

THE ORGANIZATION OF THAI SOCIETY
IN THE EARLY BANGKOK PERIOD,
1782-1873

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by

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FOREWORD

Within the still limited circle of scholars working in the field of Thai studies, the focus of interest is in the main on recent changes, contemporary trends, or future developments, for here the problems are pressing and the data, or some of them, at least, seem to be at hand. The anthropologist disappears over the horizon to see what is happening in peripheral villages in rural regions where history, he thinks, maybe forgotten. For the economist and political scientist, concerned with central institutions, the history of a "developing" or "new" nation is primarily a matter of understanding just those new national structures which may make of a society a "new state".

These procedures are at fault, for apart from supporting dangerously static dichotomies--"traditional and modern", "folk and urban", and the like--they fail to tell us just how new the new structures are and how they came into being, and we are left without a picture of process, without a model of the whole society and the continuities and discontinuities involved in making it what it is today. In his thesis on the development of education under Rama V, David Wyatt says, "Thailand's response to the West was a creative one, for it flowed quite painfully but naturally out of Thai history, society and culture to transform the old Kingdom of Siam into the new and modern Thai nation". And by helping us understand the "old Kingdom" and what was involved in the transformation process, he helps us appreciate the building of the new.

Many have talked about the need for an understanding of older Thai social organization, but very few have done anything about it. In the West for years the studies of a few foreign specialists, notably Lingat and Quaritch Wales, have been the chief sources for our meager information on the structural and processual characteristics of Thai society, national and local, before 1850. Lack of data has not stopped us from speculation regarding the ordering of the Thai society and polity and individual mobility within them; or from addressing ourselves to such a non-problem as whether they are "loosely structured" or not. But now a new generation of Thai and Western scholars is turning

again to the sources and finding much that their predecessors missed or did not have time to search for. Khun Kachon Sukkaphanit has recently published a valuable study on the status of the common man, Thanadon Phrai (1962). The theses of David Wyatt and Constance Wilson tell us much that is new about the internal organization of an older Thai society. And in this present careful ethnohistory and analysis by a Thai cultural anthropologist, M.R. Akin Rabibhadana of Thammasat University, we find a confirmation and expansion of the exciting new work on old Thailand which is now going forward there and abroad. By helping us understand the patterns of the past, these young scholars help us see just how new the new Siam is, and they put all disciplines concerned with Thailand and new nations in their debt.

Lauriston Sharp
Director, Cornell Thailand
Project

Ithaca, New York
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I. SCOPE, METHOD AND SOURCES

This is a study of the organization of Thai society between 1782-1873, with special attention being given to social stratification and mobility. The Early Bangkok period covered here begins with the ascension of Rama I to the throne and ends in 1873 when King Chulalongkorn came of age.

Thai society of this period was in the last stage of its indigenous development before the organization of social classes and statuses had been influenced to any significant extent by Western ideas and standards. Evidence of the framework of the Thai system of stratification appeared first in the "Laws of the Civil and Military Provincial Hierarchies" during the reign of King Boromma Trailokkanat, A.D. 1448-1488,¹ but since that time much change and development have inevitably occurred. The trend seems to have been modification and adaptation in the relationship between the classes rather than fundamental change of the status structure. During the reign of King Chulalongkorn (A.D. 1868-1910), however, major changes occurred. Slavery was abolished. Government corvée was entirely replaced by hired labor. The status of phrai, which involved personal attachment to the nobles, was deprived of much of its significance by the establishment of a regular army. The reorganization of the civil administration, which set up regular salaries for the previously unsalaried government officials, affected the basis of the organization. The channels and rate of social mobility were not only affected by the enlargement of the bureaucracy; the establishment of secular and Western influenced schools and higher education facilities also widened the avenues of social mobility.²

¹Phra Aiyakan Tamnaeng Na Phonlaryan (Law of the Civil Hierarchy), Phra Aiyakan Tamnaeng Na Thahan Huamyang (Laws of the Military, Provincial Hierarchies) PK, vol. I, pp. 178-271.

²Detchard Vongkomolshet, The Administration, Judicial, and Financial Reforms of King Chulalongkorn, M.A. thesis (unpublished), Cornell University, 1958.

An analysis of Thai society as it was before these major changes may throw light upon earlier periods. Moreover, aspects of social stratification and mobility in this period are of interest in providing historical perspective for the study of social stratification and mobility in more recent times. In Thailand, traditions of the past continue to exercise an influence. The historical background may be of particular significance in connection with the process of social mobility and its general social consequences. Many aspects of the structure of Thai society in this period may have relevance to a study of the reforms instituted by King Chulalongkorn as factors delaying or facilitating the smooth accomplishment of these reforms. The historical background may also help students of later events in the twentieth century such as the so-called revolution of 1932 and its aftermath.

For a study of Thai society, the period 1782-1873 has a special advantage over other earlier periods because of the availability of source material. For a general description of Thai society and the class structure valuable information can be gleaned from various laws, royal decrees, royal proclamations, annals and chronicles, and the writings and speeches of King Mongkut, King Chulalongkorn, and Prince Damrong. In an anthropological study such as this, the writings and speeches of these people are extremely valuable in giving insights into the ways of thinking, ideas, and attitudes of the people of the period. These three leaders were aware of the differences between Western societies and their own. King Chulalongkorn and Prince Damrong engineered the changes which came about in the fifth reign. Thus, like King Mongkut, they were looking at their own society with a critical eye, observing what other Thais of the period would have taken for granted and made no comment upon. As for social mobility, more biographies of high officials and princes are available for this time than for any earlier period. Short biographies of all officials who obtained ministerial position can be obtained, and genealogies of important families are also available. The availability of material has been an important factor in the selection of this period for the purpose of detailed study.

The study will be divided into three main parts. The first part will be devoted to the development of Thai social and political organization, using evidence mainly from Thai laws of different periods, and records of events in the annals. From such documentary material, the history of Thai social and political organization will be constructed, taking particular notice of the circumstances and varying conditions relevant to time and place. Besides placing the Early Bangkok period (1782-1873) in its

historical perspective and showing the cultural traditions which it inherited from the past, it is hoped that such study may throw light on some unexplained phenomena of earlier Thai history and especially on some aspects of the Ayutthaya period.

The second part of the study will be a synchronic analysis of Thai society of the Early Bangkok period. An attempt will be made to discover how groups were organized in Thai society, and the relationships between groups and individuals occupying different statuses within these groups will be discussed. The structure of the social stratification will also be examined, and an attempt will be made to define Thai social classes.

The third part of the study will be an analysis of the process of change within the Early Bangkok period. Notice will be taken of the changes which were a consequence of the lessons learned from the fall of Ayutthaya in 1767 as well as of the economic changes due to the increase in international trade and the influx of the Chinese immigrants. The study will concentrate on the effect of these changes on the structure of Thai society. An attempt will be made to compare the changes in the structure of the society during this period with those which occurred during the Ayutthaya period. As far as the evidence permits, a short analysis of social mobility will be made.

For this study the importance has been noted of the bulk of Thai laws, royal decrees, royal proclamation; the correspondence, writings and speeches of King Mongkut, King Chulalongkorn and Prince Damrong; the annals of Ayutthaya and Bangkok. Besides these, genealogies of Thai noble families, biographies of important persons, and the writing of one prominent historian, Khachon Sukkhaphanit, have also been used. These are indigenous materials in the Thai language. As far as foreign sources are concerned, these are records made by contemporary visitors such as John Crawford, Sir John Bowring, and Bishop Pallegoix. In addition, important research on this period has been done by such Western scholars as David K. Wyatt, G. William Skinner, Walter F. Vella and H. G. Quaritch Wales.

The bulk of Thai laws and royal decrees of the Ayutthaya period and the reign of King Rama I are found in the collection made by King Rama I in the year A.D. 1804. The laws of Ayutthaya, it will be seen, have dual usages in this study. In order to explain these dual usages, the growth of Thai law must be briefly described.

The basic premise of the law was the Buddhist Thammasat (Dharmaśastra) which the Thais had probably

taken over from the Mons. This is the sacred and eternal law. In Thailand, besides the Thammasat, there grew up another legal literature. It consisted of decisions of kings and precedents taken from actual sentences and orders. The value and authority of such records depended on the king's reputation as being a ruler governing according to rules of equity, the Thammasat. Possibly from the end of the sixteenth century, such selections of royal decisions were made into abstract matras or sections and placed under the headings of the Thammasat.³ In a number of places their dates were kept, although certain modifications and interpolations could be expected.

The first of the dual purposes for which these laws are used as sources for this study is the reconstruction of the development of Thai social organization in Chapter II. Often these laws have been disregarded in previous writing on Thai society because of the difficulty of dating them and identifying interpolations. The method of dating each law used in this study will be explained in the appendix. Regarding the problem of interpolation, notice has been taken of the style of writing. It is hoped that this approach will minimize the chance of taking interpolated passages as part of the initial text originating on the date stated in that specific law. Whenever possible the events recorded in the annals will be used as corroborating evidence showing the possible cause and general likelihood of a certain law being passed at that time. The approach is best explained by giving an example of the interpretation of perhaps the most interpolated laws of all, the Laws of the Civil and Military Provincial Hierarchies.

The Laws of the Civil and Military Provincial Hierarchies are generally accepted as having been passed during the reign of King Trailok.⁴ These laws set out the system of sakdina, rank (yot), honorific names, and krom (departments or divisions) of officials. At first glance, one can observe a large number of krom which

³R. Lingat, "Evolution of Law in Burma and Siam," JSS, XXXVIII, 1 (January, 1950), pp. 9-32.

⁴See H. G. Quaritch Wales, Ancient Siamese Government and Administration, New York, 1965 (reprinted). Although the dates written into the Laws of the Civil and Military Provincial Hierarchies are inconsistent, the fact that they were passed during the reign of King Trailok seems indicated by a reference in the annals to such changes in the hierarchy having then occurred. (See PPHL, vol. I).

could not possibly have been in existence in Trailok's time. Krom must have been added from time to time. Comparison of the laws with the records registered in the annals gives one the idea that the ranks of the officials in various positions have been raised higher than those of the original text. Thus, the rank of phra might, in some cases, have been raised to chao phraya and therefore reflected the rank of those positions at the time of King Rama I. This supposition arises from the fact that in the most reliable recension of the Annals of Ayutthaya (Luang Prasoet Edition) the titles of chao phraya, or even phraya for officials of the capital do not appear. Yet it is certain that the system of sakdina and its correlation with official ranks and positions existed in Trailok's time, for the annals also mentioned the king giving rank and sakdina to his ministers. The point is that although parts of a law might have been interpolated and altered, the original structure, the framework, should be an innovation of the time of original promulgation, or was already in existence at that time.

Besides the actual laws, there are a large number of decrees dating from the latter reigns of Ayutthaya. These have not been incorporated into the Thammasat. Their dates are found to be extremely accurate, and the texts show no sign of having been altered or modified. These and later decrees and proclamations of the Bangkok period are widely used in this study. Unlike those which have been incorporated in the Thammasat, these royal decrees contain an explanation for their proclamation--often an account of the events which brought them about. These events are most useful as data for this study for their historicity is assured.

Another use will be made of the laws of the Ayutthaya period, that is as evidence for the rules in operation during the Early Bangkok period. Superficially, it looks as if the time factor is completely ignored, and changes have been disregarded. But this is not so. In the year 1804, by the order of King Rama I, earlier laws and decrees were selected to be kept together, revised and arranged into sections. Three official copies of them were made, one to be kept in the palace for royal consultations, another to be kept at the archives for preservation and availability to provincial officers for copying, and the last one to be kept at the Royal Court for consultation by the lukkhun (legal interpreters). Thus these laws were in effect during the Early Bangkok period, and could be taken as representing formal rules of conduct for the members of the society.

King Chulalongkorn and Prince Damrong spent the early part of their lives during the period under study. They were the engineers of the changes which took place

later. Their description and criticism of society in the years 1782-1871 is of much value in revealing the situation especially of the monarchy, the princes and the officials. King Chulalongkorn's letters to his son, the Crown Prince, describing the behavior of earlier kings of the Chakkri Dynasty, are informative. His own life story, when he became king, as related in one of the letters, gives us insight into the situation of the monarchy at the time of his accession to the throne. His speech explaining the reasons for the changes in the administration shows clearly the actual working of government prior to the changes. Prince Damrong's historical writings contain a wealth of information on various institutions, government administration, the administration of provincial towns and life stories of many people. His book on the Ministry of the Interior describes the life of its staff before the reforms and gives us many insights into social mobility within the bureaucracy. Mr. Khachon Sukkhaphanit's Thanandon Phrai (The Status of the Phrai) using Thai laws as sources gives to a considerable extent a ready-made groundwork upon which the second chapter of this study is based.

The sources for biographies are Prince Sommot (1860-1915) The Appointment of Chao Phraya in Bangkok (Ruang Tang Chao Phraya nai Krung Rattanakosin) genealogies and biographies of certain members of important families written by their descendants, biographies of important persons written by Prince Damrong, and biographies written by other writers, including writers of today. Prince Sommot's book contains short biographies of all the officials who reached the two highest ranks (somdet chao phraya and chao phraya) during our period. As these biographies were based chiefly on the actual records of appointments, the reliability of their contents is high. As these also describe the special "merit" for which the person was raised to these ranks, they indirectly tell us what work or merit contributed to mobility within the bureaucracy. Further details regarding the high officials in their process of moving upwards can be gained from genealogies and biographies. When one is using these materials, the purpose for which each book was written must be kept in mind. This involves a consideration of the relationship between the biographer and the person about whom he is writing.

The writings of foreign visitors, especially of Bishop Pallegoix who lived in Thailand over twenty years, are very useful in giving us information supplementary to the data in Thai sources. There were many things that the indigenous writers took for granted but which were striking in the eyes of foreigners.

A structural analysis of Thai society of this period has never been done before. H. G. Quaritch Wales has

Written a book on Ancient Siamese Government and Administrations He devoted a chapter of his book to 'classes of the peoples' His treatment, however, is not limited to our period, but covers the whole period before the changes introduced by King Chulalongkorn's He does not attempt a complete analysis of the class structure. Nor does he deal with social mobility's L. M. Hanks in a well-known article, "Merit and Power in the Thai Social Order," deals in a general manner with social mobility from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the presents It is a synchronic study of limited scopes Thus changes within the period are intentionally disregarded in favor of a generalized scheme or model. It does, however, show much insight into Thai world-view and beliefs. David K. Wyatt has also concerned himself with social mobility in Thailand, and has written an interesting paper on "The Growth of One Family Dominance in Nineteenth Century Siam." Especially on the rise of the Bunnak family to power, his evidence and findings are of great value to this study. A great debt is also owed to Prince Damrong's Without the fruits of his research and documentation, it would have been almost impossible to make this study.

TABLE I.

Reign Periods of Thai Kings
(Ayutthaya and Early Bangkok only)

Early Ayutthaya Period (1350-1569)

Ramathibodi I.	1350-1369
Ramesuan	1369-1370
Brommaracha I.	1370-1388
Thonglan	1388-1388
Ramesuan	1388-1395
Ramracha	1395-1409
Intharacha	1409-1424
Brommaracha II.	1424-1448
Trailok	1448-1488
Brommaracha III.	1488-1491
Ramathibodi II.	1491-1529
Brommaracha IV. (Nophutthangkun)	1529-1533
Ratsada	1533-1534
Chairacha	1534-1546
Yotfa	1546-1548
Worawongsa	1548-1548
Chakkraphat	1548-1568
Mahin	1568-1569
Fall of Ayutthaya	1569

Late Ayutthaya Period (1569-1767)

Thammaracha	1569-1590
Naresuan	1590-1605
Ekathotsarot	1605-1620
Sisaowaphak	1620-1620
Songtham	1620-1628
Chettha	1628-1630, or <u>1628-1629*</u>
Athitwong	1630-1630, or <u>1629-1629*</u>
Prasatthong	1630-1655, or <u>1629-1656*</u>
Chao Fa Chai	1655-1656, or <u>1656-1656*</u>
Sisuthammaracha	1656-1656
Narai	1656-1688
Phetracha	1688-1703
Sua	1703-1708
Thaisa	1708-1732
Borommakot	1732-1758
Uthumphon	1758-1758
Ekkathat	1758-1767
Fall of Ayutthaya	1767

Thonburi Period (1767-1782)

Taksin	1767-1782
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Early Bangkok Period (1782-1873)

Rama I. Yotfa	1782-1809
Rama II. Loetla	1809-1824
Rama III. Nangklao	1824-1851
Rama IV. Mongkut	1851-1868
Rama V. Chulalongkorn	1868-1910

Sources:

Prince Damrong Rajanubhab, Athibai Ratchakan Krung Kao (An explanation of the Ayutthaya Dynasties), PP, II, 5, pp. 611-626.

Annals of Ayutthaya, Luang Prasoet Edition, PP, I, 1, pp. 115-138.

Francis H. Giles, "Analysis of Van Vliet's Account of Siam," The Siam Society, Selected Articles from the Journal, vol. VII, pp. 103-114.

G. William Skinner, Chinese Society in Thailand, Ithaca, 1957.

* Dates underlined are those suggested by Giles and differ from Prince Damrong's.

II. GENERAL BACKGROUND AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The size of the Kingdom of Siam of the Early Bangkok period was only slightly smaller than the present Thailand, although the size of her population was one sixth of the present. If the vassal states are included the size of the kingdom at that period would have been larger than the present Thailand. There were the Laotian vassal states in the North, the Cambodian vassal states in the East, and the Malay vassal states in the South. The extent of the kingdom proper, however, can be gauged from the names of towns under the control of the two Chief Ministers, and the Minister of Khlang. It appears that the furthest Northern boundary would reach above the latitude of 18° N. covering the area around the town of Phitsanulok; the furthest Southern boundary would reach the town of Songkhla at about the latitude of 7° N; the Eastern boundary would probably be part of the Mekong River; and the Western, the long chain of mountains which at present still divides Thailand from Burma.¹

The main part of the kingdom covered the large alluvial plain of the Chao Phraya River and its tributaries. A major part of this plain still lay under a tropical jungle. Where it had been cleared, however, the land was devoted to the growing of wet rice. For the year 1850, it has been said that the population was almost wholly engaged in agriculture, and rice was the principal crop.² It was the principal part of the diet, and was grown in river valleys which were flooded each year with a fair degree of regularity. As for the amount of rice produced, there was enough to feed the native population and to supply the failure of a rice crop in Southern China.³ Besides rice, there was also the production of textile fibers and of peppers which were exported.⁴

¹Phraya Maha Ammattaya Thibodi, Kanpokkhong fai Phonlaryan (Civil Administration), Bangkok, 1962.

²James C. Ingram, Economic Change in Thailand Since 1850, Standord, 1954, p. 8.

³George B. Bacon, Siam, the Land of the White Elephant, New York, 1892, p. 84.

⁴James C. Ingram, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

Next to rice, fish was also part of the main diet of the people. The fish were procured both from the sea and from inland streams, canals, ponds, and lakes. They were dried and preserved for consumption throughout the year.⁵

By the reign of King Mongkut (1851-1868), sugar plantations had been developed, and were said to be "everywhere" in the kingdom. They had, however, been developed not by the Thai, but by the Chinese settlers.⁶

The Chinese settlers also controlled all the inter-regional trade.⁷ In fact, it might have been developed by them, for, as every region could easily produce the basic needs, inland trade must have been very small.

Water transportation was the most important means of communication. This is reflected in the pattern of settlement for it was in the form of groups of houses strung along rivers and canals. Such a group of houses constituted a village, which was then called ban, a modern Thai word for house. A village was the smallest unit of territorial government. The next larger units were tambon (commune), and khwaeng (district). Prominent in almost every village was the wat, a combination of a temple and a monastery. The wat was central to Thai religious organization. It was the place of worship as well as the residence of the monks. The life of a Thai man was closely linked with the wat of his village.

If there is no wat within one's village, one has the difficulty of travelling far from the village in order to make merit. The monks of the village wat, with the exception of the abbot who may have been invited from another place, consist mostly of the villagers who have entered monkhood themselves. The wat is the place to show off one's wealth and dress as well as a place to enjoy oneself without being disorderly or drunk for fear of incurring bap. Entertainment such as plays and dances are given in the compound of the wat. On these occasions, one may first meet one's future spouse. When one has a child, and he

⁵ Ibid., p. 16.

⁶ Sir John Bowring, The Kingdom and People of Siam, Vol. I, London, 1857, pp. 203-204.

⁷ James C. Ingram, op. cit., p. 19.

has grown up, the place he is trained to read, write, be of good character, and enter monkhood is the wat. When one is dead, one's body is cremated at the wat, and the remains are kept there. The wat is everything that is good in the life of a villager from his birth to his death.⁸

Ever since the first record of the existence of a Thai kingdom in the thirteenth century, Thai religion has always been Theravada Buddhism. This, however, did not exist in its perfect purity, untinged by other beliefs and practices. When Buddhism arrived in Thailand it probably had already been mixed with Hinduism. Although Brahmanical elements tended to center around the royal courts, their influence was shown in a large number of Buddhist rituals as practiced by the common Thai people. The indigenous beliefs of the Thai must have been animist. Animism continued to be practiced side by side with the imported Buddhism. In the popular mind there were no conflicts between them, and they therefore could exist side by side. There has been, moreover, the tendency for Buddhism to incorporate other indigenous and Brahmanical practices.

A man wishing for success in his governmental career or business enterprise may make offering to a Buddha image to give him success. Further, when his prayer is granted, he may make an offering of food to the image. When a man, who is a good Buddhist, is asked for an explanation of such action, his reply shows his awareness of the image being a symbol of the Buddha, his teaching. He adds, however, that for every image of importance there is a guardian angel (thewada) who looks after it. This spirit gives him the success he prays for.

Central to Buddhism is the pragmatic idea that a certain kind of action generates a certain kind of consequence. The man who sows a certain kind of seeds will reap them. Good actions generate bun or merit. Bad actions generate bap, which is demerit.

This is taken together with the belief in reincarnation. Rebirth occurs because of kam (karma) which is the consequence of actions, the bun and the bap. In the Buddhist view, life is pervaded with suffering, and the highest aim is to reach nipphan (nirvana), a state of eternal bliss, of not being born again. One may reach

⁸Sathian Koset (Phraya Anuman Rajadhon), Trut-Sat, Bangkok, 1963, pp. 88-89.

that stage eventually by accumulating merit little by little in each life into which one is born. As demonstrated by the Jatakas, the Buddha, himself, had been accumulating merit in a large number of previous lives.

One consequence of this belief is the notion that one's status and circumstances in this life depend upon the amount of bun or bap which one has accumulated in previous lives. The Thai perceive that all living beings stand in a hierarchy of varying ability to make actions effective and of varying degrees of freedom from suffering.⁹ Thus hierarchical positions in the organization of Thai society were the inevitable outcome of these beliefs. Status differentiation was the accepted order of things. Being born into a noble family of wealth or being given a position of high rank was the consequence of bun which the individual had accumulated.

Together with the concept of bun and bap, there is an acute awareness of the uncertainty of things on this earth. Nothing is permanent. Man is born, grows, ages, sickens, and dies. This is what the Buddha witnessed, and what induced him to leave the palace and to become a hermit. One's accumulated merit may have lifted one up on the throne, but it is not certain when this accumulated merit may run out, leaving the individual to experience the consequences of his bap. The writer of the Annals (Royal Autograph Edition) described the fall of King Taksin thus: "When the bun of Chao Taksin expired and he died, his age was 48 years."¹⁰ One does not know the extent and amount of bun and bap one has already accumulated. A high position of rank and power would denote that one has already accumulated a great deal of bun during past life. To ensure future prosperity for both this life and the next life one should continue accumulating merit, and refraining from bad actions which would incur bap.

There are three ways to make merit. They are than, sin, and phawana. By than is meant alms giving. Alms can be given either to ordinary people or the monks. Thai people generally offer food to the monks on two types of occasions; food is given to the monks as they pass by the home on their morning rounds and when monks are formally invited to attend an event such as a marriage ceremony. One type of presentation of new robes to the monks

⁹L. M. Hanks, Jr., "Merit and Power in the Thai Social Order," American Anthropologist, LXIV, 6 (December 1962), pp. 1247-1248.

¹⁰PPHL, vol. II, p. 438.

is made into an important social occasion called kathin. The giving of shelter takes the form of wat building. This act was believed to obtain great merit, and people who could afford to do so were expected to devote their wealth to building wat. Sin consists of rules of conduct and behavior. For an ordinary layman, there are five rules of conduct. He is enjoined not to kill, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to lie and not to take alcoholic drink. Phawana is meditation, the concentration of the mind on Buddha and his teaching. The performances consist in worshipping, practicing religious services, and listening to sermons.¹¹

Almost all Thai men during the Early Bangkok period spent some part of their lives in monkhood. This is a part of the life cycle of a Thai man. During the Ayutthaya and Early Bangkok periods, the wat was the only institution of education. When a boy reached puberty, his parents would send him to live in a wat under the supervision of a monk whom they knew well. By this monk the boy would be taught to read and write, while at the same time serving his teacher like a little servant. The last phase of this period of education generally consisted in the boy being ordained as a novice for a short time before he reentered the secular world.¹² When a boy entered the novitiate, great merit was thought to accrue to his parents, and there were very few boys indeed who would omit the performance of this meritorious act.

Religion was undoubtedly the main factor making for the integration of the Thai State. The Buddhist monkhood had a church organization, and a hierarchy, the center of which was in the capital. The details of this organization will be given in Chapter VI.

The practice of entering the monastery at the age of puberty had many important functions in Thai society. It created a lasting link between a Thai man and the religious institution. Further, it was an important preparation for entering the adult world. For the Thai, entering the novitiate constituted a rite of passage, marking the separation from his childhood family, and incorporation into the sacred world. His leaving the monastery and the novitiate, after preaching the Vesandara

¹¹Krom Sinlapakon (Department of Fine Arts) Prapheni Kiawkap Chiwit (Life Customs), Bangkok, 1965.

¹²David K. Wyatt, The Beginnings of Modern Education in Thailand, 1868-1910, Ph.D. Thesis (unpublished), Cornell University, 1966.

Jataka, marked his incorporation into the family again, but as a being reborn, a new man, ready to shoulder adult responsibilities and obligations.¹³

The Kinship System

The kinship system of the Thai during this period appears to have been almost the same as that of the present. As can be gathered from laws and genealogies, it was bilateral, which means that descent was traced through both the paternal and the maternal lines. There was no corporate unit based on descent. Relationship to the bilateral kindred was traced outwards from Ego. Judging from the genealogies of noble families, the limits of one's group were drawn with consideration given to the status and rank of the person in question for inclusion in the circle of relatives. Thus, although the genealogy might refer mainly to the male line, a high ranking person, such as a princess, was included even though she was only a daughter's daughter's daughter of a woman in the direct male line.¹⁴

Marriages, according to Bowring, were permitted beyond the first degree of affinity.¹⁵ Marriages within the king group were noted to be the practice among the princes. The practice of endogamy could also be observed within the Bunnak family at the height of their power in the reign of King Mongkut.¹⁶ The incest rule did not apply to the kings whose queens were often their half-sisters (of the same father but different mothers). It was not rigorously observed among the nobles either for a few cases of marriages between half-siblings are found in the genealogies.¹⁷ The reasons were probably political and

¹³It must be noted that it was the ambition of the parents to listen to their son giving a sermon on the Vesandara Jatakao. In the life story of the Lord Buddha, after his enlightenment he returned to preach to his father and relatives. Then, it was said, he referred to the Vesandara story and stated the Four Truths. Sathian Koset, op. cit., p. 307.

¹⁴See the case of Princess Sasithon in the Bunnak genealogy (daughter of Maew, concubine of Rama I).

¹⁵John Bowring, The Kingdom and People of Siam, vol. I, p. 119.

¹⁶See Bunnak genealogy.

¹⁷See Appendix, genealogies.

economic, although it may be observed that there existed in the society a tendency for women to marry upward.

According to Pallegoix, place of residence, at least for the first one or two months after marriage, was matrilocal.¹⁸ This rule may not have been strictly observed, especially among people of high rank, for there appear to have been many exceptions to this rule in the marriages of princes and nobles.

Polygyny was a recognized practice especially among the princes and the nobles. The wives were ranked, however. The wives of importance were the ones who had been formally recognized, and/or the ones who had been given to a man by the king. At the death of the husband, a wife who had been given to the deceased by the king obtained the greatest share of the property. A wife who had been through the marriage ceremony with her husband obtained a larger share of the property than the minor wives.¹⁹

The kinship terminology emphasized difference in generation and age. The key behaviors within the nuclear family were respect and obedience. As Pallegoix noted, extreme respect was given by the offspring to their parents.²⁰ Distinction between older and younger members of the kin group who are of the same generation are made in the kinship terminology. Obligations of respect and obedience applied to the behavior which the younger exhibited toward the older members of the family. The power of control over the members of the family was given to the husband, who was recognized as the legal head of the household. His wives and children were considered to be his property. Thus the law empowered him to sell his wife and children into slavery.²¹

Historical Development of Thai Social and Political Organization

Before a description of the development of Thai social and political organization can be given, it is

¹⁸Jean-Baptiste Pallegoix, Lao Ruang Myang Thai (Description du Royaume Thai ou Siam), trans. San To Komonlabut, Bangkok, 1963, p. 210.

¹⁹Clause 5, Laksana Moradok (Law of Inheritance), PK, vol. II, pp. 145-146.

²⁰Jean Baptiste Pallegoix, op. cit., pp. 208, 216.

²¹Clauses 3-4, Laksana That (Law on Slavery), PK, vol. II, p. 74.

necessary to point out one dominant factor which exercised much influence in shaping the form of organization to be found at the beginning of the Early Bangkok period (1782-1873).

One particular characteristic of the historical Southeast Asian mainland states was the lack of manpower. The need for manpower is well illustrated by events following each war between Thailand and her neighbors. The victorious side always carried off a large number of people from the conquered territory. Whole villages were often moved into the territory of the conqueror, where they were assimilated and became the population of the conqueror. The Thai seem to have been especially aware of the importance of having a large population. The famous inscription of the early Thai King Ram Kamhaeng could be interpreted as an advertisement inducing people to come and settle in the Sukhothai kingdom.²² The rules given to the Governor of Nakhon Sithammarat in 1784 placed special emphasis on his duty to memorize the number of phrai (commoners) in his province. Here recognition that people created an area's wealth can also be seen.

He (the governor) should frequently read the list of lek (male commoners) and commit to memory their number so that, when they are needed for government service, they can be called into service easily. When lek of any mu (platoon) or kong (battalion) are lazy and have run away to hide themselves in the forest and on the hills, and thus have not been tattooed nor served in government service, the Governor should appoint loyal officials to go out to them and persuade them to come and settle down in an inhabited area so that the area will be wealthy.²³

And again in connection with the pirates:

If the Yuan (Vietnamese), pirates, enemies, come to take away our people, the Governor

²² Prof. O. W. Wolters, to whom I owe this observation, tells me it originated with Mr. Simmonds of the School of Oriental and African Studies.

²³ Samnao Kot, Ruang Tang Chao Phraya Nakhon Sithammarat (Copy of Rule, On the Appointment of the Governor of Nakhon Sithammarat), PP, volo I, pt. 2, p. 475.

Lek is a Thai word used for "male phrai," generally of provincial towns, see Khachon Sukkhaphanit, Thanandon Phrai (The Status of Phrai), Bangkok, 1962, p. 38.

must fight against them. Do not let the enemy take away any of our people. If the Governor and officials are negligent, and omit to patrol the bay as ordered, so that the pirates or Yuan are able to take away any of our people, the Governor and officials will be punished according to the Decree.²⁴

Thailand always had a small population for the area she controlled. Although there is no reliable statistical data for the size of the population during the Ayutthaya or the Early Bangkok periods, a number of estimates have been made by visitors to Thailand. The earliest statement on the size of the population was made by La Loubere who circa 1688 stated that the persons mentioned on government rolls, which were supposed to be carefully kept, numbered only 1,900,000. For circa 1829, Bastian also quoting from a Thai record, gave the number of persons marked on the rolls at 4,000,000.²⁵ John Crawford who headed a mission to Bangkok in A.D. 1822 said, "The whole population according to the best accounts which I could obtain amounts to about 5,000,000..."²⁶ Bishop Pallegoix who lived in Thailand for over 20 years estimated the population of Thailand at 4,500,000 to 5,000,000 people.²⁷

²⁴ Ibid., p. 477.

²⁵ H. G. Quaritch Wales, Ancient Siamese Government and Administration, New York, 1965 (reprinted) p. 8.

²⁶ John Crawford, The Crawford Papers, Bangkok, 1915, p. 102.

Detail of the composition given:

Siam and Lao (considered equally populous)	4,200,000
Peguans (Mons)	42,000
Kambujans (Cambodians)	50,000
Malays	15,000
Chinese	700,000
Total	5,142,000

²⁷ Jean-Baptiste Pallegoix, op. cit., p. 3.

Detail of the composition:

Siamese	1,900,000
Chinese	1,500,000
Laos	1,000,000
Malays	1,000,000
Cambodians	500,000
Peguans	50,000
Karen, Xong	50,000
Total	6,000,000

He mentioned the abundance of food, noted that the people developed only half the plain into rice fields, and commented that the size of the population was not commensurate with the size of the country.²⁸ In 1947, the official census set the population at 17,442,689.²⁹ Even at the present time when her population is about 32,680,000 (in 1967)³⁰ Thailand can still be considered to be favored in the ratio of arable land to population.

The sensitiveness of the Thai in the nineteenth century to their small population can be detected in the words of Somdet Chao Phraya Sisuriyawong, reported by Sir John Bowring.³¹

"Among other curious evidence of the state of his mind, I (Bowring) learnt that on one occasion he sent for a foreign gentleman whose opinion he greatly valued, and in the presence of many persons said to his adviser--

Q. (Sisuriyawong) Now you must make yourself Sir John Bowringt answer me--why do you come to Siam?

A. We are to become your neighbors--we wish to be your friends.... Don't shut the door.

Q. ...

A. ...

Q. Well! In a large house with many servants, the door may safely be left open; in a small house with few servants, the doors must be shut."

And on the questions of export, and produce, rice, sugar, etc.

Q. (Sisuriyawong) "Yes, a soil, but no people. A soil without people is but a wilderness, and the people we have are so lazy, not like your people."

²⁸Ibid., pp. 3, 13.

²⁹Warasan Sathitti (Bulletin of Statistics), vol. XV, 4, (September 1967) p. 3.

³⁰Ibid., p. 3.

³¹Sir John Bowring, op. cit., pp. 464-466.

From existing evidence, the history of Thai society can be traced back to the early thirteenth century when Thai chiefs attacked and defeated the Khmer commander of Sukhothai, then the capital of the northwestern part of the Angkor empire, and established there the center of a Thai kingdom which became powerful during the latter half of the century.³² Because of the scarcity of suitable evidence, very little can be said regarding the social and political organization of this kingdom. The nature of government appears to have been paternalistic. The king was the leader and protector of the people in war, and in time of peace was their father whose advice was sought and expected in all matters and whose judgment was accepted by all.³³

The dominant position of Sukhothai did not last long, for within the next century her power was eclipsed by another Thai center, Ayutthaya, which was situated in the middle of the valley of the Chao Phraya River. Ayutthaya was the capital of the kingdom from 1350 to 1767. For convenience, we can divide this period of 417 years into two parts. The first was from its foundation to 1569 when it was taken by Burmese troops under Bayinnaung. The second period covered the time from its recovery of independence to 1767 when it was sacked and destroyed by the Burmese.

It appears that the main problem of establishing a viable kingdom in this area was the control of manpower. The area was underpopulated, and the movement of the people was extremely difficult to control. Further, the area was subjected to almost continuous warfare. In each war the victor always carried off large numbers of people from the conquered territory to his own land. These factors provided conditions suitable for the growth of strong monarchical power and an organization which was tailored for rapid mobilization of manpower.

The Kingdom of Ayutthaya had both of these. Political organization must naturally be compatible with the indigenous social organization. Mr. Khachon Sukkhaphanit has described Thai social organization in this area as being composed of small groups, each with a leader.³⁴ In

³²t D. G. E. Hall, A History of South-East Asia, 2nd ed. London and New York, 1964.

³³ Prince Dhani, "The Old Conception of the Monarchy," JSS, XXXVI, 2, (December 1947), p. 93.

³⁴ Khachon Sukkhaphanit, Thanandon Phrai, pp. 11, 14.

order to facilitate the recruitment of men for war, every member of each group was compelled to register under his leader who was then responsible for mobilizing the members of his group in time of war. As early as 1356 a requirement had already been made compelling everyone to be registered under a leader. Such a leader was called nai, or munnai.

When anyone institutes a legal proceeding, and he is not registered under any munnai, do not examine the case or give judgment. Send that man to the Satsadi (The Registrar) to be made the king's man (phrai luang).³⁵

To be the king's man (phrai luang) was to be made to do corvée labor for the duration of six months in a year.³⁶ A later law of 1527 shows clearly the situation of those who failed to register with a nai. They were to be arrested and punished.³⁷ Thus, anyone who refused to register was not given the royal protection. He had committed an offense against the law and was therefore an outcast and a prey to all who would take advantage of him. His property had no protection from theft for there was no authority which he could seek to right his wrong. When found out, he would be punished and made to serve corvée. No kind of assistance from the state could be had except through the intermediary offices of the naio.

Thus two categories of people emerged. Those who had to register under their leader were phrai (or lek), and the leaders themselves were called nai or munnai. The main purpose of such registration was to facilitate the process of mobilization in time of war. Thus a law of 1351 stated:

When the royal order is given to mobilize men for war, and the munnai do not bring their men to battle, but take money from their phrai instead...one of the eight types of punishment will be given to such munnai.³⁸

³⁵ Clause 10, Laksana Rapphong (Laws on the Institution of Litigation), PK, vol. I, p. 298.

³⁶ Khachon Sukkhaphanit, op. cit., pp. 30-31, 41.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 170 Royal Decree, 1527 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 14), PK, vol. III, pp. 159-160.

³⁸ Clause 4, Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government) PK, vol. II, p. 3730

In order to mobilize the men under his control on short notice, a nai had to keep watch on the movement of the men registered under him. As there never existed an organized police force until the end of the Early Bangkok period, the nai were also given the responsibility to look after the behavior of the men under their control. Thus, whenever anyone instituted a legal proceeding against a phrai, the court sent the warrant of arrest to the nai of that phrai, and ordered him to send that phrai to court. Punishment was prescribed for a nai who disobeyed the court's order. In cases of serious offenses such as theft, the nai, on receiving the warrant, had to inform the court of the length of time it would take him to arrest the culprit. If on his return, he did not bring the accused with him, but tried to shield his phrai in any way, he would be punished as if he was the thief himself.³⁹

As suggested by the law of 1355, phrai were considered to belong to their nai, and were put in the same category of property as slaves, wives, and children. This law laid down that anyone who took away phrai, slave, wife, or child of another was a thief. If the phrai, slave, wife, or child was willing to go with the thief, he/she would be punished.⁴⁰ As for the position of the nai, a law of 1359 tells us that they normally had access to the royal audience.⁴¹ They must, therefore, have been high ranking officials, i.e., the princes and the nobles.

The first evidence which reveals the nature of ranks and orders of the officials was Phra Aiyakan Tamnaeng Na Phonlaruan, and Phra Aiyakan Tamnaeng Na Thahan Huanyang (Law of the Civil Hierarchy, and the Laws of the Military, Provincial Hierarchies) of 1454.⁴² In these laws, four related methods of ranking were used, the sakdina, the yot, the honorific names, and government positions.

³⁹Clause 7, Laksana Rapphong (Laws on the Institution of Litigation), PK, vol. I, p. 297; Clauses 4-6, Laksana Chon (Laws on Theft), PK, vol. II, pp. 296-298.

⁴⁰Clause 1, Laksana Lakpha (Laws on Kidnapping), PK, vol. II, pp. 125-126.

⁴¹Clause 4, Laksana Chon (Laws on Theft), PK, vol. II, pp. 296-297.

⁴²H. G. Quaritch-Wales, Ancient Siamese Government and Administration, p. 260

The sakdina, called by Dr. Quaritch Wales "dignity marks"⁴³ was the most important and the most refined index of the status of its possessors. It ranged from 100,000 for the Upparat (highest government position for a prince, generally occupied by a royal son, brother, or uncle), 10,000 for a minister, to 25-10 for a phrai, and 5 for a that (slave).⁴⁴

The word sakdina has been said by Dr. Quaritch Wales to mean literally "power of fields."⁴⁵ The word na clearly means rice field (or land). For the word "power," on the other hand, the Thai language has many words which can be translated as "power," and yet they have different shades of meaning. There are the words sak or sakdi, det or decha, rit, and amnat. While the latter mean rather the exercise of power, sak or sakdi is something that one possesses as the source of power. It could perhaps be translated as resources. To the modern Thai the word signifies the possession of high status by being born into a high ranking family. Thus the modern princes are said to have high sak although they may have no power at all.

There appears to have been a strong correlation between the amount of sakdina one possessed and the number of people one had beneath one's control. Prince Damrong has suggested that originally sakdina was concerned with the limitation placed on the extent of land one was allowed to possess. A phrai was not allowed to possess more than 25 rai of land (2-1/2 rai = 1 acre); an official of the sakdina 400 was not allowed to possess more than 400 rai of land. The reason for the limitation was to allow people to have only that amount of land they were capable of developing.⁴⁶ It means, therefore, that the amount of sakdina and the extent of land possessed by any one person grew with the increase of the number of people under his control. The lowest sakdina was 5, which was that of a slave. It did not matter whether the slave had

⁴³ Ibid., p. 35.

⁴⁴ Phra Aiyakan Tamnaeng Na Phonlaryan (Law of the Civil Hierarchy), Phra Aiyakan Tamnaeng Na Thahan Huamyang (Laws of the Military, Provincial Hierarchies) PK, volo I, pp. 178-271.

⁴⁵ H. G. Quaritch-Wales, op. cit., p. 49.

⁴⁶ Prince Damrong, Laksana Kanpokkhrong Prathet Sayam tae Boran (Ancient Administration of Siam), Bangkok, 1959, p. 13.

a family or not, his sakdina remained the same, for his children belonged to his mastert. On the other hand, the sakdina of a phrai was 15, but increased to 20 and 25 when he had a family. A retired official, if he still possessed phrai of his own, was allowed to retain half of the sakdina he had possessed when he was on active duty. H. G. Quaritch Wales states that the sakdina enabled one to tell the number of phrai under the control of a nai. Thus supposing each of his phrai had the sakdina of 25 rai, a nai of the sakdina of 400 controlled 16 men.⁴⁷

The yot (rank in form of title) was said to be ranked, first for the princes from Phra Maha Upparat, Phra Anuchathirat (royal brother), Phra Chao Luk Thoe (royal child), Phra Chao Lan Thoe (royal nephew, niece, or grand child) to Mom Chao (royal grandchild); secondly for the nobles, from Chao phraya, phraya, phra, luang, khun, mun to phan.

The honorific names were long, imposing names given by the king to the officials. Each name was attached to a certain government position of a definite krom (department or regiment). Thus, when an official was moved from one position to another, he would also be given a new name.

Although a large number of krom were mentioned in the Laws of the Civil Hierarchy and the Laws of the Military and Provincial Hierarchies, we do not actually know how many of them were in existence in the Early Ayutthaya period (1350-1569). This is because new positions were added to the laws as they were set up later. The annals, however, tell us of the existence of four important krom: the Muang (City), the Wang (Palace), the Khlang (Treasury), and the Na (Land), each headed by a minister.⁴⁸ During the reign of King Trailok (A.D. 1448-1488) the population in the area around Ayutthaya was divided into two groups: the so-called Military Division and the so-called Civil Division. Two positions of Chief Ministers were established. The annals stated their positions to be the Head of the Military Division (Kalahom), and the Head of the Civil Division (Mahatthai) respectively.⁴⁹ The names Military and Civil, however, had nothing to do with their

⁴⁷H. G. Quaritch Wales, op. cit., p. 50.

⁴⁸PPHL, vol. I, p. 107.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 107.

function, which was the same. In war both groups shared in battle equally.⁵⁰

Control of manpower was the most important factor in the organization which was developed. We have already stated that each noble possessed a certain number of phrai who were registered under him. As the nai were arranged to fill different positions in the krom, their phrai also became members of the krom. A krom would generally contain at least three nobles, the Chao Krom (Chief of the krom), the Palat Krom (Deputy Chief of the krom), and Samuha Banchi (Registrar).⁵¹ There were, however, various sizes of krom, and a large krom contained within itself a number of smaller krom. A krom was further subdivided into kong, and a kong into mu. The organization is best compared with an army in which the large krom were the divisions, the smaller krom were the regiments, the kong were the battalions, and the mu the platoons. This comparison is apt because the Thai appear to have thought of the organization in terms of an army. Thus the Thai word for minister, senabodi, originally meant army general.⁵²

As the phrai were obligated to obey the orders of their nai, and the officials their superior,⁵³ the chief of a krom would have under him a certain number of men, nai and phrai, whom he could maneuver for his own political purposes. The security of a king depended on his ability to balance the power of these nobles.

This was done through careful regulation of the amount of manpower under the nobles, and the method of "divide and rule." In each krom, there was a Samuha Banchi (Registrar, Accountant) who held the list of phrai of his krom. A central Registrar was established, called Phra Surat Sawatdi, who held the roll of all phrai of all krom. The Phra Surat Sawatdi was directly responsible to the king. With the division of the population into two

⁵⁰ King Chulalongkorn, Phraratcha Damrat Nai Phrabat Somdet Phra Chunla Chomklao Song Thalaeng Nayobai Kaekhai Kanpokkhong Phaendin (Speech on the Changes in the Administration), Bangkok, 1927, pp. 2-3.

⁵¹ Prince Damrong, Tamnan Kan Ken Thahan Thai (History of Thai Mobilization), PP, vol. VI, pt. 23, p. 310.

⁵² Prince Damrong, Laksana Kanpokkhong Prathet Sayam tae Boran (Ancient Administration of Siam), p. 10.

⁵³ Clause 89, Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government), PK, vol. II, p. 418.

groups, all krom were divided between two types, the military and the civil. Each Chief Minister had a firm control over the distribution of manpower in all the krom within his division. It appears that the Chief Ministers considered the knowledge of the exact amount and distribution of manpower within their division to be their most important duty.

The administration of our country, as had been done, was to have six ministers. Two of them were made Chief Ministers. The Samuha Kalahom had authority over all military krom. The Samuha Nayok had authority over all civil krom. In consideration of the positions as originally established, it seems as if one of these had the responsibility and authority over all military affairs, while the other had the responsibility and authority over all civil affairs. But from events as recorded in the annals, it does not appear to have been so. They were like the Registrars of the population of the military and the civil groups. Moreover, as to the division into the military and civil groups, although the laws showed the differences between the phrai luang of one group and the other in some places, in wars both groups were used equally in the same manner so that the original purposes of such division are impossible to be known...⁵⁴

The necessity of having at least two Chief Ministers was undoubtedly to create a balance of power. In order to prevent the high ranking officials from joining forces against the throne, at least during some periods, there were laws in effect forbidding high ranking officials to have private contact with each other. Capital punishment was prescribed for officials of the sakdina 1,600 to 10,000 who went to see each other at their abodes or talked to each other in secret. An official of the sakdina 600-10,000 who knew of any illegal action committed by another, and refrained from informing the king would be punished as a traitor.⁵⁵ Further, to ensure their loyalty, they were required yearly to drink the imprecated water, taking the oath of allegiance to the king.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ King Chulalongkorn, op. cit., pp. 2-3.

⁵⁵ Clause 75, Kot Monthianban (Palatine Law) PK, vol. I. p. 84.

⁵⁶ Clause 80, Kot Monthianban, ibid., p. 85.

The position of the king was elevated above mortals. Elaborate ceremonies surrounded him at the time of his coronation and on various other occasions. Special court language was reserved for the person and actions of the king.⁵⁷ This served to justify his position and authority above the princes and nobles. Yet even with such an aura surrounding him, it appears that only a strong king could rule in peace. Numerous succession disputes and dethronements of reigning weak kings testify to this conclusion.

During the Early Ayutthaya period, princes were sent to rule over provincial towns, especially the important ones such as Phitsanulok, Lopburi, and Suphanburi. These princes ruled over their domains autonomously like tributary states.⁵⁸ During this period, they played important roles in succession disputes at Ayutthaya. At the death of a reigning monarch, the princes who governed important towns moved their troops to Ayutthaya to fight among themselves for the throne, or put to death a weak successor, often their own nephew or cousin. One might thus gain the throne of Ayutthaya.⁵⁹

There were three main reasons for Ayutthaya's ability to dominate these provincial towns. First, there were kinship ties and obligations, these governors generally being close junior relatives of the reigning king of Ayutthaya. Secondly, on account of the transfer of manpower

⁵⁷ Clause 81, Kot Monthianban, ibid., p. 85.

⁵⁸ H. G. Quaritch Wales, op. cit., pp. 108-109.

⁵⁹ A.D. 1369-70. At the death of King Ramathibodi I, his son and successor had to give up the throne to his uncle, Borommaracha I, who was the Governor of Suphanburi.

A.D. 1388. At the death of King Borommaracha I, his son and successor was put to death by his cousin, Ramesuan, the Governor of Lopburi.

A.D. 1409. Ramesuan's son and successor, after reigning 15 years, lost the throne of Ayutthaya to Intharacha, a prince ruling at Suphanburi.

A.D. 1424. At the death of Intharacha, two of his sons, the Governors of Suphanburi and San fought for the throne, and both were killed in battle.

A.D. 1533-1534. After the death of King Borommaracha IV, his son and successor was put to death by a prince, the Governor of Phitsanulok.

For detail see PPHL, vol. I, especially Prince Damrong's explanation.

in each victorious war,⁶⁰ and at the time of succession disputes when princes moved their troops to Ayutthaya to gain possession of the throne, Ayutthaya probably was strongest. The third reason was the method of "divide and rule." The governor of one town who went to visit that of another town was considered to have committed treason.⁶¹

The main problem of this type of organization was its loose integration. Only the loyalty of the princes and the nobles to their king bound these units of power together. It operated well enough as long as the king was successful, especially in war, and the kingdom was expanding. When it was attacked by a formidable enemy from outside, the component parts of the system tended to split off in order to save their own lives. This is one of the reasons for the first fall of Ayutthaya in 1569.⁶²

This major defeat must have been a shock to the people of Ayutthaya. Things could never be the same again. The defect of the system was realized, and from the beginning of the Late Ayutthaya period (1569-1767) major changes may be observed.

First, the princes were no longer appointed to govern provincial towns. Palaces were built for them within the capital city. There were the Palace of the Front (Wang Na) and the Palace of the Rear (Wang Lang). According to Prince Naris, the capital city was made a symbol of the kingdom, having the royal palace as its capital, surrounded by palaces of princes as if the latter were

⁶⁰In A.D. 1369 King Ramathibodi attacked Angkor and brought back large number of captives. In A.D. 1375 Borommaracha I attacked Phitsanulok and brought back a large number of its population. Circa A.D. 1384-1395, Ramesuan attacked Chiangmai and brought back large numbers of the population of the Northern Provinces. Ibid. Also for the date of the attack on Angkor, see O.W. Wolters, "The Khmer King at Basan (1371-73) and the Restoration of the Cambodian Chronology During the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries" in Asia Major, Vol. XII, part 1, pp. 44-87.

⁶¹Clause 77, Kot Monthianban (Palatine Law), PK, vol. I, p. 84.

⁶²PPHL, vol. I, pp. 166-183. In the reign of King Chakhraphat, and King Phra Mahin, Phra Thammaracha, the Governor of Phitsanulok joined the Burmese camp of Bayinnaung against Ayutthaya.

the provincial towns.⁶³ The most important of all these princes was the Upparat who occupied the Palace of the Front (Wang Na). Second to the Upparat was the prince who occupied the Palace of the Rear (Wang Lang).⁶⁴ Prince Damrong thought that their origin must have derived from the organization of a military expedition. The king was the commander of the main troops (thap luang). The Upparat commanded the troop which was the vanguard (thap na). The prince of Wang Lang was in command of the rearguard (thap lang).⁶⁵ These princes, each possessed their own phrai, and appointed their own officials to look after them.

With the princes being in the capital city, the central government could exert more control over provincial governors. Of the two Chief Ministers, one came to have control over the Southern Provinces and the other the Northern Provinces. The Samuha Kalahom had control over the distribution of manpower in the Southern Provinces and authority over the governors of towns therein. The Samuha Nayok had control over the distribution of manpower in the Northern Provinces and authority over the governors of towns therein.⁶⁶ The central government, through krom wang (The Royal Palace department or regiment) appointed the Yokkrabat, the legal official, for every town.⁶⁷ This official acted as a spy for the central government. He was told to keep an eye on the town governor, who was his direct superior. Whenever the Yokkrabat wished to come to the capital, the governor was expressly forbidden from

⁶³Letter of Prince Naris dated June 14, 1933. San Somdet (Correspondences between Prince Damrong and Prince Naris), Bangkok, 1956, vol I, p. 126.

⁶⁴During the reign of King Thammaracha (1569-1590), when the princes came to live in the capital city, Prince Naresuan, the Upparat and Governor of Phitsanulok occupied the Palace of the Front, and his brother, Ekathotsarot, occupied the Palace of the Rear. Prince Damrong, Tamnan Wang Na (History of the Palace of the Front), PP., vol. V, pt. 13, pp. 85-86.

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 84-85.

⁶⁶The time when the two Chief Ministers obtained regional authorities is not known, but later the Minister of Khlang was also given one, and by 1743, all three Ministers had regional authorities. Clause 19-21. Phra Thammanun (Laws of Procedure), PK, vol. I, pp. 141-144.

⁶⁷H. G. Quaritch Wales, op. cit., p. 112.

preventing him.⁶⁸ By law, a town governor, then, was made responsible to the central government for his actions. Punishment was threatened if he oppressed the people, or let robbery become prevalent in his area.⁶⁹ In fact the law equated his position with that of the Chief of a krom.⁷⁰

Further, there appears to have been a certain expansion in the organization of the krom in the capital. In the Early Ayutthaya period, the organization of the groups of phrai and their nai seems to have been territorially arranged. The closeness between a nai and his phrai could be observed in the law of 1359, when a phrai committed theft, the king would send the nai to go personally to get the thief.⁷¹ A Royal Decree of 1732, on the other hand, stated that the nai was detained at court while his subordinate went to get the phrai.⁷² A law of 1647 showed that by this time the nai might be at the capital while his phrai were in the provinces. It stated that when the nai or Chao Krom (Chief of krom) sent a sealed document ordering his phrai who were living in any provincial town to come to him, anyone who tried to prevent the phrai from obeying the order of his nai would be punished.⁷³ Prince Damrong states that the control of manpower in the olden days was not made on a territorial basis. Besides the noble officials, each krom had many petty officials (khun mun), who lived in the area where the phrai of the krom resided. Each khun mun was responsible for the group of phrai among whom he lived.⁷⁴ Thus in regard to manpower, in an area where a large number of

⁶⁸ Clause 139, Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government), PK, vol II, pp. 443-444.

⁶⁹ Clause 51, Laksana Aya Luang, PK, vol II, p. 403; Royal Decree, 1599 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 15), PK, vol. III, p. 162.

⁷⁰ Clause 40, Laksana Aya Luang, PK, vol. II, pp. 398-399.

⁷¹ Clause 4, Laksana Chon (Laws on Theft), PK, vol. II, pp. 296-297.

⁷² Royal Decree, 1732 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 6), PK, vol. III, p. 116.

⁷³ Clause 81, Laksana Aya Luang, PK, vol. II, p. 415.

⁷⁴ Prince Damrong, Tamnan Kan Ken Thahan Thai (History of Thai Mobilization), PP, vol. VI, pt. 23, p. 310.

phrai belonging to the krom in the capital resided, the power of the town governor over the men in his area would be much reduced. Considering the difficulty of communication, and the condition that the phrai of a krom in the capital had to go to the capital to do corvée, it would seem that the closer the town was to the capital, the less the control of the town governor over manpower in his area.

This process of centralization might have been greatly assisted by one important factor, an immense increase in the number of phrai luang. This increase has been pointed out by Mr. Khachon Sukkhaphanit, and is evidenced by numerous laws dealing with phrai luang which were promulgated at the beginning of the Late Ayutthaya period.⁷⁵ We have noted earlier that phrai luang were the people who did not register under a nai, and thus, when arrested, were made to do six months' corvée labor annually. As was to be expected after military defeat, the sacking of provincial towns and the fall of Ayutthaya, large number of phrai lost their nai, who might have been taken as captives to Burma, killed in battle, or who simply might have run away into the wilderness. As phrai who had no nai were made phrai luang, their number naturally would increase after the devastating wars with the Burmese. Thus, when new governors of provincial towns were appointed, they would find themselves governing, not their own phrai som, but phrai luang.

There were then clearly two important categories of phrai, the phrai luang and the phrai som. The phrai luang were the king's phrai. They belonged to the king and were compelled to do services (corvée) for him, called ratchakan (affairs of the king), for six months in a year.⁷⁶ The king, however, assigned them to be under the control of the nobles in various krom.⁷⁷ These nobles became the nai. The phrai som, on the other hand, belonged to their nai completely. They did not have to do government corvée (ratchakan). Instead, they served their own nai.⁷⁸ Thus,

⁷⁵ Khachon Sukkhaphanit, Thanadon Phrai (The Status of Phrai), p. 21.

⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 21, 25-26, 30; Prince Damrong, Laksana Kanpokkhong Prathet Sayam tae Boran (Ancient Administration of Siam), pp. 11-12.

