INDIGENIZING THE COLD WAR
: Nation-Building by the Border Patrol Police of Thailand, 1945-1980

By
Sinae Hyun

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The dissertation is approved by the following members of the Final Oral Committee:
Thongchai Winichakul, Professor, History
Alfred W. McCoy, Professor, History
Katherine A. Bowie, Professor, Anthropology
Charles Kim, Assistant Professor, History
Ian G. Baird, Assistant Professor, Geography

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ABSTRACT

Indigenizing the Cold War: Nation-Building by the Border Patrol Police of Thailand, 1945-1980
Sinae Hyun
University of Wisconsin-Madison
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The Border Patrol Police of Thailand (BPP) were formed by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Thai military in 1951. Since its formation, the Thai BPP evolved from a CIA paramilitary intelligence unit and rural development agency into a mechanism for nation-building by the Thai monarchy. Its multiple transformations reveal the ways in which the Thai elites continuously pushed forward their own agendas of political domination while collaborating with the U.S. anticommunist policies in Southeast Asia. This dissertation therefore argues that the local elites "indigenized" the American Cold War system through the nation-building programs to achieve their political goals.

Starting with a survey on the decolonization in Southeast Asia after the end of Pacific War in 1945, this dissertation examines the evolution of the Thai ruling elite's indigenization in the following three periods: realignment of civilian-military relations between 1945-1957, military domination during 1957-1973, and the royalist elite's rise to power from 1973 to 1980. In 1980, royalist premier Prem Tinsulanonda shifted the government's anticommunist counterinsurgency from military to political warfare, which represents a tangible decline in the Thai elite's desire for collaboration. The rise and fall of competing elite groups, their political objectives and outcomes, and the persisting ideological inclinations of their domestic and foreign policies is illuminated by the transformations and civic actions and military campaigns of the BPP.

The Thai monarchy began to take control of indigenization beginning in the early 1960s when it patronized the BPP and its counterinsurgency projects, incorporating them into the royal projects. The BPP became a concrete manifestation how this traditional institution successfully constructed infrastructures of the ideological inclination, institutional networks, executive agency and popular support. These infrastructures became a vehicle for spreading royalist nationalism among the general populace, consequently ensuring the domination of the royalist elite into the present day. Enlightened by archival and empirical evidences, this dissertation elucidates how local police were mobilized in nation-building under the auspices of the U.S. government and Thai elites. Furthermore, it demonstrates how the local elites harnessed foreign interventions to preserve their spheres of power and autonomy in the second half of the twentieth century.

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NOTES ON TRANSLITERATIONS AND THAI NAMES

Several systems are commonly used for transliterating Thai. With the exception of proper names and place names, I am following the sound-based "General System" of transliteration in the *Romanization Guide for Thai Script* (Bangkok: Royal Institute, 1982), with some alternative spellings in footnotes to clarify differences in pronunciation. Proper names are transliterated according to General System except the interviewees provide me their preferred English names.

Thais are frequently referred to by their first name. In this dissertation, I use both first and last names the first time an individual is mentioned in the text, and I subsequently refer to Thais by their first names. Similarly, the Thai language bibliography is listed alphabetically by first names in accordance with Thai convention. Unless otherwise noted, all translations of texts and conversations are mine.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFPFL - Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (Burmese)
ARD - Accelerated Rural Development (Thai-U.S.)
BCP - Burmese Communist Party (Burmese)
BDP – Border Defense Police (Thai)
BIC – Border Information Center
BPP - Border Patrol Police (Thai)
BSVT - Border Security Volunteer Teams (Thai)
CSOC - Communist Suppression Operations Command (Thai)
DEVCON - Development Consultants International (U.S.)
CIA - Central Intelligence Agency (U.S.)
CITC - Counterinsurgency Training Centers (Thai)
CPA – Civil Police Administration (U.S.)
CPT - Communist Party of Thailand (Thai)
ICA - International Cooperation Agency (U.S.)
JUSMAG - Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group (U.S.)
KMT – Chinese Nationalist Party, *Kuomintang* (Chinese)
MAP - Military Assistance Program (U.S.)
MDUs - Mobile Development Units (Thai)
MEDCOIN- Medical Counterinsurgency Program (Thai-U.S.)
MMT - Mobile Medical Team (Thai-U.S.)
NSCT - National Student Center of Thailand (Thai)
OPC - Office of Policy Coordination (U.S.)
OPS - Office of Public Safety (U.S.)
OSS - Office of Strategic Service (U.S.)
PARU - Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit (Thai)
PDJ - Plaine des Jarres or Plain of Jars (Laos)
PFF – Police Field Force (Thai, Malaysia)
PMCF - Princess Mother's Charities Fund of Thailand, Inc. (Thai)
PMMV – Princess Mother's Medical Volunteers Foundation (Thai)
PSB - Psychological Strategy Board (U.S.)
PSD – Public Safety Division (U.S.)
RASD - Remote Area Security Development (Thai-U.S.)
RLAF - Royal Lao Air Force (Laos)
Sea Supply - South East Asia Supply Corporation (U.S.)
SEATO - Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (Southeast Asia)
SGU - Special Guerrilla Unit (Laos)
TDP – Territorial Defense Police (Thai)
TNPD - Thai National Police Department (Thai)
UDP- Uplands Development Project (Thai-U.S.)
USAID - United States Agency for International Development (U.S.)
USIS - United States Information Service (U.S.)
USOM - United States Operations Missions (U.S.)
VDC - Volunteer Defense Corps (Thai)
VSOC - Village Scout Operational Center (Thai)

Indigenization: A Search for the Intersection between the Global Cold War and Local Nation-Building

On November 30, 2002, I was standing with over ten thousand protesters in Seoul, the capital city of South Korea, demanding immediate withdrawal of the U.S. armed forces from Korea as well as the repeal of U.S.-South Korea Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). The direct trigger of this mass protest was the killing of two fourteen-year-old middle school girls by the U.S. military armored vehicle in Gyeonggi province right next to Seoul. After speakers vehemently criticized the outdated Cold War politics that had permitted the U.S. military forces to station in post-Cold War Korea, a group of activist singers came out and began to sing their protest song titled, "Fuckin' U.S.A."

This song provoked several questions in me. Say, the U.S. is bad, but what about "US"? Why have we permitted the U.S. to do all of these bad things at home over the past half a century? And why do we have to blame everything on the U.S.? In what way has the Korean relationship with the American superpower since the end of the Pacific War contributed to the growing ambivalence, as well as admiration and antagonism, toward Americans? By the time the activist group finished singing the song, I came to at least one conclusion: it is too easy to blame the U.S. for all the wrongs that happened in my homeland. By blaming the Americans, we are giving a carte blanche to the Korean government and politicians to evade their responsibility for the tragic death of two innocent teenage schoolgirls who were walking home after school. At the same time, by insisting that the U.S. did everything wrong, we are ironically eulogizing the Pax Americana for ourselves. This was where my initial idea about indigenization of the American Cold War by the local elites kicked off.

At first glance, my thesis, "indigenization of the Cold War", seems to be an antithesis to the Pax Americana paradigm that has dominated Cold War studies during the second half of the twentieth century and, perhaps, to present. It is partly true. On the other hand, it is more a critical and apologetic scrutiny of the nature of nation-building processes in the former colonies during the Cold War. Whereas most Cold War studies focus on the role that the two global superpowers played out in the second half of the twentieth century, my research on the indigenization of the Cold War through the lens of the Thai Border Patrol Police attempts to cast a light on the local elite's endeavor to contain the drastically increasing conflicts among the ethnicities, spaces, cultures and classes within an international boundary in the façade of the American Cold War. In this respect, my research critically treats the heightened anti-western or anti-American movements that blame global superpowers for being responsible for the Cold War messes, while ignoring the local elite's appropriation of the same global condition. This perspective does not necessarily mean that the U.S. or other superpowers are exempted from any of the Cold War's tragedies. On the contrary, these Cold War superpowers should still remain in the list of key actors liable for committing destructive warfare and tacitly advocating state violence against innocent people. Nevertheless, I contend that this must not be the end of the story. To have a complete picture of the development and impacts of the global Cold War at home and abroad, we need to shine a light on the local side of story that has been ignored or overlooked.

In this dissertation, I argue that the local elite allies "indigenized" the international Cold War system. "Indigenization" here refers to the process of harnessing international intervention to achieve the local elite's aim of consolidating their power bases. Therefore, the term "Indigenization of the Cold War" does not refer to the superpowers' attempts to fit their political objectives into the local context. Rather, "indigenization" refers to how the local elites fulfilled

their own goal of building a nation-state, hence assuring their domination and continuation. By observing the interactive political developments of the U.S.-centered Cold War system and Thailand's local nation-building from the end of World War II to the early 1980s when the global Cold War struggles began to decline, this dissertation will show the ways in which the local elites indigenized the American Cold War system to preserve their power ascendancy in Thai society and autonomy in foreign relations.

In this context, I focus on examining the role and influence of the local elites' allies and their nation-building projects that affected their bargaining power in domestic politics and foreign relations. The local elites here mainly consist of ruling elites who dominate government and political institutions, and non-governmental state apparatus that exert considerable influence over the indigenous society. When it comes to identifying their roles under the circumstances of colonialism or the Cold War, several studies have suggested characterizing the local elites as "collaborators", "intermediaries" or "subordinate elites." A brief overview on these terms shall help us better understand the main goals of collaboration system from the local elite's stance.

In his renowned work on the collaborative mechanism, Ronald Robinson argues that the local elites exploited the "alternative source of wealth and power" that had been imported by the European imperialists through collaboration "to preserve or improve the standing of indigenous elites in the traditional orders."[1] In other words, the local ruling elites, who had possessed the comparative upper hand in the society enabled either by their longstanding or recently built political, economic and social domination, were not always subordinate to the global power's ideologies or policy. Whereas the foreign power was limited by "the need to elicit indigenous

[1] Ronald Robinson, "Non-European foundations of European imperialism: sketch for a theory of collaboration" in *Imperialism: The Robinson and Gallagher Controversy*, ed. William Roger Louis (New York: New Viewpoints, 1976), 121.

collaboration and split indigenous opposition," the local ruling elites could take both the acts of collaboration and opposition, preferably supported by "a mass, rural following" to enhance their bargaining power.[2] The foreign power's restraints in mobilizing local collaborators communicate with Alfred W. McCoy's definition of the subordinate elites. He argues that from its inception, the U.S. system of subordinate elites did not create "mere surrogates or puppets, but allies who worked, albeit from a weaker position, to maximize their nation's interests through a complex bargaining relationship."[3]

To observe the ways in which this colonial collaboration system continued to the Cold War period, it is useful to invite Robert O. Keohane's account on the dynamics of alliance. His 1971 article titled, "The Big Influence of Small Allies" points out the U.S. has long been recognized as the one who manipulates other governments, but as it turned out, many small states regarded "membership in a U.S.-dominated alliance at least partially as a means of control over the United States."[4] As long as the U.S. government is committed to its global crusade and continues to expand its alliances with small powers, the "big influence of small allies" becomes, as Keohane puts, "an unplanned but natural result of our globally active foreign policy."[5] His argument regarding the small allies' big influence over the U.S. foreign policy allows us to reconsider the conventional definition of collaboration. The conventional characterization of the local elite allies as collaborators of empire largely conveys the imperialist-centered perspective. Brett Reilly, for example, argues that the subordinate elites played a role of "critical means for the

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[2] Robinson, "Non-European foundations," 137.

[3] Alfred W. McCoy, "Fatal Florescence: Europe's Decolonization and America's Decline," in *Endless Empire: Spain's Retreat, Europe's Eclipse, America's Decline*, eds. Alfred W. McCoy et al. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 28.

[4] Robert O. Keohane, "The Big Influence of Small Allies," in *Foreign Policy* 2 (Spring 1971), 164, 180.

[5] Keohane. "Big Influence of Small Allies," 182.

exercise of informal influence" of empire, thereby limiting the latter's role to a local agency working with the big powers to maintain the empires' domination.[6] In actuality, the primary goals of collaboration between the big and small powers were set in parallel, and the local elites were not abided by imperialist or Cold War powers' objectives at all times.

More often than not, the local elites "voluntarily" collaborated with the foreign powers. The local elite allies conflated their own agendas of collaboration with that of the formal or informal empires so that they could gain access to foreign resources, which Robinson called an "alternative source of wealth and power." In this regard, the local elite allies' primary intention of collaboration did not have to always be compatible with that of the foreign powers. The local elite allies accepted the foreign powers' policy goals and implementations, but through this voluntary collaboration, the local elites could preserve their own sphere of interest and power. In other words, collaboration did not reduce local elite allies' autonomy, and this becomes more evident under the informal empire. The local elite's voluntary collaboration to preserve its authority and sphere of power constitute the main characteristics of the indigenization concept.

Examples of the local elite's voluntary and autonomous collaboration can be easily found throughout Thai history. Before and after the end of Japanese occupation in Southeast Asia, Pridi Banomyong, a civilian leader of the Seri (Free) Thai movement who became prime minister after the end of the Pacific War had actively collaborated with the U.S. government's Office of Strategic Services (OSS) not only to repel the Japanese colonialists but also the pre-war military dictator Phibun Songkhram. Although he had declared war against the Allies, Phibun in his

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[6] Brett Reilly, "Cold War Transition: Europe's Decolonization and Eisenhower's System of Subordinate Elites," in *Endless Empire: Spain's Retreat, Europe's Eclipse, America's Decline*, eds. Alfred W. McCoy et al. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 346.; Harry J. Benda, "Political Elites in Colonial Southeast Asia: An Historical Analysis," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History: An International Quarterly* 7:3 (April 1965), 234.

second premiership utilized the American influence and resources to reinvigorate his standing against the growing influence of new military rivals: Sarit Thanarat and Phao Siyanon. Sarit, who came to power after successfully staging a coup against the Phibun regime, maintained a close relationship with the U.S. government, especially through the Department of Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to enhance his authoritarian regime. The current king of Thailand also collaborated with the U.S. to secure the feeble institution of the monarchy that had been stripped off its absolute power by the People's Party coup in 1932. By indigenizing the U.S. Cold War politics, these Thai elite allies advanced their own political agendas of domination and consequently, could preserve their autonomy and strengthen their authority.

In this respect, the indigenization concept does not contrast with the history of collaboration between the indigenous elites and the global powers. Instead, the indigenization framework attempts to broaden the meaning of collaboration by bringing in the local elite allies' goals and utilization of collaborative mechanism to forward their own power ascendancy. Accordingly, the indigenization concept assumes that it was the internal politics that determined the behavior of indigenous ruling elites in dealing with the foreign relations and the nature of interaction between them. If the role of local elite allies had been limited to assisting the formal and informal empires' domination, internal politics would have had innate constraints that affected foreign relations since local elites are charged with translating global influence into terms of their own domestic politics.[7] In fact, for the local elite allies who steadfastly pursue their own interests, a central factor of change in their attitude toward the foreign powers derives from the internal power dynamics.

[7] Robinson, "Non-European foundations," 119.

Since it was the domestic politics that greatly affected the rise and fall of the local elite allies, "nation-building" became a political means for them to enhance their bargaining power as well as solidify their domination through indigenization. The American Cold War crusade embodied in the form of anticommunist modernization and counterinsurgency strategies launched in accordance with the interest of the local elite allies. These allies did not have to protest against the global superpower's intervention because certain Cold War foreign policies and its implementations could create a favorable condition to continue hierarchical homogenization and assimilation of various power relations. As a result, the nation-building undertaken through the indigenization of the Cold War system generated a drastic increase of political infighting, and even civil wars, in the second half of the twentieth century. At the same time, it also precipitated a vertical alignment of power relations in the so-called Free World.

