A few evicted old tenants to replace them with new ones who were prepared to bid up the lump sum payment. One recent case which aroused sharp criticism among the tenants was when Yee, the largest poultry-farm owner in the village, gained possession of a 50 rai plot of land through debt foreclosure in 1982. She then agreed to rent out 30 rai to a rice-farming couple for one year before building

another of her poultry-farm on it. For this, she charged the couple an advanced cash rent of 15,000 baht in total which was double the amount of the average rent. In another case, Yee herself said that she had demanded a lump sum payment of 50,000 baht on a 50 rai plot over and on top of the rent.

Differential Access to Means of Production

At this stage, a breakdown of rice-farming households and rice land area in the village according to land tenure status and sizes of landholdings may enable us to draw up further observations on the rice-farming population in Theparaj. The following table includes all the households that were engaged in rice-farming, although those who did not derive a major part of their income from rice cultivation were marked off in brackets. Moreover, tenants on "crown land" are treated here as owners of the land rather than as tenants for the reason that they were paying a nominal sum of rent to the state, that they had security of tenure over the land and that they could even sell off their leases, i.e. transferring the occupation rights/ ownership over the land, or renting it out to others. They were then in a position much more akin to that of owner-operators than with the rest of the tenants.

Number of Agricultural Households, Area of Riceland Holdings and Average Size of Holdings by Land Tenure Status and Size of Holdings

Size of Hg (rai)	TENANT			PART-OWNER/PART-TENANT					OWNER-OPERATOR			TOTAL		
	No of Hshd	Area	Ave HgSz	No of Hshd	Area owned	Area rented	Area Total	Ave HgSz	No of Hshd	Area	Ave HgSz	No of Hshd	Area	Ave HgSz
0- 9.9	1	8	8	-	-	-	-	-	6	38	6.3	7	46	6.6
10- 14.9	3	33	11	1	5.8	9.8	15.6	15.5	2	23	11.5	6	71.5	11.9
15- 19.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20- 29.9	4	91	22.8	-	-	-	-	-	4(1)	101(20)	25.3	8(1)	192	24
30- 39.9	6	166	33.2	(1)	(19.5)	(18)	(37.5)	(37.5)	7	243.3	34.8	13(1)	409.3	34.1
40- 49.9	2(1)	95.8(40)	47.9	4	72.8	91.3	164.1	41	2(1)	94(42)	47	8(2)	353.8	44.2
50- 59.9	3	159.8	53.3	1(1)	22(20)	28(30)	50	50	4	225.5	56.4	8(1)	489.3	54.4
60- 69.9	-	-	-	2	62	70	132	66	2(1)	136.8(62)	68.4	4	268.8	67.2
70- 79.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	74	74	1	74	74
80- 89.9	-	-	-	2	75	88	163	81.5	-	-	-	2	163	81.5
90- 99.9	-	-	-	1	28.8	67.3	96.1	96.1	-	-	-	1	96.1	96.1
100-109.9	-	-	-	1	45	55	100	100	-	-	-	1	100	100
170-179.9	-	-	-	1	84.3	87	171.3	171.3	-	-	-	1	171.3	171.3
	19 (31.7%)	553.5	29.1	13 (21.7%)	395.7	496.4	892.1	68.6	28 (46.7%)	935.6	33.4	60	2,381.1	39.7

Out of the 2,361 rai of riceland farmed by people in Village no. 2, 44.5% was rented land while 55.5% was owner-operated land (the 556 rai of crown land being included in the latter category). Of the rented land, about 41.3% was rented from local landowners while 59.7% from absentee landowners. As far as the land tenure status of the households is concerned, the true picture may not be accurately represented by the above table, as many households occupied different statuses at the same time. A number of tenants were part-time wage labourers; owner-operators with small plots were also engaged in a lot of wage work; a few households were simultaneously landowners, tenants and owner-operators of poultry-farms. Hence, while broad categories may be drawn, it should not be readily assumed that they are always clearly defined groupings.

Among the 19 households of tenants, 4 households that rented plots of under 15 rai needed to supplement their income from other sources. Of the 4 households, 3 hired themselves out regularly doing all types of wage work, and one derived its income from wage work as well as from its small fruit orchard which occupied a small part of its rented land, while at the same time, the household head was practising, on a small scale, traditional medicine. Two of the four households did not own two-wheeled tractors and thus needed to rent them, while the other two with 10-12 rai plots had their own machines. Another 7 tenant households also supplemented their income from wage labour, but with their plots to

look after they hired themselves out only at harvest time. One of them, however, was also hired to cultivate 8.5 rai of land for its neighbour. While only 2 of the tenants with holdings less than 10 rai had to rent power-tillers, the rest of the households in this category owned all the basic farming implements. But, of all the 19 households, only one, with a 45 rai plot, owned a rice-thresher which they also rented out to others. Apart from these 19 households, there was another household (in brackets) which rented the whole of the riceland that they cultivated from their parents, but at the same time, they were also operating a medium-sized poultry-farm on their own 7 rai while renting out 8 rai of their land to a rice-farming household. And this last household, together with the other 5 households that cultivated more than 40 rai of land, were also regularly hiring in wage labour for hand-weeding and sometimes for spraying insecticide in addition to harvesting, when all the households needed to hire in labour.

Of the 13 part-owner/part-tenant households, only one with a 15 rai plot needed to supplement income from regular wage-work. On the other hand, the rest of the households with relatively large plots were hiring in labourers for weeding; among them 5 households with plots larger than 80 rai found themselves hiring in labour not only to weed their fields, but also to help with the land preparation. Three of the 5 households hired in 1- 2 residential labourers each to help with all types of

work. All of them had more than one tractor each. All households but one that farmed more than 60 rai, owned rice-threshers which they rented out when work in their field was over. Of the 3 households with plots larger than 90 rai, two had supplementary income sources from duck and pig-raising while the one with the 140 rai plot also owned a small rice-mill, milling local paddy only for consumption. On top of the 13 households, there were two households (in brackets) that operated rice and poultry-farms simultaneously. Both of their poultry-farms were of a small scale. One of them, while growing rice on 19 rai of their own land plus 18 rai of the land they were renting from their parents, was at the same time renting out another 30 rai of their own land to a rice-farming family. The other operated their poultry-farm on their own land while the 50 rai rice plot was partly owned and partly rented from their siblings.

As regards the land that was being rented by tenants and part-tenants of Village no. 2, about 41% was rented from local and 59% from absentee landowners. Local landowners numbered 19 in all. Of these, 7 were poultry-farmers, all but one of whom retained 5-10 rai of their land for their poultry farms and rented out the rest of their land to rice-farmers in plots ranging from 8 to 50 rai.

The one exception was Yee, who had gained possession over a lot of land through her former dealings as merchant-cum-moneylender and in 1981-82 was operating a big poultry-farm on 90 rai of land (as has been described

in the former section). As for the rest of the local landowners, one was a wealthy family of shop-owners who also lent out money, and gained over 100 rai of land through debt foreclosures and purchase, dividing some among their children, and were renting out 40 rai to their daughter's household and 20 to another non-related household. Three landowners who were brothers rented out their small plots of 6.5 rai each which they rented to their youngest brother while they themselves earned their living from being members of a traditional musical band. One landowner was an old lady whose husband, an ex-village headman, was working at a tyre factory in Bangkok, and because she was old and childless, she thus rented out her 9 rai plot which she had inherited. Two of the local landowners were retired elderly couples who were renting out their 55 rai and 59 rai plots to their children. Three were themselves rice-farmers, one renting out 10 rai and retaining 70 rai for his own rice cultivation. The second was actually renting in 30 rai of his parents' land while renting out 40 rai of their land in another tambon and retaining 35 of the their land which was adjacent to their rented land for their own cultivation. The third was farming 20 rai of their own land and renting out 20 rai to their daughter's family. Of the 17 landowners, 10 were renting to their children or relatives. None, except the elderly couples, relied on landrenting as their major income source.

As for the absentee landowners, most resided in Chachoengsao town or in Bangkok and a few were based in

Samutprakarn. Most plots were obtained before the double-cropping days, either through foreclosing on loans or sales. A few plots had been purchased allegedly in order to rent out to their close relatives as a means of helping them out. Out of the 21 plots rented out by absentee owners, 5 belonged to close relatives of the tenants, some of whom used to reside locally but later moved out to live elsewhere, while the rest belonged to non-relatives.

Similarly, the category "owner-operator" is by no means clear-cut either. Thirty households are classified within this category for the reason that they owned all the land on which they were operating. However, 7 of the 8 households with plots less than 15 rai all needed to rely heavily on income from wage labour and were often identified by people as "wage-labourers" rather than as "rice farmers." The one exception was a household of a woman with three children who inherited 27 rai of land and in 1981-82 decided to hire her neighbours, a tenant household, to farm 8.5 rai of the land because she was not adept in rice-farming and had no essential farming equipment. The rest of her land was also rented out to the same neighbouring household. At the same time, her household also relied on income from the wage labour of her three children, one of whom worked in a tannery in Bangkok, the other two being casual labourers in her brother's medium-size poultry-farm. On the other hand, four households with 45 rai upwards hired in labour on a regular basis. Throughout the year, two of them employed

residential labourers to help them all through the year with all types of tasks. Four households had their own rice-threshers. As in the remaining 11 households with plots between 20 and 39.9 rai, one couple regularly hired themselves out as wage workers at harvest time, others were mostly family farmers, neither hiring in or hiring out labour. A few also had supplementary sources of income, e.g. one had a small shop, another was engaged in duck-raising. Besides the 30 households in this category, there were three households that operated basically as owner-operators in their capacity as rice-farmers but rice-farming was no longer their major income source. One household, farming on 20 rai of its rice land had, since early 1982, started up a small poultry-farm. Previously, it operated as a part-owner/part-tenant household working on 70 rai of land altogether. One household derived its income mainly from fish-raising which it first started in the early 1970s. Only 9 out of 42 rai of its land was land exclusively for growing rice. The owner said that he continued to grow rice in his fish ponds which covered the rest of the area, in order to keep the weeds and grass at bay and also with its high yields, rice was a good supplementary income source. Occasionally, he needed to hire in northeastern labourers to help out during busy preiods. At the same time, the couple also hired themselves out occasionally at harvest when wages were high. One household that was at present cultivating

62 rai of its 73.5 rai of land was simultaneously running its medium size poultry-farms as well.

No Clear-Cut Classification

Among households that were engaged in rice-farming, although a certain pattern of stratification can be traced, sharp lines cannot be drawn dividing them up into distinct groupings. Some landowners were at the same time cultivating their own land or operating their own poultry-farms. Some owner-operators hired themselves out as wage-labourers, a few households simultaneously rented in and rented out land while hiring in wage labour on their rice-farms but running their poultry-farms exclusively with their family labour. The villagers themselves tended to categorize people into rice farmers, poultry-farmers and wage-labourers. Within the rice-farming category they would refer to them all together as one group and rarely distinguished between tenants, owner-occupiers, and landowners, but would often pose themselves as a group vis à vis the wage-labourers and poultry-farmers. One exception was that those who carried out rice-farming on small plots who needed to rely heavily on wage work tended to be classified as wage-labourers rather than as rice-farmers. And no one can deny that significant differences existed between them and those households with very large plots. All households in the former group not only hired themselves out, they also had differential access to credit, capital goods and various inputs. Those cultivating plots on

less than 10 rai possessed no essential equipment of their own. They needed to borrow tractors, water pumping machines, tubewell pipes from their better-off kinsmen when the latter had finished with their use and provided for their own fuel. One household had incurred a somewhat different arrangement with their relatives i.e. as their land lay adjacent to the relatives', the relatives ploughed both holdings at the same time using their own machinery and labour. In return, the household undertook to harvest a certain amount of the relative's land without pay. Better-off kinsmen who "lent out" their farming implements to their poorer relatives in this way could ensure themselves of a number of wage workers at harvest when workers were not easy to come by during peak periods and some also benefited from what worked out as a discount from the going wage rate (more land being harvested at the same cost). On the other hand, households with 10-14.9 rai plots might own tubewells and engines but none had their own tractors. Most thus needed to rent tractors while one borrowed it from their daughter's household. As regards such inputs as fuel, fertilizer, insecticide, and herbicide, all households with plots of less than 15 rai turned to their better-off kinsmen or private moneylenders for credit in cash to be paid back in the form of harvest work for the kinsmen, or cash repayment bearing interest of 48-60% for the moneylenders. Unlike other households with 20 rai and over with whom rice merchants usually gave credit in fertilizer and later bought back their paddy, farmers

with very small plots neither got advanced credit in fertilizer, nor could they sell their paddy directly to the merchants because the latter did not consider it worth their while to collect small amount of paddy. The small farmers thus needed to depend on their better-off kinsmen or neighbours again to dispose of their paddy by selling it along with the latter's. The group of small farmer-cum-wage labourers can be said to have had so far benefited from double-cropping and the new cultivation technique which had made it viable to produce a paddy surplus on small acreage. It ensured them with enough rice to consume all the year round and with a small amount left over for sale. Moreover, they were also able to earn higher wages at peak harvest periods. However, compared with other rice-farming households they were operating at a distinctly more disadvantageous position, at higher costs of production as well as with a great deal of dependence on the personal favour of their kinsmen and neighbours. All of those render their position more precarious than others. Advance market conditions could put them out of business before anybody else and turn them into pure wage labourers.

As regards the rest of the rice-farming households numbering 47 households and cultivating 20 rai of land upwards, stratification is more diversified. Landholding size can generally be used as a crude indicator as a household that was able to cultivate large plots needed to be able to raise the cash outlays and had all the capital equipment commensurable to the size of their

labourers. Hence, households with holdings of more than 90 rai all possessed two tractors and a rice-thresher each as well as hiring resident labourers to help them with all types of tasks in the fields.

On the whole, one finds that as regards the rice-farming households in Theparaj, lines dividing one category from another shift according to which particular indicators one uses to distinguish them and often no meaningful lines can be drawn at all because of the complexity. For instance, if we take land tenure status as an indicator, we find that of the 60 rice-farming households, 19 were tenants, 13 were part-owner/part-tenants, and 28 were owner-operators (bearing in mind also the complex situation whereby a number of households occupied different sets of social relationships simultaneously, e.g. being tenants and landowners at the same time). Or we could take as an alternative indicator, the participation or non-participation of a household in wage labour, which could identify its position in the social relations of production and its opposing interests vis à vis other social classes or groupings. Here, one can see that this organization does not correspond with the above.

Of all the 60 rice-farming households, 23 households (i.e. all the tenants, part-tenants and owner-operators with plots less than 15 rai plus 10 households, most of which were tenants with plots between 15 and 39.9 rai), hired out their labour on a regular basis. At the other end of the scale, 12 households (all the 6 households of

part-tenants and owner-operators with plots larger than 70 rai plus another 6 from all land tenure categories with plots between 40 and 69.9 rai) regularly hired in wage labour throughout the year. The remaining 25 households (who came from all tenant categories), can be classed as "family farmers" as they neither hired in nor hired out their labour on a regular basis, although some might occasionally hire in labour for weeding.

Similarly, a household's land tenure status does not necessarily reveal its relative wealth or income, i.e. the fact that a household rents land is in itself no indicator of whether the household is rich or poor. Here a few observations can be made.

Firstly, since the introduction of double-cropping, 8 tenants or part-tenants had been able to gain land through purchase and the amount bought ranged from 17 to 50 rai. In 1981-82 these 8 households were operating either as owner-operators or as part-owner/part-tenants on plots ranging from 32 to 171 rai. Three of the 8 households had been and were operating very large holdings of 80 rai and over. All the tenant households recognized the relative insecurity of their position and their top priority was to strive to have some land of their own. On the other hand, no owner-operator, even the ones with large holdings, had been "purchasers" of land in the post-double-cropping years.

Secondly, it can be seen that the largest holdings in the village, i.e. all holdings above 80 rai, were all farmed by part-owner/part-tenants. If size of holdings serves to indicate the amount of cash outlay and capital

assets of a household's command, which at present constitute important determinants for successful cultivation, then it would be a gross mistake to treat tenants as a homogeneous category. Although being a tenant means that one had no security of tenure, double-cropping and also poultry-farming have somewhat changed the context of this insecurity. Intensive farming has had a differential impact on different households; some benefit, others lose out. However, whereas in the pre-double-cropping days the chance of a tenant acquiring land of his own was almost non-existent. This has ceased to be the case for some; with the present cultivation techniques in Theparaj, a number of tenants have benefited in terms of increased wealth, income and status. This has made it possible for them to reduce or eliminate such insecurity by acquiring some land of their own. Some had turned from pure to partial tenants, others from partial tenants to owner-operators. A number of partial tenants emerged as being among the most successful rice-farmers in the village. On the other hand, the fact that rice-farming has become a more attractive economic undertaking, means that landowners, particularly absentee ones who had no desire to work the land themselves, to sell off their land. At the same time, rich poultry-farmers were also buying up more land and bidding up the land price still further. Such a situation had increased the threat of eviction on the part of tenants. In Village no. 2, tenants working the choice land on the "road" side were particularly

vulnerable as the land was fetching higher prices than land on the other side of the canal. Pure tenants were obviously more vulnerable than partial ones unless they happened to be renting their parents' land which they were later to inherit.

Wage-Labourers

In 1981-82, out of the 201 households in Village no. 2, 97 were making their living from wage work. The majority of the wage-labouring households, numbering 83 in all, hired out their labour in poultry-farms and/or in ricefields. The nature of work, the basis on which the labour was hired, the relationships between labourers and employees differed for both enterprises and within the same enterprise depending on what type the work was. The differences often resulted in some sort of division being drawn by the workers themselves between those working in poultry-farms and those working in rice fields.

The introduction of the technological innovation in rice and poultry-farming has resulted in a significantly higher level of the forces of production as well as changes in the labour process. The double-cropping in rice cultivation means that the crop cycle has become tighter and the whole operation become very much time-bound. Harvesting of one crop needs to be completed quickly so as to leave time for land preparation for the following crop. Mechanized farm equipment, such as tractors and threshing machines, have been adopted to relieve this

time constraint, since they enable land preparation and threshing to be done on a much shorter time. The new method and pattern of cropping have resulted in a change in the structure of the rice farmers' demand for labour. It has intensified considerably the seasonal peaks of labour requirements, particularly during harvest. At the same time, the new broadcasting technique had eliminated the labour-intensive tasks of uprooting and transplanting which was the pertinent feature of the old transplanting method. On the other hand, labour hired in for land-weeding, and for transplanting young rice plants on to patches where the broadcast seedlings fail to grow, although these tasks require labour on a large scale as well as on a less regular basis because weeds might be more numerous in some years more than in the others and if land is meticulously prepared, then there existed little need for the transplanting task.

A lot of the wage-labourers welcomed the advent of double-cropping, especially its peak demand for labour at harvest which drove up the level of their wages. In 1981-82, the rate of harvest pay ranged between 150 and 250 baht per rai. A fast worker can harvest 1/2 rai a day and was then able to earn around 75-125 baht a day. A slow worker, on the other hand, might take 3-4 days to harvest one rai of the densely populated rice field and would then earn proportionally less.

Apart from this, about 15 out of the 40 households that hired themselves out in rice fields were doing very well from harvest work, to such an extent that in 1981-82

it was generally said that they could earn more than some rice-farmers. What happened was that after the harvesting in Theparaj and nearby areas was over, these households travelled to other amphoe in Chacheongsao or to other neighbouring provinces to hire themselves out where harvest work was available. Sometimes, people from different areas directly requested them to go and harvest their fields. Members of those households usually travelled around in groups of 8-20 people or maybe more. Once they found a farmer who agreed to hire them, they were put up in his shed for as long as their work for him lasted. They had to provide for and cook their own food, using the few pots and pans they carried along with them. They often described this rough-living as "sleeping on bare ground, eating on bare sand." Their work contract was different from when they hired themselves out in Theparaj. When working away from home, they hired themselves out as a group. The wage rates were settled on a per rai basis. The whole group then worked together on the same plot and tried to finish it as fast as possible. Afterwards, the total pay was shared out equally. On the other hand, in Theparaj they hired themselves out as individuals and each worked on his/her own in a square rai and got paid according to the amount of work done. As such, those who were able to travel around and earn more money tended to be only the strong workers who could work fast and keep up with the pace of the rest in the group. Because of this, slow and older

workers were never asked to join in the travelling groups.