⁷⁷ Clause 103, Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government), PK, vol. II, p. 426.

⁷⁸ Khachon Sukkhaphanit, op. cit., p. 30; Prince Damrong, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

while the nai of any group of phrai luang had power over them only as long as he held the official position in the krom to which that group of phrai luang belonged, phrai som constituted a part of the property of an individual nai, and could be inherited by his descendants.⁷⁹

Although both princes and nobles could own phrai som of their own, it turned out that the main possessors of phrai som were the princes,⁸⁰ and the largest possessor of them all was the Upparat, the prince of the Palace of the Front. The phrai of a prince were always phrai som, whether they had been given to him by the king or had been acquired in other ways. This seems to have been the effect of carrying over the idea that princes were governing towns as tributary states. In the old Thai concept of myang (town) as opposed to the modern concept of chang-wat (province), the emphasis was on the people, and not the territory. Thus, although no longer governing any town as such, they still had their own men, phrai som, doing services for them like the town population governed by them.

A town was equated with a krom in Thai law. Thus the princes had their own krom, and appointed their own nobles to look after their phrai som. The krom of the Upparat was Krom Phra Ratcha Wang Bowon Sathan Mongkhon. The system of ranks and titles of his officials was almost a replica of those of the king, the central administration, but on a much smaller scale.⁸¹ Thus in size, the whole of his unit was equal only to a large krom. The prince of the Palace of the Rear also had a krom which was called Krom Phra Ratcha Wang Bowon Sathan Phimuk, but he seems to have had far fewer officials than the Upparat. During the reign of King Narai (1656-1688) and later, many princes' krom were created for a sister and daughter and other princes.⁸² Since the phrai in the prince's krom were phrai som and not phrai luang, the establishment of new prince's krom would increase the number of phrai som within the kingdom.

⁷⁹Luang Siworawat, Withi Pokkhrong Ban Myang Boran (Ancient Methods of Town Administration), PP, vol. V, pt. 15, p. 371.

⁸⁰This fact emerged from the Royal Decrees of Late Ayutthaya period complaining of the loss of Phrai Luang. See also Khachon Sukkaphanit, op. cit., p. 21.

⁸¹Prince Damrong, Tamnan Wangna (History of the Palace of the Front), PP, vol. V, pt. 13, pp. 153-155.

⁸²Ibid., pp. 89-91.

Without sophisticated weapons and a regular army, possession of political power depended mainly on the control of manpower. Because phrai som belonged to their nai completely, a person who had a large number of phrai som could constitute a threat to the throne. There were, therefore, in laws and decrees of this period, numerous attempts to increase the number of phrai luang, and reduce the number of phrai som.⁸³

On the other hand, the increase of phrai luang meant the growth of the power on the part of the nobles, for the king assigned his phrai luang to be under the control of his nobles.⁸⁴ This could present a danger to the king when the king was weak. For example, a Chief Minister usurped the throne of a weak king in 1629. Yet, for the following reasons, the increase of phrai luang was to be preferred. First, it gave much more security to the position of the king by reducing the power of other princes as competitors to the throne. Secondly, the king could control the increased power of the nobles by controlling the distribution of phrai luang in various krom, and preventing the chiefs of these krom from joining up against him. Thirdly, as is obvious from the text of numerous laws of this period, the phrai som were always increasing at the loss of phrai luang, for no one wished to be a phrai luang.⁸⁵ The first reason is obvious for the princes were the main possessors of phrai som. The second reason is that, as the king assigned his phrai luang to be under the control of his nobles, he therefore controlled the distribution of phrai luang. We have already taken note of a few laws which tried to prevent contacts between high officials and tried to create a mutual suspicion between them.⁸⁶ Similar laws with more detail were promulgated in 1647.⁸⁷

⁸³See below pp. 44-46.

⁸⁴"Officials whom H. M. has appointed to look after his group of phrai luang must not lose any of them, must be very kind to them so that they would not be in difficulties..o" Clause 135, Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government), PK, vol. II, p. 441.

⁸⁵A number of Laws and Royal Decrees could be found complaining of the loss of phrai luang.

⁸⁶See above, p. 32.

⁸⁷Clause 44, Laksana Aya Luang, laid down that any official who wished to visit another on business must inform his superior before making such a visit. Clause 83,
(continued)

The last was the fact that phrai luang always tried to get out of their status. At least two reasons can be put forward to explain this phenomenon. The first and the most important was the burden of the annual six months' corvée labor to which they were subjected. This cause of the loss of phrai luang was explicitly pointed out in a Royal Decree of 1748.⁸⁸ On the other hand, there is no evidence of any system of corvée developed for the phrai som during this period.⁸⁹ Their duty was to serve their nai in his own affairs.

For the sake of clarity, we may attempt to compare the range of work given to phrai som of a prince's krom with that of phrai luang. If living close to or within the palace of the prince, he probably had the duty of guarding the palace, or serving the prince like a servant. Serving in this capacity, he would be likely to obtain his food from the prince's large kitchen. He might also be called to do repairs, additions, or alterations to the palace or its grounds. He might be called occasionally to accompany the prince when he traveled, or to be a messenger for him in his business. A rather heavy task which might be given to him was work on a private building project of the prince such as the building of a wat. The main part of the duty of a phrai som was to give "gifts" regularly to the prince, and the noble whom the prince had appointed to look after him directly. In war or any particular internal disturbances in which the prince was involved, he would be called upon to serve as a soldier under the command of the prince. The phrai luang, on the other hand, were given the bulk of construction work, the Royal Palaces, and the palaces of the princes, city and town fortifications, numerous wat and stupas, irrigation works, etc. Further, they had to perform their duty in guarding the Royal Palace, city and towns, and all royal affairs in the process of the administration of the kingdom. This difference in the amount of work of the phrai

laid down that if anyone knew that someone was doing anything against the law and neglected to inform the king, he was to be punished. Clause 15, laid down that, when the officials gave orders not according to the law, anyone who obeyed such orders would be punished. Clause 72, laid down that anyone who said anything bad of the king was to be punished. See also clauses 83, 88 and 94. PK, vol. II, pp. 383-413.

⁸⁸Royal Decree, 1748 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 48), PK, vol. III, pp. 265-272.

⁸⁹Khachon Sukkhaphanit, op. cit., p. 30.

som and the phrai luang arose from the fact that all krom of the central and provincial government were given active functions in the process of administration. The prince's krom were given no function in the administration of the kingdom, but existed only to support the princes by supplying them with food and necessities, and as their private armies.

Further, when the phrai luang served in the king's affairs (ratchakan) he was given neither payment nor food.⁹⁰ Even when he had done the corvée, he would often be called by his nai, the noble who looked after him, to serve him just as a phrai som did.⁹¹ Thus a phrai luang was serving his nai like a phrai som, as well as doing corvée for the king.

The phrai som had one more advantage. There was no law against a phrai som changing his nai, although in practice, the consent of his nai would be needed. Considering that the possession of manpower constituted the most important form of wealth, this should have been difficult. In fact, however, it does not seem to have been so. In choosing a new nai, a phrai would always try to get a wealthier one, for this would mean less work for him. A wealthy man would have a large number of phrai and slaves. What a phrai som could do in such a case was to make his prospective nai buy him off from his old nai. As noted by Bowring, this was the method used by slaves, and it could easily be done.⁹² Sales of phrai som were made by their nai.⁹³

As we can gather from the contexts of many laws, four ways were open to get out of the status of phrai luang. First, the phrai could run away into the forest. The country was under-populated and there was as yet no

⁹⁰Prince Samrong, Laksana Kanpokkhrong Prathet Sayam tae Boran (Ancient Administration of Siam), pp. 11-12.

⁹¹Royal Decree, 1748 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 48), PK, vol. III, pp. 265-272; Clause 25, Laksana Aya Luang, PK, vol. II, pp. 388-389.

⁹²Sir John Bowring, op. cit., p. 193.

⁹³Royal Decree, 1788 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 18), PK, vol. III, p. 370.

effective means of identification⁹⁴ A man who ran away from one nai was welcomed by another, for increase of one's phrai meant increase of wealth and power. Secondly, a phrai luang could bribe his nai to help him by substituting another person to do his corvée, or neglecting to register his children as phrai luang⁹⁵ The officials were highly susceptible to bribery for they received no salary for their work.⁹⁶ Thirdly, most Thai men went into monkhood at a certain time of their lives. While they were monks, they were exempted from corvée. For a phrai luang who became a monk for a long duration, there was a possibility that he could somehow slip out of the list.⁹⁷ Lastly, a phrai luang could get out of his status by becoming a slave. Debt slaves were prevalent; by getting deeply into debt, one could become a slave.⁹⁸

There existed during this Late Ayutthaya period, another type of phrai importance. They were called phrai suai. These were the phrai who lived in an area, the produce of which was in much demand by the government. Tin and gun powder were prominent among such products. Instead of doing corvée, this type of phrai was required to supply the government with a definite amount of the product each year.⁹⁹ For the purpose of mobilization it seems as if they could either be phrai luang or phrai som.

⁹⁴ Thai people did not have surnames. Further, they often changed their names. The system of marking Phrai was not instituted until 1773. See PPHL, vol. II; Phraratcha Phongsawadan Krung Sayam (Annals of Siam), British Museum Edition, p. 689; Royal Decree, 1774.

⁹⁵ See Royal Decrees, 1744, 1748 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 48, 60), PK, vol. III, pp. 265-272, 303; Royal Decree, 1784 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 5), PK, vol. III, p. 322; Clauses 22, 41, 57 Laksana Aya Luang, PK, vol. II, pp. 387, 399, 406; Clauses 1, 5, Phra Aiyakan Banphanaek (Laws on the Division of Phrai), PK, vol. I, pp. 273, 292-293.

⁹⁶ See Prince Damrong, Laksana Kanpokkhong Prathet Sayam tae Boran (Ancient Administration of Siam), p. 13.

⁹⁷ Law of 1722, Clause 6, Phra Aiyakan Banphanaek, PK, vol. I, p. 293.

⁹⁸ When a phrai luang was very much indebted, he was put up for sale, i.e., to be made a slave. The money obtained went partly to repay his debt, and partly into the Royal Treasury.

⁹⁹ Prince Damrong, op. cit. p. 12.

That is to say, they could be those belonging to the king or to other persons.

For this chapter, it remains only to review the pattern of changes in the ratio of phrai luang and phrai som and their effects on the strength and integration of the kingdom. We have noted earlier that at the beginning of this period, the number of phrai luang had greatly increased. They were not only taken from phrai som who had lost their nai; the planned movement and resettlement of people in preparation for the war of independence, as well as the resettlement of captives gathered from successful wars of King Naresuan, and his brother King Ekathotsarot (1569-1620), must have also been factors making for the increase of phrai luang.¹⁰⁰ This was reflected in the increased power of the nobles. Only ten years after the death of King Ekathotsarot, we find that in the period between 1628 to 1630, the Samuha Kalahom played a major role in succession disputes. In 1628 he succeeded in organizing a revolt against King Chettha, and placed a puppet, King Athitwong, on the throne. The minister himself wielded all power. In 1629 he took over the position of the king and was called King Prasatthong.¹⁰¹

A period of continuing loss of phrai luang might have begun in the reign of King Prasatthong (1629-1656). It reached its apex, however, in the first half of the eighteenth century. The fact is reflected in the laws promulgated during this period. A law of 1647 told the officials not to use their phrai as if they were their slaves.¹⁰² In 1671, stealing a phrai luang was made one of the most serious crimes.¹⁰³ A law of 1690 gave lengthy orders to Chao Mu (Leader of a platoon), Chao Krom (Chief of krom) to seek more phrai, and to arrest those who had run away. They were further warned not to try to "conceal" the phrai and not to register phrai luang under

¹⁰⁰PPHL, vol. I, pp. 202-328, 553-554, 570, 600.

¹⁰¹For an account of the events, see J. Van Vliet, "Historical Account of Siam in the XVII Century," and Francis H. Giles, "Critical Analysis of Van Vliet's Historical Account." The Siam Society, Selected Articles from the Journal, vol. VII, pp. 91-177.

¹⁰²Clause 25, Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government), PK, vol. II, pp. 388-389.

¹⁰³Clause 27, Laksana Rapphong (Laws on the Institution of Litigation), PK, vol. I, p. 310.

their control as their own phrai som.¹⁰⁴ A Decree of 1723 prescribed that, when a male phrai som cohabited with a female phrai luang, all their offspring must be phrai luang.¹⁰⁵ The normal rule appears to have been that, when phrai of different krom or nai were married, their offspring were to be divided equally between the two krom or nai of the married couple.¹⁰⁶ A Rule of 1711, admitting that phrai always tried to get out of the group to which they were assigned, made an attempt to help the nai in getting back their escaped phrai.¹⁰⁷

The loss of phrai luang which also means the increase of phrai som, became serious not long before the reign of King Borommakot (1732-1758)s. The events from 1732 to the fall of Ayutthaya in 1767 as well as the tone of laws and decrees of this period demonstrated the seriousness of this loss. There was severe fighting between the princes before Borommakot came to the throne. During his reign when the king journeyed to worship the Buddha's footprint at Saraburi, three hundred Chinese dared to make an attempt to plunder the Royal Palace. When the king gave a funeral ceremony for a princess, the procession was sixty men short and the minister did not know where to find men to fill up the gap. He had to ask the king for advice, and the king had to make up the procession by taking sixty men out from those on duty guarding the Royal Palace.¹⁰⁸ A number of King Borommakot's laws and decrees reflect the loss of phrai luang. Measures to prevent further loss were made by promulgating laws and

¹⁰⁴ Clause 1, Phra Aiyakan Banphanaek, PK, vol. I, pp. 272-277.

¹⁰⁵ Royal Decree, 1723 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 22), PK, vols III, pp. 184-185.

¹⁰⁶ Normally, when phrai of different krom or nai, were married the rule seems to have been that the first son belonged to the mother's krom or nai, the second son belonged to the father's, the third son belonged to the mother's...while the first daughter belonged to the father's, the second daughter belonged to the mother's, the third daughter belonged to the father's.s. See Khachon Sukkhaphanit, Thanandon Phrai, p. 22. Clause 3, Phra Aiyakan Banphanaek, PK, vols I, pp. 282-288s

¹⁰⁷ Rule No. 20, Kot 36 Kho (The 36 Rules), PK, vol. III, p. 67.

¹⁰⁸ Since Damrong, Tamnan Kan Ken Thahan Thai (History of Thai Mobilization), PP, vol. VI, pt. 23, pp. 304-305.

decrees, repeating those which were already in existence. The following additional measures, however, were taken. A Royal Decree of 1744 demanded that every time a krom made the list of phrai, or added new phrai to the list, or examined the list, the Chao Krom (Chief of Krom), Palat Krom (Deputy Chief) must both be present.¹⁰⁹ A law of 1722 ordered the nai to take particular care to get back into their groups and do corvée, those phrai luang who had become monks.¹¹⁰ A Royal Decree of 1748 acknowledged that the severe loss of phrai luang was due to their condition being worse than that of any other types of phrai or even slaves.¹¹¹ The only means designed to help them, however, was the law of 1724 which allowed a heavily indebted phrai luang to do corvée only for four months of the year, and work for his creditor in lieu of interest for another four months.¹¹²

As has already been noted, increase of phrai som gave greater power to the princes. One consequence of this was the corruption and confusion in the administration of justice. A Royal Decree of 1740 complained that people brought cases to various princes, and officials of the princes did not conduct the trials according to the law.¹¹³ Another Royal Decree complained of the prevalence of gang robberies.¹¹⁴ The most important consequence of the increased power of the princes was the increase in the number and seriousness of factional disputes which led to fighting and civil wars, particularly at times of succession. King Borommakot came to the throne only after a severe battle with other princes. In 1758 King Uthumphon succeeded his father to the throne only after having three important princes executed. Yet he, himself, had to give up the throne within that same year to his

¹⁰⁹ Royal Decree, 1744 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 60), PK, vol. III, p. 303.

¹¹⁰ Clause 6, Phra Aiyakan Banphanaek (Laws on the Division of Phrai), PK, vol I. p. 293.

¹¹¹ Royal Decree 1748 (Phraratcha Komnot Kao 48), PK, vol. III, pp. 265-272.

¹¹² Clause 5, Phra Aiyakan Banphanaek, PK, volo I, pp. 292-293t

¹¹³ Royal Decrees, 1740 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 40, 50), PK, volo III, pp. 242-244, 282-286.

¹¹⁴ Royal Decree, 1752 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 12), PK, vol. III, pp. 140-151.

brother in order to avoid a civil war within the city.¹¹⁵ Such increase of factionalism within the city might have contributed to the weakness of Ayutthaya in resisting the Burmese attack in 1767.

¹¹⁵Phongsawadan Krung Si Ayutthaya, Chabap Phan Chanthanumat (Annals of Ayutthaya, Phan Chanthanumat Edition), pp. 301-303; PPHL, vol. II, pp. 236-243.

III. KINGSHIP

As is generally known, the Thai kingdom was governed by an absolute monarch who wielded all powers, executive, judicial and legislative. Historically, there were at least three principles upon which the Thai monarchy rested. At each period of Thai history, one principle might be dominant over the others.

The first principle was the patriarchal. It was the dominant precept of Sukhothai kingship. According to this principle, the king was like a father to his people, being both their leader in war and their chief judge. As a father of his people, he was readily available to give advice and arbitrate in all their troubles and disputes.¹ In Sukhothai a gong was hung up in front of the palace for the people to go and beat upon whenever they wanted personal help and redress.²

Contacts with the Khmer and with Brahmanism brought in the theory of divine kingship. This made its appearance in the coronation ceremony in which the Brahman invited Shiva to enter the body of the king, and spoke to the latter as if he were the god. By bestowing on the king the Brahman girdle, the weapons of Shiva and Vishnu, and his name in full style bearing the phrase "Thipphaya Awatan" (divya avartārt Incarnation of the Celestial Gods) the person of the king was assimilated with the god.³ In the death ceremony of the king the Kosa, originally a sheath to cover the linga of Shiva, was used, an indication that the king was the incarnation of the celestial god.

Ayutthaya appears to have been much more Khmerized from the beginning. The oath of allegiance reputed to have been written in the first reign of Ayutthaya began

¹ Prince Dhani, "The Old Siamese Conception of the Monarchy," JSS, XXXVI, 2 (December 1947)§ pp. 91-107.

² Ibid.

³ Prince Dhani, "Ruang Borommarachaphisekt (Coronation Ceremony) in Chumnum Nippon (Collected Writings of Prince Dhani), Bangkok, 1964.

by invoking the three gods of the Hindu pantheon: Shiva, Vishnu and Brahman.⁴

"The Brahmanic elements provided the kingship with the majestic aura of mystery and a place in the cosmic order which buttressed the authority it needed to rule over a varied and widely scattered population."⁵ The position of the king was elevated and he was no longer accessible to the people. The king could be seen only in his palace, at a window inserted in the hall of audience; and when he went out, any subject who raised his head to look upon him was liable to receive an earthenware pellet shot from the bow of one of the guards at the head of the royal procession.⁶ The Palatine Law of A.D. 1468 set out elaborate rules protecting the king from dangers, and endowing his palace with a certain sacredness.⁷ Thus the patriarchal principle declined in importance, existing only in the right of the people to petition the king. Even this was greatly curbed, for the people had to do it through their nai and the two chief ministers.⁸

The third principle, probably the most important of all, derived from the Thammasat (from the Pali Dhammasat) which the Thais obtained from the Mon. Here the ideal monarch was described as a King of Righteousness, elected by the people, and abiding steadfast in the ten kingly virtues, i.e. alms giving, morality, liberality, rectitude, gentleness, self-restriction, non-anger, non-violence, forbearance and non-obstruction. The ten kingly virtues have often been quoted in Thai literature and attributed to the commentators of the Jataka. Coupled with these were four lines of conduct proper for an ideal monarch. They were: "Sassamedha" knowledge of food organization, "Purisamedha" knowledge of men, "Sammapasa" winning the hearts of people, "Vacapeyya" gentle words.⁹

⁴King Chulalongkorn, Phraratcha Karanyanuson, Bangkok, 1964, pp. 15-16.

⁵David K. Wyatt, The Beginning of Modern Education in Thailand, p. 16.

⁶G. Coedès, The Making of South East Asia, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1966, pp. 146-147.

⁷Kot Monthianban (Palatine Law), PK, vol. I, pp. 58-129.

⁸Royal Decree of 1673 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 18), PK, vol. III, pp. 170-171.

⁹Prince Dhani, "The Old Siamese Conception of the Monarchy," JSS, XXXV, 2 (December 1947), pp. 91-107.

The rules of conduct were associated with the concept of Cakravartin, the universal sovereign. According to the inspiration of the Buddhist Canon (Digha Nikaya, Cakkavatti: Surra), by keeping to these rules of conduct, the ideal monarch justifies himself as the King of Righteousness, and through righteousness he may attain the dignity of a Cakravartin. Prince Dhani has given a translation and abstraction of the passage in the Buddhist Canon as follows:

"But what, sire, is this Ariyan duty of a wheel-turning monarch (i.e. the Chakravartin)?"

This, dear son, that thou, leaning on the Norm (Dhamma) honouring, respecting and revering it, doing homage to it, hallowing it, being thyself a Norm-bearer, a Norm-signal, having the Norm as thy master, shouldst provide the right watch, ward and protection for thy own folk, for the army, for the nobles, for vassals, for Brahmins and householders, for town and country dwellers, for the religious world, and for beasts and birds. Throughout thy kingdom let no wrong-doing prevail. And whoever in thy kingdom is poor, to him let wealth be given.

And when, dear son, in thy kingdom men of religious life...shall come to thee from time to time and question thee concerning what is good and what is bad, what is criminal and what action will in the long run work for weal or for woe, thou shouldst hear what they have to say, and thou shouldst deter them from evil and bid them take up what is good. This, dear son, is the Ariyan duty of a sovran of the world."

The old tale goes on to say that upon the strict observance of his father's injunctions as detailed above, the young monarch, succeeding his father who retired in old age, found one day upon the upper terrace of his palace the coveted celestial wheel, which rolled onward first to the east and then to other quarters of the universe. The king followed with his army; and wherever it stopped there the victorious war-lord took up his abode and with him his fourfold army. All the rival kings in those respective regions came to the sovran king to give him welcome and beg for his teaching. The king then exhorted them to refrain from killing, from stealing, from adultery, from untruth and from intoxicating drinks,

ending up with the injunction "Enjoy your possessions as ye have been wont to..a"¹⁰

This story is also related in "Traiphum Khatha," a religious treatise reputed to have been written by King Lithai of Sukhothai.¹¹ It was symbolized in the coronation ceremony when the king seated himself on an octagonal throne and was invited by the representatives of each cardinal and subcardinal point of the universe to extend his protection and exercise his royal authority over all those realms and all beings dwelling therein. In another section of the ceremony, responding to the Brahman High Priest and priests who extend to him the invitation to rule over the kingdom, he said:

Brahmins, now that I have assumed full responsibility of government, I shall reign in righteousness for the good weal of the populace. I extend my royal authority over you and your goods and your chattels, and as your sovereign do hereby provide for your righteous protection, defence and keeping. Trust me and live at ease.¹²

The coronation ended with the king's triumphant procession round the city. In the story of the Cakravartin, he also went round the world in the wake of his celestial wheel.

The combination of these latter two principles resulted in the modification of the Brahmanical concept of Devaraja. Thus Professor Wyatt stated:

Buddhism, in its modifications of an essentially Brahmanical cosmology, directed the moral authority of the kingship to ends in harmony with the ethical tenets of Buddhism. The Brahmanical concept of Devaraja, the king as god, was modified to make the king the embodiment of the Law, while the reign of Buddhist moral principles ensured that he should be measured against the Law.¹³

¹⁰Ibid., p. 96.

¹¹Traiphum, attributed to King Lithai of Sukhothai, in Hø Samut Haeng Chat, Ruang Phra Ruang, Bangkok, 1955.

¹²Prince Dhani, op. cit., p. 104.

¹³David K. Wyatt, op. cit., p. 16.

At the height of Brahmanical influence during the Ayutthaya period, it seems likely that this principle might have been less evident. The idea of the king being above ordinary mortals was shown in this Royal Decree of A.D. 1740.

Only the king is the highest in the land, because he is godlike. He can make the superior person (phu yai) be the subordinate person (phu noi), and vice versa. When the king gives an order, it is like the axe of heaven. If it strikes trees and mountains, the latter cannot withstand it, and will be destroyed.¹⁴

For the Bangkok period, changes appeared to have occurred from the first reign. The true understanding of the implications of the nature of Brahmanical ceremonies, if they had been known previously, appeared to have been lost. The link between the king and Vishnu, Shiva and Brahma does not appear to have been understood even by the king himself. Evidence for this lack of knowledge is the Royal Decree of 1782. By this Decree, King Rama I ordered the people to destroy lingas which they used to worship. The reason for such an order was that the king and the learned men of the court had looked through the Tripitaka for evidence of such a custom as the worshipping of the lingas, and they could find none. The king then came to the conclusion that it must have been the work of some vile men to tease harlots, and witches and ignorant people then took up and continued the practice.¹⁵ From this it can be seen that even the symbol of Shiva was no longer understood.

Rama I was a religious man, as is evident in his laws and decrees as well as his actions, but his interest in religion was directed to the intellectual side probably as a reaction to the practice of King Taksin. His work in connection with the revision of the Tripitaka was well known.¹⁶ He himself studied carefully the Tripitaka, and often sent notes to ask the Phra Sangkharat (the Patriarch) to clarify problems in interpreting certain passages in it. He must have been well acquainted with the duties of the Buddhist ideal monarch, the Cakravartin. His Royal

¹⁴Royal Decree, 1740. PK, vol. III, p. 277.

¹⁵Royal Decree, 1782. (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 35), PK, vol. III, p. 420.

¹⁶Prince Dhani, "The Reconstruction of Rama I," JSS, XLIII, 1 (August 1955), p. 25.

Decrees almost always described him as having the ten kingly virtues. Two of his Decrees at least directly preached the teaching of Buddha, explaining the meaning and implication of the precepts.¹⁷ Probably as a consequence of his reading the Buddhist Canons, he issued a Royal Decree in A.D. 1785 changing the procedure of taking of the oath of allegiance, the officials should worship the Buddha image instead. It stated that the custom of worshipping the images of previous kings before the Buddha was an impious act, for nothing could be higher than the three Jewels, i.e. The Buddha, the Dharma, and The Sangha. He said the custom arose because the kings of olden days thought too highly of themselves, and therefore set up the custom to glorify themselves.¹⁸

This change of procedure at the ceremony of taking the oath of allegiance was symbolic of the change in Thai kingship. King Rama II (A.D. 1809-1824) prohibited shooting at the eye of people who looked at the king when he was traveling. King Mongkut (A.D. 1851-1868) liked people to come out of their houses to see and pay respect to him when he went out of his palace.¹⁹ He talked to them and inquired of their condition.²⁰ He paid a great deal of attention to petitions submitted to him by the people.²¹ King Chulalongkorn states that each month the number of petitions received by the king which had to be looked into were about 120-130.²² Four times a month King Mongkut or one of his sons always went to the building at the palace wall, Phrathinang Sutthaisawan, to give

¹⁷Royal Decrees of 1782, 1785 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 33, 36), PK, vol. III, pp. 411-415, 421-435.

¹⁸Royal Decree, 1785 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 40), PK, vol. III, pp. 445-446.

¹⁹Royal Proclamation of 1857, PPRS (B.E. 2394-2400) pp. 281-287e

²⁰Royal Proclamation of 1858, PPRS (B.E. 2401-2404) pp. 54-55e

²¹Royal Proclamations of 1854, 1855, 1853, 1858, PPRS (B.E. 2401-2404), pp. 33-35, 91-92, 98-100; PPRS (B.E. 2394-2400), pp. 67-68, 103-104, 106-108, 188-189, 263.

²²King Chulalongkorn, Phraratcha Damrat nai Phrabat Somdet Phra Chunla Chomklao Song Thalaeng Nayobai Kaekhai Kanpokkhong Phaendin (King Chulalongkorn's Speech on the Changes in the Administration), p. 31.

alms to the poor, and receive petitions from the people.²³ He was also concerned about the corruption in the administration of justice, and asked that copies of litigation be made and given to him.²⁴

It can be seen from this process of change that the Early Bangkok period marked the rise of the principle of the King of Righteousness. At the same time the cult of Devaraja can be seen to have lost its influence. Because Sukhothai patriarchal kingship was compatible with the principle of the King of Righteousness, but not with the cult of Devaraja, it revived again during the Early Bangkok period in the actions of king Mongkut.

In the following analysis the nature of kingship and the role of the king as conceived by the people will be treated separately.

Thai kingship was religious in its nature. The first aspect of the religious nature can be dealt with rapidly. The king was an intermediary between this world and the supernatural world. In Sukhothai, King Ram Kamhaeng propitiated the guardian spirit of the kingdom, Phraya Khabung. During the Early Bangkok period, the king sponsored royal ceremonies relating to agriculture such as the First Ploughing, the ceremonies to control the water level, and the ceremonies for the control of wind and rain.²⁵ When there was a serious epidemic of cholera in 1849 King Rama III took a vow to keep the precepts, and spent a great deal of money on buying animals and setting them free. He also told the people to make merit and set free imprisoned animals in the belief that through the acts of making merit the epidemic would subside.²⁶

The last illustration was connected with the concept of bun which also gave a religious tinge to Thai kingship. In order to understand this, one has to conceive the position of the king as the highest in the realm to be filled by the person with the greatest past merit (bun)s. We have already noted that one could learn roughly how much merit

²³Royal Proclamations of 1856, 1858, PPRS (B.E. 2394-2400), pp. 263-264.

²⁴Royal Proclamations of 1862, 1859, PPRS (B.E. 2405-2408), p. 29; PPRS (B.E. 2401-2404), p. 174.

²⁵See King Chulalongkorn, Phraratcha Phithi Sipsong Duan (Annual Royal Ceremonies) Bangkok, 1953; H. G. Quaritch-Wales, Siamese State Ceremonies, London, 1931.

²⁶PPKR (Third Reign), vol. II, pp. 146-147.

one had accumulated by one's position in this life. By accession to the throne, one is said to have accumulated much merit (mi bun). On the other hand, if an individual continued only to incur bap its consequence would hit him as soon as he had already spent his past merit. The welfare of the kingdom was tied up with the merit of the king. Therefore, such occurrences as the cholera epidemic or other strange natural phenomena might be taken as signs to show that the strength of the king's bun had weakened. To cure such a disaster, a good king had to make merit. As a consequence of this belief, a king must behave according to Buddhist norms, continually accumulating bun in order to ensure the prosperity of his kingdom. By observing the Dharma, the young monarch found the coveted celestial wheel, which led him to conquer the world.

Because the king was a Norm-bearer and Norm-signal, kingship was a symbol of the Dharma itself. In governing the kingdom, the king was to give commands according to the Thammasat. Thus, in theory, the king had no legislative power.

As had been stated by scholars of legal history, the function of the king was not to legislate but to protect the people and preserve the sacred laws.²⁷

Although in the actual growth of Thai laws, decisions and decrees of past kings were selected to be kept and periodically incorporated into the code under the headings of the Thammasat (Law of Manu), they obtained force of law, not because they emanated from the kings, but because they were illustrations of the Eternal Law and partaking of its authority.²⁸ Thus Thai kingship was sacred because it symbolized the Dharma, the principle upon which the order of the kingdom depended.

The earlier Chakkri kings had tended to follow closely the emphasis given in the Thammasat and the tale of the wheel-turning monarch in defining their roles. Supporting the religion, protecting the people, and dispensing justice, were the aspects of the king's role emphasized by the Thammasat.

²⁷Prince Dhani, "Old Siamese Conception of the Monarchy," JSS, XXXVI, 2 (December 1947), p. 99.

²⁸R. Lingat, "Evolution of Law in Burma and Siam," JSS, XXXVIII, 1 (January 1950), p. 27.

To support the religion, the king would first behave according to the Dharma. By this is meant that he was to observe the ten kingly virtues, i.e. alms giving, morality, liberality, rectitude, gentleness, self-restriction, non-anger, non-violence, forbearance and non-obstruction. He had to always observe the five precepts and on holy days the eight precepts, and live in kindness and good will to all beings. He took pains to study the Thammasat and to keep up with the four principles of justice, namely to assess the right or wrong of all service and disservice rendered to him, to uphold the righteous and the truthful, to acquire riches through none but just means, and to maintain the prosperity of his state through none but just means.²⁹ Besides the above, the Phra Thammasat also laid down a time table for the king's daily activities. It has been observed that Thai kings kept closely to this time table.³⁰ The extent to which the kings of the Chakkri Dynasty tried to keep to these rules of conduct may be gauged from King Chulalongkorn's statement in his letter to the Crown Prince, Chao Fa Maha Wachirunnahit, and other observable acts of the kings. In this letter King Chulalongkorn said that the Chakkri Dynasty had lasted longer than any of the other royal dynasties because all the kings of this dynasty had consistently abided in the Dharma. The kings restrained themselves from falling into the four akati (fondness, greed, anger, delusion). They were not revengeful, nor envious. They tried to keep unity among the princes and officials.³¹

We may note that foremost among the ten virtues of a king and also incorporated in the duties of the Cakravartin was alms giving. A royal alms house was built during the reign of King Rama II.³² This was rebuilt and enlarged by King Rama III. The latter also gave rice to ship captains to distribute freely to starving people in China.³³ King Mongkut gave alms to the poor four times a

²⁹Clause 4. Phra Thammasat, PK, vol. I, pp. 14-15.

³⁰H. G. Quaritch-Wales, op. cit.

³¹Letter dated May 23, 1893, Prachum Phrabrom Rachawat lae Phra Owat (Collected Royal Teachings), Bangkok, 1956, pp. 7-8. King Chulalongkorn also gave illustrations of this statement in the letter.

³²King Chulalongkorn, Phra Thammathetsana Chaloem Phrakiat Phrabat Somdet Phra Nangklao Chao Yuhua. (Sermons in honour of King Rama III) Bangkok, 1938, pp. 91-92.

³³Ibid., p. 117.

month, when he went out to receive petitions from the people.³⁴

The kings of the Chakkri Dynasty also actively supported the religion in other ways. There is no need to mention their building numerous wat and religious monuments for this fact is only too well known. King Rama I also undertook the revision of the Buddhist Canon. Besides, the kings also took active measures to protect the religion. As had already been said by Prince Dhani, this protection was not necessarily from external encroachments, but from the monk's own failings.³⁵ King Rama I issued a series of Royal Decrees, i.e. the ten Edicts, giving protection to the Buddhist Church in the exercise of its jurisdiction over the monks. King Mongkut also issued Royal Proclamations dealing with laxity among the clergy.³⁶

Giving protection to the people was considered to be one of the most important attributes of the king's role. It was because he was protecting them that he could demand their services. In regard to the phrai avoiding corvée at the time of building the city, King Rama I made the following statement. According to the custom of the land, the monks, the Brahmans, and the people could live in peace because of the power and merit of the king. The king acceded to the throne to protect the people and the kingdom from the enemies who wanted to injure and destroy them. When the kingdom was protected, the Buddhist religion prospered and the people could worship freely. This was because of the protection afforded by the king. Thus the king had done a great deal for all kinds of living creatures of the world. The people should be loyal to him, and be willing to use their strength in doing work for him as an expression of their gratitude.³⁷

Two important aspects of royal protection were, first, organizing and leading the army against the enemies, and secondly, preventing harm which endangered the lives and property of the people. All the kings of the Chakkri

³⁴ Royal Proclamation 1853, PPRS, (B.E. 2394-2400), p. 67.

³⁵ Prince Dhani, Monarchical Protection of the Buddhist Church in Siam, Sarnath, 1964, p. 1.

³⁶ See PPRS (B.E. 2401-2404), pp. 130, 250, 257, 296.

³⁷ Royal Decree of 1785 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 12), PK, vol. III, p. 349.

Dynasty, especially Rama I, considered the first aspect to be a very important duty.

As regard to the expectations of the people, we may note that great warrior kings have always been much admired. The blame for defeat in war often falls on the king. Thus of the first fall of Ayutthaya, it was said, "When King Chakkraphat of the White Elephants had died, King Phra Mahin took not the slightest care of the war. He stayed all the time in his palace."³⁸ For the second fall of Ayutthaya, the King was blamed for many things. His life was debauched. He drank intoxicants, was interested only in women and not in war. He considered his personal pleasure to be of greater importance than the defense of his city.

The duty to prevent robberies had always been a major concern of the king. This can be seen in the fact that a town governor who let robberies become prevalent in his province was to be punished. In regard to danger to life, King Rama I issued a Royal Decree in the year 1791 warning people not to dress up their children with valuable ornaments because they would become easy prey for thieves and robbers, and thus their lives would be endangered.³⁹ A Royal Proclamation with similar warning was issued by King Mongkut in the year A.D. 1866.⁴⁰ Further, King Mongkut also issued Royal Proclamations warning people of tricks of robbers and thieves, and advising people to lock their doors.⁴¹

One aspect of the king's role as protector of the people was related to his supporting the religion. It appears that the king was obliged to try to make people behave according to the Dharma. In the Royal Decree of A.D. 1800, prohibiting cock-fighting, the people were warned that the cruel acts incurred in the game would lead the players to hell.⁴² King Rama III tried in various ways to stop people from killing animals.⁴³ It will

³⁸ PPHL, vol. I, p. 175.

³⁹ Royal Decree of A.D. 1791 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 20), PK, vol. III, pp. 375-377.

⁴⁰ PPRS (B.E. 2408-2411), pp. 37-45.

⁴¹ Royal Proclamations A.D. 1855, 1856, PPRS (B.E. 2394-2400), pp. 158-160, 256-260.

⁴² PK, vol. III, pp. 449-451.

⁴³ Royal Proclamation, 1856, PPRS (B.E. 2394-2400), pp. 234-237.

be remembered that two of King Rama I's Royal Decrees expressly preached the Dharma and explained the meaning of the precepts.⁴⁴ King Mongkut's Royal Proclamations in connection with the Thai new year (The Songkran) often contained Buddhist sermons.⁴⁵

The king's role as a judge was important because of the Thammasat and the principle underlying Sukhothai patriarchal kingship. In general, the king's interest was shown by the right given to the people to proffer petitions to their monarch. Because it was in conflict with the Devaraja cult by which the king must be kept aloof and inaccessible to the people, this right was much abrogated during the Ayutthaya period. In the reign of King Rama III, however, a large drum was made for anyone who wished to petition the king to come and beat upon it.⁴⁶ King Mongkut personally received petitions from the people four times a month and took much interest in the administration of justice.⁴⁷

We can observe that the role of the king changed during this period. The most important aspect of this change was in the relationship between the king and the common people. This might be a change in the principle underlying the method of government. Earlier, during the Ayutthaya period or even the first two or three reigns of the Early Bangkok period, the king protected the people by assigning them to be under the care of the nobles. Although there were various decrees and laws laying down severe punishment for any noble who oppressed the common people, the kings did not actively listen to the common people, or find out how they were oppressed. Punishments were given to the nobles in cases of severe oppression which could not be hidden from the king, and that was considered to be sufficient. There was thus no communication upwards to him except through the nobles, themselves. King Mongkut, however, changed this by mixing with the people, and by always being eager to hear of their troubles. Thus, a link was created between the king and the common people against the nobility's abuse of power. The king was, therefore, the person to whom the

⁴⁴Royal Decrees of 1782, 1785 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 33, 36), PK, vol. III, pp. 411-415, 421-435.

⁴⁵Royal Proclamations, 1862, 1864, 1865, PPRS (B.E. 2405-2408, B.E. 2408-2411), pp. 1-15, 181-191, 264-278.

⁴⁶King Chulalongkorn, Phra Ghammathetsana Chaloem Phrakiat Phrabat Somdet Phra Nangklao Chao Yuhua, p. 920

⁴⁷Supra, p. 56.

people looked for redress of their wrongs. He became the true protector of the people.

Thai people looked up to their monarch as their eventual protector and the fountain of justice. The king was revered not because he was the reincarnation of a Hindu god, but because he symbolized the Dharma, the pillar of the state. Thus extreme reverence was paid to him. He was called Phraputthaçhao Yuhua, Phraputthaçhao Luang, and in addressing him, one called oneself Kha Phraputthaçhao. The term Phraputthaçhao is also used for the Lord Buddha, the word -phuttha- being a Thai form of "Buddha." Other terms by which the king was called were Khun Luang, Nai Luang, Phraçhao Phaendin, Chao Chiwit. The term Khun Luang derives from Sukhothai usage of the word Khun to denote the ruler of a city state. The word Luang means great. The word Nai Luang derives from the phrase Nai Wang Khun Luang, i.e. "in the palace of the great ruler."⁴⁸ The term Phraçhao Phaendin means Lord of the Land, and Chao Chiwit means Lord of Life.

There can be no doubt that the nature of Thai kingship was to a large extent, if not wholly, religious. Even nowadays, for instance, wherever His Majesty goes in the country, the people gather around him, place pieces of cloth on the ground and invite him to tread on these pieces of cloth. The imprinted cloth is kept for worshipping. Two explanations of such behavior may be offered. The first derives from his being the symbol of the Dharma. The second may be connected with the Thai world view on the nature of the attainment of high status. One obtains such status because one has bun or merit. First, by accumulating merits in many successive lives, one may become an arahan (highest saint), or even a Buddha so that the king may be considered to be on the way to being a future Buddha. It follows logically that the person occupying the throne may be considered a Bodhisattva (a Buddha to be).⁴⁹ The second implication concerned the belief that a person which much bun may be endowed with certain supernatural qualities. Certain monks of ascetic nature and strict observance of the rule of conduct have been held

⁴⁸See letter from Prince Damrong to Prince Naris, dated January 27, 1937, San Somdet (Collected Correspondences Between Prince Damrong and Prince Naris), Bangkok, 1956, vol. V, pp. 69-76.

⁴⁹See San Somdet, vol. II, p. 596. A letter from Prince Damrong to Prince Naris dated November 6, 1935.

to possess such qualities.⁵⁰ Certain people who are of high esteem were held to possess such qualities irrespective of their sex. The most general belief is that words uttered by such persons control future events, i.e. whatever he or she says always come true. More evidence of this type of belief in connection with past kings can be found. Thus when his wife had difficulties in childbirth, Chao Fa Krom Luang Itsarasunthon (later King Rama II) asked for the water which had been touched by his father's foot for her to drink.⁵¹ It is curious, however, that tales of such supernatural power always center around great kings. There appears to have been none around kings who were failures, or of debased morals.

In government, the role of the king was to issue commands according to the Dharma and the Thammasat. The people, on the other hand, were expected to obey his commands, to serve and respect him and follow his advice.

Thai kingship served the function of integrating Thai society almost as much as Thai religion. Unlike the Chinese or the Vietnamese, the Thai were not sensitive about the extent of the physical boundary of the kingdom. There was always a certain vagueness about the location of the boundary. On the other hand, the Thais were particularly sensitive to the number of people under their king. They tried to add more people to this group by transferring people from cities and states which they had conquered. They took particular care not to let their enemies take any of their men away. It seems that the extent of the kingdom was gauged by the amount of manpower under the king, by the number of men owing allegiance to him.

In summary, one may say that kingship and religion were tightly interdependent. The religion could not exist without the support and protection given by the king. Yet the position of the king was secured because the Dharma was his guide, and the justification for his supreme authority. In regard to civil administration, the monarchy was in theory absolute for it was the duty of the people to obey his command. Actions of the king, however, were to be judged against the Dharma, because he was presumed to give commands according to the Dharma. Kingship and religion were inseparably linked.

⁵⁰ See, for example, Prince Damrong, "Ruang Phrakhrū Chalongt" in Nithan Boran Khadi, Bangkok, 1951, pp. 11-12.

⁵¹ "Khattiya Ratchabōriphat," The Social Science Review, II, 3 (February 1965), p. 16.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION, EARLY BANGKOK PERIOD

In the previous chapters, the historical development of Thai social and political organization have been traced. The premise underlying the organization, as succinctly stated by King Rama I, was that it was the duty of every man in the kingdom to serve the king in return for the protection which he afforded them.¹ Thus everyone was considered to be in the royal service.

We can compare the organization of the society to that of an army in which every male in the kingdom was a soldier. At the beginning, the structure of the organization was simple. The smallest unit was a group of men under a nai who was a noble or a prince. As time passed by the organization began to grow in complexity. Such groups were organized into krom and their subunits kong and mu. Soon hierarchies of krom emerged. Some krom were large, and some were small. A number of smaller ones were made subsidiaries to other larger krom. Different governmental functions were assigned to them, and their relationships became extremely complicated. The following is an attempt to describe roughly the situation at the beginning of the Early Bangkok period.

The Princes' Krom

The government which emerged from the process of development through the period of 432 years from the foundation of Ayutthaya to that of Bangkok consisted of hierarchical groups in the form of krom and their sub-units, kong. The pinnacle of this hierarchy was the king, an absolute monarch. Below him ranged different levels of princes and nobles who were heads of krom. Their differing statuses and ranks could be observed in their different sakdina.²

¹Royal Decree of 1785. (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 12), PK, vol. III, pp. 349-350.

²For the meaning of sakdina see above, pp. 28-29.

Second to the king was the Upparat, prince of the Palace of the Front, who was given the highest sakdina within the realm, i.e. 100,000.³ He appointed his own officials and, as we have noted, he was the largest possessor of phrai som in the realm. They were organized into groups similar to those of the king. From Phraratcha Phongswadan Krung Rattana Kosin, the Annals of Bangkok, we learn that King Rama I's brother, who was the Upparat, appointed officials of the Palace of the Front to fill the positions of Čhao Phraya (probably an equivalent of a Chief Minister), Phraya Kalahom (Minister of the Military Division), Phraya Čhasaenyakon (position of importance in Krom Mahatthai), Phraya Monthianban (Minister of Krom Wang, i.e. the Palace), and Phraya Sancha Phuthon (Head of the Pages).⁴

Besides the Upparat, there were many princes who were elevated to krom rank, and thus were given krom. Generally, when the king appointed a prince to such krom rank, he also gave him men, i.e. phrai and officials.⁵ These phrai then became phrai som belonging to the prince. A prince's krom had at least three officials who were often nobles. They were the Čhao Krom (Krom Chief), Palat Krom (Deputy Chief), and Samuha Banchi (Registrar). The rank of a Čhao Krom correlated with the rank of the prince who was the possessor of the krom. Thus a prince of the rank of krom luang would have a krom, the Čhao Krom of which was given the rank of luang. A prince who had the rank of krom mun would have a krom, the Čhao Krom of which was given the rank of mun.⁶ At the beginning of the reign of King Rama I, the king appointed eleven of his relatives to such krom ranks. There were two krom phra for his sisters, five krom luang for his son, nephews, and nieces,

³Clause 2, Phra Aiyakan Tamnaeng Na Phonlaruan (Laws of the Civil Hierarchies), PK, vol. I, pp. 178-179.

⁴PPKR (The First and Second Reigns), pp. 27-28.

⁵Prince Damrong, Tamnan Wang Na (History of the Palace of the Front), PP, vol. V, pt. 13, pp. 89-90a, 156; Royal Proclamation, 1854, PPRS (B.E. 2394-2400), p. 97.

⁶Prince Damrong, Ruang Chaloem Phra Yot Čhao Nai (In Honor of the Appointment of Princes), vol. I, pp. 46-101.

two krom khun for another son and a daughter, and one krom myn for the husband of his half-sister.⁷ It seems that during the reign of King Rama I, the officials of such a krom, including the Chao Krom, were appointed by the prince himself and not by the king.

The purpose for setting up the prince's krom can be gathered from the process of development described in the previous chapter. First, it was to give him a group of people to rule over instead of a town. Secondly, especially in the case of the krom of the Upparat, since he was an important army commander who was often sent to war, it was to give him a troop which he could mobilize rapidly when he was sent out to defend any town.⁸ Thirdly, for the other princes, it appears that the krom were created as the symbol of their rank and dignity, as well as to give them wealth. As will be seen later the main basis for status evaluation in Thai society was the possession of power, which depended largely on the extent of control over manpower.⁹ Further, Thai nobles and princes lived off their phrai. The possession of phrai meant the possession of wealth as well as power.¹⁰ It was, therefore, to keep up the status of the princes that they were given krom.

During the Early Bangkok period, there was a significant change in the extent of the power of the princes. This can be considered as the application of the lesson learned from the fall of Ayutthaya in 1767.¹¹ Less than ten years after the fall of Ayutthaya, the most important measure for the control of manpower was introduced, and it had its effect on the power of the princes.

⁷ PPKR (The First and Second Reigns), pp. 18-19.

⁸ The Upparat was frequently sent out to wars. While he was the Upparat, Naresuan conducted almost all wars during his father's reign. When he was king, his brother, Ekathotsarot, the then Upparat, also conducted a number of wars During the reign of King Rama I, his brother, the Upparat, was sent out to war many times. See PPHL, vols. I and II.

⁹ See below, Chapter VII.

¹⁰ See below, Chapter VII.

¹¹ For the cause of the fall of Ayutthaya, see above, Chapter II.

The only extant Royal Decree of King Taksin is that of 1774 giving reasons for the requirement that every phrai must be marked with the name of their nai and the name of the town in which he resided. This Decree also prescribed the death sentence for anyone who dared to make a counterfeited tattooing needle, or falsely tattooed phrai as their own.¹² There is no evidence of tattooing the names of nai and town on the wrist of phrai before this reign. The stated reason for marking was to make everyone do ratchakan (Royal Service), i.e. fighting and corvée labor. The marking of the phrai must be considered as a major step in the control of manpower. Identification was an important problem which had to be solved before effective prevention of the loss of phrai luang could be made.

The process of tattooing the phrai was considered to be an extremely important affair of state. King Rama II (1809-1824) instituted the custom of sending out high officials from the capital to conduct the marking of phrai for the whole kingdom at the beginning of each new reign.¹³ During the reign of King Mongkut (1851-1868), evidence is found that the two Chief Ministers were appointed to conduct the marking of the phrai.¹⁴

Further measures were taken to prevent the loss of phrai luang. Although phrai had been allowed to make payment instead of doing the corvée since the late Ayutthaya period, this did not seem to have reduced the number of phrai luang who tried to escape from their status. This was because neither the phrai som, nor the that (slave) seems to have been compelled to do corvée for the government.¹⁶

¹²Royal Decree of 1774 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 34), PK, vol. III, pp. 231-232.

¹³PPKR (The First and Second Reigns), pp. 374, 386-387.

¹⁴Royal Proclamation, 1855. PPRS, (B.E. 2394-2400), pp. 136-140.

¹⁵Royal Decree of 1748 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 48) PK, vol. III, pp. 265-272.

¹⁶Khachon Sukkhaphanit, Thanandon Phrai (The Status of Phrai), p. 30.

It appears, however, that by 1788, that (slave) was the only category of commoners exempted from corvée.¹⁷ Both phrai som and phrai luang were required to do corvée labor. From a Royal Decree of 1785, it appears that in the case of phrai luang, the requirement for annual corvée labor was reduced to four months.¹⁸ The Royal Decree of 1810 further reduced it to three months.¹⁹ Certain privileges were given to phrai luang. During the reign of King Rama I, and King Rama II (1782-1824) certain groups of phrai luang were given Traphum Khumham, a document exempting them from certain kinds of taxes such as market taxes and perhaps fishing taxes. In the reign of Rama III (1824-1851) this exemption was extended to all phrai luang.²⁰ In addition to this, King Mongkut (1851-1868) gave exemption from land taxes to certain groups of phrai luang who were reported to have done more work than other groups.²¹ By 1873 all phrai and slaves were required to do corvée labor or pay a certain sum of money in lieu of doing so.²²

As for measures designed to increase the number of phrai luang, in 1783 a Royal Decree was made, laying down that a phrai som who was dissatisfied with his nai and wished to institute a proceeding against him must be made phrai luang.²³ Moreover, at some time during this period, 1782-1873, there originated the practice, at the death of a prince or a high noble of turning all his phrai som into phrai luang.²⁴

¹⁷Royal Decree of 1789 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 17), PK, vol. III, pp. 366-367.

¹⁸Royal Decree of 1785 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 12), PK, vol. III, p. 350.

¹⁹PPKR (The First and Second Reigns), pp. 382-387.

²⁰Royal Proclamation, 1855, PPRS (B.E. 2394-2400), pp. 175-178.

²¹Royal Proclamation, 1860, PPRS (B.E. 2401-2404), pp. 283-287.

²²Khachon Sukkhaphanit, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

²³Royal Decree of 1783. (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 4), PK, vol. III, pp. 319-320.

²⁴Khachon Sukkhaphanit, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

We have already noted that the main possessors of phrai som were the princes of krom rank. When people escaped from the status of phrai luang, they tried to become phrai som. Thus, when the ways of escaping from the status of phrai luang had not yet been closed, the phrai som of princes of krom rank kept on increasing, and the king had no way of controlling the distribution of manpower among the princes. As events towards the end of Ayutthaya period show, increased power of the princes led to intense factional disputes and wars between the princes, especially at times of succession. With the introduction of marking the phrai, the loss of phrai luang could no longer be so heavy. A limit could then be made on the extent of the prince's power.

As an evidence of the king's concern over the increase of manpower under the control of princes a passage in the Annals of Bangkok during the Third Reign, (Phraratcha Phongswadan Krung Rattana Kosin Ratchakanethi III) may be quoted.

... On 16 February 1837 Phra Prathumthewa, Governor of Nongkhai, reported that Phra Lakhon took large numbers of phrai from the towns, Nongkhai, Nonghan, the families of (Lao) Wiang and (Lao) Phuan to give to Prince Krom Khun Itsarat Rangsan (who later became Phra Pinklao, generally known as the Second King during the Fourth Reign). Phra Phirenthorathep, the royal official, who was sent from Bangkok to examine the list of phrai, did not know what to do about it. H.M. issued an order to Phra Prathumthewa as follows: This case of Phra Lakhon giving Lao families to a prince of krom rank must be investigated. If the allegation proves true, Phra Lakhon has committed a serious crime, deserving capital punishment. As a precedent, there is the case of Khun Prasoet of the town Phukhio, who collected phrai of the towns Suwannaphum and Khemarat, and gave them to a prince of krom rank to be phrai in his krom. In this case the Lukkhun (Brahmins, legal advisers) advised that capital punishment should be given to Khun Prasoet, and Khun Prasoet was executed at Suwannaphum. H.M. thereby ordered Phra Phirenthorathep to give Phra Lakhon the same punishment as had been given to Khun Prasoet and confiscate all his property. The

purpose for reporting this (in the Annals?) was to inform the princes and the nobles so that in the future they would not seek to collect phrai for their own profit.²⁵

The Upparat was also a prince of krom rank. His title was Krom Phra Ratchawang Bowon Sathanmongkon, and, especially during the Late Ayutthaya period (1569-1767) and Early Bangkok period, he was often referred to by this title instead of Upparat. The relationship between the Upparat and the king, as can be seen in the events recorded in the annals, seems to be ambiguous, and at times full of suspicion. We have learned that during the Early Ayutthaya Period (1350-1569), the Upparat was appointed to govern Phitsanulok, one of the most important towns within the kingdom. At the beginning of the Late Ayutthaya period, he was brought into the capital city and a krom consisting of his phrai som was established for him.²⁶ This position in general was occupied by the king's brother or the king's son. The relationship between the Upparat and the king may best be seen from events recorded in the annals, the summary of which is given here.

For the reign of King Naresuan (1590-1605), the Upparat was his brother, Ekathotsarot. Their relationship was exceptionally good, but it must be noted that King Naresuan apparently had no son.

For the reign of King Ekathotsarot (1605-1620) his son Chao Fa Suthat was made Upparat. The Upparat killed himself. The reason for his committing suicide, as recorded in the Annals, Royal Autograph Edition, was that he was suspected by the king, his father, of instigating a revolt. Prince Damrong noted that foreign sources stated that he was executed because his father, the king, thought that he was instigating a revolt.²⁷

For the next six reigns, 1620-1656, there was no record of anyone being appointed to occupy this position.

²⁵PPKR (The Third Reign), vol. I, pp. 179-180.

²⁶See above Chapter II.

²⁷PPHL, vol. I, pp. 343, 658-660.

²⁸PPHL, vol. II, pp. 24-25.

In 1656, King Sisuthammaracha came to the throne through a successful revolt against King Čhao Fa Chai (1656-1656). He appointed his nephew, Prince Narai, who helped to put him on the throne, as the Upparat. Within that same year, 1656, the Upparat made a successful revolt against the king and put the latter to death. This Upparat became the famous King Narai, who reigned from 1656-1688.²⁸ He did not appoint anyone to occupy the position of Upparat.

In the year 1688, King Phetracha came to the throne, and appointed his son, Luang Sorasak, to the position of Upparat.²⁹ Towards the end of his reign, this Upparat murdered Čhao Phra Kwan, his half brother, who was the favorite of King Phetracha. The king was so angered that he used his prerogative appointing Phra Phichaisurin, a nephew, to succeed him. Fearing the Upparat, Phra Phichaisurin, at the death of King Phetracha in 1703, offered the throne to the Upparat.³⁰

King Phra Čhao Sya (1703-1708) appointed his eldest son to the position of Upparat. The Annals, Royal Autograph Edition, reported that once he suspected the Upparat of instigating a revolt against him, and punished the Upparat severely.³¹

In the year 1708, King Phra Čhao Sya died, appointing the Upparat to succeed to the throne.³² King Thaisa (1708-1732) appointed his brother to the position of Upparat. At his death, however, King Thaisa used his prerogative to appoint his son, Čhao Fa Aphai to succeed him.³³

The death of King Thaisa was followed by a civil war between the Upparat and Čhao Fa Aphai. The Upparat won the battle and became King Borommakot (1732-1758). He appointed his eldest son, Čhao Fa Thammathibet, to the position of Upparat.³⁴ This Upparat, however, was later flogged to death by the order of the King. The reason

²⁹Ibid., p. 120.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 162-164.