To understand these interactive processes of the development of Cold War systems and nation-building between the global superpowers and local elites, it is useful to review the extant literature in the fields of Cold War and nation-building studies and define the meaning and nature of these two concepts. Building on the literature review and conceptual probe, the main thesis of "indigenization" will be further articulated through a general overview of the chapter discussions.

Rewriting the Cold War

The conventional, dominant trends in the Cold War studies can be summarized as follows: First, the Cold War is the rivalry between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (hereafter, Soviet Union) to gain ascendancy in the international community. Second, the U.S. and Soviet Union retained their forbearance in order not to wage another world

war, and hence the reason why their power competition has been called a "cold" war. Third, the Cold War was an ideological war against the Soviet Union that had been heavily influenced by Leninist-Marxist communism, whereas the U.S. was far more inclined towards the *realpolitik* when defending its economic, political and security interests over the globe.[8] Either for the old or new Cold War histories, these trends have been more or less the main analytical lenses in studying general Cold War developments. As they gave rise to the three schools of Cold War studies -- that is traditionalist, revisionist, and post-revisionist. According to Geir Lundestad's summarization, the traditionalists see the Soviet Union as largely responsible for the Cold War, whereas the revisionists tend to see the U.S. as the one to blame. Post-revisionists on the other hand blame both the U.S. and the Soviet Union for the same global rivalries.[9]

These conventional norms in Cold War studies have inevitably narrowed the scope of the field in the past decades. The central reason why the conventional trends have nearly dominated Cold War studies derives from the presumed difficulties in inserting the so-called third world, which is, in this case, the newly emerged postcolonial nation-states. John Lewis Gaddis explains in his renowned book, *We Now Know*, that the reason why Cold War studies have heavily focused on the two superpowers is because "the third world defies easy generalization." The latter's decisions to collaborate with or resist the Cold War superpowers "depended upon time, place and circumstances." Then, he confirms "the 'third world' did not, in the end, determine the

[8] This is a summary of various reviews on the Cold War studies in the edited volume by Odd Arne Westad, ed., *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, and Theory* (London; Portland: F. Cass, 2000), especially the articles by Odd Arne Westad, John Lewis Gaddis, Melvyn P. Leffler, Geir Lundestad and Anders Stephanson.; See also, John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford: New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1997).; Christopher E. Goscha and Christian F. Ostermann, "Introduction: Connecting Decolonization and the Cold War in Southeast Asia," in *Connecting Histories: Decolonization and the Cold War in Southeast Asia, 1945-1962*, eds., Christopher E. Goscha and Christian F. Ostermann (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 1-12.

[9] Geir Lundestad, "How (Not) to Study the Origins of the Cold War," in *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, and Theory*, ed. Odd Arne Westad (London; Portland: F. Cass, 2000), 64-65.

Cold War's outcome."[10] In short, the complexity in defining the role of the "third world" in the superpowers' decision-making processes has kept Cold War scholarship from exploring beyond the U.S. and/or the Soviet Union-centered history.

The difficulties in identifying the role of local actors in the evolution of the Cold War in fact derives from the very limitation of conventional Cold War studies' key premises. First, the definition of the Cold War as the power competition between the U.S. and Soviet Union overlooks the actual characteristics of the Cold War, which was an "international system" that both the superpowers as well as the small powers had collectively utilized.[11] Second, the longstanding assumption that the Cold War was merely the superpower's rivalry sustains the "whom-to-blame" framework, subsequently constraining the scope of this global system's impacts to the unilateral, vertical relations between superpowers and the small powers that have been dully categorized as the "third world." Third, these narrow visions of the Cold War system reveal the persistence of the excessive focus on the "foreign relations" between the East and West, consequently omitting critical scrutiny of the unintended consequences of the international Cold War system upon the local polities and vice versa.[12] In this way, conventional Cold War studies has been concentrated on observing the balancing of power among superpowers -- not only the U.S. and the Soviet Union but also the former European empires. This focus eventually obliterates the reality that the end of colonialism brought about the emergence of new nation-

[10] Gaddis, *We Now Know*, 286.

[11] The conceptualization of the Cold War as an international system here follows John L. Gaddis and Odd Arne Westad's definitions. See John Lewis Gaddis, "On Starting All Over Again: A Naïve Approach to the Study of the Cold War," in *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, and Theory*, ed. Odd Arne Westad (London; Portland: F. Cass, 2000), 29.; Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 74.

[12] See the critics on the overemphasis on the foreign relations and East-West dichotomies from John R.W. Smail, "On the Possibility of an Autonomous History of Modern Southeast Asia," in *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 2:2 (July 1961), 100.; Matthew Connelly, "Taking Off the Cold War Lens: Visions of North-South Conflict during the Algerian War for Independence," in *American Historical Review* 105:3 (June 2000), 742.

states endowed with sovereignty. In conventional Cold War studies, these new nation-states were often viewed as passive spectators who were victimized by the global superpowers' competition for political, economical, cultural and racial domination. In this way, conventional Cold War studies have affirmed that local actors did not determine the Cold War's outcome.

Beyond the confines of the conventional "Cold War lens", recent Cold War scholarship, albeit limited, have strived to give more voice to the local elites of the non-West to accentuate their multifaceted, active responses to the global powers.[13] This attempt has evolved from numerous -- yet less-recognized -- debates around the role and influence of local elites that reassess whether they acted as an active collaborator of Western imperialism or another power-bidding agency that manipulated the big powers' foreign policies for their own benefit.[14] New Cold War historians have tried to overcome the conventional "whom-to-blame" framework and sought the international and local contexts that became conducive for sustaining the modernizing traditional elites' domination as well as global superpower's rivalry in the second half of the twentieth century. These attempts, however, have limited the analysis to the "localization" or "internalization" frameworks.[15] In other words, the elites in the newly emerged nation-states were the recipients who had wholly internalized and adopted the superpowers' Cold War schemes and applied them as the norm for legitimacy in local politics. For example, the American nation-building theory called "modernization" was adapted by the various recipient countries of U.S. foreign aid and assistance throughout the Cold War. Similarly to how Gregg Brazinsky artfully described "Koreanizing modernization", the Thai local elites also "Thainized"

[13] Connelly, "Taking off the Cold War Lens," 742.

[14] For example, see Robinson, "Non-European foundations," 117-142.; Keohane, "Big Influence of Small Allies," 161-182.

[15] For the discussion on "modernizing traditional elites," see Benda, "Political Elites in Colonial Southeast Asia".

Walt W. Rostow's modernization theory to serve their national development projects.[16] Nevertheless, the local elites did not adopt these theories and practices only for the sake of achieving modernization of their nation-state to mimic the superpowers. It was utilized as a slogan to advance the indigenous elite's nation-building; a process that actually continued traditional hierarchies and the elite's power ascendancy.

In this respect, the indigenization framework permits us to view the local elite's "selective" appropriation of the U.S. foreign policies and development programs to push forward their goal, not that of the American suppliers. The local elites are not passive recipients. Similarly, the framework also allows us to understand unintended consequences of the global powers' intervention in local politics by identifying the actual goal of indigenous elite's selective adaptation. In this way, the indigenization framework can embrace multifaceted, multilateral "interactions" between the global superpowers and new nation-states that the localization and internalization frameworks have not yet fully explored.[17] Then in what ways the indigenization framework will help us to rewrite the Cold War histories? Or simply put, how can we rewrite the Cold War beyond the conventional norms?

Obviously, the indigenization framework breaks away from the conventional Cold War studies' trends centered on the Cold War dichotomies and whom-to-blame framework by perceiving the Cold War as an open, fluid international system that embraced diverse local actors and their reactions to the postcolonial power realignment. As mentioned, the indigenous elites

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[16] Gregg A. Brazinsky, "Koreanizing Modernization: Modernization Theory and South Korean Intellectuals," in *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development and the Global Cold War*, eds. David C. Engerman et al. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 251-273.

[17] Geir Lundestad and Melvyn P. Leffler proposed to focus on the "interaction" between two superpowers instead of blaming one side, and also to bring up various factors and factors in analyzing the Cold War history. See Lundestad, "How (Not) to Study," 75.; Melvyn P. Leffler, "Bringing it Together: The Parts and the Whole," in *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, and Theory*, ed. Odd Arne Westad (London; Portland: F. Cass, 2000), 53.

adapted the global superpowers' Cold War paradigms and foreign policies voluntarily and selectively, and indeed there is several academic work that discuss the impacts of small powers' manipulation of the superpower-centered politics and their influence over the international politics.[18] However, the reason why this research has not broadened the field of Cold War studies is because of their adherence to the foreign relations framework. John Smail describes that the foreign relations approach is like an "automobile headlight on a moonlit night; it illuminates a part of the scene very brightly but distracts attention from the rest."[19] The concentration on the interaction through foreign policies could result in not fully perceiving the internal political dynamics that enabled the local elites to adapt the global Cold War politics to their cause.

Moving away from his previous revisionist view, Gaddis recently suggested that the new Cold War history should include more local actors rather than only focusing on the global superpowers. In this way, Gaddis continues, the new Cold War history would allow us to see that the superpowers "were never super enough to operate at full strength everywhere" and that small powers "were often in a position to influence the actions of their larger counterparts."[20] Gaddis also contends if the conventional Cold War studies' approach has assumed this War as an act of "balancing" of powers between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, the new Cold War studies should attempt to bring up the "diversification" of powers by including the indigenous elites of new

[18] For example, see the recent accounts on the local elites' active political manipulation of the global power politics from Matthew Connelly, "Rethinking the Cold War and Decolonization: The Grand Strategy of the Algerian War for Independence," in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 33:2 (May 2001), 221-245.; Robert J. McMahon, "Eisenhower and Third World Nationalism: A Critique of the Revisionists," in *Political Science Quarterly* 101:3 (1986), 453-473.; David S. Painter, "Research Note: Explaining U.S. Relations with the Third World," in *Diplomatic History* 19:3 (Summer 1995), 525-548.

[19] Smail, "On the Possibility," 98.

[20] Gaddis, "On Starting All Over Again," 31.

nation-states.[21] To summarize, by observing the convergence and divergence of political interests among the superpowers and new postcolonial nation-states, and the internal dynamics that catalyzed the local elite's active responses to the global Cold War politics, the new Cold War studies will be able to overcome the conventional assumptions on unilateral, vertical, and passive relations between the superpowers and local powers and recognize multilateral, variegated interactions.

Another way to find an intersection that embraces these multilateral interactions can be drawn from the third conventional norm: the role of ideology in Cold War studies. Although some have cautioned against the danger of concentrating on the ideological aspects of the Cold War attributed to the Soviet obsession with complying with Leninist-Marxist communism, the ideological dimension of global Cold War history has in fact invited new interpretations and analyses that defy conventional norms such as the lesser ideological implication to the U.S. foreign policy and its Cold War politics.[22] Anders Stephanson, for example, argues the "peculiar presumption of something called 'the American Way' and the auxiliary, more sinister, thesis" has been prescribed any challenges to American's concept of freedom as 'un-American.'"[23] Just as the conventional studies dichotomize communist and anticommunist sides, the Cold War has divided American and un-American ways. Thus, Stephanson identifies the Cold War itself is an American ideology.

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[21] Gaddis, *We Now Know*, 283-284.

[22] Particularly, Michael Hunt's work provides an in-depth and insightful study on the relationship between the American political values or "ideology" and U.S. foreign policy for the last two centuries. See Michael E. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).

[23] Anders Stephanson, "Liberty or Death: The Cold War as US Ideology" in *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, and Theory*, ed. Odd Arne Westad (London; Portland: F. Cass, 2000), 87.

In a similar fashion, the modernization theory upheld by American social scientists between the 1950s and 1970s presents the impacts of the Cold War as "American ideology" to its foreign policymaking establishments, and therefore, Michael Latham defines modernization theory as the American Cold War ideology. The U.S. foreign policies under the heavy influence of this Cold War ideology assumed that U.S.-led anticommunist modernization would allow the previous colonies to "take-off" from the traditional societies and the local elites would be able to modernize themselves with help from U.S. foreign aid and assistance.[24] In fact, the presumed inability of the traditional societies to "take-off" reveals the persistence of what Mark Bradley called the "racialized cultural hierarchies" in the worldview of the U.S. foreign policymaking establishment that had been deeply rooted from the colonial period and to the postcolonial period.[25] These accounts inform us that Cold War politics took place not only around the foreign policies and diplomatic negotiations between powers but also entailed more diversified discourses on the role of ideology, state policies, and cultures as well as the postcolonial demands embodied by the nation-building projects of the indigenous elites.[26] These new perspectives on the role of ideologies and cultures have therefore contributed to broadening the breadth of Cold War studies from foreign relations to the historical, cultural, political, and socio-economic dimensions that this international system has influenced considerably throughout the twentieth century.

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[24] Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

[25] Mark P. Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America: The Making of Postcolonial Vietnam, 1919-1950* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2000), p.77.

[26] See for example, Tony Day and Maya H. T. Liem, eds., *Cultures at War: The Cold War and Cultural Expression in Southeast Asia* (Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 2010).; Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

Last but not the least, it is significant to recognize that assuming the Cold War to be the competition between the so-called Free World and the Communist Bloc has inevitably treated decolonization and the Cold War as separate historical processes. This treatment consequently creates a gap between these concurrent historical events while at the same time making the local actors an insignificant factor to the development of the Cold War.[27] In fact, the past two centuries of world history have witnessed not only the rise and fall of the Western empires but also the birth of the "great majority of today's nation-states."[28] The emergence of postcolonial nation-states therefore signaled the beginning of more elaborate gradation of power relations both in global and local polities. In this regard, having a holistic view toward the concurrent processes of decolonization and the Cold War will permit us to see the historical continuities over the past two centuries rather than forcing us to search for "*the* postcolonial Other", or making the Cold War an isolated political development.[29] By connecting the colonial past and postcolonial future, which is in this case the Cold War, the new Cold War studies can also overcome the limits of postcolonialism, and embrace the colonial legacies and its impacts on the evolution of the Cold War system in twentieth century world history.[30]

Several historical accounts have attempted to connect the colonial past and postcolonial future. Notably, Mark Bradley's *Imagining Vietnam and America* attempts to "locate and analyze the relationship between Vietnam and the United States within the larger sweep of the

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[27] Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America*, 6-9.

[28] Benedict Anderson, "Old State, New Society: Indonesia's New Order in Comparative Historical Perspective," in *Journal of Asian Studies* 42:3 (May 1983), 477.

[29] Anne McClintock, "The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term "Post-Colonialism," in *Social Text* 31/32 (1992), 86. (Italic in original).

[30] As for the limits of postcolonialism discourse, see, Leela Gandhi, *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 7.

international history of the twentieth century in which the global discourse and practices of colonialism, race, modernism, and postcolonial state making at once preceded, were profoundly implicated in, and ultimately transcended the dynamics of the Cold War."[31] In a similar fashion, by defying the rigidity of colonial and postcolonial dichotomy, Matthew Connelly's studies on the Algerian war for independence articulate the ways in which the Algerian anticolonialists took advantage of the late colonial crisis and "planned to harness the Cold War to their cause" by making international tensions serve their grand strategy.[32] In this way, Connelly's study connects the previously separate decolonization and Cold War histories. Elizabeth Cobbs' study on the origin and development of Peace Corps also provides insights to the ways which to posit both the postcolonial political realignment -- broadly defined as decolonization, and the global Cold War as coinciding historical contexts. Cobbs argues these concurrent historical events allowed the U.S. policy leaders to "acknowledge the larger world revolution between North and South but found their responses to it constantly complicated by the war between East and West."[33] Recently, a co-edited volume titled, *Connecting Histories*, by Christopher Goscha and Christian Ostermann brings forward the role of ideology and the importance of smaller powers by highlighting the interconnectedness between decolonization and Cold War histories in Southeast Asia, and recognizing the "global South" as an important actor in the making of the Cold War in order to respond the "renewal of Cold War studies for Asia."[34] In short, these analyses on the

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[31] Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America*, 8.