Although the travelling labourers had to endure harsh living conditions away from home for a varying period of 1/2 up to 3 months, they said that the good wages obtained made it worthwhile. Hiring themselves out at peak labour demand periods in different locations meant that they were in a position to bargain with their employers. Wages varied from place to place depending on the terrain, the local average wage rate, as well as the conditions of the rice plants. For instance, if the field was low-lying and collected water, if the rice plants were lying flat on the ground, or if the plant population was dense, then the wages charged were higher than otherwise.

By the time that these workers returned to Theparaj, fields had already been planted and they were again employed to carry out various chores in the rice fields where they could earn 50 baht a day. They were thus able to bring in a regular income all the year round. Consequently, they tended to be better off than the non-travelling labourers in the village.

Despite the fact that all labourers who worked in rice fields looked forward to harvest time when they could get good wages, the situation was not necessarily viewed without reservation. Firstly, as the wage for harvesting was high, there existed a great deal of competition for it. And just as some of the Theparaj labourers travelled long distances away from the home

village to seek work, so there were also labourers from other areas coming into the area in groups during harvesting seasons. Some came from other amphoes in Chachoengsao, others from as far as Ayuthaya province. Moreover, good wages also attracted a number of households engaged in rice-farming themselves to offer their labour at harvest to supplement their family income. Hence, competition for harvest work was fierce. And potentially, as the number of landless was increasing and labourers came to settle more into the new pattern of cultivation, more labourers might be competing for work and consequently could drive wages down.

Secondly, the fact that the high-yielding rice varieties that were grown tended to mature at around the same period of time, as opposed to the old practice of planting different varieties that matured in different periods, meant that the demand for labour was most intense for only 1-2 months. At this time rice-farmers tried to hire as many hands as possible to get the harvest over with quickly. Thus, at each harvest a labourer seldom managed to reap more than 8-20 rai before the season was over. A slow worker might complete merely 7-10 rai at the most. For those who could not travel around to seek more harvest work, they would hope to earn good wages for only 2-4 months in a year.

Thirdly, the labourers' ability to bargain might be somewhat dampened when they worked inside Theparaj itself because their dependent position vis à vis those who employed them often meant that they hired themselves out

to the same employer at every harvest. Theparaj labourers tended to say that they could not really bargain with local rice-farmers and took whatever pay was being offerred, although this might be a little lower than the going wage rate because they still needed to depend on their employers in the future. A labourer might feel obliged to work for a rice-farmer because his/her family occasionally had to borrow some money, rice or other goods from the latter, or they might have been using the latter's floating jetty to park their boat on the other bank in order to get a bus into town. Some of the rice-farmers to whom they owed favours nevertheless paid them the going wage rate, but others might delay their pay for long periods, might not even tell them beforehand what the pay would be, or might pay them less than the average rate; for instance, in one season a labourer was paid 220 baht per rai from one farmer and 180 baht from another. Furthermore, some rice-farmers who rented out their land as housesites to wage-labourers had drawn up an arrangement to ensure their own supply of harvest labour. Whereas formerly landless families were allowed to build their house on their kinsman's or neighbour's land without charging any rent, 5 or 6 years ago local rice-farming landowners began to charge them rent and instead of demanding rent to be paid in money, they often preferred to be paid in labour i.e. their tenants were required to harvest a rai of their rice-fields each year. And most labourers often felt obliged to harvest more than the amount required for

their rent to ensure the continuing security of their tenure over their house sites. A lot of labourers were complaining that their own kinsmen were charging them a much higher rent than absentee non-relative landowners. While the latter was charging 400 baht a year for one rai, they were paying their kinsmen 250 baht for only 1/4 rai plots.

Fourthly, the labourers were also troubled by a nagging fear and anxiety that the relative job security and high wages they were enjoying in 1981-82 might not be long-lasting because of the growing trend towards increasing mechanization. Recent changes in rice cultivation technology had resulted in certain jobs being lost. When the new method of broadcasting came to replace the transplanting technique, such tasks as uprooting the seedlings, maintaining the multitude of dykes and transplanting have been obliterated altogether, although the introduction of double-cropping has, on the other hand, resulted also in more harvest work. But added to this is also the fact that over the years, rice-farmers in Theparaj have introduced more and more labour-saving devices. The use of tractors has greatly reduced the amount of labour needed in land preparation and has done away with the need for manpower to work and look after the buffaloes. The most recent adoption is the rice-threshing machine which proves both labour and time-saving for the farmers.

As labour costs loom large, rice-farmers become increasingly willing to try out any cost-saving machines

that are made available. They were particularly enthusiastic when a firm brought into the village a combine-harvester to hire out to the rice-farmers at the beginning of 1981. This firm was in the agri-business field - producing crops that made up some of the animal-feed ingredients. News spread swiftly that to have one's crops harvested by the new machine would cost only 300 baht per rai in all, while hiring labourers and rice-thresher to do the whole job normally costs 450 baht or more. A large crowd turned up at the trial harvest. The outcome proved satisfactory although some reservations were voiced over the fact that the heavy machine left very deep tracks in the soil which might render the next ploughing more difficult. Nevertheless, the farmers present seemed to have thought the benefits outweighing its costs. They thus competed to be the first to hire the machine. However, a week later when the machine was working on a wet field with its soft soil, it got badly stuck and needed a heavy crane to rescue it. The whole idea of using this type of combine-harvestor, which worked very well with upland crops, was finally abandoned.

As can be expected, the enthusiasm of the rice-farmers was by no means shared by the labourers in the village. Their fear was particularly heightened at the time when they bitterly complained that the situation was already bad enough as it was: hav-ing to compete with labourers from outside the area for work. Now that the combine-harvester was introduced, their future would be

all the more grimmer. Some labourers were saying in a half-joking manner that it would not be beyond their conscience to smash up such machines.

Fifthly, harvest pay, which was seen as a reasonably high rate, might not be as high as it seemed at first sight. People tended to compare harvest wage with the wage they got from other tasks, based on the amount of money a labourer could make in one day, but they tended to ignore the difference in the amount of labour being put into the different tasks. As harvest work was paid by the rai, a labourer worked longer hours in the fields, i.e. he/she would start working at 6 or 7 A.M., and would work right through to 5 or 6 P.M., or when darkness set in, and the lunch break would be brief. With other jobs, for which they got paid on a daily basis, the routine would be somewhat different. A labourer would then start work at 8 A.M., take about 1 - 1 1/2 hours off for lunch and would finish his/her day at 5 P.M. This means that the difference in harvest and other chores' wages would not be as great as one first thought since the labourer was prepared to work 3 - 4 hours more at harvest time.

When one looks at the labourers of the rice-fields as a whole, one sees the differences in the general living standards, in incomes as well as attitudes among them. Those who could travel outside and earn harvest wage were in a better-off position and tended to concentrate on work in rice-fields. As for those who could not travel around because they were getting on in years, were not physically fit, were slow workers, or had

their dependents to look after, they had to take up whatever odd jobs there were to make ends meet. This may partly account for the fact that the labourers viewed their predicament differently. Some said that work had become more and more difficult to find. In the old days, a labourer did not need to go elsewhere to look for work since there was work to do all the year round within the village itself. Other labourers were saying that double-cropping had created more work for them in general. For some labourers who did not travel outside the village to seek work, the three months or so of the slack season might bring in very little income, if at all. For others, some of the male members in the households were able to find some construction and repair work to do in poultry farms, some turned to fishing and petty trade. A few households decided to raise a small number of pigs. One of the most important jobs in slack periods, especially for the women, was mat-weaving, in which a large number of labouring households were engaged. The small amount of money they could earn by hiring themselves out to weave mats on a piece rate basis goes some way to illustrate the relative scarcity of alternative employment during the off-peak periods. Being one of the major side jobs, its work arrangement and pay deserves some atention.

There were 3-4 households in the village that devoted small patches of their land to grow the flax-like rush plants, which needed no looking after. Three were well-off rice-farmers with holdings of over 70 rai and

the fourth was a wealthy shop-keeper. A small portion of the crops were sold off as whole plants and those wishing to buy had to do their own cutting. Only a few labouring households undertook mat-weaving on a self-employment basis and they were the ones who bought the whole plants directly from the growers. The main portion of the plants was cut into tiny, long strips and then dried by the households that grew them. Then they hired members of the various wage-labouring households to weave the strips into mats. The cycle of mat-weaving started with the onset of the slack season. Those hired had looms of their own. Two people were required to work a loom and on average it took them 1 1/2 days to complete one mat. For this, the two of them got 40 baht in all, i.e. each person earned merely 13 baht per day. The finished products were later collected by owners of the rushes and sold to traders, who constituted their regular marketing outlets, at 120 baht a piece. Those who hired themselves out complained of the minute sum they were paid compared with the profits their hirers were getting but they added also that a poorly-paid job was still better than no job at all.

Apart from the 40 households who hired themselves out as wage-labourers on a casual basis in rice-fields, there were 34 households that earned their living by working for poultry-farms, and another 9 households who worked for both sectors. Among the poultry-farm workers, there were about 26 households that were employed on a full-time basis by big poultry-farms. Of these, about 20

lived inside the big poultry-farms while the rest lived in their own homes and commuted daily to work. The former could choose to have a full-board accomodation i.e. accomodation with meals and in 1981-82 got 600 - 800 baht a month, or they could live in but cook their own meals in which case they were paid 1,000 baht a month. Those living out got the same or a little more pay than the non-full-board workers, i.e. 1,000-1,200 baht. Most of these workers were put in charge of one poultry shed with 3,000-4,000 birds. Their day started at around 5.30 A.M. and ended at about 6 P.M. Their main duties were collecting eggs twice daily, grading them, keeping records of the hens' egg-producing performance, selecting non-layers for culling, treating the birds against disease, although they could and were usually called upon to perform other odd jobs in the farm, too, like carrying goods, deepening the water ponds, etc. Then there were also a few people whom big poultry-farmers put in charge of cooking, mixing animal feed, driving their transport trucks, and one person usually was hired to perform a function of a head-workman with a number of birds or baby chicks to look after as well as supervising the other workers in the farm. A driver got about 1,200 - 1,400 baht while the head-workman got 1,600-1,800 baht a month.

The remaining labourers who worked for poultry-farms hired themselves out on a casual basis and a few were hired regularly. They worked as carpenters, repairing existing sheds, cages, fences, etc., and sometimes building new ones. They were paid on a daily basis about

60-70 baht a day. In the few years before 1981-82, work for them had been quite regular all the year round as big farms were expanding and putting up new sheds, while small and medium farms also called for their services. The increasing work in the poultry-farms had brought a number of labouring households, about 10 in all, back from Bangkok, where they had previously been working either as carpenters, at building sites, or in factories, to resettle in their own village once more. For most households, usually the husbands worked as carpenters or builders in poultry-farms on a casual basis while the wives sought work in rice fields.

The villagers, including the labourers themselves, tended to classify local labourers into two main groups i.e. poultry-farm workers and rice-farm workers, although the former category usually excluded the casually-employed carpenters. Between workers in ricefields and full-time poultry-farm workers there was a sense of comparison and competition prevailing. Poultry-farm workers said that they favoured their present job because they were earning money every day of the month and their work was lighter than work in the rice fields. They tended to place an emphasis on the guarantee of a regular though low income and argued that rice field workers might earn more than them, particularly at harvest time, but this income was not necessarily assured. For instance, if it rained, they had to call off their work for the day and therefore earned nothing at all on that day. Moreover, they also

remarked that during the rest of the year, work in rice fields was not easy to come by unless one was prepared to travel to other areas to search for it. On the other hand, workers on rice fields tended to place a greater value on the "freedom" and leisure that their type of casual work allowed. While arguing that work in poultry-farms was lighter, they pointed out that poultry-farm workers had to work every single day of the week and could rarely take days off or could take a day off if they could find somebody else to take their place in their absence. On the other hand, being employed on a casual basis they "have no bosses" and hence enjoyed the "freedom" to take days off when they so wished.

However, such attitudes may change depending on the relative job and pay prospects each sector is enjoying. A year after I left the village, I heard that the rice price dropped and rice-farmers had to cut down on the amount of wage-work they employed and were offering lower harvest wage rates. The apparent instability of wage rates and the uncertainty of work availability in rice-fields has thus led an increasing number of rice-farm workers to apply for their names to be put on the waiting lists of big poultry-farms in the area. Seeing their work prospects worsening, many rice-farm workers have become more attracted to the idea of working in poultry-farms with more regular but less pay (20-40 baht a day as against at least 50 baht a day), and are more prepared to put up with a boss, without his "freedom", and without days off.

Apart form the labourers who worked in the two major farming sectors in the village, the remaining 13 households who can be classed as labourers either earned their living or were supported by those who earned their living from wage employment. Four households were supported by their family members who were working in Bangkok factories, two households were financially supported by their children who were working as domestic servants, four were denuded households of elderly ladies whose children sent them money only on occasion while they themselves undertook little jobs, such as being hired to weave mats, to sew fishing nets, etc., one household of a widow and two children earned its living by sewing bulk clothing for a trader in Chachoengsao town, and the remaining three households worked in the timber shop and all were outsiders who had come from Cholburi and the northeast to seek work and were living in the accommodation provided by the timber shop-owner.

The Remaining Households

The above account has covered all the main groupings in the village, i.e. the poultry-farmers, rice-farmers and wage-labourers, who made up 176 households in the village. As for the remaining 25 households, they were engaged either in trade, in self-employment or in public employment, as has been earlier described in the section relative to the village's occupational pattern. Their positions with regard to labour employment varied. For instance, the one household that ran a local shop, the

small rice mill owner-cum-rice-farmer, the timber shopowner and the owner of a small machine repair shop were employing between one and six wage-labourers. Four others employed labourers on a casual basis i.e. the owner of the traditional musical band, a boat builder and two rice-traders. And apart from the four households of teachers and 2 households of elderly people who were supported by their children, who were non-wage-labourers, the remaining 11 households were all self-employed, running their own small shops, selling noodles, raising fish, driving their own bus.

The Emerging Differentiation Pattern

By 1981-82, if we take the whole village population into consideration, a certain pattern of systematic differentiation seems to be emerging with regard to various indicators such as access to means of production, the kinds of farm operation, wealth, the children's education and various patterns, social status and prestige, etc. Nevertheless, it cannot be emphasized enough the fact that differentiation is an ongoing process, that at this stage the best that can be done is to point out certain trends that are in the process of developing, that although the top and the bottom social classes or strata are more easily identifiable, a large number of the households fall in between and enjoy relatively diverse production and social relations vis à vis other classes or strata.

To deal first with the emerging pattern of differential access to land, the fact that there exists two major farming operations in the village which differ significantly in the nature and scale of operation, renders it untenable to take landholding size per se as an indicator, as poultry-farming involves a much more intensive use of capital and land than rice-farming. Nevertheless, some important points can be made as regards the pattern of access to land. It is worth pointing out that all the poultry-farms except one small-scale one operated on their own land, while more than half of the rice-farming households gained access over the land or part of it through renting; and the wage-labouring households owned no land at all with the exception of a few who owned less than one rai as their house-sites. Furthermore, it is noticeable that if one takes those households who were engaged in poultry-farming and leave out poultry-farmers-cum-rice-farmers, one finds that 11 out of 15 of them also assumed the position of landowners, renting out part of their land to rice-farmers in the village.

More interesting is the fact that in the past decade, 7 of the poultry-farmers had bought up 222 rai of land in the village in order to start up or expand their poultry-farms, and 203 out of the 222 rai was purchased by large poultry-farmers. With regards to land in Village no. 2 alone, the big four farmers owned between 36 and 144 rai, although their actual holding sizes

ranged between 23.5 and 90 rai. The recent burst of land purchases by them and the fact that two big poultry-farmers were among the top three largest owners of land in Village no. 2, the largest landowner being Mrs. Yee who was also the largest poultry-farm owner in the village, coupled with similar trends in the neighbouring village, may point in the direction of more land falling into the hands of a few big poultry-farmers. And if their farms continue to expand in this fashion, a trend towards increasing concentration of land ownership might emerge in the future. The fact that big poultry-farms had much greater purchasing power and could afford to bid up the price of and were competing to buy choice land near the road and the canal was making it increasingly difficult for others in the village to acquire land through purchases. Nevertheless, at this stage the holdings of the big poultry-farms were not yet very large in terms of land use and their owners could by no means be seen as large landowners, except perhaps Mrs. Yee, who previously gained a lot of her land through her trading-cum-moneylending activities and not in her capacity as a poultry-farmer as such.

On the other hand, the increased productivity and output of rice production since the adoption of modern technology and double-cropping, had given a small number of rice-farming households the opportunity to acquire their own land through purchase too. As has been mentioned in the previous section, in the past 5-6 years, 8 tenants or partial tenants have been able to buy plots

ranging from 17 to 50 rai, all of which lay on the "roadless side" of the canal. Moreover, the new prosperity had largely put a halt to the long-existing trend of involuntary sale or loss of land on the part of the landed rice-farming households. During the pre-double-cropping days in the 1960s, all the 434 rai of locally owned land fell into different ownerships, either because of debt foreclosures or because the former owners were hard-pressed for money, and none of the rice-farmers were able to purchase any land in this period. However, in the post-double-cropping days, only 124 rai of land fell into the possession of a local moneylender, i.e. Mrs. Yee's ownership, because of indebtedness. The rest of the land was sold by non-cultivating landowners. On the other hand, there were 8 rice-farming households who gained land ownership through purchase in this period. The improved situation enabled most rice-farmers to pay off their former debt and in 1981-82, none of the landed rice-farming households mortgaged their land with private moneylenders, while 4 households with plots between 17 and 50 rai were mortgaging their land with a commercial bank or the state's credit institutions in order to obtain cheap credit, rather than being forced to do to by distressing financial circumstances.

When one looks at the landownership situation as a whole, a few notable changes stand out. Firstly, the past decade has witnessed for the first time the decline in the share of absentee-landownership. Up until the 1970s the share of land owned by absentee landowners

(excluding "crown land" which by 1981-82 had been transferred into the hands of the Land Reform Office) steadily increased from 3.3% in 1908, to 19.2% in 1940, 25.2% in 1950, 33.4% in 1960, 38.9% in 1970. However, by 1981-82 this share dropped to 30.9%. This was due to the fact that a number of poultry and rice-farmers had bought some 355 rai of land from absentee landowners, and also the fact that the past decade saw no loss of land through indebtedness to people outside the village who acted as moneylenders.

Secondly, despite the fact that a number of households had been able to consolidate their landownership position through their purchasing ability, the trend towards fragmentation of landownership continued. Average landownership had become progressively smaller through the decades. In 1908, the landownership mean was 77.5 rai, this declined to 53.2 rai by 1940, 44.3 rai by 1960, 35.8 rai by 1970 and then to 22.1 rai by 1981-82. In 1981-82 more than half, 55% of the land owned, was under 20 rai and 34.2% was under 10 rai, compared with 32.5% and 19.5% respectively for 1970. The general division of land among children continued both on the part of local and absentee landowners, although the actual landholding sizes may not necessarily decline in the same proportion because some of the small plots were rented out as one plot to a single sibling household or to the one existing tenant household. The swelling of the number of plots under 10 rai in the past decade was due to the fact that some land

had been divided up into tiny plots of .50 to 1 rai and sold off as house-sites and also due to the division of land among children.

Thirdly, the recent policy of the state, regarding land reform had resulted in 65 rai of land owned by absentee landowners being sold in 1979 to the Land Reform Office and the policy might have led a number of landowners to divide up their land to avoid the Reform programme. Mrs. Yee, for instance, transferred ownership of her various plots to her children and sold off some of the land that she was not operating for this reason. However, on the whole the land reform programme had had little effect on the existing pattern of landownership; its implementation had been slow and fallen far short of its already limited target. For instance, the target set for land to come under the programme since 1977 covered 135,995 rai of land in amphoe Ban Pho in which tambon Theparaj is situated. By 1981 only 523 rai of land had been subject to the reform (Chachoengsao Land Reform Office, 1981: 2). The 65 rai of land in Village no. 2 which was sold to the Land Reform Office had previously been rented by one tenant household and after the transaction, the same tenant had continued to rent the same plot. Another part of the programme was to grant what was known as "land rights documents" to tenants of the 507 rai of "crown land" in the village. This was carried out with great fanfare, with the Crown Prince handing out the documents to each of the tenants. The documents confirm the occupants' rights of tenure. But

in fact, the actual position of tenure basically remained the same as before since prior to receiving their documents in 1977, the tenants already had a secure tenure over their holding, and some even sold off their tenural rights to others. Furthermore, the tenants' terms of payment also remained largely the same as before. Despite certain changes in the proportion of rent and land tax, tenants said that they ended up paying about the same rate as before, ranging from 30 to over 60 baht per rai, depending on the number of times each plot had changed hands.