³¹Ibid., pp. 175-180.

³²Ibid., p. 187.

³³Ibid., pp. 189, 202-203.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 202-208, 215-216.

given by the Annals, Royal Autograph Edition, was that he had an illicit relationship with the King's wives.³⁵ Towards the end of his reign, the King appointed his third son, Uthumphon, to the position of Upparat, skipping his elder brother Ekkathat who, he thought, was a fool.³⁶ After the death of King B̄rommakot, however, Uthumphon reigned for only ten days. He gave up the throne to his elder brother Ekkathat, and he himself entered the monk-hood.³⁷

When King Rama I came to the throne in 1782, he made his brother, Chao Phraya Surasi, the Upparat.³⁸ Although most of the time their relationship appears to have been very good, in about October, 1796, guns were brought up on the forts of both palaces pointing at each other, and civil war was imminent.³⁹ After the death of this Upparat in 1803 his sons, Phra Ong Chao Lamduan, and Phra Ong Chao Inthapat instigated a revolt. They were arrested and executed.⁴⁰

When King Rama II (1809-1824) succeeded his father to the throne, he appointed his brother, Chao Fa Krom Luang Senanurak, to be the Upparat.⁴¹ A major change was made in the appointment of the officials of the krom of the Upparat. King Rama II had learned a lesson from the event of October, 1796. Thus, when he appointed his brother Upparat, he also supplied him with officials. These officials were selected in such a way that they were junior relatives of the nobles of the king. Of the Bunak family, for instance, the elder brother (Dit) was Chamun Waiworanat, an officer in the Corps of the Royal Pages, his younger brother (That) was Chamun Dekchai, an officer among the pages of the Upparat.⁴² King Rama III

³⁵Ibid., pp. 231-233.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 234-236.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 236-239.

³⁸PPKR (The First and Second Reigns), p. 18.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 221-223.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 265-267.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 366-367.

⁴²Prince Damrong, Tamnan Wang Na (History of the Palace of the Front), PP, vol. V, pt. 13, pp. 155-156.

(1824-1851), however, did not follow his father's example. When he came to the throne, he made his uncle the Upparat. He neglected, however, to supply the prince with men and officials, and it was said that this Upparat had great difficulty in finding men to occupy official positions in his palace.⁴³ King Mongkut (1851-1868) appointed his brother, Phra Pinklao, to this post, and in addition, raised him up to a position of honor equal to that of the king. The officials and men of the Upparat, however, were given to him by the king. In this respect King Mongkut followed the example of King Rama II, and the officials of Phra Pinklao, the Second King, were closely related by kinship ties with the nobles of the king.⁴⁴ From the reign of King Rama II to the end of the reign of King Mongkut, there is no evidence of serious conflict between the king and the Upparat.

The events recorded in the annals tend to show that there was an inherent conflict between the institution of kingship and that of the Upparat, at least from the beginning of the Ayutthayā period down to the reign of King Rama I. The relationship between the king and the Upparat

⁴³Ibid., pp. 157-158.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 157-158. Although Phra Pinklao was given the honor of a king, I doubt whether he had the same extent of power as the king. A statement of King Chulalongkorn may be quoted.

"The position of Upparat was given greater honor than before by King Mongkut. The Upparat was given an honorific name similar to that of a king. At that time, Siam had much contact with foreign countries, which have different ways of ranking their princes than ours, and it was difficult to translate our ranks in such a way that it would be understandable to them. Therefore, the position of Upparat was translated as the Second King so that it could be easily understood. Since then foreigners have misunderstood it so much that it has become difficult to make them understand the truth."

King Chulalongkorn, "Prakat Ruang Krom Phra Ratchawang Bowon Sathan Mongkon Sawannakot" (Proclamation on the Death of the Upparat) in Phraratcha Niphon nai Phrabat Somdet Phra Chulachomklao Chao Yuhua, song Wichan Ruang Phraratcha Phongswadan Kap Ruang Ratcha Prapheni Kantang Phra Maha Upparat (Writings of King Chulalongkorn, commenting on History, and on the Custom of Appointment of Upparat), Bangkok, 1936, pp. 62-63.

was often filled with mutual distrust. Suspicion of revolt prevailed on the part of the king, and the Upparat feared that the king might turn against him. The king's attitude was in part due to the fact that he could not control the manpower under the Upparat. Since the reign of King Rama II, however, the king could indirectly control the manpower of the Upparat. As will later be seen more clearly, in the expansion of the central government over provincial towns, the Thai method of integration was to create double allegiances. We have noted that King Rama II gave officials and men to the Upparat, and the officials were junior relatives of the officials of the King. They had, therefore, kinship obligations towards their elder relatives in the service of the king. Consequently, although the Upparat still possessed a large amount of manpower, his officials who directly controlled the phrai had double allegiance. They had to obey the command of the Upparat who was their direct superior, and yet they would be reluctant to act against the king whose trusted officials were their elder relatives. Further, by this means, the king's officials would know what was happening in the krom of the Upparat, and therefore the king's suspicion of the Upparat would lessen. For the reign of King Chulalongkorn, however, the Upparat was not appointed by the king but by the council of nobles and princes at the time of the death of King Mongkut (1868).⁴⁵ The officials of the Upparat were appointed while King Chulalongkorn was a minor, and Prince Damrong noted that the Upparat had more men under him than any previous Upparat except Phra Pinklao, who was a royal brother, and had been honored with the title of "Second King."⁴⁶ The process of the conflict between the Upparat and the king is well described by Professor Wyatt.⁴⁷

Another phase of conflict between the Upparat and the king began at the death of a king who had appointed the Upparat. From events recorded in the annals, we may note that, when the Upparat was a brother of the king and outlived the latter, the king, on his deathbed, tended to nominate his son as the successor to the throne. No Upparat could bear this and civil war ensued. The rule of

⁴⁵Prince Damrong, Chotmai het Plai Ratchakan Thi IV to Rachakan Thi V (Records of events at the end of the Fourth Reign and the Beginning of the Fifth Reign), Bangkok, 1935, pp. 26-27.

⁴⁶Prince Damrong, Tamnan Wang Na (History of the Palace of the Front), PP, vol. V, pt. 13, pp. 161-162.

⁴⁷David K. Wyatt, The Beginnings of Modern Education in Thailand, 1868-1910, pp. 81-85.

succession was quite vague,⁴⁸ but in general it seems to have been believed that the king had the prerogative to nominate his successor.⁴⁹ The Thai kingdom of the Early Bangkok period was fortunate in that at the death of the kings, with the exception of King Rama I, there was no Upparat. It is a matter for speculation whether there would have been succession disputes and civil wars between the Upparat and the royal children if the Upparat had survived the death of the king. However, disputes and civil wars were not likely. The nobles and princes were aware of the likelihood of European intervention in such cases. Moreover, it seems that since the end of King Rama II's reign the nobles had managed to make themselves king-makers, and probably were in control of the manpower of both the king and the Upparat. Within the Early Bangkok period, with the exception of King Rama I, no other kings used their prerogative of nominating the heir to the throne. The heir was elected by the council of nobles and princes at the death of the king.⁵⁰

The power of other princes must have been on the wane. Better control of the loss of phrai luang through marking would have affected their capability to increase the amount of manpower under their control. By the reign of King Mongkut (1851-1868), although they still possessed

⁴⁸A letter from Prince Naris to Prince Damrong dated June 18, 1933 stated "Succession in Siam seems to be unclear. Even the Palatine laws have made no mention about it. One certain belief was that the successor to the throne should be a Chao (prince). There were frequent succession disputes. Whoever was powerful at the time, would gain accession to the throne. Therefore, it was that the person who had the power got it. By making a prince an Upparat, sometimes the king did it with the intention of giving the prince such power that would enable him to succeed to the throne. However, at other times, the king appointed a prince to the position of Upparat for entirely different reasons from the above. Therefore, it is incorrect to consider the Upparat as the successor to the throne." San Somdet (Correspondences between Prince Damrong and Prince Naris), vol. I, pp. 133-134s

⁴⁹See the texts of the annals in general.

⁵⁰See PPKR (The First and Second Reigns), pp. 305-306, 724; PPKR (The Third Reign), vol. II, pp. 184-192; Prince Damrong, Chotmai het Plai Ratchakan Thi IV (to) Ratchakan Thi V (Record of Events at the End of the Fourth Reign and the Beginning of the Fifth Reign).

their krom with a large number of phrai, their officials were directly appointed by the king and owed allegiance to him. Further, a Royal Proclamation of King Mongkut stated explicitly that the duty of these officials of the princes of krom rank was to take care that the princes did not misbehave.⁵¹

The Central Administration

By the Bangkok period, there were three main officials in the central administration. They were the Chief Minister of Mahatthai (Civil Division), the Chief Minister of Kalahom (Military Division) and the Phra Khlang (Minister of the Treasury). All of them had regional authorities. The Samuha Nayok (Chief Minister of Mahatthai) had authority over and the control of the northern provinces. The Samuha Phra Kalahom (Chief Minister of Kalahom) had authority over and the control of the Southern Provinces. The Phra Khlang (Minister of the Treasury) had authority over and the control of a number of coastal provinces.⁵²

Of the three ministers mentioned above, King Chulalongkorn pointed out that the two Chief Ministers regarded their duties of being the Registrars of manpower in the provinces under their control to be of greatest importance.⁵³ Besides this, all three ministers administered the provinces under their control, sending orders to and receiving reports from provincial towns. When trouble arose in those towns under their control, whether it be enemy attack or revolt, the ministers were sent out as troop-commanders to pacify or resist attacks in the areas under their control. Each also had a law court which heard appeals from courts of the town governors in their respective areas. Lastly, they each collected the taxes which had been forwarded to the central government from

⁵¹Royal Proclamation of 1860. PPRS (B.E. 2401-2404), pp. 199-203.

⁵²Prince Damrong, Laksana Kanpokkhrong Prathet Sayam Tāe Bōrān (Ancient Administration of Siam), p. 18.

⁵³King Chulalongkorn, Phraratcha Damrat Nai Phrabat Somdet Phra Chunlachonk Lao Song Thalaeng Nayobai Kaekhai Kan Pokkhrong Phaendin (King Chulalongkorn's Speech on the Changes in the Administration), pp. 2-3.

these towns. Thus, the Chief Ministers and Phra Khlang combined the functions of a provincial administrator, a minister of justice, an army commander, and a lord of the treasury for the area and the people under their control.⁵⁴

Besides the function of regional administrator, the Phra Khlang had other additional functions. As denoted by the name of his position, he was originally the comptroller of the royal treasury. When the king became engaged in foreign trade, the Phra Khlang was given the duty of furnishing the royal cargo ships. This brought him into contact with foreign nations and thus, when foreign delegates or merchants came to Thailand, it was the duty of the Phra Khlang to deal with them. The two departments, Krom Tha (Department of Port Authority) and Krom Phra Khlang Sinkha (The Royal Warehouse) were placed under his control. Thus, the functions of the Minister of Treasury, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Administrator of provincial towns (coastal towns), the Minister of Justice, the Director of Port Authority, and Chief Agent of the royal trading enterprises were combined in this one position. The consequence was the obvious inefficiency in all krom under him. As King Chulalongkorn pointed out, Phra Khlang left the duty of comptroller of the treasury to Phraya Ratchaphakdi (Chief of Krom Phra Khlang Mahasombat), the duty of furnishing the royal cargo ships to Phraya Siphiphat (Chief of Krom Phra Khlang Sinkha). He still had to examine the list of nobles and to manage the payment of biawat (royal annual gift of money to officials) but he later neglected this. Phraya Ratchaphakdi (Chief of Krom Phra Khlang Mahasombat) had little power and was unable to exert control over other krom. Government revenues and taxes were collected by Krom Mahatthai, Krom Khlang, Krom Myang (Department of City), money from suai (payment made by phrai suai⁵⁵ when they could not supply the produce), payment made in place of doing corvée by phrai and that (slave) and land taxes, all these constituted income of the government which should have been forwarded to the Royal Treasury. Phraya Ratchaphakdi had no knowledge of the actual amount collected. Nor did he have the power to demand the other krom to forward these revenues to him. Thus, the actual position and function of the Treasurer was scattered among many krom, with the consequence that the revenues

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 3-5.

⁵⁵For phrai suai, see above, Chapter II.

were dissipated and could not be used by the central government.⁵⁶

There were three other ministerial positions. The first was the Minister of Krom Myang (The City). He was responsible for local administration within the capital city and for keeping the peace therein. He had under him the two embryonic police forces of the city (kong trawen), and had authority over the district officers within the area around the city. He also presided over the law court for serious offenses. The second was the Minister of Wang (The Palace). His duty was to look after the royal palace (som nai). He had authority over the courts dealing with all types of cases involving these people. The third was the Minister of Na (Land, Rice field). He had the duty of looking after the royal rice fields, encouraging the people in their farming and gathering land taxes (taxes on rice fields). He had also the duty of buying rice for the royal granary. He also had power to set up courts deciding cases in connection with rice land and cattle.⁵⁷

There were also many other small krom. Some of them were parts of these six major krom. Others were directly under the control of the king. Some of the important krom which were directly under the king might be mentioned. The first was Krom Phra Suratsawatdi (The Registrar). The chief of this krom was presumed to keep the list of phrai all over the kingdom, and held court to settle disputes between krom in connection with the allocation of phrai. As illustrated by the number of laws and decrees connected with it, once it must have been a very important krom. This krom, however, later became redundant, for the Chief Ministers and Ministers did not allow the Krom Phra Suratsawatdi to have anything to do with the phrai under their control. They neglected, therefore, to send their lists of phrai to this krom. Thus, it was kept ignorant of the affairs which it was established to control.⁵⁸

Another krom which, by the form of its establishment and nomenclature, should have been an important krom, was

⁵⁶King Chulalongkorn, Phraratcha Damrat Nai Phrabat Somdet Phra Chunlaçhqmklao Song Thalaeng Nayobai Kaekhai Kan Pokkhrong Phaendin (King Chulalongkorn's Speech on the Changes in the Administration), pp. 6-7.

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 7-12.

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 14-15.

Krom Lukkhun. The officials of this krom were presumably court Brahmins having judicial capacity. However, their function was limited to interpreting the laws. As Thai laws derived from Thammasat (The Law of Manu), they were presumed to have better knowledge of it. The courts of various krom, however, conducted the trials and passed sentence.⁵⁹

The most important krom with respect to social mobility was the Krom Mahatlek. This was the krom of the royal pages who served in the palace as the king's personal servants.⁶⁰ We shall have occasion to deal with this krom in much greater detail later.

Provincial Administration

It has already been stated that the control and administration of all provincial towns were divided amongs the two Chief Ministers and the Minister of Khlang. Towns were mainly divided into two categories: the Inner Townships and the Outer Townships. Besides this division, towns were further classified into four classes according to their strategic importance and population.⁶¹

The Inner Townships were administrative units within a short distance of the capital. They were fourth-class townships, the chief officials of which were acting governors or magistrates (phu rang).⁶²

Within the category of Outer Townships, there were two kinds of units, namely, the major townships, and subordinate townships and territories. The major townships comprised outlying provinces classified into first, second and third class townships. These townships were under the control of the capital and reported to either the Chief Minister of Mahatthai, or the Chief Minister of Kalahom, or the Minister of Khlang.⁶³ Subordinate townships were called Muang Khuin, and were subordinate to the major township which was near them. The chief official of such

⁵⁹For detail, see H.G. Quaritch-Wales, Ancient Siamese Government and Administration, pp. 178-181.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 40.

⁶¹Prince Damrong, op. cit., p. 9.

⁶²Ibid., p. 9.

⁶³Ibid., p. 18.

a subordinate township was, as in the case of the governor or major townships, referred to as Chao Muang (Governor of Town, literally Master of Town). Their ranks were not specified but their sakdina appears to have ranged from 800, 1000, to 1600 depending upon the classes of the towns to which they were subordinate.⁶⁴

The Main function of a town governor as described by the Thai was to be the eyes and ears of the king. As the king's eyes, he was expected to oversee the administration of the province; as the king's ears, he was supposed to keep the king informed of local conditions and events. In his area he was the combination of an administrator, the chief justice, and an army commander. As an army commander he was empowered to give the death sentence although this was probably limited to periods of war and unrest only.⁶⁵ From the insistent pressures of the government as expressed in laws and decrees, his main duties appear to have been the maintenance of public peace and order, and, if his town was close to the sea or border,

⁶⁴Clauses 30-31. Phra Aiyakan Na Thahan Huamuang (Laws of the Military Provincial Hierarchies), PK, vol. I, pp. 263-271.

⁶⁵There are conflicting conclusions as regards his power of giving the death sentence. Phaichitr Uathavikul states that the only time he had an absolute power of life and death was in times of war. The History of Patthalung on the other hand states that during the reign of Rama I, the governor had always the power of the commander of the army and could give orders for execution. Evidence in the old laws and decrees tends, however, to support Phaichitr's conclusion for the seal of the Chief Minister of Mahatthai was used in giving orders for executing death sentences in all provinces. There might have been exceptions during the reign of King Rama I in connection with the town Patthalung on account of the Burmese wars. Phaichitr Uathavikul, Structure of Provincial Administration, an unpublished paper; Luang Siworawat, Phongsawadan Muang Phattalung (History of Phattalung), PP, vol. V, pt. 15, pp. 323-368; Clause 19, Phra Thammanun (Law of Procedure), PK, vol. I, p. 142.

guarding against external attack.⁶⁶ Besides this, he was expected to look after the welfare of the people and to keep the populace well contented. Negative injunctions not to oppress the people were specific, detailed and very severe.⁶⁷ In his work he was assisted by a set of officials collectively called Krommakana

There were three levels of this Krommakana. On the highest level, there was first the deputy governor, the Palat. He was the chief assistant to the governor, and deputized for him during his absence. He was also the judge in cases of false imprisonment, misuse of power by officials, and oppression of the people.⁶⁸ Ranked below the Palat were three important positions: the Phon, Mahatthai, and Yokkrabat. The Phon was the military commander whose duties were to command garrisons and supervise territorial defense. The Mahatthai was responsible for issuing important writs and keeping records. We have talked of the Yokkrabat earlier in his role as a spy of the central government. In function he was the legal expert. His duty, as stated in the law, Laksana Aya Luang, was to learn what the governor and town officials were doing. If town officials misused their power in conducting trials, the Yokkrabat was to inform the governor.⁶⁹ When the governor sat in the appellate court, the Yokkrabat had to be present.⁷⁰ In Ayuthaya times, only the above officials were appointed from the capital, the rest of the officials were appointed by the governor.⁷¹

⁶⁶See Samnao Kot Ruang Tan Chao Phraya Nakhon Sithammarat (Copy of Rule, on Appointment of the Governor of Nakhon Sithammarat), PP, vol. I, pt. 2, pp. 474-481, 489-495. Clauses 5, 51 Laksana Ayaluang (Crimes Against the Government), Clauses 7, 8 Laksana Kabotsuk (Laws on Treason), PK, vol. II, pp. 374, 403, 465-466.

⁶⁷See clauses 14, 16, 21, 22, 32, 54 Laksana Aya Luang, PK, vol. II, pp. 383-455.

⁶⁸Clause 3, Phra Thammanun (Laws of Precedence), PK, vol. I, p. 132a

⁶⁹Clause 139 Laksana Aya Luang, PK, vol. II, pp. 443-445.

⁷⁰Phaichitr Uathavikul, op. cit., p. 27.

⁷¹Luang Siworawat, Withi Pokkhrong Ban Muang Boran (Ancient Methods of Town Administration), PP, vol. V, pt 15, p. 370.

On the second level, there were officials of the Town (Myang), Palace (Wang), Treasury (Khlang) and Land (Na). The Town official was the judge of serious criminal cases, and had authority over district officers. The Palace official was the protocol officer and conducted various ceremonies. He was also a judge of civil cases. The Treasury official had the duty of collecting revenues and land taxes. He was also a judge in cases of debt. The Land official supervised land registration and controlled public granaries. He judged cases concerning disputes of land ownership and crop damages.⁷² According to Withi Pokkhrong Ban Myang Boran (Ancient Methods of Town Administration), there were four other positions of this level. There was the Registrar (Satdi) who was responsible for the registration, mobilization, and keeping of records and lists of phrai, and was the judge in cases concerning disputes over control of phrai. There were also two judges of different **types** of cases (positions of Aya and Phaeng), and a legal officer dealing with the institution of litigation. Lastly, there was the keeper of the town arsenal.⁷³

A certain number of phrai luang were attached to each position of the first and the second levels. They would be under the control of the holder of such a position.⁷⁴ In the town of Phatthalung there were 19 or 20 officials occupying these twelve positions at any one time. The Yokkrabat had two or three assistants equal to him in rank (luang). The Satdi (Registrar) was occupied by five officials of the same rank (luang) although one of them was considered to be the chief.⁷⁵ In fact, the number of officials of all levels varied from town to town according to the size and class of the town.⁷⁶ Phatthalung was a third class town.

⁷²Ibid., pp. 370-371.

⁷³Ibid., pp. 370-371.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 371.

⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 369-374.

⁷⁶For comparison, see the positions of officials of Nakhon Sithammarat in the reign of King Rama II, Krom Sinlapakon, Tamniap Kharatchakan Nakhon Sithammarat (Officials of Nakhon Sithammarat), PP, pt. 73, Bangkok, 1943.

The officials of the third level were generally assistants, aides or functionaries under the first and second-level officials. According to Withi Pokkhrong Ban Myang Boran, no phrai luang were assigned to their positions. If they had any phrai, the phrai were their own phrai som whom they had found or inherited from other people.⁷⁷

No town officials received government salaries. They were allowed to pocket all the fees which they could take in performing their duties such as settlement of disputes, land registration, registration of the phrai, etc. They could engage in agriculture and commercial enterprises. And they could command the phrai to work for them in their private businesses. The only limit was that they must not oppress the people.⁷⁸ The meaning of the term "oppress" was left quite vague. From laws, decrees, and cases that occurred, it seems that a town governor or his officials would be considered to have committed this crime when the oppression became unbearable to the people and they moved out of the area of that town or began to request their nai or patron to inform the king or central government of it. It seems that the people would not move away or make such protests as long as the governor and his officials only demanded from the people what was customary in that area.⁷⁹ The reason for assuming that punishment would fall on the governor when people could bear the oppression no more and began to move out of the area of the town is that movement of people was always the concern of the government. A Royal Decree of 1717 (still in force during the Early Bangkok period) laid down that when a governor of any town found phrai hiding in the forest, he should ask them whether anyone had oppressed them. When such was the case, the governor was required to send the name of the oppressor to the capital.⁸⁰ King Mongkut also considered oppression

⁷⁷Luang Siworawat, op. cit. p. 371. The text called them all phrai suai because Phatthalung was an area where revenue was taken in kind and not in the form of corvée.

⁷⁸Prince Damrong, Tamnan Myang Ranong (History of the Town Ranong), PP, pt. 50, Bangkok, 1931, p. 18.

⁷⁹For reports to the king through their patrons, see Royal Proclamation of 1855. PPRS (B.E. 2394 - 2400), pp. 173-175. For petitioning the king, see Royal Proclamation, PPRS (B.E. 2408-2411), pp. 260-263.

⁸⁰Royal Decree, A.D. 1717. PK, vol. II, p. 363. Royal Decree 1727 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 23), PK, vol. III, pp. 188-189.

causing people to move to other towns and places a serious crime. Anyone who knew of such occurrences did not need to bring action to court; they could inform the ministers or petition the king directly.⁸¹

Very little is known about administration at the local level. The smallest unit was the village (mu ban or ban)^e. Each village had a head man appointed by the town governor. He was not given a title or rank. If he happened to be a retired official, he would of course still have his personal rank and title. His function was probably limited to maintaining public peace and supervising village defense against bandits. The next larger unit was the commune (tambon) under a chief who was also appointed by the governor. He reported to the official of the Town (Muang)^s. He had minor administrative and judicial duties, and his main function appears to have been the maintenance of public peace.⁸² The next larger unit was the district (kwaeng). The official of kwaeng had the rank and title of khun, with the sakdina of 400.⁸³ He was empowered to conduct trials for various types of cases (robbery, stealing of property and cattle as well as of slaves, phrai, children, and wives, adultery, and the exercise of harmful magical practices.)⁸⁴ Besides, the judicial duties, his main duties were the maintenance of public peace and the organization of communal activities, especially those connected with agriculture.⁸⁵ According to Prince Damrong, however, he was not responsible for the registration and mobilization of phrai. These were the duties of the registrar of krom and the chief of its sub-unit (nai krong).⁸⁶

⁸¹ Royal Proclamation of 1863. PPRS (B.E. 2405-2408), pp. 151-160.

⁸²phaichitr Uathavikul, op. cit.

⁸³Clause 23, Phra Aiyakan Thahan Hua Muang (Laws of Military Provincial Hierarchies), PK, vol. I, p. 260.

⁸⁴Clause 5, Phra Thammanun (Laws of Procedure), PK, vol. I, p. 133.

⁸⁵phaichitr Uathavikul, op. cit.

⁸⁶Prince Damrong, Tamnan Kan Ken Thahan Thai (History of Thai Mobilization), PP, vol. VI, pt. 23, p. 310.

Relationship Between the Central Administration and the Provincial Administration.

The amount of control the Central Government could assert over provincial towns was the consequence of the development over a long period of time. Since the princes were brought into the capital city in about 1569-1590, the Chief Ministers, and later the Phra Khlang (Minister of the Treasury), also had control of the northern and southern provinces. They held the roles of phrai in the area under them and therefore could control the distribution of manpower. Larry Sternstein in "The Distribution of Thai Centers at Mid-Nineteenth Century" made the following observations:

Bangkok's control of the kingdom was effected through a nice territorial subdivision, based primarily upon population densities and tempered by the practical limits to its direct authority: the densely peopled environs of the capital--administered directly--were subdivided among a number of small districts; beyond this region, but well within Bangkokian control, districts were grouped into provinces whose size varied inversely with the density of population; and outlying provinces over which control was minimal were not so much devised as manipulated, in order to deny too much power to anyone. This conscious territorial organization, designed for controlling as large an area as possible from a single center--Bangkok--determined in great part, the distribution pattern of all the kingdom centers.⁸⁷

Governors of provincial towns had been appointed by the king since the Early Ayutthaya period (1350-1569). We have noted that during the Late Ayutthaya period (1569-1767) the Yokkrabat (Legal Expert) for each town was appointed by the king through the Minister of Wang (Palace). During the reign of King Rama I an important Royal Decree was promulgated depriving the town governors of the power

⁸⁷Larry Sternstein, "The Distribution of Thai Centers", Journal of Southeast Asian History, VII, (March 1966), p. 67.

to appoint all of his important officials.⁸⁸ From then on the Palat (Deputy Governor) were to be appointed by Krom Mahatthai (Krom of the Samuha Nayok), Krom Kalahom (Krom of the Chief Minister, the Samuha Phra Kalahom), or Krom Khlang (Krom of the Minister of Treasury, Phra Khlang) depending on the area in which the particular town was situated. The Phon was to be appointed through Krom Asa (a Krom in Bangkok), the Mahatthai through Krom Mahatthai, Yokkrabat and a number of other officials through Krom Wang. The other officials, e.g. Myang, Wang, Khlang and Na, were to be appointed through the similarly-named krom in Bangkok. Even the kwaeng official was to be appointed by Krom Myang in the capital. Expansion of central power through dual allegiance can be observed clearly. In the administration of a town, the governor was the direct superior of these officials. Yet this Royal Decree told them to consider those who appointed them to be their direct superior. The provincial officials were ordered to come to Bangkok to pay respect to those who had appointed them every year. It is never clear in case of conflicting orders, whether they were to obey the town governor or those officials in Bangkok who had appointed them.

⁸⁸Royal Decree 1802 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 44), PK, vols III, pp. 454-458.

V. THE ORGANIZATION OF THAI SOCIETY. EARLY BANGKOK PERIOD (1782-1873)

The main basis of the organization was the idea that the king in theory owned not only all the land within the kingdom, but all the people who owed allegiance to him. A Thai king was not only a Phra Chao Phaendin (Lord of the Land), but also Chao Chiwit (Lord of Life). Everyone had to have someone who was responsible for him. In each nuclear family, the husband had the control of the services of his wives and children. In each krom or kong, each noble had the control of the services of his phrai. A gigantic hierarchy was set up, each individual position within it being shown in the amount of sakdina possessed. We have already noted the relationship between the sakdina and the possession of manpower. The king's sakdina was never stipulated in figures because it was infinite.

It is clear from the description given in previous chapters that the hierarchical organization thus set up was in the nature of krom and their sub-unit kong. Two different approaches can be used in the analysis of this organization. The first approach, used by H.G. Quaritch Wales, is to look at the krom and kong as functional units, each with a special function contributing to the working of government. The socio-political nature of Thai organization, however, makes possible another approach by which the krom and kong are looked at as units of manpower. Their special functions as units in the working machinery of government were added on and were, in a sense, secondary. Thus, while certain societies might be more conscious of the importance of land and divide the polity into regions with definite boundaries, the Thai, extremely conscious of the importance of manpower, divided the kingdom into groups of men, each with a chief who served as a responsible member of a staff-line, patron-client structure. The boundary of the kingdom, or of a province, was always left vague, while the population of the kingdom, or a town, and the numbers in a krom, were the main concern of the Thais. The relative importance placed on the krom as a unit of manpower, as opposed to that of being a functional unit in the machinery of government, can be seen in the nature of the organization of Krom Mahatthai, a major krom under the Chief

Minister, the Samuha Nayok.

The Krom Mahatthai had at least five smaller krom within it. They were first Krom Mahatthai Klang (Central Mahatthai) headed by Khun Ratchanikun of the sakdina 1,000. The second was the Krom Mahatthai Fai Nya (Northern Mahatthai) headed by Luang Maha Ammat of the sakdina 3,000. The third was Krom Mahatthai Fai Phalamphang (probably carrier of big guns) headed by Luang Chasaen of the sakdina 2,400. The fourth was Krom Mahatthai Tamruat Phuthon (probably a kind of patrol) headed by Luang Wasuthep of the sakdina 1,000. Lastly, there was Mahatthai Tamruat Phuban (probably a kind of patrol) headed by Luang Phetluthep of the sakdina 1,000.¹ As regards the functions of these smaller krom within the Krom Mahatthai, Prince Damrong found that the officials of the first, the second, and the third krom had exactly the same function, doing the same kind of work, perhaps since Ayutthaya times. The chiefs of the other two krom appeared to have no particular function but that of controlling the phrai luang of the krom, and occasional business out of the city. Prince Damrong thought that, as suggested by their names, they might once have been a kind of patrol.² In fact each of the three major krom of the kingdom, i.e. Kalahom, Mahatthai, and Khlang, consisted of a number of minor krom. The number of minor krom within a major krom tended to vary from time to time. When phrai som of a prince's krom were made phrai luang at the death of their nai, the prince, the group of phrai and its officials were often given a new name and assigned to be under the Minister of Kalahom, the Minister of Mahatthai, or Chiefs of other major krom. Thus a new minor krom was added as subsidiary krom of the major krom.³

In the following pages, the social aspect of this organization will be considered. By the Early Bangkok period, the king, at least in theory, owned all manpower within the kingdom. As was clearly stated in a Royal De-

¹Clause 8, Phra Aiyakan Tammaeng Na Phonlayan (Law of the Civil Hierarchy), PK, vol. I, pp. 182-186.

²Prince Damrong, Thesaphiban, Bangkok, 1960, pp. 33 to 36.

³King Chulalongkorn, Phraratcha Damrat Nai Phrabat Somdet Phra Chunla Chomklao Song Thalaeng Nayobai Kaekhai Kanpokkrong Phaendin. (King Chulalongkorn's Speech on the Changes in the Administration).

cree of 1785, the king's main duty towards his people was to give them protection. In return, it was the duty of the people to serve him in his royal affairs. In practice the king distributed people under the care of his officials. Thus, Clause 103 Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government) prescribed punishment for any official who did not take sufficient care of the people whom the king had put under his care.⁴ Luang Siworawat, in Withi Pokkhrong Ban Myang Boran (Ancient Methods of Town Administration) told us that a certain number of phrai were attached to each position of the first and second levels of town officials.⁵ Also, in each krom, there were ranked officials appointed by the king, and the phrai under them. The first relationship to be considered in the formal organization, therefore, is that between the nai and the phrai.

The Relationship Between Nai and Phrai

There appears to have been two ways in which the word nai is used in the Thai language. By the first, the word nai or munnai means simply a direct superior. It has nothing to do with classes or categories of people. Thus the Chao Myang (Town Governor) was the nai of the Palat (Deputy Governor) although both belonged to the category of khunnang (noble). The word nai, however, can be used in another sense which denotes a category of people opposite to that of phrai. Prince Damrong in Laksana Kan Pokkhrong Prathet Sayam Tae Boran stated "Khrao ni cha wa duai bukkhon chan nai samrap khuapkhum bangkhap bancha phrai."⁶ (Now I shall talk of those people of the class nai who controlled phrai and gave orders to them). In general, when the word nai, or munnai, was used in laws and decrees, the two meanings were often combined. Therefore, the word means the direct superior of the phrai. In the following discussion, the word will be used in this combined meaning.

In the eyes of the government, the role of the nai

⁴Clause 103, Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government), PK, vol. II, p. 426.

⁵Luang Siworawat (Phin Chantharotwong) Withi Pokkhrong Ban Myang Boran (Ancient Methods of Town Administration), PP, vol. V, pt. 15, p. 371.

⁶Prince Damrong, Laksana Kan Pokkhrong Prathet Sayam Tae Boran (Ancient Administration of Siam), p. 12.

was to control and look after the phrai assigned to him.⁷ The first important duty of the nai was to produce his phrai on the demand of the government. He was the person who had to mobilize the phrai under him for corvée labor and for war.⁸ When a phrai was accused of a crime or became a defendant in a law suit, a warrant was sent to his nai to produce his phrai for trial.⁹ Ample evidence can be found to show that this duty of the nai continued to be part of his role during the Early Bangkok period.¹⁰

As the consequence of his obligation towards the government, a nai was by law given much authority over his phrai. He had the right to command and the power to give corporal punishment to his phrai. Thus Clause 89, Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government) stated that a phrai could be imprisoned or fined (or both) if he displayed a lack of respect for his nai by refusing to obey an order.

The duty to obey was subsumed under the duty to show respect. A statement in the Royal Decree of 1783 shows that the nai had also the power to give corporal punishment to his phrai when his phrai misbehaved.¹² A Royal Proclamation of King Mongkut advised that any phrai luang of any krom, who had exhibited bad character by taking intoxicants, opium, etc., or committing or participating

⁷Clause 135, Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government), PK, vol. II, p. 441.

⁸Clauses 4, 31, Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government), PK, vol. II, pp. 373-392.

⁹Clause 8, Laksana Rapphong (Laws on Institution of Litigation), PK, vol. I, p. 297.

¹⁰Royal Decrees, 1783, 1785, 1786. (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 4, 12, 16) PK, vol. III, pp. 319-320, 348-353, 363-365.

¹¹Clause 89, Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government), PK, vol. II, p. 418.

¹²"Some (phrai) were lazy and did not come to serve the corvée. The nai gave them punishment by having them scourged." Royal Decree, 1783 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 4), PK, vol. III, pp. 319-320.

in robbery, theft, assault, or trespass, had to be taken to Krom Myang (The City Department) by his nai and put in prison there. If the phrai was a phrai som, the prince or official who was his nai, had to put him securely in chains, and not allow him to cause trouble.¹³ Thus the nai was also given the duty to control the behavior of his phrai. This is in accord with the fact that a nai was responsible for the appearance of his phrai in court for trial when the phrai had committed an offense.

The nai appear to have had almost complete control of the services of their phrai. Clauses 103, 106 of the Law Laksana Betset (Miscellaneous Laws) stated that no one should hire or use the service of a phrai without the permission of his nai. If he did so and something happened to the phrai - if he died or escaped for example - the hirer was liable to reimburse the nai of the phrai.¹⁴ John Crawford has noted that in 1821 at the capital there existed no such thing as free labor, for the labor of every individual was appropriated by some chief or other, without whose approval he could not work.¹⁵ When King Mongkut allowed Thai people to work for foreigners who came to Thailand, he took care to admonish them to reach an agreement with their nai about services for the government and the services for their nai before taking on contracts of service with foreigners.¹⁶

The nai naturally had control over the movement of his phrai from one area to another. A Royal Decree of 1785 ordered town officials to keep watch for strangers in their area. If they saw any in their districts or town, they were to make inquiry. If such a stranger had obtained the permission of his nai to go there and work, he was allowed to live and work there until it was time for him to return to his nai to serve the corvée. If corvée time arrived, and the man was still there, the of-

¹³Royal Proclamation of 1860. PPRS (B.E. 2410-2404), pp. 254-257.

¹⁴Clauses 103, 106, Laksana Betset (Miscellaneous Laws), PK, vol. II, pp. 237-239. Each person was given a value in monetary terms according to his sakdina. See Phra Aiyakan Phromsak (Laws on the Estimation of Compensation), PK, vol. I, pp. 161-177.

¹⁵The Crawford Papers, Bangkok, 1915, p. 135.

¹⁶Royal Proclamation of 1856, PPRS, (B.E. 2394-2400), pp. 229-233.

officials of the town had to arrest him, and send him to the capital.¹⁷

The right of the nai to demand services from his phrai som was accepted. It was the duty of the phrai som to serve his nai.¹⁸ The main duty of the phrai luang, however, was to do service for the government, i.e. corvée. But the right of the nai to demand services from his phrai luang was implicitly allowed. Thus it was laid down in negative terms that the officials should not use the services of the phrai under their control as if they were their slaves. The nai could use the services of their phrai in the home of the nai if needed, but only for two or three days at a time.¹⁹ Such a limitation cannot have been effective for it was most vaguely phrased. Further, in practice, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, for the phrai to distinguish between government and private work in many types of services they were called to render. Thus, when a phrai made the complaint that he had been oppressed, the accusation usually charged his nai with demanding so much services that the phrai had no time to work for his own living, or with demanding excessive amounts of money or "gifts".²⁰

On the other hand, there were cases where active help was given to the phrai by their nai. Because our evidence consists of laws and decrees, the assistance rendered by the nai to the phrai appears in strange forms. Thus laws were passed laying down severe punishment for the nai who had shielded his phrai from being brought to trial for offenses which he had committed.²¹ Punishment

¹⁷Royal Decree, 1785. (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 12), PK, vol. III, p. 352.

¹⁸Prince Damrong, Laksana Kanpokkhrong Prathetrayam Tae Boran (Ancient Administration of Siam), p. 11; please note the bracketed sentence also.

¹⁹Clause 25, Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government), PK, vol. II, p. 389.

²⁰Royal Decree, 1783. (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 4), PK, vol. III, p. 319.

²¹Clauses 5, 6, Laksana Chon (Law of Theft), PK, vol. II, pp. 297-298. Clause 85, Laksana Tralakan (Law of Judges), PK, vol. I, p. 411.

was laid down also for a nai who argued for his phrai in the latter.²² A Royal Decree of 1744 related that frequently, while on trial at the district (kwaeng) court, a phrai would make contact with his nai in the capital as soon as he began to realize the hopelessness of his case. Thereupon, the nai would send an order to the kwaeng officials who was the judge to send the phrai to the capital. Thus the trial was stopped half way and the phrai escaped punishment.²³ King Mongkut tells us a great deal about the way in which the nai who was a noble or a prince of high rank could help his phrai. Certain important officials gave sealed documents for exemption of taxes to phrai who were not legally entitled to them.²⁴ Powerful nobles in the capital could give far more protection and privilege to their phrai than the exemption from taxes, as a Royal Proclamation of King Mongkut shows.

When any high-ranking person who has his slaves and phrai working in rice fields, orchards, or pasturing elephants, horses, oxen, and buffaloes in the provinces, by sending notes or words of mouth, asks the town Governors and their officials to look after his men with such words that the Governors and town officials are so afraid that they dare not do anything with those men...not even merely give report to the (Chief Ministers) Lukkhun Na Sala ...such a master of slaves, or nai of phrai is disloyal to the country.²⁵

It appears, therefore, that giving protection as well as assistance to their phrai was a major part of the role of the nai, at least, the ideal role. The government generally tended to take this part of the role of the nai for granted. Even so, in a few laws, it was explicitly recognized and confirmed. Thus, when a phrai wished to institute a legal proceeding, it was the duty

²²Clause 44, Laksana Tralakan (Law of Judges), PK, vol. I, p. 396.

²³Royal Decree, 1744 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 29), PK vol. III, pp. 212-217.

²⁴Royal Proclamation of 1856. PPRS (B.E. 2394-2400), pp. 260-262.

²⁵Royal Proclamation of 1855. Ibid., pp. 147-148.

of his nai to bring him to the proper court.²⁶ When the phrai had trouble, he could request help from his nai.²⁷ If the phrai was sent away in service to the government, and his wife was in difficulty, she should inform his nai to report the matter to the king.²⁸ In case the nai took the phrai with him on government service, and the phrai was in need of money, a law laid down that the nai should let him borrow money without interest.²⁹

Another part of the role of the nai was to settle the disputes between his phrai. This must necessarily have been so, because in instituting a law suit, the nai had to make the application on behalf of his phrai.³⁰ Moreover, Thai law allowed the settlement of disputes by arbitrators chosen by both parties of a common accord.³¹ According to the law, the role of the nai, in sum, was to control, command, assist and protect his phrai. With the exception of services for the government in the case of phrai luang -- which was, however, performed under the direction of the nai -- the nai had complete control of the services and movement of his phrai.

Owing to the nature of our evidence, we learn of the performance of nai in their protective role only in cases where it was excessive and constituted an infraction of the law such as helping them avoid government corvée, interfering in the course of justice at the trial of their phrai, and giving them illegal exemption from government taxation.

It was no doubt an important part of the role of a phrai to give part of their produce as "gift" to their

²⁶Clause 1, Phra Thammanun (Law of Procedure)q PK, vol. I, p. 131o

²⁷Royal Decree of 1710 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 18), PK, vol. III, pp. 170-171.

²⁸Clause 63, Laksana Phua Mia (Laws on Husband and Wife)q PK, vol. IIq p. 32.

²⁹Clause 63, Laksana Kuni (Laws on Debts and Loans) PK, vol. II, p. 198.

³⁰H.G. Quaritch-Walesq Ancient Siamese Government and Administrationq pp. 185-186o

³¹Ibid.q p. 184.

nai. The unsalaried officials lived on "gifts" from and services of their phrai.³² Thus Pallegoix states:

Normally, lek (male phrai) constituted an important source of income for their nai. If the nai did not oppress them, but let them earn their living in peace, they would give large amounts of gifts such as rice, fruits, vegetables, and fish.³³

Unlike European feudalism, the relationship between nai and phrai was not based on the ownership of land. From the beginning of the Ayutthaya period, anyone, phrai or noble, could have full possession of the land which he had cleared and planted.³⁴ Further, it was against the interest of the government to let the nobles and princes own large amounts of land, for lands belonging to these people were not taxed until the reign of King Rama III (1824-1851).³⁵ However, while land was plentiful, manpower was lacking. It was the labor force that was required. The nai had the control of the services of his phrai, and could command them to work for him on his land or in his business enterprises.

The nature of the phrai and nai relationship was that of client and patron. Clientship has been defined as a relationship between two persons who are not kin but stand in positions of superiority-inferiority to one another. Its best description may be "lop-sided friendship", when by "friendship" is meant "instrumental friendship", a personal relationship which has the striving for

³²Prince Damrong, Laksana Kanpokkhrong Prathet Sayam Tae Boran (Ancient Administration of Siam), p. 13.

³³Jean Baptista Pallegoix, Lao Ruang Myang Thai (Description du Royaume Thai ou Siam), trans. San To Komonlabut, pp. 280-281.

³⁴Clause 45, Laksana Betset (Miscellaneous Laws), PK, vol. II, p. 212. Phanit Yupho gave the date for this law as 1343 in Bantuk Kansop Sakkarat (Notes on Finding the Dates of the Laws), PP, vol. II, pt. 5, p. 645.

access to resources -- natural or social -- as a vital part in it.³⁶ It has been noted that the need for protection led to the creation of this relationship.³⁷ The phrai needed the nai to protect him against other noble-officials. The kingdom had no organized police force. Power of arrest was given to all officials who were nobles.³⁸ Anyone who had no nai could be arrested, for it was an offense against the law not to be registered under a nai. Moreover, the nai served as the only link between a phrai and the government, as his access to the court of justice had to be made through his nai, and only through his nai could his complaint be heard by the government. Without a nai, a phrai could not live, except in the jungle where the arm of the government could not reach him. In order to own a piece of land to plant rice for his living, he had to contact the officials because the land to be cleared had to be registered.³⁹ Without a nai, he could not register the land, for, when he contacted the officials, he would be arrested for not having a nai. If he simply cleared the land, however, and planted the rice without registering his land, the land was not considered as belonging to him. Anyone could use force to expel him from his land, and he could seek no assistance from the government without the help of a nai. It was a necessity for a phrai to have a nai.

For a phrai to have a nai was to be under the command of his nai. A nai could order his phrai to work for private affairs of the nai, and his demand for services might be so excessive that there was no time left for the phrai to earn his own living. Although Clause 25 Laksana Aya Luang purported to prohibit excessive demand on the service of a phrai luang,⁴⁰ its working betrayed the fact

³⁶J.A. Pitt-Rivers, The People of Sierra, London, 1954, p. 140; Eric R. Wolf, "Kinship, Friendship, Patron-Client Relations in Complex Societies", in A.S.A. Monograph 4, London, 1966, pp. 1-20.

³⁷Lucy Mair, Primitive Government, p. 113.

³⁸Royal Decree, 1748, telling the nobles to make an arrest when they find people quarreling or fighting (Phra-ratcha Kamnot Kao 49), PK, vol. III, pp. 272-273.

³⁹Clause 45, Laksana Betset (Miscellaneous Laws), PK, vol. II, p. 212.

⁴⁰See above, p. 82 and footnote 19.

that it could afford only an extremely insufficient protection for the phrai. One way to prevent the nai from demanding excessive service was to please him by giving him gifts. It was important to be in the nai's favor. Thus in the story Khun Chang, Khun Phaen, the monk who was the teacher of the hero, trying to dissuade the latter from leaving the monkhood, said:

Are you leaving the monkhood to be tattooed (as phrai)? With marked wrist, one suffers all the time, carrying plao until the shoulder threatens to break. If the nai loves you, then it is better for he will be kind and not order you to do heavy work. If he dislikes you, then, for spite, he will use you in all heavy work, sawing wood, drawing logs...⁴¹

There was, however, a mechanism which tended to restrain the nai from making excessive demands on the services of their phrai. When the phrai could not bear such excessive demands from their nai, they could simply run away into the jungle. Many laws and decrees expressed the government's concern over such phenomena, for it affected mobilization in time of war. The nai whose phrai had run away was liable to be punished for having oppressed the phrai.⁴² As was noted above, town governors were told to take care to see whether there were people hiding in the forest and jungle in their areas. If there were, the governor inquired whether anyone had oppressed them.⁴³

For the Ayutthaya period, we have already noted the differences in the amount of work for different types of phrai, and showed that it led to the attempts on the part of phrai luang to get out of their status. Although phrai luang, phrai som, and that (slaves) were all eventually required to do government service or make payment in place of it, the differences still remained. The phrai luang had to serve government corvée for three months in a year or make payment of 18 baht. They were required to do

⁴¹Khun Chang, Khun Phaen, Wachirayan library edition, Bangkok, 1962, p. 119.

⁴²Clauses 25, 31, 54, 103, 135, Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government), PK, vol. II, pp. 367-454. Royal Decree, 1599 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 15)† PK, vol. III, p. 162.

⁴³Royal Decree, 1727 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 23), PK, vol. III, p. 189.

corvée for one month, and work for their own living for the next two months before they were called for corvée again.⁴⁴ They served government corvée under the direction of their nai, and, if they chose to make payment instead, they made payment to their nai.⁴⁵ The phrai som were required to serve government corvée only for one month in each year, or make payment of 6 baht. The that (slaves) were required to serve government corvée for 8 days in a year, or make payment of 1.50 baht.⁴⁶ There was still the temptation to get out of the status of phrai luang.

After the introduction of the marking of phrai and that with the names of their nai, and the town where they lived, most ways of escaping from the status of phrai luang into that of phrai som were closed. Only two means of escape were open -- by escaping into the jungle, or by becoming that (slave). A Royal Decree of King Rama II told us that the number of phrai who had run away into the jungle was not small. This Decree acknowledged that it was because the nai made such excessive demands on the services of their phrai. This Decree invited them to return to a habitable area, and for this time only, they would not be punished and would be allowed to choose their new nai.⁴⁷ During the reign of King Rama I, escape from the status of phrai luang into that appears to have increased. Royal Decrees of 1787 and 1788 complained that phrai luang were posing as that (slaves). This could, of course, be done with the help of their nai.⁴⁸ In fact, as the Royal Decree of 1788 tells us, the nai were doing good business by selling their phrai som, and using the money obtained thereby to buy phrai luang as that

⁴⁴Khachon Sukkhaphanit, Thanandon Phrai (The Status of Phrai), pp. 36, 38.

⁴⁵Royal Decrees, 1748, 1786 (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 48, Mai 16), PK, vol. III, pp. 265-272, 363-365.

⁴⁶Khachon Sukkhaphanit, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

⁴⁷Phraratcha Kamnot Sak Lek, Ratchakan Thi II. (Royal Decree on Marking the male phrai, the Second Reign) in PPKR, (First and Second Reigns), pp. 383-387.

⁴⁸Royal Decrees of 1787, 1788 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 17, 18), PK, vol. III, pp. 365-371.

(slaves).⁴⁹ This Royal Decree made such sale illegal and invalid, and prescribed punishment for the nai who cooperated in the sale of phrai luang. The effectiveness of measures designed to prevent the loss of phrai luang during the Thonburi period (1767-1782) and the Early Bangkok period (1782-1873) helped to cause the rise of informal client and patron relationships to be described in Chapter VII.

The nature of the relationship between phrai and nai, deprived of its legal trappings, was that of client and patron. Thai society was a peasant society in which the phrai constituted the bulk of the peasants. Control over them was held by the government in the city, where decisions that affected their lives were made. The only channel through which their voices could be heard, and assistance from the government could be given, was through their nai. The relationship was a dyadic and contractual one in which one party (a phrai) offered gifts and services to the other (his nai) in return for aid and protection. The organization of the administration was the formalization of this dyadic contract. To each phrai, the nai adjusted his aid and protection according to the amount of gifts and services the phrai rendered him. Formalization of this relationship, however, increased the power of the nai over his phrai, and deprived the phrai luang of their liberty to choose and change their nai. Thus oppression could ensue, when the phrai wished to end the relationship by ceasing to meet their obligations, or when the nai made more demands than the individual phrai could afford to give. In this condition it was better to be a phrai of a wealthy nai who had large numbers of phrai and that(slaves) than of a poor one, for there would be less demand for gifts and services. Furthermore, when wealth, rank and power went together, it was better to have a nai whose rank was high for he could give far greater protection and aid than the one of low rank.⁵⁰

Relationship Between Direct Superior and Direct Subordinates

The next relationship to be considered is the relationship between a direct superior and a direct subordinate of the same krom when they were both khunnang (noble) but of different ranks. Thus, a Palat Krom (Deputy Chief) or Sumuha Banchi was a direct subordinate of a

⁴⁹Royal Decree, 1788 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 18, PK, vol. III, pp.369-371.

⁵⁰For explanation of this statement, see below.

Chao Krom (Chief) of the krom. In case of a major krom such as Mahatthai, the officials of the subsidiary krom, including its Chief, would be subordinates of the Chief of the major krom of which it was a part. As will be made clear later, it is extremely difficult to describe precisely in black and white the relationship between them. There appears to have been a great deal of variation in individual cases. It is safe to say first, however, that the subordinate had to show respect towards his superior. The direct superior was also called nai in Thai, although there appears to have been no word for a direct subordinate who was not also a phrai. Clause 89 Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government) laid down that when a nai had given an order according to the custom, the subordinate who refused to obey the command would be considered to have looked down on the nai and would be made a phrai.⁵¹ Thus the role of the direct superior was to give command to his direct subordinates according to custom and law. The role of the direct subordinate was to respect and obey his superior. The king alone, however, was entitled to appoint, promote, demote, or give punishment to all nobles.⁵² He might give any official a promotion on the recommendation of the direct superior, or on the recommendation of other persons, or even for his own personal reasons.⁵³

From the above description, it can be seen that the formal organization was built on lines of command. The king, being an absolute ruler, was the source of all authority. Then followed hierarchies of krom, and the formal lines of command went from the superior to the subordinate. It must, however, be remembered that the picture which is presented here is only a model of the formal organization, and, as will be seen later, it is extremely simplified.

⁵¹Clause 89, Laksana Aya Luang, PK, vol. II, p. 418.

⁵²King Chulalongkorn, Phra Boromma Racha Thibai Wa Duai Yot Khunnang (Royal explanation concerning the ranks of the nobles) in Prayut Sitthiphan, Tontrakun Khunnang Thai, Bangkok, 1962.

Appointment of officials with the sakdina below 400, i.e. not a Khunnang, was made by the officials within the krom. Royal Proclamation of 1853, PPRS, (B.E. 2394-2400), pp. 121-122.

⁵³For example see the appointment of the Governor of Tak described in a letter from King Mongkut to Phraya Wichitchonlathi dated August 12, 1861. PHLC, vol. II, pp. 43-53.

We have noted earlier that the expansion of central power was partly accomplished by creating dual allegiances. Thus, the officials of the princes' krom, as well as the provincial town officials, had two direct superiors. According to the law, the princes' officials must obey the command of the princes, and the town officials that of the town governor. Yet, especially in the case of town officials, their promotion and demotion depended entirely on the king who, in case of conflict, might choose to listen to the recommendations or accusations from either the town governor or the official in Bangkok. The king's choice would depend on his relationship with either of them as well as in some case upon his relationship with the town officials themselves. It was best for such an official to be on good terms with both of them, but if a choice had to be made, it would be the person whom he thought had more influence on the king that he would obey and try to please.

The Relationship Between Phu Yai (The Superior) and Phu Noi (The Inferior)

The relationship between phu yai and phu noi was based on patterns of respect. A person who was a phu yai was the one who had higher status than oneself, and was thus a superior. In Thai society during the Early Bangkok period, statuses were finely graded by the assignment of a certain number of sakdina (dignity marks) to each person in the system. The respect relationship of phu yai, phu noi, depended to a large extent on the amount of the sakdina each person possessed. Thus, soon after the fall of Ayutthaya in 1767, when Phraya Tak went to the town Chantaburi, and the governor of that town sent his officials to invite Phraya Tak into the town, it was recorded that Phraya Tak sent a message to the governor saying "The Governor of Chantaburi, being phu noi, should come out in person and pay respect to me. I am phu yai. Being phu yai, it is not proper for me to go to the phu noi before he has come to me..."⁵⁴ King Rama I's comment on a quarrel between his officials also illustrated this relationship.

Phraya Ramakamhaeng is only a phu noi yet he does not respect and fear phu yai. He walked freely into the residence (Chuan) of

⁵⁴Phraratcha Phongsawadan Krung Sayam (Annals of Siam), British Museum Edition, p. 657. PPHL, vol. II, pp. 301-302. At that time Phraya Tak was in the position of governor of Kampaengphet, a second class town. Chantaburi was a third class province. Phraya Tak's sakdina (dignity mark) was 10,000, Phraya Chantaburi 5,000.

Phraya Siratchadecho and pointed his finger over the head of Phraya Siratchadecho.⁵⁵

An event during the reign of King Rama III also shows an aspect of this relationship. When a building was being put up at Wat Phra Chettuphon, an ordinary royal page warned Phraya Siphiphat, the supervisor of the building, that the rope used for pulling logs was too long, and thus there was a danger of the log swinging and hitting the wall of the building. Phraya Siphiphat sharply cut him to size by saying, "You are too young, and do not know anything. You should not tell phu yai what to do." The consequence was that much damage was done to the building and a number of workers lost their lives.⁵⁶

The function of the relationship between phu yai and phu noi was to integrate the various units of manpower, the krom, the kong, etc., into the whole society. As can be seen from letters of Luang Udom Sombat to Phraya Siphiphat reporting what had been said and done in the royal palace in connection with the rebellion of the Malay States, from 1838 to 1839, this relationship of phu yai and phu noi was taken into consideration in making appointments and assigning duties. Thus, when there were a number of officials of equal rank in an area, there should be a phu yai (anyone of higher position) around to arbitrate in case they quarrelled among themselves.⁵⁷

As can be seen from the illustration given above, the main emphasis appears to have been on respect. Respect in Thai society, however, implied obedience, at least in face to face relationships as well as restraints in manner and speech. Thus it was difficult to argue against a phu yai or offer advice which was not asked for, without being considered to have behaved disrespectfully. This relationship of superordination-subordination pervaded the whole society in every level from the top to bottom.

⁵⁵Royal Decree, 17920 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 22), PK, vol. II, pp. 380-381. Phraya Siratchadecho, Chief of Krom Phahu, sakdina 10,000. Phraya Ramakamhaeng, Chief of Krom Asa Kwa, sakdina 5,000. Such a gesture was considered to be extremely disrespectful.

⁵⁶Prayut Sitthiphan, Ton Trakun Khunnang Thai (Origins of Thai noble families), p. 87-88.