[32] Connelly, "Taking off the Cold War Lens," 74-741, 767.; Connelly, "Rethinking the Cold War," 222.

[33] Elizabeth A. Cobbs, "Decolonization, the Cold War, and the Foreign Policy of the Peace Corps," in *Diplomatic History* 20:1 (Winter 1996), 79-105.; Painter, "Research Note," 79, 89.

[34] Goscha and Ostermann, *Connecting Histories,* 7-8.

interaction between colonial legacies and Cold War impacts accentuate the continuity of historical developments throughout the twentieth century.

Building upon these accounts, I argue that the local elite's nation-building projects are one of the perpetuating historical elements that also connect the decolonization and Cold War processes. As will be discussed shortly, the local elites' postcolonial nation-building was more the matching process of the newly defined nation with an old state institution to continue the hierarchical homogenization of various power relations among ethnicities, cultures, spaces, or classes. The persistence of the elite-centered nation-building throughout the colonial and postcolonial periods implies that the Cold War system indeed abided the colonial legacies, and provided conducive environments for continuing vertical, lineal gradation of power relations in the local, regional and global polities. By scrutinizing the shared goals of local nation-building and the global Cold War developments, the field of Cold War studies can better communicate with the key paradigms of the world history in the past two centuries.

In conclusion, the rewriting of Cold War history should consider integrating the following four propositions: First, the Cold War was not only a global rivalry between the U.S. and Soviet Union. It was an open, evolving international system that invited various sizes and types of powers, multifarious ideologies, and numerous local, regional and global actors to compete for their ascendancy when the centuries-old empires began dismantling. Second, Cold War studies should incorporate the historical continuity among the colonial-decolonization-postcolonial processes. In order to do so, the new Cold War studies shall recognize the concurrence of decolonization and the Cold War as represented in the postcolonial nation-building process to view the historical continuities that continued from the colonial period throughout the twentieth century. In this way, new Cold War histories can interact with both the colonial legacies and

postcolonial demands. Third, despite its predominance, the Cold War system was neither colonial nor hegemonic. Although the international Cold War system did have some dominance over the local politics, the indigenous elites, more often than not, found their way to selectively adapt the external interventions. By recognizing the incomplete hegemony of the global system over local politics, we can also extend our scope of analysis to the unintended consequences of the Cold War. Finally, the global Cold War system basically aimed to stabilize the aftermath of colonialism in both domestic and international polities. This aspiration for stability provided favorable conditions to the local elites for continuing the hierarchical assimilation of various power relations through their nation-building. Keeping these propositions in mind, let us now explore the definition and actual processes of "nation-building" of the local elites in the postcolonial period.

Nation-Building in the Absence of Colonial Powers

To understand the reason why the local elites "indigenize" the global Cold War system, we first need to ask one general question: what was the ultimate goal of pursuing the Cold War system for both the global superpowers and local elites? If we place the Cold War in the larger historical developments of the twentieth century, the answer could be largely said to be the stabilization of the aftermath of colonialism and decolonization. Decolonization did not simply mean the fragmentation of colonial empires. It also meant the enfranchisement of the former colonial states and transfer of sovereignty to the local ruling elites. In this sense, decolonization process generated the rise of new nation-states governed by the local elites and divided by the international borders.

Under this shared goal of stabilizing the messy political landscape, there were separate developments of vision between the global superpowers and the local elites. To the superpowers, either old or new, not only strengthening but also preserving their power ascendancy in an increasingly crowded international community with the new nation-states was the ultimate goal. One of the prominent American policymakers, George C. Marshall, reflected this concern in a speech made at Honolulu after his trip to Asia in the late 1940s:

> We are in the middle of a world revolution – and I don't mean Communism. The Communists are like your surf riders here; they're just moving in on the crest of a wave. The revolution I'm talking about is that of the little people all over the world. They're beginning to learn what there is in life, and to learn what they are missing.[35]

The world revolution invoked by the "little people all over the world" meant dismantlement of an extant order, or more precisely, realignment of power relations among the big and small powers that had been shaped and maintained from the colonial period. So did communism, in the sense that it also meant the reorganization of existing order of powers in local, regional and global polities. In this context, prompt stabilization of the power relations in the absence of Western European colonialist was the foremost task to the postcolonial superpowers, both the U.S. and Soviet Union.

To the local elites, "stabilization" similarly meant continuation of the extant order of powers without the foreign, colonial authorities. The first task given to the local elites was therefore assuming sovereignty -- supposedly to be realized through decolonization and independence processes. The second task was rather complex. Decolonization assigned local elites of former colonies with the task of matchmaking between the nations and the state. Like Walker Connor says, enfranchisement of former colonial states with fixed international boundaries inevitably

[35] Sargent Shriver, *Point of the Lance* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), 9.

"created a large number of transcultural states."[36] Growth of the "transcultural states" subsequently released at once preceded, "discourses and practices of colonialism, race, modernism and postcolonial state making" which "profoundly implicated in, and ultimately transcended the dynamics of the Cold War."[37] In this respect, one of the urgent tasks for the postcolonial local elites was redefining the "nation" that could embrace or prevail the diversifying demands from different races/ethnicities, cultures, spaces and classes. As will be detailed in the following chapters, redefining the meaning and role of "nation" was generally undertaken by the processes of homogenization and assimilation of the demands from the various interest groups under the slogan of national unity and progress, to make them constituencies of a nation-state. This is the reason why "nation-building" became one of the most popular items on the agenda for the indigenous elites of postcolonial states.

Growing utilization of the term "nation-building" especially in the postcolonial period invited more critical scrutiny of the conventional concept of nation and nationalism centered on the Western European experiences. Among the discourses around the origin, concept and role of the nation and nationalism, one major trend explores the question of whether the nation is old or new. Broadly speaking, there are a group of scholars who advocate that the nation existed and continued from time immemorial on the one hand. The other contends that nation is a modern creation, starting as early as the eighteenth century. For an easier comparison, let us call the former group the "continuist" and the latter the "modernist."[38]

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[36] Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Question for Understanding* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 8.

[37] Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America*, 8.

[38] This part of literature reviews are mostly drawn from the following works on nation, nationalism and nation-building: Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History* (Cambridge: Polity Press; Malden: Blackwell, 2001).; Gopal Balakrishnan, ed. *Mapping the Nation* (London, New York: Verso, 1996).; Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).;

The continuists generally focus on ethnic origin of the nation, as we can see from the works of two preeminent ethnonationalists: Anthony D. Smith and Walker Conner.[39] Anthony Smith proposes two working definitions of 'nation' and '*ethnie*' which are "pure or ideal-types" derived from "a stylization of the respective beliefs and sentiments of elite members of *ethnies* and of nations." The nation refers to "a named human community occupying a homeland, and having common myths and a shared history, a common public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for all members." As for its counterpart, Smith suggests another group termed "*ethnie*" which is defined as "a named human community connected to a homeland, possessing common myths of ancestry, shared memories, one or more elements of shared culture, and a measure of solidarity, at least among the elites."[40] He then explains the paradox that although nation is originated from a preexisting *ethnie*, this could become "more inclusive, more complex and less tied to its original ethnic base" pertaining to the "transformation of the relationship between ethnicity and culture, and between culture and politics."[41] In sum, nation came out from the preexisting ethnic communities -- *ethnie*, but it transformed to be more specific, specialized community in the course of its interactive developments with culture, ethnicity and politics. Thus, it is significant to differentiate nation and *ethnie* to understand the ethnic continuism embedded in the original conception of nation.

Anthony D. Smith, ed. *Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1992).; Connor, *Ethnonationalism*.; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London; New York: Verso, 1991).; I borrowed the word "continuism" from Benedict Anderson, "Introduction," in *Mapping the Nation*, ed. Gopal Balakrishnan (London, New York: Verso, 1996), 11.

[39] See also Donald Horowitz. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, new edition (Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 2000).

[40] Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, 13.

[41] Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, 14.

Walker Connor on the other hand argues that the indiscriminate application of Western experiences for defining the concept of nation nearly led to negligence of the ethnic origin of nations and their continuation. In his 1972 article titled "Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying," Connor criticizes improper analogizing of the nation from the experience of the United States and says: "Lesser 'us-them' relationships can exist within a single nation, so long as in any test of allegiance the larger 'us' of the nation proves more powerful than the divisive call of a particular region, religion, pre-American ethnic heritage, or whatever."[42] The negligence of ethnic continuism in the conception of nation becomes more evident in the interutilization of the terms "nation" and "state". Conner therefore argues:

> Since most of the less developed states contain a number of nations, and since the transfer of primary allegiance from these nations to the state is generally considered the sine qua non of successful integration, the true goal is not "nation-building" but "nation-destroying".[43]

This is one of the main reasons why these ethnonationalists suggest that "nation-building" is rather a misnomer because the term wittingly or unwittingly rejects the presence of polyethnic societies and impose uncontested allegiance toward the "larger us" to all, giving the "undue optimism" that "a single national consciousness was to be forged among disparate ethnic elements."[44] The popular use of the term "nation-state" was also criticized in this vein. Anthony Smith argues that the term "nation-state" often tends to understate the dynamics of the nation compared to that of the state. Therefore, he suggests alternative terms like "national state" or "state-nations" to clarify that the nation-state is not always the conflation of one nation and one

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[42] Connor, *Ethnonationalism*, 49.

[43] Connor, *Ethnonationalism*, 39. Originally from his article titled, "Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying?" *World Politics* 24 (April 1972), 319-55.

[44] Connor, *Ethnonationalism*, 29, 69.

state.[45] Connor supports this point by remarking that in fact only about ten percent of all states can be called "true nation-states," constituted by homogenous ethnics.[46]

Although his work has not focused specifically on defining the ethnic origins, Partha Chatterjee proposes a similar approach of continuism that brings forward authenticity and longevity of the nation. In his examination of postcolonial nationalism in *The Nation and Its Fragments,* Chatterjee criticizes the modernist works -- especially Benedict Anderson' *Imagined Communities* -- are limited to taking the claims of nationalism to be "a political movement too literally and seriously." In Chatterjee's account of the key components of anticolonial nationalism in Asia and Africa, this particular nationalism divided the world of social institutions and practices into two domains: the material and spiritual. The material domain represents the sphere in which the West demonstrated its superiority over the colonized East, whereas the spiritual domain was the place where the colonized people refused to allow the colonial power to intervene in order to maintain the essential marks of their cultural identity. Chatterjee argues that the latter domain is the place where nationalism "launches its most powerful, creative, and historically significant project of fashioning 'modern' national culture that is nevertheless not Western." And to Chatterjee, this is the domain of nationalism where Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities" could be brought into being.[47]

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[45] Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, 17. According to Smith, 'national state' can be defined as "a state legitimated by the principles of nationalism, whose members possess a measure of national unity and integration (but not of cultural homogeneity)" and 'state-nations', where "polyethnic states aspire to nationhood and seek to turn themselves into unified (but not homogenous) nations through measures of accommodation and integration". Miroslav Hroch for example uses the term "state-nations" to clear the confusion between national movement and nationalism: Miroslave Hroch. "From National Movement to the Fully-formed Nation: The Nation-Building Process in Europe," in *Mapping the Nation*, ed. Gopal Balakrishnan (London, New York: Verso, 1996), 80-81. Originally published in *New Left Review* 198 (March-April 1993), 3-20.

[46] Connor, *Ethnonationalism*, 53.

[47] Chatterjee, *Nation and Its Fragments*, 5-6.

In sum, "continuists" argue that the nation originated from preexisting ethnic communities. This ethnic continuism reveals first, the nation is not wholly a modern creation; and second, this continuity is also maintained by the spiritual domain of the nation that has provided significant marks of their identity. In addition, the continuists argue that the predominance of "nation-building" and "modern nation" discourses have inevitably invited the (ethno-)nationalism and separatism in the former colonies.[48] Because of the inappropriate utilization of the terms like "nation-building", the actual nature of "nation-formation" came to be devoid of ethnic origins by obliterating the role of *ethnie* that had provided one of the most significant sources for conceiving and shaping the nation and its identity.[49] Thus, Smith criticizes the modernist's concentration on the "peculiarly constructed and imagined quality" of the nation have created the impression that the nation especially in the former colonies were rather a modern offspring of the postcolonial demands.[50] Instead, Smith contends that "nation-building" is a modern process, not the nation itself.[51]

The modernist group, on the other hand, generally regards nation and nationalism as modern and they focus on the socially, politically, economically and culturally constructed nature of the nation in modern history. Ernest Gellner and Karl Deutsch's works are considered classics in the discussion on the rise of nationalism and nation-building catalyzed by socio-

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[48] Connor, *Ethnonationalism*, 8. Originally from his article titled, "Self-Determination: The New Phase," *World Politics* 20 (October 1967), 20-53. Walker Conner used the term "ethnonationalism" which he treats as a synonym of "nationalism". Connor defines "nation" as "a group of people who believe they are ancestrally related" and "nationalism" connotes "identification with and loyalty to one's nation as just defined. It does *not* refer to loyalty to one's country": Connor, *Ethnonationalism*, xi.

[49] Anthony D. Smith, "Nationalism and the Historians," in *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, ed. Anthony D. Smith (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1992), 76, endnote 20. According to Smith, the term "nation-formation" refers to "all those processes, intended or not, that contribute to the emergence of the nation and national consciousness".

[50] Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, 3, 48.

[51] Smith, "Nationalism and the Historians," 76, endnote 20.

economic transformations, like industrial revolution, modernization and urbanization, or the increase of social communication and mobility.[52]

Benedict Anderson's renowned work *Imagined Communities* brings our attention to the political intervention to conceiving and spreading the modern nation and nationalism. To Anderson, nation is both an inherently limited and sovereign "imagined political community." Anderson therefore articulates how the use of vernacular language expedited transformation of national consciousness and print capitalism affected the realization of this political imagination.[53] John Breuilly's work similarly concentrates on the political aspects of modern nation-building. Breuilly argues that by approaching nationalism as politics, we could recognize such the political movements that claim the preexistence of nation, definition of political identity and loyalty with the nation and the imperatives of national sovereignty are "peculiarly modern, essential movements of the last two centuries." In this sense, state modernization is "crucial for the development of genuine and strong nationalist movements."[54]

As for the cultural origins of nation, Eric Hobsbawm's essay titled "Inventing Traditions" highlights the ways in which rulers of state invented, constructed and formally instituted "traditions" that seek to "inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition" for maintaining the state. In this regard, Hobsbawm argues "comparatively recent historical innovation, the 'nation', with its associated phenomena: nationalism, the nation-state, national symbols, histories and the rest" depends on "exercises in social engineering which are often

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[52] See for example, Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 39-50.; Karl W. Deutsch, "Social Mobilization and Political Development," in *American Political Science Review* 55:3 (September 1961), 493-514.

[53] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 11-12.

[54] John Breuilly, "Approaches to Nationalism," in *Mapping the Nation*, ed. Gopal Balakrishnan (London, New York: Verso, 1996), 149, 169.

deliberate and always innovative." By understanding the process of inventing traditions, the "modern nation" consisting of "such constructs and is associated with appropriate and, in general, fairly recent symbols or suitably tailored discourse" could be better understood.[55]

To summarize, the modernists generally agree that the political, social, economic and cultural developments and transformations engendered a new definition of the nation. This newly "invented" or "imagined" nation was to serve the cause of the state and its ruling authorities. In this sense, the modernist concentration on the newness of the nation largely reflects the unavoidable influence of the geopolitical, social and cultural transformations of the state between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries. From the eighteenth century, as Michael Mann argues, states "suddenly loomed large in the lives of their subjects, taxing them, conscripting them, attempting to mobilize their enthusiasm for its goals."[56] The modernist perception of the nation as modern generally agrees with this increasingly dominant role of states, which were becoming "cages, trapping subjects within their bars." [57]

There are two key hypotheses that we can glean from this overview of the origins of nation and nation-building studies. In essence, although differences exist in the perceptions of the historical continuity and modernity of the nation, both groups agree to the ethnic origins of the pre-modern nation, multiplicity and diversity of the preexisting ethnic communities and their certain connection to the modern nation. This initial agreement on the pre-modern ethnic communities as the origin of nation diverges in the face of the question of "when" and "how" the multiplicity of preexisting ethnic communities became visibly and systematically problematized.