If one looks at the access to labour and the kinds of farming operation, a certain pattern has also emerged. Standing out from the rest of the village were the 4 big poultry-farmers in the who could be called capitalist farmers. They were assuming the role of farm owner-managers, running their farms by employing full-time wage-labourers, with their capital assets amounting to millions of baht and with their surplus being ploughed back to expand their production. Then there were the 5 medium poultry-farmers and 12 of the rice-farmers with holdings of more than 40 rai, who hired in wage-labourers either on a full-time or on a casual but regular basis, who had access to all the farming equipment, but they differ from the first group in that they expended their own labour for the various types of work in the farm except harvesting. All the small-scale poultry-farmers, on the other hand, could be called family farmers, who relied solely on their family labour

to run the farms and neither hired in nor hired out labour. The majority of the rice-farming households were less easy to identify in a clear-cut fashion. They had to rely on wage labour for harvesting and occasional weeding but the rest of the tasks were carried out by their own family labour. A smaller number of rice-farming households with holdings of less than 15 rai were more distinguishable in that they did not hire in any wage labour but themselves hired out their labour to others. Then of course there were the wage labouring households who had no access to vital production means and thus had to sell their labour for a living. Other indicators, like the children's education and marriage patterns may point towards the widening social and economic gap that was developing in the village society. A few broad tendencies can be gauged, although one again has to bear in mind that the stratification pattern with regard to these indicators is in the emergent stage and is in the process of further development. The first observation that can be made is the fact that there was a strong tendency among big poultry-farmers to send their children to non-local schools, i.e. to well-known schools in Chachoengsao or in Bangkok, and then on to higher education. The two largest poultry-farmers in the area, Liang and the Theparaj kamnan, sent each of their children for education in the U.S. In the kamnan's case, both of his sons were educated in Bangkok up to higher level education and afterwards one had returned home to help run the farm; the other had been sent abroad with

the hope that he would return to a job in the civil service which was seen as a prestigious job. As regards the big poultry-farmers in Village no. 2 itself, three of the four farmers were sending or had sent their children to schools in Chachoengsao. One of them had two young children at expensive Catholic primary schools in Chachoengsao town. One had 4 children: 2 in secondary school and 2 in technical colleges in Chachoengsao town. As for Mrs. Yee, the largest paoultry-farmer in the village, all her 4 children were married. All but one went on to higher-level education, one son being a Kasetsart University (of Agriculture) graduate. Of her two daughters, one was married to a vet, the other to the son of a big rice-miller based in the nearby amphoe and both had moved out to live with their husbands. Her two sons, though married to daughters of well-to-do merchants, had remained to help run her poultry-farm and the timber business. The fourth farmer, Maay, was a little different. With children 15 in all from two wives, and with his background in rice farming, he sent all his children to the local school for their primary education. Four children of school age were in a secondary school in Chachoengsao town, one was at Kasetsart University. Six of the older children did not have higher education and before getting married they remained at home to help in the rice fields. They were married and 4 were running their own small to medium poultry-farms which operated closely with their parents' farm, getting raw materials from and selling eggs to the

latter. They were married to children of landed rice-farmers. The other 2 children were helping their parents manage the farm, one being married to a teacher. One son, who still lived in the area, was married to a merchant's daughter and was operating as one of the biggest rice-traders in the area. Of the 3 children who lived away from home, one was a police officer based in the northeast who had another sister to help him with housekeeping, while the remaining daughter was working in a commercial bank in Bangkok. Hence, none of the children of the big poultry-farm owners had married people well below their status. Most children were encouraged to study on to a high level of education. Some were persuaded to remain and help the parents run their farms, and likewise assumed the role of farm managers.

In contrast, the children of all the wage-labouring households were invariably attending or had attended the local Theparaj school for their primary education. Many of the children also hired themselves out during their school holidays. The majority sought wage employment immediately after completing compulsory education. Of those households with school age children, only 7 had one or two of their children attending secondary school. Among the grown up unmarried children, about half of them, who were mostly in their teens, remained with their parents and hired themselves out locally while the other half had gone to work in Bangkok, Samutprakarn or Cholburi provinces doing jobs ranging from factory work,

building work, domestic service, working in restaurants or smaller food shops to working as cleaners in hospitals. Those who had gone to work elsewhere tended to get married to people they met at their place of work, while the majority also remained in Theparaj tended to get married to fellow wage labourers. Only a few had married children of tenant or owner-operator rice-farmers. None had married into poultry-farming households. Nearly all the wage labourers' children chose to set up their own households at marriage.

As for the rest of the households in the village, stratification is more diverse, although a few observations can be made. Firstly, most of the small and medium-scale poultry-farmers tended to send their children to Wat Theparaj School, but most children were then encouraged to go on to secondary and college level education in Chachoengsao or in Bangkok. Secondly, rice-farming households tended also to send children to Wat Theparaj School but beyond that there was no clear pattern; some households chose to invest in one or two of their children's education, others did not. But an increasingly prevalent attitude among a lot of rice-farming households seemed to be that they wished at least some of their children to receive high education so as to avoid the tough life in the rice fields or because there would not be enough land to go around. However, at present, a reasonably clear tendency is for most rice-farmers to retain a number of their children at home so that they could help parents with work in the rice

fields and some of the married children had remained in their parents' households for the same reason. The marriage pattern is also diverse; some were married to children of wage-labourers, other to children of rice-farmers.

As regards other possible indicators of differentiation, such as wealth and income, the inadequate information available hinders an accurate portrayal of the existing situation, and precise information is by no means easy to attain, particularly among the large-scale poultry-farmers, some of whom grossly understated the scale of their operations, probably due to their sensitivity relating to tax issues. Nevertheless, the available information can give us a rough picture with regard to the relative position of each group. Big poultry-farmers themselves said that their assets amounted to millions of baht. One big poultry-farm owner with 80,000 chickens in 1981 estimated his assets to be around 20 million baht, and his income to be at least 7 million baht a year. If the big farms were talking of assets in terms of millions of baht, medium and small poultry-farmers estimated their assets to be in the hundreds of thousands baht range. The smallest farm, which was started in 1982 with 1,200 chickens, cost its owner 200,000 baht for sheds and cages, only leaving out all the other assets such as land, and other necessary equipment. Net incomes of medium and small farms are said to average between 100,000 to over 600,000 baht per annum. On the other

hand, a rice-farmer with the largest holding and a larger amount of farming equipment than average estimated his assets, excluding land, to be at the maximum 130,000 baht, and estimated his net income to be around 300,000 baht if an average yield was 70 thang per rai and if he got 2,800 baht per kwian for his paddy. His income of course may suddenly drop if the price of rice falls or if yields are poor as in the main season of 1982, when paddy was fetching only 2,400-2,600 baht per kwian while an average yield dropped to about 60 thang per rai. As for the wage labourers, they themselves said that they had no assets worth speaking of except possibly their own house. With regard to their net incomes, the best wage labourer hiring himself/herself out in the rice fields all the year round, as well as travelling to other areas to seek higher-pay harvest work, at most could earn 25,000 baht a year in wage payment, while the worst off labourers got less than 10,000 baht a year in gross income. Even when allowances are made for the fluctuations in the prices of agricultural products, there can be little doubt as regards the enormous gap that existed between the wealthiest and the poorest households in the village.

Villagers' Own Categorization

The villagers themselves naturally had their own classification regarding the relative economic status of the various households. They tended to be more definite as to who the very rich and the very poor were in the village and pointed respectively to the big poultry-farm

owners and the wage-labourers as the cases in point. Beyond this, categorization was less precise depending on the person's own relative position within the hierarchy. For instance, wage labourers tended to classify all the medium and small poultry-farmers as well as rice-farmers with holdings from about 40-50 rai upwards as rich, while most poultry-farmers tended to view their position as better-off than rice-farmers. The different ways in which different groupings viewed themselves vis à vis the other groups and the way they viewed the recent changes that had so significantly affected their lives are of particular interest as they may help reveal certain patterns of social relations that the villagers were experiencing with one another and the relative intensity of their shared or antagonistic feelings vis à vis other groups.

In Theparaj society in 1981-82, the sharp dividing lines seemed to be between the wage-labourers and the upper strata on the one hand and between the big poultry-farmers and the rest of the groupings on the other. And the division and comparison tended to be based on the participation of manual labour as well as on the existing property relations. In certain contexts, the division was based rather on the differing patterns of economic activities which set the poultry and rice farmers apart, although among the poultry-farmers the large poultry-farm owners were always set apart from the rest.

The adoption of poultry-farming and double-cropping in rice cultivation was generally welcomed by the majority of the villagers, for it had resulted in a perceptible increase in wealth and prosperity of the whole village, including the poorer wage-labouring households. But the ways different groups perceived their prospects, portrayed their problems and concern significantly differs depending very much on their respective position in the existing property relations.

The wage-labouring households mostly welcomed the increasing job availability and higher wages of recent years which had accompanied double-cropping and the rapid expansion of big poultry-farms. Those working for poultry-farms, including the casual labourers who were hired as carpenters or builders, said that nowadays they had work to do all the year round, while labourers in rice fields generally said that double-cropping meant jobs were more plentiful than before. However, beyond this, their reservations abound. According to them, although wage work was easier to find in 1981-92, their cost of living had also gone up considerably since everything had to be bought and money had become the most crucial factor in their livelihood. On this point, everyone would reminisce about the days of old when food for free existed in abundance. Fish, shrimps and various vegetables were there for the gathering and hardly any money used to be spent on food. Often their plight was attributed to consequences of actions of other groups. For instance, where fish in the canal had been greatly

depleted and wild edible plants in the fields virtually disappeared, they would pinpoint the reasons to be the present-day application of insecticide and herbicide which has eliminated a good part of their source of food for free. For some the situation had worsened further by the fact that outsiders usually came into the area to fish, who would use every means including explosives and electricity to catch fish and some even caught baby fish for sale as well.

More important is the fact that double-cropping had eliminated also the opportunity for the poor to gather some rice for their own consumption. On this point, they would refer right back to the pre-double-cropping days when they could go around the rice fields after harvest was over to collect loose grains of paddy that were left in the fields. A household might be able to gather several thangs of paddy each year that would last them for several months. However, in 1981-82 this practice was no longer possible because rice-farmers were in a hurry to prepare their fields for the second crop. So, immediately after the first crop had been reaped, ploughing recommenced. On this once again, they tended not to attribute the cause of their worsened predicament to the double-cropping per se, but to the social relations which they saw as being connected with it. They said that an opportunity to gather loose grains still existed at the end of the dry season cropping cycle when fields were left fallow for a few months to await the first annual rain before the next cycle started

again. However, as people had become more "money-conscious, stingy and self-centred", so the reasoning went, they preferred to make money on these loose grains by allowing duck owners to feed their flocks on theirs at a fee, rather than allowing the poor to forage their fields for free.

The fact that all the labouring households had to buy rice for consumption meant that when the government initiated the programme to sell cheap rice, known as "khaao o-cha" or "khaao ong-kaan", at the end of 1980 (although by 1983 it was no longer on sale), this was wholeheartedly welcomed by all the wage-labourers alike as they previously had to buy rice at twice the cheap price. People would rush in to buy the cheap rice at the kamnan's place, although there never seemed to be enough rice to go around because of the limited amount available. The cheap rice issue turned out to be a major bone of contention and strong criticism on the wage-labourers' part against better-off people who scrambled for a share of the khaao o-cha. According to the wage-labourers, a wealthy merchant in the village and a number of rice-farmers and poultry-farmers also tried to obtain the rice. It was said that some of them sent along their children to queue up and some even hired somebody else to buy the rice for them. In this case, the wage-labourers named the individuals whose conduct they strongly objected to with the reason that better-off individuals could afford to buy rice in the market, that rice-farmers in particular had no need at all to buy the

cheap rice because they were themselves rice-growers, and that these people ought to feel ashamed of themselves. Some said the "paupers' cards" (bat anaathaa) should be presented to the kamnan when rice was bought so that those eligible for a share of the cheap rice would be restricted to those who were really poor.

Another issue which was a major concern for the wage-labourers and was a constant subject in their conversations was one concerning their house-sites. All the households alike felt intensely insecure as a result of their landlessness position. A lot of households had had to move their houses several times over the years because the landowners sold off the land or they wanted to make use of the whole area of their acreage. Many households were trying hard to save up enough money to buy sufficient land for their house-sites so as to ensure their future in the village, but this was becoming increasingly difficult because of the rising land prices. A few tried to buy less than one rai of land but were turned down because the landowner said they preferred to sell their land in big plots. The issue was often phrased in terms of increasing selfishness and lack of charity on the landowners' part. Criticism was made in general terms against landowners who had a lot of land but yet refused to rent out even one rai to poor households. Those wage-labourers who were renting land of local landowners tended not to criticize the latter in strong words but criticisms there certainly were. Chief among them was the fact that recently, landowners who

were their own kinsmen had started to levy rent on their house-sites for the first time and that some charged higher rent than non-kinsmen and absentee landowners. Interestingly, the new arrangement that had been drawn up was often couched in the language of reciprocity rather than in straight monetary and impersonal contract, i.e. some of the tenants did not call the sum paid a "rent" but termed the arrangement as follows: "The kinsmen do not really charge us rent but ask us to harvest one rai a year of their land for them in return." However, most other tenants viewed this as a straightforward rental arrangement.

Wage-labourers in Theparaj tended to view themselves as occupying the lowest rung in the social ladder, identifying themselves as the poor in the village vis à vis other groups, and setting themselves apart from the others on the basis that they had to sell their labour for a living i.e. "to receive (or accept) employment" (rab jaang), that they had neither capital nor assets like the rice-farmers or poultry farmers: "We have no thun, that is why we have to sell our labour." As such, those rice-farming households with little land, and whose dependence on offerring wage labour was great, tended to be identified as wage-labourers and being among the poor, too. In 1981-82, wage-labourers, particularly those who could find work all the year around either in ricefields because they travelled to other areas, or in poultry-farms, because the latter were expanding, were enjoying their good fortune in terms of job availability

and increased income compared with the pre-double-cropping days. Their labour was greatly demanded at harvest and this was even more the case when crops were being harvested during the rainy season when a harvesting skill of the people of Theparaj and some other areas was demanded to secure the paddy from soaking in the flooded field. (I.e. after the plants are cut, they are bundled up, tied together in small sheaves and rested on their gathered stalks to keep them well above the water level in the rice fields - a technique peculiar to the local area but not necessarily known to some outside workers who are only familiar with harvesting on dry fields and could thus leave the reaped plants on the ground.) Because of this, a lot of the rice-farmers in the village tried to retain some reciprocal ties with a number of wage-labourers, some tried to bind them through the housesite rental agreement as mentioned above, in order to ensure themselves enough labour at harvest. They might invite the labourers to the social functions they held, allowed those on the "roadless" side of the canal access to the road, but lent them money, rice or other things at no interest, etc. As such, a number of ricefield workers did feel obliged to work for those on whom they depended for favours and assistance. And this was sometimes viewed by the labourers with certain discontent although it was seldom expressed in explicitly antagonistic terms. Some labourers grumbled against certain rice-farmers who paid them less than the going average wage, who did not bother to tell them what wage

rates they were paying, and whose payment was often long overdue. The sentiment is often expressed in such terms as "When one works for kinsmen or neighbours, one can't expect to ask for high wages. One has no bargaining power."

Before 1983, optimism seemed to have prevailed among a great many wage labourers, particularly those working in the rice fields who were getting good wages for their harvest work. Constant competition and comparison seemed to exist between them and those who worked in poultry-farms. The former claimed that they were better paid as they were getting at least 50 baht a day for weeding and cutting grass and a fast worker could make up to over 100 baht a day during harvest, whereas those in poultry-farms only received 30-40 baht a day. Those rice field workers who travelled to other areas even claimed that they were doing better than some small rice-farmers. However, in 1983 such optimism was dampened down considerably when the harvest wage dropped from over 200 baht down to about 160 baht per rai or less while rice-farmers were cutting down on the amount of wage labour employed because of the prospect of low rice prices. Fluctuating prospects of employment in the rice fields, a steadily increasing number of workers looking for jobs, a high propensity for rice-farmers to adopt more labour saving devices, particularly recent experiments in the use of combine-harvesting, have led more rice field workers to apply for jobs in poultry-farms which are seen as relatively more secure.

With regard to the rice-farmers, their problems and concerns and the ways they viewed them were essentially different. All Theparaj rice-farmers agreed that double-cropping had brought them increased wealth and comfort, that the present method of rice cultivation and the use of various mechanical devices have made rice-farming much easier and relieved them of many backbreaking and arduous tasks - land preparation, buffalo-caring, uprooting, transplanting, threshing, etc. Added to this, double-cropping and the new rice varieties have generated a big increase in output, and hence their income, to such an extent that in the past four or five years they began to think that rice-farming could after all be a secure source of livelihood which was contrary to their general attitude in the pre-double-cropping days. At the same time, they all agreed also that present-day rice-farming required a great amount of capital and cash outlays. They constantly complained of the costs of labour, fertilizer and fuel which ranked among the highest on their expenditure list. The difficulty of finding workers during peak harvesting periods and the relatively high harvest wages were also seen in terms of the changing social relations between themselves and the wage-labourers. Many rice-farmers complained that nowadays wage-labourers were choosy and often "play hard to get." Some referred back to the old days when employers could scold and criticize their workers if they did something wrong and compared this with the present-day situation when workers easily walked

out on their hirers, if they were displeased with the latter's words. Rice-farmers were thus particularly keen on the idea of replacing harvest workers with combine-harvesters not merely to reduce costs but also to reduce the problem of having to hire a labour force which they regarded to be increasingly difficult and conceited.

Beyond this, there were certain slightly differing standpoints among rice-farming households according to their positions in the property relations. In general, it can be said that the issue which was a predominant concern of rice-farmers was that concerning the increasingly important role of capital and cash outlays in their production, rather than the land rent. As rent was considered as "not too high" by the tenants themselves, the dividing line between tenants and owner-operators was not so sharply drawn as one might expect and quite a few tenants were seen as being well-off rice-farmers while some were able to acquire their own land. And at present, being a tenant does not seem to determine crucially one's economic or social status in the village society, although there is always the fact that a pure tenant's position may be reduced to that of a wage-labourer if he/she is evicted from the land and recent cases of eviction had certainly heightened the fear and the feeling of insecurity among tenants, particularly those who were renting from non-ralatives. The issue that seemed to constitute a major concern to rice-farmers and sometimes led one farmer to distinguish himself/herself from another

rice-farmer, was the access to credit. All but a few rice-farmers with holdings over 40 rai had access to institutional credit while the rest needed to depend on private moneylenders exclusively. The latter who relied on particular merchants for credit in fertilizer as well as in cash saw themselves as having to depend on the merchants' continued "benevolence" and would always sell their paddy to the same merchants who advanced them with fertilizer. While some of the former also needed to rely on merchants if the offerred prices for their paddy were lower than the prices that the other merchants were offerring. This at times led those farmers who did not need to form dependent ties with merchants to make remarks such as, "We can choose to sell our paddy to whichever merchant offers us the highest price because we are not under anybody's influence, because we are not anybody's servants." Yet, this too seemed to be a mild distinction and on the whole the sharper dividing line seemed to exist more between rice-farmers as a group and wage-labourers.

Some of the experience of group action on the part of rice-farmers in recent years (which will be dealt with later) may have reinforced the shared feeling among the rice-farmers. Often one heard them attributing the cause of the plight of rice-farmers as a group against other parties. For instance, the government was blamed by many for its rice premium policy which was seen as acting to depress the paddy price that they got, for its insincerity and half-heartedness in carrying out such policies as the

rice price guarantee on rice price support programmes and officials were often criticized for corruption. Fingers were also pointed to those closer to the village circle i.e. some saw merchants as taking advantage of them at every stage of the transactions - in the form of exorbitant interest rates on the fertilizer they advanced at the beginning of each crop cycle, in the form of lower-than-average prices for their paddy at harvest, and some merchants were accused of selling fake fertilizer.