⁵⁷Chotmai Luang Udom Sombat (Letter of Luang Udom Sombat), Bangkok, 1962.

It was, and perhaps still is, the key relationship in the structure of the society. The forms of greeting, the words used in ordinary speech, and the personal pronouns, place all interactions in this type of relationship. The variation is in the bases of statuses. Thus differences in age appear to be more important in a village community while differences in official rank are dominant in the higher circles. Of a village community of present day Thai, it has been said:

Perhaps the relationship of 'older-younger' (phi-nong) can be considered the most important determinant of social behavior in the community. From the time that a child is old enough to comprehend he learns that certain phi individuals require a wai or ceremonial greeting upon first encounter.⁵⁸

The importance placed on higher or lower statuses as a guide to behavior makes the Thai ask personal questions at first meeting. Questions concerning age, position of parents, position of oneself, value of one's possessions, etc. often shock foreign visitors. The importance of the answers to these questions is their service as a guide for the definition of relative position and consequent behavior. For our period, although the existence of sakdina served as a rough and accurate guide for each individual status, there was still many factors which gave rise to difficulties in placing an individual higher or lower than oneself. One of these factors was the widespread existence of informal hierarchies of client and patron relationships.⁵⁹

Client and Patron Relationship in the Formal Organization

In the Thai society, one of the most important acts which had such symbolic association was the act of giving or offering. Thai worship often involved such acts. An offering was made yearly to the house-spirit (phra phum) as a request for protection. A promise of an offering was made when one requested a favor from a god or angel or even a Buddha image. A boy going to the temple to learn to read and write first went with flowers, incense and probably other things to give to his future teacher. As related by Prince Damrong, the monk, Pan, came to him with

⁵⁸Howard K. Kaufman, *Bangkhuad*, p. 5. The word "phi" is literally translated "older sibling". The Thai, however, make generous use of kinship terms for non-kin

⁵⁹Below Chapter VII.

a potted tree, and asked to leave the monkhood and come to work under Prince Damrong.⁶⁰ With Prince Damrong's help, he eventually became Chao Phraya Yommarat. To become a client of a noble or a person of superior status was phrased in such terms as "to give oneself" to him temporarily (fak tua)^o. To become a client of a prince as well as the king, one was said to thawai tua, i.e. "to offer oneself" to him. The process always involved gift-giving. Thai tradition was that one should never go to see a phu yai empty-handed. One must always take something as a gift. Such gifts always implied a request for favor or protection. Just as one made an offering to the house-spirit with a request for protection or assistance, one made a gift to a phu yai in order that the latter would help one. The act of giving was the key to the establishment of client and patron relationships. It must be noted that during the Early Bangkok period, it seems that the inferior (phu noi) first came to the superior (phu yai), for it would lower the dignity of a phu yai to have to come first to phu noi.

Clientship was supported by the operation of a dominant value, katanyu-katawethi, to remember what another had done for one, and try to do something in return. This concept may be differently expressed by the use of the term bun-khun. A person was said to have made bun-khun to another when he had given something to the latter or had done something of benefit to him. The recipient of the favor was obligated to do something in return. The concept was closely related to such a concept as debt and reciprocity, and can be easily distinguished from loyalty (loyalty may be translated as khwaṃ chongrak phakdi). Because bun-khun was like debt, which is essentially a contract, the failure of one party to perform his part of the contract released the other party from his obligation. Thus when a phu noi gave gifts to a phu yai, but the latter gave no favor, protection, or assistance in return, the phu noi would stop giving the phu yai gifts. When the phu yai did something in return, then, the phu noi would be obligated to continue giving gifts or performing services for him.

For anyone to become a khunnang, i.e. official of the sakdina 400 and above, one had to go through the ritual called thawai tua. This ritual involved being pre-

⁶⁰Prince Damrong, Prawat Chao Phraya Yommarat" (Biography of Chao Phraya Yommarat)^o, in Phraya Komarakun Montri, Prawat Chaophraya Mahasena, Bangkok, 1961, pp. 54-55^o

sented formally to the king, and offering him flowers, incense, and candles.⁶¹ This act of thawai tua could be considered as the mark of entering the clientele of the king. Although the khunnang might be put in any position in various krom, and would be directly under the command of the Krom Chief, they were still clients of the king. It was the king, therefore, and not their direct superior who had the power of punishment and promotion.⁶² Thai officials were in service for life, unless they were punished and made phrai by the king.

We have noted that the nature of the relationship between a nai (khunnang), or prince, and his phrai was a client and patron relationship. The similarity between the role of the nai towards his phrai, and the king towards his khunnang could profitably be observed also. The king gave aid and special protection to his nobles.⁶³ He controlled them, and gave them rewards and punishment. The nai was responsible for the promotion and appointment of phrai.⁶⁴ Phrai, of course, could be made khunmun (petty officials) with a sakdina below 400.

⁶¹The act of thawai tua, as described, is still performed nowadays, especially by those wishing the king to conduct their marriage ceremony. Such marriages are considered to be prestigious. Many high officials and princes ask the king to conduct the marriage ceremonies for their offspring. In such a case, both the bride and groom must be presented to the king and go through this ritual.

⁶²Clause 28, Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government) laid down that, when a noble was accused of anything, the king must be told. Only when he gave the royal order could a trial of the case be conducted. Severe punishment was laid down for anyone who disobeyed this rule. PK, vol. II, p. 390.

⁶³For example, see Royal Decree of 1798, laying punishment for anyone who had love affairs with the wife of an official who had entered monkhood. A passage in this Decree stated that it was the duty of the king to give protection and assistance to the families of the nobles. (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 14), PK, vol. III, p. 359.

⁶⁴Royal Proclamation of 1853, telling the nobles not to appoint people who were addicted to opium as khunmun, i.e. officials with sakdina below 400. PPRS (B.E. 2394 - 2400), pp. 121-122.

Thus, it can be seen that there was a hierarchy of client and patron relationships. In this hierarchy there were two major levels, the phrai and their nai, and the khunnang and the king. A group of phrai was the clientele of a nai who was a noble. The whole group of khunnang was the clientele of the king.

CHAPTER VI. SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

In the previous chapter, we have already pointed out that one of the most important relationships in Thai society was the relationship between the superior and the inferior. Beginning from the relationship of older-younger in the local community to that of phu yai, phu noi in the administrative hierarchies, and various krom and kong, relative statuses of the persons determine the behavior in their interaction, from ways of greeting, speech, and general behavior. Further, it was not simply the concepts of superior and the inferior, but the degree of superiority and the degree of inferiority that determined one's behavior in an interaction. As examples we may take the manner of greeting and the use of personal pronouns in speech. Thai manners of greeting are wai and krap. Wai consists of putting the palms of both hands together somewhere between the forehead and the chests. Krap is similar to wai but it is done by kneeling, and bending the body down until both hands reached the ground. Krap is, of course, done to a person of much more exalted status than those one would greet by wai. Wai itself denotes the relative statuses of the person greeting, and greeted immediately. The person who performs the greeting first recognizes that the person thus greeted is superior. Moreover, wai can be performed in many ways, such as while standing or sitting, with head bent or straight up, and with hands at different heights, the higher the hands, the higher the status of the person being greeted. The manner of this greeting reveals how far superior the person performing it considers the person greeted. As for personal pronouns used in speech, there are many, e.g. ku, kha, khaphachao, chan, phom, kraphom, kramom, klao kramom, khaphraph ut-thachao, all meaning "I", and each of them is used in interaction with a person of certain relative status to the speaker. Each of them denotes the degree of higher and lower statuses between the person addressed and the speakers. Similarly, there are also many words, for the second person pronoun, third person pronoun, and each word denotes the status of that person relative to the speaker.

As we have seen in the relationship between phu yai-phu noi, relative statuses governed the behavior of Thai people in their interactions. The most important norm is that the inferior must respect the superior. Respect in Thai society implies obedience besides other rules of

etiquette such as not arguing with the superior, not giving unasked-for advice, not addressing him by his name, and many others. Relative degrees of compliance to the norms of respect and obedience depend partly on the distance between the statuses of the two parties, and partly on the amount of power the superior person holds over the destiny of the inferior. One may, perhaps, conceive a Thai in a social situation as using an inventory of a variety of ranked roles. The role he plays towards one individual is always slightly different from that towards another individual of different status. Further, the higher one's status is in the society, the greater care one is required to take in playing the correct role for each individual with whom one is involved in an interaction. With emphasis being placed on respect, it is to be expected that Thai people are status conscious, and would be very much annoyed at not being treated according to their proper statuses.

The sakdina (dignity marks) system was a device which served as the most accurate guide to the different statuses of the whole population. Its main function was to serve as a guide for behavior in interactions. We have thus, for the study of social stratification, an explicit ranking system. It is necessary only to find the criterion on which the sakdina system was based. We have already noted that the amount of sakdina one possessed correlated with the amount of manpower under one's control. The control of manpower brought two assets which were wealth and political power. From the description of the relationship between phrai and nai, it is clear that the possession of manpower meant wealth.¹ Further, the possession of people who must obey one's command necessarily gives one political power. The structure of Thai society was based on lines of command.² Thus the ranking system as shown in the sakdina was based mainly on wealth and political power. Social stratification in Thai society was economic and political.

Legal Categories, Chao, Khunnang, Phrai, That

The Thai, themselves, categorized people into four main groups: the chao, the khunnang, the phrai, and the that. The chao consisted of a group of princes, the near descendants of a king. Their ranks were subjected to the operation of the declining descent rule. There were two types of ranks for them, the sakunlayot (ascribed rank), and itsariyayot (achieved rank). Of the first there were,

¹Above

²Above

before the reign of King Mongkut, three main ranks: Čhao Fa, Phra Ong Čhao, and Mom Čhao. The titles of Mom Rat-chawong and Mom Luang were established during the reign of King Mongkut³ and were not considered to be Čhao.⁴

Because of the existence of the royal harem, the king had numerous concubines and offspring. Thus King Rama I had 42 children of 28 mothers, King Rama II had 73 children of 40 mothers, King Rama III had 51 children of 37 mothers, and King Mongkut had 82 children of 35 mothers.⁵ The rank of the offspring of the king depended on the rank of their mothers. A royal child whose mother was a queen or princess (Čhao) would be a Čhao Fa. If the mother was a queen or a daughter of a king, the child would be a first class Čhao Fa. Otherwise he or she was a second class Čhao Fa.⁶ Of the offspring of King Rama I, there were 10 Čhao Fa, most of them having been born of his Queen, Somdet Phra Ammarintharas. Of the offspring of King Rama II, there were 7 Čhao Fa, 3 of them having been born of his Queen,⁷ and the other 4 of Čhao Fa Kunthon.⁸ Of the offspring of Rama III, there were no Čhao Fa for none of his concubines was ever made queen. Of the offspring of King Mongkut, there were 5 Čhao Fa, all having been born of his Queen, Krom Somdet Phra Thepsirin.⁹ The rest of his offspring were Phra Ong Čhao.

³Prince Damrong, Ruang Chaleom Phrayot Čhao Nai (In Honor of the Appointment of Princes), Bangkok, 1929, pp 4-5.

⁴Royal Proclamation, 1864, PPRS (B.E. 2405-2408), pp. 235-237.

⁵Krom Sinlapakon (Department of Fine Art), Ratcha Sakun Wong (The Royal Family), Bangkok, 1965.

⁶Prince Damrong, op. cit., p. 3s

⁷Krom Somdet Phra Sisuriyen, a daughter of King Rama I's sister.

⁸Čhao Fa Kunthon was a daughter of King Rama I, whose mother was a princess of Vientiane.

⁹A daughter of Krom Mun Mattaya Phitak, son of King Rama III.

There were three classes of Phra Ong Čhao. The first were royal children born of royal concubines (Phra Sanom). The second class Phra Ong Čhao were those princes whose fathers were Čhao Fa, and whose mothers were čhao Children of the Upparat were Phra Ong Čhao of this class. The third class Phra Ong Čhao were princes whose parents were both Phra Ong Čhao, or whose fathers were Čhao Fa but whose mothers were not čhao.

The offspring of Phra Ong Čhao, and Čhao Fa in general, were Mom Čhao.¹⁰

As regards itsariyayot, the king could raise the rank of a čhao, and rank thus obtained was called itsariyayot. The most important of these ranks, and the highest, was the Upparat. The giving of krom rank to princes has already been explained in detail in earlier chapters. During the reign of King Rama I, the rank of Krom Phra was given to the Upparat, Prince of the Palace of the Front, the Prince of the Palace of the Rear, and King Rama I's two elder sisters. The ranks of Krom Luang and Krom Khun were given to the Čhao Fa. The Phra Ong Čhao were given the rank of Krom Mun. King Rama II gave the rank of Krom Somdet Phra to his mother. King Mongkut allowed them to attain the rank of Krom Somdet Phra. Thus by this reign, both the Phra Ong Čhao and the Čhao Fa could be appointed to the five krom ranks, i.e. Krom Mun, Krom Khun, Krom Luang, Krom Phra, Krom Somdet Phra. The only difference was that the Phra Ong Čhao must first be appointed Krom Mun, while the Čhao Fa was appointed first to the rank of Krom Luang.¹¹ Mom Čhao could also be given the rank of Phra Ong Čhao, and could be given krom ranks. Their offspring, however, would be Mom Ratchawong and not Mom Čhao. Other relatives of the king could be appointed to a position with the title of Phra. In the reign of King Mongkut, this title was changed into Mom.

The ceremony of giving krom rank involved the inscription of the name of the prince on gold leaf (suphanabat), and the king pouring water on the head of the prince. Such a prince must offer the king incense, tapers, and gold and silver trees. The custom of giving gold and silver trees must have persisted from the time when the princes were sent to govern provincial towns as tributary states and had the duty to send as tribute gold and silver trees to the capital.¹²

¹⁰Prince Damrong, op. cit., pp. 3-5.

¹¹Prince Damrong, op. cit., pp. 18-20.

¹²Ibid., p. 23.

The sakdina of the princes are set out in Table 2.

Table 2
Sakdina of Princes

	<u>Without</u> <u>Krom Rank</u>	<u>With</u> <u>Krom Rank</u>
Royal brother (<u>Čhao Fa</u>)	20,000	50,000
Royal Offspring (<u>Čhao Fa</u>)	15,000	40,000
<u>Upparat</u>		100,000
Royal brother (<u>Phra Ong Čhao</u>)	7,000	15,000
Royal offspring (<u>Phra Ong Čhao</u>)	6,000	15,000
Royal nephew, niece, grandchild (<u>Phra Ong Čhao</u>)	4,000	11,000
<u>Mom Čhao</u>	1,500	
<u>Mom</u> (achieved rank)	1,000-800	
<u>Mom Ratchawong</u>	500	

Source: Phra Aiyakan Tamnaeng Na Phonlaryan (Law of the Civil Hierarchy), PK, vol. I.

The legal privileges of the princes were as follows: First, they could not be tried by any other courts except those of Krom Wang (The Palace Department).¹³ Secondly, they could not be sold into slavery for the officials were not allowed to validate the contracts of such sales.¹⁴

Normally, princes were not appointed to important administrative position. However, from the reign of King Rama II, a peculiar position had been created. The position was called Phu Kamkap Ratchakan, i.e. Supervisor of the Royal Affairs. During the reign of King Rama II,

¹²Ibid., p. 23.

¹³Royal Proclamation, 1854, PPRS (B.E. 2394-2400), p. 93.

¹⁴King Chulalongkorn, letter to Prince Rabi, dated June 15, 1901, Prachum Kotmai Pracham Sok (Collected Annual Laws), vol. V., p. 344.

five princes were appointed to this position, as supervisors of Mahatthai and Wang, Mahatthai and Kalahom and Myang, Myang, and Khlang, respectively. During the reign of King Rama III, two princes were appointed to this position, as supervisors of Khlang and Mahatthai and Wang and Sangkhakari. During the reign of King Mongkut, there were three princes holding this position, as supervisors of Na, Wang, and Myang, respectively.¹⁵ Perhaps the position was merely a sinecure, having no real power. The only fact that might support a contrary conclusion was that Rama III, while he was Krom Mun Chetsadabodin, held the position of the supervisor of Khlang (Krom Tha). It is possible that his occupancy of this position was a factor in the decision of the ministers to invite him to the throne instead of Prince Mongkut (later King Mongkut) at the death of King Rama II.

As has already been stated, four related methods were used to distinguish the power and dignity of the officials. They were the sakdina, the yot (rank in form of title), the ratchathinnam (honorific name), and the tannaeng (official position). For the officials who were not Princes, the sakdina ranged from 30,000 for a Somdet Chao Phraya, and 10,000 for Chao Phraya who were Ministers, down to 100 for the Phan. Only those with the sakdina 400 and above were considered to be khunnang (noble). The exceptions were the members of the Krom Mahatlek (Corps of the Royal Pages), because all of them were considered to be khunnang.¹⁶ By the reign of King Mongkut, there appears to have been eight titles, ranging from the highest to the lowest as follows: Somdet Chao Phraya, Chao Phraya, Phraya, Phra, Luang, Khun, Mun, and Phan. The relationship between these titles and the sakdina can be seen in Table 3. The ratchathinnam generally denoted the official position, for each honorific name was always used for a certain position in a definite krom. For each krom, however small, there were at least three positions generally occupied by nobles. They were the Chao Krom (Chief of the Krom), Palat Krom (Deputy Chief) and the Samuha Banchi (Registrar).

¹⁵"Ruang Pha Borihan Ratchakan Nai Adit" (Past Administrators), in Phraratcha Nipon Ratchakan Thi V (Writings of King Chulalongkorn), Bangkok, 1962, pp. 65-118.

¹⁶King Chulalongkorn, "Phra Borommaracha Thibai Wa Duai Yot Khunnang" (Royal Explanation on the Ranks of the Nobles), in Prayut Sitthiphan, Ton Trakun Khunnang Thai, p.2.

Table 3
The Rank System of the Nobles
Relationship between yot and sakdina

Somdet Chao Phraya	30,000
Chao Phraya	10,000
Phraya	1,000 - 10,000
Phra	1,000 - 5,000
Luang	800 - 3,000
Khun	200 - 1,000
Mun	200 - 800
Phan	100 - 400

Sources: Phra Aiyakan Tammaeng Na Phonlaruan, and Phra Aiyakan Tammaeng Na Thahan Huamuang (Laws of the Civil and Military Provincial Hierarchies), PK, vol. I.

As a group the nobles were exempted from being marked for corvée labor. This exemption extended also to their offspring. Clause 2, Art. 17 of Banphanaek Law prohibited the turning of offspring of people of sakdina 400 and above into phrai.¹⁷ Officials of minor ranks were individually given documents of exemption from being marked, but such document did not cover their offspring.¹⁸ Further, they had to make payment to their nai in order to obtain such document. The officials of the sakdina 400 and above were also given the privilege of attending the royal audience. Further, only people with sakdina 400 and above were allowed to be represented in courts of law by another person.¹⁹ According to their rank, they were entitled to mark a certain number of phrai as their secretaries (Samian Thanai).²⁰ Sir John Bowring has noted that

¹⁷PK, vol. I, p. 281.

¹⁸Royal Proclamation, 1858, PPRS (B.E. 2401-2404), pp. 31-33.

¹⁹Clause 92, Laksana Tralakan (Laws on Judges), PK, vol. I, p. 413.

²⁰Royal Decree, 1810, Prachum Kotmai Pracham Sok (Collected Annual Laws), vol. IV, pp. 1-7.

a nobleman never moved about without the bearer of his areca box,²¹ which was given to him as an insignia of his rank. In fact, in law they were not allowed to go anywhere without their attendants.²² Prior to 1824, they were exempted from taxes on their rice land.²³ The law Laksana Moradok (Laws of Inheritance) treated people of the sakdina 400 and above differently from other people. It contained special provisions for the distribution of property at their death.²⁴ Severe punishment was given to anyone who dared to revile people of the sakdina 400 and above.²⁵ It appears that their houses were exempted from certain types of searches. Thus a Royal Proclamation of 1860 stated that, although it was not considered trespassing for the master of a slave or the nai of phrai to pursue his slave or phrai into a private house, he must not follow his "slave" or phrai into the residence of a prince, noble or foreigner, but must inform the owner of the house and request the return of the slave, or phrai.

As we have already dealt with phrai in detail, the next category of people to be considered was the that. Throughout this study I have translated the word that as "slave", but it is done partly in deference to the opinion of earlier writers on the subject, and mainly because of the lack of a word in the English language which corresponds to the word that. According to the Law on Slavery (Laksana That) there were seven types of slaves:

1. Those who had been redeemed with property.
2. Children of slaves born in the house of the master.
3. Slaves given to children by their parents (or inherited).
4. Slaves who had been acquired as a gift.
5. Slaves who had been rescued from imminent perils and legal penalties.
6. Slaves who had been supported in times of famine.
7. Slaves who had been conquered in war.²⁶

²¹Sir John Bowring, The Kingdom and People of Siam, vol. I, p. 112.

²²Clause 32, Kot 36 Khø (The 36 Rules), PK, vol. III p. 74.

²³Royal Decree, 1824, Prachum Kotmai Pracham Sok, vol. IV, pp. 59-63.

²⁴PK, vol. II, pp. 141-171.

²⁵Clause 16, Phraratcha Banyat, PK, vol. III, p. 97.

It would be erroneous to believe that these categories constituted different types of slaves with different duties and obligations. They seemed rather to demonstrate the methods by which one could acquire slaves. The substance of the Law on Slavery itself dealt specially with redeemable slaves and interest bearing slaves, both being debt or bond slaves. The rest of the classes of slaves were dealt with as a group in the section called general laws.

The principle upon which the law on slavery operated seems to have been that a man, as the head of the household, had the ownership of himself, his wife, and his children. Thus he was legally entitled to sell himself, his wives, and his children to other persons.²⁷ This position and power of the head of the household was, however, limited by King Mongkut's Royal Proclamation of 1867²⁸ when, for such a sale, the consent of the person to be sold was required. In general, Thai law considered a slave as both a legal object and a legal subject. As a legal object, the slave could be sold and his services leased. As a legal subject, the slave was allowed to own property, inherit property, enter into contract, and have access to courts of justice. Thus a slave had a legal right to redeem himself.²⁹ For a slave who was sold into slavery the price of liberty was that of the actual sale. Even when the master had resold his slave at a price higher than the original sale, the slave had to pay only the price of the original sale in order to obtain his liberty. The new master had to demand the difference between the first and the second price of sale from the former master.³⁰ On this point, it must be noted that all contracts for sale of slaves were required by law to be made in writing. Such documents contained the date of the sale, the purchase money paid, and the names of the purchaser, the seller or guarantor, and the slave.³¹ The original docu-

²⁷Clause 3, Laksana That (Law on Slavery), ibid, p. 74.

²⁸Royal Proclamation, 1867, PPRS (B.E. 2408-2411), pp. 76-81s

²⁹Royal Decree, 1895, (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 30), PK, vol. III, pp. 404-405.

³⁰Clause 51, Laksana That (Law on Slavery), PK, vol. II, p. 99.

³¹See an example of such a document in Sir John Bowring, The Kingdom and People of Siam, vol. I, p. 192.

ment was retained by the master who have it up whenever the slave produced the amount mentioned in it.³² It would seem that in case of resale at a higher price as mentioned above, the slave, himself, or his guarantor would hold the document of the original sale and thus knew exactly the amount of the original sale. The price of liberty for a slave born of a slave in his master's house varied according to age. War captives who had been made slaves were in the same position as slaves born in his master's house.³³

Most slaves during the Early Bangkok period were "bond" slaves. The law divided them into three kinds:

(a) That thai mai dai kat kha (literally translated: that who has not been redeemed for full value). H.G. Quaritch Wales called them "redeemable slaves", and Samuel J. Smith called them "temporary slaves".³⁴

³²Ibid. t. p. 191.

³³It has been said that slaves who were war captives did not have this right. During the Early Bangkok period, however, they did have this right, for in 1801, the law on the regulation of price of slaves born in the master's house, slaves who were bought together with their mother, and slaves who were war captives was passed. It was as follows: (summary)

Male Slave: Age 1-25 years, price ranging from 16 baht to 52 baht increasing with age.

Age 26-40 years, price fixed at 56 baht.

Age 41-70 years, price ranging from 52 baht to 16 baht decreasing with age.

Age 71-100 years, price ranging from 12 baht to 4 baht decreasing with age.

Female Slave: Age 1-20 years, price ranging from 12 baht to 24 baht decreasing with age.

Age 21-30 years, price fixed at 48 baht.

Age 31-60 years, price ranging from 44 baht to 24 baht decreasing with age.

Age 61-100 years, price ranging from 16 baht to 3 baht decreasing with age.

³⁴H.G. Quaritch Wales, Ancient Siamese Government and Administration, p. 61; Samuel J. Smith, Siamese Domestic Institutions, Old and New Laws on Slavery, p. 1.

This category included all slaves who had been sold into slavery at or below a fixed price, i.e. 180 baht for a female slave, and 219 baht for a male slave.³⁵ As the prices fixed for the sale of this type of slave were high, I venture to presume that most slaves in Thailand in this period were of this type. The sales were generally made with a guarantor. In case the slave ran away, the master could claim compensation from the guarantor.³⁶ For this type of slave, if the master was dissatisfied with them, he could return them to the seller. The master could, of course, punish the slave but only to enforce obedience. If the master inflicted punishment and occasioned death, he would be punished and fined according to his rank.³⁷ In cases where the slaves were relatives of the seller and were sold at a low price the master was not allowed to put them in stocks and chains. Nor was he allowed to punish in a way that would cause scars, fractures, or blindness.³⁸ If a slave of this type sustained permanent injury in the course of his duty, his value was reduced, and he could redeem himself at a price lower than that of the original sale.³⁹

(b) That thai kat kha (that who has been redeemed for full value). This type of that has been called by Samuel J. Smith as "absolute slave", and by H.G. Quaritch Wales as "non-redeemable slave".⁴⁰ When people were sold into slavery at a price higher than that fixed for the so-called "temporary or redeemable" slaves, they would become this type of slave.⁴¹ Sales of this type of slave must have been made without a guarantor. If the slave ran away, the master had to bear the loss. He could not

³⁵Samuel J. Smith, ibid., p. 2. Clause 5, Laksana That, PK, vol. II, pp. 74-75.

³⁶Clause 2, Laksana That (Laws on Slavery), PK, vol. II, pp. 73-74.

³⁷Clause 8, Laksana That (Laws on Slavery), ibid., p. 76.

³⁸Clause 9, Laksana That, ibid., pp. 76-77.

³⁹Clause 25, Laksana That, ibid., pp. 84-85.

⁴⁰Samuel J. Smith, op. cit., p. 10; H.G. Quaritch Wales, op. cit., p. 59.

⁴¹Clause 42, Laksana That (Laws on Slavery), PK, vol. II, p. 95.

claim compensation from anybody else.⁴² For this type of slave, the master could inflict more severe punishment. But Art. 7 of the (General Section) Law on Slavery said "the punishment must not be excessive. If the punishment amounts to gashes or breakage, in that case the value of the slave must be divided into three parts. Two-thirds is deducted in favor of the abused slave." This clause means that in this case the slave could buy his liberty by making payment of an amount only one third of the purchase price of the original sale. If the punishment occasioned death, the master had to forfeit his life therefore.⁴³ It is thus certain that the master had no power of life and death over any kind of slave.

(c) That thai mai dai chai (that who had been redeemed, but not used). This type of that has been called by Samuel J. Smith as "interest bearing slave".⁴⁴ The sale of the person was here used as security for a debt. Instead of serving the master, the person sold retained his freedom to live where he wished and to do whatever business he liked; the only obligation he had towards the masters would be to pay interest to the master. A concrete case would be a poor man selling his wife to a rich man, but instead of letting the wife go to serve the rich man, the wife remained with her husband, and the husband paid interest monthly or otherwise as agreed. From the context of a Royal Decree of 1794, it seems that the buyer could not take possession. The Royal Decree tells us of a case where the interest was in arrears for 14 years, and says:

From now on in the case where anyone has trouble and sells their dependents, child, or wife, as an interest bearing slave to a wealthy man who has many slaves, if he gives interest to the buyer each day or each month, the money thus given is considered to belong to the buyer. If such an interest bearing slave does not make payment, or has run away, when ten years have elapsed, and the master arrests the slave, he must bring him to Supha (town official), and the payment of interest shall be made in front of the Supha.⁴⁵

⁴²Clause 2, Laksana That, ibid., p. 74.

⁴³Clause 53, Laksana That (Laws on Slavery) ibid., p. 100.

⁴⁴Clause 3, Laksana That, ibid., pp. 73-74; Samuel J. Smith, op. cit., p. 2.

⁴⁵Royal Decree, 1794, (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 28), PK, vol. III, p. 400.

Neither the Law on Slavery of the Royal Decree mentions any right of buyer to take possession. In fact, the Royal Decree mentioned that the slave would have to make payment for an amount double that which is due.

The necessity to use the word "slave" for that is very unfortunate. The ideas associated with the word "slave" in the Western World are quite different from the ideas associated with the word that. Sir John Bowring, thus, said:

Throughout the whole of this paper I have used the terms "slaves" and "slavery" to express the Siamese words "bau" and "bat" (that). I have used them in deference to the opinions of preceding writers, but I consider that some other words would much better express their meaning.⁴⁶

It seems that H.G. Quaritch Wales in Ancient Siamese Government and Administration also used the word "slave" as a translation of the word "that" (his spelling: dasa).⁴⁷ Yet he scrupulously avoided describing interest bearing slaves completely, although interest bearing slaves were called that by the Thai, and laws in connection with them were incorporated in the Laksana That (Laws on Slavery). The point which I would like to bring out clearly is that the Thai legal category of the people called that covers far wider ranges of types of people than the word "slave" would lead us to believe. Some of them were like the type of people associated with the idea of slave, e.g. the so-called absolute or non-redeemable slave, but the interest bearing slave is something quite different. To carry over the idea of Western slavery and apply it to that is to misunderstand that completely. The only way to understand that is in the context of Thai social organization.

In Thai society, there was no slave market, nor any evidence of selling slaves for profit, although it has been said that a third of the population were slaves.⁴⁸ Most of the slaves were the so-called "redeemable or temporary" slaves. The reason was that for the so-called "absolute" or "irredeemable" slaves, there was no guarantor, and "as a natural consequence, more than four-fifths absconded when they got an opportunity, and the owner had

⁴⁶Sir John Bowring, op. cit., p. 189.

⁴⁷H.G. Quaritch Wales, op. cit., p. 59.

⁴⁸Sir John Bowring, op. cit., p. 191 footnote.

no redress."⁴⁹ Bishop Pallegoix states that slaves were as well treated as servants in France, and Sir John Bowring says that they were better treated than servants were in England.⁵⁰ He also states that whenever they were emancipated, they always sold themselves again. It is interesting to note the reason given by him.

Masters cannot ill-treat their slaves, for they have always the remedy of paying the money they represent; and he must be a very worthless character who cannot get somebody to advance the sum.⁵¹

We are, therefore, back to the lack of manpower again. By the time of the reign of King Mongkut, however, as we shall see in the next chapter, it was not really the lack of manpower for labor, but for political power and prestige purposes.

Thai words for buying slaves are interesting. It was not "su that" (buy a slave) but chuai thai (help to redeem). The reason for using the term "help" was that one helped the poor by lending money to him. Such a poor person who was helped could be the person being bought, or his parents. The same sakdina, i. e. five rai, was given equally to the pauper and the beggar, who were not slaves, and to that.⁵²

Thai society was permeated with client and patron relationships. Only when the laws had formalized this relationship as in the case of the nai and phrai luang, could it become oppressive. In general the relationship between the patron and his client was interdependent. Further, it was the role of the patron to protect and help his client. When the client became destitute, the patron had to help him, and that was by lending him money. In such a society when there was no organized police force, and it was easy for a debtor to abscond, the rate of interest had to be extremely high.⁵³ The best security for a loan to a man was to have the debtor or his child or his wife living and serving in the creditor's household. Their services could be taken for the interest. Such an

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 191.

⁵⁰Ibid. p. 193.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 193.

⁵²Phra Aiyakan Thahan Huamyang, PK, vol. I, p. 261.

⁵³Sir John Bowring, op. cit., p. 195.

agreement would please both parties. Thus a debtor or his wife or child would then become a that. Sir John Bowring described the relationship between a master and his slave as follows:

In small families, the slaves are treated like the children of the masters; they are consulted in all matters, and each man feels that as his master is prosperous, so is he. The slaves, on the other hand, are faithful, and when their master is poor, will devote every fyang they can beg or steal to his necessities, and as long as he will keep them, will pass through any amount of hardship.⁵⁴

There would have been cases where the client who became destitute was the one who pleased the patron in many ways. In such a case, when the client came to ask for a loan from his patron and offered to leave his wife as that of his patron, the patron might let her go back to stay with her husband. This would be a case of interest bearing slave. The reason for making the loan into a contract for the sale of an interest bearing slave was to have the loan recorded in writing while the interest could be kept low. That is the reason why the case occurred in which the interest was fourteen years in arrears.⁵⁵

Although we have no concrete evidence for the hypothetical reconstruction given above as an explanation of that, it seems to be the only plausible explanation for the existence of interest bearing slave. It is partly supported by the present practice.⁵⁶ We have already mentioned the phenomenon of phrai luang trying to get out of

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 194.

⁵⁵See Royal Decree, 1794 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 28), PK, vol. III, pp. 398-399.

⁵⁶Sometimes an old servant who has resigned from service and gone to live in the country, to his or her master in Bangkok, bringing her daughter or son along in order that the latter would become a servant of the master, and at the same time asks for a loan. For old times sake, the master will usually lend the money. There being no slavery in Thailand now, and no written contract, what often happens is that the child may be dissatisfied with the job and quit. The master loses both the loan and the service of the child. During the Early Bangkok period, it was different because the child would have become a slave and there would have been a written contract. So when the child ran away, the master could sue for the loan.

their status by becoming slaves. It is said that when King Chulalongkorn wished to end slavery in Thailand, there were many slaves who did not want to be free.⁵⁷

In regard to legal protection for slaves the right was given to a slave to redeem himself in case the master refused to accept the payment.⁵⁸ When the slave had been in the service of the master for a long time, and then ran away to seek shelter in another place, the master could not get him back, if the owner of the premises where the slave had sought shelter refused to give him up.⁵⁹ In other cases, the owner of such premises could demand a reward from the master.⁶⁰ The master was obligated to feed his slaves during famine.⁶¹ The master could be punished for adultery if he violated his female slave who already had a husband.⁶² The master was made responsible for the welfare of the children of his slave while the mother was on duty.⁶³ Besides redeeming himself by payment, and manumission, a slave would become automatically freed if he was sent on business and captured by hostile forces,⁶⁴ and when the owner allowed his slave to become a monk or a nun.⁶⁵ A female slave would become free automatically by having a child by her master or his relative.⁶⁶

⁵⁷Phraya Anuman Rajadhon, Ruang Loek That Nai Ratchakan Thi V (Abolition of Slavery in the Fifth Reign), Bangkok, 1956, p. 27.

⁵⁸Clause 86, Laksana That (Laws on Slavery), PK, vol. III, pp. 404-405.

⁵⁹Clause 55, Laksana That, PK, vol. II, p. 102.

⁶⁰Clause 61, Laksana That, ibid., p. 105.

⁶¹Clause 69, Laksana That, ibid., p. 108.

⁶²Clause 42, Laksana Phua Mia (Laws on Husband and Wife), ibid., p. 19.

⁶³Clause 93, Laksana That, ibid., p. 118.

⁶⁴Clause 80, Laksana That, ibid., p. 112.

⁶⁵Clause 75, Laksana That, ibid., p. 110.

⁶⁶Clause 96, Laksana That, ibid., p. 120.

Social Classes

The first question which shall be taken up is whether the legal categories described above constituted social classes. We have noted that the sakdina system was a map of the stratification structure of Thai society. It is therefore profitable to set out the sakdina for every type of persons, ranging from the highest to the lowest.

Table 4
The ranking system, yot, legal category, and sakdina

<u>Yot (rank)</u>	<u>Legal Category</u>	<u>Sakdina</u>
King		Infinite
Upparat	Čhao (prince)	100,000
Čhao Fa (royal brother or offspring with <u>krom</u> rank)	Čhao (prince)	50,000-40,000 ¹
Somdet Čhao Phraya	Khunnang (noble)	30,000
Čhao Fa (royal brother or offspring)	Čhao (prince)	20,000-15,000
Phra Ong Čhao (royal half brother, or offspring) with <u>krom</u> rank	Čhao (prince)	15,000
Phra Ong Čhao (offspring of Čhao Fa) with <u>krom</u> rank	Čhao (prince)	11,000
Čhao Phraya	Khunnang (noble)	10,000-3,000 ¹
Phraya	Khunnang (noble)	10,000-1,000 ¹
Phra Ong Čhao (royal half-brother)	Čhao (prince)	7,000
Phra Ong Čhao (royal offsprings of concubines)	Čhao (prince)	6,000
Phra	Khunnang (noble)	5,000-1,000
Phra Ong Čhao (offspring of Čhao Fa)	Čhao (prince)	4,000
Luang	Khunnang (noble)	3,000-800 ¹
Mom Čhao	Čhao (prince)	1,500
Mom (achieved rank for a royal relative)		1,000-800
Khun	Khunnang (noble) or phrai (commoner)	1,000-200

<u>Yot (rank)</u>	<u>Legal Category</u>	<u>Sakdina</u>
Mun	Khunnang or phrai ²	800-200
Mom Ratchawong (offspring of mom Chao)		500
Phan	Khunnang or phrai ²	400-100
Petty official of the provinces, e.g. Rong Kwaeng (Deputy District Officer)	Phrai	300-100
Phrai (leader of phrai, with a family, and without)	Phrai	25-10
Destitute person, beggar, or <u>that</u>	Phrai or <u>that</u> (slave)	5

Note: 1. Range given here. The actual sakdina for each person depended on the size and importance of the krom to which he belonged.

2. Within the range given, those below 400 were phrai.

Sources: Phra Aiyakan Tamnaeng Na Phonlaryan, and Phra Aiyakan Tamnaeng Na Thahan Hua Myang (Laws of the Civil and Military, Provincial Hierarchies), PK, vol. I, pp. 178-271. Prince Somnot, Ruang Tang Chao Phraya nai Krung Rattana Kosin.

The first problem which we shall consider is whether the Chao constituted a distinct class above the khunnang (noble). According to the sakdina system, a negative answer must be given. Of all the princes, the Upparat, and the royal offspring, who was born of a queen or princess and had obtained krom rank, had higher sakdina than the highest ranked noble, the Somdet Chao Phraya. Other royal half brothers even with krom rank had lower sakdina than the Somdet Chao Phraya. In fact a Somdet Chao Phraya was of equal rank to a prince of the rank of Krom Luang. As with the princes of krom rank, the name of the Somdet Chao Phraya, on his appointment, was inscribed on gold leaf. His symbols of status, the umbrella, the palanquin, the sword, were identical with those of the princes of krom rank.⁶⁷ He had something similar to a private krom like

⁶⁷Prince Somnot, Ruang Tang Chao Phraya nai Krung Rattan Kosin (On the Appointment of Chao Phraya during Bangkok Period), Bangkok, 1931, pp. 36-37, 58-59.

the princes of krom rank, although the chief of his krom was not called Chao Krom but Chang wang. Similar to the prince of the rank of Krom Luang, the chief of the krom of a Somdet Chao Phraya was of the rank of Luang. The chief had under him a Palat Changwang, an equivalent of a Palat Krom (Deputy Chief) of the rank of Khun, and a Samuha Banchi (Registrar) of the rank of Myn.⁶⁸ During the reign of King Chulalongkorn, when Thai ranks were translated into English, the title of Somdet Chao Phraya was often translated as a "non-royal Duke", while that of the princes of krom rank was translated as "royal Duke". A certain word of the royal language was applied to him, i.e., ong instead of khon, this elevated status being signified by the title Somdet. Thus we say "Somdet Chao Phraya song ong" instead of "Somdet Chao Phraya song khon" (the two Somdet Chao Phraya), as would be normal in the case of other khunnang (nobles).⁶⁹ As can be seen in Table 4, the Phra Ong Chao, the royal half brothers, and the royal offspring who were not born of a queen, unless they were given krom rank, were ranked below all the Senabodi (Ministers) and governors of first and second class towns who were chao phraya or phraya with the sakdina 10,000.⁷⁰ The Mom Chao (generally royal grandchild) ranked below the chao phraya, and some phraya. The Mom Ratchawong ranked below even a Luang. This was so because when a Mom Ratchawong entered the royal services through thawai tua, he might be appointed as an official of the rank of Luang. Thus, according to the sakdina system, the chao (princes) as a group were not ranked above the khunnang (nobles) but parallel with them, the highest ranked princes being higher than the highest ranked, nobles, of course.

Another question which must be dealt with here is whether the sakdina system was an accurate map of Thai social stratifications. We have already noted two cases in which sakdina was used as a guide to superior-inferior relationships.⁷¹ We have noted also that there is a correlation between the amount of sakdina and the number of men controlled, and expect a correlation to exist between the control of manpower and income and wealth of the possessor of the sakdina. It seems to have been an especially good index of its possessor's status, for when the Bunnak

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 36-37.

⁶⁹For example see Chao Phraya Thipphakarawong, Bangkok, 1931, PPKR (the Fourth Reign), vol. I, pp. 133, 183; Prince Sommat, op. cit.

⁷⁰See Table 4.

⁷¹See above pp. 108-109.

family rose in power and dominated the political scene during the reign of King Mongkut (1851-1868), the title of Somdet Chao Phraya with the sakdina 30,000 was created to be occupied by the leaders of this family.⁷² Control of manpower was symbolized and made obvious by the number of samian thanai (personal aides and secretaries), one was allowed to possess. Thus a Royal Decree of 1810 laid down that an official of the sakdina 400-800 was allowed to mark only three of his phrai as samian thanai, an official of the sakdina 1,000-1,600 was allowed six samian thanai, an official of the sakdina 2,500-3,000 was allowed only nine samian thanai, an official of the sakdina 5,000 was allowed 12 samian thanai, and an official of the sakdina 10,000 was allowed 15-30 samian thanai.⁷³ The samian thanai were used for various purposes including carrying the areca boxes. This relationship between sakdina and a number of secretaries suggests that the possession of manpower played an important part in connection with prestige.

In the comparison of the statuses of the princes and nobles, there was one factor which might have raised the status of princes to a level higher than expected from the amount of sakdina, they possessed. This was their blood relationship with the king. The position of the king, as the symbol of the moral order within the State, was of such a height that it verged on religious sacredness. His descendants and relatives shared in the reverence paid to the king, which could be seen in the necessity for the use of court language in addressing them. This gave rise to an ambiguity in connection with the evaluation of the status of princes. Thus while a Mom Chao would rank below a Chao Phraya,⁷⁴ and the princes and the nobles knew it, this fact was not realized in the provinces. Similarly, while a Mom Ratchawong was known not to be a Chao (prince) in the higher circles, and ranked about the same as a Luang, he would be thought to be a Chao

⁷²See David K. Wyatt, "Family Politics in Nineteenth Century Thailand".

⁷³Kotmai Chamra Lek (Laws in connection with male phrai) Prachum Kotmai Pracham Sok (Collected Annual Laws) vol. IV, p. 5.

⁷⁴In early 1940's I have seen a Mom Chao who was conscious of his rank pay respect by wai first to a Chao Phraya. His attitude towards that Chao Phraya in general was that the Chao Phraya was superior to him.

⁷⁵At about the same period a Mom Ratchawong was told to pay respect with the wai to a Luang but not a Khun.

(prince) by the ordinary people in the provinces. Thus he would have been ranked higher than a Luang by the peasants in the provinces. To prevent this ambiguity causing conflict, Mom Chao and Mom Ratchawong were not allowed to go into the provinces without the permission of the king.⁷⁶

Within the stratification structure as it was set up, the chao was not a class above the nobles. They had in fact no more privileges than the nobles. They could of course be tried only by the court of Krom Wang, but this was rather because in the administration of justice, the high ranked officials of each krom had the power to conduct trials, and the nobles of each krom would be tried by the superior officials of his krom. The princes were considered to belong to Krom Wang. A trial of a noble, however, as has already been stated, could not begin without the special permission of the king. A son of a Mom Chao, i.e. a Mom Ratchawong, was in no better position than a son of a noble. At the close of the reign of King Mongkut, a prince, even the son of Phra Pinklao, the Second King, seems to have become a client of Somdet Chao Phraya Borom Maha Sisuriyawong.⁷⁷ Prof. Wyatt has noted that "the lesser members of the Royal Family found official office closed to them unless they married into the noble families. And even so, more often than not, they found themselves without power."⁷⁸

As has been shown above, it seems to be unrealistic to consider chao (princes) and khunnang (nobles) as constituting two distinct classes of people, one above another. It remains to consider whether phrai and that constituted two different classes. As we have already seen, the existence of interest bearing slaves showed that the term that had much wider meaning than the word slave. It seems to mean rather "debtor". Further, in the osakdina system,

⁷⁶At about the same period, a Mom Ratchawong was told to pay respect with the wai to a Luang but not a Khun.

⁷⁷After the death of his father, Phra Pinklao, Krom Mun Bwon Wichaichan went to Somdet Chao Phraya's residence every morning to learn about administration, and to help do things for Somdet Chao Phraya, such as decorating the houses, for instance. Natthawut Sutthisongkham, Somdet Chao Phraya Borom Maha Sisuriyawong, pp. 484-485.

that was given the sakdina of 5.⁷⁹ H.G. Quaritch Wales told us that there was no shame attaching to the status of a private slave, and that the condition of the slaves was often better than free men (phrai).⁸⁰ As a Royal Decree of this period tells us, phrai luang tried to get out of their status by becoming that.⁸¹ It would seem rather illogical to think of phrai and that as constituting two distinct classes, the phrai above the that, when large number of phrai wanted to be that, and a number of phrai, (i.e. the paupers) and beggars, were of the same rank as that in the sakdina system.

The distinction among four legal categories was not based entirely on status evaluation. The distinction between the chao and the khunnang was based mainly on the fact that the members of the first group were descendants of the king. It took no notice of political power, control of manpower, and wealth which in Thai society were important criteria for status differentiation. The distinction between phrai and that was made in order to put debtors in a different category from other peasants. It was thus based on wealth alone. Yet this basis became unrealistic when phrai, wanting to avoid government corvée labor, would willingly become that although they were not destitute.

A compelling view of stratification structure of Thai society during the Bangkok period has been proposed. It has been stated as follows:

Efforts to depict social classes in Thai society flounder because of misconstruing the nature of this social order, which resembles a military organization more than an occidental class type society. Like an army, Thai society has a hierarchy of fixed ranks which determine occupation, but one moves freely from occupation to occupation up and down the hierarchy.⁸²

⁷⁹Clause 23, Phra Aiyakan Na Thahan Huamyang, PK, vol. I, p. 261.

⁸⁰H.G. Quaritch Wales, op. cit., p. 63.

⁸¹For example, see Royal Decree of 1788. (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 18), PK, vol. III, pp. 369-371.

⁸²L.M. Hanks, Jr., "Merit and Power in the Thai Social Order" in American Anthropologist, LXIV, 6 (December 1962), p. 1252.

However, as regards social mobility, the description would fit well only in time of war, and not during peacetime. As will be seen later, during peacetime, upwards mobility from that and phrai to khunnang was almost nil.

Because the norms controlling behavior between Thai people had as their basis the relationship between the superior and subordinate (nai and phrai, patron and client), and the superior and the inferior (phu yai-phu noi), the statuses of Thai people were minutely differentiated. This tends to give the image of the society as being classless.

On the other hand, it would be safer to look at the economic situation and occupational roles of the people before deciding that Thai society of the Early Bangkok period was a classless society. The first question we could ask ourselves is "What was the form of wealth in Thai society of that period?" Unlike other pre-industrial societies which have been intensively studied, it was not land. This point should have emerged clearly from the earlier parts of this study. Further, it should be noted that Thailand had never had trouble with the distribution of land. Before the Second World War, there was no desire for hoarding land. During the reign of King Chulalongkorn, when the King offered Luang Chinda Rak a large piece of land outside the city and told him to take as much as he wanted, Luang Chinda Rak accepted only 4 rai. When his children asked him the reason for taking only that amount of land, he said that he would not know what to do with a large piece of land; it would only become a jungle. The neighbor of Luang Chinda Rak, a noble of the rank of phraya, when offered land by the King on the same condition, took even less, for he took only 2 rai.⁸³ As we know, the population of the Thai kingdom was small, and a large part of the kingdom was the plain which was flooded each year. Land suitable for the planting of rice was therefore plentiful. The description in the inscription of King Rama Kamheng-- "Nai nam mi pla, nai na mi khao" (In the water there are fish, in the fields there is rice)-- expresses well the abundance of food in the land. Another saying, however, expresses equally well what was needed and appreciated. "Rok khon di kwa rok ya," i.e., "to have too many people (as client under one) is better than to have too much grass (uncultivated land)." The Thai elites, i.e. the princes and the nobles, lived on the labor of and the gifts from their phrai and that. That there were many complicated disputes over the control of manpower is

⁸³The author is grateful to Khun Sae Siphon, the daughter of Luang Chinda Rak, who gave me this information.

evident from various laws, Royal Decrees, and Royal Proclamations; but there were none over control of land. It is interesting also to note that that could own property. We have already noted the relationship between slavery and indebtedness. The question which could be asked was "why did the creditor prefer to have services rather than land as security?" The simple answer would be because personal service was more highly valued than land.

The possession of manpower was a form of wealth, and its symbol was shown by the number of samian thanai who constituted the retinue of a noble or a prince wherever he went. It was a style of living to have followers walking behind oneself carrying various articles, some of which symbolized one's rank; as did also the followers themselves. As noted above, only the people of sakdina 400 and above were allowed to mark their phrai as samian thanai.

As regards other symbols of the people who had the sakdina 400 and above, an account of an event at the end of the reign of King Rama III tells us that the use of certain kind of material for dresses (som pak) was limited to the nobles (those of sakdina 400 and above).⁸⁴ A passage in Prawat Trakun 3 Trakun (History of Three Families) shows the image of a noble in the eyes of the Thai. In this passage a Mun Anurak (position with sakdina less than 400) who was a guard in the Royal Palace, was called to King Mongkut, and the king inquired where he had been. He told the king that he had been building barns to store up rice in order to sell to the European merchants at the time when the Bowring Treaty was to come into force. The king then told him that he need not do that for he would be a noble (khunnang) sitting on a tiang (an elaborately carved bench or dais). After he was made a khunnang, he went to the Registrar of his krom and made arrangements to buy a piece of land to build his house. He got this piece of land in Nonthaburi on the bank of the canal, Bangkok Noi. A bay 10 feet deep was made in front of his house so that his phrai could park their boats when they came on duty. On one side of his land, he had a special stand made to dry the boat which would be used in royal procession.⁸⁵ In this it can be seen that the symbols of the people of sakdina 400 and above were the possession of phrai, a ceremonial boat and a special kind of carved

⁸⁴Prince Damrong, Prawat Somdet Chao Phraya Borom Maha Sisuriyawong (Biography of Somdet Chao Phraya Borom Maha Sisuriyawong), Bangkok, 1929, p. 13.

⁸⁵Fung Ritthakhani, Prawat Trakun 3 Trakun (History of 3 Families), Bangkok, 1959.

bench, This type of bench was used, together with the triangular cushion mentioned by Sir John Bowring, as follows:

The Siamese nobles generally occupy elevated benches or thrones, leaning on stuffed triangular cushions, the ends of which are ornamented with gold embroidery..We were informed that the use of such cushions was prohibited to the people.⁸⁶

Another extremely important distinction between the members of the class of phrai and the class of nai can be seen in the expression "samniang bokphasa kariya bok trakun" i.e., manner of speech reveals the language of the speaker (to what country he belongs), manner of conduct reveals the lineage (family he descended from). A Thai, by observing the manner of a person, can tell the class to which that person belongs. We have learned that there were subtle differences in the form of greeting, speaking, etc. in the behavior which one person showed towards each individual of different status. A phrai did not know of these subtleties. He would address all nobles and princes alike using the word than, and call himself by the term kraphom. He would greet them all by sitting down and the wai. He did not know that to some of them he was supposed to krap. Nor did he know that some nobles he was supposed to address by the term taithao, to others than, etc. He did not know how to wai correctly, and he did not know how to correctly address a person in each position. It was therefore easy for King Rama I, as soon as he saw the officials appointed by the Governor of Phatthalung, to say that they were all phrai.⁸⁷

Thus, although statuses of people in Thai society appear to have been minutely differentiated, there was a gulf between those of the sakdina 400 and above, and those whose sakdina were below 400. The latter were required to be marked with the names of their nai and the name of the town in the area in which they lived. The crossing of this gulf had to be done by going through the ritual of thawai tua to the king. We have already dealt with the relationship between phrai and nai.

There are three Thai words which are relevant to our consideration of social stratification in Thai society.

⁸⁶Sir John Bowring, The Kingdom and People of Siam, vol. I, p. 116.

⁸⁷Royal Decree, 1802 (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 44), PK, vol. III, p. 455.

The first word is chan which may be translated as "class". The second word is wanna which is somewhat similar to "caste". The third is phuak which simply means "group". The word wanna is most suitably applied to the chao (princes). The word phuak has been generally applied to all four legal categories, i.e. phuak Chao, phuak khunnang, phuak phrai, phuak that. In all documents of the period, and even during the reign of King Chulalongkorn, the word chan (class) was not applied to the four legal categories. It was used in such phrases as "khon chan sung, khon chan tam", i.e. people of high class, people of low class, and noble class, people of the class of commoners (phrai). Prince Damrong used the chan (class) to describe the nai, i.e. princes and nobles and again for the phrai, i.e. phrai and that. His whole statement means that Thai society was divided into two classes: the nai who constituted the governing class, and the phrai who were the governed.⁸⁸ When we consider the gulf between those of the sakdina 400 and above, and those of the sakdina below 400, his division seems reasonable. The question whether the term "class" can be applied to them, depends on what one means by that term in its association with Western societies, so differently organized from Thai society of the Early Bangkok period.

The Sangha (Monkhood)

A few words must be said about the monkhood before we leave the discussion on social stratification. As we have seen there was a wat in almost every village in Thailand, and since almost every male Thai spent a certain period of his life varying from a few months to years as a novice or a monk, there were at any one time a large number of monks. From all appearances, the status of a monk was very high in Thai society. A layman of whatever status and rank, with the exception of the king, had to pay respect to a monk by using the krap form of greeting.⁸⁹ When a boy was ordained as a novice, his parents had to pay respect to him. When a man entered monkhood, his superior, his nai, had to pay respect to him.

Thai people conceive the world of the monks as another world, separate from their own. Thus, a separation between the religious organization and governmental organization was made, each constituting separate spheres of action called Phra Satsana (the realm of religion), and Phra Ratcha Ana Chak (the kingdom). This may be con-

⁸⁹The King paid respect to the monk not by krap but by lifting one of his hands.

sidered as a division into the sacred world and the profane world. There is evidence which suggests that entering and leaving monkhood was considered as death and rebirth. We have talked of this point in connection with the rite of passage for boys before entering the adult world. It is interesting to note that King Rama VI in his talk on reincarnation considered entering and leaving monkhood as being the process of reincarnation. A man who was born at an unfortunate time, i.e. when the stars are not favorable, could select a propitious time for leaving the monkhood. He might then have his horoscope made, taking the time of his leaving the monkhood as the time of his birth. It is believed that by this means, the man would be able to escape the bad influence of the stars which are unfavorable at the time of his original birth.