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[55] Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 13-14.

[56] Michael Mann, "Nation-states in Europe and Other Continents: Diversifying, Developing, Not Dying," in *Mapping the Nation*, ed. Gopal Balakrishnan (London, New York: Verso, 1996), 296-297.

[57] Mann, "Nation-states in Europe," 297.

If we expand our scope of analysis of the nation from its presumed European homeland to the globe, the end of colonialism in the mid-twentieth century should be treated as one of the most critical turning points in the discourses on the nation, nationalism and nation-building. The twentieth century's global transformations with the outbreak of two world wars indeed contributed to the expansion of nationalism and subsequently the discourses on the role and meaning of nations.[58] Anthony Smith thus argues the historians came to devote greater attention to "a rigorous search for situational or general factors that serve to explain the genesis and course of particular movements or of nationalism-in-general" from the 1950s, when there was a growing interest "in national sentiment and the nation as explananda."[59] In this respect, enfranchisement of the former colonial states and the resultant growth of nation-states opened up new dialogues on the role of nations and *ethnies* within the state that was now bounded by the international borders, and also beyond that state boundary as it became an independent member of the international community. This means that the postcolonial nation-state's interactions with neighbors and global superpowers came to constitute another influential factor in their internal politics.

Second, the meaning and origins of nation also diverges in multiple directions when it is associated with other entities like national-*ism*, national identity, and nation-building. This means that first, the original concept of nation is modified by the place, time and identifier. Secondly, the concept and identity of nations and ethnic communities are transformed by the historical or temporal conditions and also by the surrounding environments -- say, geographical and cultural factors. Transformability of the concept of nation and ethnic communities does not necessarily

[58] Mann, "Nation-states in Europe," 297.

[59] Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, 71.

go against the continuist contention on the ethnic origins of nation. As Smith argues, change is "built into the definition of national identity." Even if change is sudden and disruptive, "it will produce new elements that can be culturally assimilated by the membership." This is the reason why Smith believes that "continuity is not opposed to change," because change "is continuous, and continuity, the continuity of growth, is always imperceptibly changing."[60] To summarize, certain changes or modifications in the meaning and role of nation are to assure the continuity of it, not to mark the discontinuity.

Keeping these lessons in mind, let us go back to the definition of "nation-building." Anthony Smith argues that the term "nation-building" refers to "a nationalist programme of building the institutions and roles of the 'nation-state' ", but in practice, it is more concerned with "state-building" than "nation-creation."[61] If we agree that the "nation-building" was more concerned with "state-building," then the "nation-building" does not have to be the "nationalist" program as we can see from the historical experiences. The European colonizers also attempted to build the institutions and roles of its colonial states and the postcolonial states did not make a sharp departure from these institutions and roles that had been built during the colonial period.[62] In the postcolonial period, the meaning and role of "nation" had to be redefined not only to merge the members from diverse cultural, spatial and social backgrounds into one national entity, but also to make that entity match with the state boundary.

In this sense, "nation" in the postcolonial period should be perceived as a far more fluid and inclusive concept compared to how it is conventionally defined. On the other hand, the "state",

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[60] Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, 20, 29-30.

[61] Smith, "Nationalism and the Historians," 76, footnote 20.

[62] See for example, Donald K. Emmerson, "The Bureaucracy in Political Context: Weakness in Strength" in *Political Power and Communication in Indonesia*, eds. Karl D. Jackson and Lucian W. Pye (Berkeley; Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1978), 82-136.

consisting of an international boundary that contained transcultural societies as well as the institutions that were still filled with colonial bureaucrats, could be considered a comparably older and more fixed entity than the postcolonial "nation." The "state" derived its modern legitimacy from the nation by inventing it or replenishing it with new institutions and norms like the modernist group argues. In this respect, "nation-building" can be defined as the statist's program of building the ideological, institutional and socio-political infrastructures to match the societies consisting of multifarious interest groups representing ethnic, cultural, political, social, economic demands with the existing state order. The undertakings of assimilation and homogenization in this process reveal that although the postcolonial conception of "nation" could be more fluid and inclusive than the conventional one, it does not necessarily mean the inclusion process was carried out evenly. The newer concept of nation defined by the old state in the postcolonial period was in fact to sustain the traditional hierarchical order of power.

Lord Acton in his 1862 essay titled "Nationality" said that theory of nationality had an important mission in the world, which is to end "the worst enemies of civil freedom -- the absolute monarchy and the revolution."[63] As it turned out, the "nationality" insofar has not completed its mission. Historical examples of postcolonial nation-building lend us to see two key paradigms -- almost ideologies -- that delayed the end of the worst enemies of civil freedom in the new nation-states: they are, the imperatives of unity and progress -- the latter often dubbed as modernization. The national unity that the indigenous elites had called for and actualized is a Procrustean bed that forces transcultural societies to fit in the state's order and boundaries, hence it is more of a unity between the nation and state, not a unity among nations. In addition, national unity has been the unity built-upon hierarchy, not harmony. Assimilation and homogenization of

[63] Lord Acton. "Nationality," in *Mapping the Nation*, ed. Gopal Balakrishnan (London, New York: Verso, 1996), 37-38. Originally published in *The Home and Foreign Review* 1, July 1862, 146-74.

the transcultural societies to build a modern nation-state was essentially to maintain the extant hierarchical order of power relations among ethnicities, cultures, spaces and classes. In this respect, national unity is more the top-down ideology reinforced by the dominant ethnic or ruling elites of the state.

Modernization theory as one of the most preeminent Cold War ideologies also contributed to strengthening the hierarchy built in national unity by generating an illusion that a lineal, upward-oriented order of progress would help the traditional societies to "take-off" from the (colonial)-past and become a modern state. The central assumption of the American modernization theory is that economic growth would enhance internal political and social stability, and thus the U.S. government supported the Thai local elites' modernization by providing material and ideological sources in the form of foreign aid and assistance. In turn, these sources helped to increase political influence of the local elites, refashioning them with the leadership role that emphasized moving Thailand forward. The actual result of modernization in Thailand, however, was the widening of pre-existing gaps between classes, ethnic groups and regions. But, the resultant instability did not inflict much harm on the elite's ascendancy. In this sense, national progress or modernization became another doctrine for maintaining the hierarchical order of power relations. Overall, these two key slogans of nation-building of unity and progress enabled the local elites to smoothly adjust to the global Cold War system because essentially, both nation-building processes and the Cold War shared common aspirations: stability and continuity.

In conclusion, I suggest the following four propositions for understanding the central characteristics of nation-building in the postcolonial era. First, decolonization of the colonial empires marks a historical turning point in redefining the meaning and role of nation, ethnic

communities and nation-state. Second, in the absence of direct colonial rule, the dominant elite's strategy for nation-building was essentially the combined processes of homogenizing the multiethnic, transcultural nations and preserving the hierarchical power relationships of the old state. Third, the local elites' two key slogans of nation-building, unity and progress, contributed to strengthening hierarchical power relations in local and global politics. This in turn means that national unity and progress became almost an ideology of the nation-building that justified the continuation of elite-centered politics. Finally, the Cold War system largely fulfilled the local elite allies' desire for bringing in external influence in the form of material and ideological resources for containing the transcultural societies within the extant state institutions. In this sense, we shall incorporate the influence of external factors and actors, either regional or global, in the analysis of nation-building to better understand the dynamics of changes and stabilization in the newly emerged nation-states. The anticolonial nationalist elites of former colonies have often been seen as if they were striving to depart from the colonial past by getting rid of the foreign hands. This viewpoint is largely true, but at the same time we shall also see that they understood that indirect foreign intervention through material and ideological aids could be more than useful for augmenting their governing authority and legitimacy.[64]

These propositions together with those of the new Cold War studies will now be boiled down to the analytical framework of "indigenization."

[64] Matthew Connelly's work on the success of Algerian independence movement signifies the importance of utilizing the external factors to forward the local agendas. See, Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

Indigenization

The international Cold War system was neither colonial nor hegemonic and this serves as the first premise for understanding the indigenization concept. Whether the superpowers directly intervened with or indirectly influenced local politics, the local elites who had survived the end of colonialism and maintained their power in the postcolonial nation-state had more latitude for negotiation compared to the locals under direct colonial government.[65] The postcolonial superpowers like the U.S. and Soviet Union did impose the Cold War system almost as a doctrine upon the local elites. Nevertheless, the latter group knew that the Cold War system was not hegemonic -- the knowledge partly derived from their firsthand experience with colonialism.[66] This does not mean that the Cold War was not influential. On the contrary, the indigenization framework helps to articulate the ways in which the local elites adapted the most compatible, beneficial political programs and ideologies from the global system to continue their social and political dominance. One good example of the local elites' selective adaptation is the discrepant definition of communism. Throughout the Cold War, the Thai ruling elite's definition of communism was anti-nation, anti-Buddhism and anti-monarchy. In this way, they stigmatized not only communist but also general anti-government movements as anti-Thai, hence the enemy of state.

The second premise for indigenization is that the decolonization of the colonial states was still an on-going process during the Cold War, meaning that local nation-building concurred with the development of the international Cold War system. The ultimate goal of the Cold War as

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[65] For the continuing political influence of indigenous elites in the postcolonial period, see Benda, "Political Elites in Colonial Southeast Asia".

[66] See for example, Shawn F. McHale, *Print and Power: Confucianism, Communism, and Buddhism in the Making of Modern Vietnam* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), 39-60.

discussed earlier was to stabilize the aftermath of colonialism and decolonization. Decolonization emancipated the general colonial subjects across racial, ethnic, cultural, regional and class lines, which signaled the beginning of intense power competitions among the various interest groups and ruling elites within a state. The local elite's nation-building was meant to subdue these potential reservoirs of internal interruptions and to continue its power domination. Since strengthened internal security could help to stabilize international power relations, the superpowers supported the indigenous elite allies' nation-building. In this way, the political interests of the global superpowers and local elites converged and led them to cooperate with each other. The development of local nation-building programs and the international Cold War system therefore came to be interconnected.

The third premise for indigenization therefore assumes that the Cold War system was an opportune condition that essentially supported the local elite allies' nation-building. Communism would signal the dismantlement of extant power relations not only among the multiethnic societies but also among classes, spaces, and cultures. Moreover it, in theory, promoted a worldwide beginning with these diverse interest groups that were not part of the hegemony imposed by the elite, which bore the potential threats to the global power balance. This is the main reason why the U.S. and Thai elite allies could concert anticommunist campaigns in Thailand and Southeast Asia. The U.S. government began its economic and military aid programs to Thailand from 1950 and also overtly supported the local leadership who utilized these sources for enhancing internal security. In this sense, indigenization of the international system is fundamentally inclined towards maintaining the stability and continuity of the existing power relations in the local, regional and global communities.

This dissertation explores the power dynamics of local elite allies and their indigenization of both colonial legacies and Cold War demands in the second half of the twentieth century by posing two main questions. First, in what ways did local politics interact with Cold War developments? The rise and fall of various local elite allies during the Cold War vividly demonstrates consequential influence of the internal politics in determining their responses toward the U.S. foreign policies. The examination of the interaction between the local politics and global Cold War starts in 1945 when the Pacific War abruptly ended in Southeast Asia. It ends in 1980 when the Thai government declared its shift of counterinsurgency from the military to the political offensive. This period of examination is divided into three parts.

The first period between 1945-1957 shows a realignment of civilian-military relations in Thai politics that coincided with the development of the American Cold War system. Despite its friendly relationship with the civilian leader Pridi Banomyong and his Seri Thai faction before 1945 and its initial promotion of democratic leadership around the end of the Japanese invasion in Thailand, the U.S. government gradually shifted its support to Phibun Songkhram as he proved to be a staunch anticommunist and also an effective authoritarian leader. The 1947 coup that brought Phibun to his second premiership together with the U.S. government's earnest beginning of its anticommunist campaigns in Asia is therefore the beginning point when the Thai elite allies actively increased their bargaining power to indigenize the emerging American Cold War system. When the U.S. government and Phibun administration signed the military and economic treaties in 1950 shortly after the outbreak of the Korean War, the CIA and Thai military generals formed the Thai Border Patrol Police (BPP) and Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit (PARU) to carry out clandestine paramilitary intelligence in the border areas. Amidst intensifying power struggles among Phibun, Sarit Thanarat and Phao Siyanon, Sarit staged a

coup against Phibun's government in 1957. The BPP faced a life-or-death crisis at this point as its key patron, Phao, went into exile and the CIA had to halt its operations in Thailand fearing Sarit's retaliation.

The second period 1957 to 1973, was the heyday of the Thai elite allies' indigenization of the American Cold War. Under Sarit's ironfisted rule, Thai military leadership enjoyed uncontested power in this period and it continued to his successor Thanom Kittikachorn. Particularly under the Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy administrations, the Thai military could mobilize an enormous amount of U.S. foreign aid and a variety of counterinsurgency strategies -- mostly in the disguise of modernization programs, to safeguard their authoritarian regimes. In the meantime, Sarit invited a young monarch to a political arena to enhance the regime's authority and legitimacy. Since the fall of absolute monarchy by the People's Party coup in 1932, the Thai monarchy had remained relatively inactive and less visible in politics and society. With wholehearted support from Sarit and the U.S. government, however, the current monarch and his mother steadily consolidated power bases through their extended nation-building projects, finally making themselves the national leader of Thai unity and progress. The growing political influence and popularity of the current monarch and the royalist elite network eventually threatened the military's power ascendancy. The success of the October 14th democratization movement and the king's mediator role in resolving the tension between the military and civilian leaders in 1973 marked the earnest beginning of the monarchy and royalist elite's political domination.

The last period between 1973-1980 presents the ways in which monarchy and royalist elite network grasped the upper hand in politics and expanded their influence to every corner of Thailand. While allegedly remaining "above politics," an arena that has been mired by relentless

military authoritarian rules since Sarit, the current monarch and his extended elite royalist network have in reality constantly intervened in Thai politics with the help of ever-growing mass followings. The U.S. withdrawal from the Indochina quagmire in the early 1970s indeed allowed the local elites to nearly monopolize political power to serve their interest. In 1980, an adamant royalist and army commander-in-chief General Prem Tinsulanonda assumed premiership. Prem subsequently proclaimed the shift of the Thai government's official counterinsurgency from armed suppression to political offensive through the Prime Minister Order 66/2523 in the same year. The main reason why I posit the year 1980 as a punctuation mark of indigenization process for this dissertation is twofold. First, the Order 66/2523 represents a tangible decline in the Thai elite allies' desire for utilizing American influence to handle internal conflicts. Second, the rise of General Prem to premiership reflects the successful indigenization of Cold War by the local elite allies, especially the monarchy, since it gained tenacious bases of political power as well as durable legitimacy through the indigenization of the Cold War.

The second question that this dissertation delves into is: What factors determine the success and failure of the indigenization of the Cold War system? From the standpoint of the local elite allies, the factors for successful or unsuccessful indigenization can be largely divided into two groups -- external and internal. Generally speaking, the external factor represents the degree of external powers' interest in the country and the internal factor implies the local elite allies' ability to direct the imported resources to forward their own agendas. The "ability" here largely derives from the construction of infrastructures that enables the local elites to gain political influence as well as popular support. As identified earlier, the local elite's nation-building programs were meant to provide the ideological, institutional and socio-political infrastructures

to continue their power domination. Let us see how the internal and external factors of indigenization communicate with the Thailand case.