As regards the poultry-farmers the big poultry-farmers were set distinctly apart from the rest of the village including the smaller poultry-farmers in nearly all aspects. They were seen to have a circle of their own and to associated almost exclusively among themselves and with people outside the village. The smaller poultry-farmers said that they never joined in the drinking or gambling circles of the big farmers as they talked in vastly different units of currency. They thus observed the latter at a distance. They expressed their envy of the big farms remarking that the latter could operate much more cheaply than they could because of their ability to buy in bulk and that they could sell at "leading prices" while small farmers had to accept lower prices for their eggs. Despite the fact that medium farms dealt directly with merchants while small farms needed to form dependent ties with all of the big farms, they tended to see themselves as belonging to the same group of small poultry-farmers as distinct from the big farms.

Political Action

The distinct positions and identifications of the various groupings at times took the form of open political action or groupings. Most notable was the recent group action of the rice farmers which had significantly enhanced their solidarity with one another. Theparaj rice farmers were very proud of their ability to make their voice heard and they all agreed that their ability to act as a group is due very much to the fact that they had a number of incorruptible, "clean-handed" leaders, and in particular it is Kwanchai whose persevering efforts over the years had been a powerful force behind their success.

Kwanchai returned to Theparaj in 1974 at a time when the rice-farmers were experiencing extremely severe insect attacks against their rice plants. The 1975 attack wiped out almost the entire crop. Farmers said that at that time they had no idea what the cause was. It was during these years also that Kwanchai tried to re-establish the Farmers' Group in Theparaj. With his own money he redeemed the defunct Group from its debt so that it could register once again. The Group revived its existence with 130 members at the initial stage. It was on behalf of this Farmers' Group that Kwanchai contacted the various agencies and managed to borrow pesticide sprayers for the village. However, these efforts unfortunately failed to save the rice crops. As for the Farmers' Group itself, there was not much participation by members at the start. Few turned up at its monthly

meetings. The despair and destitution of many households, generated by the recent pest attacks, further inhibited the farmers' involvement since they had to fend hard for their living to pay back the accumulating debt.

It was after these disastrous years that the rice-farmers began to turn to the new high-yielding seed grains that also opened the way to double-cropping. These years also witnessed an increase in the membership of the Farmers' Group from 130 to 230 members. The increased participation was mainly due to the fact that through the Group, farmers could obtain fertilizers at cheaper than market prices from the state's newly established Agricultural Marketing Organisation, and also to the fact that through the Group they could sell their rice at guaranteed prices, although the latter did not prove very successful.

The Farmers' Group began to be eclipsed by events not long afterwards and by 1981 it was virtually non-existent. Many former leaders saw the cause of this decline in the various measures that the government later enacted, either to subject the local Farmers' Groups to greater control by state officials, or to supercede the Groups' essential functions by establishing alternative organisations to perform these same functions. The amendments to the Co-operative Societies Act (Kirsch, 1981: 43-44) were seen as constituting the state's attempt to undermine local Farmers' Groups by reintegrating them into district-level agricultural co-operatives and subjecting them to the closer scrutiny

and control of the state. The measure that had made possible the purchase of fertilizer by groups of 10 farmers, from state agencies like the BAAC, was also regarded with suspicion as an attempt by the state to disintegrate the farmers' grassroots organisation.

Not only have the rice-farmers worked more as an organised group at the local level, from 1973 onwards, cooperation among Farmers' Groups especially within the province of Chachoengsao had greatly increased and their solidarity had been expressed in the form of organised mass rallies to air their grievances or by sending farmers' representatives to meet and submit their complaints to the government.

The sucession of open protests by Chachoengsao farmers started in 1973. The first mass rally was led by farmers in Amphoe Bangnamprieo, who staged it in front of the provincial townhall against the ineffectiveness of the government's guaranteed rice price in their area. In subsequent years (1974, 1977, 1978, 1981) representatives of the Farmers' Groups at the provincial level were sent to the state's Agricultural Marketing Organization and to the Prime Minister's Office to protest the same problem. These protests seldom yielded much fruitful result. At best a small number of farmers might have been able to sell their rice at the prices guaranteed by the government. Usually the Prime Minister or the Director of the Agricultural Marketing Organisation would promptly issue a directive to their local officials to put the measure into immediate implementation, but the overall

effect was never widespread nor longlasting. The disillusioned farmers coined a phrase "banging the bowl to please the dog" (signifying the empty promise of non-existant food in the bowl) to describe the government's superficial and half-hearted attempts to alleviate their problems.

Nevertheless, one specific protest did produce the required result with which the farmers are particularly pleased, because they also managed to outwit officials. This took place in 1979-80 when the then Minister of Agriculture reduced the amount of fertilizer that the Agricultural Marketing Organisation might sell to each farming household from 50 kg to 20 kg. This outraged farmers in areas like Theparaj where the high-yielding rice varieties consume a great deal of fertilizer. The farmers say that it was senseless for the Ministry to apply one uniform rate to the whole of the country. On hearing about the new policy, one farmer leader from Theparaj, who is seen by the villagers as a very shrewd and astute person, went on his own initiative, together with a few friends to the Land Reform Office to voice his objection and to find out more about the details of the order. (At that time fertilizer had to be purchased through the Land Reform Office and not directly from the Agricultural Marketing Organisation as before.) The leader managed to photocopy secretly the document signed by the Minister approving the new measure which was earlier shown to him.

There followed a series of meetings among provincial-level representatives of the Farmers' Group which eventually resulted in a decision to hold a mass demonstration at the Prime Minister's Office in Bangkok. On that occasion nearly 2,000 farmers from all over Chachoengsao and from certain parts of the adjacent Samutprakarn province participated. A group of farmers' leaders were sent in to meet the Minister of Agriculture, accompanied by a Chachoengsao MP who awaited them there. At their encounter the Minister claimed that he had no knowledge of the particular directive so he was presented with the photocopied document that bore his signature. The Minister eventually gave in and was pressed by the farmers to sign, there and then, another directive to overrule the former one and restored the previous rate of 50 kg/rai of fertilizer per family.

The organisation of this mass rally was by no means without problems and several parties did intervene to try and stop it from taking place. First of all, the incumbent president of the provincial-level Farmers' Group, who was seen to be more on the side of the officials than the farmers, refused to participate. Then when an organisational meeting was being held among the farmer leaders, an MP turned up to dissuade them from going on. Another MP also sent along a message to say that everything possible was being carried out to correct the situation and there was no need for the demonstration. As a result, a number of leaders began to

waver but the hard core leaders seemed to have won the argument to proceed with the mass rally.

The most recent demonstration staged by the Chachoengsao farmers in which Theparaj villagers again participated was in October 1981. More than 1,500 farmers rallied in front of the provincial town hall to ask the government to put its guaranteed rice price policy into immediate practice (the Nation Review, 16/10/1981). Their grievances this time were peculiar to the Chachoengsao area where double-cropping is practised, in that their main-season rice crops are harvested earlier than other regions so as to be able to squeeze the second crop in before the sea water enters the canals and turns the water brackish and unsuitable for the rice plant. Because the harvest is in the middle of the rainy season, the harvested grains are wet and fetch very low prices in the market. It means that the farmers have to sell their paddy at a loss (Riew Thai, 20/10/1981). The prices that the farmers were getting were further depressed when farmers competed among themselves to dispose of their wet paddy at the soonest possible time before more damage occurred through rotting or sprouting. This early harvesting meant that the area would not benefit from the government's guaranteed-price policy which was set to be implemented 2-3 months afterwards.

The first demonstration succeeded in getting the Rice Policy Committee to comply to the farmers' demand, by assigning 3 rice mills in the province to purchase

paddy from the farmers at special guaranteed prices for wet rice.

However, before the month ended, the farmers were out protesting once again and this time against the malpractices of the rice mills concerned. Farmers say that the mills insisted on giving the guaranteed price only to those with dry paddy (paddy with 14% humidity level). Moreover, the mills also deducted 2 thang's worth of paddy per kwian as impurities. But by the time the government got the rice mills to comply to the original contract, the farmers had only two days left in which to sell their paddy. The time limit and the unnecessarily complicated procedure inhibited a majority of farmers from going through with the deal. The few who did were faced with a few more rice-millers' tricks. The mills limited their purchase to only 20 kwian per day, they increased their deduction for impurities, some charged extra conveyor-belt fees (a charge for transporting paddy from a boat/truck into the mill). At the same time, the millers were also bribing officials involved to overstate the number of the farmers and the amount of the paddy sold to them so that they could claim more money from the government.

Attempts were again made to stop the farmers from staging the demonstrations. As soon as the naay amphoe (district officer) got wind of the news, he promptly issued a statement which was distributed all over the amphoe BanPho. His message was that the authorities had been informed of the farmers' plight and had already

proceeded to correct the situation so there was no need for the "brothers and sisters" to demonstrate. The communist threat was also invoked and a scare tactic used to discourage the farmers from joining in the rally. To quote one of the passages in full:

> We have received intelligence reports that the other side have changed their tactics and are now active in the cities. Their line is to use various rallies in order to create a current of people's war everywhere. One method is to shoot at demonstrators and blame officials in order to create anger directed against the state's officials and causing us to shed blood amongst ourselves. When we are weak they will be able to deal with us more easily and eventually to seize power. This makes us extremely concerned for the safety of the fraternal farmers who join the demonstration. (Amphoe Ban Pho Announcement, 14/10/1981.)

We can gauge from the series of demonstrations and petitions that the Theparaj farmers had mostly directed their protests against the government e.g. against its rice price policy, fertilizer policy and the delay and half-heartedness to carry out the policies. At rallies, they also took turns to speak out against the soaring prices of all the other commodities, including prices of agricultural inputs like fertilizer, fuel, insecticide; that is, all except the price of paddy. The farmers attacked the unnecessarily complicated and highly bureaucratic procedures that they had to go through in order to sell a meager amount of paddy. They attacked their MP's for not being real representatives of the people and for disappearing completely once elected. They attacked the government as being under the merchants' influence and attacked officials for

collaborating with merchants and capitalists to enrich themselves. They attacked the rice premium policy as being a factor depressing the paddy price. They attacked the rice-mills for taking every possible advantage of them. Hence, unlike their counterparts in the North where the problem of high rent is pertinent (Anan, 1983: 2-24), in areas like Theparaj the farmers were not so much against the landowning class and the rent issue as against the government and merchants/moneylenders on such issues as the rice price, rice tax policies, the high costs of agricultural inputs and the high cost of living.

Judging from the frequency and the degree of participation in these protests, the rice-farmers-owner-operators as well as tenants can be said to be better organised politically than other groups in the local community. In Theparaj there were a number of rice-farmers who proved themselves to be very shrewd and capable leaders. Nearly all of them were middle and well to do farmers, in their 30s or 40s, who usually had higher education or travelled more widely than the average villager. Although the organisational legwork was largely covered by Kwanchai, the other leaders, too, played a highly significant role in rallying fellow farmers to support the protests. Some turned out to be more resolute and strong-headed than Kwanchai himself. Some were elected headmen of their villages and they were particularly proud of their integrity and incorruptibility. They saw themselves as "headmen of the

people", to be contrasted with those headmen who were just an "arm of the bureaucracy".

And among the leaders in the village, who was closely associated with the rice-farming community, was a teacher who had been settled in the village for 40 years. Unlike the headteacher who was seen, and himself acted as an official, and unlike the other teachers who stayed aloof from local affairs, this teacher, whose wife was a local wage-labourer, had been an active participant both in the community and in the rice-farmers' activities. He followed very closely all the political goings on at the national level and his store of knowledge was widened by the amount of travelling he had done. The information that he learnt, e.g. about the MPs' corrupt backgrounds, about official corruption, about foreign education systems etc., often got related to the other villagers' inside drinking circles. Furthermore, he was also an outspoken man. He dared to criticise a provincial welfare officer at a meeting of the National Defence Volunteers for not caring about poor people and their children. He infuriated the deputy-governor at a Rural Work Opportunities scheme meeting when he criticised the uniform policy being applied throughout the province regardless of the different local conditions. To the villagers he is "one of us" and not "one of them".

As regards the other groups in the village, the poor rice-farmers tended not to join in with the protest activities. They were usually too busy undertaking harvest work outside the area or they did not see their

interests to be at stake; the main part of their income came from wage work and they had only a small quantity of paddy to sell. The majority viewed themselves as wage-labourers rather than as rice-farmers.

Another group of villagers who often acted in concert consists of certain factions of the large-scale poultry-farmers. The kamnan faction, which was the biggest, worked closely on matters concerning their business interest, e.g. setting a guideline price for their eggs, sharing information on diseases, prices, etc. They tended to meet daily to discuss these problems. However, between the various factions of these big and medium-to-big poultry-farmers, conflict seemed rife. The kamnan was clearly at odds with another very large poultry-farm owner, Liang, who was the principal agent of the CP Company in the area, and constantly criticised him of the ways he grossly exploited his clients who were owners of the small-scale poultry-farms. He also succeeded in enticing some of the medium-sized farms to become independent and to establish direct contact with the feed companies. This naturally angered his opponent, but the kamnan said that his rival could not really do anything about it because "our faction is much bigger". However, within the kamnan's own faction, some members occasionally acted in defiance of their leader and the kamnan is said to have been outraged when a few of "his men" became hua khanaen (vote canvassers) for MPs other than the one the kamnan was supporting.

On the whole, large-scale poultry farmers came into little contact with the rest of the village members, aside from the wage-labourers of their own farms. Their dealings and contacts were concentrated more with people outside the local community. Once or twice a year they were seen to be involved in local community affairs when they sponsored major religious ceremonies at the local wats but for the rest of the year they were mostly confined within their own enclosed farm compounds. Other villagers including their own poorer kinsmen would not dare even to greet them. "They are rich, we poor have to mix with our own kind."

An exception to this seemed to be the kamnan himself who was very well-liked among the broad spectrum of the villagers. Even his rivals who ran against him for the kamnan office accepted that he, too, was a good kamnan and they themselves would not have been able to do as well as he did. The rice-farmers said that he was a good kamnan, who always acted for the common good of the whole community, that he was generous and did not oppress the villagers. He might actively support candidates of his own choice or exercised his influence to get them elected at local elections, he himself might have bought the votes that won him the kamnan post, but he also rendered his assistance and helped with the expenses of the farmers' activities, including at demonstrations. Poor people thought highly of him because he always passed the word on to them to go and get their share of the

government's cheap rice before stocks ran out, because he always greeted them and was not aloof.

As regards the masses of the wage-labourers in the village, they seemed to be a diverse group. They were engaged in a wide variety of occupations. The majority were employed in the rice fields but some of their members might also be supplementing their families' income with fishing, weaving, petty trading or other types of wage work. A number of the wage-labourers were hired by the large and medium-sized poultry-farms, some on a regular basis, some not. The latter were largely composed of carpenters who were hired on a daily basis when there was repair or building work to be done at poultry-farms of all sizes. The diversified nature of work sometimes resulted in a diversity of experiences and perceptions. Often, competition and contention reign among them when choice jobs were on offer.

The Changing Patronage Relations

Although the property relations that prevailed in Theparaj village society in 1981-82 were complex and by no means clear-cut, and many households could be seen to occupy diverse positions as regards their relations to the means of production, such relations were becoming increasingly important in defining the relationships that one household had with another. The growing intensification of rice farmers, the adoption of the highly capitalised agri-business of poultry-farming and the increasing impact that the state had on the

villagers' production also resulted in certain changes in the relations between the local elite and the masses, in that they had significantly contributed towards the growing depersonalization of patron-client relations.

Capitalized relations of production facilitated a considerable mechanization of agricultural labour. By 1981-82, labour was hired on a contractual basis. The labour exchange system, which was long practised among rice-farmers, virtually disappeard after the introduction of double-cropping, except in the small task of broadcasting. One has seen that rice-farmers were trying to utilize capital when and where possible to replace what they saw as a difficult and expensive workforce with machinery. At the same time, wage-labouring households are finding themselves having to pay rent for the land on which their houses are built for the first time. Among the producers themselves, vital resources of production were no longer vested in the local community but were located farther away from the village. The increasingly important determinant of success in modern farming was a household's access to credit and for this producers either turned to commercial banks, state credit institutions and/or merchants, while local patrons could now help out only with small sums of money or rice at occasional intervals and often this was not for the purpose of production but of consumption. And while the recent trend was for more land to come under the ownership of local villagers vis à vis absentee landowners, it has also been the case that a lot of local

landowners proved to be much more stringent than the latter and many were extremely reluctant to rent out their land, preferring instead to cultivate the land themselves with the help of hired labour. Added to this, the increasing role of the state in making available credit, marketing and other agricultural services resulted in a large number of farmers becoming direct clients of the state with no need for any intermediation of patrons. Now, full-time functionaries are overseeing the various basic social welfare and agricultural improvement programmes and thus, these aspects of the role of a traditional patron has passed out of his hands almost completely.

As a consequence, some of the poor households in the village said that they no longer felt they had any patrons, and many felt that they no longer had the guarantee of survival they perceived as having been available to their parents, that their fight for suvival depended on their efforts alone. And those who might be viewed by some as their patrons were often found to have their basis of patronage not in their personal wealth but rather in their access to outside, particularly to state resources. For instance, in the case of Kwanchai, people turned to him for help because they realized that he had contact with officials in the Ministry of Agriculture and at the provincial level and that he could get hold of good seeds, cheap fertilizer, insecticide, etc., from state agencies. In the case of the kamnan, he himself might contribute his own money to various social

functions but when it came to face to face relations with poorer villagers who sometimes depended on his patronage, he was often referred to in terms of his official position in the state bureaucracy for the access he provided to the state's cheap rice, of his power to issue them with "paupers' cards" to enable them to obtain free medical services, etc.

Not only did many of the poorer villagers feel that the 1981-82 society was one of "every man to himself", but in general the logic of cost calculation, of "profit and losses" seemed to have become inherent in so many spheres of the villagers' activities. When a family holds a social function, be it a wedding, an ordination of its son into monkhood, or a funeral, it could expect contributions from those invited. Despite the fact that "to contribute" at such functions is termed "to help" (chuay ngaan), at the end of the day the family would carefully work out whether it has made a profit (kamrai), a loss (khaadthun), or a break-even (samoe tua). Families that had no cause to stage the social functions, e.g. childless couples, were said to khaadthun, as they had been paying out money in contributions without receiving any in return. Some childless couples thus might go ahead and sponsor an ordination of other people's sons, not merely to gather more merits but also to "retrieve the capital previously invested" (keb thun khuen = to collect back capital). It was said also that if a family held several celebrations already, their future functions would not be attended by so many people

even if invited, or it would not be getting large contributions because people would reason that they had "helped" enough already in the previous functions.

As a result of such a market-oriented logic, invitations might be sent out to wealthy friends but not to poor kinsmen. When invited, the poorer households tended not to contribute in money but in labour. If an occasion arose when the poor were required to contribute in money, e.g. when they did not wish to lose their whole day's wage work or when they were very closely related to the host family, antogonism to the point of the severing of relationships sometimes ensued when the host expresses his/her displeasure at the meager amount of contributions. An instance of this was when a niece came to pay respect (waay) to her elderly aunt at her wedding with an offer of a piece of cloth, flowers, candles, incense sticks. Her aunt rab waay (received the waay) by giving the couple 20 baht, she being one of the most destitute in the village. Not long afterwards she heard that the host family was saying that her contribution was not worth the cost of the material that was presented to her (rab waay mai khum khaa phaa). The aunt returned the material and broke off her ties with her relatives.

Although villagers of Theparaj were defining their relations with one another increasingly in terms of their position in the existing property relations scheme, it cannot be forgotten that other types of social relations also existed which created their own lines of divisions among the villagers. On other issues and at other times,

people might define themselves as members of the same village, the same religion, the same faction or kingroup. In recent years, forces from outside the village society also played an important role in the attempts to win over the villagers' support and loyalty.

Most concretely, this usually takes the form of the state's attempt to promote systematically the citizens' loyalty to the "Nation, Religion, King" and to counter what it sees as threats to these institutions; and the threats include communism as well as "instigation of all forms of unrest". The two organisations which have involved Theparaj villagers are the Village Scouts and the National Defence Volunteers (for details see M. Muecke, 1980).