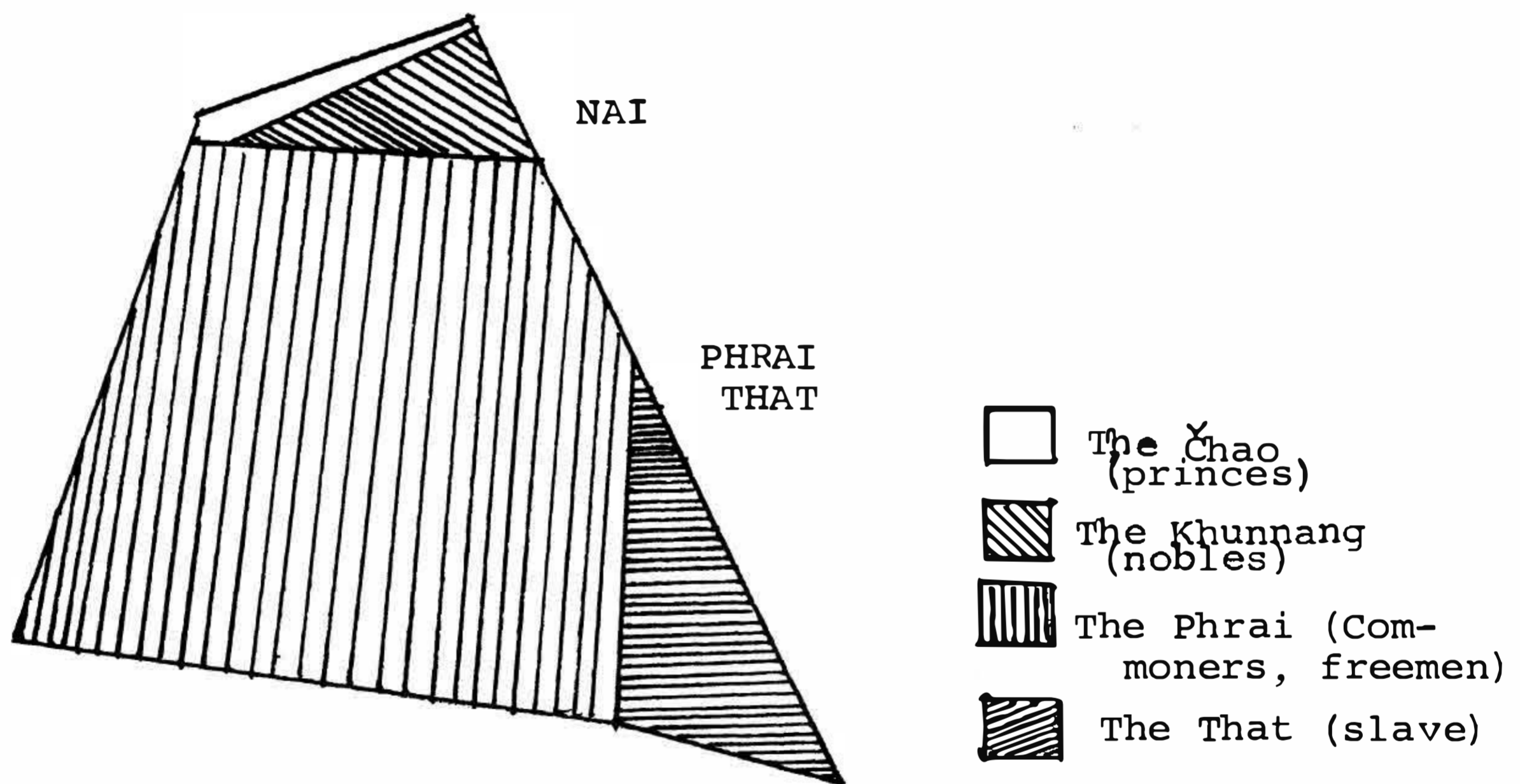
In the realm of religion, the society was organized on the basis of clients and patrons as well, the detail of which we need not necessarily go into. The Sangkharat, as the name implies, was the "king of the monks". Then, there were three Chao Khana Yai, regional Chiefs (North, South, and Central),⁹⁰ similar to the Samuha Nayok, Samuha Phra Kalahom, and the Senabodi of Khlang (The Chief Minister of Khlang) in the profane world. In each wat there was at least one head monk, the abbot, who had the responsibility of administering the affairs of his wat, and its occupants. Every new monk had a superior who was like a father to him and was to a certain extent responsible for his behavior.⁹¹

It is to be suspected that the custom of entering the monkhood functioned as a safety valve in the status-dominated society. We have noted that one way of avoiding government corvée was by entering monkhood. Entering monkhood also serves to relieve a person from the domination and oppression of his superior. When one entered the sacred world, the relationship between nai and phrai, phu yai-phu noi to which one was subjected in the profane world ceased, at least for the time one was in the yellow robe. Being a monk, one could see one's superior in the profane world, one's nai or parents whom one had revered and obeyed pay respect to oneself. It was a temporary exchange of roles that would serve to relieve the oppressive feeling of being dominated by another. We shall postpone the discussion of the function of monkhood in social mobility to a later chapter.

⁹⁰Walter F. Vella, Siam Under Rama III, pp. 33-34.

⁹¹See Kot Phra Song (Rules for the monks), PK, vol. III, pp. 1-56.

As a conclusion here, if we follow the Thai model of dividing the society into the sacred world and the profane world, and concentrate our attention on the profane world, Phraratcha Ana Chak (the kingdom), we may make a rough diagram of the structure of Thai stratification system as follows:



VII. PROCESS OF CHANGE WITHIN THE EARLY BANGKOK PERIOD,
1782-1873

It would be a mistake to consider the Early Bangkok Period to have been static. The appearance of being static arises only from contrasting the changes within this period with the major reforms accomplished by King Chulalongkorn immediately after. Yet it is doubtful whether these reforms would have succeeded so well without the changes preceding them.

There were many factors that encouraged changes in the organization of the society.

The first was the lesson learned from the bitter experience of failures in the Burmese wars and the fall of Ayutthaya. Despite the conscious use of the Ayutthaya model in the period of reconstruction after the kingdom had gained its independence, a great deal of modification and alteration was made.

The second factor was the new danger, the expansion of colonial powers. The old enemies of Siam, the Burmese and the Vietnamese, ceased to be active. Instead, the kingdom was threatened by the colonial powers to whom she had to react differently. Her awareness of this new danger is apparent in the words of King Rama III, who on his death bed said:

There will be no more wars with the Burmese and the Vietnamese. There will be troubles only with the farang (Europeans). Take good care; do not fall into their traps. Whatever they have invented, or done, which we should know of and do, we can imitate and learn from them, but do not wholeheartedly believe in them.¹

The superiority of the European forces was realized. All around her, Siam could observe her neighbors falling under the domination of those European powers. Such awareness could not but affect the internal politics of the country.

¹PPKR (The Third Reign), vol. II, p. 188.

The third factor was the influx of Western ideas due to increased contacts with European nations. In this regard the establishment of the printing press as a means of communication between the government and the people, as well as a tool in the spread of new ideas, was not negligible.

The fourth factor was the change in the economy of the country due to the increase in international trade. The country became more prosperous and the cost of living rose.

The fifth factor was the influx of Chinese laborers with its consequence on *corvée* and internal trade.

The sixth factor was the major change made in the system of taxation in the reign of King Rama III.

The consequences of the last three factors affected the whole system of organization. With the increase in international trade and the rising cost of living, higher value was placed on the possession of property, while the availability of Chinese laborers reduced the importance of manpower. Thus, real wealth came to consist in ownership of property and money gained from international trade, instead of manpower as had previously been the case.

In Chapter IV we have already taken note of a major change which occurred during this period as a lesson learned from the Fall of Ayutthaya. This was the rigid control on the distribution of manpower in the formal organization introduced by marking of phrai with the name of their nai and the town where they lived. We have also noted the waning of the power of the princes of krom rank through the effective control of the distribution of manpower, and the creation of dual allegiances for the officials of the princes of krom rank. We have seen that the central Government, by creating dual allegiances, had increased its control over the governors of provincial towns. Major changes in Thai Kingship which brought it closer to Buddhism as well as the people have already been described in Chapter III. It remains, therefore, to describe only the changes which occurred in the organization of the society which affected stratification structure.

As has often been noted by foreign writers, one distinguishing mark of Thai society was the wide existence of clientship. In our description of the model of the formal organization of Thai society, we have noted that the basis of the organization was a hierarchy of client and patron relationship. All such relationships within

the formal organization have been described. Outside of the formal organization, however, there also existed the relationship of client and patron. I would like to call such relationship "informal clientship" or "informal client and patron relationship" because it was not incorporated into the formal organization. As will be seen later there were three main types of such informal client and patron relationship from the reign of King Rama III (1824-1851) to the end of the Early Bangkok period. One type, however, might have been in existence since the Ayutthaya period. This type was the informal client and patron relationship between the people in the class of nai, i.e. both client and patron were either nobles or princes. Cases occurred where one party was a prince while another was a noble, as well as where both parties were nobles. A diagram will make it clear what is meant by informal client and patron relationship.

Diagram A

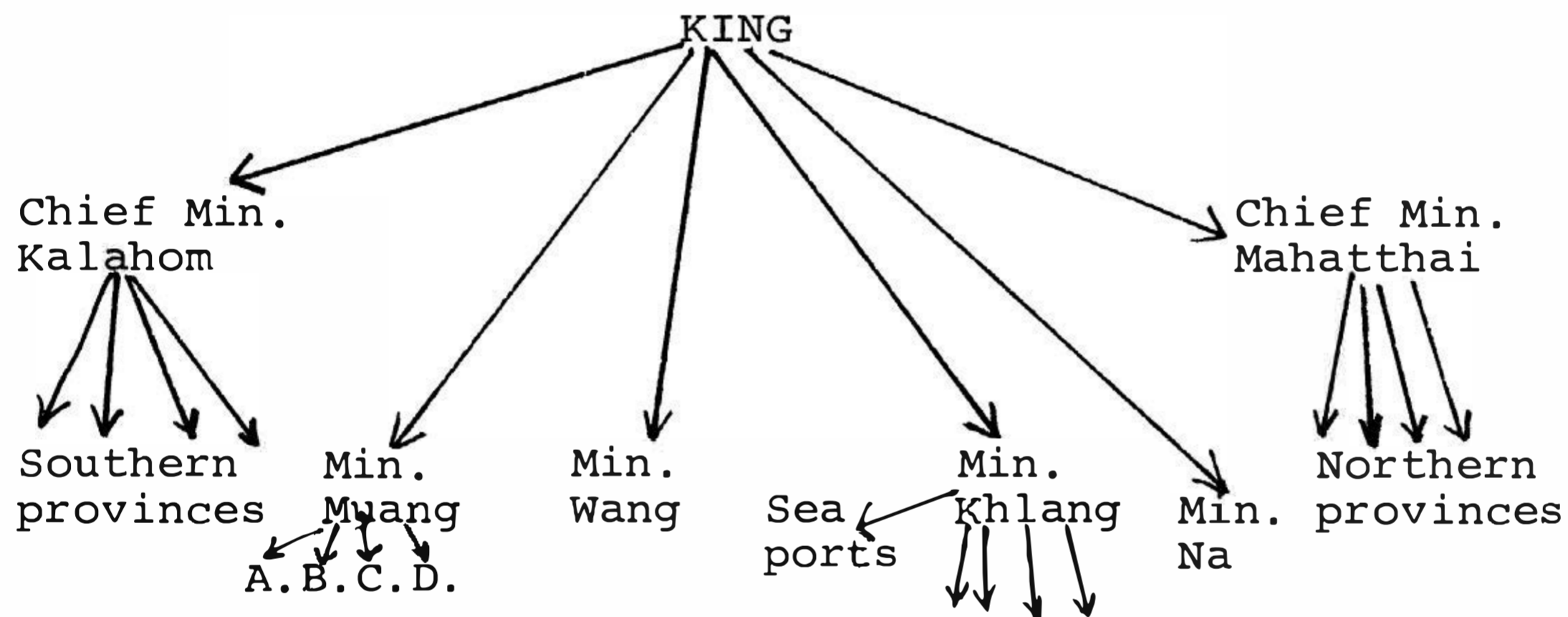


Diagram "A" represents an extremely simplified plan of the lines of authority of Thai Government of the period. A, B, C, D, were the officials under the command of the Minister of Krom Muang.

Diagram B

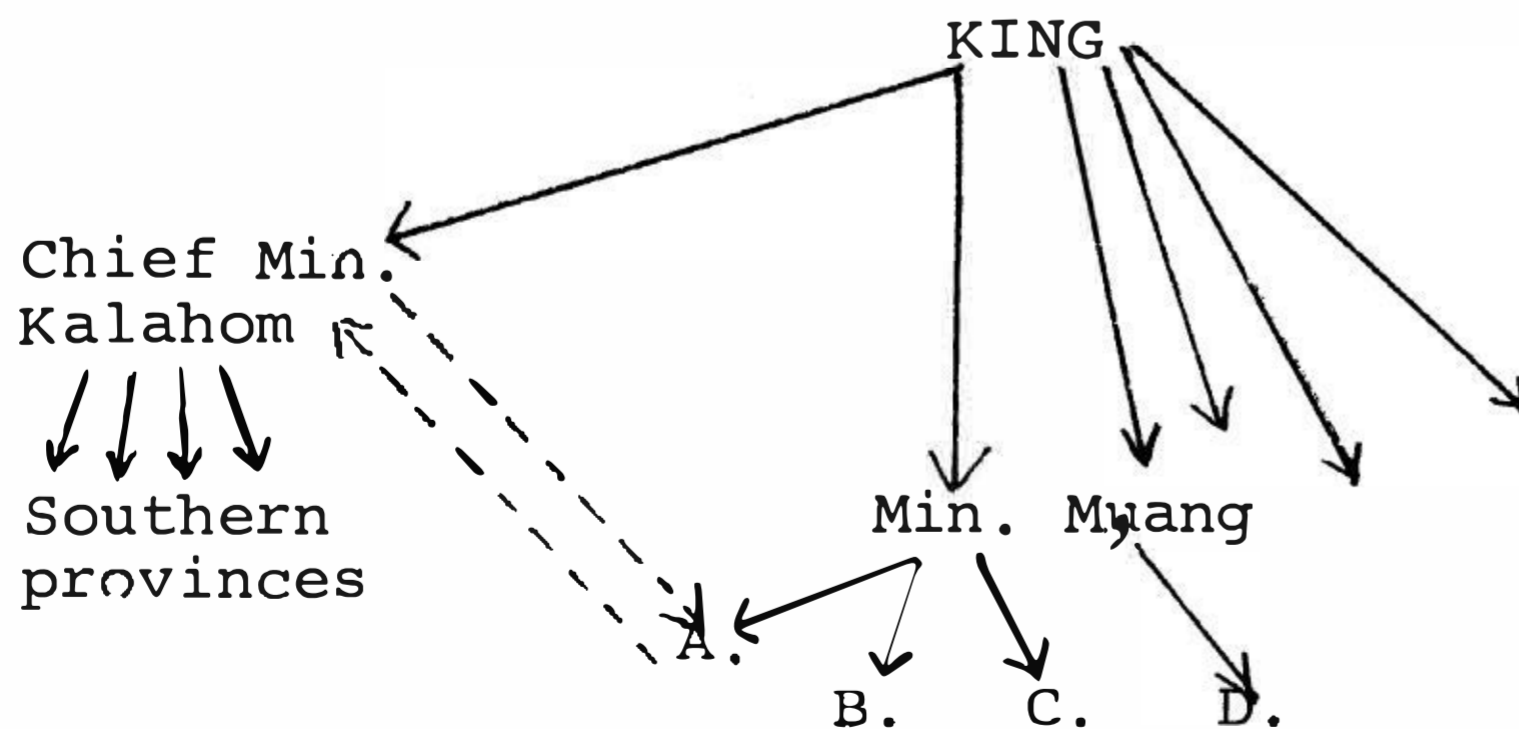


Diagram B is intended to show what happened when an official, A, established an informal client and patron relationship with the Chief Minister of Kalahom. As will be seen later on, the informal clientship thus established affected both the relationship between A and his direct superior (in this case the Minister of Krom Myang), and the relationship between the official and his equals (B, C, D). The reading of the above diagrams may be done as follows:

A was a noble, an official of Krom Myang who had a sakdina above 400. In the formal organization, being a noble, he was a client of the king. Being within Krom Myang, he was a direct subordinate of the Minister of Krom Myang. Thus solid lines mean the relationships within the formal organization. A, however, had a chance to be introduced to the Chief Minister of Kalahom, and realizing that the Chief Minister was a very powerful man in the kingdom and had much influence on the king, he presented gifts to, and did various things for, the Chief Minister. Thus A established an informal relationship of client and patron with the Chief Minister. He did this with the expectation that the Chief Minister would perform the role of the patron. When any official position became vacant and A wanted that position, he would ask the Chief Minister to put in a good word for him to the king so that the king would appoint him to that position. Further, A would expect that if he were to do anything wrong and the Minister of Krom Myang asked the king to give A punishment, the Chief Minister would intervene either with the king or with the Minister of Krom Myang directly in A's favor.

The causes for the rise of this type of relationship could be found in the nature of government and the competition between Thai nobles for advancement. All the nobles, i.e. officials of sakdina 400 upwards, including all who had been through the ritual of thawai tua had the privilege of attending the royal audiences, even if they had not been appointed to an official position. Attending the royal audiences did not mean, however, that they necessarily had the royal trust and received royal favors. From reading such letters of those of Luang Udom Sombat relating what occurred in the Royal Palace during the Malay States rebellion, it is surprising to find how personal the conduct of the government was. In all appointments, or duties given to any important officials, consideration was taken of the personal lives, connections, and kinship ties of the various officials. The king governed his officials as a father would his children. Their quarrels, likes and dislikes, were all taken into account.²

² See Chotmai Luang Udom Sombat. (Letters of Luang Udom Sombat), Bangkok, 1962.

Sometimes even regional division depended on such private affairs. Thus the quarrel between the Governor of Nakhon Sithammarat and the Governor of Songkhla (Bunhui), a town subordinate to Nakhon Sithammarat, led to Songkhla being established in 1777 as a town directly subordinate to Bangkok instead of to Nakhon Sithammarat.³ In 1782, however, because the then governors of Nakhon Sithammarat and Songkhla were great friends, Songkhla was again made subordinate to Nakhon Sithammarat.⁴ Then in 1791, the governor of Songkhla and the governor of Nakhon Sithammarat were involved in a serious quarrel and Songkhla was again made a town directly subordinate to Bangkok.⁵ The first change occurred when Phraya Songkhla (Yiang), who was originally a Chinese tax collector well acquainted with King Taksin, came to the capital and accused the governor of Nakhon Sithammarat of taking women weavers from Songkhla to Nakhon Sithammarat.⁶ The second change occurred at the appointment of a new governor of Nakhon Sithammarat, because the Upparat informed the king that this new governor and the governor of Songkhla were great friends.⁷ The last change occurred in connection with a town (Saiburi) dependent of Nakhon Sithammarat, and the movement of troops during a revolt of Pattani. The governor of Nakhon Sithammarat accused the governor of Songkhla of taking over an area of that town, and encouraging the soldiers of the royal troops to quarrel with the troops of Nakhon Sithammarat. The governor of Nakhon Sithammarat did not succeed in discrediting the governor of Songkhla, for the latter had done well in the suppression of the rebellion. The town, Songkhla, however, was again made directly subordinate to Bangkok instead of Nakhon Sithammarat.⁸

One can see that competition between Thai nobles was very keen. Further illustrations of competition among

³Phraya Wichiankhiri, Phongsawadan Myang Songkhla lae Phatthalung (History of the towns of Songkhla and Phatthalung), Bangkok, 1962, pp. 3-4.

⁴Ibid., p. 4.

⁵Ibid., pp. 13-14.

⁶Ibid., pp. 3-4.

⁷Ibid., p. 4.

⁸Ibid., p. 4

⁹Royal Proclamation, 1863, PPRS (B.E. 2405-2408), pp. 152-155.

Thai nobles can be found in King Mongkut's Royal Proclamations and letters. In connection with appointments to governorships of provincial towns, the middle level officials paid bribes of 3200 or 4000 baht and more to people closely connected with the king to influence the king for their appointment.⁹ An event was related in King Mongkut's letter to Phraya Wichitchonlathi in 1861 that during the reign of King Rama III, a certain Phra Phonsongkhram wanted to be the governor of Tak so much that he accused the governor of Tak and Prince Mongkut of establishing secret contacts with the British. Phra Phonsongkhram involved Prince Mongkut in this accusation because he knew that the governor of Tak was an informal client of Prince Mongkut. Further, the accusation was lodged because Phra Phonsongkhram knew that King Rama III at that time greatly disliked the English, and he had heard rumors that King Rama III was not pleased with Prince Mongkut. Phra Phonsongkhram was so frightened, when not long after, Prince Mongkut was elected to the throne, at the death of King Rama III, that he tried every means to take back the accusation and keep the whole affair a secret. Although well aware of the fact, King Mongkut, with his usual magnanimity, did not hold a personal grudge against Phra Phonsongkhram, and even raised him to the position of Phraya Sayam Simanurak.¹⁰ A Royal Proclamation of King Mongkut (undated) says that His Majesty did not take seriously minor accusations which arose from officials being jealous of one another.¹¹ All these accusations and requests for favors, etc. which came to the king show the intensity and keenness in competition among the nobles.

These informal client and patron relationships existing in the noble and princely circle had two levels. First, there were the attempts to continue and strengthen the relationships with the king himself. Histories of all the families show the utilization of the royal harem for this purpose. A rising noble always gave his daughter to the king to work in the Royal Palace or become a royal concubine.¹² This act served many purposes. The client and patron relationship was established and maintained by gift-giving, and the offering of a daughter could be con-

⁹Royal Proclamation, 1863, PPRS (B.E. 2405-2408)q pp. 152-155.

¹⁰Letter to Phraya Wichitchonlathi dated 12 August, 1861. PHLC, vol. II, pp. 44-48.

¹¹PPRS (B.E. 2408-2411), p. 282.

¹²See genealogies of the Bunnak family, the Gajaseni family, and biographies of nobles such as Chao Phraya Bōdin Decha, etc. Appendix.

sidered the highest form of gift-giving to maintain and strengthen the relationship. Also, since the royal court was an establishment of the highest prestige in the realm and its cultural center, there the daughter would receive an education that could not be acquired elsewhere. Not all of the ladies sent into the Royal Court became royal concubines. They might be trained in the royal ballet or to perform various ceremonial duties. By having a daughter in the Royal Court the daughter as well as the parents gained prestige. It seems also that there was always the hope that the daughter might become a royal favorite. Such a daughter could be of much assistance to her father and her brothers who were noble, and indeed to the whole family. It was advantageous, especially in such keenly competitive circles, to have a member of one's own kin as close as possible to the source of the royal power. As mentioned in a Royal Proclamation of 1863, women given to the king to be in the Royal Palace were so numerous that the king could remember neither the faces nor the names of the majority of them.¹³

Although various means were used to strengthen the relationship of client and patron with the king, it was not possible for the king to be in close contact with all of his clients. In making appointments or promotions for any official the king might depend on the advice of the direct superior of that official, or any other person or persons who knew him. If a position became vacant, the king might ask the people in his close circle to suggest a person suitable for such a position. For instance, King Mongkut appointed Phraya Wichitchonlathi to be the governor of Tak on the recommendation of Krom Luang Wongsathirat, who had known Phraya Wichitchonlathi well.¹⁴ Thus, there arose numerous client and patron relationships between persons in the immediate circle of the king and the officials outside of the circle. King Mongkut's statement about bribery to get governorships is an example of the existence of such relationships. Such relationships were utilized by the clients not only for promotion, but also for protection. On two occasions a certain Sing was saved during the reign of King Rama II from severe punishment by the help of his patron, Krom Mun Chetsadabodin (who later became King Rama III and appointed Sing Chao Phraya Bodin).¹⁵

A lower ranked noble would try to establish such client and patron relationship with those above him who might one day have the duty to examine his action. Most noble officials were judges of one type of case or another, for the administration of justice was divided among various

¹⁵Prince Damrong, Prawat Chao Phraya Bodin Decha (Biography of Chao Phraya Bodin Decha), pp. 24-26s

krom. These were what H.G. Quaritch Wales called departmental courts.¹⁶ In the provinces each official held his own court to decide cases appertaining to his department (krom). To be a judge in a case was a lucrative business. Luang Čhakkhapani tells us that when an official of the rank equivalent to Čhao Krom (Krom Chief) realized that his income was insufficient, he could request a favor from his superior by asking the latter to let him conduct the trial at his own home. This was profitable for, while the trial lasted, both parties to the litigation and also the witnesses had to stay at the house of the judge. During the trials, then, relatives and friends of both parties would bring food and other things to the judge's house for them. In order to please the judge, they would also bring him gifts of money and food. Further, when the official was allowed to conduct a trial at his house, he had the prison at his house, and could put either party or both in prison, have either of them flogged, or put in chains.¹⁷ One can see that the situation was most tempting for the judge to take bribes and blackmail the litigants, and such cases were not lacking. A Royal Proclamation of King Mongkut tells us that cases of judges even of Krom Tha (Krom Khleng) taking bribes had been found through investigations instituted on the basis of petitions made to the king.¹⁸ There was, however, a snag in this profitable business. For there was the right for either party to appeal against the conduct of the trial, stating for example, that the judge had taken a bribe from the other party. As Luang Čhakkhapani tells us, officials who were judges of low rank, therefore, tried to protect themselves by fak tua with those officials sitting on the Court of Appeal.¹⁹ Thus an informal client and patron relationship was created between a lower ranked noble and a higher ranked one with the expectation that the latter would give aid and protection.

¹⁶H.G. Quaritch Wales, Ancient Siamese Government and Administration, p. 182.

¹⁷Luang Čhakkhapani Sisinwisut, Ruang Khong Čhao Phraya Mahithon. (Biography of Čhao Phraya Mahithon) pp. 19-20.

¹⁸Royal Proclamation PPRS (B.E. 2408-2411) p. 257.

¹⁹Luang Čhakkhapani Sisinwisut, op. cit., pp. 20-21; for the meaning of Fak Tua see above, p. 94.

Informal Client and Patron Relationship Between phrai and nai.

There were also informal client and patron relationships between the nobles and persons in every other level of society. The reasons for a phrai wishing to be a client of a powerful noble were many. First, the relationship between phrai and nai, as has been described, would naturally tend to be a client and patron relationship for, to avoid oppression and to gain help, the phrai would try to gain the favor of the nai by continually giving him gifts. When a phrai could not get on with a nai well, he might seek to be a client of someone else who was superior in rank to his nai. The nature of the relationship of phu yai, phu noi, lent itself to creation of client and patron relationships outside the formal system. A patron who was superior to the phraits nai could help the phrai in a number of ways. An extreme and probably exceptional case concerned the phrai in the village of Sitha. King Mongkut wrote in a letter to Krom Mun Mahesuan that over 60 phrai luang of the Royal Palace, who lived in that village, could not be mobilized. The nai could not command these phrai. Even a nai of the rank of phraya, who called these men to do services for him, was punished for doing so.²⁰ Proclamations of King Mongkut in 1858 tell us that phrai, slaves and debtors ran away from their nai masters and creditors to hide in the houses of the powerful princes and nobles, and could not be got hold of. In his vivid imagery King Mongkut compared them to the dust sticking under the shoes of the powerful, and said that unknowingly they were sharpening the buffaloest horns for fighting against each other.²¹ In connection with Phraya Sisahathep (Thongpheng) who was a favorite minister of King Rama III, Phraya Satchaphirom writes that the Mons came to settle on both sides of the canal near his home to depend on his protection and merit. (In Thai phung bun literally translated means "depend on his merit"). He used their services to build a bridge across that canal.²² (Phraya Sisahathep's mother was a daughter of Phraya Raman Wong, a Mon noble serving under King Taksin).²³ We have already mentioned the protection afforded by the powerful nobles

²⁰Letter dated A.D. 1866, PHLC, vol. I, p. 181.

²¹Royal Proclamation, 1858, PPRS, pp. 59-63.

²²phraya Satchaphirom, Lao Hai Luk Fang (Telling the Children), p. 14.

²³Ibid., pp. 10-11.

and princes to their phrai, and slaves who were in the provinces.

The confusion and ineffectiveness in the administration of justice also encouraged the existence of such relationships. There was no real division between the executive and judicial powers. Often both powers resided in the same persons. Thus Prince Rabi has stated that for some cases of theft the courts of the krom conducted the trials without the prosecutors, or the judges themselves were also the prosecutors, for they thought that it was their executive duty to get rid of thieves and robbers.²⁴ The formal aspects of the organization of the administration of justice have been described by H.G. Quaritch Wales, and there is no need to repeat them here.²⁵ The defects of the administration of justice, however, can be envisaged from a Royal Proclamation of King Mongkut. The first cause of the inefficiency of the administration of justice arose from the fact that these officials who were judges were not paid salaries by the government. The fees for giving trials were part of their income. Thus they tended to demand excessive fees, or delay the trials with the aim of obtaining more money from the litigants.²⁶ Moreover, they were easily tempted to take bribes from one party or another. The wealthy and persons of high rank could manage to stop the trials by using their influence.²⁷ Some people, believing themselves to be clients of foreigners, or the wealthy, committed crimes such as trespassing, assault, or wanton destruction of other people's property, and boasted that the foreign consuls could give them protection from justice, or that the wealthy, their patrons, could bribe the judges so that they could not be punished.²⁸ The cost of seeking justice through the proper courts was so high that it was better to seek justice by other means. This is related to the second cause of the inefficiency in the administration of justice. The most likely origins of this second cause were the relationship of phu yai, phu noi, and the fact that the judges were also administrative officers. Phu noi must show respect by being obedient to phu yai. Thus, when phu yai

²⁴Thawi Tawethikun, Kotmai Pokkhrong (Administrative Law) p. 73.

²⁵H. G. Quaritch Wales, Ancient Siamese Government and Administration.

²⁶Royal Proclamation, 1851, PPRS (B.E. 2394-2400) pp. 14-20.

²⁷Royal Proclamation, 1864, PPRS (B.E. 2405-2408), pp. 208-209.

²⁸Royal Proclamation, 1861, PPRS (B.E. 2401-2404), pp. 300-304.

intervened in cases where a phu noi was the judge, it was natural that the opinion of phu yai would not be questioned. Of course, it was related also to the question of appointments, dismissal, and the existence of client and patron relationships among the officials. King Mongkut even made a Royal Proclamation prohibiting powerful persons from meddling in legal trials.²⁹

Client and Patron Relationship Between Chinese Immigrants and Members of the Class of Nai

Outside the groups of nobles, client and patron relationships could be utilized for the purpose of social mobility. It is of note that, from cases which have come to the knowledge of the writer, the people who used the relationship for this purpose were mainly not the phrai, but the Chinese immigrants. This was connected with the method of tax farming which came to be widely used for collection of revenues from the reign of King Rama III. A person who became a tax collector had to be made a noble for only persons with the sakdina of 400 and above could be represented in court. The business of tax collector involved a great deal of litigation, and thus it was necessary to give him a title and the sakdina of 400.³⁰ From such minor positions as tax collectors with the ranks of khun and luang, a number of these Chinese immigrants became Thai, and climbed up to such high positions as town governors.³¹ Although the appointment of tax farmers was given to the highest bidders, there can be no doubt that to be able to make a tender at all involved much manipulation of client and patron relationships. Thus it appears from a Royal Proclamation of 1858 that, besides giving in a yearly sum as contracted to the government, the tax farmer had to pay various sums to other high nobles and princes each year.³² The case of a noble, Phraya Burut, who had a large number of Chinese as his clients, is mention-

²⁹Royal Proclamation, 1853. PPRS (B.E. 2394-2400), pp. 98-99.

³⁰Prince Damrong, Thesaphiban, pp. 29-30.

³¹See the life histories of Chinese immigrants such as "Yiang", who became the governor of Songkhla in 1773, (Phraya Wichiankhiri, Phonsawadan Myang Songkhla lae Phatthalung, pp. 1-3), and "Khosuchiang", who became the governor of Ranong in 1854, (Prince Damrong, Tamnan Myang Ranong, pp. 3-9).

³²Royal Proclamation, 1858. PPRS (B.E. 2401-2404) p. pp. 10-15.

ed in a letter of King Mongkut to Phraya Surawongwaiyawat.³³ The Royal Proclamation of 1858 states that a large number of nobles and people in the Court circle, wanting to help their Chinese clients, tried to persuade the king to set up a tax on betel leaves.³⁴

The Chinese immigrants were easily received as clients of the nobles and princes because they had been successful traders, and thus could afford to give much more than ordinary Thai phrai. One purpose of having clients was to gain wealth which came in the form of gifts. A wealthy client could give much more than a poor one. With restriction on their movement and the demand on their labor by the government as well as their nai, it was difficult for a phrai to accumulate wealth. To become a successful trader necessitated free movement from the area of one town to another. To labor for wages one could not do without the consent of one's nai. Thus the field for these two lucrative occupations was left open to the Chinese immigrants who were exempted from corvée and were not obligated to be registered under a nai.³⁵ It seems that, for the purpose of gaining wealth, Thai nobles and princes preferred Chinese immigrants as their clients rather than Thai phrai.

The Relationship Between the Formal and Informal Clientships

The Thai conceived group formation in their society as comparable to that of elephants. There must be a leader, who is followed by all members of the group. In formal groupings or informal groupings, there must be a person whose command the rest of the group followed. The group did not arise simply because people had common aims or purposes and joined together to accomplish them. Groups emerged because of the dyadic relationships between the leader and each individual member of the group.

The groups as organized in the formal structure were based on lines of command, which were in turn dependent on the relative statuses of the officials as defined by the sakdina system. In special cases the lines of command might be disturbed by the relationship of phu yai, phu noi, when a phu yai issued to a person not directly subordinate to him an order conflicting with the command of

³³Letter dated Saturday, the eleventh day of the waning moon, the eighth month, 1867, PHLC, vol. I, pp. 218-219.

³⁴PPRS (B.E. 2401-2404), pp. 41-42.

³⁵G.W. Skinner, Chinese Society in Thailand, pp. 96-97.

the direct superior of that person. Such awkward situations were smoothed over by the force of the norms governing the relationship of phu yai, phu noi, for a phu noi must respect and kreng chai phu yai. (Kreng chai can be translated as the fear of doing anything which would disturb another). As long as the differences of status as charted by the sakdina system were not disturbed, everyone knew his place and how he should behave towards the others according to their relative statuses.

The existence of dual patrons or superiors tended to set direct superior against direct subordinate, yet they functioned as an integrative measure for the whole society. Conflicts within small groups were necessary for the integration of the larger group. Further, the conflicts arising from the existence of such formal clientships could be controlled, and thus did not disturb the pattern of status differentiation. An official within a small group respected and obeyed the command of his direct superior. Nevertheless, he watched his direct superior's actions, and if they looked suspicious, he reported them to the person designated as his patron. The duty of the yokkrabat can be given as an example of this. The yokkrabat reported the action of his direct superior, the town governor, to the Minister of Wang (Palace) or the king. Yet if the yokkrabat showed disrespect towards the town governor, he might be punished by the king.

Informal clientship also tended to create conflicts within the sub-groups. Such conflicts, however, could not be controlled. They also disturbed the pattern of status differentiation as defined by the sakdina system. Wealth as well as special royal favors given to people outside the formal organization, e.g. the King's concubines, or someone not having an important official position, might affect selection of patrons by the clients. Further, clients of persons of very high rank and power tended to disobey their direct superior, and considered their own status to be higher than that given for their official position. Thus, as has been related by King Mongkut, clients of powerful nobles in Bangkok committed robberies and thefts in the provinces with impunity.³⁶ The clients in this case were phrai. On the other hand, what would happen if the client were a noble-official? Let us assume that the Phra Khlang (Minister of Krom Khlang) had a client, a noble official of the rank and position of Khun Dap of the sakdina 500 within Krom Phra Tamruat Yai Khwa. Instead of obeying the command of the chief of his krom, the Khun Dap would obey that of Phra Khlang. If the Phra Khlang was powerful, wealthy, or close to the king, not only would the Chief of Krom Phra Tamruat Yai Khwa refrain

³⁶Royal Proclamation, 1855, PPRS (B.E. 2394-2400), pp. 151-153.

from forcing his direct subordinate, the Khun Dap, to obey his command, the Chief would not dare to report the matter to the king. On the other hand, the Khun Dap, encouraged by the fact that his direct superior was powerless against him, would attempt to take on roles to make him equal in status to his direct superior. He would give commands to his equals, etc. His being a client of the Phra Khlang would raise his status in the eyes of the people within his krom, and elsewhere. Evidence is not lacking for such occurrences. They might have given rise to such Proclamations as that of 1858 warning the officials that they should perform duties only within their krom or kong, and not in another krom or kong.³⁷ Phrai Luang of Krom Supharat, although marked for that krom, and easily identifiable, were said to have disappeared to join other krom.³⁸ How far the existence of informal clientships affected rights and duties of the officials can be gathered from this passage in the Royal Proclamation of 1855.

...H. M. has known for certain as if it were natural that the officials, both in the capital and in the provinces, always think of the future when they do anything. They look to the left and to the right, taking care not only of the affairs of the king, but also fearing that prince, this prince, that official, this official...who are in the royal favor. They consider who will be big (phu yai) and powerful in the future. If one were to work in a straight forward manner, these people would be angry and take revenge. If by chance one does anything wrong, they will magnify the wrong so that one would be blamed by the king, and lose one's rank and position. Or in the future, that prince may become big and powerful and not keep one in a high official position or give one promotion...³⁹

Further, status in Thai society was evaluated by the number of men under one's command. In the formal organization the sakdina system had precisely that basis. The relationship between a patron and his phrai in informal clientship was very similar to that of nai and phrai in the formal organization. To gain more clients outside

³⁷Royal Proclamation, 1858, PPRS (B.E. 2401-2404), pp. 104-105.

³⁸Royal Proclamation, 1862, PPRS (B.E. 2405-2408), pp. 27-28.

³⁹Royal Proclamation, 1855, PPRS (B.E. 2394-2400), p. 155.

the formal organization, then, would also raise one's status. Having large number of clients gave a noble prestige and the reputation for being kind, generous, and powerful. Because power was necessary to protect clients, the greater a noble's exertion of power, the more clients would be attracted to him. Thus clients of the powerful tended to oppress other people for they knew that they could do so with impunity. King Mongkut, therefore, found it necessary to issue a number of Proclamations telling the nobles to get rid of old notions. Samples of some of his statements are reproduced here. To high ranking nobles who allowed their names to be used by their clients to frighten other people, tax collectors, and officials, he said:

...Do not think only of making people afraid of your name at the present moment. Think more of the future. The people will not later love and fear you and your descendants, because they will know that you love bad men more than good men.⁴⁰

Of phrai, slaves, and debtors sheltered in palaces of princes, and houses of nobles of high rank, he said:

Although the phrai, slaves and debtors who have sought shelter there may praise you and say that they could get away from the power of their chao mu (platoon leader), nai, and creditors because of you, whoever hears of this will not give you much praise for these people have committed wrongs. Some have stolen property of their nai or creditors. Whoever hears of this will say that phu yai (the big man) cooperates with thieves, and this is no honor... The character of the person who is big now, or is going to be in the future, should be in keeping with his honor, so that he has the reputation of being kind to all, not siding with his own followers, or bad men, but desiring to help only good men. To seek honor by making people believe that both patron and clients are so brave and daring that no one can do anything to them is a method advised by the old text but most unsuitable for the need of the country at the present time.⁴¹

The main difference between the informal clientships

⁴⁰Royal Proclamation, 1855, PPRS (B. E. 2394-2400), p. 147.

⁴¹Royal Proclamation, 1858, PPRS (B.E. 2401-2404), pp. 63-64.

and the formalized ones was that, through the process of formalization, the State had deprived the clients of the right to terminate the contract and seek a new patron. With the formal clientships introduction of the marking of phrai made it virtually impossible for the clients to terminate the contract illegally through bribing their nai, or other means. On the other hand, informal clientships were manipulable. Thus in informal clientships, it was necessary for the patrons to exert their power more vigorously in giving protection in order to keep their clients as well as to gain more clients.

The existence of numerous informal clientships was in conflict with the established order which was based on status patterns defined by the sakdina system. The informal clientship modified the behavior between superiors and subordinates in krom and kong. Further, it tended to establish informal units of manpower outside the established order, for according to the norm of the society in connection with superior and subordinate relationship, it was an important duty of the clients to please their patrons by obeying the orders of the latter.

It appears to the present writer that we witness a rapid growth of informal clientships in the Early Bangkok period. This, however, can only be presented as a hypothesis for the material on the state of the society during the first and second reigns of the Bangkok period does not permit us to state definitely that the numerous informal client and patron relationships testified to by the letters and Proclamations of King Mongkut (the fourth reign) were already in existence in those reigns.

Three extremely important changes had occurred within this period which must have had an impact on the formal organization. The first was the increase of international trade. During this period, the country was gradually being opened up for foreign trade. Trade agreements were made with the Portuguese in 1818, with the East India Company in 1826, and with the United States in 1833.⁴² This resulted in certain changes in the economy. King Chulalongkorn noted this change when he said that the officials of Krom Wang and Krom Myang had to suffer the consequences of the rise in the prices of food because the country had made progress.⁴³ It seems that the rise

⁴²G. Coedes, The Making of South East Asia, p. 168. D. G. E. Hall, A History of South East Asia, pp. 436-438.

⁴³King Chulalongkorn, Phraratcha Damrat nai Phrabat Somdet Phra Chunla Chomklao Song Thalaeng Nayobai Kaekhai Kan Pokkhrong Phaendin (King Chulalongkorn's Speech on the Changes in the Administration), p. 10.

in the cost of living affected the majority of the officials, for apparently the increased income occurred only in certain krom, such as Krom Tha (Krom Khlang acting as Port Authority) and Krom Phra Khlang Sinkha (The Royal Warehouses) due to increased international trade.⁴⁴

The second important change was the widespread use of a new method of revenue collection dating from the reign of King Rama III. For a discussion of this change, we have to look at the sources of government revenue in general. Especially at the beginning of the Early Bangkok period, a large part of it came from foreign trade. The Annals of Bangkok stated that in the reign of King Rama I (1782-1809) a large part of the revenues came from foreign trade. A large number of junks, owned by the King, the nobles, and the merchants, carried various articles of trade to China each year.⁴⁵ For the reign of King Rama II (1809-1824) taxes were stated to be insufficient, and additional revenues had to be acquired from foreign trade. The king owned two ships which journeyed to a number of places. The princes and nobles who were wealthy built ships for conducting foreign trade.⁴⁶ James C. Ingram⁴⁷ states that the exact nature of the organization of trade prior to 1850 is obscure, but broadly it appears that trade was monopolized either by the king and his court or by individuals to whom monopolies of specific commodities were sold. The trend was away from the former towards the latter form in the first half of the nineteenth century, the Second and Third Reigns. It has been stated by King Mongkut that in the first and the second reigns (1782-1824) the kings themselves engaged in trade and obtained most of their revenues from the profit in trade.⁴⁸ For the reign of King Rama II, there were royal monopolies on tin, ivory, cardamom, eagle-wood, gamboge, swallow's nests, turtle eggs, and sampan wood.⁴⁹ Besides these monopolized articles, sugar and pepper were denied

⁴⁴See below, pp. 169-170. The name of Krom Khlang was changed to Krom Tha in the reign of King Rama II (1809-1824).

⁴⁵PPKR (the First and Second Reigns)q, p. 300.

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 720-721.

⁴⁷James C. Ingram, Economic Change in Thailand Since 1850, p. 26.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 27.

⁴⁹John Crawford, Journal of an Embassy from the Governor-General of India to the Courts of Siam and Cochin China, pp. 378-381.

to traders until the king had as much as he wanted to buy.⁵⁰ During this reign, however, possibly because of the decreased profit, the king gave more freedom to traders, but established an inland tax.⁵¹

At least in part, these monopolized goods were supplied by the phrai suai who had to supply produce instead of doing corvée. These goods were gathered together in warehouses under the control of Krom Phra Khlang Sinkha (The Department of Royal Warehouses) and then sold to foreign merchants who were unable to obtain them from anyone else in the kingdom.

As for inland taxes, those on fruit trees was probably collected by Krom Khlang. Land tax was collected in kind by Krom Na (Department of Land). As regards the payment the phrai luang made in lieu of government corvée, its collection was done through their nai in the krom of the phrai. There was also a head tax levied on the Chinese immigrant. The method of collection for these various taxes, traditionally, was done through officials in the various krom, and in the provinces, by the town governors and his officials. This traditional system of revenue collection invited dishonest practice, and we cannot doubt that large parts of it went to the unsalaried officials who had the duty to collect the revenue.⁵²

A new method of collecting taxes was introduced either in the later period of Ayutthaya, or the beginning of the Bangkok period. This was done by farming out the collection of each kind of taxes to the highest bidder. Sir John Crawford stated that during the reign of King Rama II, the spirits tax, gambling tax, fishing tax and shop tax were thus farmed out.⁵³

The reign of King Rama III saw the proliferation of taxes collected by the methods of farming out. As reported by Wira Wimonit the procedure was that the tax farmers proposed to the king which kind of taxes to be levied through any of such krom as Mahatthai, Kalahom, Krom Tha

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 378-381.

⁵¹James C. Ingram, op. cit., p. 27.

⁵²Wira Wimonit, Historical Patterns of Tax Administration in Thailand, M. P. A. Thesis, mimeo., Thammasat University, Bangkok, 1961, pp. 34-41.

⁵³John Crawford, op. cit., p. 379.

(Krom Khlang), or Krom Phra Khlang Sinkha (The Royal Warehouse). After the farming practice was established the farm authority was let by the government, at intervals, to persons submitting the highest bid. From an account presented by Phraya Montri (Phu) to King Rama III, these tax farmers appear to have been composed largely of the officials and the Chinese.⁵⁴ As tax farming began to be widely operated, trading activities of the king began to subside.⁵⁵

In general the proliferation of tax farming must have deprived a large number of the unsalaried officials of part of their income. As tax farming was done through Krom Mahatthai, Krom Kalahom, Krom Tha, the officials there were said to have obtained increased income thereby.⁵⁶ But as tax farmers dealt with officials of very high positions only, tax farming increased the income of only these high officials. Its effects on the income of lower officials were rather in the form of benefits given to them by their patrons who became more wealthy. It seems, however, that the minor and middle-ranked officials even within these krom must have been deprived of part of their income.

The rise in the cost of living as well as the deprivation of part of their income would naturally make the officials demand more money and services from their phrai. Increased oppression on the part of their nai would compel the phrai to seek protection elsewhere, i.e. from wealthy, powerful officials who were feared by their nai. Thus the number of informal client and patron relationships would increase.

The third major change was the availability of labor due to the influx of Chinese immigrants. After the building of Bangkok had been completed, the importance of corvée labor, was reduced. There is evidence that a definite sum of money was spent on hiring Chinese laborers to dig a canal in 1851. The Annals of Bangkok, however, state that the practice of hiring Chinese laborers to dig canals began in the reign of King Rama II (1809-1824) at a place near a town called Khuankhan.⁵⁷ Thus the duration

⁵⁴Wira Wimonit, op. cit., pp. 62-63.

⁵⁵James C. Ingram, op. cit., pp. 27, 31.

⁵⁶King Chulalongkorn, op. cit., p. 9.

⁵⁷PPKR (The Fourth Reign), vol. I, pp. 75-76.

of corvée in each year was reduced, and payment in specie became preferable to the government.⁵⁸ The consequences of this change in the relationship between phrai and nai should not be underestimated. Without the regular corvée, when the phrai had to work under his nai, the relationship became more distant. Further, now that the phrai made payment in specie instead of doing corvée, the demands made by their nai for their services might have appeared unjustified. There was now less necessity to please the nai by giving gifts in order to get such favors as light work or secret exemption from corvée. This loosening of the tie between the nai and his phrai occurred just when the nai needed and demanded more money, gifts, and services from the phrai.

In Ayutthaya times, to avoid such oppression there would have been a rush to get into the status of phrai som. The marking of the phrai, however, had made such escape difficult. Further, the differences between phrai som and phrai luang had become blurred.⁵⁹ Informal clientships, therefore, became a necessity. To establish an informal clientship, and to have a patron who was sufficiently powerful to overawe one's nai was the only way to avoid the oppression. Although we lack the evidence for conditions during the reigns of King Rama I and II, the changes mentioned above suggest a rapid growth of informal clientships during the reigns of King Rama III and King Mongkut (1851-1868). Such types of informal client and patron relationships were between the nobles and the phrai as well as between the people of the same class, i.e. the governing class which was composed of the nobles and princes.

Both from consideration of the organization of the society as well as from events recorded in the Annals, it appears that informal client and patron relationships between people of the upper class must have been in existence during the Ayutthaya period. It seems, however, that informal client and patron relationships between the nobles and the phrai did not exist then. During Ayutthaya period there were still many ways open to a phrai to change his status from phrai luang to phrai som.⁶⁰

Informal clientships tended to form into hierarchies of their own outside the formal organization. They had their own lines of command too. Thus a powerful noble might have besides phrai, other lower ranked nobles as his

⁵⁸Walter F. Vella, Siam Under Rama III, p. 19.

⁵⁹See above Chapter IV.

⁶⁰See above Chapter II.

clients also. These nobles would also have their own clientele who were phrai. Thus the powerful noble had the command of his clients, and they of their own clients. The existence of such hierarchies of clientships would provide no competition or danger to the king as long as there was division and antagonism among the powerful nobles who were the major patrons in these informal hierarchies. As can be seen in Table 5, by the reign of King Mongkut, the Bunnak family had occupied the top positions in all the most important krom which brought them both wealth and power. The absoluteness of the king's power depended upon the division and antagonism among the powerful nobles who were the major patrons in the informal hierarchies of clientships. When such magnates joined forces his power was jeopardized. Thus the king became dependent on these magnates who were formerly his clients. One can feel the situation of the king in the following abstract of King Chulalongkorn's letter to his son, the first Crown Prince:

The words dairap siri ratchasombat (obtaining the auspicious royal wealth) are beautiful words for wealth is what everyone covets. People would think in a simple way that the person who is a king would be esteemed higher than ordinary people, that he would be able to punish anyone who displeases him, and lift up those who please him, that he would have much wealth which he could squander or give to people whom he likes as he wishes. In brief, these are reasons for being delighted with accession to the throne, but there are many others, the enumeration of which has no end.

In fact it is far from what people expect. At such time when in the common expression one is said to mi bun (have merit, and therefore, have happiness) one, in fact, has kam (having bap, and therefore unhappiness) and becomes more miserable. This has happened to myself...

At that time I was 15 years and 10 days. I had no mother and most of my mother's relatives were unreliable. Those not thus unreliable held no important positions in the administration. My relatives on my father's side, i.e. all the royal princes, were under the power of Somdet Chao Phraya (Borom Maha Sisuriyawong), and everyone of them had to think first of himself and his life. Most officials would not assist me. Although there were some officials whom I knew well, the majority of them were of minor rank. Those of superior rank, however, had no power to give me assistance. All my brothers and half bro-

thers were younger than myself. I was still young and had not sufficient knowledge and experience to do my job, even to the extent to which my father (King Mongkut) had done...⁶¹

In connection with the princes and descendants of princes taking journeys into the provinces without royal permission, King Mongkut wrote a rather bitter and sarcastic letter to Prince Krom Mun Mahesuan in which he said:

When the king (meaning I) makes such an order, the persons who are of great power and high position (phu yai) in the land do not agree to it and refuse to obey. In refusing they have not followed the old custom. They refuse to do so because they are phu yai and do not have to kreng chai (fear to offend) the king. Therefore, they do what they like. They either become overly enthusiastic about the Europeans just as the princes of Ava were about the Ceylonese monks, or they are simply blinded with their positions and power, seeing that the king, unable to refuse, will let them do what they like. But the insignificant princes, Phra Ong Chao and Mom Chao, follow their suit, not fearing the regulations laid down by the king...

...It seems that [the gods] are siding with the king. Although both his father and mother are of high rank, he was covered under sand and dust. Even his own clients and phrai did not imagine that he would become big and important. Perhaps the gods made the phu yai dig him up and install him on the throne. But to say that he became king because of the power of the gods would be to neglect the debt of gratitude owed to the phu yai who together helped to put him on the throne. The fact that he became king because of the support of the phu yai is well known to many people. Thus, discarding the notion of gods, one has to say that he has become a king because of the support of the phu yai. On the other hand there were a large number of people who were against his becoming a king. You know of this for you, yourself, were oppressed by those people. There were many of them, and they were of one mind.

⁶¹King Chulalongkorn, letter to the Crown Prince, Chao Fa Wachirunnahit dated July 8, 1893. Prachum Phra Borom Rachawat (Collected Royal Advices), pp. 20-21.

While they were big and powerful, the phu yai who support the present king could not do anything to them. Yet, when the time came for the present king to ascend the throne, those people started to fight among themselves and killed each other. Their objective, therefore, failed. Thus, it is difficult not to say that the gods have helped to clear the way for him.

The present king always respects phu yai of the land. Whenever he goes out of the capital, he always writes to inform the Prince of the Palace of the Front. Further, whenever he wishes to go anywhere, he always consults Khun Sisuriyawong (Chao Phraya Sisuriyawong, Minister of Kalahom). If Khun Sisuriyawong disagrees, he is never stubborn. In such cases, he always follows Khun Sisuriyawong's advice.⁶²

During the reign of King Mongkut, or even before, it seems that most hierarchies of informal clientships had come to be under the control of the Bunnak family. As indicated by the royal letter of King Mongkut, it was they who put him on the throne. Since the reign of King Rama II, the Thai kings neglected to use their prerogative in appointing their heirs to the throne, and thus the successor to the throne came to be elected by a group of princes and nobles. It was, however, not by voting, for consensus was required. It seems that the control of manpower had a large and important share in bringing such a consensus about. Everybody knew who had the greatest power and his choice would be accepted. Events at the end of the reigns of King Rama III and King Mongkut tend to support such a proposition.

At the end of the reign of King Rama III, a prince of krom rank, Krom Khun Phiphitphuban, called in all his phrai, and it was said that his palace was not large enough for all of them to live in. They had to be put up in a wat nearby. Chao Phraya Phra Khlang (the Minister of Khlang) and his son who later became Chao Phraya Sisuriyawong (Chuang Bunnak), the Samuha Kalahom brought troops from the fort at Paknam, a town under Chao Phraya Phra Khlang, into Bangkok, and threatened the prince that, if he did not disperse his men, the Chao Phraya Phra Khlang would order the soldiers to arrest his men. To this ultimatum the prince had to comply.⁶³ Again at the meeting

⁶²Letter to Krom Mun Mahesuan dated 1868. PHLC, vol. I, pp. 188-190.

⁶³Prince Damrong, Prawat Somdet Chao Phraya Borom Maha Sisuriyawong (Biography of Somdet Chao Phraya Borom Maha Sisuriyawong), Bangkok, 1929, pp. 13-15.

to elect the successor to King Mongkut, a prince of krom rank had to comply with the wish of the Chief Minister even though the prince thought otherwise. After electing King Chulalongkorn as the successor of King Mongkut, Chao Phraya Sisuriyawong (Chuang Bunnak) proposed that a son of Phra Pinklao (the late second king) be made the Upparat. Prince Krom Khun Worachak, a prince of krom rank protested that the meeting had no power to appoint the Upparat. However, Chao Phraya Sisuriyawong was reported to have been very angry, and the prince had to comply, saying at the same time "If you want me to agree, then, I agree."⁶⁴

It can be seen from Table 5 that since the reign of King Rama II, members of the direct male Bunnak family line always occupied Krom Khlang. In fact, when one of the most famous of the Bunnak, Chao Phraya Phra Khlang (Dit) was offered a promotion to the position of Samuha Kalahom (Chief Minister) in 1830, he refused the promotion, preferring to remain in the inferior position of the Minister of Khlang. The consequence was that he was appointed to be in control of both Krom Kalahom, and Krom Khlang.⁶⁵ It is also of note that from the reign of King Rama II onwards, the princes who were elected kings were the ones supported by the Minister of Khlang. Rama III, during the reign of his father, was closely associated with the Minister of Khlang, and appointed him to supervise Krom Tha⁶⁶ (at that time Krom Khlang was called Krom Tha, "The Port").

The officials of Krom Khlang, especially those of high rank, gained more advantages than the officials of other krom from the changes which had taken place. The increase in trade activities would have brought them more wealth, both from "gifts" from foreign merchants, as well as from other businesses which they did as their sideline. Further, when the system of tax farming came into operation, they were in an advantageous position to deal with tax

⁶⁴Prince Damrong, Chotmai het plai Ratchakan thi IV to Ratchakan thi V. (Records of Events at the End of the Fourth Reign and the Beginning of the Fifth Reign), vol. I, p. 112.

⁶⁵PPKR (The Third Reign), vol. I, p. 112.

⁶⁶PPKR (The First and Second Reigns), pp. 433; King Chulalongkorn, Phra Thammathetsana Chaloe Phrakiat Phrabat Somdet Phra Nangklao Chao Yuhua (Sermon in Honor of King Rama III), Bangkok, 1938, pp. 37, 43-44.

farmers for in their work they dealt especially with foreigners and most tax farmers were Chinese immigrants. Because the income of Thai officials in general had remained the same, or even become less, the officials of Krom Khlang could easily use their wealth to gain clients in informal clientships. Increase of clients meant increase of power and higher status. It was not surprising, therefore, that the members of the Bunnak family had come to have so much power.

Since the Bunnak family was so powerful, one asks the question, "Why did one of them not usurp the throne?" The answer may be found in two factors. The first was foreign relations and the threat of colonial powers. The second was the development of Thai kingship during the Chakkri Dynasty.

As has been stated at the beginning of this Chapter, the Thai were fully aware of the threat posed by European powers. They saw all around them their neighbors falling under European domination. The obvious immediate cause of the fall of these kingdoms was succession disputes which gave a European power the opportunity to intervene and put their nomination on the throne.⁶⁷ The Thai kings themselves may have shown their awareness of this in that, with the exception of King Rama I, they refrained from exercising their prerogative of naming their successors. King Mongkut stated again and again before his death that, in regards to succession to the throne, the nobles and princes should consult each other and elect any suitable prince. When he realized that they were going to elect his son, Prince Chulalongkorn, the King said that his son was still too young and would not be able to govern. The answer to this royal comment given by Phraya Suriwongworawat, a member of the Bunnak family, son of Chao Phraya Sisuriyawong, and the Chief Minister of Kalahom, illustrates well the awareness of the foreign threat.

If Prince Chulalongkorn is not put on the throne, there will be trouble in the future, for everybody, including the foreigners, likes and respects him and considers him to be the successor to the throne. Even Emperor Napoleon II of France has written him and given him a sword inscribed in his honor as the Crown Prince. If we do not elect him as successor to the throne, there will be trouble in the future.⁶⁸

⁶⁷Since his youth the present writer has continually been told that succession disputes led to the fall of these kingdoms.

⁶⁸Prince Damrong, Mua Phrabat Somdet Phra Chonklao Chao Yuhua Sawannakot (Events at the end of the Fourth Reign), Bangkok, 1929, p. 12.