The external factor for indigenization generally refers to a global power's intention to work with the local elites. In this dissertation, I survey three key components of the external factor that catalyze collaboration between the foreign and indigenous powers. They include historical relations, geopolitical importance, and the internal stability assured by the able local elites in the eyes of the foreign powers. The first component, historical relations, basically refers to the previous experience and resultant perceptions the global superpowers had regarding the local politics. For example, Thailand had maintained Euro-centered foreign relations until the early twentieth century but had not experienced direct colonial rule. Thailand's lack of colonial complication with European empires convinced the American foreign policymakers in the first place that Thailand could easily ally with the U.S. America's recognition of Thailand as a central Southeast Asian ally began in the early 1940s when the Japanese colonists utilized the country as the outpost of its imperial aggression towards the region. Thai Prime Minister Phibun declared a war against the U.S. and England in January 1942 and the U.S. government supported the Thai anti-Japanese group, Seri Thai, until the end of World War II to secure Thailand from falling victim to Japanese imperialism. In sum, Thailand had few European colonial complications as well as lower adversity toward the U.S., which helped the two countries to continue by and large friendly relations throughout the Cold War period.[67]

Second, the geopolitical importance of an individual country depends on the central goal of global superpowers' foreign policies. For instance, the geopolitical importance of the Korean

[67] See for example, David K. Wyatt, *Thailand: A Short History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 243-307.; Chris Baker and Pasuk Phongpaichit. *A History of Thailand* (Port Melbourne, Vic.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 140-167.

peninsula grew dramatically from the late 1940s because it is located among the rising global powers of Far East, including China, Soviet Union or Russia, and Japan. The geopolitically strategic importance of Thailand rose in tandem with Korea's because the U.S. perceived the country as a hub of transportation across the Southeast Asian region as it is close to, although does not border China and Vietnam. These perceived advantages eventually led the U.S. to make Thailand an anticommunist bastion of Southeast Asia.[68]

Finally, how the internal stability of a newly emerged nation-state was perceived by external actors was largely derived from the foreign policymaker's perceptions and relationships with the local elites. If there is a group of local ruling elites or a preeminent leader that can ensure the internal stability as well as the smooth implementation of the foreign power's policies, the latter would extend its support for these elites. This is the reason why the U.S. allegiance to the local elites shifted constantly as shown in the cases of Sarit Thanarat and Phao Siyanon. When the CIA's close ally Phao left Thailand on the night of Sarit's coup in 1957, the U.S. government wasted no time and became an ardent supporter of Sarit. As a locally trained military-cum-politician, Sarit broke away from the Europe-centered foreign relations and actively utilized the American-led Cold War system to strengthen his authoritarian regime. The Thai elite network also began to consolidate under Sarit's leadership, particularly with the growing political influence of the monarchy. Additionally, by mobilizing the U.S. foreign aid and assistance to Thailand, Sarit initiated the first Thai National Economic Development Plan in 1961, and restyled himself a developmentalist leader. To summarize, the internal security and

[68] For the U.S. recognition of geopolitical importance of Southeast Asia and Thailand, see for example: Donald K. Emmerson, "Southeast Asia: What's in a Name," in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 15:1 (March 1984), 1-21.; Arlene B. Neher, *Prelude to Alliance: The Expansion of American Economic Interest in Thailand During the 1940s* (Ph.d. Dissertation, Northern Illinois University, 1980).; E. Bruce Reynolds, "The Opening Wedge: The OSS in Thailand" in *The Secrets War: the Office of Strategic Services in World War II,* ed. George C. Chalou. (Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1992), 328-350.; Daniel Fineman, *A Special Relationship: the United States and Military Government in Thailand, 1947-1958* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997).

stability is critical in determining the foreign power's intention to collaborate with the local elites.

Overall, the U.S. interest in and intentions of collaborating with the Thai elite allies stayed mostly high from the 1940s to the mid 1970s, when the U.S. withdrew its armed forces and development agencies at the end of the Vietnam War. Thailand's geopolitical importance increased tremendously from the late 1960s when the U.S. government became more concentrated on Indochina because Thailand was the central base for carrying out its anticommunist campaigns in this region. Thus, the period between 1957-1973 was the heyday of the Thai indigenization of the American Cold War. The earlier experience of the Americans' collaboration with the Thai military groups reviewed in Chapter One played a significant role in creating a special relationship between Thailand and the U.S. throughout the Cold War, as articulated in Chapter Two. By the time communist regimes were established in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam, their collaboration began to decline. In this sense, it can be said the external factors for the Thai elite allies' indigenization remained by and large favorable between the 1940s to mid 1970s.

The internal factor for indigenization derives from the local elite's ability to mobilize imported resources and foreign policy for enhancing their political influence and popular support. The local elite allies' nation-building created various infrastructures of political domination so the examination. Therefore the examination of the internal factors for indigenization mainly looks at the characteristics of the local elite allies' nation-building and its divergence among the competing elite groups. In particular, the case study delves into the infrastructures of ideology, institutions, executive and popular agencies. These infrastructures did not have to be built from scratch. More often than not, each competing elite or group

appropriated existing establishments or personnel and combined them with the imported resources. Let us briefly examine how these internal factors affected the Thai elite allies' power domination.

Since the nation consists of various groups of interest, the ideological infrastructures for nation-building are foremost focused on searching for a unifying paradigm, such as anticolonial nationalism. In this respect, Chapter Three investigates Thai elite allies' adaptation of the American modernization and counterinsurgency programs under the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations and how they conflated these U.S. Cold War paradigms with the traditional triumvirate of Thai nationalism -- nation, religion and monarchy -- to create an ideological infrastructure. In this process, the hierarchical nature of national unity and progress were further strengthened because these American Cold War ideologies helped the local elite allies to rationalize the singular, vertical alignment of powers in the eyes of general populace. This enabled both the local and foreign powers to continue the extant hierarchical relations in the national, regional and global politics.

These ideological infrastructures need to be practiced by actual institutions to prove their compatibility or superiority over extant ideologies and establishments. As detailed in Chapter Four and Five, the Thai royal family began participating in the BPP and United States Operations Mission's Remote Area Security Development programs in northern Thailand in the early 1960s and soon supplanted the leadership role of this U.S. developmental organization. Building off from the BPP's civic actions, the royal family initiated its own royal projects from 1969, which essentially provided institutional infrastructures for constructing a counterinsurgent state and spreading royalist nationalism throughout the country. While expanding royal secretary offices that took charge of the royal projects, the monarchy also mobilized a number of Thai

governmental organizations such as the Ministry of Education or Department of Public Welfare to assist its nation-building. In this way, the Thai monarchy could get a head start over other competing local elite allies by harnessing the BPP and U.S. government's rural development programs and conflating these with their nation-building programs. This manipulation of and conflation of various local and foreign powers and organizations would reinvigorate the monarchy's political authority and popular support. In this context, it is noteworthy that the royal family's support of the BPP's civic action program began in the remote border areas of northern Thailand where most of the Thai governmental organizations could not reach and where ethnic minorities constituted the majority of border population. Rather than initiating royal development projects in the major cities or rural areas where the other competing local elites still exerted considerable influences, the monarchy sought new grounds for institution-building. In these new grounds, the monarchy was able to prompt assimilation and consolidation of the border population under royal patronage.

In this respect, the Thai royal family's mobilization of BPP and PARU forces in their nation-building projects highlights the importance of executive agency for catalyzing the local elite allies' indigenization effort. The BPP had at first belonged to the Ministry of Interior under Phao's patronage, and demoted to the subordinate of the Provincial Police after Sarit's coup. In other words, although it was the CIA that launched this paramilitary police project, the Thai military held administrative control over these units. As examined in Chapter Four, the BPP's transformation into symbolic missionaries of Thai royalist nationalism from the early 1960s when the royal family began sponsoring the BPP's civic action programs shows the local elite allies' appropriation of the CIA's local executive agency. PARU's transformation from the CIA's foot soldiers of covert operations in Thailand and Laos to a central bodyguard for the

monarchy as detailed in Chapter Six shows the similar pattern of assuming U.S.'s local agency. At the same time, the Thai monarchy utilized the BPP and its civic action programs as a direct communication channel with the U.S. government and other Thai elite allies. Whether intended or not, Sarit laid the ground for extending royal influence over the rising army generals including Prem Tinsulanonda by permitting the Thai army and PARU to collaborate with the CIA in the secret war in Laos. In this way, PARU became a bridge and linked the Thai military factions, the BPP, and also the royal family that came to constitute the royalist elite network. Finally, PARU nailed down the victory of the Thai monarchy in power struggles through the undertaking of October 6 Massacre in 1976.

One of the main perpetrators of October 6 Massacre in Thammasat University was the Village Scouts, a right-wing organization that was conceived and developed by the BPP from the early 1970s. Creation of the Village Scout movement, which gave force to the monarchy's effort to consolidate power, therefore presents the construction of popular support infrastructure. As detailed in Chapter Seven, the Village Scout was not merely a part of counterinsurgency tactics of provoking a grass-roots, patriotic movement. It was more so the systematic construction of popular agency that practices and promotes royalist nationalism, starting from the border areas and soon stretching out to the major towns and cities. In the process of building this popular royal force, the royal family created the image of "king" as the benefactor of development and the Thai people. This image has become legendary, and has promoted the exaltation of the authority and popularity of the monarchy to the present day. I discuss nature of these "invented" legends as an ideological infrastructure and their reciprocation to the overgrowth of popular agencies in Thai society today in Chapter Eight.

By steadfastly constructing the infrastructures of ideology, institution, executive and popular agencies, the Thai monarchy and its royalist elite network came to dominate Thai politics. It was mainly due to the royal family's selective appropriation of the U.S. foreign policies and ideologies, and its indigenous agents that helped to advance the building of the royalist power bases. Therefore, I conclude the Thai monarchy's indigenization of the American Cold War system was successful. The outcome is comprehensible in modern-day Thailand. The lasting impacts of the Thai monarchy's indigenization of the Cold War in the post-Cold War era and its implication for the BPP's future are discussed in Chapter Nine based on my field research and interviews with the incumbent BPP and PARU members. As added in this chapter, the interviewees questioned about the sustainability of the monarchy and BPP's nation-building mission in the post-Cold War era. This reveals that even a successful indigenization of the global Cold War by the local elite allies is contingent on the rapidly evolving internal and external conditions, although the significant changes that could reverse the power ascendancy of the royalist elite network seem unfeasible up to now.

In conclusion, this research on the Thai elite allies' indigenization attempts to cast a light on the side of local politics that has actively interacted with and influenced the development of the international Cold War system in the second half of the twentieth century. Through this process, this dissertation aims to narrow the gap between the universal and local narratives of the Cold War and intersect the separate discourses on the nation-building between East and West so that we can better understand the reasons why the Cold War was essentially a constellation of hot civil wars, and why it has far-reaching and profound impacts on the contemporary dynamics of change and stabilization in Thailand and Southeast Asia.

Chapter 1. From Decolonization to the Cold War

This chapter explores general historical backgrounds of the anticolonialist movements and the U.S. government's involvement in the decolonization processes in Southeast Asia to understand the shaping of external factors for indigenization in the immediate post-1945 period. By examining the ways in which the regional political realignment and local nation-building led the U.S. foreign policymaking establishment to forge the Cold War in American way, this chapter highlights the concurrent development of decolonization and the Cold War and the convergence of political interests between the local elite and foreign powers around the end of colonialism in Southeast Asia.

Decolonization and Japanese Invasion in Southeast Asia

> Like all fairy tales, it turned out that the ending was too simple. No one was happy for long, whether they were the colonizers or the colonized. For both sides, the hardest part began after one flag came down and another went up.[1]

The end of Japanese colonialism in Southeast Asia came somewhat unexpectedly as the Japanese imperialists surrendered to the Allied Forces on August 15, 1945, after the blasts of atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. While Indonesians exuberantly celebrated "Liberation Day" in those days of Japanese surrender, Ho Chi Minh carefully drafted and declared the independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in the following weeks. However, neither the victory over Japan nor the declarations of independence brought about the actual victory over the centuries-old colonialism. Like Wang Gungwu describes above, the most difficult problems emerged when "one flag came down and another went up" and the decolonization of Southeast Asia was plagued with endless conflicts and internal power struggles. The actual transfer of sovereignty from the Western colonialists to the colonized took place during the first two decades after 1945 amidst the violent clashes between the Asian anticolonial nationalists and European colonialists, and soon the conflicts further enlarged with the coming of the United

[1] Wang Gungwu, "Afterword: The Limits of Decolonization," in *The Transformation of Southeast Asia: International Perspectives on Decolonization*, eds. Marc Frey et al. (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2003), 296.

States.[2] In this respect, the nature of the decolonization process in Southeast Asia needs to be explored, primarily to identify the historical and political context that invited the United States into the region's political realignment processes.

In their edited volume entitled, *The Transformation of Southeast Asia: International Perspectives on Decolonization*, the contributors offer several useful themes for surveying the decolonization process in the region. Among those, the following three ideas are particularly noteworthy for our ensuing discussion on the Southeast Asian decolonization. First, the decolonization process was "either twinned with or even prodded by the consolidation efforts of imperial powers" from the late colonial period. Second, decolonization did not bring about the immediate end of colonialism or independence. Finally, the United States should be considered as a central actor in the Southeast Asian decolonization process.[3] In short, the complexity of decolonization could be understood within the historical context that gave rise to more militant clashes between the indigenous anticolonial nationalist movements and Western colonizers, with the inclusion of U.S. in the scene. Building on these themes, there are two main questions that will help us to identify the nature and impacts of decolonization process in Southeast Asia. First, did the expanding anticolonial nationalist movements in Southeast Asia convince the European colonizers to withdraw their colonial governments? Second, did the Japanese invasion in Southeast Asia prompt the decolonization? By reviewing the extant literatures on the decolonization and Japanese invasion, this survey will identify the continuities and discontinuities between the colonial period and the Cold War.

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[2] For the recent studies on the decolonization process in Asia, see Marc Frey et al., *The Transformation of Southeast Asia: International Perspectives on Decolonization* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2003).; Westad, ed. *Reviewing the Cold War*.; Antlöv, Hans and Stein Tønnesson, eds. *Imperial Policy and Southeast Asian Nationalism, 1930-1957*. (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1995).; Duara, Prasenjit, ed. *Decolonization: Perspectives from Now and Then*. (London: Routledge, 2004).

[3] Marc Frey et al. *Transformation of Southeast Asia,* viii-ix.

First, were the European colonizers aware of the necessity of granting independence to their colonies? Paul Kratoska argues it was the European colonizers who initiated the decolonization process in late colonial period. Prompted by the recommendation of the reformers in metropoles and colonies, the colonial powers contemplated a "systematic and orderly transition to self-government and eventual independence under international control" well before the World War II.[4] However, the growing local nationalist movements and unexpected Japanese invasion to their colonies did not allow sufficient time for the European colonizers to actualize either the self-governance or independence for the colonized. On the contrary, these colonizers had to fight harder to restore their prewar control over the colonies because the Japanese invasion catalyzed the overgrowth of anticolonial movements and the increasingly militarized and politicized young nationalist groups began demanding an immediate end of colonialism, not the slow transition.[5] In this respect, it could be assumed that the uncompromising gap between the colonizers and colonized groups that eventually led to violent clashes between the two derived from the disparity in their definitions of decolonization. Decolonization to the European colonizers in the pre-1941 years meant the 'reconceptualization of colonialism' and with the reform of colonial policies in the overseas territories, the administrative burden and cost began to lessen. Hence the recommendation of self-governance by the colonial officials came into practice, as Kratoska contends. By contrast, decolonization to the indigenous nationalist groups meant the 'total liberation from the Western powers' and installment of their own government with enhanced political autonomy and the pursuit of the social, economic developments apart from the colonial metropoles.