At the command of ISOC (the Internal Security Operations Command), the first Village Scouts' training in the area was held at a big temple in the nearby Amphoe Mueang in 1976. Very few people from Theparaj participated except all the village headmen and a number of teachers who received the order to attend, together with a few poultry farmers. At that meeting most participants were merchants in town and town-based youths. Very few rice-farmers joined in since it was in the middle of a serious insect attack. The training course was largely sponsored by wealthy people - merchants, bankers, landowners and local politicians. A Theparaj village headman says that the meeting seems to him to have been very successful in stirring up the

feeling of group unity because he saw a great deal of tears being shed on the last day before they parted. He told the story with a mocking tone and says also that he himself refused to join in certain activities which he regarded as absurd, e.g. reducing the participants' ages to 8 years old and ordering them to crawl and weep, etc.

There was more participation from the local villagers when the National Defence Volunteers' training was held at Wat Theparaj itself in 1981. The amphoe officials then requested for "patriots'" to come forth and specifically asked each village headman to supply at least 20 people from his own village. One hundred and eighteen people completed the course of training and most participated at the request of their headmen but some joined because of other ulterior motives like hoping to obtain a permission to carry their guns in the village. The main objective was said to be to train people to defend their own villages, and the programme was mainly geared towards instructions and practice on the use of guns and fighting strategies. A number of participants were designated "village policemen" and some believed they had the power of arrest in the village.

It is not altogether clear how effective these programmes were. To most villagers, the threats cited by the authorities seem very remote and the remaining impression left from the training course was rather predominated by the sense of fun and enjoyable memories. However, it can also be said that these organisations had been successful to a certain extent in inculcating a

feeling of being a group, and an identification with one's group. At the Bangkok Bicentennial celebration in 1977 which, ironically enough, was also held in all the provinces, it was said that tens of thousands of defence volunteers turned up to join in the march.

Patrons As Political Brokers

More important in the village's power relations seemed to be the fact that rural villagers were now being involved in the dynamics of electoral competition, particularly during the past decade. On the other hand, vertical patron-client ties seemed nevertheless to have continued albeit in another form and based on a different source of patronage. Elections both at the local and national levels not only promoted vertical integration from the village level to national-level political institutions, they also politicized already pre-existing personal ties as well as creating new ones. In trying to obtain the votes of the rural masses, politicians tried to go about the business by securing the support of important local patrons who were seen to be able to pull in the votes of their respective clients, and sources of patronage ranged from provision of help in times of trouble, in dealing with officials, in securing public funds, to straightforward cash payments. As competition at elections of all levels became very intense, the role of local leaders as hua khanaen, or vote-canvassers, had become more prominent, while the clients might find their position somewhat enhanced as their support was sought

at the polls. The way the local community was explicitly and intensely factionalized in times of elections, the manner in which politicians conducted their political campaigns and the types of candidates being elected can reveal certain aspects of existing power relations and the strength or weakness of the vertical ties that link people at the village level to the other levels of the political system.

During general elections the majority of politicians appeared in Theparaj and the nearby tambons to campaign in person. They usually turned up at social or religious functions that were being held. Although this helped familiarize their names with the voters, it was not the principal tactic adopted. Rather, they tended to find it far more effective to rally votes through building up the number of locally-based hua khanaen. The most obvious choice they would go for would be the incumbent village and tambon headmen, well-respected members of the local community, as well as local followings. Vote-seeking politicians would offer their hua khanaen various rewards and incentives. A lot of them offerred the latter lump sums of money, part of which was to keep and the rest to be distributed among potential supporters. The other form that the reward might take was the prospect of patronage or the continuance of existing patronage. The hua khanaen might be able to seek the politicians' help when they were in trouble. For instance, one MP candidate who was known to be a big nakleng of Chachoengsao town managed to "save" a local nakleng who

shot dead a rival, from imprisonment. Apart from these, all the hua khanaen would also be invited to several rounds of feasts where they would also be treated lavishly with food, drinks and entertainment.

During general election campaigns, money was freely available. Certain MP candidates were named by villagers as "Lord Spendthrifts" or jaao bun thum because they threw their money about. The best known among them was Prasit Karnchanawat, a veteran candidate who was an elected MP for Chachoengsao several times and was Speaker of the House of Representatives and also held important cabinet posts in the Ministries of Agriculture, Commerce and Economic Affairs (Prachachart, 1974: 162, 170, 171). Because people associated his campaigns with money handouts, when his hua khanaen canvassed for votes, people held out their hands and asked, "Well, where is the 100 baht then?" In the 1978 election he chose to use tactical voting and 50 baht was handed out to each of his supporters before they went to the poll and another 50 baht was handed out only when it had been confirmed that the supporter cast a single vote exclusively for him rather than vote for the other two candidates at the same time (a system whereby constituencies elect several representatives is usually used). As for his hua khanaen, they too were promised 100 baht for each vote cast tactically in this manner. Prasit always launched a systematic campaign to recruit the hua khanaen themselves and particular attention was paid to areas where his voting support was thought to be weak. Once this was

discovered, his men were promptly despatched to recruit more hua khanaen. A village headman, an obvious potential hua khanaen, was approached by Prasit's men who visited his house several times. When he repeatedly declined, as he was already supporting a local candidate of the Phalang Mai Party, Prasit invited him round to his house. When there, the first questions he was asked by the "Lord Spendthrift" were: "How many villagers are there in your village and how much money would you like?" Prasit also told him, "Do take the money to hire your villagers to vote for me". While at Prasit's place, the headman also saw Prasit's hua khanaen reporting their progress into tape recorders, which made him realise how well-organised the rich man's campaigns were.

Villagers generally view this style of campaigning with money handouts in a cynical light. Interestingly, they saw the money being handed out at elections as the candidates' own "investment". To quote them, "the politicians have invested a lot of money in the campaigns, so once elected they would try and recover the money." "The politicians treat elections simply as a means of promoting their own livelihood, they are not really concerned with doing things for the benefit of the country or anything like that and once elected they will not appear in the area again until the next election." As money had become one of the most important means of gaining votes, one failed local MP candidate could not help but complain bitterly, "If you tied money to the tail of a dog, it would get elected."

However, according to Theparaj people, the pattern of voting for money had somewhat changed over the years. In the former days, people said that 99% of the villagers would "honestly" vote for all three as entitled and not cast an exclusive vote for the one candidate as they are sometimes asked to. This might have been the factor that led politicians like Prasit to devise a way to force his supporters to cast their votes for him exclusively.

As mentioned above, incentives offerred to the villagers at elections did not necessarily take the form of money handouts only. One previously unknown, last-minute candidate won the votes of nearly all Theparaj voters on one occasion because he promised and managed to bring electricity into the villages on the eve of polling day.

However, the villagers themselves had their own choice of candidates. There was in 1981-82, one politician who was well-liked and whom the villagers said would always be elected, despite the fact that he did not give them money handouts during the campaigns. He was described as a good man who was never too proud to accept all the invitations, no matter whether they came from the rich or the poor. He would contribute generously towards the costs of the functions. And, like other candidates, he also spent a great deal of money on feasting his hua khanaen and supporters during campaigns. But to the villagers he was a consistent person. The rice farmers were very impressed when he met them and tried to arrange

for them to see the Ministers concerned when the farmers staged a demonstration in Bangkok.

Whether they were "spendthrift lords" or not, the Chachoengsao candidates for Parliament were usually locally-born, wealthy people with business backgrounds. Prasit, the big "lord spendthrift", had shares in numerous large-scale businesses ranging from rice-milling, rice-exporting, finance and banking. Of note were his shares and a post of deputy chairman on the Bangkok Bank's Board of Directors (Krirkiat, 1982: 206; Hewison, 1981: 399). Other candidates were known to be operating such businesses as rice-milling, saw-milling, finance companies and even illegal timber trading and gambling houses. The villagers could observe for themselves how the people they elected as MPs were using their position to further their own personal gains. People saw that Prasit's rice-mill in the nearby amphoe was usually able to clinch various deals with the government. They also knew that an MP they often supported had become very wealthy from his trade in illegal timber and that he got away with it because he had good connections with high-ranking officials, including the police.

Similar stories were also echoed as regards members of the Provincial Council. Elections at this level too were fiercely contested and a lot of money was spent by the majority of politicians to "buy" votes. Similarly, those elected were usually from local wealthy business families. Once elected, their economic position was

further entrenched. It was said that a member of the Provincial Council tried to win the various contracts for public projects for his own men. And construction works in Amphoe Ban Pho, ranging from road building to the supplying of desks and chairs for government schools were carried out by his men. At one time, Theparaj was beneficiary of a sum in the provincial budget which was designated for the repair of the dirt road. According to a village headman, the market price of the laterite was 90 baht per cubic ton although the budget's set price was 80 baht. The contractor, a provincial councillor's son, won the bidding. Naturally, he completed the repair works using a much smaller amount of the laterite than specified in the contract. The village headman raised this in a local meeting and proposed a change of contractors. However, other contractors declined to contest because of forseeable losses and in the end the original contractor was allowed to complete the work.

As for elections at the tambon and village levels, villagers said that these were even more fiercely contested and produced a far more tense and heated atmosphere in the local community. Present-day elections reflect the local pattern of factionalism which has changed over the past few decades. Previous leaders were mostly landowning rice-farmers, while those who were in control of the marketing and processing of rice, usually of Chinese origin, tended to remain tangential to local politics. Over the years certain members of the latter channelled their investment into the new poultry-farming

business. And at present they not only have significant connections with financial, commercial agents and government officials outside the local community, they have also begun to play an increasingly direct and active role in local-level politics.

A serious bid for the post of headman by a poultry-farmer occured in the early 1970s when the present kamnan, a large-scale poultry-farmer, contested with a teacher in the election and became headman of Village no. 1. Rumour had it that the naay amphoe who supervised the counting of the votes conducted a biased procedure favouring the poultry-farmer condidate. The election was held at a poultry-farm and by an open instead of a secret ballot. It was further biased by the fact that the naay amphoe started off by asking those who wished to vote for the teacher to walk out of the congregation place. Because most people felt awkward and found the procedure too blatant, in their words they felt "kreng jai" (not wanting to offend, either out of consideration or out of deference) and did not want to walk out. Only the very strong supporters of the teacher's walked out in the end. People said that had the ballot been secret, the poultry-farmer would not have won by such a large majority.

Not long after he had become village headman, the poultry-farmer entered another fierce contest for the post of kamnan in 1975. Candidates were among four out of the six incumbent village headmen. Apart from the poultry-farmer, the others were two rice-farmers, and one

merchant who was headman of the market village. A great deal of electioneering took place. The majority of candidates said that they relied mainly on the support of their own kinsmen, clients, as well as on the help of a few hua khanaen. They appeared in person at the homes of their potential supporters to openly request their votes. They also treated their hua khanaen and supporters with food and drinks and it seemed that those who turned up at a candidate's feast could be expected to vote for him in return. It was said that all but one candidate adhered to such means of campaigning. The poultry-farming headmen was alleged to have gathered his support by means of money and rice handouts. A rice-farmer candidate complained bitterly because some of his own clients, who were renting his land, failed to vote for him but voted for the candidate from whom they had accepted the gifts. As all the four candidates were incumbent headmen, they tended to count on the support of the majority of the people in their respective villages, i.e. the poultry-farmer headman could expect to win nearly all the votes in Village no. 1 which incidentally also contained a larger proportion of poultry-farming households, while the two rice-farmer candidates who were based in villages where rice-farming households predominated and where their close kinsmen were concentrated, could also expect the largest numbers of votes from their own villages. People often said that the fact that there were two rice-farming candidates led to a split in the votes of the rice-farming community and resulted in a victory for

the poultry-farmer candidate. At this particular election, too, there was a widespread allegation against certain malpractices during the counting of votes. It is said that in actual fact the rice-farmer headman of Village no. 4 got two more votes than the poultry-farmer headman but the naay amphoe ruled two ballot papers null and void. In the end the two runners-up had exactly the same number of votes and suspiciously, the naay amphoe had to proceed to draw lots to pick the winner.

The fact that local elections were so bitterly contested led many candidates and some hua khanaen to turn into irreconcilable enemies. People described such heated contests as resulting in feuds between or among candidates. (The phrase used is "kin jai kan" which literally means "to eat one another's heart.") Such rivalry was said to destroy the unity of the local community as it tended to divide the villagers into factions. Hence, some people, once elected, would invite the failed contestants and their supporters along to their celebration feasts as a gesture of reconciliation. Similarly, due to the potential danger of antagonising the other parties, many villagers were reluctant to become hua khanaen for fear of the "kin jai kan" result.

Factionalism that recurred at local-level elections was vertical in nature and cut across class lines. A variety of factors, complementary as well as conflicting ones, appeared to influence the villagers' decisions. As a rule, a candidate could expect support from his very close kinsmen and his clients (those who rented his land,

borrowed his money, etc.). Kinship ties were often cited as one of the most significant factors in deciding who to support. Nevertheless, one also heard frequent complaints against "betraying" kinsmen and clients. The fact that the poultry-farmer candidate who won the kamnan election was not a local man originally and his wife, a local rice-miller's daughter, had not many relatives in the area could mean that factors other than kinship ties might be overriding the latter to some extent. It could be that the big poultry-farmers who were hiring a number of wage-labourers on a regular basis had come to be seen as an alternative source of patronage by some wage-labouring families. Furthermore, the fact that many of the wage-labourers were renting their houseplots from absentee landowners on a purely contractual basis, the fact that members of their families had become resident-labourers in poultry-farms and hence no longer needed to rely on their kinsmen for their house land, might have contributed to the further weakening of the traditional kinship ties as the sources of patronage shifted. At other times kinship ties were overruled by what people viewed to be appropriate qualities of present-day leaders. For instance, at the election for Village no. 2 headman, had the two candidates been able to count on the support of their respective kinsmen, then the result would have been quite close. But as it turned out, the elected man won by a big majority because he happened to have got a fair number of votes from among the other's kinsmen. In such circumstances some

households chose to split their votes between the two candidates, i.e. the husband would vote for one and the wife for the other (one candidate might be their relative while the other their friend). However, the often-quoted reasons for the elected candidate's victory were that he was well-connected and knew a lot of people, that he was much more articulate and knew the ropes much better than the other candidate, that he was far more generous.

Another instance which could be cited was the most recent election for the headman of Village no. 4, whereby the victorious candidate had very few kinsmen to count on for solid support. Some explained his triumph by the fact that he promised to appoint a Muslim as an assistant headman, thereby winning all the Muslim votes. (Villages nos. 4, 5 and 6 had a number of Muslims in their population.) Others said that he won because a relative of his hua khanaen, who was a high-ranking military officer, spread the word on this candidate's behalf when he came to the big religious function at the Wat and this significantly boosted his support.

As for the victories of poultry-farmers at local elections, some villagers attributed them to the lavish campaigns and money handouts that were adopted. At present, poultry-farmers were the incumbent kamnan of both Theparaj and the adjacent twin tambon Prawet. The Prawet kamnan was said to have paid 30,000 baht for the last village headman's resignation from his post in order that he could replace him and then proceed to contest for the post of kamnan later. Their victories were also

linked to their close connections with government officials who could bend the rules to their advantage.

Not only had members of the large-scale poultry-farming community entered the actual election contests in person, they were also actively supporting and excercising their influence on behalf of candidates of their choice at the sukhaa phibaan elections and the saphaa tambon selections of committee members. Because these committees were empowered to decide on which local projects to support with public funds at their disposal, their members could win some projects for their own villages or for their interest groups. One found that proposals to repair the dirt road or road bridge were almost always put forward by the poultry-farmer or the merchant members of the committees for they were most dependent on the road. On the other hand, rice-farming members often proposed such projects as canal-deepening, the acquisition of big engine pumps and water pipes to improve the water supply for the second rice crop. At the same time, members also tried to win the funds for their own respective villages in order to boost their own prestige as well as to confirm, strengthen and expand their local bases of support.

Members of local-level committees and headmen, whether they be poultry-farmers, rice-farmers or merchants, were mostly members of the well to do section of the population. The types of projects proposed and carried out often reflected the interests of the groups to which committee members belonged. For instance, in

the 1950s when the saphaa tambon committee was composed almost exclusively of landowning rice-farmers, projects undertaken were dominated by the interests of the rice-farmers e.g. canal deepening, repairs of foot bridges across canals and often the projects might include repairs and improvement works on the temples and schools. From 1971 onwards, the committee had accepted new members from the poultry-farming section and from 1973 this section had been boosted further by the election of a poultry farmer as kamnan of the tambon. From the second half of the 1970s. the kamnan had also been designated president of the saphaa tambon and of various other committees. From then on the saphaa tambon projects had concentrated predominantly on the repairs of the road and road bridges.

To whom this road was of most financial importance can be seen from the fact that when the road was in a very poor state and no money was yet forthcoming from local funding (i.e. either from the sukhaa phibaan or the saphaa tambon projects), big poultry-farm owners and rice millers in the area pooled their financial resources together to have the road repaired. In 1982, rice millers had to contribute 7,000 baht each and the big poultry-farmers 3,000 baht each. However, for the poor in the village, their voice did not get represented at all on local committees in that decisions about projects were not made with their benefits in mind, although this does not necessarily mean that they did not receive any benefit from local projects, like road repairs.

Not only did many local projects reflect the major vested interests in the area, but they had also been under the influence of the bureaucracy. The committee meetings were organised along the line of officials' meetings. In the early years, the saphaa tambon even had the naay amphoe as its president, although in later years the kamnan has taken over this role albeit at the command of the bureaucracy itself. Villagers with official positions always predominated in local committees as all the tambon and village headmen were committee members by right and a teacher was always appointed as the committees' secretary. Guidelines for local projects were provided by the higher echelons of the bureaucracy. Often, policies were imposed on the local committees from above.

Furthermore, the official concept of "development" was often adopted by the villagers themselves and aspects of official mentality was replicated at the local level. For example, in 1973 when the Queen Mother's mobile medical unit was visiting the area, the kamnan's specific request was for the villagers "to dress up cleanly and properly in accordance with the Thai culture". In 1977, the kamnan wanted the villagers to show their loyalty on the Queen's birthday by participating in local "development work" (phatanaa thong tin), namely, to cut grass and trim the trees along the roadsides. "Development" as seen by the villagers tended to be something to do with the building or the improvement of various infrastructure and public works, whereas

promotion of grassroots participation and self-determination tended to be viewed not as part of this "development", but rather as a "political" activity which could threaten the "peace and quiet" of the community.

Apart form bureaucratic rules and mentalities making themselves felt at the village level, individual officials also impinged on members of the village to reap their own financial gains. Officials' mishandling and misappropriation of public funds was too familiar to be worth another mention. Villagers who cultivated close ties with officials often saw this as a necessary evil. They were expected to entertain and to be "squeezed" financially by officials and they term this particular type of payment a "social tax" (phaasee sangkhom). According to a village headman, after the monthly meetings at the amphoe, officials met afterwards for a meal and some drinks and often village or tambon headmen had to foot the bills. Also, whenever there were such functions and festivities as the robe-giving ceremonies at any wat, Red Cross fairs, annual provincial fairs, celebrations for the promotion of high-ranking officials or policemen, etc., officials came by to "squeeze" contributions from the headmen. He said that a headman was usually seen by the officials as being stupid and having to depend on them, but at the same time entertaining and offerring gifts to officials was essential, as they helped to oil the wheels of the bureaucratic machinery and greatly facilitate any

dealings with officials. The Theparaj kamnan, being one of the wealthiest people in the area and also known to be obliging to officials, was always approached for all kinds of contributions. According to his son, the kamnan pays out about 300,000 baht a year as this "social tax".

Close connections with officials were not restricted to villagers with official or semi-official positions. Others, mostly wealthy people in the village, also proved to be well-connected. The biggest poultry-farmer in Village no. 2 was not directly involved in local-level politics, although there had been talk that she once tried and failed to get her son to become village headman. Nevertheless, this did not diminish the influence she has with government officials at the amphoe and provincial levels with whom she chooses to deal with directly. Villagers observed that she and other big poultry-farmers could obtain freely, cheap, illegal timber. They observed that when she was taken to court on a land dispute, she sought to ensure that the outcome would not be unfavourable to her by inviting the judges and court officials to a banquet at her farm and she was indeed assured that the case was likely to be withdrawn. In another land dispute of a different type, a farmer's leader who was on the provincial Land Reform Committee took issue with her for possessing land in excess of the legal limit. However, when she insisted that the daughter to whom she was giving the land was an "agriculturalist" (although she was generally known to be the wife of a big rice miller), her claim was vindicated.