We have already noted the change in Thai kingship during the Early Bangkok period. It had become closely linked with Buddhism. The king was the symbol of the Buddhist moral order, the standard by which his conduct was judged. In this respect the behavior of the Chakkri kings had been impeccable, and their security had thereby been obtained. We have noted also that kingship was brought closer to the people. King Mongkut, through mixing with the people and receiving their petitions, had become the defender of the people against the oppression of the nobles. By closely attaching himself to the principles of Buddhist norms in all his conduct, he was personally loved by the powerful nobles and the populace alike. This was a deterrent for any powerful person who had control of the informal hierarchies of clientships to exert his power to usurp the throne. There was no legitimate cause for a revolt. Wyatt gives us the following anecdote:

Oral tradition has it that one of the granddaughters of the last great Bunnak statesman, Chao Phraya Si Suriyawong (who acted as Regent during the first years of Chulalongkorn's reign) once asked him, 'Grandfather, why don't you become king?' He is said to have replied, 'Why bother? I have everything a man could desire.'⁶⁹

The most important basis of Thai social stratification was the control of manpower. This is reflected in the blessings that mothers and grandmothers gave to their descendants. Such blessings consisted of such phrases as "Khō hai luk (or lan) dai pen chao khon, nai khon" (may son or grandson become the lord of men, the master of men) or "Khō hai luk (or lan) mi bōriwan mak mak" (may son or grandson have a large number of followers). Being a device for the control of the distribution of manpower, the sakdina system was a device for government control of the status hierarchies within the formal organization. Because wealth, especially during Ayutthaya period, consisted of the possession of manpower, the sakdina system was also a device for the control of wealth. It was successful for neither purpose.

A breakdown of the sakdina system had two interrelated consequences, one being social and the other political. In order to understand clearly the breakdown of the sakdina system, it is perhaps best to review it against the course of the development of the organization

⁶⁹David K. Wyatt, "Family Politics in Nineteenth Century Thailand".

of Thai society after the Ayutthaya period. We have noted that when King Naresuan emerged victorious from the war of independence after the first fall of Ayutthaya, the number of phrai luang had greatly increased. The King assigned them to be under his officials according to their sakdina. At such a time there would have been little development of informal client and patron relationships. The fall of Ayutthaya in 1569 would have upset the whole hierarchy of informal client and patron relationships. The new formal hierarchies which were set up by the King's appointment of high ranking officials was based on personal qualities and success in war of these officials. There was, thus, no incentive for the latter to see informal patrons outside the formal organization. The sakdina, therefore, truly reflected the status and the power of its holders. This gave much strength and security to the king.

As time went by, however, the inequality between the condition of phrai luang and phrai som gradually upset the distribution of manpower laid down by the sakdina system. By the loss of phrai luang and the increase of phrai som, the princes came to control much more manpower than warranted by their sakdina. The increase in the amount of manpower under control meant also the increase of wealth. Loss of phrai luang meant the decrease of manpower under the control of the nobles and thus of wealth and power. The princes could, therefore, use their wealth to induce the nobles to become their informal clients. Thus, hierarchies of informal clientships arose with each prince in command of each hierarchy. Socially considered, the stratification system as regulated by sakdina was upset. Politically considered, the princes gained much more power than their sakdina warranted. These informal hierarchies of clientships turned into factions, the expression of which was strongest at the time of succession disputes. The weakness of the formal organization due to the existence of hierarchies of informal clientships outside it led to the weakness of the Kingdom to resist outside attacks. This led to the fall of Ayutthaya in 1767.⁷⁰

After the fall of Ayutthaya, pockets of resistance to the Burmese yoke became evident all over the country. There were five main factions led by the Governor of Phitsanulok, the Governor of Nakhon Sithammarat, Prince Thepphiphit, a monk from Fang, and Phraya Tak. The strongest faction was that of Phraya Tak who, with brilliant leadership and bravery, managed to drive away the Burmese,

⁷⁰The evidence for the proposition made here is to be found in Chapter II.

and united the kingdom by conquering other factions.⁷¹ We think of these factions as informal hierarchies which exerted their full power in the area under their control when the formal organization of the whole society was no longer in existence. When Phraya Tak subdued other factions and restored the old kingdom, his informal hierarchy became the formal one, he, himself, becoming, the king, and his subordinates, the generals, becoming officials in various high ranking positions. Similar to the time of King Naresuan, the formal organization was strong, and there would have been a minimum of informal clientships. Something, however, must have happened to King Taksin (as Phraya Tak was later called). It could have been because his mentality gave way as is said in the Annals, Royal Autograph Edition,⁷² or it could have been because he became so interested in religious practice that he neglected his clients.⁷³ Whatever happened, he lost them, and in 1782, his most glorious general, Chao Phraya Maha Kasatsuk, the Samuha Nayok, who had assisted him in restoring the kingdom, became King Rama I. The fact that King Taksin lost power did not necessarily imply that informal hierarchies of clientships were rife at that time. There being no Upparat during the reign of King Taksin, and most phrai being phrai luang, Chao Phraya Maha Kasatsuk, being the Samuha Nayok and second only to the king in command of the army, would naturally be the most powerful man in the kingdom, when King Taksin lost control of his clients. His emergence as king is within the ranking order of the formal organization.

The lesson learned from the fall of Ayutthaya was that it was dangerous to let the princes have too much power. The main purpose of marking the phrai was probably to facilitate mobilization, but it operated also to stop the power of the princes from increasing. It seems to have been the policy of the early Chakkri kings to keep the power of the princes within limit, and other means were used to accomplish this aim also.⁷⁴ The control of the distribution of manpower according to the system of sakdina should have been accomplished when the marking of the phrai had made it almost impossible for them to change

⁷¹prince Dhani, "The Reconstruction of Rama I," JSS, volo XLIII, pt. I, August 1955, pp. 21-48.

⁷²PPHL, vol. II, pp. 427-438.

⁷³King Taksin later became extremely interested in religion, especially meditation.

⁷⁴See above, Chapter IV.

their nai. Yet, as it has already been shown in the earlier part of this Chapter, it was not so. The dissatisfied phrai would seek an informal patron who could give them better protection than their nai. Thus informal client and patron relationships began to grow again. With the economic changes in the Early Bangkok period, manpower was no longer the only source of wealth. Those nobles who were in the position to acquire wealth from the new sources, e.g. Minister of Khlang, became the heads of the informal hierarchies, instead of princes as in the Ayutthaya period. These nobles were members of the Bunnak family.

Table 5.
Noble Families and Ministerial Posts

Reign	Mahatthai	Kalahom	Myang	Wang	Khlang	Na
1782	B	F*	F	D	F	C*
Rama I		A	A	F	F	F
		C*	A	F	F	
1809						
Rama II	F	A	D	X*	F	F
	D	X*	a		X*	F*
		X*			A	F
1824						
Rama III	C*	a*	F	F	A	F
	F	A	F			
1851						
Rama IV	F	A	F	B	A	F*
	D	A	D	F*	A	F*
			F			
1868			C*			

Key: A = in direct Bunnak family male line. X = Na Bangchang family
 B = Sonthirat family a = belonging to a branch of Bunnak family, not in the main line.
 C = Singhaseni family * = related by marriage to Bunnak family
 D = Bunyarattaphan family
 F = Others

Sources: David K. Wyatt, The Growth of One Family Dominance in Nineteenth Century Siam. Prince Sommot, Ruang Tang Chao Phraya Nai Krung Rattana Kosin. (Appointments of Chao Phraya in Bangkok).
 Prayut Sitthiphan, Ton Trakun Khunnang Thai (The Origins of Thai Noble Families).
 Prayun Phitsanaka, 50 Chao Phraya (Biographies of 50 Chao Phraya), Bangkok, 1962.

CHAPTER VIII
SOCIAL MOBILITY

We have already stated that the officials of the sakdina 400 and above, i.e. the nobles, were clients of the king. To become a client of the king one had to be presented to him. That is, one had to go through the ritual of thawai tua. Both the Mom Ratchawong and the offspring of nobles were legally allowed to go through this ritual. In general, it seems that they went through this ritual at an age not long after puberty. During the reign of Rama I, Dit Bunnak, who later became Somdet Chao Phraya Borom Mahaprayurawong in the reign of King Mongkut, was appointed to a position in the Corps of the Royal Pages at the age of 15.¹ Ot, who later became Chao Phraya Ratchasupphamit, went through the ritual at the age of 13 during the first year of the reign of King Chulalongkorn (1869).² There appears, however, to have been no limit set on the age for going through this ritual. It was best if the boy did not go through the ritual at too young an age, in case the king wanted the boy to be on duty as a page in the Royal Palace. In general, boys would go through this ritual after their education at the wat.

Contrary to what has been generally believed, upward mobility from the lower class, i.e. phrai and slave, to that of the governing class, i.e. nobles and princes, appears to have been extremely difficult, except in time of war and irregular succession to the throne. Although, for lack of material, no statistics can be produced to prove this proposition, it is supported by the regulations limiting the types of people eligible to go through the ritual and the association of occupation with trakun (family) as well as the overproduction of the sons of the nobles.

There were laws against the phrai going through the ritual of thawai tua. A Royal Decree of 1740 states that persons who were to serve in official positions (of sakdina 400 and above) must have the following qualities:

¹Phraya Chularatchamontri (Sen) Chotmai Het Prathom wongsakun Bunnak. (Record of the Origin of the Bunnak Family), Bangkok, 1939, pp. 33-34.

²Chao Phraya Thippakarawong, Lamdap Sakun Kao Bang Sakun Phakthi III, Sakun Chek Amat. (Genealogies of Some Old Families, The Family of Chek Amat), Bangkok, 1930, p. 2.

(a) He must belong to the family of a chief minister of the past or present. By using the term trakun, it would exclude affinal relations, but would seem to include descendants of a chief minister in both paternal and maternal lines; (b) he must have good knowledge in both military and civil matters; (c) he must be intelligent; (d) he must be of good morals; and (e) he must also be such a person as follows: (i) whatever the king desired, he must seek to bring it to the king, (ii) he must be diligent in his work, (iii) he must be brave in battle, and (iv) he must be wise in giving judgment in litigation and clever in his work. The Royal Decree emphasized that anyone who had no trakun (good, noble family), who had obtained lots of money from gambling, and bribed the nobles to present him to the king in order to become a royal page, must not be presented to the king³. This would seem to make it impossible for a phrai to become a noble. A Royal Proclamation of King Mongkut also stated that sons of Chao phraya, phraya, phra, luang, and important officials in the Corps of Royal Pages and important provincial officials, i.e. governor, Palat, Yokkrabat, and sons of Mom Chao who were well behaved could be brought to thawai tua. Nobles wishing to present sons of khun and mun, and other officials of provincial towns Krommakan, must first obtain royal permission.⁴ It seems that phrai would definitely be excluded.

The belief in trakun (family) ran strong in noble circles. Although polygyny was widely practiced in Thai society among the princes and the nobles, it emerges from the genealogies that the major wife of a noble, i.e. the one with whom he went through the marriage ceremony, was always a daughter of a nobleman, often a member of his own trakun. The influence of the belief associating occupation with trakun can be seen in the writing of Prince Damrong.

Now we shall talk about the people of class of nai who commended and controlled the phrai. These people must be more capable than the common phrai. In those ancient times, there were no schools in which anyone could enroll in any course he chose. Everybody had to depend for knowledge on the teaching within his family. For instance, persons who had been born in the governing family such as in the royal family or families of ministers, or town gov-

³Royal Decree, 1740, (Phraratcha Kamnot Kao 50), PK, vol. IIIo pp. 275-276.

⁴Royal Proclamation (not dated), PPRS (B. E. 2408-2411), pp. 279-280.

vernors, would have the opportunity to study the method of governing more than those who were born in the families of peasants who kept orchards or planted rice for their living. Because of this fact, those who were nai, who governed people in the olden days normally belonged to the class of families of those who were used to work in the royal affairs and had continued doing so from generation to generation.⁵

According to Prince Damrong, the officials who formerly worked in Krom Mahatthai (under the Chief Minister) were of two types. The first were those who had been royal pages. A number of them were later promoted to the position of governors, or to very high positions in the krom. The other type consisted of sons of rich men working as apprentices in the krom, serving as secretaries (samian). These latter rarely rose above positions with a sakdina lower than 400, although there were exceptions, and a few reached the rank of phraya.⁶ Similar situations appear to have obtained in Krom Kalahom, and Krom Khlang. King Mongkut stated that at least in these three krom, only those who were sons of noble officials of these krom were eligible to be officials there.⁷

Because of the wide practice of polygyny, there were an overproduction of members of the governing class. Thus there was a necessity for constant downward mobility from the governing class to that of the commoners (i.e. that and phrai). The princes and the nobles had large numbers of wives, and thus numerous offspring. The higher the position the noble occupied, the larger would tend to be the number of his wives and offspring. Thus Phraya Sisahathep (Thong Pheng), the favorite of King Rama III, had 57 wives and 48 offspring. Of these there were 16 surviving sons. Three of them only attained the rank of phraya, seven attained the rank of luang and above, two obtained ranks lower than luang, and four were the royal pages without official rank.⁸ Of his female offspring, one became a concubine of King Rama III, one became a wife of a prince of krom rank, and four married nobles of the rank of phraya and phra.⁹ Chao Phraya Maha Sena (Bunnak) the Chief Min-

⁵Prince Damrong, Laksana Kanpokkhrong, Prathet Sayam tae Boran (Ancient Administration of Siam), pp. 12-13.

⁶Prince Damrong, Thesaphiban, pp. 14-15.

⁷Royal Proclamation, 1854, PPRS (B.E. 2394-2400), p. 91.

⁸Phraya Satchaphirom, op. cit., pp. 17-34; see Siphon genealogy, Appendix.

⁹Ibid. See Appendix, Siphon genealogy.

ister of Kalahom during the reign of King Rama I, had 34 offspring. Sixteen of them were male. Of them, two attained the rank of Somdet Chao Phraya, three attained the rank of phraya, two were royal pages in service to the king, and one was head of a group of pages in the Palace of the Front. One was a learned monk. It is unfortunate that we do not know the number of those who died at an early age. Of the female offspring, five were royal concubines. Two of the daughters attained one of the highest positions as officials in the inner palace of the Palace of the Front, and to be appointed to minor official positions in those krom when they left the monkhood. King Mongkut issued a Royal Proclamation explaining that it was no use their trying to get into any krom except the ones without power. He told them that learned ex-monks could serve only in Krom Alak (Royal Scribes), Krom Tham-makan (Education), Krom Ratchabandit (Royal Academy), and Krom Sangkhakari (having to do with monks). The wat people, who were not members of noble families, should not try to get into any other krom, but these five.¹³ It would seem, therefore, that it was possible for the members of the lower class to go through the process of being monks to become a noble in these specialized krom. There would, however, not be many of them, for to be thus qualified, they had to be learned monks, which meant that they had to spend a long time in the monkhood, and pass a number of examinations. In fact, Prof. Wyatt's data suggest that there were very few of them who were successful in moving upward this way in the period before 1873.

Thirdly, there was a certain period in Thai history in which phrai were specifically granted the permission to go through the ritual of thawai tua. This was during the reign of King Rama I, when the kingdom began to recover from the defeat in Burmese war which involved the loss of the capital, Ayutthaya. A Royal Decree of 1784 stated as a fact that at that time there were not enough sons and grandsons of nobles to fill all the official positions, and thus there were phrai serving as royal and

¹⁰Chao Phraya Thipphakrawong, Lamdap Sakun Kao Bang Sakun Phat Thi III, Sakun Chek Amat (Genealogies of Some Old Families, Part III, Family of Chek Amat).

¹¹Kot Monthianban (Palatine Law), PK, vol. I, pp. 75-76.

¹²David K. Wyatt, "The Buddhist Monkhood as an Avenue of Social Mobility in Traditional Thai Society," Sinlapakon, X, 1 (May, 1966), pp. 49-52.

¹³Royal Proclamation, 1854 PPRS (B.E. 2394-2400), pp. 89-92.

princely pages.¹⁴ The reasons for the lack of nobility can be found in the nature of Southeast Asian warfare; the victor always carried away a number of people as prisoners of war, and the members of the governing class of the defeated kingdom suffered more severely than the members of the other classes.

From the above review, a proposition can be made that the rate of upward mobility from the lower class to the governing class would be highest in time of war, and after a major defeat in war. In peace time, however, such rate would be very low indeed. For the Early Bangkok period, the rate of such mobility was probably highest during the reign of King Rama I, and then continued to decrease until there was a minimum of it in the reign of King Mongkut. Table 6, giving positions of fathers of all čhao phraya during the Early Bangkok period, shows such continued decrease in upwards mobility. We do not know the position of the fathers of 10 of the 22 čhao phraya appointed by King Rama I, 3 of the 14 appointed by King Rama III. All of the 18 čhao phraya appointed by King Mongkut were sons of nobles. It was natural that čhao phraya of King Rama I should have unknown origin for it was not long after the sack of Ayutthaya and the beginning of a new dynasty. If we assume that the čhao phraya whose father's positions were unknown were not the sons of important nobles, the increase of such čhao phraya during the Third Reign is striking. Čhao phraya was a very high ranking position, the highest of all before the reign of King Mongkut. It clearly took some time before a noble of low rank was able to work his way up to this position. The reign of King Rama II lasted 15 years, from 1809 to 1824. The age of a person going through the ritual of thawai tua would probably range from 15-25 years old. Thus by the reign of King Rama III, the ages of those nobles who had been through the ritual during the First reign would be nobles who had been through the ritual during the First Reign would be above 30. In fact most would be above 35. This would be the right age, i.e. between 35-50 years old, for becoming a čhao phraya. 15-20 years would be required for a noble of low rank to work his way up to the rank of čhao phraya. As an example, we know for certain that Sing, who became Čhao Phraya Bōdin Decha during the reign of King Rama III, began his career as a noble official during

¹⁴Royal Decree, 1784, (Phraratcha Kamnot Mai 38), PK, vol. III, pp. 438-442.

Table 6
Chao Phraya A.D. 1782-1869

Reign	No. Apptd.	Father being noble			Special Cases	Class of father unknown
		Same position	Same rank	Lower rank		
Rama I 1782-1809	22	3	4	2	3 ^a	10
Rama II 1809-1824	14		5	3	3 ^b	3
Rama III 1824-1851	11	3	1	2	1 ^c	4
Mongkut 1851-1868	18	2	9	4	3 ^d	

- a. Čhao Phraya Nakhon (Phat) a son-in-law of the previous Čhao Phraya Nakhon.
Čhao Phraya Aphaiphubet (Baen)ę, a Cambodian noble who had also received Thai recognition.
Čhao Phraya Ratchaburi (Sem), a close relative of King Rama I's Queen.
- b. Čhao Phraya Thamma (Thet), a relative of King Rama I's Queen.
Čhao Phraya Mahasena (Sang), a relative of King Rama I's Queen.
Čhao Phraya Saiburi (Pangaran), a ruler of a Malay tributary state who was given Thai rank.
- c. Čhao Phraya Saiburi (Pangaran), same person as b.
- d. Čhao Phraya Phonlathep (Iam), son of King Rama I's Queen's brother's daughter.
Čhao Phraya Phonlathep (Long)ę, whose mother was a member of the Bunnak family.
Čhao Phraya Mahisarathibodi, whose wife was the heroine of the war with Laos.

Sources: Prince Sommot, Ruang Tang Čhao Phraya nai Krung Rattana Kosin (Appointment of Čhao Phraya in Bangkok)
Ratchabandit Sathan, Athibai Rachinikun Bangchang Phraya Chula Ratchamontri, Čhotmai het Prathom Wongsakun Bunnak (The Origin of the Bunnak family)
Prayun Phitsanakha, 50 Čhao Phraya haeng Krung Rattana Kosin (50 Čhao Phraya of Bangkok)
Prayut Sitthiphan, Ton Trakun Khunnang Thai (Origin of Thai noble families)

the First Reign.¹⁵ The figures in Table 6 show that there was a great deal of upward mobility into the low ranking noble class during the first reign. The figure from the Fourth Reign, on the other hand, although of minimum significance as far as mobility into the class of nai was concerned, tends to suggest that there had been far less upward mobility in later reigns.

A review of governors of certain towns, and the genealogies of six noble families of the Early Bangkok period show a striking tendency for important provincial positions, as well as positions in important krom, to pass to descendants or relatives of the holders of such positions. We have material on official positions in the following towns: Nakhon Sithammarat (first class township), Songkhla (status frequently changed; *supra*), Phatthalung (third class township), Ranong (fourth class township subordinate to Chumphon). From genealogies of the Na Bangchang family, the family of Chao Khun Kaeo, the Wongsarot family, the Bunnak family (3) and (5), and the Gajaseni family, we have certain materials on the following towns: Samutthasongkram (probably fourth class town), Ratchaburi (probably fourth class town), Chantaburi (third class town).¹⁶ A proposition which could easily be drawn from these materials is that the ruling class within each town consisted of the members of a family, and that important posts within the town were occupied by these.¹⁷ This finding is in accord with Prince Damrong's statement in connection with town governors at the time when he took the post of the Minister of Mahatthai, and began the reform of the administration.

Town governors whom I met were generally phudi mi trakun (people of high class, belonging to established families) but were often the inhabitants of those towns themselves. They were descendants of previous governors who were in the royal service and worked there for their own living until they settled there. Their sons were presented to the king (thawai tua) and then were requested to go back and work there, or trained for office work in those towns until they were given Sanyabat (kind of certificate given by the king to the official on being appointed to noble position) to be Yokkrabat and

¹⁵Prince Damrong, Prawat Chao Phraya Bodin Decha (Sing, Sinhaseni), (Biography of Chao Phraya Bodin Decha) in Chao Phraya Komarakhun Montri, Prawat Chao Phraya Mahasena (Bunnak), p. 24.

¹⁶See Appendix.

¹⁷See Appendix.

Palat. Those who did well in their work later became town governors and lived there until their death.¹⁸

It also appears from the genealogies that the tendency for the position of town governor to be inherited increased in frequency towards the latter part of the Early Bangkok period. A similar situation seems to have existed in certain krom.

One main problem in considering social classes in Thai society arises from the presence of large numbers of Chinese immigrants. The Chinese immigrants were not incorporated into the formal system (to become phrai and to serve corvée) as long as they retained the Chinese custom of wearing the hair in a pig tail.¹⁹ Instead of doing corvée, they were required to pay head taxes. Being outside the system, there was no restriction on their movement within the kingdom. There was no restriction on their undertaking services and labor for payment. Because of the restriction put on the services of phrai, there were relatively high wages all through the period.²⁰ The Chinese immigrants were then mainly engaged in wage labor and entrepreneurial trades. Thus, as has been stated already, by 1850 the Chinese had gained almost complete control of the interregional trade of Thailand. A number of documents mention a group of people termed setthi (wealthy ones) or chao khlua (Chinese merchants). King Mongkut's Royal Proclamation of 1867 mentions two such setthi.²¹ It seems therefore, that besides the two classes of phrai and nai, there was perhaps another class, an entrepreneurial class of Chinese traders in the middle. And there was a great deal of movement from this class into the noble class through the practice of farming out taxes.²² In order to move into the class of nobles, possession of wealth was

¹⁸prince Damrong, Thesaphiban, pp. 25-26.

¹⁹See Royal Proclamation 1858. PPRS (B.E. 2401-2404), pp. 7-10.

²⁰G. William Skinner, Chinese Society in Thailand, p. 97.

²¹PPRS (B.E. 2408-2411), pp. 54-56.

²²prince Damrong, Thesaphiban, pp. 29-30.

necessary to enable an individual not only to bid to become a tax farmer, but also to present gifts to the nobles and princes so that they would support the bid. Tax farmers were composed largely of the Chinese.²³ From the positions of such tax farmers, many of them and their descendants became Thai nobles and worked as Thai officials in various positions. They often became officials in provincial towns, and were called Krommakan Chin.²⁴ Some of them even became town governors and established important Thai noble families as shown in the life stories of Yiang (town, Songkhla) and Khosuchiang (town, Ranong).²⁵

In 1750, a Chinese named Yiang of the family Hao came to set up a house in Songkhla. For one year he grew vegetables for sale. Then he went away to a town called Chana to try to raise betel and sell betel leaves. Three years later, he moved back to Songkhla and set up a shop there. He married a Thai woman and had five sons. In 1769 King Taksin captured Nakhon Sithammarat, and set up his camp at Songkhla. The governor of Songkhla escaped with the governor of Nakhon Sithammarat. King Taksin appointed a man named Yom, a native of Songkhla, as a new governor. While King Taksin was there, Yiang made up a list of all his property including his wife, children, slaves, and 50 boxes of tobacco, and went to offer King Taksin all his property, at the same time requesting that he might be made a tax farmer for birds' nests in that area. He offered to make annual payment of 400 baht for the taxes. King Taksin took only the 50 boxes of tobacco and appointed Yiang Luang Inthakirisombat, a tax farmer. At the same time King Taksin took the third son (Bun Sin) of Yiang with him in order to make him a royal page. Yiang regularly sent the taxes when due to the capital. In 1775 Yiang went to the capital with the taxes and many gifts for King Taksin. It is reported that King Taksin said Yiang had been his client for a long time and should therefore be appointed governor, and that the governor (Yom) was no good and that he should not be allowed to be governor any longer. Thus Yiang was made governor of Songkhla, while Yom was called to the capital and deprived of his rank and title.²⁶

²³Wira Wimonit, Historical Patterns of Tax Administration in Thailand, p. 60.

²⁴prince Damrong, Thesaphiban, pp. 29-30.

²⁵See Appendix on the families of governors of Songkhla.

²⁶Phraya Wichienkhiri (Chom), Phongsawadan Muang Songkhla Lae Phatthalung (History of Songkhla and Phatthalung), pp. 1-3. See also G. William Skinner, Chinese Society in Thailand.

In 1797, a Chinese named Khosuchiang came to Mak Island (Penang) and worked as a laborer. When he had been able to collect a certain amount of money, he went to Takua Pa to trade there. He was given assistance by a noble lady, Thao Thepsunthon, who was trading there. When he had increased his assets, he went to Phang Nga, for it was a better place for trading. He set up his house in the market of Phang Nga and traded there until he became wealthy. He then had a ship built and used it for carrying cargo from one place to another along the western shore of the peninsula. In his trading business he visited Ranong and found that the place was rich in tin deposits and that there were few people mining. Thus he came to Bangkok and contacted Krom Kalahom making a bid for farming taxes on tin in the area of the towns Tra and Ranong. He was appointed Luang Rattana Setthi, a tax farmer for tin in that area. In 1854, the governor of Ranong died and the position became vacant. Khosuchiang was made the governor of Ranong and given the title of Phra Rattana Setthi.²⁷

From the story of Yiang one can easily sense a conflict between the town governor and the tax collector. It seems as if Yiang came to the capital to report on the town governor. That could be the reason why the town governor, Yom, was called to the capital and deprived of his rank and titles. Prince Damrong states that where the town was big and the governor was an important man, then the tax collectors would bow to him for convenience in collecting taxes. If the town was not important and the governor was not an important man, the tax collectors were not afraid of him, and even invited him to join in collecting taxes.²⁸ As has already been stated earlier, the farming of taxes must have affected the income of the officials of provincial towns. Conflict was bound to arise sooner or later. Worse still for town officials who had no connections with the higher officials in Bangkok, for tax collectors had to have important men in the capital as their patrons before they could be successful in their bids for tax farms. We have noted that besides the actual taxes to be paid into the royal treasuries or treasuries of the krom, a tax farmer paid large amounts of money to other high nobles and princes. Contacts between the tax collectors and their patrons must have been regular. Thus in case of conflict, a town official who got no protection from higher up would be the loser. When Khosuchiang became governor, he continued to act as the tax collector.

²⁷Prince Damrong, Ruang Tamnang Muang Ranong (History of Ranong), pp. 3-9.

²⁸Ibid., p. 18.

The method was soon imitated by the governors of Takua Pa, Phang Nga, and Phuket.²⁹

The advantage of the Chinese immigrants lay not only in being outside the corvée system. The limitation on upward mobility of phrai did not affect them. They had never been made phrai. Nor did the belief in trakun affect them, for they could and did state that they belonged to the noble families of China. The Thai had no way of disproving them. In fact the use of wealth would have closed any lips which would utter protests. Wealth was the most important means of moving into the governing class. Even before the widespread use of tax farming, wealth was a means of moving into the upper class. The founder of the Bunnak family, an Arab trader, could become a noble because he was very wealthy.³⁰ It is of note that the founders of the great noble families whose genealogies are presented in the appendix were largely foreigners.

We have noted once before that there was keen competition among the assets required to enable one to move into positions of much power. One can easily assume that most sons of nobles would go through the ritual of thawai tua and be enrolled in the Corps of the Royal Pages. After such enrollment, three things might happen to them. First, they might do service as royal pages serving the king in the palace. The closer their duty required them to be to the king, the greater was their opportunity for advancement. Secondly, they might be appointed directly as officials, generally to work under their noble fathers. It may be noted that large numbers of sons of provincial governors were thus appointed. Thirdly, they might remain only Mahatlek Phiset (a type of page who had no duty of serving the king), gaining access to the royal audiences and nothing else.

As a consequence of the structure of the society, nobles of high rank had control of large amounts of manpower and thus were in positions to threaten the security of the king. It was therefore of the utmost importance that people appointed to high positions be those whom the king knew well personally and could trust to be loyal to him. Of the ministers of King Rama I, we may note that they consisted mostly of those whom he knew well, having served under him when he was an official under Taksin, or

²⁹Ibid., pp. 18-19.

³⁰Chek Amat was a rich Arab trader who came to settle in Ayutthaya in 1602. Phraya Chula Ratchamontri, Chot-maihet Prathum Wong Sakun Bunnak (Origin of the Bunnak Family), pp. 2-5.

having previously been his personal clients, and assisted in his accession to the throne. Bunnak, who later became his Chief Minister of Kalahom, had not only been living with him for a long while, but was also related to him by marriage.³¹ The ministers appointed by King Rama II were mostly of the Na Bangchang family which was closely related to his mother. The exceptions were the two men, Čhao Phraya Kosa (Kon) and Čhao Phraya Phonlathep (Tong-in), who had been officials of King Rama II's krom when he was only a prince of krom rank.³² Another exception was Čhao Phraya Aphaiphuthon (Nøi) who was a son of the Minister of Wang (Palace) during the reign of King Rama I, and had served in a high position in the Royal Palace before. Ministers of King Rama III might seem to have presented a slightly varied pattern because of the presence of Čhao Phraya Thamma (Sombun) and Čhao Phraya Yommarat (Chim)q. The first, however, had already served for a long time in Krom Wang (the Palace). His Chief Minister of Mahatthai, Čhao Phraya Bødin Decha, however, had been well known to him since the reign of King Rama II. When Sing (Čhao Phraya Bødin Decha) was punished by King Rama II, Rama III twice lent Sing assistance.³³ The position of Chief Minister of Kalahom was in the hands of the Bunnak family. Most of the ministers of King Mongkut had had important positions in the Corps of the Royal Pages (9 out of 13). Seven of them were direct descendants of the Bunnak family or related by marriage to the Bunnak family. This brings out clearly the fact that in peace time and without internal unrest, important positions in the Corps of the Royal Pages were important steps towards important positions in the bureaucracy. It is generally accepted that the Corps of the Royal Pages was a training ground for persons preparing to fill important positions in the bureaucracy. By being enrolled as a royal page, one had the opportunity to learn how to conduct affairs of state from the deliberations one heard in the audience hall. Those in actual service, however, gained much advantage, for the king often sent them out to various krom or even provincial towns as his messengers, and also to observe

³¹See Appendix, biographies of the Ministers of King Rama I and the genealogy of the Bunnak family.

³²See Appendix, biographies of the Ministers of King Rama II.

³³Bunnak Phayakhadet, Prawat Čhao Phraya Bødin Decha (Sing Sinhaseni) Samuha Nayok (Biography of Čhao Phraya Bødin Decha, the Chief Minister)q, pp. 2-4.

and report to the king what was being done in those krom or towns.³⁴ Thus an intelligent royal page would not only learn how work was done, but could also establish contact with those in power in the government which would be a great asset to him later on. The king could also observe the ability and intelligence of the royal pages, and thus could easily make selection for appointment when an official position became vacant. The king would also know who could be trusted and how far. On this latter point kinship relation with the king, whether in the maternal or paternal line, would also have been an important asset.

A striking occurrence within this period was the rise to power of one noble family, the Bunnak. The rise into power of a single noble family had never occurred in the previous course of Thai history. The strength and absoluteness of the king depended upon the division among the nobles, and thus generally it was the king who tried to stop the growth of single family powers. Although the rise of the Bunnak family has been excellently treated by Prof. Wyatt in his paper "Family Politics in Nineteenth Century Thailand), a short analysis of it must be made here in order to complete the picture of stratification and mobility during the Early Bangkok period.

The rise of the Bunnak family may be traced to five main factors: first, their close association with the kings of the Chakkri Dynasty as friends as well as relatives; secondly, the policy of King Rama II in connection with his attempt to deal with the power of the nobles; thirdly, the change in the economy of the country with its consequences for the nobles; fourthly, the determined reduction of power of the princes; and, lastly, the ability of the individual members of the Bunnak family to acquire the knowledge needed at that particular time.

From childhood Chao Phraya Maha Sena (Bunnak) was a close friend of King Rama I. During the time of the occupation of Thailand by the Burmese and later during the reign of King Taksin, he always stayed with King Rama I. Further, when he lost his wife, he married Nuan who was a sister of the Queen of King Rama I. They stayed with King Rama I all this time and Nuan was said to have looked after the son of King Rama I who later became King Rama II. In 1787 he became the Chief Minister of Kalahom.³⁵ As can

³⁴King Chulalongkorn, Phra Borom Racha Thibai waduai Yot Khunnang (Royal Explanation on the Rank of the Nobles) in Prayutsitthiphan Ton Trakun Khunnang Thai (Origins of Thai Noble Families), pp. 1-2.

³⁵Phraya Komarakun Montri, Prawat Chao Phraya Mahasena (Biography of Chao Phraya Mahasena)s

be observed from the genealogies of Thai noble families, and as observation of Thai kinship shows, there was a tendency for endogamous marriages among the Thais especially among the high class. Thus, five of the daughters of Chao Phraya Mahasena were royal concubines.³⁶ His sons born of Nuan were King Rama II's first cousins, and there could be no doubt that all his children were well acquainted with King Rama II.

Since the reign of King Rama I it seems that the nobles were powerful. King Rama II attempted to curb their power by appointing his relatives to all important positions. He set up the positions of Phu Kamkap Ratchakan (Supervisor, overseer) of the important krom, and appointed farmers to occupy them. Further, he appointed five members of Na Bangchang, and Bunnak-Nuan families (also Na Bangchang), his maternal relatives, to ministerial positions. He appointed another two members of the Bunnak family who, although not of Na Bangchang family, could be considered also to be related to him. He appointed another person, Chao Phraya Phonlathep (Thong-in), who was related to him through his father's sister's husband (Krom Mun Narinthonphitak), and whose daughter was married to his first cousin, Dit Bunnak. Thus eight of the persons appointed to ministerial positions were related to him. This was out of the eleven persons thus appointed during his reign. One of these was Dit Bunnak, son of Chao Phraya Mahasena (Bunnak) and Nuan. He was appointed the Minister of Khlang. During the reign of King Rama II, King Rama III, who at that time was Krom Mun Chetsadabodin, was appointed the Supervisor of Krom Khlang,³⁷ and thus was closely associated with Dit Bunnak who was his senior relative, being first cousin of his father. As noted by Prof. Wyatt, Dit Bunnak dealt with a British diplomatic mission in 1825-26 with a high degree of skill. This must have contributed greatly to King Rama III's confidence in him, and thus he was later allowed to hold both positions, that of the Chief Minister of Kalahom as well as Minister of Krom Khlang.

As we have stated earlier, the change in the economy as well as the change in the method of taxation must have greatly affected the economic situation of the nobles. The availability of wage labor due to the influx of Chinese laborers, which made reduction in the duration as well as the extent of corvée labor possible, affected the relationship between nai and phrai, and consequently the

³⁶See Appendix.

³⁷Phu Borihan Ratchakan Phaendin Samai Adit (Past Administrators) anon. in King Chulalongkorn, Phraratcha Niphon Ratchakan Thi V, Ryang Thieo Thi Tangtang p. 74.

economic situation of the nobles. The possession of wealth became a dominant factor for increasing the number of clients in all classes, nobles as well as phrai. The growing hierarchies of informal client and patron relationships became an important factor in the control of manpower and the increase of power in general for any individual. The Bunnak family's hold on Krom Khlang was continuous. It was not surprising then that Dit Bunnak refused to relinquish the position of the Minister of Krom Khlang for that of Chief Minister of Kalahom.³⁸ His brother, That Bunnak, when offered the position of the Minister of Myang, refused, preferring to remain in the position of the Chief of the Royal Warehouse (Krom Phra Khlang Sinkha), another lucrative position.³⁹ Looking at the consequence of the changes in the economy of the kingdom in this light would explain the reason for the decrease of the power of the Chief Minister of Mahatthai and the rise of the power of the Minister of Khlang. The Bunnak thus never tried to make the position of the Chief Minister of Mahatthai their stronghold or base of power. Yet King Rama I's rise to power had been based on the position of the Chief Minister of Mahatthai. But that was before the Early Bangkok period, and much change had occurred since then.

The rise to such an extreme height of power by the Bunnak family could be accomplished not only because of the reduction in the amount of power possessed by their rival nobles in less lucrative krom, but also by the loss of power of the princes. We have dealt in detail with the loss of power by the princes in Chapter IV. It could be said that the princes were purposely deprived of their power by the king as a consequence of the lesson learned from the fall of Ayutthaya in the year 1767. Further, the princes were potential competitors for the throne, and thus their power had constantly to be watched and curbed.

It would be extremely unfair to the Bunnak family if we neglect to mention their exceptional ability. Unlike Chao Phraya Bodin Decha (Sing), the members of the Bunnak family do not appear to have distinguished themselves in battle. Yet in the realm of politics and diplomacy they were supreme. When the Thai kingdom was menaced with the threats of Western powers with whom she could not deal by the use of force, it was diplomatic ability that was most needed. We have mentioned already the ability of Dit Bunnak. His son, Chuang, was well prepared for new problems the kingdom was facing. He knew

³⁸Prince Somnot, Ruang Tang Chao Phraya Krung Rattanakosin (The Appointment of Chao Phraya in Bangkok), p. 35.

³⁹Ibid. p. 37.

English and showed interest in practical sciences and engineering. Thus in the reign of King Rama III he distinguished himself by overseeing the construction of forts at Paknam, and successfully building square rigged vessels on the European model. He got on well with the Europeans and they appear to have admired his intelligence.⁴⁰ The Bunnak were aware of the problems which the country faced, and the necessity for having on the throne a person capable of dealing with the situation. Thus they used their power in support of King Mongkut and lifted him to the throne. By this act, they were amply rewarded for half of the ministers appointed by King Mongkut were the members of the Bunnak family or persons related to them. And, these positions were the lucrative ones. Further, two members of the Bunnak family were raised to the position of Somdet Čhao Phraya with greater sakdina than princes of krom rank who were not Čhao Fa. It looks as if this extremely high position was created especially for the Bunnak family for no one else but the Bunnak has ever attained it.

The most important moment for ascendancy of the Bunnak family was in the reign of King Rama II. It seems that the King was faced with a major problem in the growing power of the nobles. Apparently the nobles had been powerful since the reign of King Rama I for, as Prof. Wyatt has noted, initially Rama I could be little more with these ministers than a first among equals.⁴¹ In order to curb the power of the nobles, King Rama II had two choices. The first was to give power to the princes. The lesson learned from the fall of Ayutthaya made it impossible to take up this choice. Another choice left to the king was to give power to his relatives who were not čhao (princes). The choice has double advantages. First, not being čhao it was more difficult for them to usurp the throne as long as the king had not failed in his duty. Secondly, being relatives of the king they could be more trusted than other nobles who were not. It was in their interest to support the members of the Chakkri Dynasty who were their relatives. Thus the Bunnak family was given power, which, owing to the changes already mentioned, grew to the extent related in the previous chapter.

⁴⁰Prince Damrong, Prawat Somdet Čhao Phraya Borom Maha Sisuriyawong (Biography of Somdet Čhao Phraya Borom Maha Sisuriyawong), pp. 3-10.

⁴¹David K. Wyatt, "Family Politics in Nineteenth Century Thailand."

IX. CONCLUSION

In previous chapters, the development of Thai social and political organization has been traced, the organization of Thai society including social stratification and mobility has been analyzed, and the process of change considered. To this chapter falls the task of synthesizing the three parts of the study and presenting the final results.

One important characteristic of mainland Southeast Asia which has played an imminent role in the development of Thai social and political organization, was the lack of manpower. All through Thai history the Thai were extremely conscious of the necessity for possessing large amounts of manpower, and were always devising ways and means of controlling manpower. Possession and control of manpower was vital for the survival of the society. When the Thai moved into Southeast Asia, there were in existence already powerful kingdoms of the Burmese, the Mons, and the Khmers. The last already had control of the Chao Phraya River valley. The rise of the Thai kingdom, therefore, involved bitter struggles and frequent warfare. With minimum development in technology and the arts of warfare, victory or defeat in battle depended mainly on the force of numbers which could be mustered to overawe the enemies.

The method of mobilization devised by the Ayutthaya Kingdom consisted in assigning groups of people under nobles and princes who had the duty to mobilize the men under them in time of war. The people were thus compelled to be registered under the nobles and the princes. In order to make rapid mobilization effective, much power was given to the nobles and the princes over the people under their control. Thus, as early as the beginning of the Ayutthaya period in Thai history, the people within Thai society were divided into at least two main categorical classes. Within the upper class there were the princes and the nobles who were the nai, and within the lower class the commoners (phrai) and the slaves (that).

There appears to have existed the concept that the people belonged to the nobles or the princes who governed them. As these commoners (phrai) were often placed in the same category as slaves, wives, or children, it shows that their services were considered to belong to the nobles and princes who had control of them. It may also be noted that the government did not deal with the phrai (commoners) directly, but only through their nai who were the princes and the nobles; the commoners had to request help from the government through their nai.

It would seem to be a mistake to consider the Thai kingdom of the Early Ayutthaya period as a single kingdom. In fact, it was a number of city states with one dominant city state, Ayutthaya. Other city states such as Suphanburi, Lopburi, and Phitsanulok, were tributaries to Ayutthaya. The impression given of their being one single state was due to the fact that the rulers of these tributary states were related to the king of Ayutthaya. They were sons or brothers of the king of Ayutthaya.

Ayutthaya could dominate these other city states, first, by manipulation of manpower, secondly, by the use of kinship obligations, and thirdly, by preventing the rulers of these city states from joining forces against Ayutthaya. Thus, whenever Ayutthaya showed signs of weakness, especially at times of succession when there were splits among those controlling manpower within the area of the city, a ruler of one of the stronger city states could move his troops to Ayutthaya and take over the government of the city.

It seems that despite the reforms instituted by King Trailok, the government of the kingdom remained essentially in this condition until after the fall of Ayutthaya in 1569. This sack of Ayutthaya was a shock to the people and showed up several defects within the system. Throughout the course of Thai history, it may be observed that a characteristic Thai national ability lay in the people's adaptiveness, their ability to modify their structure and system according to lessons learned from national disasters and failures, as well as examples from other lands.

During the recovery following the first fall of Ayutthaya, there was an internal unification of the kingdom. Princes were no more sent out to rule over provincial towns as tributary states. Instead, they were kept in the capital city where palaces were built for them, and they had their own forces of men under their control. Power struggles therefore occurred within Ayutthaya itself instead of between Ayutthaya and one or another tributary city state.

Greatly assisting this reorganization of government was the fact that defeats in war had broken the relationship between nai and phrai. Even during the Early Ayutthaya period (1350-1569), there were already in existence two types of phrai, the phrai som and the phrai luang. For the purpose of mobilization, all phrai (commoners) were required to be registered under a noble or a prince. Each town appears to have had a Registrar, who held the list of phrai of the town. The people thus registered were called phrai som. The people who refused to register or neglected to register with any noble or prince were deemed

to be criminals. When they were arrested, they were made phrai luang who had to do government corvée labor for six months in a year. The words phrai luang meant phrai belonging to the king. The king could not, of course, personally control them himself and thus he assigned them to be under his officials, the nobles.

The Burmese wars which led to the fall of Ayutthaya and the following wars of revolt against the Burmese suzerainty had much affected the link between the nai and his phrai. When King Naresuan emerged victorious from these wars, we found that most phrai had become phrai luang. Unlike the condition prior to the fall of Ayutthaya, the rulers of various towns were governing, not their own phrai som, but the king's phrai luang. This gave rise to the concept, probably the most important in the understanding of the organization of Thai society, that the king "owned" not only all the land in his kingdom, but all the people within it.

Already within the Early Ayutthaya period (1350-1569), the people within the area of Ayutthaya were divided into two main groups, the so-called military division and the civil division. They were under the control of the Chief Minister of Kalahom, and the Chief Minister of Mahatthai, respectively. As the majority of people within the kingdom became phrai luang, the authority and responsibility of these two chief ministers were extended outwards to cover the inhabitants of provincial towns. Thus the whole population of the kingdom was divided into two main divisions, the military and the civil. During the Late Ayutthaya period (1570-1767), we find that the Chief Minister of Kalahom had control of the people of the Southern Provinces, and the Chief Minister of Mahatthai had control of the people of the Northern Provinces. One cannot be certain when the Minister of Khlang came to have similar control over certain coastal towns, but it appears to have been within the Late Ayutthaya period. This change in the administration could be said to be a process in the centralization of the control of manpower. Its effect was to facilitate the manipulation of the distribution of manpower in order to strengthen the control of Ayutthaya over other towns within the kingdom.

Thai society could be categorized as a peasant or agrarian society. The majority of people planted rice for their own consumption. What exceeded their needs, went to support religion and the governing class of princes and nobles. Considering the small size of her population, Thailand could be considered to be rich in food supply. For the existence of the society, what was in need was manpower. This was needed mainly for the defense of the kingdom, and secondly for the services to be rendered to the upper class.

In distributing manpower among the princes and the nobles, the king assigned the amount of manpower to be possessed by each individual noble according to his rank. Thus the amount of sakdina possessed by any one noble tended to correlate with the amount of manpower under his control.

There were three important effects of the possession of manpower. First, the amount of manpower possessed by an individual denoted his position within the ranking system of the society. This was a necessary consequence of the correlation between the amount of manpower possessed by an individual and the amount of his sakdina (dignity marks). The sakdina scale showed relative positions of the people within the ranking system. Secondly, the control of manpower was also closely related to the possession of wealth, for the princes and the nobles lived mainly on the material support and services rendered them by the phrai under their control. The more phrai an individual possessed, the more wealthy he would be. Thirdly, the amount of manpower possessed by an individual indicated the extent of his political power. The people under one's control had the duty to obey one's command, and one could maneuver them for one's political ends.

By assigning phrai under the princes and the nobles, the population of the whole kingdom was organized into groups, very much like an army, in which the princes and the nobles were the officers. A perfect working of the system presupposed a perfect control of the distribution of manpower by and for the king. A person in control of large amounts of manpower, if disloyal to the king, could present a danger to the throne. In order to be secure, the king must be able, by the use of his power of appointment, to deprive anyone who was suspected of being disloyal of his control of power. Yet very few kings could gain complete control over the distribution of manpower.

For the Ayutthaya period, the danger for the monarch's power position lay in the existence of the princes and their phrai som. When the king assigned phrai to be under the control of his nobles, such phrai were phrai luang. Besides serving or giving gifts to their nai, the nobles, the phrai luang were also required to serve the king (Ratchakan) by doing government corvée labor for a period of six months in a year. When the king assigned phrai to be under the princes, he gave those phrai directly to the princes. Such phrai became phrai som belonging completely to their nai, the princes. They were, therefore, not required to serve government corvée. As the phrai luang had to do government corvée, which was a heavy burden to them, they always tried to escape from their nai and become phrai som of the princes. The king

could not take away phrai som from their nai and redistribute them for, unlike phrai luang, they did not belong to the king, but belonged completely to their nai. Thus the king had no control over the phrai som.

As the possession of manpower was related to status differentiation, and wealth, as well as political power, the effect of the loss of phrai luang during the Ayutthaya period could best be considered in regards to these three aspects. The first was the effect on the ranking system. Status differentiation as regards the ranks of individuals within the hierarchy was extremely important, for rules of conduct were norms depending upon superior and inferior statuses. Differential ranking was so important that such a system as the sakdina scale had to be devised as guides for individual behavior in interactions. This ranking within the system depended symbolically upon the control of manpower. When most commoners were phrai luang, the king could distribute manpower according to various ranks of the officials; when most were phrai som, the king had little control. Status evaluation was based on the actual control of manpower and thus could be in conflict with the formal ranking within the system. How would one compare the rank of a noble of the sakdina 5,000 who had lost most of his phrai with that of another noble of the sakdina 3,000 who had not lost his phrai? In fact, because the phrai luang belonged to the king, while phrai som belonged completely to their nai, a prince who possessed a large number of phrai som, at the time when the loss of phrai luang was heavy, presented a threat to the king.

Secondly, because wealth came from the possession of manpower, the loss of phrai luang meant that the nobles who had lost their phrai luang became poor, while the princes with the increase of their phrai som became wealthy. The princes could then use their wealth to acquire nobles as their clients.

Thirdly, because the possession of manpower brought the possessor political power, the princes became powerful. They gained support not only from the increase of their phrai som, but also from the nobles who were their clients. Such princes became leaders of factions, the expansion of which can be clearly seen at times of succession. At such a time one can easily gather from the record of events in the Annals that in the political arena there were a number of factions, nobles supporting one prince or another. To prevent the formation of such factions, old Thai laws abound with threats of severe punishment for people of high rank who associated with princes and other nobles. As Thai history itself demonstrates, such laws appear to have been of little use in preventing the formation of factions.

Thai history suggests that after major disasters, such as the sack of Ayutthaya, the Thai kingdom reemerged stronger than before. Then after a period of peace it became weakened, the society being split into factions fighting among themselves. At least two explanations for this phenomenon can be deduced from this study. The first was that a major disaster disorganized the existence of the informal client and patron relationships, and also separated the nai from their phrai som. When a strong king emerged after the disaster, most phrai were phrai luang, and thus the king had complete control of the distribution of manpower. After a period of peace, the number of phrai luang gradually lessened, while the number of phrai som was on the increase. The informal clientships began to grow and factions developed. The accession to the throne by a new king was the most critical time, for the king was not as yet able to consolidate his clients and depose the heads of other factions. Royal Decrees tell us of the severe loss of phrai luang and the increased power of the princes towards the end of the Late Ayutthaya period. Succession disputes raged at the end of each reign. When King Uthumphon came to the throne in 1758, he had to kill three princes of krom rank, heads of other factions. Further, he had to give up the throne within that year because he did not wish to kill Prince Ekkathat, his own full brother who was the head of another faction.^d

During the Ayutthaya period, the princes were powerful and became the main threat to the king. As noted above, when they were brought into the city, palaces were built for them, and they had complete control over their men who were phrai som. If we think of a ruler of a town as a ruler not of a territorial area, but a ruler of a group of men, we would find that the bringing into the capital city of the princes did not greatly change their statuses for they still governed their own men, their own phrai som. Thus at any time when the loss of phrai luang became heavy, the princes became threats to the king.

There can be no doubt that the weakness of Ayutthaya which led to its fall in 1767 was due largely to the existence of factions within the capital city. The power of the king was weakened because of the heavy loss of phrai luang. The ranking within the formal organization was upset by the actual loss of phrai luang as well as the existence of quasi-groups of informal clients and patrons, which were ready to turn into factions fighting against each other at any time. There could not, in fact, be a unanimous willingness to resist outside attack.

¹PPHL, volo II, pp. 236-243.

The second explanation may be found in social mobility. Thai society was organized like an army. The princes and the nobles each had control of certain amount of manpower. In time of war, they led their men in battle. In peace time, the nobles were the officials in the bureaucracy, administering the day-to-day business of government. According to the Thai concept of trakun ("good family")² and the regulation on the types of people suitable to go through the ritual of thawai tua, there could be little upward mobility from the lower class of phrai and that to that of khunnang. If we assume that the proclamation of such a regulation meant its rigorous application, at least at the time, we find that the rate of upward mobility would be lowest in peace time, for such laws were promulgated in the reigns of King Borommakot (1732-1758) and King Mongkut (1851-1868). From our study of the Early Bangkok period, we learn that in peace time mobility within the level of khunnang depended a great deal on kinship connections, and personal relationships with the king and with other powerful nobles. Thai society was extremely personalized, and much emphasis was laid on face-to-face behavior in regard to the amount of respect to be shown to those of various degrees of higher and lower statuses. Persons with the greatest means of mobility were those who came from important noble or princely families, contracted strategic marriages, and had much knowledge of the informal clientships. When political factions were rife, it was the ability to estimate the potential of the person to be attached to as patron that had the most meaning for one's future advancement. Thus in peace time, opportunity for advancement was given to those endowed with political ability, and not the warriors. Yet when there was a war, these "politicians" were the persons who would lead the army in battle.

After national disasters such as the fall of Ayutthaya, and at the times when major wars were being waged, opportunity for upward mobility was open to all who were capable in the conduct of warfare. Regulations for the amount of rewards and promotion for distinguished services in battle were laid down in Clause 36 Laksana Kabotsuk, and Kot Monthianban, and the rewards were ample.² Thus in time of war, important positions were given to distinguished warriors. Consequently, when the kingdom emerged from a national disaster, the military strength of the nation was at its peak. After a peaceful period the informal clientships began to grow, society split into factions, and the persons who occupied important positions were political experts and non-warriors.

The second fall of Ayutthaya in 1767 gave the Thai

²Laksana Kabotsuk (Laws of Treason), PK, vol. II, pp. 476-477.

another lesson. The awareness of the importance of controlling the distribution of manpower led to the marking of all phrai and that. Through marking the wrist of phrai with the names of their nai and the town in which they lived, control of manpower was greatly facilitated. Although there were still complaints of the loss of phrai luang appearing in laws and decrees, it seems that they could not have been as heavy as those occurring during the Ayutthaya period. Further, as it was realized that the excessive requirement of government corvée led people to try to get out of the status of phrai luang, the duration of government corvée for phrai luang was reduced and phrai som were also required to do government corvée. To prevent the increase of phrai som, phrai som were turned into phrai luang at the death of their nai. This operated to prevent the increase of power of the princes. Further, although the princes still had large numbers of their own phrai som, the officials of the princes, of the Upparat for instance, are found to be junior relatives of the officials of the king.

Before we consider changes and developments during the Early Bangkok period, it is best to note briefly the result of the study in regard to Thai social organization. In Thai society, the norms governing behavior in interaction between individuals were based mainly on differential statuses. The necessity for having a superior in the formation of groups should be recognized. A group in fact consisted of a patron and a number of clients. The basis of the relationship between the king and the nobles, the nai (i.e. princes and nobles) and their phrai (commoners) was, in the last analysis, reciprocity. Those who were the patrons (king, princes and nobles) had to give protection to their clients (followers, people under their control), while the clients had the duty to give gifts to them and render them services. This concept of reciprocity was emphasized in the dominant value of katanyu-katawethi. That is, to remember what another has done for one, and try to do things in return. The importance of this concept in Thai society will be realized when we learn of the Thai belief that a person who lacks katanyu should not be associated with, and that such a person has no future. With the operation of such a concept, there was no need for the king to give salaries to his princes and nobles, for in return for the protection given to the commoners (phrai), the latter were under the obligation to do service for and support their nai.

The area being underpopulated, the labor force necessary to the performance of work and services had to be organized as efficiently as possible. The king, the peak of the society, was in theory the owner of all manpower within the kingdom. He distributed the people to be under the

protection of his officials, the princes and the nobles, according to their ranks as defined by the sakdina system. Thus a gigantic hierarchy of officials emerged, the status of each individual precisely defined by the sakdina (dignity marks). There were hierarchies of clients and patrons in the formal structure. The nobles were clients of the king. To him they rendered services in return for his protection and rewards. At the same time the phrai were clients of the nobles. The nobles were obligated to give protection to the phrai who were assigned to be under their control. At the same time the nobles lived on what was given to them by their phrai, or what they could demand from them, and their services.

The evaluation of statuses was extremely important in Thai society. This evaluation was based mainly on the control of manpower, the amount of clients possessed by an individual. Status appears to have involved a religious element, the belief that a person attained higher status on account of his past religious merit, or Karma. One could look at the formal organization of the society as having a hierarchy of positions to be filled by persons who had just that much past merit for the specific positions. The concept of bun, which was used to justify a person obtaining high position, served to link status hierarchy with the doctrine of cause and effect in Buddhism. In itself, it supported the importance of hierarchy in the organization of the society. The stringent code of behavior regarding the ceremonial show of respect to be given to people of different ranks suggests that there existed a religious element in differential statuses. The position of the king as the representation of the Dharma, by which order in the state was kept, was of course religious in nature.

There were clearly two main classes in Thai society. The upper class, nai, consisted of the nobles and the princes whose roles were mainly governing roles. The lower class consisted of the phrai and the that who tilled the land, giving gifts to and supporting the upper class by offering services.

The nineteenth century was an important period in Thai history for significant changes occurred within it. The first was the influx of Chinese immigrants. These supplied what was most needed in Thai society, i.e. labor. Because laborers were scarce, the Thai laborers, members of the lower class, were monopolized by the members of the upper class. Free labor was non-existent. Thus the Chinese immigrants became wage laborers. The availability of wage laborers made it possible for the government to dispense with a large part of corvée labor. The reduction in corvée had an important effect on the relationship between a nai and his phrai. Corvée labor had given an op-

portunity for the nai to render assistance to his phrai, and thus he would be given gifts by his phrai. With the previous longer duration of corvée, the contact between the nai and his phrai was closer, for the nai had the actual control and command of his phrai while the latter were serving corvée. Since the reign of King Rama II, the government began to hire Chinese laborers to dig canals. By the reign of King Rama III, the government showed preference for taxes in specie rather than corvée. Such actions disturbed the relationship between the nai and his phrai.