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[4] Paul H. Kratoska, "Dimensions of Decolonization," in *The Transformation of Southeast Asia: International Perspectives on Decolonization*, eds. Marc Frey et al. (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2003), 3.

[5] Kratoska, "Dimensions of Decolonization," 4, 22.

The anticolonial nationalist movements in Southeast Asia indeed attempted to create a sense of belonging among the indigenous people, through ideas such as nationhood, and also escalated a call for independence from the late nineteenth century onward. As the European colonizers became more aware of the growing tension caused by their colonized subjects and from the reformers' call for political autonomy from the metropoles, they came to contemplate a graceful retreat from the foreseeable maelstrom of decolonization process.[6] Thus, even if it may be difficult to conclude that the growing anticolonial nationalist movements in Southeast Asia successfully persuaded the European colonizers to withdraw from the colonies, it could be said that the colonizers felt the necessity of revamping the previous colonial policies and administrative systems. Nevertheless, neither the European colonizer's contemplation of withdrawal from the colonies, nor the Southeast Asian local nationalists' shift to more militarized protest to achieve independence came true in the pre-Pacific War years. The actual trigger came with the Japanese advancement to Southeast Asia, like Wang Gungwu contends: "For most, the story only began after 1941."[7]

Indeed, overall the three and a half years of Japanese occupation in Southeast Asia did leave a powerful imprint not only on the indigenous anticolonialist but also on the Western colonizers. Shattered by the "backward" Asian country's unexpectedly successful invasion, the colonizers' confidence in re-dominating the colonial subjects withered considerably after 1941.[8] On the other hand, the Japanese occupation in Southeast Asia permitted time, albeit insufficient, to the

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[6] One of the most intriguing examples of those reformers could be found in Eduard Douwes Dekker's 1860 novel *Max Havelaar*. For the impacts of this novel to Indonesian decolonization, see Pramoedya Ananta Toer, "The book that killed colonialism," in *The New York Times Magazine*, April 18, 1999, 112-114.

[7] Wang, "Afterword," 272.

[8] Alfred W. McCoy, "Introduction," in *Southeast Asia Under Japanese Occupation*, ed. Alfred W. McCoy (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1980), 9.; Robert J. McMahon, *The Limits of Empire: the United States and Southeast Asia since World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 19.

indigenous anticolonial nationalists for preparing an eventual independence and construction of sovereign nation-states.[9] Although the sudden withdrawal of Japan after the atomic bombings did not bring about total liberation, these years of Japanese occupation ultimately prompted the departure of European colonialists and the simultaneous arrival of the U.S. cold warriors in Southeast Asia. However, this does not mean that the Japanese occupation eventually discontinued the colonial legacies in Southeast Asia.

In his introduction to the edited volume titled, *Southeast Asia Under Japanese Occupation*, Alfred W. McCoy disagrees with the conventional assumptions that the Japanese invasion and presence in Southeast Asia caused "discontinuity" of colonial domination. McCoy instead argues that the war "did not foster a political transformation," because the old elite remained more or less intact in their power.[10] The continuing power domination by the traditional elites that constituted what Leela Gandhi called "the infectious residue of its own unconsidered and unresolved past," largely represents the "continuity" from the colonial to postcolonial periods.[11] Furthermore, Harry Benda argues these old elites, or in his words, the "modernizing traditional elites," eventually stayed in power well after the end of Pacific War and swiftly transformed into a nation-builder as well as the "leaders of modernization" in the postcolonial period.[12] To sum, the Japanese invasion of Southeast Asia had further radicalized the indigenous anticolonial

[9] McMahon, *Limits of Empire*, 21.

[10] McCoy, "Introduction", 1, 4, 7.; Harry J. Benda, *Continuity and Change in Southeast Asia: Collected Journal Articles of Harry J. Benda* (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1972). For other interpretations on the Japanese Occupation period in Southeast Asia, See, for example, Josef Silverstein, ed. *Southeast Asia in World War II: Four Essays* (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1966).; David Joel Steinberg, ed. *In Search of Southeast Asia: A Modern History* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971). For the recent and Japanese view on the period, see Kenichi Goto, *Tensions of Empire: Japan and Southeast Asia in the Colonial and Postcolonial World* (Athens: Ohio University Press; Singapore: Singapore University Press, National University of Singapore, 2003).

[11] Gandhi, *Postcolonial Theory,* 7.

[12] Benda, "Political Elites in Colonial Southeast Asia,", 234.

nationalist movements but it did not bring about an actual independence and reform of the colonial governments, and also did not sever the power domination of the local traditional elites. Instead, it accelerated the transformation of these traditional elites into the leaders of postcolonial modernization.

Overall, there are three notable legacies of Japanese occupation period in Southeast Asia. First, the Japanese victory over European colonialists gave confidence to the indigenous nationalists about "what Asian arms, organization, and dedication could achieve" against Western powers.[13] This confidence encouraged the indigenous nationalist groups to radicalize their anticolonial movements to achieve total independence. In addition, the Japanese imperialists' promise for nominal independence greatly contributed to the expansion of indigenous anticolonial nationalist movements. The overgrowth of nationalist movements in this period, in turn, provided the conditions for the emergence of far more complicated internal conflicts after 1945. Last but not least, Japanese collapse and subsequent political chaos in Southeast Asia invited the United States' intervention to the region's decolonization process, which will be discussed shortly.

Building upon these historical and political backgrounds, it can be assumed that decolonization processes in Southeast Asia consists of a two-pronged process: independence and nation-building. While the end of World War II and its aftermath did not immediately sever the ties between European colonizers and Southeast Asian colonized, most of the latter groups gained independence within two decades after 1945. On the other hand, the modernizing traditional elites -- one of the key components of anticolonial nationalist movements, began refashioning the nation-building projects to continue their power domination. Indeed, nation-

[13] Westad, *Global Cold War*, 87.

building was a centuries-old agenda of the indigenous elites for justifying their power ascendancy in the local societies and neither the "high colonialism" nor the end of colonialism stymied this old practice. Nevertheless, the decolonization processes that fixed the international boundary around the transcultural states did provide an opportunity for the local elites to transform themselves from a traditional power-holder to nation-builders -- or more precisely, matchmakers of nation-state. By utilizing the extant state order inherited from the colonial government, the indigenous elites in the postcolonial period began building the ideological, institutional and socio-political infrastructures to consolidate the societies, which consisted of multifarious interest groups representing ethnic, cultural, political, social, and economic demands.

Since nation-building was intended to homogenize and assimilate the diversifying demands from the various interest groups into one nation fixed by a state boundary, it was inevitable that the newly emerged nation-states witnessed incessant political infightings and disintegration throughout the Cold War and beyond. The question then is: what are the roots of conflict and turmoil in postcolonial Southeast Asia? The following section will briefly investigate the characteristics and impacts of the anticolonialist movements in the first decade of postcolonial period to understand the ways in which the decolonization process absorbed those conflicts and transformed into the Cold War struggles from the late 1940s.

Anticolonialists' Postcolonial Contention

As the colonial regime's suppression and exploitation intensified in the late colonial period, anticolonial movements expanded accordingly. Furthermore, those anticolonial nationalists came to embrace a variety of social classes and ideologies to enhance their collective struggle against

the imperialists. These divergent nationalist movement groups in the late colonial period could unite under one common goal: independence. However as the liberation from the European colonialists seemed to be realized, and especially during the Japanese occupation period, the loose alliance among the various anticolonial movements began to split and each came to pursue its own vision of postcolonial nation-state. Among the emerging tensions and conflicts, this section will briefly examine the conflict between non-communist and revolutionary communist groups in mainland Southeast Asia in the immediate post-1945 period to understand the ways in which the contention gradually evolved into the Cold War struggle.

The Communist movement in Southeast Asia was born out of the convergence of anticolonialism and revolutionary nationalism. As his early activities in the French communist party show, Ho Chi Minh upheld a communism that accommodated the anticolonialist goal of liberation.[14] Ho Chi Minh's interpretation of communism became more or less the generic communist doctrine among the communists in Indochina and to a certain extent, in Thailand, because the Thai communists learned about the Lenin-Marxism through Ho's writings and teaching.[15] With the help of indigenous mediator like Ho Chi Minh, the communist movement in Indochina could also embrace the united front or popular front strategy of the Third Communist International (Comintern, 1919-1943) that promoted the tactical alliance among the nationalist bourgeoisies, peasantry, and communists. For instance, the first generation of the Burmese communists were mainly from the Burmese anticolonialist group *Dobama Asiayone*, which was

[14] There are a number of writings on the Ho Chi Minh's communist and nationalist ideologies. For the general review and analysis on the Indochinese communist ideological background, see Grant Evans and Kelvin Rowley, *Red Brotherhood at War: Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos since 1975* (London; New York: Verso, 1990).; Arthur J. Dommen, *The Indochinese Experience of the French and the Americans: Nationalism and Communism in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001).

[15] Christopher E. Goscha, "Vietnamese Revolutionaries and the Early Spread of Communism to Peninsular Southeast Asia: Towards a Regional Perspective," in the *Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies* 14 (2000), 3, 9, 11, 16-18.

an amalgam between communist and nationalist groups, namely consisting of "*thakin* (masters)" from the educated class.[16]

If the high colonialism period paved a road for the revolutionary communist to expand its influence and militarize anticolonial movements, the Japanese occupation was a final push for the anticolonial nationalists to move on to the revolution for liberation phase. When the Japanese surrendered to the Western colonizers in mid 1945, there arose signs of tension between the groups that had promoted peaceful political transition in collaboration with the European colonizers and the other that had further shifted to the revolutionary path to gain total independence. Not long after, the nationalists and communists, within the loose anticolonialist alliance, began to clash with each other more visibly over the issue of forming a new government after the colonizers granted independence. The tension between the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL, 1944) and Burmese Communist Party (BCP, 1939) around independence is one of the most exemplary cases of the conflict between non-communists and revolutionary communists. In brief, the AFPFL grew out of the struggle against the Japanese occupation and soon transformed into a political party after the Japanese imperialists left.[17] When the British returned, the members within the AFPFL divided into several groups and among those, the groups that asserted the political negotiation with Britain, and the other which insisted armed struggle against the colonialists, were the most vocal on the debates about decolonization. The BCP, then still a member group of AFPFL, began to distance itself from the

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[16] Bertil Lintner, *The Rise and Fall of the Communist Party of Burma (CPB)* (Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1990), 6-8.; Oliver Hensengerth, *The Burmese Communist Party in the State-to-State Relations between China and Burma*. Leeds East Asia Papers No.67 (Leeds: University of Leeds, 2005), 4. For the early nationalist and communist movements in Burma, see Robert H. Taylor, "Burma in the Anti-Fascist War," in *Southeast Asia Under Japanese Occupation*, ed. Alfred W. McCoy (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1980), 132-157.: Mary P. Callahan, *Making Enemies: War and State Building in Burma* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 45-86.

[17] Lintner. *CPB*, 9; Virginia Thompson, "Burma's Communists" in the *Far Eastern Survey* 17:9 (May 1948), 103.

AFPFL because of its disagreement with the leading socialists' inclination towards the negotiated power transition.

In February 1946, the Red Flag communists, a faction of BCP led by Thakin Soe, who had promoted radical communism and revolution, declared the end of the coalition with the AFPFL and continued armed struggle against the British. Another faction, called the White Flag communists, had pursued a moderate and cooperative strategy and supported the AFPFL's anticolonialist fight.[18] However, when Thakin Nu (U Nu) succeeded the leadership of AFPFL after Aung San's assassination in July 1947, the White Flag communists clashed with U Nu over the issues of negotiation for political transition, and the form of new government. Against the growing criticism and opposition from the communists, U Nu agreed to endorse the British recommendation for Burmese independence while leaving British control over its economy by and large intact.

Finally on October 17, 1947, U Nu signed the Nu-Attlee Agreement in London and brought independence to his home.[19] Consequently, the White Flag communist group, led by Thakin Tan Tun, turned to armed struggle to topple U Nu's government, accusing the AFPFL and U Nu of their continued subjugation to the British colonialists. At this point, U Nu did not waste time suppressing the radicalizing communist movements, and on March 27, 1948, he commanded a massive arrest of White Flag communists. Soon, all the BCP leaders left Rangoon and launched

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[18] Lintner. *CPB*, 14-17.; Hensengerth. *Burmese Communist Party*, 15.; John Badgley, "Burmese Ideology: A Comment," in *Independent Burma at Forty Years: Six Assessments,* ed. Josef Silverstein, Josef (Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program, 1989), 66. For the general review on the CPB organization and strategies, see John H. Badgley, "The Communist Parties of Burma," in *The Communist Revolution in Asia: Tactics, Goals, and Achievements*. Ed. Robert A. Scalapino (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1965), 291-294.

[19] Richard Butwell, *U Nu of Burma* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), 92-93. See also the original document of "Nu-Attlee Agreement signed by Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury Clement Richard Attlee and Prime Minister Thakin Nu on October 17, 1947," *Nation*, accessed October 25, 2011. http://blog.nationmultimedia.com/print.php?id=1675

a rural insurgency against the government from April 1948, signaling the beginning of full-scale communist insurgency in independent Burma.[20]

In the Indochinese case, the Japanese collaboration with the Vichy regime caused immediate resistance from the northern Vietnamese nationalist groups, notably by the Vietminh, the northern Vietnamese communist group founded in 1941. By contrast, Southern Vietnamese's response to the Japanese was rather mixed because there had existed more pro-Japanese groups. Most anti-Japanese groups were the communist or Trotskyites that upheld anti-fascism, whereas the pro-Japanese groups were constituted by religious movements like Cao Dai Church and Hoa Hao group, and royalists, such as Prince Cuong De and his Vietnamese Restoration League and Bao Dai. These latter pro-Japanese groups were gradually leaning towards anticommunism as they viewed the revolutionary communist led by Ho Chi Minh and Vietminh would threaten their existence as soon as France grants independence.[21]

After Japan surrendered in 1945, political conflicts began to intensify between the communist and non-communist nationalists in solving the problems of French re-colonization attempts. After Ho Chi Minh declared the establishment of Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1945, the French began contacting Bao Dai and finally brought him to throne in 1949 to counter the Vietminh's domination over entire Vietnam. Fearing the increased influence of Ho Chi Minh and the Vietnamese communist to its neighboring countries, the British, American and Thai governments immediately recognized Bao Dai.[22] Nonetheless, French's Bao Dai solution did not

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[20] Hensengerth. *Burmese Communist Party*, 18; Thompson, "Burma's Communists," 103.

[21] For the discussion on the Japanese occupation in Indochina, see David G. Marr, "World War II and the Vietnamese Revolution" in *Southeast Asia Under Japanese Occupation*, ed. Alfred W. McCoy (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1980), 104-131.

[22] For the detailed discussion on the Bao Dai solution and the British and American responses to the French colonialist, see Mark Atwood Lawrence, "Recasting Vietnam: The Bao Dai Solution and the Outbreak of the Cold War in Southeast Asia," in *Connecting Histories: Decolonization and the Cold War in Southeast Asia, 1945-1962*

bring a satisfactory result to reassume its colonial control and to suppress dramatically growing communist movements in Vietnam. On the contrary, the solution only deteriorated the existing geographical and political rift between North and South Vietnam.