What is more, she also succeeded in stopping the farmer leader from being re-elected to the Land Reform Committee in the following year. Villagers noticed, too, that when she requested electrical transformers to be installed, she got the services in one day while other villagers normally had to wait for days on end. Villagers thus conclude that because she had money she could have absolutely everything that she wanted. "Nowadays it's only money that counts. Money can buy officials, votes, everything. And money makes more money."

This, then, is the situation in Theparaj of 1981-82, a village that has undergone a considerable amount of transformation, which now includes sectors that exhibit significant though differing degrees of capitalist penetration. In some respects the village may not be typical of rural areas in Thailand, nor even of Central Thailand. On the other hand, the growing "industrialization" of agriculture seems very likely to become a feature of many areas in the not too distant future. However, the forms in which agrarian change takes place in various localities are also likely to differ as the varying local socio-economic and political settings themselves also constitute significant constraints on the very process of capitalist development. The sheer diversity and complexity of the transformations thus render a study of specific and concrete conditions an essential undertaking.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Theparaj was established in 1880 after Thailand had signed the crucial treaties with Western nations which, with their conditions centered upon the latter's interests, laid down important constraints on the subsequent development of Thai society. This has undoubtedly resulted in the massive qualitative transformation in Thai society whereby the basis of the pre-existing self-sufficient economy became increasingly destroyed and various local manufacturing trades became lost over time as the process of commoditization set in. However, as has been suggested, the dynamics of change, albeit on a limited scale, was already beginning to take place prior to 1855 and this was internally based. These prior changes could be seen in various factors, notably the great increase in the volume of trade with foreign states in the early Bangkok period, the nature of products being traded which had undergone some form of processing, the state's imposition of money taxes to replace many taxes in kind, the emerging possibility for people to pay commutation tax in money in place of undertaking corvee service, which signifies the existence of cash income among a section of the population, the growth of towns and their populations that were supplied with surplus produce by certain sections of the peasantry, the limited degree of capital investment into such enterprises as shipbuilding, sugar-milling, sugar

plantation, mining, etc. This could partly explain the stunning rapidity and smoothness in which the subsequent transformation after 1855 took place in the Central Plain areas including provinces like Chachoengsao. It explains the fact that the first settlers of Theparaj were already well-versed in specialized production for the market which was due to their prior involvement, before migrating to Theparaj, in the production of sugar cane and fruits for sale while retaining their subsistence rice plots. It points to the not uncommon existence of the buying and selling of land as well as the acquisition of slaves with the use of money. Nevertheless, these changes were limited in scope and were confined in the distribution sphere with pre-existing sakdinaa relations continuing to predominate. Changes that were taking place in certain newly established industries such as sugar-milling, shipbuilding, etc., largely involved the immigrant Chinese in their capacity as entrepreneurs or as wage labourers, rather than the Thais.

Massive qualitative transformations in Thai society occurred when it became integrated into the international capitalist economy in the mid-nineteenth century. The terms contained in the treaties with the West not only involved an imposition on Thailand's sovereignty, but they also resulted in the country becoming a lucrative market for Western goods as well as a rich source of raw material supplies. The Thai state itself also played an important role in facilitating the penetration of commodity relations. This can be seen from the

implementation of various initial measures; for instance, the gradual abolition of slavery and the corvée system, which released peasants from the old sakdinaa bonds, the increasing imposition of taxes in money which necessitated the acquisition of cash in income, the encouragement for people to give up new land for rice production through tax incentives and through public works construction, the regulation of land claims, etc. As a result, the peasants , particularly those in the Central Plain, withdrew their labour from the production of use value still further only to devote it to the production of paddy for the market. Naturally, the process of transition did not occur overnight. Vestiges of the sakdinaa system continued to co-exist alongside the emerging new relations, and were often utilized to the benefit of certain sections of the population under the new circumstances. In the case of Theparaj, those first settlers who were able to acquire slaves were able to make use of this old form of forced labour to enable them to claim, clear and cultivate more land, a resource which was growing in value. On the other hand, there were those villagers whose labour was still demanded to undertake public works that constituted of the infrastructural basis for the system of commodity production because they could not afford payment of capitation taxes.

The qualitative historical changes that accompanied the increasing commoditization of production were further compounded by the shrewd move on the part of King Rama V

to reorganise the wide system of administration and finance to meet the different demands of the new situation. The reorganisation resulted in a vast increase in the power and control of the central government and the decline of the locally-based structures of power. However, this move, too, took some time to bear its full effect. Thus, in the early years of Theparaj, the intervention of the central government remained limited and power was still very much vested in local communities. The presence of the local nakleng, with their control over the use of force, persisted for many years before the central government was able to institute its effective control over the countryside. Apart from them, others who emerged as local wielders of power tended to be those who had more than average land and wealth, who were able to provide poorer fellow villagers with the resources and protection necessary for survival against the harsh social and natural elements prevalent in newly settled areas. The relationships took on a personalistic and paternalistic form based largely on the morally defined community values of reciprocity and mutual help. Contacts with the outside world existed, but in a limited fashion. Villagers made most of the farm implements themselves and occassionally acquired low production and consumption articles, often through barter and from direct producers of such goods. Paddy surplus was sold to Chinese paddy traders who came into the village after harvest, although this commercial contact was also mediated by some local elite themselves

who undertook to trade in paddy. Vital resources such as land, implements and credit in kind were mostly supplied by local elite with the relationships taking on a paternalistic and co-operative nature.

In the following half century, the first half of the twentieth century, commodity relations expanded still further. The country's development path continued to take the export-oriented path, with rice as a major export and the substantial growth of rice output was based on the incorporation of new land into cultivation with little change in technology. The peasant producers' involvement with the market increased over the years. They increasingly directed more time and effort to producing paddy for sale and in the case of Theparaj villagers, they eventually ceased making their own farming implements, growing their own food, pounding their own rice, etc., and instead were paying for such goods and services. Surplus continued to be appropriated from the agricultural sector largely through unequal exchange with merchants and usurers profiting from the process.

The state had a role in facilitating the overall process. By the beginning of the twentieth century it undertook to promulgate land laws which formally recognized the rights over landed property, while rights over persons that were the mainstay of the old sakdinaa society were gradually dissolved with the abolition of slavery and the corvée system. At the same time, the state's demands on the population were no longer in the

form of labour obligations but in money taxes. Moreover, the state also assumed responsibility relating to various aspects of the peasantry's production and livelihood. These included its provisions of basic infrastucture like the construction and maintenance of transport and communication system, irrigation facilities, its provision of schooling, as well as the policing of the countryside.

In Theparaj, the possibilites created by the expanding market relations were taken up by those who dominated the financing and distribution of rice i.e. rice merchants, local traders, as well as moneylenders and rich landowners. Some of the Chinese merchants reinvested their surplus in rice and saw-milling or in expanding their trading activities, while well-to-do local landowners, who often operated also as moneylenders, tended to store up their wealth in land, valuables or spend it conspicuously and some invested it in their sons' education.

The fortunes of the rice-producing villagers were now inextricably linked with the fluctuations in the market. Shortfalls in their production or income, the deterioration in the terms on which their paddy was exchanged, and other vagaries of both natural and social elements could result in them falling into the cycle of indebtedness, in land mortgaging and often to the eventual loss of land. The problems of tenancy, of landlessness and indebtedness progressively increased and were further exacerbated over the years by the tendency

of land fragmentation through inheritance and the increasing population pressure on land. Nevertheless, concentration of land ownership did not seem to take place in any appreciable degree. Despite this fact, differentiation among the rural households proceeded nonetheless and over the years, the ranks of tenants and wage-labourers continued to swell.

As the impact of the market system, commodity relations and of the state became increasingly pronounced, patron-client relations, too, took on a different character. The previous morally defined relationships, based on mutual aid, gradually took on a more and more contractual nature. By 1950, poorer households no longer borrowed but had to rent farming implements, labour exchange had declined in importance since well-to-do households were using hired labour, while the labour exchange relationships that continued to exist became based on much more stringent and exacting calculations; landowners devised new tenurial arrangement to guarantee against rent default. And the fact that a good proportion of the village land was owned by absentee landowners and that loans were borrowed from merchants or moneylenders based outside the local community meant that many villagers no longer depended on the local patrons for vital means of produciton. At the same time, as the state, with its power concentrated very much in the bureaucracy, expanded its control over the peripheral areas of the country, decisions by the state's bureaucrats, together with the resources of the state,

came to outshadow the decisions and resources of the local patrons as their importance for the villagers' livelihood, thereby contributed to a further decline of the old form of patron-client paternalistic relationships.

In the 1930s, as a result of Rama V's Reformation, there occurred significant realignments in the elements controlling the state and new balance of forces within the ruling class was emerging, which was to influence the subsequent development path. This was when the king's absolutism was challenged by a group of military and civilian bureaucrats who rapidly rose up the social and political hierarchy. Subsequent realignments took place, whereby top-ranking bureaucrats, now in control over the disposal of the vast state's resources, increasingly formed alliances with members of the merchant class, thereby mutually strengthening each others' economic and political bases. The state's increasing intervention in various economic activities in the years before 1960 can be seen as an attempt to launch a state-initiated programme of industrialization. The institution of new forms of taxes on the rice producers, e.g. the rice premium, the policy of exchange rate control, etc., can be seen as constituting part of the state's policy to secure an involuntary transfer from the agricultural export sector to finance the new industrialisation drive. This drive was greatly associated from 1960 onwards and with the emphasis changing from industrialization based on the state's capital to one based on private capital,

while the state retained a crucial role in securing the necessary conditions for this to take place. From 1960 onwards, a new set of strategies emerged whereby the state has been active in attracting international and national capital into various sectors of the economy by a series of measures. Important among them were the promulgation of the Investment Promotion Act, with its handsome investment incentives, repressive labour and wage policies, along with the ploicy to keep down the rice price for consumers at the expense of rice producers' income, the rapid development and expansion of the infrastructure and specific programmes aimed at promoting an intensive agricultural growth pattern.

Regarding the development of agriculture in particular, the state has intervened primarily to establish the bases for sustained rates of agricultural output expansion and productivity growth so as to meet the requirements of certain industrial growth. This has resulted in strong linkages being forged between agriculture and the agro-industrial complex. The promotion of technological innovation in rice agriculture has taken the form of the development of the infrastructure that supports agriculture, the financing of research on new high-yielding rice varieties, and the expansion of various agricultural programmes, as well as the launching of the state's rural credit schemes to help finance the increasing use of inputs of industrial origin. At the same time, investment incentives have also been provided to large-scale agri-businesses which

have attracted substantial multinational and joint domestic-foreign investment. From the 1960s onwards, large-scale agro-industrial capital has expanded its presence in the rural area. In Theparaj, a section of the rural producers have since been drawn into the vertically integrated animal feed agro-industry with its integral control over the production, processing and marketing of raw materials and finished produce related to animal products.

The adoption in Theparaj village of high-yielding rice varieties, the new cultivation techniques, double-cropping, together with the various components of its technological package and the adoption of modern poultry-farming, have resulted in important structural changes in the village society. At present, the village is experiencing an ongoing as well as a rapid process of change. Thus, any long-term effects may have to wait some years before a more comprehensive assessment is possible. However, certain observations can be made based on the picture that prevailed in 1981-82.

Firstly, the intensification of agricultural production using modern inputs during the past two decades has forged close input-output linkages between the villagers' production and the agro-industry, and large-scale financial and agro-industrial capital is assuming an increasingly significant role in the agricultural sector of Thailand. This is most apparent in the poultry-farming sector of Theparaj. All the poultry-farms, big and small alike, are provided with

certain basic inputs such as baby chicks and feed concentrate by a few large-scale animal feed companies which enjoy an oligopolistic control over their production. Owing to the capital-intensive nature of their production, small poultry-farmers are relying on formal credit institutions, be they commercial banks and/or state credti institutions, to finance their operations, although smaller farms are also tied, through informal credit networks, to some of the big farms for credit in kind, as well as relying on institutional credit. Modern poultry-farming, with its advanced productive forces, has created the basis for accumulation and expansion, particularly for the big poultry-farmers and is turning them into fully fledged capitalist farmers.

As regards the rice-farmers, they too have been linked more tightly into the international economic system than ever before. The adoption of double cropping and the technological package which comes with the "green revolution" means that most of their inputs have an industrial origin and are supplied almost entirely by overseas producers. However, compared with the poultry-farming sector, the rice-farmers are operating at a distinct disadvantage for the reason that the price of their produce is constantly maintained at a low level so as to hold down urban wages; at the same time, world prices for their inputs are rising faster than rice prices. As a consequence, poultry-farming has attracted more capital into it and there seems to be a trend for

more rice-farmers with enough capital to give up gradually rice-farming and to turn to poultry-raising instead.

Secondly, those in Theparaj who have been most able to take advantage of the expanding market for poultry-products are those who have accumulated capital from their mercantile and/or moneylending and milling activities, a parallel somewhat to what has happened at the wider level, whereby financial and merchant capitalists have, since the industrialization drive, channelled their investment into a variety of new industrial enterprises. Among Theparaj poultry-farmers, these ex-merchants-cum-moneylenders or millers have thus been able to exploit the advanced production forces, as well as hired labour, to create for themselves a basis for further accumulation and reinvestment. On the other hand, small poultry-farmers, whose backgrounds are invariably rooted in rice-farming, have entered into the new business on a significantly different basis. Their ability to accumulate and expand their productions, circumscribed by the fact that they are subjected to the mercantile control of some big farms through indebtedness and agreements covering the sale of their eggs.

Thirdly, the introduction of new technology in rice cultivation and of modern poultry-farming has had crucial distributive effects on Theparaj village society. The gap between the rich and poor in the village has undoubtedly widened, and is widening still, despite the fact that the poor are not necessarily poorer in absolute

terms. When account is taken of various indicators such as access to the means of production, wealth, income, education and marriage patterns, a systematic pattern of differentiation among households in the village seems to be emerging. Standing out are those at the top and bottom of the socio-economic scale; i.e. while half of the households earn their living by selling their labour, the big poultry-farmers assume the role of farm managers, operating their farms on a highly capitalized basis and make full use of wage labour. However, as differentiation is still in the process of developing and unfolding, relations, both capitalist and non-capitalist, are overlapping and tangled up in a complex manner. Any attempt to categorize households in Theparaj village into clear-cut classes turns out to be at best premature. Many households in the village assume simultaneously different places in the complex scheme of production relations and may be landowners, tenants, family farm operators (in their capacity as poultry-farmers), and regular employers of wage labour (in their capacity as rice-farmers).

The differentiation that has taken place since the adoption of double-cropping and poultry-farming seems to be of a different character than the differentiation that existed previously. In the earlier period, differentiation took place in conditions of economic instability, of a low technological level, low output, fluctuating production and frequent crop failures. Access to land was already unequal from the first days of

the village establishment, as a small number of households were able to claim more land than the rest, with their possession of slave labour. Over the years, the problems of unequal access to land was compounded by the increasing frequency for merchants and moneylenders to dispossess indebted households that were faced with successive crop failures, adverse market conditions, unexpected misfortunes, etc., aided by the existence of land transactions on the part of those who could afford to buy it. However, no marked concentration of land ownership seems to have developed in Theparaj, although land ownership had always remained unequal, the trend being countered by the practice of land division through inheritance and possibly by the fact that those who could accumulate land tended to derive their main income from sources other than land.

In contrast, the agrarian differentiation of the present day seems to be taking place in conditions of economic prosperity, of a high technological level, high output, improved agricultural infrastructure and extension services and of the increasing availability of institutional credit. Although merchants are still relied on for credit in kind and poorer rice-farmers have to depend on them for other forms of credit as well, land mortgaging with private moneylenders and land loss through indebtedness seem to be things of the past and have largely ceased to exist. As capital has become an increasingly important determinant in the success of present-day agriculture, borrowing still goes on

extensively, even more than before, but farmers are able to repay their degbt and chronic indebtedness is now a rare occurrance. At the same time, the greater demand for labour in general has resulted in better pay for the wage-labouring households. Nevertheless, the gap between the rich and poor in Theparaj has become considerably wider since the introduction of double-cropping and poultry-farming and future prospects do not appear very promising for the poor.

While the wealthy big poultry-farmers continue to expand their operations and have become multi-millionaires, the majority of the wage-labouring households are finding that they are better off in absolute terms as a result of double-cropping and the growing poultry-farming business. However, at the same time they also find that they have to contend with rising costs of living and additional expenditure items such as house-site rent and food which were once available free of charge, that rice field workers have to seek work in other areas while those who are too old or too weak to do so find themselves having to scratch out their living in slack periods from mat-weaving, fishing, etc., and to work more hours to make ends meet. They are also faced with the threats of increasing competition for work from outside labourers, of wages being reduced when rice-farmers get low prices for their rice, and perhaps the most dreaded threat of all is the introduction of combine-harvesters into the area, which would drastically reduce their job opportunities. Their counterparts in

the poultry-farms are also earning their living with wages that barely enable them to subsist.

As for rice-farming households, poorer ones find themselves operating at very high costs of production since they have to rely on private moneylenders for high-interest loans, while the prices of their inputs tend to increase faster than rice prices. This not only makes them more vulnerable to adverse conditions than their richer counterparts, but it often results in them working harder and longer hours than their richer counterparts. Furthermore, those who are tenants have to face an increasing possibility of eviction as higher profitability of rice and poultry-farming has increased the tendency for local landowners to demand the land back for their own operation while the soaring land value tempts many owners to sell off their land altogether.

However, the increasing differentiation does not necessarily lead to a greater concentration of land ownership. Despite the fact that double-cropping has resulted in increasing wealth and prosperity among the better-off farmers who have access to cheaper institutional credits and to other benefits provided by the state, while a number of tenants have been able to acquire land through purchase, the existence of the alternative, more profitable business of poultry-farming, which requires a much smaller amount of land, seems to militate against the trend towards more land concentration. But in the past four years, there has also been a rapid expansion of big poultry-farms which

has led to more land being bought by them. If this rate of expansion continues, then there might occur a concentration of land ownership in the hands of the few big poultry-farm owners in the future. As of now, the tendency, which has already taken place, has been for the share of land owned by absentee landowners to decline while the share of locally owned land has increased.

Fourthly, as capital and credit have become an increasingly important determinant of success in both poultry and rice-faming, the possession or lack of capital assets and the differential access to credit at present feature prominently in the villagers' concern, in their thinking as well as in their perception of others. For instance, wage-labourers are distinguished from others not only by the selling of their labour to others but also by the fact that they are without capital assets. Rice-farming tenants now see credit availability as their foremost problem, and not land rent as before. Rice-farmers in general often categorize themselves by their relative independence from private merchants-cum-creditors. As such, their feelings of antagonism or dependence tend to be more intense towards the latter compared with towards landowners, although the fact that recently some landowners have begun to demand lump sum payments as pre-condition for landrenting, may also direct increasing criticisms against landowners. With regard to the poultry-farmers, the most frequent complaint of small poultry-farmers is against the low prices of eggs they receive from creditors-cum-merchants;

while big poultry-farmers themselves are not troubled by the credit problem at all, but are concerned primarily about the market conditions of their produce.