The second was the change in the method for the collection of revenues. The general spread of a tax farming system in the third reign (it had begun earlier) might have been due to the need of the central government to cover its expenses, especially since it began to use wage laborers for construction. The traditional method of revenue collection, at least in the provinces, appears to have been through the nai who were the officials. This system was most conducive to corruption, and thus very little of the revenue actually reached the royal treasuries. The change in the system of tax collection must have affected the economic situation of the members of the upper class in general. When considered together with the loosened relationship between nai and phrai, the income and living conditions of the members of the upper class must have gone down generally. However, there were exceptions, for certain krom (departments or divisions) had other new sources of income.

It should be noted that in the system of ranking in Thai society, consisting in the distribution of the control of manpower, the basic assumption was that wealth correlated with the amount of manpower possessed by an individual. That was so because the income of the members of the upper class came from the phrai under their control. With the availability of wage labor, the reduction in the length of corvée, and the opportunity available to officials of certain departments such as Krom Khlang to obtain their income from other sources, the correlation between wealth and the control of men was disturbed. During the Early Bangkok period, with the introduction of the marking of the phrai and the turning of phrai som into phrai luang at the death of their nai, the distribution of manpower could be controlled. However, the system was not prepared to deal with the effect of wealth in giving its possessor the power to gain clients and manipulate people according to his will.

The consequences of the changes will be most clearly understood when shown in each separate level of society. Among the upper class the tendency was for the poor officials to become clients of the wealthy ones and perform

services for material benefits. Thus, informal client and patron relationships within the upper class grew. The possession of large numbers of clients meant the rise of one's status, and also power. To have followers in various other krom meant that one's affairs in connection with those krom would be facilitated. Thus one gained power especially in the manipulation of the course of justice, for the administration of justice was never successfully organized. The powerful patron, therefore, could give better protection to his clients, and attract new clients.

With the rise of the cost of living, and the loss of income, the nai would tend to oppress their phrai, making more demands for their services and gifts. On the other hand, with the burden of making payment to tax farmers and without corvée, the phrai would begrudge the payment and services to be rendered to their nai. With the system of marking the wrist of the phrai in operation, it was difficult for them to get out of their groups, and become phrai som. The best way out was to find a patron who was powerful enough to shield them against the oppression of their nai. Thus informal client and patron relationships between members of different classes also occurred. It seems that by the reign of King Mongkut such informal clientships were common.

An additional consequence of the influx of the Chinese may be mentioned. This was the rise of the entrepreneurial class. The Chinese immigrants were outside of the system. Unlike the Mon or Khmer immigrants, the Chinese immigrants were not marked for corvée, or restricted in their movement. They began their career frequently as wage laborers, and after having accumulated assets, they became traders. Large numbers of them became successful and wealthy, and were often incorporated into the class of the nobles. With their wealth, they could become clients of important nobles or princes, and later became tax farmers and thus were made nobles.

The history of the Thai kingdom demonstrates repeated attempts to control the distribution of manpower according to what could be called an authority code, in this case the various ranks as defined by the sakdina system. Yet, despite the passing of many laws and decrees for this purpose and even the introduction of indelible marking of individual members of the society, this feat could not be wholly accomplished. The cause of this inability could be traced to the conflict of two principles of organization in Thai society. The first was that the king was the source of all power within the state. According to this principle, he was the sole owner of all manpower within the kingdom. The hierarchy of ranks and power was established by his distribution of manpower to the princes and the nobles according to their ranks. Order within the

state depended upon his distribution of manpower, the balance of which gave security to the position of the king. Yet the principle in the formation of groups, the relationship between patron and client, depended upon reciprocity. On his part, the patron's role was to give protection to his client, and the client's role was to render gifts and service to his patron. Cases of a patron's intervention in the course of justice and trials of his clients, as well as the assistance given to his clients to avoid corvée, were examples of his performing the role which was expected of him by the clients. When the patron could not perform his role, or could not perform it as well as others, there was no moral obligation on the client's part to render him gifts and services. The dominant value of Thai society was katanyu-katawethi, i.e., to remember what another has done for one, and to try to do something in return. This is different from the concept of loyalty, and the distinction can be realized from the fact that one could be loyal to the crown or to an abstract principle, but that would not be katanyu-katawethi. Thus when a patron could not give the usual protection, i.e., would not perform his customary role, the client was free to seek a new patron.

In the Ayutthaya period, the patron was expected to shield his phrai from government corvée which was looked upon as an evil burden to be avoided at all cost. If that was not possible, the patron was expected to assist the client who rendered him ample services and gifts by assigning him lighter, or less, work than others. Yet it was quite difficult for a patron to help his client in this respect unless he had great power and authority, for the government was very much concerned that the phrai luang should serve corvée. The existence of the clients of princes, the phrai som who had to do no government corvée, induced phrai luang to try to get out of their status. Thus the loss of phrai luang occurred. When the phrai som of the princes increased, their wealth increased. Wealth could be used to thwart the course of justice and give protection to the clients whether they be nobles or phrai. Further, wealth could be used directly to obtain clients among the upper class, whose members obtained no salary from the government, but depended for their living on gifts and services from their clients who were phrai luang. The loss of phrai luang made the nobles more liable to become clients of the wealthy princes. Thus informal clientships grew, and the society split into factions headed by the princes.

During the Early Bangkok period, the princes could not play the same roles because an effective mechanism had been developed to prevent the loss of phrai luang. The change in the economy, however, had enabled the nobles of certain krom to take the place of the princes. The members

of the Bunnak family had the foresight, the ability, and the opportunity to take advantage of the situation and thus, by the reign of King Mongkut, they obtained great power by being able to control the hierarchies of informal clients and patrons.

Observed in this light, there appears to have been a cyclical development in the course of Thai history. Because national disasters, and the process of recovering from them, destroyed the existing informal client and patron relationships, the formal hierarchy of ranks coincided with actual distribution of power when the kingdom emerged from such disasters. Yet after a period of peace, the informal clientships began to grow. This gave rise to quasi-groups of patrons and their clientele outside the formal organization. Such informal groups could at any time develop into political factions. The formal hierarchy of ranks ceased to correlate with actual distribution of power. When certain factions began to grow in strength to attain proportion, they became a threat to the power of the king. Because of the existence of factions, the kingdom was weak, and if attacks should come at such a time from a neighboring land, the kingdom would find it extremely difficult to resist. A major defeat, such as the loss of the capital, would, however, allow the emergence of a new hierarchy without the informal clientships, and this gave strength to the king and the kingdom.

With this cyclical development there tended to be correlated a changing rate of mobility. It seems that in peace time the rate of upward mobility would be lowest. In times of war, on the other hand, the rate of mobility would be highest. As regards downward mobility, there must always have been a high rate throughout the course of Thai history. With the practice of polygamy among the upper class, there must of necessity be a high rate of downwards mobility. As regards the means of mobility, we have noted that in war times, the ability to fight and lead men in battle was the most important asset. In peace time, on the other hand, the ability to deal with people, both superior and subordinate, was much appreciated. On the part of the superior, the ability to govern was important. As for the subordinates, it was the ability to fak tua, used in the sense that signifies the ability to make others like and have trust in oneself, that was important. With elaboration of roles and of conduct in connection with the show of respect, it was the ability to evaluate the status of other persons correctly that led to individual success in upward mobility. This implies a knowledge not only of the formal ranks of other persons, but also their place in the quasi-groups of informal clients and patrons and their kinship connections. When the society was split into factions, the ability to see the potential of the person to whom one should be attached as

his client was also important. In peace time, therefore, those who attained important positions would be the capable politicians and adroit diplomats. This, however, applied only to mobility within the class of the nobles, for in peace time there appears to have been minimum movement from the class of phrai and that to that of khunnang.

It seems, however, that the cycle of earlier Thai history was broken during the Early Bangkok period. The availability of the Chinese laborers not only showed up the inefficiency of the corvée system, but also eventually rendered it redundant. The development of regional trades as well as the increase of international trade created a major economic change. It was no longer possible to turn back the clock and strengthen the formal organization on the basis of the sakdina system. The economic and political changes as well as administrative innovations had a general "modernizing" effect upon society. They opened up sources of power, new channels of mobility, and elaborate informal relationships. These in turn demanded, on the one hand, a major change in the organization of the bureaucracy, and on the other, they gave the society an increment of flexibility which allowed it to respond more readily to the various challenges of imperialism and modernization.

APPENDICES

- A. Note on Thai Laws and Royal Decrees
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APPENDIX A

Note on Thai Laws and Royal Decrees

The bulk of old Thai laws used in this study is the Pramuan Kotmai Ratchakan thi Nung (Legal Code of Rama I), generally known as "The Three Seals Laws". The basis of this law is the Buddhist Thammasat. This is the sacred and eternal law. In Thailand there grew another legal literature besides the Thammasat. It consisted of decisions of kings and precedents taken from actual sentences and orders. The value and authority of such records depended on the king's reputation as being a ruler governing according to the rule of equity, the Thammasat. Possibly from the end of the sixteenth century, such selections of royal decisions were made into abstract matras or sections and placed under the headings of the Thammasat. In general their dates of promulgations were kept, although certain modifications and probably interpolations also could be expected.

The edition used for this study is that of R. Lingat, which was published in three volumes by Thammasat University in 1938. The first two volumes contain laws which are set out in matras and placed under various headings of the Thammasat. The third volume contains royal decrees in their original forms, i.e. those laws which have not yet been abstracted, put into matras, and placed under various headings.

Volume I contains laws under the following headings:

- Phra Thammasat
- Inthaphat
- Kot Monthianban (Palantine Law)
- Phra Thammanun (Law of Procedure)
- Phra Aiyakan Phromsak (Rates of Fines and Compensations)
- Phra Aiyakan Tammaeng Na Phonlaruan (Law of the Civil hierarchy)
- Phra Aiyakan Tammaeng Na Thahan Huamwang (Laws of the Military, Provincial Hierarchies)
- Phra Aiyakan Banphanaek (Laws on the Division of Phrai)
- Laksana Raphong (Laws on the Institution of Litigations)
- Laksana Phayan (Laws on Witnesses)
- Phisut Damnam Luiphai (Laws on Trials by Ordeal)

Laksana Tralakan (Laws on Judges)
Laksana Uthōn (Laws of Appeal)

Volume II contains laws under the following headings:

Laksana Phua Mia (Laws of Husband and Wife)
Laksana That (Laws of Slavery)
Laksana Lakpha (Laws of Kidnapping)
Laksana Mōradok (Laws of Inheritance)
Laksana Kuni (Laws on Debt)
Laksana Betset (Miscellaneous Laws)
Laksana Wiwat (Laws on Quarrels and Fights)
Laksana Chon (Laws on Theft)
Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government)
Laksana Kabotsuk (Laws of Treason)

Volume III contains the following:

Kot Phra Song (The Monks Rule)
Kot 36 Kho (The 36 Rules)
64 royal decrees of Ayutthaya period
1 royal decree of Thonburi period
15 royal decrees of Rama I

There are two main problems in connection with the use of the old laws for historical reconstruction. These are a) the problem of finding the correct date for each law, and b) the problem of distinguishing interpolated passages, and minor alterations.

a. Problems of Dating. Four Thai systems of dating are found to have been used for these laws.

The first is the Buddhist Era (B.E.). For the Ayutthaya period, subtracting 544 from the date will give the year A.D. For the Bangkok period, subtract 543.

The second dating system is Čhunla Sakkarat (C.S.) Adding 638 to the date will give the year A.D.

The third system is Maha Sakkarat; add 78 to the date for the year A.D.

The fourth system is Čhulamani Sakkarat; add 188 to the date for the year A.D.

Those laws which have been put under various headings in Vol. I and II do not state which system was used, i.e. giving simply the number. However, the animal year is always given, and usually the name of the king under whose authority the law was promulgated. With the exception of a few kings who used the same names in their laws (e.g., Prasatthōng often used the name Ekathotsarot), I find that the kings' names are not unreliable as a guide. The animal

year is, of course, the best and the most reliable guide for finding the dates of the law. Thai people did not make mistakes in connection with animal years for their own ages were reckoned by the use of animal years, and events were remembered with reference to them. Further, one must remember that these laws were copied by hand. A mistake could easily have been made in copying numbers but it is unlikely the animal years were miscopied since they are written as complete words. Thus a date appearing in any law can be checked with the name of the king and the animal year. In the Royal Decrees, i.e. laws which have not been abstracted and incorporated under various headings, the system of dating was always given, and the dates, checked by the use of animal years, are found to be extremely accurate.

b. Problem of Interpolation and Alteration. A great deal of interpolation and alteration can be expected in the main body of the law (those arranged in matras under various headings), because of the purpose for which the Royal Decrees and judgments were abstracted and kept. The changes were made to make the law sufficiently abstract to be useful at the time of the compilation and in the future. The last compilation was made in 1804. Thus, anything in the old laws which was contradictory to custom in 1804 would have been taken out. In those laws which were not completely discarded at the time, minor changes and alterations would have been made in order to "modernize" them.

1. As ranks and title changed in practice, corresponding alterations were made in the law. For example, if the rank of a certain official had changed from phra to chao phraya, we can expect that the rank was changed in those laws mentioning this official.
2. Laws, such as the Civil and Military Provincial Hierarchies, which purported to set out ranks and titles of officials of various krom, would be subjected to much change. New positions and new krom would be added on.

This would, of course, place an important limit to the use of the law as historical evidence, but by no means does it make the law valueless. As example, we may take the Laws of the Civil and Military Provincial Hierarchies. These laws are probably the most interpolated of all. We cannot use these laws to find out how many krom were in existence at the time of its promulgation. We cannot use these laws for finding ranks and titles in existence at that time. The ranks we find in the law as chao phraya, might have been only phra at that time. Yet it is certain that the fourfold system of ranking was in existence at that time, i.e. rank in form of title (e.g. khun), the honorific names (e.g. Kosathibodi), the position (e.g. Minister of Khlang), and the sakdina. It is not, however, valid to draw from these laws the conclusion that this

fourfold system was introduced in the reign of King Trailok, when these laws were passed, for laws might have been promulgated to confirm or formalize an existing fact. It only tells us the existence of the fourfold system at that time. In interpreting these laws, it is also necessary to look at events recorded in the annals, for either the law of the annals may confirm or contradict each other. The events recorded in the annals may tell us also about the likelihood of such a law being promulgated.

There is, however, another type of interpolation which might or might not have occurred. The form in which the laws in the first two volumes appear are as follows: Take for instance Laksana Betset (Miscellaneous Laws).

It began with a Pali phrase, followed by a sentence saying that the said law has been arranged by previous kings in matras which were their explanations as follows.

Here a date is given (1343), name of the king (Ramathibodi), place (name of building, palace), and description of his giving orders to a certain person (in this case Khun Kasetrathibodi, i.e. Minister of Land). (In other laws, sometimes the reason for his giving such orders are also given.)

Thus began Clause 1, and on to Clause 45.

At the beginning of Clause 46, a new date is given (in this case Thursday, fifth day of the rising moon, year of the dog), name of king (Chakkraphat), place, an actual case, which gave rise to the royal orders, and an order.

Then follow Clauses 47 to 51. At Clause 52 a new subject matter begins with a Pali clause and a sentence as at the beginning of this heading.

Then a date is given (1359) followed by the name of the king (Ramathibodi), and the place; a preamble in the form of question put to the king by his noble (Chao Khun Luang Soprui, Minister of Capital City), followed by an order of the king. Then Clause 53 on to Clause 72 follow.

At Clause 73 there is a change of the subject matter with a Pali passage. There is no new date, new name of king, or anything. This Clause 73 is followed by Clause 74 and on to Clause 85.

At Clause 86, there is a change of the subject matter with a Pali phrase, followed by the date (1753) with the name of the king (Ekathotsarot), place. A noble (Phra Suphawadi) told the king of a case and asked for his opinion. The king then gave the judgment.

Then follow Clauses 87-118.

At Clause 119, there is a change of the subject matter with a Pali phrase. There is no new date, name of king, etc.

Then follow Clauses 120-134.

At Clause 135, a new date is given, a sentence telling us that the king gave an order to a noble (Khun Si-phuripricha) to make a record of the orders.

Then follow Clauses 136-138.

At Clause 139, a new subject matter begins with a Pali clause, a new date (1362), name of king (Ramathibodi), place, and a story. A noble (Khun Thoraniban) asked the king for his judgment in a case which he related to the king. The king gave orders.

Then follow Clauses 140-155.

At Clause 156, a new subject matter begins with a Pali phrase, a new date, name of the king (Ramathibodi), followed by the royal orders.

Then follow Clauses 157-176, the last in the law.

In a clause containing both a law and a date, it seems certain that the promulgation of the law corresponds with the date given. The question is whether the laws in all clauses between one date and another were promulgated at the date which comes before them as they should be, or some later laws might have been put in whose dates are left unspecified. This problem can only be partially solved by considering the style of writing, and the context of each particular law and the particular heading under which it appears.

It must be noted that these problems do not arise in the case of the royal decrees. The royal decrees are reproduced in the forms in which they were first promulgated, sometimes giving in detail the events which gave rise to the particular decrees. The dates of the royal decrees are found to be extremely accurate. For this study much use has been made of the royal decrees. The events related in them are found to be most valuable in giving insight into the condition of the society at the time of their promulgation.

The following are notes on each particular law which has been used for historical reconstruction in Chapter II.

Phra Thammanun (Law of Procedure), Clauses 19-20. The date, given in Clause 17, is 1555. Year of the Pig, and Ekathotsarot is the name of the king. Prince Damrong, thinking that the system used is Maha Sakkarat, assigns A.D. 1635 as its date. (Tamnan Kotmai Muang Thai, p. 108). Phiphat Sukkhathit, thinking that the system used is Chulamani Sakkarat, assigns A.D. 1743 as its date. ("Sakkarat

"Chulamani", Sinlapakon, VI, 5, p. 55). It is probable that the later date may be the correct one, for 1555-78 would come out as 1633, which is the Year of the Cock, and not the Pig. The only support for Prince Damrong's date is that King Prasatthong (1629-1656) often used the name Ekathotsarot in his laws. It is possible, however, that Borommakot (1732-1758) might occasionally have used this name also.

The laws, Clauses 17-21, talk of the uses of the ministerial seals in connection with the provinces under the control of the three ministers, i.e. The Chief Ministers of Mahatthai and Kalahom, and the Minister of Khlang. The names of towns under the Chief Minister of Mahatthai betray the fact that the names of these towns have been changed in order to make them fit the situation in the reign of King Rama I, for one of the towns mentioned is Ayutthaya, and the name used for it is Krung Kao (the old city). Although these laws cannot tell us the names of the provinces under the jurisdiction of each minister at the time of the original promulgation, they do tell us that the three ministers had already been endowed with the responsibility for regional government by that time.

Phra Aiyakan Na Phonlaruan (Law of the Civil Hierarchy),
Phra Aiyakan Na Thahan Huamuang (Laws of the Military,
Provincial Hierarchies)

The same date was given in Clause 1 of Phra Aiyakan Na Phonlaruan, and Clause 30 of Phra Aiyakan Na Thahan Huamuang. It is 1298, Year of the Dog. The king's name is Trailok. Prince Damrong assigns A.D. 1454 as their date. H.G. Quaritch Wales assigns the same date for these laws. Although their date may not be precisely A.D. 1454, the laws were certainly promulgated in the reign of King Trailok. The Annals, Phan Chanthanumat edition, as well as the Royal Autograph edition, state that King Trailok gave honorific names to the nobles according to their sak-dina, and appointed the two chief ministers.

Kotmonthianban. The date given in Clause 1 is 720, Year of the Rat, reign of King Trailok. H.G. Quaritch Wales, following Prince Damrong, assigns A.D. 1458 as the date of this law. A.D. 1458 is the Year of the Tiger, and not the Rat. Prof. Wyatt, however, has suggested the year 1468. (See David K. Wyatt, "The Thai 'Kata Mandiarapala and Malacca'" JSS, LV, 2, pp. 282-284). This later date seems to be the correct date in consideration of the circumstances of the time.

Phra Aiyakan Banphanaek (Laws on the Division of Phrai). The date given in Clause 1 is C.S. 1052, Year of the Horse, which is A.D. 1690. Clause 2 is dated C.S. 1093, Year of the Pig, which is A.D. 1731. Clause 3 contains only detailed tables showing how to divide phrai. Clause 5 dated C.S. 1086, Year of the Dragon, which is A.D. 1724. Clause

6 dated C.S. 1084, Year of the Tiger, which is A.D. 1722. It must be noted that, with the exception of clauses containing tables only, every clause is dated and the form of each clause is like a royal decree.

Laksana Rapphong (Laws on the Institution of Litigations)

Clauses 8 and 10. The date is given in Clause 1 as 1899, Year of the Goat, reign of King Ramathibodi. The system used is B.E. and thus the date is A.D. 1355.

Clause 27. The date is given in Clause 21 as 1591, name of the king being given as Narai Prince Damrong, thinking that the system used is Maha Sakkarat, assigns A.D. 1671 as its date. (Tamnan Kotmai Myang Thai, p. 109). Phiphat Sukkhathit thinks that the system used is Chulamani Sakkarat, and the scribe made a mistake in copying the number. The date should be 1491, and thus A.D. 1679. ("Sakkarat Chulamani," Sinlapakon, VI, 5, p. 56).

Laksana Lakpha (Laws on Kidnapping)

Clause 1 dated 1899, Year of the Goat, reign of King Ramathibodi. The system used is B.E., and thus A.D. 1355.

Laksana Chon (Laws on Theft)

Clauses 4,5,6. The date given in the preamble is 1903, Year of the Pig, reign of King Ramathibodi. The system used is B.E., and the date is therefore A.D. 1359.

Laksana Aya Luang (Crimes Against the Government)

Clauses 1-12. The date given in the preamble is 1859, Year of the Hare, reign of King Ramathibodi. The system used is B.E., and thus the date is A.D. 1351.

Clauses 13-101. The date given in Clause 13 is the Year of the Pig, reign of King Ekathotsarot. Prince Damrong assigns the date of A.D. 1647 to it. It is likely that these laws were passed by King Prasatthong, considering Van Vliet's statement in "Historical Account of Siam" (The Siam Society, Selected Articles from the Journal, VII, p. 90), as well as the fact that King Prasatthong often used the name Ekathotsarot in his laws.

Clauses 102-105. The date is missing, but a new name of the king is given. The name is Trailok.

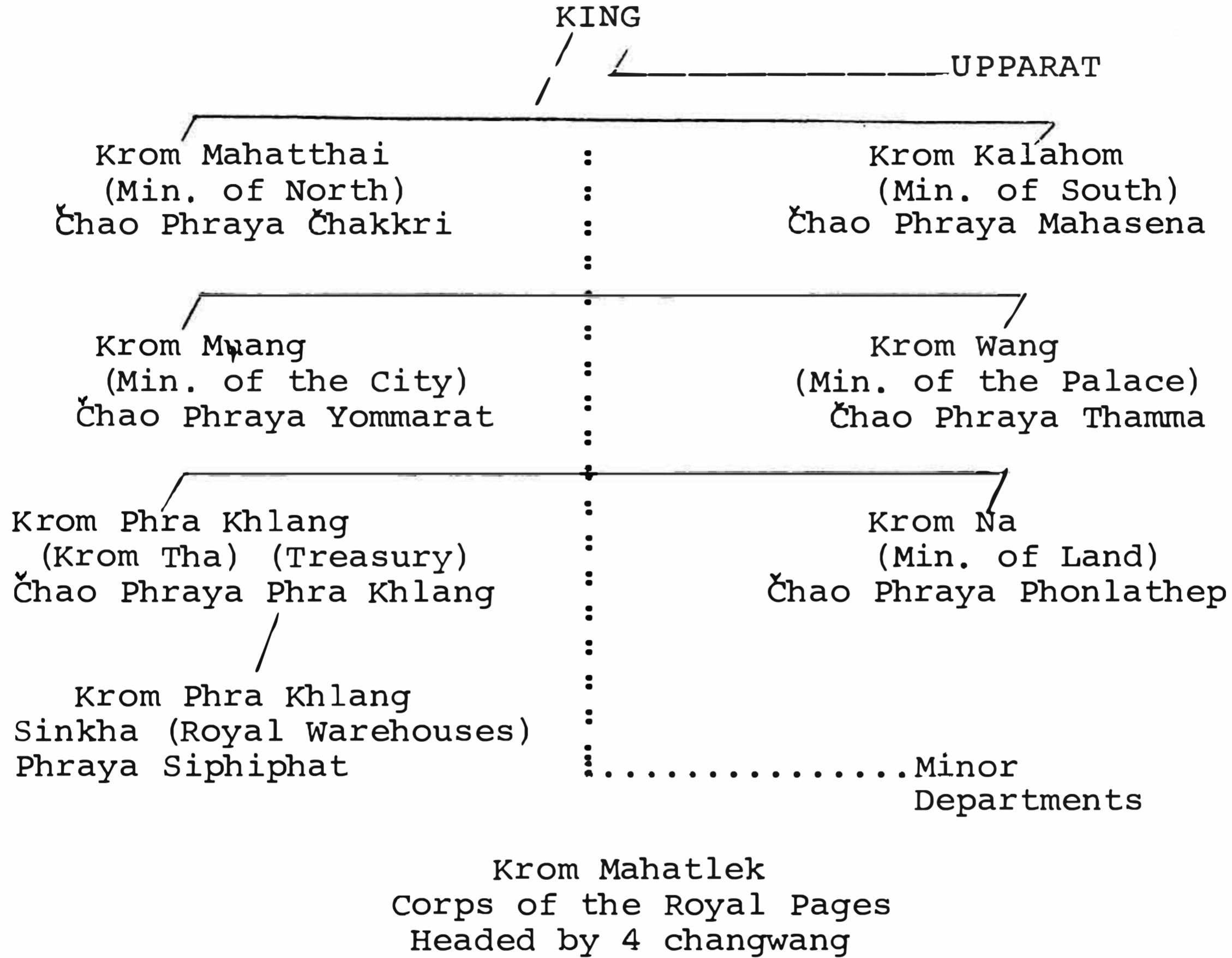
Clauses 121-138. The date given in Clause 121 is Wednesday, the eleventh month, the third day of the rising moon, Year of the Pig. No name of the king is given.

Laksana Betset (Miscellaneous Laws)

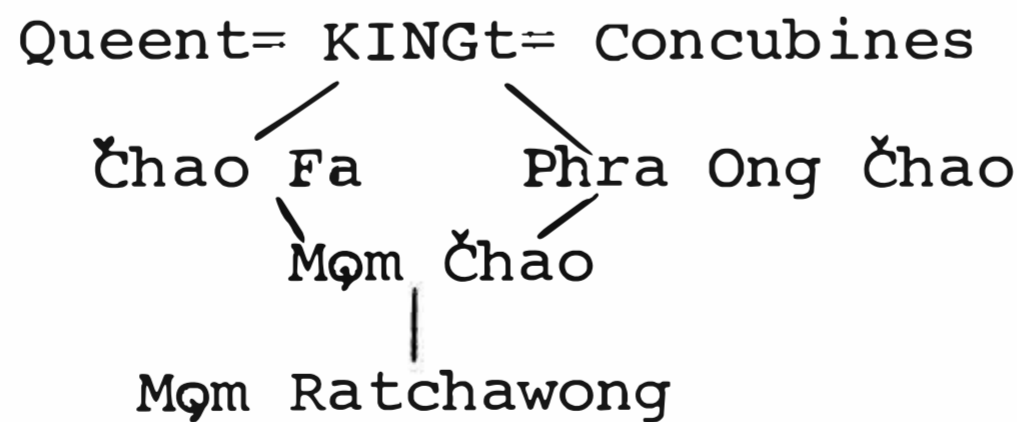
Clauses 103, 106. The date given in Clause 86 is 1565, Year of the Cock. The name of the king is Ekathotsarot. According to Phiphat Sukkhathit, the system used is Chulamani Sakkarat, and thus the date is A.D. 1753.

APPENDIX B

A. Thai Government



B. The Royal Family



C. Nobility

- Somdet Čhao Phraya (Viceroy or Regent)
- Čhao Phraya (Minister and Governor of First Class Town)
- Phraya
- Phra
- Luang
- Khun

Nobility, Krom Mahatlek only		<u>sakdina</u>
Chamyun		1,000
Nai Sak, Nai Rit	each	800
Cha*		600
Nai Kuad, Nai Khan		500
Nai Chaikhan, Nai Sorawichai Nai Phonlaphan, Nai Phonlaphai Nai Sanit, Nai Sane, Nai Leawut Nai Sutchinda	each	400

* All the material in Appendix B up to this point is taken from David K. Wyatt, "The Growth of One Family Dominance in Nineteenth Century Siam."

APPENDIX C

Short Biographies of Chief Ministers and Ministers

Reign of King Rama I, 1782-1809

Mahatthai

Chao Phraya Rattanaphiphit (Son)

Said to be a son of a noble of Ayutthaya. During the reign of King Taksin (1767-1782) he was Phra Akkharasunthon, the seal official of Krom Mahatthai, and was working directly under Rama I who was then the Chief Minister of Mahatthai. When King Rama I came to the throne, he was made Chao Phraya Rattanaphiphit, Chief Minister of Mahatthai.

Two of his sons, Sya and Mang, were Ministers of Wang (Palace) during the reigns of King Mongkut and King Chulalongkorn respectively. Another of his sons was Phraya Senaphiphit (Mi). One of his daughters, Puk, was a concubine of King Rama III.

Kalahom

Chao Phraya Mahasena (Pli)

Being a son of the Chief Minister of Kalahom of the reign of King Borommakot (1732-1758), he was a royal page during the reign of King Ekkathat (1758-1767). After the fall of Ayutthaya, he joined the faction of Krom Mun Thepphiphit at Phimai, and was appointed Phra Mahathep by the latter. When Krom Mun Thepphiphit was defeated by King Taksin, he came to serve under Taksin. He was then appointed Phra Phonlamuang, official of Phitsanulok. When King Rama I came to the throne, he was appointed Chief Minister of Kalahom. See the Bunnak genealogy for his connection with the Bunnak family.

Chao Phraya Mahasena (Bunnak)

Being a son of Chao Phraya Akkhamahasena (Sen) of the reign of King Ekkathat, he was then a royal page. He was appointed Nai Chalognaiyanat, head of a section of the royal pages. At the fall of Ayutthaya, he went to live with Rama I who was then the Yokkrabat of Ratchaburi. During the reign of King Taksin, while Rama I served as the Chief Minister of Mahatthai, Bunnak remained living in the residence of Rama I, serving the latter as a thanai (secretary). He refused to serve in any official position under King Taksin. When his wife was killed by robbers, he married Nuan, a sister of the wife of Rama I. When King Rama I came to the throne, Bunnak was appointed Phraya

Uthaitham, and was given a house to live in the area of the ministers. In 1787, in an attack on Tavoy, Chao Phraya Mahasena (Pli), a commander of the Thai troops, was lost. Thus the position of the Chief Minister of Kalahom became vacant, and Bunnak was appointed Chao Phraya Mahasena, Chief Minister of Kalahom. He served in this post until his death in 1795. Most of his offspring attained high government positions (see Bunnak genealogies).

Chao Phraya Aphairacha (Pin)

He was a son of Chao Phraya Mahasombat (Phon) of Ayutthaya. During the reign of King Taksin, he had served in the army under the command of Rama I, who was the Chief Minister of Mahatthai. He was said to be one of the persons who engineered Taksin's overthrow, and Rama I's accession to the throne. When King Rama I came to the throne, he was appointed Chao Phraya Phonlathep, the Minister of Krom Na (Land). At the death of Chao Phraya Mahasena (Bunnak) in 1795, he was made Chief Minister of Kalahom. In the reign of King Rama II (1809-1824), he was appointed Chao Phraya Aphairacha, the highest ranked official in the Palace of the Front. (See also the genealogy of the Sinhaseni family)s

Krom Khlang

Chao Phraya Phra Khlang (Son)

The sources are silent in regards to the position of his father. During the reign of King Taksin, he was already a Phraya Phiphatkosa, Chief of Krom Phra Khlang Sinkha (The Royal Warehouse). At the accession of King Rama I, he was made the Minister of Khlang. Apparently he was not managing the affairs satisfactorily because of the deterioration of his mental capacity due to old age. He was, later, reduced in rank to that of Phraya Siakkharat, assistant to the Chief of Krom Tha (Port). Two of his sons reached the rank of phraya.

Chao Phraya Phra Khlang (Hon)

He was a son of Chao Phraya Surabodin (Bunmi) of Ayutthaya. During the reign of King Taksin, he was Luang Sorawichit, official of Uthaithani. At the time of unrest in the capital, he sent out messages to inform Rama I, who was at that time leading the army in an attack on Cambodia. On Rama I's return to the capital, Hon went to meet him outside the city. He was an exceptional prose writer and a poet. At Rama I's accession to the throne, he was appointed Phraya Phiphatkosa, Chief of Krom Phra Khlang Sinkha (The Royal Warehouse). When Chao Phraya Phra Khlang (Son) was demoted, Hon was made Chao Phraya Phra Khlang, Minister of Khlang.

It is said that he had many children but none of them was an official. One of his daughters was a concubine of Rama II. He died in 1805.

Chao Phraya Rattanathibet (Kun)

We have no information regarding his father. During the reign of King Taksin, he was Phraya Ratchaprasit. During the reign of King Rama I, he was made Phraya Siphiphat, Chief of Krom Phra Khlang Sinkha (The Royal Warehouse). After the death of Chao Phraya Phra Khlang (Hoi), he was made Chao Phraya Phra Khlang. In the reign of King Rama II, he was made Chief Minister of Mahatthai. He was the founder of Rattakun family. One of his sons was Phraya Rattanamatphongphakdi (Sattawa).

Krom Wang

Chao Phraya Thamma (Bunrot)

A son of Phraya Monthianban, official of Wang in Ayutthaya, he was a Phraya Thamma during the reign of Taksin, and was reputed to be a specialist in royal ceremonies. At the accession of Rama I, he was made the Minister of Wang. He was dismissed from his post because, while a commander of troops in a war with the Burmese, he refused to fight. Later he was appointed Phraya Phetracha, Chief of Krom Phra Kotchaban (Royal Elephant), and later was promoted to the rank of Chao phraya.

One of his sons was Chao Phraya Phuthon (Nqi). Two of his daughters were concubines of Rama II, and Rama III, respectively. He was the founder of the Bunyarattaphan family.

Chao Phraya Thamma (Thongdi)

He was said to be a client of Rama I before the latter's accession to the throne. During the reign of Rama I, he was appointed Chamun Sisorasak, an official in the Corps of the Royal Pages. Later he was appointed Phraya Siphiphat, Chief of the Royal Warehouse. When Chao Phraya Thamma (Bunrot) was demoted, he was made the Minister of Wang. One of his sons reached the rank of phraya.

Chao Phraya Thamma (Sot)

He was a thanai (secretary) of Rama I's brother before Rama I's accession to the throne. When Rama I's brother became Upparat, Sot was made Phraya Monthianban, an official of the Palace of the Front. After the death of Chao Phraya Thamma (Thongdi), he was made the Minister of Wang. Two of his daughters were royal concubines of Rama II, and Rama III, respectively. One of his sons was an official in the Royal Pages with the rank of Chamun.

Krom MuangČhao Phraya Yommarat (Thongin)

He was Luang Ratchamyangrong, official of Krom Muang during the reign of Taksin. After Rama I's accession to the throne, he was made the Minister of Muang.s In a war with the Burmese (cir. 1785), he was dismissed because of his failure in his duty as a commander of troops. Later he was appointed Phraya Mahathirat, assistant to the Minister of Krom Muang.

Čhao Phraya Yommarat (Bunnak) See Čhao Phraya Mahasena above.

Čhao Phraya Yommarat (Bunma)

He was another son of Čhao Phraya Akkhamahasena (Sen). He was a royal page of Prince Uthumphon, the Upparat, during the reign of King Borommakot, and obtained the rank of Luang Nai Mahachaiphak. After the fall of Ayutthaya, he went to live with the Governor of Phetchabun. It appears that he was later raised to the rank of Phraya and became a town governor. When his half brother, Bunnak, became the Chief Minister of Kalahom, he was made the Minister of Muang. During the reign of Rama II, when Čhao Phraya Aphairacha (Pin) obtained a new appointment to the Palace of the Front, he was made Chief Minister of Kalahom. See Bunnak genealogy.

Krom Na

Čhao Phraya Phonlathep (Pin) see Čhao Phraya Aphairacha (Pin) above.

Čhao Phraya Phonlathep (Bunnak Ban Maela)

He was one of the conspirators of the revolt in Ayutthaya during the reign of Taksin. After Rama I's accession to the throne, he was appointed Čhao Phraya Chaiwichit, Governor of Ayutthaya. Towards the end of the first reign, he was appointed the Minister of Krom Na. At the beginning of the reign of King Rama II, he was said to have been involved in a conspiracy and was executed.

Reign of King Rama II, 1809-1824

Krom Mahatthai

Čhao Phraya Rattanathibet (Kun) see Čhao Phraya Phra Khlang (Kun) above.

Čhao Phraya Aphaiphuthon (Noi)

A son of Čhao Phraya Thamma (Bunrot) (above), he became Phraya Anuchitracha during the reign of Rama I. During the second reign, he was made Čhao Phraya Yommarat, Minister of Krom Muang. At the death of Čhao Phraya Rattanathibet (Kun), he became the Chief Minister of Mahatthais. One of his daughters was a concubine of Rama III. His

sons were Čhao Phraya Phutharaphai (Nut), and Čhao Phraya Kalahom Ratchasena (Krap).

Krom Kalahom

Čhao Phraya Mahasena (Bunma), see Čhao Phraya Yommarat (bunma) above.

Čhao Phraya Wongsasurasak (Saeng)

A son of the Governor of Ratchaburi (Sem), he was a member of the Na Bangchang family, and was thus related to Rama II through the latter's mother, and also the Bunnak family. (See genealogies of Na Bangchang and Bunnak). He was a Governor of Ma Kløng and then Ratchaburi. When Čhao Phraya Mahasena (Bunma) died, he was made Chief Minister of Kalahom. His descendants were governors of Ratchaburi.

Čhao Phraya Mahasena (Sang)

His mother being a sister of Rama I's Queen, he was a member of Na Bangchang family, and related to the Bunnak family, (see genealogies of Na Bangchang and Bunnak). When Rama II was the Upparat, he was Phraya Sisuriyawong, Chief of the Corps of the pages of the Palace of the Front. When Rama II became king, he was appointed Chief of the Corps of the Royal Pages. Later he was appointed Minister of Krom Khlang. At the death of his cousin, Čhao Phraya Wongsasurasak (Saeng), he was made Chief Minister of Kalahom.

Krom Khlang

Čhao Phraya Kosa (Kon)

He was a Palat of the krom of Rama II when the latter was a prince of krom rank. When Rama II was made the Upparat, he was appointed Phraya Kraikosa, an official of the Palace of the Front. After Rama II came to the throne, he was made the Minister of Khlang. One of his offspring obtained the rank of phraya.

Čhao Phraya Phra Khlang (Sang), see Čhao Phraya Mahasena (Sang) above.

Čhao Phraya Phra Khlang (Dit)

He was a son of Čhao Phraya Mahasena (Bunnak) and Nuan, a sister of Rama I's Queen. He was therefore a member of Na Bangchang family as well as a direct descendant of the Bunnak family. He became a royal page during the reign of Rama I and was given the rank of Nai Sutchinda. He was later promoted to the position of Phraya Suriyawongmontri, Chief of the Corps of the Royal Pages. During the reign of Rama II he became Phraya Suriyawongkosa, official of Krom Khlang. Towards the end of the second

reign, he was made the Minister of Krom Khlang. During the reign of Rama III, he was offered the position of the Chief Minister of Kalahom. He refused that position, however, preferring to remain in the lower position of the Minister of Krom Khlang. He was therefore given both positions acting as the Chief Minister of Kalahom as well as the Minister of Krom Khlang. When King Mongkut came to the throne, he was made Somdet Chao Phraya Borommaha Prayurawong, having the same honors as a prince of krom rank, and occupied the position of Viceroy for the whole kingdom. (See Bunnak genealogy).

Krom Wang

Chao Phraya Thamma (Thet)

Both he and his wife were members of Na Bangchang family. He was the Governor of Ratchaburi at the beginning of the reign of Rama II. During this reign he was appointed the Minister of Krom Wang. One of his sons obtained the rank of phraya.

Krom Myang

Chao Phraya Yommarat (Noi) see Chao Phraya Aphaiphuthon (Noi) above.

Chao Phraya Yommarat (Noi Bunnak)

A son of Chamun Waiworanat of Ayutthaya, he had the same grandfather (on the paternal side) as Chao Phraya Mahasena (Bunnak). During the reign of Taksin, he was given the rank of Luang Songphon, and later promoted to Phraya Sisuriyaphaha, and was made to head a delegation to Vietnam. During the reign of Rama II, he was made the Minister of Krom Myang. In the third reign, he was appointed Chao Phraya Mahasena, Chief Minister of Kalahom.

Krom Na

Chao Phraya Phonlathep (Sa)

He served as a Palat of the krom of Rama II when the latter was a prince of krom rank. When Rama II became Upparat he was appointed Phraya Chasaenyakon, official of the Palace of the Front. When Rama II came to the throne he was made Phraya Santhamit. Later he was appointed the Minister of Krom Na. His sons were governors of Phitsanulok and Nakhon Sawan.

Chao Phraya Phonlathep (Thongin)

He was a son of Chao Phraya Mahasombat of Ayutthaya. His brother married Rama I's sister, and was made a prince, Krom Mun Narinthonphithak. His daughter was the major

wife of Somdet Čhao Phraya Borommaha Prayurawong (Dit Bunnak). During the reign of Rama II he was raised from the rank of Phraya Ratchaphakdi to Čhao Phraya Phonlathep, the Minister of Krom Na.

Reign of King Rama III, 1824-1851

Krom Mahatthai

Čhao Phraya Bōdin Decha (Sing)

A son of Čhao Phraya Aphaiphuthon (Pin), he was a royal page during the reign of King Rama I, and obtained the rank of Čhamun Samoechairat. He served in the Palace of the Front during the second reign, and was appointed Phraya Kasetraska, official of the Upparat. During this reign he was punished twice, first for having his boat rowed across the royal landing stage while the King was there, and secondly for accumulating iron scraps and collecting a large number of people as well as making something like battle trenches while he was supervising the planting of rice near Ayutthaya. He was, however, saved by Rama III who was then a prince of the rank of Krom Mun. In the reign of Rama III, he was made Phraya Ratsuphawadi and commanded the Thai army in the sack of Vientiane. He was then made the Chief Minister of Mahatthai, and conducted the war against the Vietnamese. See the genealogy of the Sinhaseni family.

Krom Kalahom

Čhao Phraya Mahasena (Nōi Bunnak) See Čhao Phraya Yommarat (Nōi Bunnak) above.

Krom Khlang

Čhao Phraya Phra Khlang (Dit) See above.

Krom Wang

Čhao Phraya Thamma (Sombun)

He was already a Phraya Bamroephadki, official of Krom Wang, before he was appointed Minister of Wang during the third reign. He was also commander in the war against Vientiane. His sons were Phraya Phubanbunthoeng (Thet) and Phraya Bamroephakdi (Chang).

Krom Muang

Čhao Phraya Yommarat (Phun)

He was already an official in Krom Myang in the position of Phra Rongmyang, and later Phraya Mahaammatt. We have no information on his father. He died within the reign of King Rama III.

Čhao Phraya Yommarat (Bunnak)

We have no information in connection with him before he was made Phraya Aphaironnarit. Nor do we have any information on the position of his father. He met an accidental death while supervising the transportation of a Buddha image. His offspring were Phra Aphaisurin (Phu), and Phraya Phithakphubant(Iam).

Čhao Phraya Yommarat (Chim)

He was a grandson of Čhao Phraya Phra Khlang (Hon) (above). He was Phraya Thipphakosa before he was made the Minister of Myang. Later, he was appointed Čhao Phraya Suthem.

Krom Na

Čhao Phraya Phonlathep (Chim)

We have no information on the position of his father. Prior to his appointment as the Minister of Krom Na, he was Phraya Sisorakrai. Among his descendants were a royal concubine, Phra Haruthai (Nut), and Phra Phahonhansuk (Yom).

Reign of King Rama IV (Mongkut), 1851-1868

Two very high positions were created in his reign. They were Viceroy (Phu Samrat Ratchakan) of the whole Kingdom, and Viceroy of the Capital City. The first was occupied by Dit Bunnak (above), and the second was occupied by That Bunnak.

Somdet Čhao Phraya Bprom Maha Phichaiyat (That)

He was a son of Čhao Phraya Mahasena (Bunnak) and Nuan, a sister of the mother of Rama II. He was a younger brother of Dit. He was a royal page during the reign of Rama I, and was given the rank of Nai Sanit. During the second reign, he was appointed Čhamun Dekchai, serving as a page in the Palace of the Front for awhile. Later he became Phraya Sisuriyawong, Chief of the Corps of Royal Pages. In the third reign, he was made Phraya Siphiphatt, Chief of Krom Phra Khlang Sinkha (The Royal Warehouse). He was offered a promotion to the post of the Minister of Myang, but he refused. In the reign of King Mongkut, he was made Somdet Čhao Phraya Bprom Maha Phichaiyat, the Viceroy of the Capital City.

Krom MahatthaiČhao Phraya Nikonbodin (To)

A son of Luang Phichaiwari (Man), a descendant of a Chinese immigrant. He was a client of Rama III while the latter was a prince of Krom rank. During the second reign he was appointed Phra Phichaiwari. When Rama III came to the throne, he was made Phraya, and later came to serve in Krom Mahatthai and became Phraya Ratsuphawadi. Later he was deputized for the position of Chief Minister of Mahatthai. In the fourth reign, he was made Čhao Phraya Nikonbodin, Chief Minister of Mahatthai. He was the founder of Kanlayanamit family. One of his daughters was a concubine of Rama III.

Čhao Phraya Phutharaphai (Nut)

He was a son of Čhao Phraya Aphaiphuthon (Noi) (above) He was a royal page during the third reign, and was given the rank of Nai Sanit. He was later promoted to Luang Sak, and then Phra Suriyaphakdio. Towards the end of the reign of Rama III, he was deprived of his rank and title. When King Mongkut came to the throne, however, he was made Phraya Mahamontri, and later appointed Čhao Phraya Yommarat, the Minister of Muang. When Čhao Phraya Nikonbodin (To) died, he became Čhao Phraya Phutharaphai, Chief Minister of Mahatthai. One of his daughters was a concubine of King Mongkut.

Krom KalahomČhao Phraya Sisuriyawong (Chuang Bunnak)

He was a son of Somdet Čhao Phraya Borom Maha Prayurawong (Dit) He was a royal page and, during the third reign, was given the following ranks and titles: Nai Chaikhan, Luang Sit, Čhamun Waiworanat, and Phraya Sisuriyawong, Chief of the Corps of Royal Pages. In the fourth reign, when his father was made the Viceroy of the whole kingdom, he was made Čhao Phraya Sisuriyawong, Chief Minister of Kalahom. At the death of King Mongkut, he was made the Viceroy while King Chulalongkorn was still a minor. In 1873, he was made Somdet Čhao Phraya Borom Maha Sisuriyawong.

Krom KhlangČhao Phraya Thiphakrawong (Kham Bunnak)

He was also a son of Somdet Čhao Phraya Borom Maha Prayurawong (Dit), but of a different mother from Chuang. He was a royal page during the reign of Rama III, and was given the rank of Nai Phonlaphan, and later Čhamun Rachamat. In the fourth reign, he was made a Čhao Phraya and

was an assistant to his father in Krom Khlang. When his father died, he became the Minister of Khlang with the title of Chao Phraya Thiphakrawong. Later his sakdina was raised to 20,000, i.e. double that of other ministers.

Krom Wang

Chao Phraya Thamma (Sya)

He was a son of Chao Phraya Rattanaphiphit (Son), (above). He was Phraya Phetphichai when King Mongkut appointed him the Minister of Wang.s One of his daughters was a concubine of Rama III.

Chao Phraya Thamma (Bunsi)

He was related to Sinhaseni family, himself being a descendant of Chao Phraya Chamnanborirak (U). (See the Sinhaseni genealogy). He was also related by marriage to the Bunnak family. He was a royal page during the reign of King Rama III and was given the rank of Cha Rong, and later Chamun Waiworanat. Later on he was appointed Phraya Phiphatkosa, official of Krom Khlang. In the fourth reign, he was made Phraya Mahaammatt, and later made Chao Phraya Thamma, Minister of Wang.

Myang

Chao Phraya Yommarat (Suk)

He was a son of Phraya Kalahomratchasena (Thongin), an official of the Palace of the Front during the first reign. During the reign of Rama III, he was the Governor of Phetchaburi. Later he was made Phraya Surasena. He was appointed Chao Phraya Yommarat, Minister of Myang during the third reign, and continued in this position during the fourth reign.

Chao Phraya Yommarat (Nut) See Chao Phraya Phutharaphai (Nut) above.

Chao Phraya Yommarat (Khрут)

He was a son of Phraya Aphaironnarit (Chang). He was a royal page during the third reign, and was given the rank of Chamun Saphetphakdi. During the fourth reign, he was made Phraya Chamongphakdi, still in the Corps of Royal Pages. Later he became Phraya Ratchaworanukun. When Chao Phraya Yommarat (Nut) became Chief Minister of Mahatthai, Khрут was made the Minister of Myang.

Chao Phraya Yommarat (Kaeo)

He was a son of Chao Phraya Bōdin Decha (Sing) above. He was a royal page during the third reign with the title of Nai Chit. Then he was made Chamun Samuhaphiman, Palat of Krom Phra Tamruat (Patrol)s He later became Phra Mahathep, Chief of Krom Phra Tamruat. In the fourth reign, he was made Phraya Siharatdecho, and then Phraya Kamhaengsongkhram, Governor of Ratchasima. Later he was appointed Chao Phraya Yommarat, the Minister of Myang.

Krom Na

Chao Phraya Phonlathep (Iam)

He was a son of Phraya Sombatphiban (Sua)s His mother was a daughter of Chuto, a brother of Rama II's mother. He was a royal page during the second reign with the title of Nai Phonlaphan, and later Cha Ret. In the third reign, he was made Luang Rit, and then Chamun Sisorasak. King Mongkut appointed him the Minister of Krom Na.

Chao Phraya Phonlathep (Long)

His mother was a member of the Bunnak family. He was serving in the Palace of the Front during the early part of the fourth reign. He was Phraya Phichaiburintharas At the death of Chao Phraya Phonlathep (Iam), he was made the Minister of Na.

APPENDIX D

Note on the Sources for the Genealogies

The sources for the following genealogies are histories of families written by their descendants, and biographies of important people. It is from such stories of families and life histories that the genealogies in the following appendices are constructed. This has certain consequences.

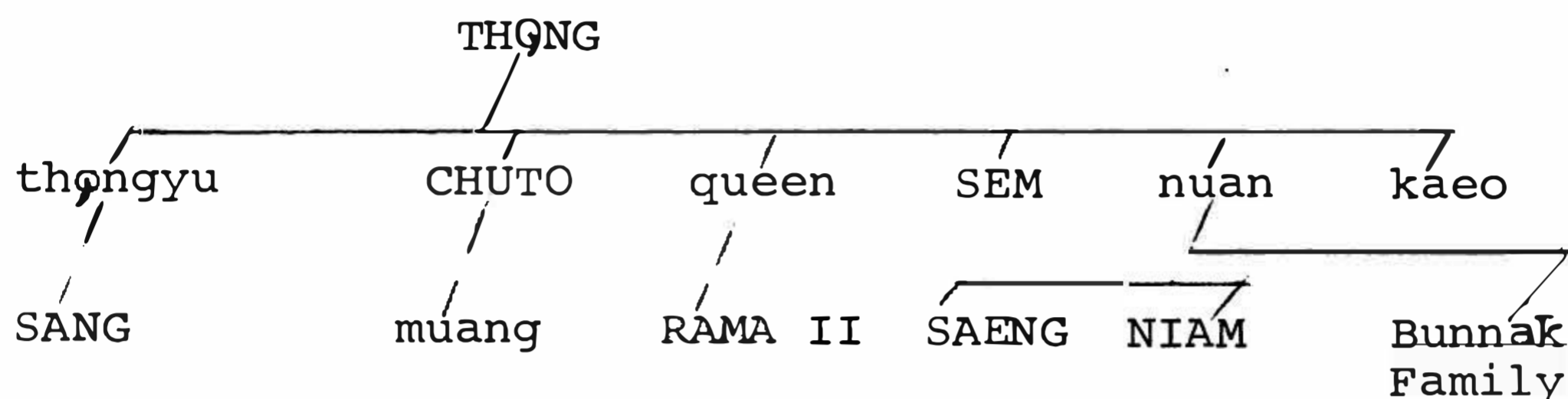
- a) The amount of information which can be gleaned from different families, or even from one family at different times, are not equal. The variation depends on the different interests of each writer as well as their memory, and records in their possessions
- b) The genealogies cannot presume to give the complete list of the names of all the members of any one family. Only those members whose names are mentioned in the sources can be listed. It is clear that the sources do not give all the names of the offspring of anyone. Often the writer of the history of the family states that Mr. X had 50 sons and daughters, but only 20 names are given.

In the following appendices, men's names will be in capital letters and women's names will be in small letters. The accompanying charts contain only the names of the most important members of the families.

APPENDIX E

Rachinikun Bangchang

Genealogies of Families Related to Somdet Phra Ammarintha-
ra, Queen of Rama I



THONG - Father of Somdet Phra Ammarinthara, Queen of Rama I.

Sons and Daughters of THONG

waen

thongyu

CHUTO The founder of Chuto, Saeng-Chuto families

Queen of Rama I

THANG

chepho

PHU

SEM

nuan - Wife of Chao Phraya Mahasena (Bunnak) of the Bunnak family.

kaeo - Wife of Phraya Samutthasongkhram (Si), Governor of Samutthasongkhram.

SANG Son of Thongyu, became Chao Phraya Mahasena, Chief Minister of Kalahom, reign of Rama II.

1. Chuto Family

muang- A daughter of Chuto, became the wife of Phraya Sombatphiban (Sya)

Sons and Daughter of muang

noi - Wife of Somdet Chao Phraya Borom Maha Phichaiyat (That Bunnak)

THAT - Chamun Sisorrarak

pheng - Worked in the Inner Palace

IAM - Luang Rit

wa Worked in the Inner Palace

SAWAT Phraya Maha Montri, husband of daughter of Somdet Chao Phraya Borom Maha Prayurawong (Dit Bunnak)

NAK Phraya Sombatyaphiban

Sons and Daughters of THAT

pha-op Wife of Luang Seniphithak (Chit Bunyarattaphan)
 HEM
 PHLQI Nai Sutchinda

Sons and Daughters of IAM

ap Thao Insuriya
 sap Wife of Chao Phraya Kalahom (Chum Bunnak)
 LIANG Chamun Ratchanakha
 EM Chamun Samoechairat
 QN Phraya Uthaitam
 UM
 Qng
 khum Wife of Luang Sunthon (Kao Bunnak)
 PREM Phraya Naranukitmontri
 lek
 SOMBUN Luang Phitakaphon
 klin
 phoy
 mQrakot
 lek
 WAN
 phuang
 YAI
 WAN
 NIN Ordinary royal page
 ab
 TO Luang Phubet
 YAM
 saisqi

Sons and Daughter of SAWAT

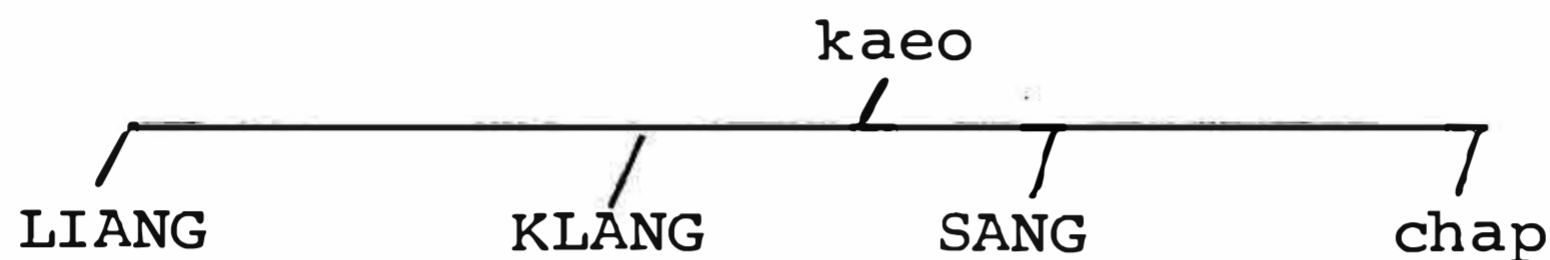
nim Wife of Nai Suchinda (Phloi Chuto)
 SANG Phraya Surasakmontri
 KHIAN Ordinary royal page
 chaeng
 NU Nai Ratchawutathon

Sons and Daughters of NAK

KHLONG
 wai Wife of Khian Chuto
 khlai Wife of Governor of Nakhon Sithammarat (Wek Bunyarattaphan)
 khlum Wife of Liang Chuto
 klep Wife of To Chuto
 samrit Wife of Governor of Nakhon Sithammarat (Wek Bunyarattaphan)
 kraphuam
 CHUN Luang BQrikan Ratchakit
 phyak Wife of Khian Chuto
 klin

PHLAI Ordinary royal page
 THONG Ordinary royal page
 TUM
 huang
 PHAN Ordinary royal page
 hoi
 sut Worked in the Inner Palace

2. Family of Chao Khun Kaeo



Sons and Daughters of kaeo

LIANG Phra Rachanuwong
 KLANG Phraya Uthaitham
 SANG Phraya Wongsaphusit
 chap Wife of Phra Phongnarin, son of King Taksin

Sons and Daughters of LIANG

in
 MEK Phraya Rachanuwong
 phian
 hun
 pao
 noi
 MUANG Phra Ratchaphakdi
 THIANG Luang Chamuang, official of the town Samutthasongkhram
 PHU Luang Aramrit, Yokkrabat of Samutthasongkhram
 CHANG
 SING
 SJA
 DAENG
 chum
 pang
 bua
 SUAN

Sons and Daughters of KLANG

KUN Phraya Mahison, official of Samutthasongkhram
 khum Official of the Inner Palace
 NUT
 KRUT
 phan
 phap Wife of Prince Krom Luang Sapphasin
 suwan

PHUK	Ordinary royal page
WA	Ordinary royal page
pheng	Royal concubine
yisun	Royal concubine
ngin	Wife of <u>Phraya</u> Siharatdecho
tang	
num	Royal concubine
chan	Wife of Prince <u>Krom Luang</u> Wongsā
saraphi	
iam	
phai	Wife of Governor of Phitsanulok
yam	Wife of Governor of Ratchaburi (Kham Wongsarot)

Sons and Daughters of NIAM

SI	Ordinary royal page
amphan	Royal concubine
phimsen	Royal concubine
nuan	

N.B. The above genealogies contain only a part of the genealogies of the Na Bangchang families.