While the northern Vietnamese were fighting against the French in the late 1940s, most wealthy landowners and businessmen in South Vietnam supported the Vietnamese royalists' anticommunism because they expected that this political movement would secure their land and power from the communist threat.[23] In this context, the 1954 Geneva Accord far deepened the schism between northern and southern communists. Most southern communist members that had been under harsher suppression by the staunch anticommunist government preferred to continue armed struggle to achieve a complete communist revolution after the Dien Bien Phu battle, whereas the northern communists inclined towards ceasefire and political negotiation options to recuperate from the protracted battle and wartime loss during the First Indochina War.[24] These clashes among various political, socio-economic parties reached the climax when the anti-French and anticommunist politician Ngo Dinh Diem replaced Bao Dai through the popular referendum in 1955. Now the contest for a new nation-state in Vietnam came to take place within the two geo-political arenas -- that is, North where the communist took the leadership role and South where the anticommunist politicians began building a separate state.[25] More importantly, the

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eds. Christopher E. Goscha and Christian F. Ostermann (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 15-38.

[23] Stein Tonnesson, "National Divisions in Indochina's Decolonization" in *Decolonization: Perspectives from Now and Then*, ed. Prasenjit Duara (London: Routledge, 2004), 262.; Marr, "World War II and the Vietnamese Revolution," 115-116.

[24] Pierre Asselin, "Choosing Peace: Hanoi and the Geneva Agreement on Vietnam, 1954-1955" in the *Journal of Cold War Studies* 9:2 (Spring 2007), 102-108.

[25] Tonnesson, "National Divisions," 267.

tension between two Vietnams quickly turned into Cold War politics when the U.S. stepped in the scene starting in the late 1940s.

As shown in the Bao Dai case, one of the most notable French attempts to re-colonize Indochina was by the preservation of the traditional elites within its puppet government. Although the Bao Dai solution turned out to be a grave failure, the French colonizer's efforts to secure its suzerains protégé in Cambodia and Laos was relatively successful.[26] Laos had been plagued with endless competition among the royal families from various regions, which delayed the emergence of a united anticolonialist movement. Grant Evans argues in his *Short History of Laos* that the early aspiration for independence, in fact, emerged from French support for the education and propaganda movement that had finally engendered a sense of belonging among the different regions and ethnicities from the late 1930s.[27] However, unlike Vietnam or Burma, there did not emerge a unified anticolonial movements or radical nationalist movements in Laos.[28]

At last, Prince Phetsarath, one of the prominent royal princes who had been regarded as the first Lao nationalist, initiated the Lao Issara (freedom) movements in 1945 and challenged the pro-French monarchy in Luang Phrabang.[29] Soon the French colonialists swept the Lao Issara

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[26] Bruce Lockhart, "Monarchy and Decolonization in Indochina," in *The Transformation of Southeast Asia: International Perspectives on Decolonization*, eds. Marc Frey et al. (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2003), 62-65.; Tonnesson, "National Divisions," 258.

[27] Grant Evans, *A Short History of Laos: the Land in Between* (Crows Nest NSW, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2002), 39-92.

[28] For a general historical background in the postcolonial Laos, see Martin Stuart-Fox, "Independence and Unity, 1945-1957," in *A History of Laos* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 59-98.

[29] For a short biography of Prince Phetsarath, see John B. Murdoch, trans., *Iron Man of Laos: Prince Phetsarath Ratanavongsa* (Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program, Dept. of Asian Studies, Cornell University, 1978). *Iron Man in Laos* is a short, classical biography of Chao Phetsarath. For Chao Phetsarath's early nationalist movement, see Søren Ivarsson and Christopher E. Goscha, "Prince Phetsarath (1890-1959): Nationalism and Royalty in the Making of Modern Laos," in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 38:1 (February 2007), 55-81. For the Lao Issara Movement,

government and strengthened the rival royal family's power to secure the French control over Laos. Consequently, the Lao Issara groups formed a government-in-exile in Bangkok in mid-1946. While the neutral Prince Phetsarath decided to remain in Bangkok, his two brothers -- Prince Souphanouvong and Prince Souvanna Phouma, returned to Laos to continue their fight for independence. In August 1950, Prince Souphanouvong formed the Pathet Lao, a left-wing nationalist coalition allied with the Vietminh. In November 1951, his half brother, Prince Souvanna Phouma, became the prime minister of Laos, which was a French client state at the time. The widening gaps in the two prince-led anticolonial movements finally resulted in a civil war between anticommunist royalists and revolutionary communists in Laos throughout the Cold War.

Overall, the above case studies show there had emerged a variety of anticolonial nationalist and communist movements ranging from conservative to radicalist in the late colonial period, and the tension among these groups intensified conspicuously in the early postcolonial period when the European colonizers began to transfer political power to the indigenous leaders. The coexistence and conflicts of the indigenous leaders demand more cautious scrutiny to the nature of postcolonial nationalist movements in the Southeast Asian region. To put it simply, non-communists' disagreement with the communist nationalists did not necessarily mean that the former group was all anticommunists. Grant Evans and Kelvin Rowley contend that communism in Indochina came to power as the "radical wing of the nationalist reaction to colonial rule," and define the nature of nationalism-cum-communism in Asia by borrowing one of the most popular Indian communist M. N. Roy's words: "Communism in Asia is essentially *nationalism painted*

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see MacAlister Brown and Joseph J. Zasloff, *Apprentice Revolutionaries: the Communist Movement in Laos, 1930-1985* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1986), 20-69.

red."[30] At the same time, because the non-communists were well aware of the contribution that the revolutionary communists had made towards independence, they understood that popular support for these revolutionaries would not be negligible, and in turn, made the latter a fierce political competitor of the non-communist.[31]

In a broader historical context, we could identify two distinctive characteristics embedded in those diversifying postcolonial nationalist movements during decolonization. First, the nationalist movements were launched and expanded by the loose alliance of anticolonialist groups before independence, however the tactical coalition began to break down because each constituent possessed different political agendas about how the country should look after the end of colonialism. Despite the instability and conflicts growing larger among the anticolonial nationalist movements in the early postcolonial period, the confusion and conflicts did not mean the beginning of bifurcated Cold War politics between the communist and anticommunist.[32] It was a contest among visions for building a new nation-state between the heterogeneous anticolonialist groups. The increased conflicts in the early postcolonial period were the byproducts of over-expanded anticolonialist movements in the late colonial period that had aspired to play a central role in the newly established indigenous governments.

Second, although they seemed radical and violent, the nationalist movements could not yet be identified as "revolutionary", in contrast with what the U.S. foreign policymakers had assumed in the early postcolonial period. There still existed strong political and economic

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[30] Grant Evans and Kelvin Rowley, *Red Brotherhood at War: Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos since 1975* (London; New York: Verso, 1990), 30. (emphasis is mine).

[31] Michael Adas, "A Colonial War in a Postcolonial Era: The United States' Occupation of Vietnam," in *America, the Vietnam War, and the World: Comparative and International Perspectives*, eds. Andreas W. Daum, Lloyd C. Gardner, Wilfried Mausbach (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute; Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 38.

[32] Westad, *Global Cold War*, 77.

influence of the conservative, traditionalist elite groups over the anticolonial nationalist movements, and in a way, their presence played out as checks and balances at least during the first decade of postcolonial period. Ironically, more of the radical and militant nationalist movements would arise alongside the growing tensions from the global Cold War political realignment.

Finally, it should be noted that all these nationalist struggles began in the colonial period and continued throughout the Cold War. Benedict Anderson argues that although the survivors of Indochinese Conflict in 1978-1979 faced civil wars after the years of deadly clashes, in fact, the nature of Cold War conflicts in Southeast Asia have always been the constellation of civil wars that never ceased fire from the late colonial period.[33]

Forging the Cold War in American Way

> The impulse to deny our own deeply nationalist ideological outlook and, even more, to fail to see the parallels with other nationalism can itself be traced to one of the more pronounced features of American nationalism itself: its strong millennial strain. That strain has cast and kept the nation in the role of a redeemer bearing an extraordinary obligation to all humanity.
>
> [Michael Hunt, 1987] [34]

American suspicion and fear against the communist domination over the former colonies in Asia grew much larger as the European colonialists failed to curb the expanding revolutionary nationalist movements in Burma, Indochina and Malay during the latter half of 1940s. In addition, victory of the Chinese communists and subsequent outbreak of the Korean War in 1949-1950 only deteriorated the U.S. government's panic alongside the so-called "Red Scare" at

[33] Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* xi.

[34] Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 191.

home. In the U.S. foreign policymakers' imagery, their little Asian brothers were blindly rushing towards the Marxist-Leninist trap of revolution, despotism and slavery.[35]

This section will review the historical, political contexts of the U.S. decision to involve in the decolonization process in Southeast Asia by focusing on the following two questions. First, how did the United States come to be involved in the decolonization process in Southeast Asia? Second, what did the Americans actually seek to achieve in Southeast Asia in this period? In the extant literature, there are two central arguments on the U.S. involvement in the postcolonial Southeast Asian affairs. First, many scholars contend that the economic value of Southeast Asia to Japan and Western Europe precipitated the U.S. intervention from the late 1940s. Southeast Asian natural resources and markets were gaining growing importance in rehabilitating the Japanese and European economies, and it was believed their fast recovery would subsequently safeguard the America-centered liberal capitalism in the global economy. Thus the U.S. was convinced to commit herself to preserving the Southeast Asian political and economic stability.[36]

On the other hand, and of great importance for our following analysis, the arguments on the ideological transformation of the U.S. foreign policies highlights the America's renewed interest to Asian political transition. In his *Ideology and the U.S. Foreign Policy*, Michael Hunt denounces the previous scholarship that has purposely ignored ideological dimension of the U.S. foreign policy. By applying Clifford Geertz's political culture system into the analysis of the U.S. foreign policy history, Hunt proposes three central elements that have constructed the general perspectives of U.S. foreign policymakers in the past and present: they are a self-claimed

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[35] Stephanson, "Liberty or Death," 81-100.

[36] Andrew J. Rotter, *The Path to Vietnam: Origins of the American Commitment to Southeast Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 30, 96, 103-104.; Michael Schaller, "Securing the Great Crescent: Occupied Japan and the Origins of Containment in Southeast Asia," in the *Journal of American History* 69:2 (September 1982), 392-414.

American national greatness; a belief in the hierarchies among the races and nations; and a fear against revolution.[37] Then, the question becomes why are these ideologies still significant to enhance our understanding of the U.S. foreign policy history, particularly during the Cold War period? Hunt explains because the Americans had been spared "the shock of a great social revolution or foreign invasion and occupation," this stable political culture actually resulted in the persistence of those three ideological backgrounds from the independence to present. Most important, the absence of self-consciousness about those ideologies all the more let the U.S. abhor any sort of revolution or political changes that were widely taking place in Southeast Asia after colonialism. [38]

In reality, these ideologies greatly contributed to leading the U.S. into the most tragic failure of foreign policy implementations in Southeast Asia during the Cold War. While its fear against the anticolonial nationalist revolutions premised the inevitable involvement in the decolonization processes, the U.S. beliefs in the national greatness and "racialized cultural hierarchies" justified its further intervention to the Southeast Asian countries in order to keep its "extraordinary obligation to all humanity" intact.[39] President Franklin D. Roosevelt's obsession with the international trusteeship for the newly independent states in Southeast Asia is one good example that reveals the ways in which the latter two ideologies influenced over the U.S. foreign policy.[40] On the other hand, the U.S. government's increasing anxiety after outbreak of the Korean War

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[37] Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 1-18.; Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

[38] Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 13-14. (explanation in original)

[39] Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 191.; Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America*, 77.

[40] Mark P. Bradley, "Franklin D. Roosevelt, Trusteeship, and U.S. Exceptionalism: Reconsidering the American Vision of Postcolonial Vietnam" in *The Transformation of Southeast Asia: International Perspectives on Decolonization*, eds. Marc Frey et al., (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2003), 198, 210-211.

and the following non-alignment movement's meeting in Indonesia in 1955 vividly demonstrates another distinctive political ideologies of the Americans: anti-revolution.

The complication of those ideological backgrounds with the foreign policymaking process eventually made the Cold War into a "specifically 'American' one" like Anders Stephanson contends.[41] At the same time, the making of the Cold War in an American way, based on the U.S. exceptionalism, was a part of American Cold War nation-building projects at home and abroad.[42] This nation-building project was undertaken, however, by engaging in both normal diplomacy and covert warfare in order to debilitate the communist Soviet Union's global dictatorship and to spread the U.S.-led liberal capitalism.[43] In this context, U.S. foreign policymakers simplified the characteristics of the anticolonial nationalist groups. The ideologically, politically, and socially mixed revolutionary nationalist movements in former colonies were unanimously labeled as communist, like shown in the U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson's words: "U.S. not impressed by nationalist character red flag with yellow stars. Question whether Ho [Chi Minh] as much nationalist as Commie is irrelevant. All Stalinists in colonial areas are nationalists."[44] In this regard, the U.S. decision to get involved in the decolonization of Southeast Asia was firstly derived from its ideological background, or more precisely the American exceptionalism that differentiates itself from the European-style colonialism and Asian-style independence movements.

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[41] Stephanson. "Liberty or Death ," 95, 84. (emphasis is mine)

[42] Elizabeth Cobbs' work also supports this argument. See Cobbs, "Decolonization, the Cold War," 101-104.

[43] Bradley, "Franklin D. Roosevelt," 198.; Stephanson, "Liberty or Death," 83.

[44] United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949: The Far East and Australasia*, Vol.7, Part 1 (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1949), 29. (explanation is mine). [hereafter *FRUS 1949*].

Against these historical and ideological backdrops, the U.S. government announced the Atlantic Charter in August 1941 that had ultimately promoted many Asian nationalists to develop more radical anticolonial movements. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Prime Minister Winston Churchill proclaimed in this joint declaration that they shall respect the "right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they shall live" and they wish "to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."[45] For the nationalists in many colonized countries, the statements made by the two superpower leaders were seen as the endorsement of their self-governance freed from imperial intervention and as an invitation to the larger international community for their new nation-states.

On the other hand, several U.S. foreign policies in the early 1940s reveal the ways in which the combination of normal diplomacy through the political negotiations and covert operations behind the enemy lines became one of the most distinctive characteristics of U.S. foreign policy implementation from the Roosevelt administration. While propagating that the liberalist superpowers would emancipate the colonized subjects, the U.S. concurrently prepared the initiation of special warfare that actually violated its vow in the same Charter. The statement assured that the two parties of the Charter would "believe that all of the nations of the world, for realistic as well as spiritual reasons must come to the abandonment of the use of force." Nevertheless, when Roosevelt met Churchill to discuss the joint declaration on the purposes of the war against fascism in July 1941, he also launched clandestine operations by installing military intelligence organizations to support Asian anticolonialist protests against the Japanese during 1942-1945.

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[45] American Spaces. "Atlantic Charter (1941)," accessed November 16, 2011, http://usinfo.org/docs/democracy/53.htm.

In July 1941, Roosevelt created the Office of the Coordinator of Information (COI) and appointed William J. Donovan -- more popularly known as "Wild Bill," as the first director of COI.[46] On October 10, 1941, just a few months after the declaration of Atlantic Charter, Roosevelt endorsed the establishment of "Special Activities" unit to take charge of sabotage, subversion and guerrilla warfare.[47] On June 13, 1942, Roosevelt gave an order to reorganize COI personnel into the new Office of Strategic Service (OSS). From its inception, Donovan and Roosevelt aspired to build up the OSS as a special organization that could carry out clandestine operations in both wartime and peacetime. Formation of the OSS and other intelligence organizations during the wartime therefore represent the beginning of U.S. unconventional warfare geared by covert operations to thwart the spread of fascism and the growing power of the Soviet Union at the outset of the Cold War.[48]

If President Roosevelt set the two-tired American foreign policy implementations consisting of normal diplomacy and covert operations, President Harry Truman provided both a means and an aim for the war against the communism. As the fear against the Soviet's Iron Curtain grew after the end of Pacific War, President Truman issued an executive order to establish the Central Intelligence Group on January 22, 1946. Initially, this group only constituted one part of a much bigger bureaucratic national security establishment. However, since the Central Intelligence Group could not overcome the strained relationship between the Department of State and the

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[46] United States. 94th Congress, 2d Session. Senate, Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities. *Foreign and Military Intelligence, Book I: Final Report. Senate Report No.94-755* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1976), 481, fn.24. [hereafter *Foreign and Military Intelligence 1976*]

[47] *Foreign and Military Intelligence 1976*, 482.