As regards the elite and mass relationships which have been described in terms of patron-client ties, they have by no means remained static but have also changed with the changing relations between the local community and the wider society. In the pioneering years of Theparaj, when contacts with the outside world were limited, local patrons were significant wielders of power in their area, their position being defined principally by their ability to provide the vital protection and resources necessary for survival in previously unsettled lands. Patron-client relations were personalistic in nature, couched in paternalistic and reciprocal ideological forms and were further reinforced by morally-defined community values. Their relationships gradually took on a different character with the increasingly direct impact that the state and the market system came to have on village society. Over the years, the state has assumed responsibility over many aspects of the villagers' livelihood, the expanding market relations have resulted in merchants and moneylenders who are based outside the village to emerge as increasingly important sources of land and credit, while the ranks of the landless have built up. These have contributed to the depersonalization of patron-client relations and the gradual dissolution of the morally-defined relationships. In time, the patrons' positions are no longer defined by

their personal wealth per se, but by their ability to mediate with state officials and by their ability to gain access to outside services because previous sources of a patron's power are now external to the community: credit, basic social welfare, schooling, various agricultural services, and protection now come from the state, the police, as well as commercial banks. In recent years a number of villagers have even become direct clients of those outside agencies without needing any mediation from the patrons. However, outside groupings continue to be cultivated, for despite a decline in one aspect of patron-client relations, the recent dynamics of electoral politics seems to have boosted the political role of the patrons in delivering the vote of the rural masses. But the present form of patron-client relations retains little of the traditional morale aspect. Instead, the relationship has come to be increasingly imbued with a highly market-oriented logic.

The past four decades have witnessed transformations in Theparaj which have been both massive and rapid. The future changes that are in store for Theparaj over the next four decades may well prove even greater, when (or if) the government's "Eastern Seaboard Development Programme" is carried out in full. The Programme designates that areas covering Chachoengsao, Cholburi and Rayong provinces will be "given all support measures to grow into an alternative to Bangkok as an industrial and commercial complex" (Thai Government Promotion Brochure, undated). In Chachoengsao in particular, agro-industies

including in particular abattoirs, animal feed manufactures, meat-processing, etc., will be established and a rail link will connect it with the northeast , bypassing Bangkok itself (The Bangkok Post Annual Supplement, 31 December 1982). If this plan is carried out to the letter, Theparaj may be turned into an area dominated by large-scale poultry-farms and related industries or it may, like Bang Chan, be engulfed by the oppressive cities of Bangkok and Cholburi. Whichever way it turns out to be, it is almost certain that further differentialtion and proletarianization will feature prominently among the consequences.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archive Documents

Materials in the National Archives of Thailand, Bangkok are given identifying codes. A typical code is as follows:

NA 5, K 9.2/4.

Here, NA stands for "National Archives", 5 indicates that the document is from the Fifth Reign (Rama V) of the Bangkok era, K represents the Ministry of Agriculture (Kaset), and the accompanying numbers to specific series and files within the general classification.

Manuscripts consulted for this thesis have the following "ministry" codes: Ag - Agriculture (Kaset, not yet reclassified); K - Agriculture (classified); M - Interior (Mahaadthai); and D - Damrong (the notes of Prince Damrong Rajanubhap, in Thai "so bo". In some cases the code does not refer to a specific ministry and here they are written out in full; e.g. "petitions" and "special register".

Newpapers and Periodicals

Arthit (in Thai, weekly)

The Bangkok Post Annual Supplement

Business in Thailand (monthly)

Khao Chaturat (in Thai, weekly)

The Nation Review (daily)

The Riew Thai (in Thai, weekly)

Thai Nikorn (in Thai, weekly)

Books and Articles

In Thai

AMMAR SIAMWALLA

1979 Khao nai setthakit thai. (Rice in the Thai Economy). Bangkok: The Social Science Association of Thailand.

AMMNUAYPHEN MANOOSUK and PIPHIT SUPPAPIPAT

1978 "Kaan wikhro thaang setthakit rueang utsaahakam aahaansat nai prathet thai." (Economic Analysis of the Animal Feed Industry in Thailand.) Report presented to the Annual Conference, 3-5 February. Bangkok: Kasetsart University.

ANAN GANJANAPAN

1981 "Chaonaa phaak nuea kab khwaam khatyaeng nai rabob kaan phalit daan kasettrakam (BE 2511-2523): kho sangket bueang ton." (Northern Thai Peasants and Conflicts in the Agricultural Production System (1968-1980): Preliminary Observations.) Sangkhomsat (Journal of the Social Sciences) 5 (1): 63-93.

ANCHALEE SUSAHYAN

1981 "Khwaam plianplaeng khong rabob phrai lae phonkrathob to sangkhom thai nai ratchasamai phrabaat somdet phra junlajomklao jao yoohua." (Changes in the Phrai System and the Effects on Thai Society in the Reign of King Chulalongkorn.) M.A. Thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

Bank of Thailand

1983 "Kaan damnoen thurakit utsaahakam aahaen sat phasom samretroob." (Business Operations of the Ready-Mixed Animal Feed Industry.) Bangkok: Agricultural Division.

CHAI-ANAN SAMUDAVANIJA

1976 Sakdinaa kab phatthanaakaan khong sangkkom thai. (Sakdinaa and the Development of Thai Society.) Bangkok: Nam Aksorn.

1982 "Phon krathob khong kaan plianplaeng kaan pokkhrong pho so 2475." (The Effects of the 1932 Revolution.) Waarasaan Thammasaat. (Thammasat University Journal) 11(2): 54-61.

CHATTHIP NARTSUPHA (ed.)

1980 Wiwatthanaakaan thunniyom thai. (The Development of Thai Capitalism.) Bangkok: Sarnsuksaa.

CHIRAPHA KITTIKUL

1980 "Tonthun kaan nuat khao lae phon thaang setthakit." (Rice-Threshing Costs and Their Economic Effects.) M.A. Thesis, Thammasat University.

CHIT PHUMISAK

1974 Chomnaa sakdinaa thai. (The True Face of Thai Feudalism.) Bangkok: Chomrom Nangsue Saengtawan.

DAMRONG RAJANUBHAB, Prince.

1924 Rueang sonthanaa kab phooraayplon. (Conversations with a Dacoit.) Bangkok: Sophonpipanthanakorn.

1959 Laksana kaan pokkhrong prathet sayaam tae boraan. (Ancient Administration of Siam.) Bangkok.

KHACHORN SUKPHANIT

1971 Thaanandon phrai. (The Status of the Phrai.) Bangkok: Kledthai.

KONGCHAI APIWATRANGSAN

1981 "Phatthanaakaan khong bansat khaamchaat nai prathet thai." (The Development of Multinational Corporations in Thailand.) Pacharayasarn 8(2): 30-37.

KRIRKIAT PIPATSERITHAM

1975 Wikhro krongkaan phan ngoen. (Analysis of Local Development Funds.) Bangkok: Thammasat University.

1978 Theedin kab chaonaa: patiroob rue patiwat. (Land and Farmers: Reform or Revolution.) Bangkok: Duangkamol.

1982 Wikhro laksana kaan pen jao khong thurakit khanaat yai nai prathet thai. (Analysis of the Nature of Large-Scale Business Ownership in Thailand.) Bangkok: Thai Khadi Research Institute, Thammasat University.

KRIRKIAT PIPATSERITHAM and RANGSAN THANAPORNPAN

1976 "Wikhro ngob pramaan phaendin prajam pee 2519." (Analysis of the 1976 Annual Budget.) Bangkok: Thammaset University Economic Association.

MAHA-AMMATAYATHIBODI, PHRAYA

1976 "Rueang mahaatthai." (On the Interior Ministry.) Book distributed at Phraya Raam's Funeral.

NARONG PETPRASERT

1981 "Kaan khayaay tua khong thunniyom nai prathet thai tangtae pho so 2488 tueng patjuban." (The Expansion of Capitalism in Thailand from 1945 to the Present.) In Somphop Manarangsan (ed.). Kaan khayaay tua khong rabob thunniyom nai prathet thai (BE 2488 - the Present). (The Expansion of Capitalism in Thailand from 1945 to the Present.) Bangkok: Sangsan: 67-124.

NIPHON PUAPHONGSAKORN

1980 "Kaan talaat lae raakhaa kai krathong kab anaakhot khong phoo liang raay yoi." (The Marketing and Prices of Broiler Hens and the Future of Small Independent Farmers.) Bangkok: Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University.

NIPHON PUAPHONGSAKORN and PREECHA PIPATKUSOLSOOK

1980 "Utsaahakam aahaansat: kaan talaat lae raakhaa." (Animal Feed Industry: Marketing and Costs.) Report presented to the NESDB.

NITHI EOWSRIWONG

1982 Watthanatham kradumphee kab wannakam ton rattanakosin. (Bourgeois Culture and Literature in the Early Bangkok Period.) Bangkok: Thai Khadi Research Institute, Thammasat University.

PALLEGOIX

1963 Lao rueang mueang thai. (On Thailand.) Translated by San Komolbut. Bangkok: Kao Na.

PRACHACHART Newspaper Editorial Board

1974 Lueak Tang '18. (Election '75.) Bangkok: Pikanet.

PRIDI BANOMYONG

1970 Khwaam pen anitjang khong sangkhom. (The Impermanence of Society.) Bangkok: Nitiwet.

RANGSAN THANAPORNPAN (ed.)

1974 Setthakit kaan kaset. (Agricultural Economics.) Bangkok: Kledthai.

RANGSAN THANAPORNPAN

1980 "Botbaat khong kongthun songkhro kasettrakon." (The Role of the Agricultural Welfare Fund.) Bangkok: Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University.

SANEH BUNTHAMANOP

1981 "Phonkrathob khong kaan chai nayobaay raksaa sathiaraphab raakhaa khao plueak thee mee to phoo phalit." (The Effects of the Paddy Price Stability Programme on Producers.) M.A. Thesis, Thammasat University.

SANGSIDH PIRIYARANGSAN

1983 Thunniyom khunnaang thai 2475-2503. (Thai Bureaucratic Capitalism 1932-1960.) Bangkok: Sangsan.

SIRILUK SAKKRIANGKRAI

1981 Ton kamnoet khong chonchan naaythun nai prathet thai 2388-2453. (Origins of the Capitalist Classes in Thailand 1845-1910.) Bangkok: Sangsan.

SOMJAI PHAIROJTHIRARAJ

1974 "Botbaat khong prathet mahaa-amnaat tawantok nai kaan saang thaang rotfai khong thai nai ratchasamai phrabaat somdet phra junlajomklao jaoyoohua lae phrabaat somdet phra mongkutklao jaoyoohua." (The Role of the Western Superpowers in the Building of Thailand's Railways in the Reigns of Rama V and VI.) M.A. Thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

SOMPHOP MANARANGSAN

1978 Wikhro nayobaay pui khong ratthabaan thai. (Analysis of the Thai Government's Policy on Fertilizer.) Bangkok: Duangkamol.

1981 Setthakit baeb thai thai. (The Thai-Style Economy.) Bangkok: Sangsan.

SOMSAK JIAMTHIRASAKUL

1982 "Sangkhom thai jaak 'sakdinaa' soo 'thunniyom'." (Thai Society from "Feudalism" to "Capitalism".) Waarasaan Thammasaat. (Thammaset Universtiy Journal) 11(2): 128-164.

SONGCHAI NA YALA (pseud.)

1981 "Panhaa kaan sueksaa withee kaan phalit khong thai an nueang maa jaak thritsadee kueng mueang khuen kueng sakdinaa." (Problems in the Study of the Thai Modes of Production According to the Semi-Colonial-Semi-Feudal Theory.) Waarasaan Setthasaat Kaan Mueang. (Journal of Political Economy) 1(2): 1-98.

SORNSAN KANJANAPIROM

1980 "Sibsee pee tho ko so." (Fourteen Years of the BAAC.) In Chonnabot Thai 2523. (Rural Thailand 1980.) Bangkok: NESDB.

SUPARAT LERTPANICHAKUL

1981 "Samaakhom angyee nai prathet thai 2367-2455." (Chinese Secret Societies in Thailand 1824-1910.) M.A. Thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

SUVIT PHAITHAYAWAT

Undated (1981?) Wiwatthanaakaan setthakit chonnabot nai phaak klaang khong prathet thai 2394-2475. Bangkok: Sangsan.

Tanabe, Shigeharu

1975-76 "Kaan chonlaprathaan phuea kaan kaset nai prawatsaat setthakit thai." Waarasaan Thammasaat. (Thammasat University Journal.) 5(2): 70-94.

TEERON NGOWSIRIMANEE (ed.)

1982 Setthakit thai: kaan plianplaeng lae kaan phatthanaa. (Thai Economy: Change and Development.) Bangkok: Sangsan.

Thailand

1962 Kotmaay traa saam duang. (Law of the Three Seals.) Bangkok: Kurusapha.

Thailand, Ministry of Agriculture and Co-Operatives

1981 "Rai-ngaan phon kaan patibatngaan prajampee 2524." (Annual Report on Operations 1981.) Chachoengsao: Land Reform Office.

Thailand, Ministry of Commerce

1980 "Kho moon kaan talaat: chachoengsao." (Marketing Data: Chachoengsao.) Chachoengsao: Provincial Commercial Office.

1981 "Kho moon kaan talaat: chachoengsao." (Marketing Data: Chachoengsao.) Chachoengsao: Provincial Commercial Office.

Thailand, Ministry of the Interior

undated (1982?) "Ekkasaan prakob kaan banyaay sarub jangwat chachoengsao." (Supplementary Document on Chachoengsao Province.) Chachoengsao: Provincial Office.

1982 "Prakaat amphoe baan pho." (Amphoe Ban Pho Announcement.) Chachoengsao: Ban Pho District Office.

THAWEESILP SUEBWATTANA

1978 "Kaan phalit lae kaan khaa khao nai phaak klaang tangtae ratchasamai phrabaat somdet phra junlajomklao jaoyoohua ratchakaan thee haa jon thueng ratchasamai khong phrabaat somdet phra pokklao jaoyoohua ratchakaan thee jet." (The Production and Trade of Rice in the Central Region from the Reign of Rama V to the Reign of Rama VII.) M.A. Thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

THONGROTE ONCHAN

1981 "Nayobaay phatthanaa chonnabot kab panhaa khwaam yaakjon." (Rural Development Policies and the Problems of Poverty.) In Luechai Chulasai and Mingsarn Santikarn (eds.) Setthakit thai: adeet lae anaakot. (Thai Economy: Past and Future.) Chiangmai: Faculty of Economics, Chiangmai University.

UTHAIWAN TANGMANSKUL and PHONGPHAN MEEKHUNIAM

1978 "Thong mueang thai pai kab akkaranukrom phoomisaat." (Travels Around Thailand With the Geographical Gazetteer.) Waarasaan Raatchabandittayasathaan. (Journal of the Royal Academy) 4: 41-50.

UDHIS NARKSWASDI

1958 "Kaan samruat phaawa neesin khong chaonaa lae kaan khaa khao nai phaak klaang khong thai 2510-11." (Survey on Farmers' Indebtedness and the Rice Trade in the Central Region of Thailand 1957-58.) Bangkok: Ministry of Agricultrue.

VIRABONGSE RAMANGKURA

1982 "Kaan phatthanaakaan setthakit taam phaen phatthanaa setthakit chabab thee 1-4." (Economic Development Under the Economic Development Plans Nos. 1-4.) In Teeron Ngowsirimanee (ed.). Setthakit thai: kaan plianplaeng lae kaan phatthanaa. Bangkok: Sangsan.

WARUNEE OHSATHAROM and ANCHALEE SUSAHYAN

1976 "Kabot phrai samai phra phetraachaa." Waarasaan Thammasaat. (Thammasat University Journal) 6(1): 52-70.

YADA PRAPAPAN

1981 Rabob jao phaasee naay aakon samai krungthep yuk ton. (The Tax-Farming System in the Early Bangkok Era.) Bangkok: Sangsan.

In English

Adas, Michael

1974 The Burma Delta: Economic Development and Social Change on an Asian Rice Frontier, 1852-1941. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

AKIN RABIBHADANA

1969 The Organization of Thai Society in the Early Bangkok Period, 1782-1873. Data Paper No. 74. Ithaca: Southeast Asia Programme, Cornell University.

Alavi, Hamza

1972 "The State in Post-Colonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh." New Left Review 74.

1980 "India: Transition from Feudalism to Colonial Capitalism." Journal of Contemporary Asia 10: 359-399.

Alavi, Hamza and Shanin, Teodor (eds.)

1982 Introduction to the Sociology of "Developing Countries." London: Macmillan Press.

AMARA BHUMIRATANA

1974 "Industrialization and Social Change in Thailand." PhD Thesis, University of Washington.

AMMAR SIAMWALLA

1975 "Stability, Growth and Distribution in the Thai Economy." In Prateep Sondysuvan (ed.), Finance, Trade and Economic Development in Thailand. Bangkok: Sompong Press.

Amyot, Jacques

1976 Village Ayutthaya: Social and Economic Conditions of a Rural Population in Central Thailand. Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Social Research Institute.

ANAN GANJANAPAN

1984 "The Partial Commercialization of Rice Production in Northern Thailand (1900-1981)." PhD Thesis, Cornell university.

Anderson, Benedict

1977 "Withdrawal Symptoms: Social and Cultural Aspects of the October 6 Coup." Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars 9(3): 13-30.

Andrews, James M.

1935 Siam: Second Rural Economic Survey (1934-35). Bangkok: Bangkok Times Press.

ANUWAT WONGSANGAROONSRI

1982 "Farm Mechanization, Production and labour Requirement." M.A. Thesis, Thammasat University.

APRACA

1982 "Agricultural Credit Policies and Programmes in Thailand." Paper presented to the General Assembly of APRACA, Manila.

Ayal, Elizabeth B.

1965 Private Enterprises and Economic Progress in Thailand. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Bailey, F.G.

1977 Stratagems and Spoils: A Social Anthropology of Politics. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Banaji, Jairus

1976 "Summary of Selected Parts of Kautsky's 'The Agrarian Question'." Economy and Society 5(1): 2-49.

1977 "Mode of Production in a Materialist Conception of History." Capital and Class 3: 1-44.

Bank For Agriculture and Agricultural Co-Operatives.

1979 Annual Report 1979. Bangkok.

Bardhan, Pranab

1982 "Agrarian Class Formation in India." Journal of Peasant Studies 10(1): 73-94.

Bell, Peter F.

1970 "The Historical Determinants of Underdevelopment in Thailand." Centre Discussion Paper No. 84. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University.

1978 "Cycles of Class Struggle in Thailand." In Andrew Turton, Jonathan Fast and Malcolm Caldwell (eds.). Thailand: Roots of Conflict. Nottingham: Spokesman. 51-79.

Bernstein, Henry.

1977 "Notes on Capital and Peasantry." Review of African Political Economy 10: 60-73.

Bertrand, Trent J.

1969 "Rural Taxation in Thailand." Pacific Affairs 42(2): 178-188.

Bourke-Borrowes, D.

1928 "Siam." Journal of the Central Asian Society 15: 305-323.

Bowring, Sir John

1857 The Kingdom and People of Siam: With a Narrative of the Mission to That Country in 1855. London: J.W. Parker & Son.

Byres, T.J.

1977 "Agrarian Transition and the Agrarian Question." The Journal of Peasant Studies 4(3): 258-274.

1981 "The New Technology, Class Formation and Class Action in the Indian Countryside." The Journal of Peasant Studies 8(4): 405-454.

Calavan, Michael H.

1977 "Socio-Economic Variation, Expenditure Patterns and Economic Strategies in a Northern Thai Village." The Journal of Siam Society 65(1): 161-180.

Carter, A. Cecil (ed.)

1904 The Kingdom of Siam. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons.

CHANTANA BANPASIRICHOTI

1984 "Tambon Councils: Their Origin and Role Analysed in Terms of People's Participation." Research Report presented to CUSRI-UNRISD Project on People's Participation in Rural Areas.

CHATTHIP NARTSUPHA and SUTHY PRASARTSET (eds.).

1981 The Political Economy of Siam 1851-1910. Bangkok: The Social Science Association of Thailand.

CHATTHIP NARTSUPHA, SUTHY PRASARTSET and MONTRI CHENVIDYAKARN (eds.).

1981 The Political Economy of Siam 1910-1932. Bangkok: The Social Science Association of Thailand.

CHAYAN VADDHANAPHUTI

1980 "The Social Structure and Peasant Political Culture: A Case Study of a Northern Thai Village." Paper presented at the Thai-European Seminar on Social Change in Contemporary Thailand. The Hague: University of Amsterdam.

Child, J.T.

1892 The Pearl of Asia: Reminiscences of the Court of a Supreme Monarch, or Five Years in Siam. Chicago: Donahue, Henneberg & Co.

Crawfurd, Sir J.

1915 The Crawfurd Papers: A Collection of Official Records Relating to the Mission of Dr. Crawfurd Sent to Siam by the Government of India in the Year 1821. Bangkok: The National Library.