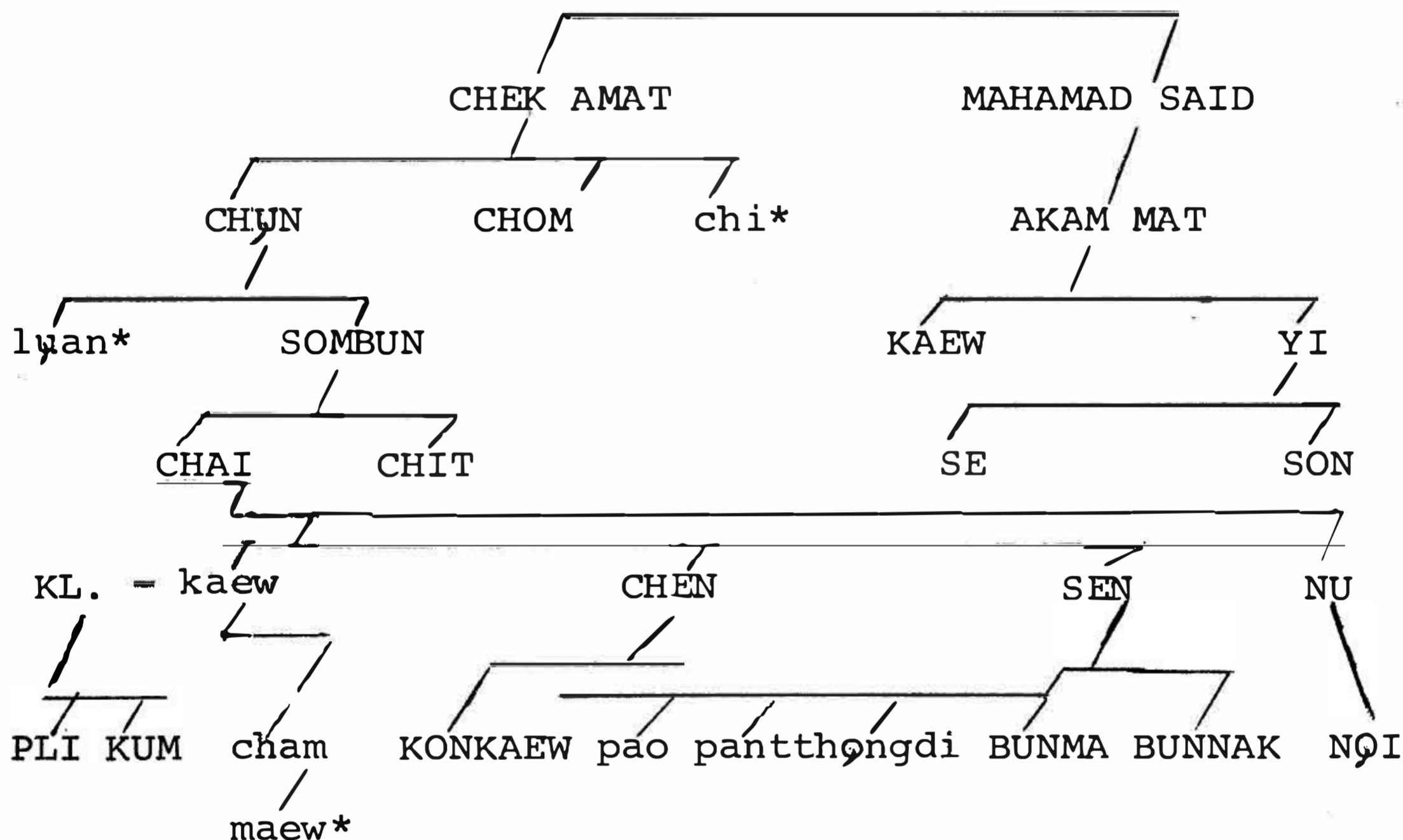
Sources: Ratcha Banditsathan, Athibai Rachinikun Bangchang (Explanation on the Queen's relatives, Na Bangchang families), Bangkok, 1930.

APPENDIX F

The Bunnak Family

One branch of this family is also Rachinikun Bangchang, i.e. related to the Queen of Rama I.

1. Ayutthaya period

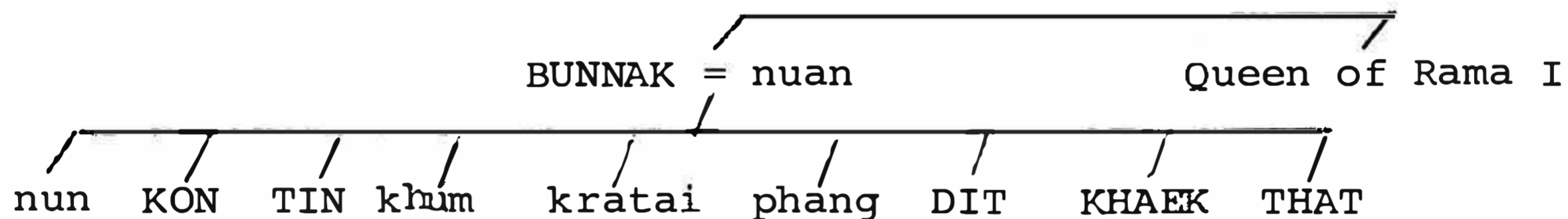


* Royal concubine

- CHEK AMAT Arab Merchant, settled in Ayutthaya (Reign, Songtham); Phraya
- AKAM MAT Phraya Sinaowarak, Krom Tha. Chief of Krom Tha; Chao Phraya
- CHUN Chao Phraya Aphairacha, Chief Minister, Krom Mahatthai
- SOMBUN Chao Phraya Bamroephakdi, Chief Minister Mahatthai (Reign, Narai)
- KAEW Phraya Chularatchamontri, Krom Tha (Reign, Narai)
- YI Governor of Tenasserim
- CHAI Chao Phraya, Phetphichai, Chief Minister Mahatthai (Reign, Boromakot)
- CHIT Phra Phromsurin
- KL. Chao Phraya Kalahom (Khløng Klaep), Chief Minister
- CHEN Phraya Chularatchamontri (Reign, Ekkathat)
- SEN Chao Phraya Akkha Mahasena, Chief Minister Kalahom (Reign, Uthumphon)
- NU Chamun Waiworanat
- chi Royal concubine of King Prasatthong, later married Akam Mat

maew Royal concubine of King Rama I
 PLI Phra Phonlamuang, official of the town Phitsanulok
 (Reign, Taksin)
 KUM Luang Nai Sak (Reign, Taksin)
 KONKAEW Luang Sinaowarat (Reign, Taksin)
 BUNMA Phra Phonlamuang, official of Phetchabun
 BUNNAK Chief Minister of Kalahom (The First Reign)

2. Early Bangkok Period



BUNNAK Čhao Phraya Mahasena, Chief Minister of Kalahom,
 (The First Reign)
 nuan Sister of the Queen of Rama I (see genealogy of Na
 Bangchang)

and Daughters of BUNNAK and nuan

nun Royal concubine
 KON
 TIN
 khum Highest official of the Inner Palace, Palace of the
 Front
 kratai Governess of the palace of Čhao Fa Praphawadi
 phang
 DIT Somdet Čhao Phraya Borom Maha Prayurawong
 THAT Somdet Čhao Phraya Borom Maha Phichaiyat
 KHAEK

Sons and Daughters of BUNNAK with other wives

tani Royal concubine
 bu
 PHUAN Phraya Aphaiphiphit
 ČHAT Luang Kaew Ayat
 SUT Nai Chalongnaiyanat, Palace of the Front
 Čhit Royal concubine
 yai
 klat
 nok Royal concubine
 nguap
 NOI Ordinary royal page
 Čhan
 suk
 SAENG
 MUANG Governor of Chanthaburi, Phraya Si-akkharat
 SAENGCHAN Ordinary royal page
 chu Royal concubine
 som Royal concubine
 SANGIAM
 PHA
 PHOM Governor of Chanthaburi, Phraya

Sons and Daughters of Dit with his major wife. chan. daughter of Chao Phraya Phonlathep (Thongin) Min. of Krom Na

CHUANG Somdet Chao Phraya Borom Maha Sisuriyawong
 hat
 pheng
 HUN
 khae
 puk
 run
 CHUM Phraya Montrisuriyawong, Head of the Corps of the Royal Pages.

Sons and Daughter of Dit with his minor wives

YOT Nai Rakphuwanat
 CHIN Phraya Uthaitham
 PO Luang Satchaphirom, assist. Governor of Ratchaburi (Fourth Reign)
 TU Phra Ratthanayapti
 CHON Phra Phromphiban, Palace of the Front
 THUAM Phraya Thepphrachun, Krom Kalahom (Fourth Reign)
 WAN Phraya Rachanupraphan, Krom Khlang
 NOKYUNG Phraya Aphaisongkhram, Palace of the Front
 TO Phra Rachanupraphan, Krom Khlang
 MEK Phraya Bamroeborirak, Palace of the Front
 KHAM Chao Phraya Thiphakorawong, Krom Khlang (Fourth Reign)
 THET Phra Phetphichai, Palat of Petchaburi (Fourth Reign)
 PHON Nai Rachanatyankan (Fourth Reign)
 YAM
 NET
 PHUK
 PAO
 CHOEM
 CHU
 LAM
 BUT
 TUI
 piam Wife of Phraya Surawena (Sawatdi Chuto)
 phyak Wife of Chao Phraya Mahasiritham (Noyai), Governor of Ayutthaya.
 mao
 saiyut Serving in the Inner Palace
 im
 liam
 phai Serving in the Inner Palace
 phloi Serving in the Inner Palace
 nuan
 prik Wife of Phraya Phanuwong (also a Bunnak)
 keson
 noen
 phun

Sons and Daughters of THAT with his major wife, noi

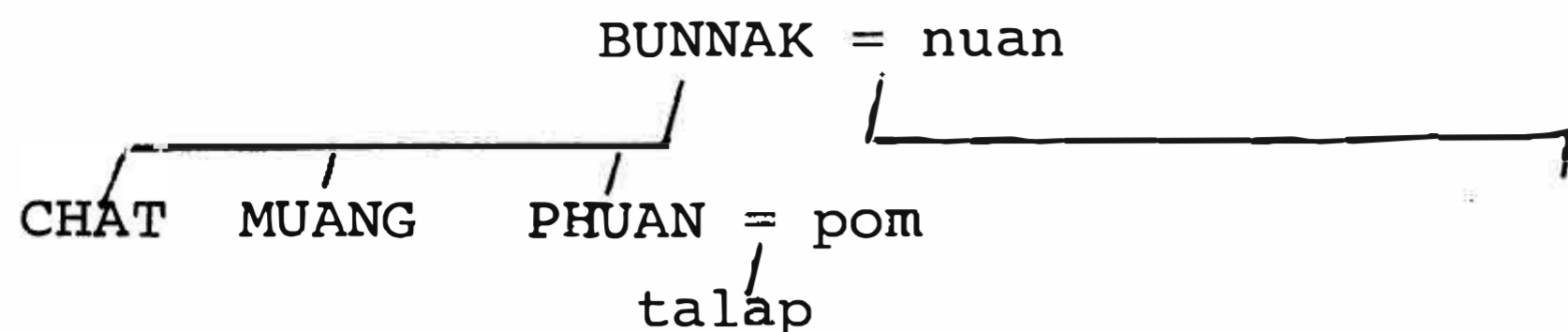
SANIT Phra Suriyaphakdi (Third Reign)
 KHANG
 DANG
 num Serving in the Inner Palace
 PHUK
 hae
 CHIT Ordinary royal page
 pao Wife of Phraya Montrisuriyawong (Chum Bunnak)
 NOP
 KRACHANG
 khli
 TO

Sons and Daughters of THAT with his minor wives

PHAE Phraya Siphiphat, Chief of Krom Phra Khlang Sin-
 kha (Fourth Reign)
 YAM Phraya Wɔrawongphiphat, Head of the Corps of the
 Royal Page (Fourth Reign)
 IAM Phraya Phaibunsombat, Krom Phra Khlang Sinkha
 (Fourth Reign)
 CHUM
 CHOEI
 AM
 TO Phra Nanaphasi, Krom Phra Khlang Sinkha (Fourth
 Reign)
 CHIT Nai Khanchai
 PIAM
 ROD
 ROEK
 suan Serving in the Inner Palace
 hun Wife of Phraya Wongsaphusit (Mek Bunnak)
 nim
 tukkata
 chat
 thep
 lek
 samli Royal concubine
 nao
 montha Wife of Mom Chao Prathusep
 luan Serving in the Inner Palace
 phan Wife of Chao Phraya Phanuwong (Thuam Bunnak)
 lamyai Wife of Phraya Rachanuwong (To Bunnak)
 linchi Serving in the Inner Palace
 pan Serving in the Inner Palace

Sons and Daughter of PHUAN with his major wife. Pom (daughter of Chao Phraya Rattanathibet (Kun))

IAM
 KIANG
 talap Royal concubine



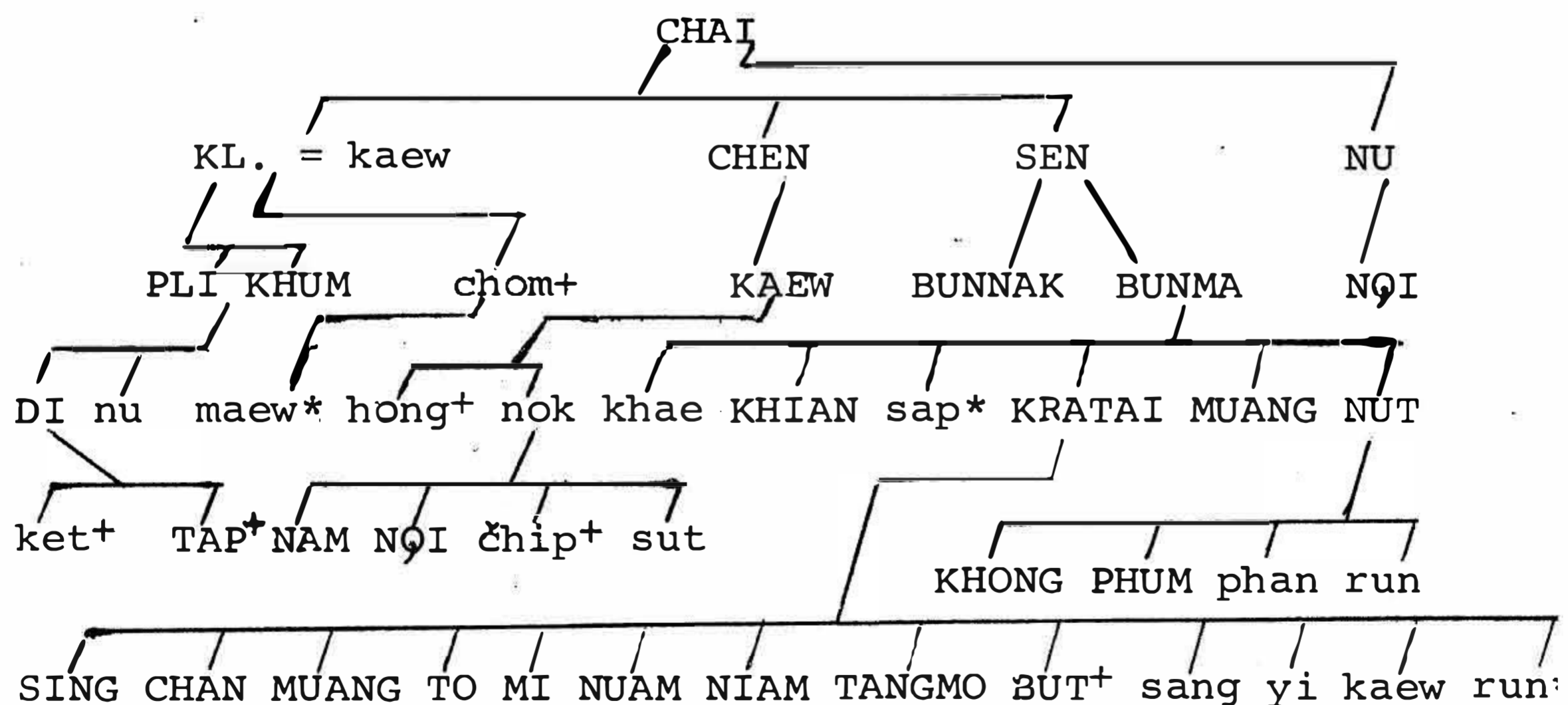
Sons and Daughters of CHAT

klin	Royal Concubine
PHU	Luang Sirisombat
ROT	
SUK	<u>Phra Mahasongkhram</u>
THAP	<u>Luang Thepseni</u>
SUT	<u>Khun Ruangdet, Yokkrabat</u> of Chanthaburi

Sons and Daughters of MUANG

CHIN	Ordinary royal page
YAM	Ordinary royal page
SIN	<u>Phra Kamhaengritthirong</u> , assist. Governor of Chanthaburi
yat	Royal concubine
ngoen	
phan	Royal concubine
PAN	
TIM	
suan	
pao	Wife of <u>Phra Mahasongkhram</u> (Suk Bunnak)

Other members of the Bunnak Family besides the descendants of BUNNAK (See also the first Chart of Ayutthaya Period)



* Royal concubine

+ For male, an ordinary royal page; for female, serving in the Inner Palace

For CHAI, KL., see Bunnak genealogy 1. Ayutthaya Period

PLI Phraya Surasena (First Reign)

KHUM Phraya Surasena

KAEW Phraya Chularatchamontri (First Reign)

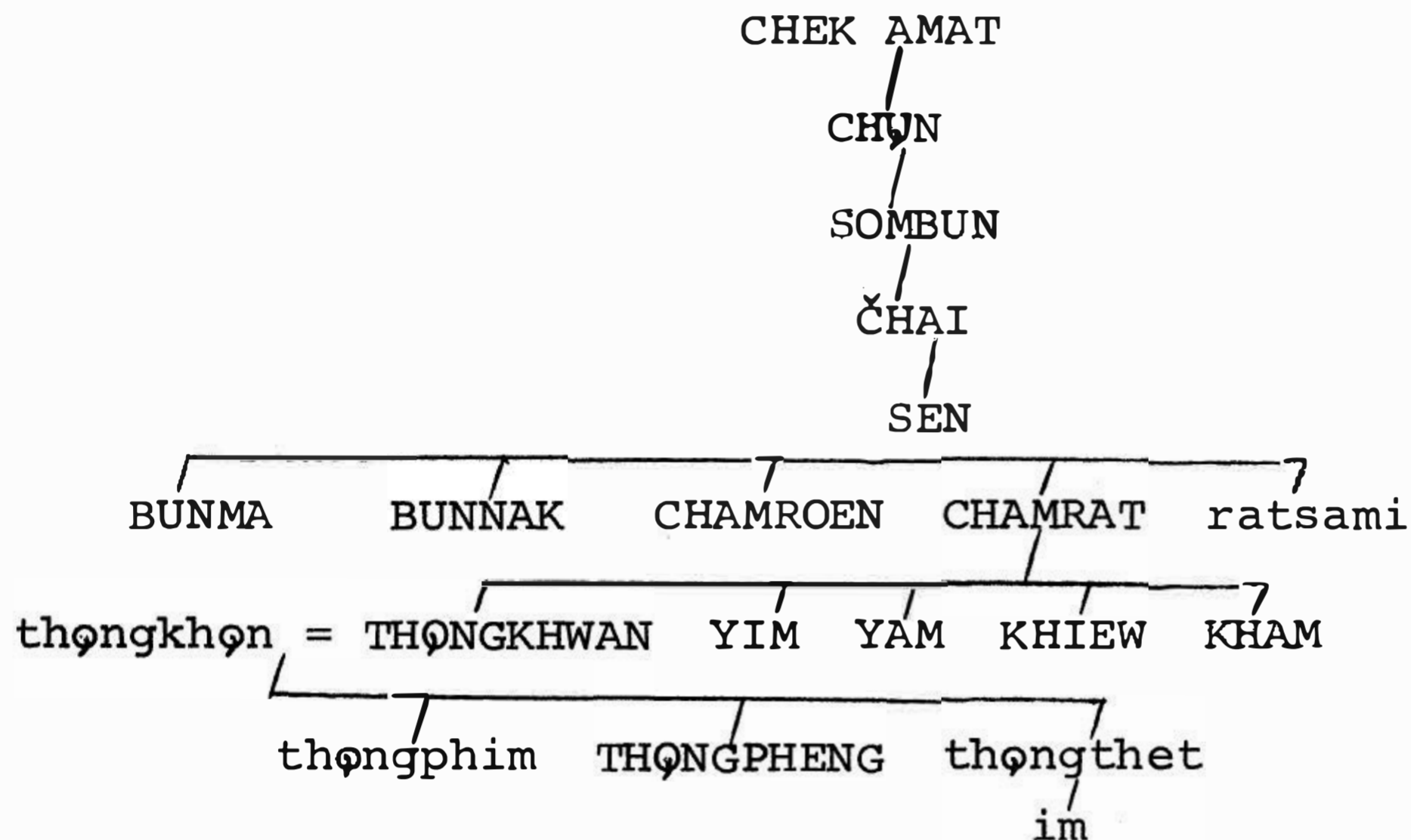
BUNMA	<u>Phraya Thakoeng</u> ; <u>Chao Phraya Yommarat</u> , Min. of <u>Krom Muang</u> (First Reign)
NQI	<u>Luang Nai Sit</u>
DI	<u>Phra Ratcharongmuang</u> , official of Phetchabun
KRATAI	<u>Phraya Aphaiphiphit</u>
NUT	Governor of Phetchabun
NAM	<u>Phraya Chularatchamontri</u>
NQI	<u>Phra Siyot</u>
CHAN	<u>Phraya Sakonburanurak</u>
TO	Governor of Chanthaburi
cham	<u>Thao Worachan</u> (First Reign)
nok	Wife of <u>Phraya Worathep</u> (Thuan Bunnak)
sut	Wife of <u>Luang Siworakhan</u>
run	Wife of Prince <u>Krom Mun Surinthararak</u>

Sources: Phraya Chularatchamontri, Chotmai het Prathom Wongsakun Bunnak (Records of the Origin of the Bunnak Family) Chao Phraya Thippakrawong; Lamdap Sakun Kao Bang Sakun Phakthi III, Sakun Chek Amat (Genealogies of some old families, part III, Family of Chek Amat)s

APPENDIX G

Siphen Family

This family branched off from the Bunnak family at the beginning of the Early Bangkok period.



For CHEK AMAT, CHUN, SOMBUN, CHAI, SEN, BUNMA, BUNNAK, see genealogy of the Bunnak family.

CHAMRAT Luang Raksasena (Reign, Ekkathat)

THONGKHAN Nai Chamnankrabuan, Krom Mahatthai, married to thongkhan, daughter of Phraya Ramchaturong, Chief of the Monss

THONGPHENG Mun Phiphitakson; Luang Sisena Phra Sisathap (Second Reign); Phraya Sisathap, (Third Reign), Krom Mahatthai

thongthet Wife of Luang Sisena

im Wife of Phraya Sunthonwohan (Phak)

Sons and Daughters of Thongpheng

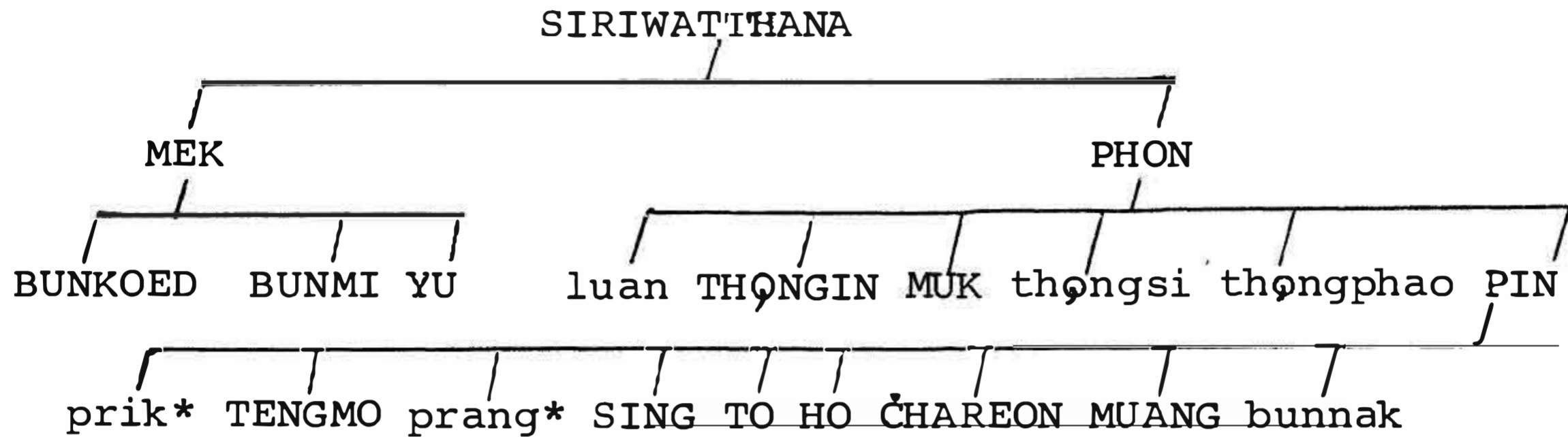
Besides those numerated below, Thongphen is said to have five more sons and six more daughters, whose names are not given in the source.

PHUNG	<u>Phra</u> Sisahathep, married to daughter of <u>Luang</u> Intharakosa (Thongkhum)
PHAI	<u>Luang</u> Anurakphubet, married to daughter of <u>Phraya</u> Mahathep (Pan)
THONGIN	<u>Luang</u> Phiphitphakdi, married to daughter of <u>Phraya</u> Satsatraritnarong
IAM	Ordinary royal page
thongkhun	Wife of <u>Phraya</u> Woraphongphiphat (Yam Bunnakt)
NAK	<u>Nai</u> Rongphinitkam
YAM	<u>Chamun</u> Ratchanakha, married to daughter of <u>Phraya</u> Mahaakkhanikon
nim	Wife of <u>Phra</u> Surintharamat
sangiam	Wife of <u>Phraya</u> Siharatritthikrai (Thongkham)
am	
CHUM	
phan	Serving in the Inner Palace
KHLIN	Ordinary royal page
CHIN	Ordinary royal page
RUN	<u>Phraya</u> Maha-ammatt, married to daughter of <u>Chamun</u> Samoechairat
CHUANG	<u>Phraya</u> Aphaisongkhram
lamai	
CHUN	<u>Phraya</u> Chareonratchamaitri
lamon	
krip	
nit	
lamut	
phan	Serving in the Inner Palace
chan	Serving in the Inner Palace
PHAN	
ung	
chui	Royal concubine
ON	<u>Luang</u> Raksombat
THUK	Ordinary royal page
phim	
SUT	<u>Luang</u> Phichai
plat	Wife of <u>Phra</u> Phrommaphiban
YI	
wae	
suan	Wife of Prince <u>Krom Mun</u> Mahesuan
dang	
SON	<u>Chamun</u> Wisetsombat

Source: Phraya Satchaphirom (Suang Siphon), Lao Hai Luk Fang (Telling the Children)t

APPENDIX H

Sinhaseni Family



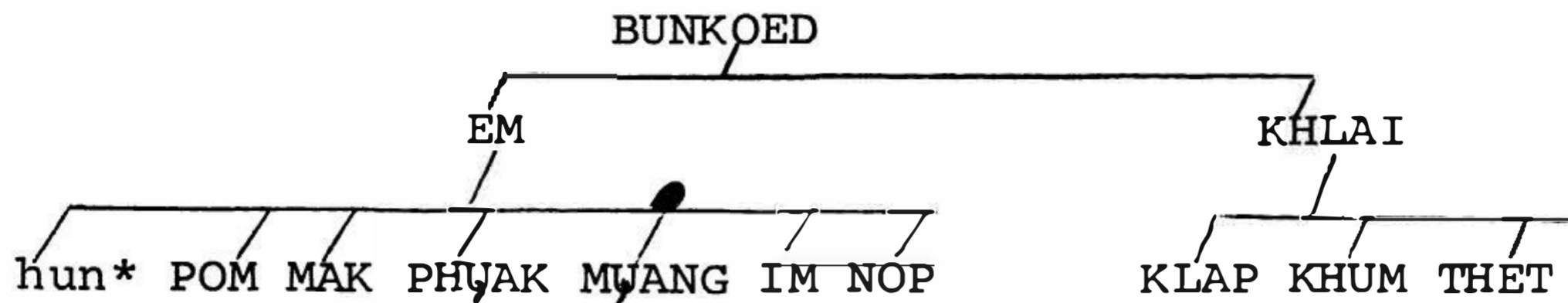
SIRIWATTHANA	Court Brahman (Reign, Narai)
MEK	Governor of Phitsanulok
PHON	<u>Chao Phraya Mahasombat</u>
BUNKOED	<u>Chao Phraya Naretharaphai</u>
BUNMI	<u>Chao Phraya Surintharaphakdi</u>
YU	<u>Chao Phraya Chamnanborirak</u> ; he was the origin of six noble families of the Early Bangkok period, i.e. Siriwatthanakun, Chantharotwong, Buranasiri, Sucharitkun, Phumirat, Chatchakun
THONGIN	<u>Chao Phraya Phonlathep</u> , Min. <u>Krom Na</u> , origin of noble families, Thongin, and Inthaphon
MUK	Husband of Rama I's sister. Appointed <u>Krom Mun Narinthonphitak</u> , thus made a prince
PIN	<u>Chao Phraya Mahasena</u> , Chief Min. <u>Krom Mahatthai</u> (First Reign); <u>Chao Phraya Aphairacha</u> (Second Reign)
TAENGMO	<u>Chamun Dekchai</u> , Palace of the Front
SING	<u>Chao Phraya Bodin Decha</u> , Chief Min. <u>Mahatthai</u> (Third Reign)
TO	<u>Luang Ramnarong</u>
HO	<u>Phraya Phichai Songkhram</u>
CHAREON	<u>Luang MahaChaiphak</u>
MUANG	<u>Luang Phiphit</u>
bunnak	Wife of <u>Phraya Kamhaengsongkhram</u> (Thongin Intharakhamhaeng)

From SIRIWATTHANA sprang nine Thai noble families, for eight of which we do not possess genealogies.

Sources: Prince Damrong, Prawat Chao Phraya Bodin Decha (Sing) (Biography of Chao Phraya Bodin Decha)
 Bunnak Phayakkhadet, Prawat Chao Phraya Bodin Decha, Samuha Nayok (Biography of Chao Phraya Bodin Decha, Chief Minister)

APPENDIX I

Amatyakul Family



* royal concubine

BUNKOED	<u>Phraya Sombatyathiban</u> (Reign, Taksin)
KHLAI	<u>Luang Chopchakkrawan</u> , Palace of the Front (First Reign)
POM	<u>Phraya Maha-Ammat</u> (Third Reign)
MAK	<u>Phra Chantharathit</u> (Third Reign)
MUANG	Official of Uthai
IM	<u>Luang Phonasai</u>
KHUM	Ordinary royal page

Sons and Daughters of POM

phum	
PLAP	<u>Phraya Maha-montri</u>
SUN	<u>Phra Intharaphiban</u> , Palace of the Front (First Reign)
KHLAI	
KHLIP	<u>Phra Phirentharathep</u> (Fourth Reign)
MOT	<u>Phra Wisutyotamat</u> (Fourth Reign)
TAT	<u>Phra Narongwichit</u>
wan	Serving in the Inner Palace

Sons of MAK

KHUM	<u>Phra Chantharathit</u>
KHAEK	

Son and Daughter of PHUAK

mon	Wife of the Governor of Chainat
PHONG	

Sons and Daughter of MUANG

khum
MUNG
KHAEK
CHUM

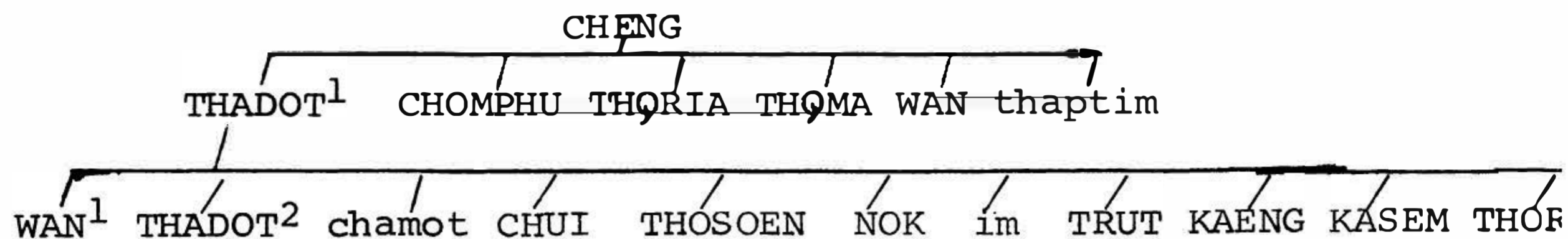
Sons and Daughter of IM

SANG	Concubine of <u>Phra Pinklao</u> , the Second King
SAWAT	
SAWAENG	<u>Nai Cha Yong</u>
PHAN	

Sources: Tri Amatyakul, Prawat Banphaburut lae Sakun Wong Amatyakul (Biographies of the Ancestors and the Story of the Amatyakul Family) Bangkok, 1964.

APPENDIX J

Gajaseni Family



CHENG Mon noble, came to Thailand (Reign, Taksin).
Chao Phraya Mahayotha, in control of the Mons
 (First Reign).

CHOMPHU His mother being a princess of Lampang and Chi-
 angsaen, he went to live there.

THORIA Chao Phraya Mahayotha (Third Reign)

THOMA Governor of Khuankhan, where the Mons lived

WAN Phraya Phraram, Chief of a krom of Mons

WAN 1. Phraya Kiat, in control of a group of Mons
 (Third Reign)

THADOT 2. Phraya Kiat

CHUI Phraya Damrongratchaphonlan

THORUI Phraya Kiat

THOSOEN Assistant Governor of Khuankhan

NOK monk

KAENGPHAI Phra Thanusin

im Royal concubine

KASEM Luang Phakdiyotha

chamot Wife of Prince Phra Ong Chao Bua

Son of WAN

THOKHO Phraya Kiat

Sons and Daughters of THADOT²

TO Phraya Kiat

PIAEK

BUNSONG Phraya Chanahongsa

LOENGPOED Phra Chanaphukam

sampon

MALAI Luang Mahatthai

to

SAAD

kom

ploi Wife of Momchao Nu

Sons and Daughters of CHUI

THQANG Phra Khayansongkhram

prang

lukchan
 KHUNTHONG Governor of Khuankhan
 NOKKAEW Ambassador to Germany
 amphan
 sonklin Royal concubine
 HAE Luang Trawen
 yong
 ploi
 em Wife of Mom Chao Thanom
 sai Wife of Mom Chao Thanom
 nu Served in the Palace of the Front
 lukin Wife of Chao Ratchabut, Prince of Lampang
 YOY Governor of Khuankhan
 tua Wife of Luang Bunsanprasit
 muan Wife of Luang Sitthidet, her half brother
 CHANG Governor of Khuankhan
 CHEK Palat of Khuankhan
 THONGYU Wang, official of Khuankhan, Luang
 OKNOED Official of Khuankhan, Luang
 CHOT
 nak Served in the Palace of the Front
 SAWAT
 CHAI Monk
 LUI
 puthong
 THONGYEN
 PHIN Luang Yotyothi
 LONGAT
 SOMPON
 chua Wife of Mom Ratchawong Sutchai
 PROM
 CHIM Luang Pathiphotchichan

Daughter of THORUI

thet

Sons and Daughter of TRUT

PHAE

DI

phan

THET Luang Prasit

Daughters of KAENGPхай

suang Wife of Phraya Kiat

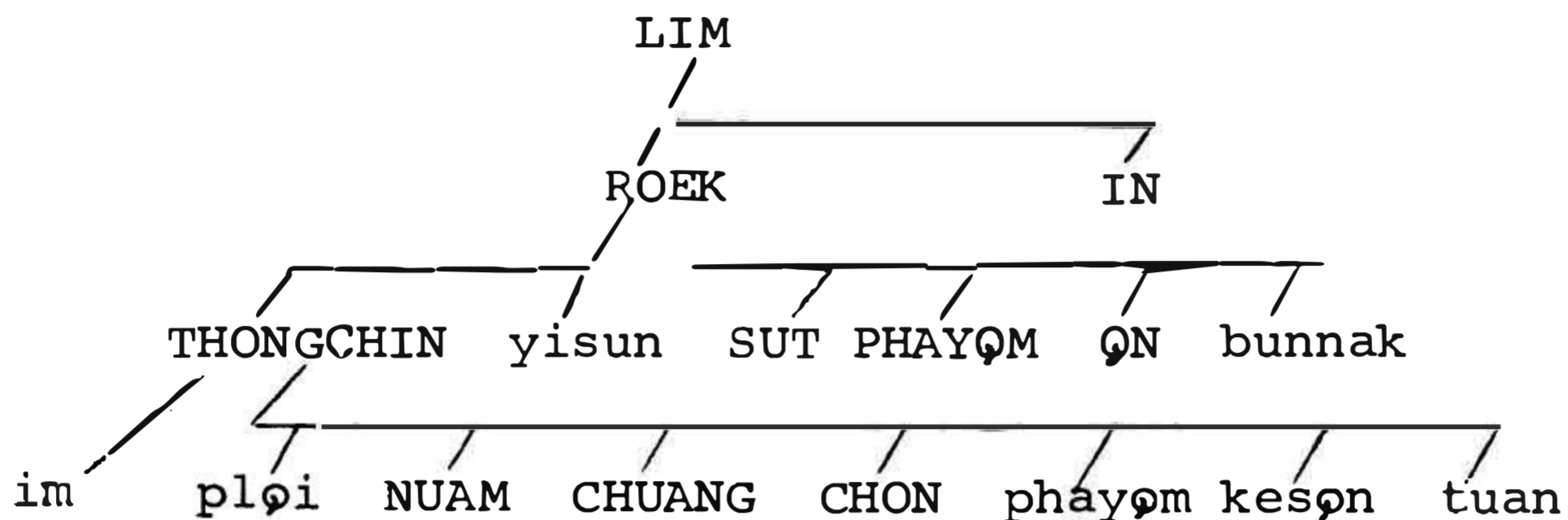
phadoem

phum

Source: Prince Damrong, Lamdap Sakun Khotchaseni kap Boran Khadi Mon, Bangkok, 1965.

APPENDIX K

Krairiksh Family



- LIM Chinese immigrant, Ayutthaya period
 ROEK Khun Thongsu, interpreter (Reign, Taksin),
Phraya Kraikosa (First Reign)
 IN Phra Inthaakon, tax farmer
 THONGCHIN Phraya Chodkratchasetthi, Chief Krom Tha
 (Chinese section), He is said to have had
 fifty children. Only eight names of them
 are given in the genealogy.
 yisun Royal concubine
 SUT Luang Det, a royal page
 PHAYOM Nai Rachaphak
 QN Luang Kaeo-ayat
 im Royal concubine
 pløi Wife of Phraya Krasapkitkason (Mot Amatyakul)
 CHUANG Phra Mongkonratchamontri
 phayom Wife of Chamun (Am Amatyakul)
 keson Wife of Cha Rong (Klin Bunyarattaphan)

Sons and Daughter of pløi

- SAMANG Phra Prichakonlakan
 CHOEM Phra Aphirakratchuthayan
 samsanguan Wife of Phraya Aphaironnarit

Sons and Daughter of NUAM

- lamai
 CHEK Khun Sorarak
 PHROM Khun Yaowaratthanarak
 WAN Luang Thepnarin
 SUB

Son and Daughter of CHUANG

- SANGIAM Luang Nai Saneraksa
 thanom
 CHUN
 CHOM Phraya Ratchasamphara
 Chan Wife of Phraya Phiphitphokhaisawan
 chum Royal concubine
 NOP Phraya Burutrattanaratchaphanlop (Sixth Reign)
 PHOEM Phraya Prasoetsupphakit

Daughter of CHON
sangwan

Son and Daughter of phayom
wong
CHOT Luang Chamnanchonpramoen

Sons and Daughter of keson
lamai
TOEM Phraya Ratchawangsan (Sixth Reign)
pui Wife of Phraya Photchanapricha
POEM

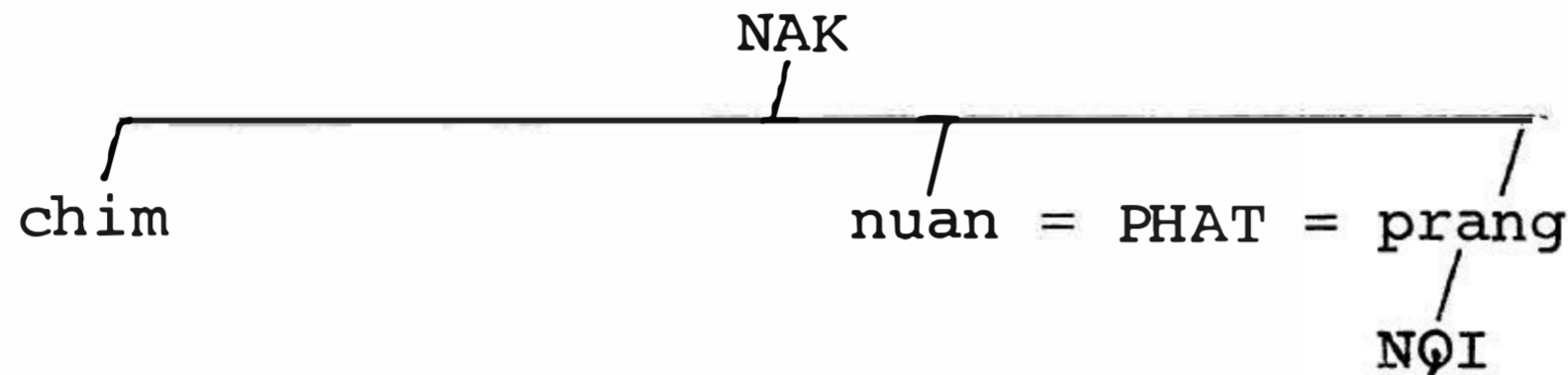
Sons and Daughter of IN
SENG
MIN
ampha Royal concubine of Rama II
maithet
thaowan Wife of Chao Phraya Phutharaphai

Sons and Daughters of SUT
arun Royal concubine of Rama II
chap Wife of Phraya Maha Ammat (Chun Kanlayanamit)
THAT Phraya Sisingthep
MOT Official of the Palace of the Front (Fourth
Reign); Phraya Phetcharat (Fifth Reign)

Source: Luang Chakpani Sisinwisut, Ruang Khong Chao Phraya Mahithon, (Biography of Chao Phraya Mahithon), Bangkok, 1956.

APPENDIX L

Family of the Governor of Nakhon Sithammarat
No Nakon Family



NAK Chao Phraya, he governed Nakhon Sithammarat as
a tributary town (Reign, Taksin)
chim Royal concubine of King Taksin
prang Previously a royal concubine of King Taksin.
She was given to PHAT at the death of nuans
prang was said to be pregnant at the time.

Sons and Daughters of nuan

CHIM Phraya Phakdiphuthon
nu Wife of Chao Phraya Thiphakorawong (Kham Bunnak)
KHAM Cha Yong
RAI Phra Ratchaphakdi, Yokkrabat of Nakhon Sitham-
marat
CHAI
ROEK
KHUN

Sons and Daughters of prang

NQI Phra Aphirakphubet, Assist. Governor of Nakhon
Sithammarat; Governor of Nakhon Sithammarat
(1811-1839)

Sons and Daughters of NQI

nqiyai Royal concubine of Rama III
nqilek Royal concubine of Rama III
NQIYAI Chao Phraya Mahasiritham, Governor of Ayutthaya.
He had five sons, two reaching the rank of Phraya,
one the rank of Phras A daughter was a royal
concubine of Rama III.
NQIKHLANG Phra Sanchamontri, Assist. Governor of Nakhon
Sithammarat (1826), Governor (1839). He had
five sons and five daughters. One son was a
Chao Phraya, one was a Palat of Nakhon Sitham-
marat, one was a Luang.
NQI-IAD Phraya Sanchamontri. He had two sons and two
daughters. His sons were royal pages. One
daughter was a concubine of King Mongkut, one
was a wife of Prince Krom Mun Mahesuans

- SANG Phraya Borirakphuthon, Governor of Saiburi; later, moved to Phangnga. He had nine sons and fourteen daughters. One of his sons was the Governor of Phangnga, one Palat, and Yokkrabat of Phangnga. Two were royal pages. Of the daughters, one was a royal concubine of Rama III, one a royal concubine of King Mongkut, five had husbands with rank of Phraya, three had husbands with rank of Phra.
- NUT Phraya Senanuchit, Governor of Takhuapa. He had 32 sons and 25 daughters. Of the sons, two obtained the rank of phraya, one of whom succeeded his father as the governor of Takhuapa, 14 achieved the rank of phra, most of whom were the officials of Takhuapa, two obtained the rank of luang, and one remained an ordinary royal page. Of the daughters, one was a royal concubine of King Mongkut, three were wives of the officials of the rank of phra, one was a concubine of King Chulalongkorn.
- KLQM Phraya Wichitkraisorn, Palat of Nakhon Sithammarat. He had eight sons and eight daughters. Of the sons, one obtained the rank of phra, one luang. Of the daughters, one was a royal concubine of King Mongkut, three were wives of officials of the rank of phra.
- PHUM Phraya Uthaithani, Governor of Kanchanadit. He had two sons and one daughter. Of the sons, one obtained the rank of phra and was made a governor of Kanchanadit. The daughter was a royal concubine of King Chulalongkorn.
- MUANG Phra Uthaithani, governor of Trang. He had two sons and five daughters. Two daughters were royal concubines of King Mongkut, one was a wife of an official of the rank of phra.
- HONG Phra Wichitkraisorn, Palat of Nakhon Sithammarat. He had nine sons and seven daughters. Of the sons, one obtained the rank of phra and was a town governor, two obtained the rank of luang. Of the daughters, one was a wife of an official of the rank of phra.
- CHIM Phra Chareonratchaphakdi, governor of Samui Island. He had five sons and one daughter. A son obtained the rank of luang.
- PHU Phra Rachanurak, governor of Thathong.
 phum Concubine of Rama III's Upparat.
 chap Royal concubine of King Mongkut.
 phan Royal concubine of Rama III.
 yaru Royal concubine of Rama III.
 hem
 DET
 CHAN Phra Nikornburihan, Assists Governor of Phangngas

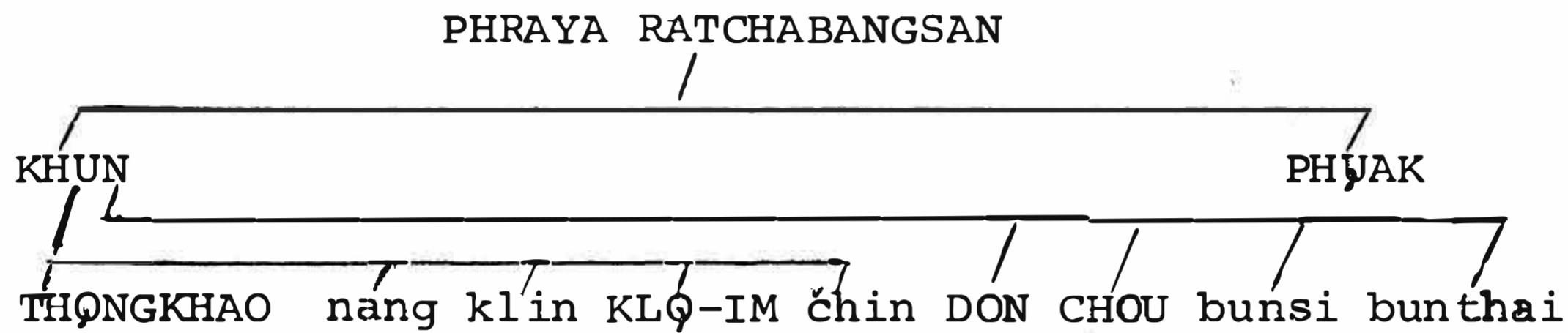
THUAN	Royal page.
klin	<u>Thao</u> Sisatcha, high position in the Inner Palace.
SEM	<u>Phraya</u> Sisuphannadit, <u>Palat</u> of Kanchanadit. He had five sons and five daughters. Of the sons, one obtained the rank of <u>luang</u> . Of the daughters, one was a royal concubine of King Chulalongkorn.
prang	Concubine of Rama III's <u>Upparat</u> .
talap	Concubine of Rama III's <u>Upparat</u> .
prik	Concubine of Rama III's <u>Upparat</u> .
taptim	Concubine of Rama III's <u>Upparat</u> .
im	Concubine of Rama III's <u>Upparat</u> .
klai	Concubine of the Second King of the Fourth Reign.
bua	Royal concubine of King Mongkut
em	
sem	
NUT	
iad	

Sources: Th a o Sichalalai, Lamdap Sakun K a o Bang Sakun Phakthi 4, Sakun Chua Sai Phraratcha Wong Thonburi (Genealogy of Some Old Families, part 4, Descendants of King Taksin. Bangkok, 1937.

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APPENDIX M

Family of the Governor of Phatthalung



PHRAYA RATCHABANGSAN Ayutthaya noble, sent to govern Phatthalung in 1748.

KHUN Governor of Phatthalung, 1772-1789.

PHUAK Governor of Songkhla, 1817-1826

THONGKHAO Royal page, ranked Luang Nai Sak; acting governor of Phatthalung (1791); Governor of Phatthalung, 1792-1817. His wife was a sister of Rama III's mothers

nang

klin Royal concubine of Rama I

KLO-IM Phra Thipkamhaeng, Palat of Phatthalung

chin Royal concubine of Rama I.

Sons and Daughters of PHUAK

BUA Phra Phonsongkhram, official of Phatthalung; he was married to a daughter of THONGKHAO.

KHRUT Luang Phitthakracha

PHLAP Luang Phiphitphakdi

QN Luang Wichitsongkhram

Sons and Daughters of THONGKHAO

pheng Married to Mom Ratchawong Thap

NOK Luang Satchaphakdi

phung Royal concubine of Rama III

noi

THAP Luang Ratchamontri, Assist. Yokkrabat of Phatthalung; later he became Yokkrabat; Governor of Phatthalung (1851-1867)

phak

HONG

NIM

KLAP

NIAM

RUNG

RAK

SUK

Phra Thippakamhaeng, official of Phatthalung

Assist. Yokkrabat of Phatthalung (1851); phra Thipkamhaeng, Palat of Phatthalung (1862). One of his daughters was a royal concubine of King Mongkut.

CHIM
KHUM
IAM
PHOT

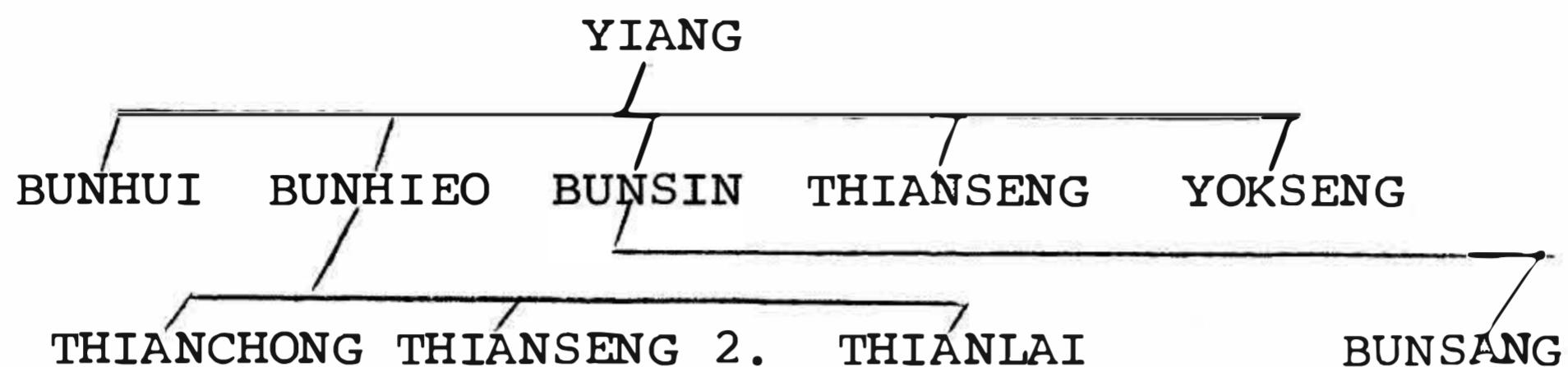
Luang Saksurakan, official of Phatthalung (1851)

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APPENDIX N

Family of the Governor of Songkhla



- YIANG Chinese immigrant (1750); Luang Inthakhirisombat, tax farmer (1769), Luang Suwankhirisombat, Governor of Songkhla, 1775-1784.
- BUNHI Luang Suwankhirisombat, Governor of Songkhla, 1784-1812
- BUNHIEO Phra Ananthasombat, official of Phatthalung.
- BUNSIN Phra Phirenphakdi, later Phraya Sisombat, official of Songkhla.
- THIANSENG Phra Suntharanurak, official of Songkhla.
- THIANCHONG Luang Nai Rit, a royal page; Phraya Wisetphakdi, Governor of Songkhla, 1812-1817.
- THIANSENG 2. Phra Suntharanurak, official of Songkhla; Phraya Wichiankhiri, Governor of Songkhla, 1817-1847.
- YOKSENG Luang Udomborirak.
- THIANLAI A royal page.
- BUNSANG Nai Phonlaphai, a royal page; Luang Suntharanurak, official of Songkhla; Phra Suntharanurak; Phraya Wichiankhiri, Governor of Songkhla, 1847-1865. His wife was a daughter of Luang Thep-phakdi, Yokkrabat of Phatthalung, and a sister of Thianseng's wife.

Sons and Daughter of THIANCHONG

wan

SAENG Nai Khan, a royal page; Luang Anurakphubet, official of Songkhla.

MEN Phra Suntharak, official of Songkhla; Phraya Wichiankhiri, Governor of Songkhla, 1865-1884.

Sons and Daughters of THIANSENG 2.

PHAE Luang Sombatphirom, official of Songkhla.

lukchan Royal concubine

lukin Wife of Phraya Wichiankhiri (Men).

Sons and Daughters of BUNSANG

klin

CHUM Phra Sombatphirom, official of Songkhla; Governor of Songkhla, 1884-1888.

THAT 1. Phra Anurakphubet
THAT 2. Governor of Nong^{ch}ik
PLANG A royal page
khiao
khling

Source: Phraya Wichiankhiri, Phongsawadan Myang Songkhla
lae Phatthalung (History of Songkhla and Phattha-
lung) .

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN BIBLIOGRAPHY

- JSS - Journal of the Siam Society
- PHLC - King Mongkut, Phraratcha Hattha Lekha Phrabat Somdet Phra Chomklao Chao Yuhua (Correspondences of King Mongkut), 3 volumes, Bangkok, 1963.
- PK - Pramuan Kotmai Ratchakan thi Nung (Legal Code of Rama I), generally known as "The Three Seals Law," R. Lingat, ed., 3 volumes, Bangkok, 1938.
- PP - Prachum Phongswadan (Collected Historical Data), 79 parts. Parts 1-43 have been published in a set of 10 volumes, Bangkok, 1963.
- PPHL - Prince Damrong, Phraratcha Phongswadan Chabap Phraratcha Hattha Lekha (Annals, Royal Autograph Edition), 2 volumes, Bangkok, 1962.
- PPKR - Chao Phraya Thipphakarawong, Phraratcha Phongswadan Krung Rattana Kosin (Annals of Bangkok), 5 volumes, 1 volume for the First and Second Reigns, 2 volumes for the Third Reign, and 2 volumes for the Fourth Reign, Bangkok, 1962.
- PPRS - Prachum Prakat Ratchakan thi Si (Collected Royal Proclamations of the Fourth Reign), 4 volumes, B.E. 2394-2400 (1851-1857), B.E. 2401-2404 (1858-1861), B.E. 2404-2408 (1862-1865), B.E. 2408-2411 (1865-1868), Bangkok, 1960-1961.

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