1967 Journal of an Embassy from the Governor-General of India to the Courts of Siam and Cochin-China. 2 vols. Kuala Lampur: Oxford University Press.

Deere, C.D. and de Janvry, A.

1979 "A Conceptual Framework for the Empirical Analysis of Peasants." American Journal of Agricultural Economics 61(4): 610-611.

Demaine, Harvey

1976 "The Role of Farmers' Association in Agricultural Development: A Case Study from Northeast Thailand." Occasional Paper. Department of Geography, The School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

De Young, John E.

1955 Village Life in Modern Thailand. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Doner, Rick.

1974 "The Development of Agribusiness in Thailand." Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars 6(1): 8-15.

Donner, Wolf.

1978 The Five Faces of Thailand. Hamburg: Institute of Asian Affairs.

Donner, Wolf, BANLUE PUTHIGORN and Avontroot, P.J.

1972 "Fertilizer Market in Thailand." UNDP/FAO.

Elliott, David.

1978 Thailand: Origins of Military Rule. London: Zed Press.

Feeny, David Harold.

1976 Technical and Institutuinal Change in Thai Agriculture, 1880-1940. PhD Thesis, University of Wisconsin

Fuhs, Friedrich W. and Vingerhoets, Jan.

1972 Rural Manpower, Rural Institution and Rural Employment in Thailand. Bangkok: Manpower Planning Division, National Economic Development Board.

Fukui, Hayao

1969 "Rice Culture in the Central Plain of Thailand (III): A Review of Rice Experiments in Thailand." Tonan Ajia Kenkyu. (The Southeast Asian Studies) 6(4): 292-320.

1978 "Paddy Production Technology: Present and Future." In Yoneo Ishii (ed.). Thailand: A Rice-Growing Society. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 246-271.

Fukui, Hayao and Takahashi, E.

1969 "Rice Culture in the Central Plain of Thailand, Subdivision of the Central Plain and the Yield Components Survey of 1966." Tonan Ajia Kenkyu 6(4): 292-320.

Gedney, W.J. (trans. and ed.).

1961 ANUMAN RAJADHON. Life and Ritual in Old Siam: 3 Studies of Thai Life and Customs. New Haven: HRAF Press.

Geertz, Clifford

1963 Agricultural Involution: The Process of Ecological Change in Indonesia. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Gisselquist, D.P.

1976 A History of Contractual Relations in a Thai Rice-Growing Village. PhD Thesis, Yale University.

Goodman, David and Redclift, Michael.

1981 From Peasant to Proletarian. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Griffin, Keith

1974 The Political Economy of Agrarian Change: An Essay on the Green Revolution. London: Macmillan.

Haas, Mary R.

1947 Phonetic Dictionary of the Thai Language, 2 vols. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Halim, Fatimah.

1980 "Differentiation of the Peasantry: A Study of the Rural Communities in West Malaysia." Journal of Contemporary Asia 10(4): 400-422.

Hall, R.A.

1980 "Middlemen in the Politics of Rural Thailand: A Study of Articulation and Change." Modern Asian Studies 14(3): 441-464.

Hanks, Lucien M.

1967 "Bang Chan and Bangkok: 5 Perspectives of the Relation of Local to National History." Journal of Southest Asian History 8(2): 250-256.

1972 Rice and Man: Agricultural Ecology in Southeast Asia. Chicago: Aldine.

Harris, John (ed.)

1982 Rural Development: Theories of Peasant Economy and Agrarian Change. London, Melbourne, Sydney, Auckland, and Johannesburg: Hutchinson University Library.

Hewison, Kevin J.

1981 "The Financial Bourgeoisie in Thailand." Journal of Contemporary Asia 11(4): 395-412.

Ho, R. and Chapman, E.C. (eds.).

1973 Studies of Contemporary Thailand. Canberra: Australia National University.

Hobsbawm, E.J.

1973 "Peasants and Politics." The Journal of Peasant Studies 1(1): 3-22.

Ingram, James C.

1971 Economic Change in Thailand 1850-1970. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

INUKAI, I.

1970 "Farm Mechanization, Output and Labour Input: A Case Study of Thailand." International Labour Review 101(5): 453-473.

International Agrarian Studies Group

undated. "Report on Thailand - I." Zurich, New Delhi.

Ishii, Yoneo

1978 "History and Rice-Growing." In Yoneo Ishii (ed.). Thailand: A Rice-Growing Society. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii. 15-39.

Jacobs, N.

1971 Modernization Without Development: Thailand As An Asian Case Study. New York, Washington, London: Praeger.

Johnston, David Bruce.

1975 Rural Society and the Rice Economy in Thailand 1880-1930. PhD Thesis, Yale University.

1981 "Rice Cultivation in Thailand: Development of the Export Economy by Indigenous Capital and Labour." Modern Asian Studies 15(1): 107-126.

Judd, Philip.

1973 "Irrigated Agriculture in the Central Plain of Thailand." In R. Ho and E.C. Chapman (eds.). Studies of Contemporary Thailand. Canberra: Australian National University, 137-172.

Kahn, Joel S.

1978 "Ideology and Social Structure in Indonesia." Comparative Studies in Society and History 20: 103-122.

1981 "The Social Context of Technological Change in 4 Villages: A Problem for Economic Anthropology." Man 16(4): 542-562.

1982 "From Peasant to Petty Commodity Production in Southeast Asia." Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars 14(1): 3-15.

KAMOL JANLEKHA

1955 "A Study of the Economy of a Rice-Growing Village in Central Thailand." PhD Thesis, Cornell University.

Kaufman, Howard Kera

1960 Bangkhuad: A Community Study in Thailand. New York: J.J. Augustin.

Kemp, Jeremy H.

1981 "Legal and Informal Land Tenures in Thailand." Modern Asian Studies 15(1): 1-24.

1982 "A Tail Wagging the Dog: The Patron-Client Model in Thai Studies." In Christopher Clapham (ed.), Private Patronage and Public Power: Political Clientelism in the Modern State. London: Frances Pinter.

King, D.O.

1860 "Travels in Siam and Cambodia." Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London 30: 177-182.

Kirsch, Ottfried C.

1981 Agricultural Co-Operation in Thailand: Its Diversified Organizational Structure and Future Development. Saarbrucken: Breitenbach.

Kitihara, Atsushi

1977 "The Forms of Rural Labour and Their Role in the Rural Economy in Thailand." In S. Hirashima (ed.), Hired Labour in Rural Asia. Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economies.

Landon, K.P.

1968 Siam in Transition: A Brief Survey of Cultural Trends in 5 Years Since the Revolution of 1932. London: Greenwood Press.

Larsen, P.B. and Sarasup, W.

1968 "The Marketing of Chickens in 11 Provinces in the Central Region of Thailand." Bangkok: Division of Agricultural Economics, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives.

Leach, Edmund R.

1961 Pul Eliya, A Village in Ceylon: A Study of Land Tenure and Kinship. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lenin, V.I.

1960 The Development of Capitalism in Russia. Moscow: Progress Publishers.

Lim Teck Ghee

1983 "Trends in Agrarian Differentiation in the Muda Region." Paper presented at the Workshop on Agrarian Differentiation in Southeast Asia, East-West Centre, University of Hawaii.

McVey, Ruth (ed.).

1978 Southeast Asia Transitions: Approaches Through Social History. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Marzouk, G.A.

1972 Economic Development and Policies: Case Study of Thailand. Rotterdam: Rotterdam University Press.

Migdal, J.S.

1974 Peasants, Politics and Revolution: Pressures Toward Political Change in the Third World. Princeton: University Press.

MINGSARN SANTIKARN

1981 Technology Transfer: A Case Study. Singapore: Singapore University Press.

MIZUNO, KOICHI

1977 "Comparative Analysis of Rural Development - Rice-Growing Villages in Thailand and Malaysia." Tonan Ajia Kenkyu 15(3): 398-420.

1978 "Change and Development of Two Rice-Growing Villages in Thailand - Don Daeng and Khok Chyak." Tonan Ajia Kenkyu 16(3): 353-377.

Moerman, Michael

1968 Agricultural Change and Peasant Choice in the Thai Village. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

1969 "Thai Village Headman as Synaptic Leader." Journal of Asian Studies 28(3): 535-550.

Morell, David

1972 "Legislative Intervention in Thailand's Development Process: A Case Study." Asian Survey 12(8): 627-646.

Morell, David and CHAI-ANAN SAMUDAVANIJA

1981 Political Conflict in Thailand: Reform, Reaction, Revolution. Cambridge, Mass.: Gunn & Hain.

Motooka, Takeshi

1978 "Rice Exports and the Expansion of Cultivation." In Yoneo Ishii (ed.). Thailand: A Rice-Growing Society. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 272-334.

Muecke, Marjorie A.

1980 "The Village Scouts of Thailand." Asian Survey 20(4): 407-427.

Muscat, Robert J.

1966 Development Strategy in Thailand: A Study of Economic Growth. New York: Praeger.

Neher, Clark.

1970 "Constitutionalism and Elections in Thailand." Pacific Affairs 43(2): 240-257.

1972 "The Politics of Change in Rural Thailand." Comparative Politics 4(2): 201-216.

1974 The Dynamics of Politics and Administration in Rural Thailand. Southeast Asia Series No. 30. Athens and Ohio: University Centre for International Studies, Ohio University.

Neher, Clark (ed.).

1976 Modern Thai Politics: From Village to Nation. Cambridge, Mass: Schenkman.

OTC/ESCAP

1979 "Transnational Corporations and International Commercialization of Pineapple Canned in Thailand." Working Paper No. 3, Bangkok.

PAITOON SAYSWANG

1978 An Economic History of the Chao Phya Delta 1850-1890. Bangkok: Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University.

Parkes, Harry

1855 "Geographical Notes on Siam, With a New Map of the Lower Part of the Menam River." Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London 1(1): 13-15.

Patnaik, Utsa.

1971a "Capitalist Development in Agriculture: A Note." Economic and Political Weekly 39: 123-130.

1971b "Capitalist Development in Agriculture: A Further Comment." Economic and Political Weekly 39: 190-194.

1979 "Neo-Populism and Marxism: The Chayanovian View of the Agrarian Question and Its Fundamental Fallacy." The Journal of Peasant Studies 6(4): 375-420.

Piker, Steven.

1968 "Sources of Stability and Instability in Rural Thai Siciety." The Journal of Asian Studies 27(4): 777-790.

1976 "The Closing of the Frontier: Land Pressure and Their Implication for Rural Social Organization in the Thai Central Plain." Contributions to Asian Studies 9: 7-26.

Popkin, Samuel L.

1979 The Rational Peasant: The Political Economy of Rural Society in Vietnam. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press.

Potter, Jack M.

1976 Thai Peasant Social Structure. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

PRATEEP SONDYSUVAN

1978 "Agricultural Credit in Thailand." In Vichitvong na Pombhejara (ed.). Readings in Thailand's Political Economy. Bangkok: Printing Enterprise.

PRAYONG NETTAYARUG.

1973 "Costs and Returns from Egg Production in Amphoe Bang Pa-In, Thailand 1971/72." M.A. Thesis, Thammasat University.

PREECHA PIPATKUSOLSOOK

1982 "Market Structure, Conduct and Contract Integration: A Case Study of Formula Feed Industry." M.A. Thesis, Thammasat University.

RAMSAY, Ansil

1982 "Tenancy and Landlessness in Thailand: How Severe a Problem?" Asian Survey 22(11): 1074-1092.

Redfield, Robert

1971 The Little Community and Peasant Society and Culture. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Reynolds, Craig J.

1983 "Marxism in Thai Historical Studies." Journal of Asian Studies 43(1): 77-104.

Riggs, Fred W.

1966 Thailand: The Modernization of a Bureaucratic Polity. Honolulu: East-West Centre Press.

Robinson, Warren C.

1978 "Economic Policy and Population Change in Thailand." World Development 6(11/12): 1261-1269.

SARASIN VIRAPHOL

1977 Tribute and Profit: Sino-Siamese Trade 1652-1853. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Schomburgh, R.H.

1861 "Boat Excursion From Bangkok in Siam, To the Pechaburi, On the Western Shore of the Gulf of Siam." Proceedings of the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London 31(22): 302-321.

Scott, James C.

1972 "The Erosion of Patron-Client Bonds and Social Change in Rural Southeast Asia." Journal of Asian Studies 32(1): 5-37.

1972 "Patron-Client Politics and Political Change in Southeast Asia." The American Political Science Review 66(1): 91-113.

1976 The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

1980 "Hegemony and the Peasantry." In Shigekazu Matsumoto (ed.), Southeast Asia in a Changing World. Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economies, 54-81.

1984 "History According to Winners and Losers." In Andrew Turton and Shigeharu Tanabe (eds.), History and Peasant Consciousness in Southeast Asia. Senri Ethnological Studies No. 13. Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology.

Shanin, Teodor (ed.).

1975 Peasants and Peasant Societies. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin.

Sharp, Lauriston, Hauck, Hazel M., KAMOL JANLEKHA and Textor, Robert.

1953 Siamese Rice Village, A Preliminary Study of Bang Chan. Bangkok: Cornell Research Centre.

Sharp, Lauriston and Hanks, Lucien M.

1978 Bang Chan: Social History of a Rural Community in Thailand. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Siffin, William J.

1966 The Thai Bureaucracy: Institutional Change and Development. Honolulu: East-West Centre Press.

Silcock, T.H.

1967 Thailand: Social and Economic Studies in Development. Canberra: Australian National University Press.

1970 The Economic Development of Thai Agriculture. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Skinner, G.W.

1958 Leadership and Power in the Chinese Community of Thailand. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

1957 Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Skinner, G.W. and Kirsch, A.T.

1975 Change and Persistence in Thai Society: Essays in Honour of Lauriston Sharp. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Small, Leslie E.

1973 "Historical Development of the Greater Chao Phya Water Control Project: An Economic Perspective." The Journal of Siam Society 61: 1-24.

Soiffer, Stephen and Howe, Gary.

1982 "Patrons, Clients and the Articulation of Modes of Production: An Examination of the Penetration of Capitalism into Peripheral Agriculture in Northeastern Brazil." The Journal of Peasant Studies 9(2): 176-206.

SONGSAK SRIBOONCHITTA

1975 "The Private Cost of Using Tractors Versus Buffaloes: A Case Study of Farmers in Chachoengsao Province." M.A. Thesis, Thammasat University.

SOPIN TONGPAN and Welsch, Delane E.

1978 "Background to the Introduction of High Yielding Varieties of Rice in Thailand." In Vichitvong na Pombhejara (ed.), Readings in Thailand's Political Economy. Bangkok: Printing Enterprise.

SRI-AROON ROSANOND, et al.

1977 "A Survey of IRRI Axial Flow Thresher Efficiency Compared with Traditional Methods of Threshing." Bangkok: Kasetsart University.

Stifel, Laurence

1976 "Patterns of Land Ownership in Central Thailand During the Twentieth Century." The Journal of Siam Society 64: 237-274.

SUTHY PRASARTSET

1978 "State Capitalism in the Development Process of Thailand 1932-1959." Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economies.

1980 "Thai Business Leaders - Men and Careers In a Developing Economy." Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economies.

Takaya, Yoshikaza

1971 "Physiography of Rice Land in the Chao Phraya Basin of Thailand." Tonan Ajia Kenkyu 8(3): 375-397.

1978 "Landform and Rice-Growing." In Yoneo Ishii (ed.), Thailand: A Rice-Growing Society. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 171-191.

Tanabe, Shigeharu

1978 "Land Reclamation in the Chao Phraya Delta." In Yoneo Ishii (ed.), Thailand: A Rice-Growing Society. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 40-82.

1981 "Peasant Farming Systems in Thailand: A Comparative Study of Rice Cultivation and Agricultural Technology in Chiangmai and Ayutthaya." PhD Thesis, University of London.

Taylor, John G.

1979 From Modernization to Modes of Production. London: Macmillan.

Tej Bunnag

1977 The Provincial Administration of Siam 1892-1925. Kuala Lampur: Oxford University Press.

Thailand, Ministry of Agriculture and Co-Operatives

1974 Agricultural Land Tenure: Chachoengsao Province. Bangkok: Division of Land Policy and Planning.

Thailand, Office of the Prime Minister

1960 1960 Population Census of Thailand by Province: Changwat Chachoengsao. Bangkok: National Statistical Office.

1970 1970 Population and Housing Census: Changwat Chachoengsao. Bangkok: National Statistical Office.

1972 Statistical Reports of Changwat Chachoengsao. Bangkok: National Statistical Office.

1974 Statistical Reports of Changwat Chachoengsao. Bangkok: National Statistical Office.

undated Eastern Seaboard Development Programme. Bangkok: Thai Government Promotion Brochure.

THAK CHALOEMTIARANA

1979 Thailand: The Politics of Despotic Paternalism. Bangkok: The Social Science Association of Thailand.

THAWAT MOKARAPONG

1972 History of the Thai Revolution: A Study in Political Behaviour. Bangkok: Chalermnit.

Thorner, Alice

1982 "Semi-Feudalism or Capitalism? Contemporary Debate on Classes and Modes of Production in India." Economic and Political Weekly, 3 parts: 1961-1968, 1993-1999 and 2061-2066.

TIPAPORN LOKAPHADHANA

1976 "Economic Comparison of Broadcasting and Transplanting Dry Season Rice in Thailand." M.A. Thesis, Thammasat University.

Tomosugi, Takashi

1969 "The Land System in Central Thailand: A Methodological Inquiry Aimed at a Dynamic Grasp of Social Change in a Thai Village." Developing Economies 7(3): 284-309.

1980 A Structural Analysis of Thai Economic History: Case History of a Northern Chao Phraya Delta Village. Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economies.

Tsuji, Hiroshi

1978 "Impacts of the New Rice Technology on Thai Delta Villages." Tonan Ajia Kenkyu 16(3): 378-399.

Turton, Andrew

1975 "Northern Thai Peasant Society: A Case Study of Jural and Political Structure at the Village Level and Their Twentieth Century Transformation." PhD Thesis, University of London.

1978 "The Current Situations in the Thai Countryside." In Andrew Turton, et al (eds.), Thailand: Roots of Conflict. Nottingham: Spokesman.

1980 "Thai Institutions of Slavery." In Watson, James L. (ed.), Asian and African Systems of Slavery. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

1982 "Poverty, Reform, and Class Struggle in Rural Thailand," in S. Jones, P.C. Joshi, and M. Murmis (eds.). Rural Poverty and Agrarian Reform. New Delhi: Allied.

1984 "Limits of Ideological Domination and the Formation of Social Consciousness." In Andrew Turton and Shigeharu Tanabe (eds.). History and Peasant Consciousness in Southeast Asia. Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology.

Usher, Dan

1977 "The Economics of the Rice Premium." Discussion Paper No. 60. Bangkok: Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University.

Wales, H.G. Quaritch

1934 Ancient Siamese Government and Administration. London: Bernard Quaritch Ltd.

Wilson, Constance M.

1980 "The Nai Kong in Thai Administration, 1824-68." Contributions to Asian Studies 15: 41-57.

Wilson, David A.

1967 Politics in Thailand. New York: Cornell University Press.

WITAYAKORN CHIENGKUL

1982 "The Effects of Capitalist Penetration in the Transformation of Agrarian Structure in the Central Region of Thailand (1960-1980)." M.A. Thesis, Institute of Social Studies, the Hague.

Wolf, Eric R.

1956 "Aspects of Group Relations in a Complex Society: Mexico." American Anthropologist 58: 1065-1078.

Wolpe, Harold (ed.)

1980 The Articulation of Modes of Production: Essays From Economy and Society. London: Routeledge Kegan Paul.

Wong, Diana

1983 "Differentiation Among Padi Households in the Muda Region: A Village Case Study." Kajian Malaysia (The Journal of Malaysian Studies) 1(2): 124-142.

World Bank

1959 A Public Development Programme for Thailand. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press.

1980 Thailand: Toward a Development Strategy of Full Participation. Washington D.C.: East Asia and Pacific Regional Office.

Wyatt, David K.

1969 The Politics of Reform in Thailand: Education in the Reign of King Chulalongkorn. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Yano, Toru

1968 "Land Tenure in Thailand." Asian Survey 8(10): 853-863.

Zimmerman, Carle C.

1931 Siam: Rural Economic Survey 1930-31. Bangkok: The Bangkok Times Press.