[48] For a historical account of the OSS, see, R. Harris Smith, *OSS: The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972). See also *Foreign and Military Intelligence 1976,* 97-99, 481-483.

armed services, the U.S. Congress passed the National Security Act that established the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) as the preeminent centralized peacetime intelligence organization in 1947.[49]

Indeed, the development of the CIA in the late 1940s constituted a significant move away from mere verbal provocation to actual engagement in the anticommunist campaign. Moving beyond the collection of information behind enemy lines, the CIA also began to pursue counterintelligence, political provocation, and covert operations as mundane matter of course operations within U.S. foreign relations. Since Donovan established the agency and many former veteran officials of the OSS transferred to the CIA, most of political warfare strategy utilized in the OSS clandestine operations moved along with the personnel to the CIA.[50] In addition, the newly enacted National Security Act of 1947 did not restrict this civilian intelligence groups' activities with specific provisions or conditions. Most of the significant operations of the CIA were arbitrarily justified under the assigned task of "other functions" by the Act. Obscurity of the general tasks in effect allowed extending the CIA's range of operations from open intelligence to clandestine political sabotage and secret war in the coming years.[51]

Another distinctive foreign policy that President Truman initiated was offering economic aid -- that later became known as the Marshall Plan, to the European countries in the immediate postwar years. The Marshall Plan, together with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

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[49] Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, "Why Was the CIA Established in 1947?" in *Eternal Vigilance?: 50 Years of the CIA*, eds. Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones and Christopher Andrew (London; Portland: Frank Cass, 1997), 21. For the backgrounds of National Security Act of 1947 and CIG, see *Foreign and Military Intelligence 1976,* 21-22, 99-101, 483-490.

[50] *Foreign and Military Intelligence 1976,* 98, 101-102.

[51] For the debates around the National Security Act of 1947, see United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947: General- The United Nations,* Vol.1 (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1947), 712-761. [hereafter *FRUS 1947*].; *Foreign and Military Intelligence 1976,* 103, 426-427, 476-481.

(NATO), was to strengthen U.S. ties with Western Europe to counter the growing threat from the Soviet Union. At the same time, it was intended to secure the European colonies in Asia from the encroaching communist powers. Since the political climate within the U.S. government in the mid 1940s was not very favorable to increasing defense spending or expanding the size of the U.S. military establishment abroad, supporting the European political economy rather than committing the U.S. armed forces in foreign countries to fight communism would be seen as more cost-effective. Particularly for Southeast Asia, which was perceived to be on the fringes of China, the U.S. government had no concrete reasons to expand the military budget or foreign interventions because, like Robert Jervis argues, the U.S. saw China as less threatening than Soviet Union at least until 1948. Instead, the U.S. government had a hope that China could turn against Soviet Union, and believed "it was possible and vital for the United States to encourage this development."[52]

In mid-1949, however, this naïve view changed as Mao Tse Tung and his communist party's success seemed permanent, and Taiwan's ability to avoid communist domination even looked in question. The expansion of communism to Southeast Asia was seen almost inevitable at this point. As contended by Andrew Rotter and others, the changes in the U.S. attitude and foreign policy to Southeast Asia in 1949 came from the following three elements of renewed American interests in securing Southeast Asia: regionalism that locates the independent indigenous nation-states into the United States geopolitical categorization of "Southeast Asia"; economic protectionism even though it contradicted the American adherence to liberal capitalism; and opposition to the despotism and colonialism.[53]

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[52] Robert Jervis, "The Impact of the Korean War on the Cold War" in *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 24:4 (December 1980), 575.

[53] Rotter, *Path to Vietnam*, 109-113.

All these were articulated in the documents prepared by the Policy Planning Staff in March 29, 1949 called PPS-51 that later became the National Security Council report, NSC-51 (July 1, 1949); and the follow-up reports like NSC-48, 48/1, 48/2 by the end of December 1949; and, finally the Harry Truman's Point Four Program that was originally proposed in 1949.[54] The first two reports were prepared respectively to provide guidelines for the shaping of foreign policymakers' general objectives in Southeast Asia and its regional policies. PPS-51 makes clear that the U.S. should view the Southeast Asian region as "an integral part of that great crescent formed by the Indian peninsular, Australia and Japan" because it is the American's goal "to encourage the SEA [Southeast Asia] region to develop in harmony with the Atlantic Community and the rest of the Free World."[55] Accordingly, NSC-51 and NSC-48 stress the necessity of strengthening the economic interdependence between Southeast Asia and Japan, Western Europe and India, and to meet this end, the reports proposed to follow the Truman's Point Four program. Finally, both reports clearly draw the line between the friends and enemies of the United States by categorizing them as non-communist and communist. Thereafter, the NSC-48/2 reiterates that the U.S. should "support non-Communist forces in taking the initiative in Asia" to pursue its objectives of developing "the nations and peoples of Asia on a stable and self-sustaining basis in conformity with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter."[56]

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[54] For the Policy Planning Staff (PPS) Paper 51 that later became the NSC-51: United States Policy Toward Southeast Asia, see *FRUS 1949*, 1128-1133. For the NSC 48/2: The Position of the United States with Respect to Asia, see the *FRUS 1949*, 1215-1220. And for the Point Four Program, see United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950: National Security Affairs; Foreign Economic Policy*, Vol.1 (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950), 846-852. [hereafter *FRUS 1950*].; Rotter, *The Path to Vietnam*, 113-116.

[55] *FRUS 1949*, 1128. (explanation is mine)

[56] *FRUS 1949*, 1215-1216.

In order to induce more non-communist regimes to ally with the Free World, Truman announced the Point Four Program in his Inaugural Speech on January 20, 1949. After going through endless debates and revisions, finally, Congress passed the legislation on June 5, 1950. As stated in the "Legislative Background of Point Four Program," the program intended to assist underdeveloped areas by sharing technical knowledge and skills and by fostering the flow of capital investment "in order to achieve the maximum effect for economic development."[57] However, the general target that the program identified as "underdeveloped areas" meant not all the poor countries that lacked the technology and capital to were to be developed. Those underdeveloped countries eligible for receiving the American foreign aid were the non-communist regimes that have "a common interest in the freedom and economic and social progress" with the United States.[58] In this regard, the Point Four Program and ensuing aid projects by the U.S. were driven by the political objectives that aimed at bringing political and economic stability among the non-communist regimes to fight the communist movements.

As a consequence, the Truman government managed to make $75 million available for economic and military aid to her Asian allies in September 1949. In fact, this allocation shifted from the previous China Aid Act that had originally passed with the Marshall Plan in 1948 to assist Chinese Nationalist Government. After Mao's declaration for the Peoples Republic of China, however, the aid for China became available for "the general area of China" that had been, in fact, widely understood to imply Southeast Asia.[59] In sum, the victory of Chinese Communist Party in 1949 transformed the U.S. reluctance to engage in the regional affairs into

[57] *FRUS 1950,* 846. See also Rotter, *Path to Vietnam*, 23.

[58] *FRUS 1950*, 848.

[59] *FRUS 1949*, 1220; Rotter, *Path to Vietnam*, 116.

an actual commitment to the Southeast Asian decolonization process. With the growing possibility of communist expansion to the Southern parts of China, and also the presence of large number of overseas Chinese in the region, Southeast Asia finally came into the central focus of the American foreign policymakers from late 1949.[60] From then on, the U.S. began to prepare its protracted war against the alleged communization of Southeast Asia.

Overall, this survey on the historical and political context of the U.S. intervention in Southeast Asia has three central implications for understanding the beginning of American Cold War in Southeast Asia. First, three fundamental ideologies of the U.S. foreign policy encompassed with the American exceptionalism came to play a significant role in determining the U.S. foreign policy goals and implementations. The U.S.'s constant assertion of its anti-imperialist dispositions and the ideological belief in American's superiority were, however, severely undermined by its cultural ignorance and racial condescension. Second, the U.S. government's self-assigned missions of spreading democracy and liberal capitalism in the region were often undertaken by the official foreign policies by the government as well as covert operations of the OSS and later the CIA. As shown in the cases of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry Truman's combining of normal diplomacies and clandestine operations, U.S. government's foreign policies and its implementations were mainly carried out by persuasion and coercion. Finally, the American Cold War crusade could be considered as a part of its nation-building project in the second half of the twentieth century. Because the U.S. saw herself different from the waning European imperialists, it believed her superiority in political, economic, and social developments were to benefit the people in want and need over the globe.

[60] Rotter, *Path to Vietnam*, 30.; McMahon, *Limits of Empire*, 42.

With these convictions in mind, the United States set in for a long, formidable crusade to the Asian Cold War battlegrounds in June 1950.

Korean War Impacts

Outbreak of the Korean War on June 25, 1950 has tremendous impacts to the development of U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War.[61] The U.S. interpreted the invasion of democratic South Korea by communist North Koreans as an ultimatum from the Communist bloc to the Free World. Indeed, the U.S. Secretary of Defense testified in the Senate meeting after the Korean War broke, that the real significance of the North Korean attack "lies in this evidence that, even at the resultant risk of starting a third world war, communism is willing to resort to armed aggression, whenever it believes it can win."[62]

The changes triggered by the outbreak of Korean War in the U.S. foreign policies, its perspectives towards the world politics, and its role in the international community could be summarized with the following four propositions. First, the U.S. war against the world communism was rather imaginary and invisible until the early 1950, but the Korean War made the U.S. believe that the communist is now proceeding to expand its territory across the national boundaries. The entry of the Chinese army onto the Korean peninsula in November 1950 only confirmed this fear among the American foreign policymakers. Second, participation in the

[61] For the studies on the Korean War, Bruce Cumings' two volumes of the "Origins of the Korean War" are widely received as the classic: Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War: Vol.1. Liberation and the Emergence of Separate Regimes* and *Vol.2. The Roaring of the Cataract, 1947-1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981-1990). Similarly, a study by John Merrill on the origins of the Korean War would be complementary to the Bruce Cumings' volumes: John Merrill, *Korea: The Peninsular Origins of the War* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1989). Particularly for the relationship between the U.S. and Korea during the wartime, see Bruce Cumings, ed. *Child of Conflict: the Korean-American Relationship, 1943-1953* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1983). For the recent study on the Korean War, see, for example, William Stueck, *Rethinking the Korean War: A New Diplomatic and Strategic History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

[62] quoted in Jervis, "Impact of the Korean War," 579.

Korean War actually demanded the reform of U.S. government and that consequently increased the foreign aid and defense budget. In addition, changes in the organization of the CIA and its renewed tasks also reflect the impacts of the Korean War on U.S. foreign policy. Finally, as the old and new countries began to line up after the potential patrons of their Cold War struggle, the demarcation between the friend and enemy of the Americans became much clearer throughout the War.

Before the Korean War broke, the U.S. did not seriously consider a Sino-Soviet bloc as threatening and as an opposite pole of global power.[63] Similarly, the U.S. did not expect the war would take place in this small peninsula. While alarmed by the Chinese communist's verbal protest against the potent U.S. domination over the newly independent states in Asia, American foreign policymakers contemplated that they could manipulate the growing divide between China and Soviet Union, as shown in its statement in NSC 48/2 dated on December 30, 1949:

> The United States should continue the policies of avoiding military and political support of any non-Communist elements in China unless such elements are willing actively to resist Communist with, or without United States aid…
> … The United States should exploit, through appropriate political, psychological and economic means, any rifts between the Chinese Communists and the USSR and between the Stalinists and other elements in China.[64]

The unexpected attack of the North Koreans against South Korea and subsequent Chinese involvement in the Korean War, however, convinced the U.S. that the communist danger was real, and now, unavoidable.

At this point, the U.S. government encountered a question as to whether this "limited war" in the previously not so significant part of world would expand to a total war between the Free

[63] Jervis, "Impact of the Korean War," 574-575.

[64] *FRUS 1949*, 1218-1219.

World and Communist bloc.[65] At the same time, as the U.S. government came to believe that this imaginary war -- soon to be coined the Cold War -- began to take the territorial contestation between the two global power blocs, then the most urgent task for the U.S. was to "keep the Korean conflict from spreading to other areas."[66] These changes in the U.S. foreign policymakers' attitudes to Asia are reflected in the announcement for the recall of General Douglas MacArthur from Korea in April 1951:

> The Communists in the Kremlin are engaged in a monstrous conspiracy to stamp out freedom all over the world. If they were to succeed, the United States would be numbered among their principal victims. It must be clear to everyone that the United States cannot -- and will not -- sit idly by and await foreign conquest.[67]

In order to obtain sufficient domestic support for its participation in the Korean War and to reorganize the administrative structure to cope with the new wartime contingencies, the U.S. government began to spread propaganda about the Communist bloc's endless hostility and its ambition of the imperial conquest against the Free World at home and abroad. Concurrently, the U.S. asserted this "limited war" could be extended to all over the globe if not checked by the Americans.

The outbreak of the Korean War, on the other hand, exposed the inconsistency and ambiguity of the U.S. foreign policy. As mentioned above, the American foreign policy in the years before 1950 were rather incoherent and undetermined regarding its stance and action against the growing communist influence in the international community. Although there were some calls alerting the increasing threat from the Soviet and other communist regimes, suspicion

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[65] *FRUS 1950*, 293: quoted in Jervis, "Impact of the Korean War," 579.; "Recall of General Douglas MacArthur (1951)" from *Department of State Bulletin*, 16 April 16, 1951, accessed November 17, 2011, http://usinfo.org/docs/democracy/58.htm. [hereafter, *Recall of MacArthur*]

[66] *Recall of MacArthur.*

[67] *Recall of MacArthur.*

and fear could not justify the actual increase of the military budget and deployment of the U.S. forces abroad.[68] The Korean War not only resolved these dilemmas but also forced the U.S. government to adopt the changes within the administration to handle its engagement in the foredoomed global war. The Korean War served as the hard evidence for both the foreign policymakers and politicians to persuade them of the danger of communist movements. Additionally, the War enabled the U.S. government to lift the bar against the resistance in allocating a large amount of defense budget for the armed forces and intelligence organizations.[69] As soon as the War broke out, Truman could secure about $16 billion in total, which was in supplement to the military budget and manpower increase in U.S. armed forces for fiscal year 1951. During the Korean War, the budget of the armed services increased approximately three times for the pre-War period. [70] Whereas the U.S. government made it clear in public that Americans would not allow this limited war to become a global war, the increasing budget and personnel became the driving force that reinforced the U.S. government to enlarge the war to sustain the overgrown U.S. defense establishment.

Changes in the responsibility of the CIA, particularly its key component, the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC), also reflected this growing alarm in the U.S. government after the outbreak of the Korean War. Established in June 1948 for the efficient execution of covert operations abroad, the OPC's main activities included direct U.S. support of foreign political parties, economic warfare, sabotage, assistance to refugee liberation groups, and support of anticommunist groups in occupied or threatened areas.[71] To facilitate these activities, the

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[68] Jervis, "Impact of the Korean War," 568.

[69] Jervis, "Impact of the Korean War," 579-580.

[70] Stueck, *Rethinking the Korean War*, 222, 237.

[71] *Foreign and Military Intelligence 1976,* 144.

Congress passed the Central Agency Act in 1949 that allowed the Director of CIA to spend funds without having to account for disbursements.[72] As soon as the U.S. government painfully learned that its intelligence had failed to detect the war in Korea beforehand, the Department of Defense pressured OPC to shift its activities towards more aggressive measures against the Soviet and Chinese communists. Shortly after, the U.S. government assigned a large portion of its budget to the guerrilla units and the propaganda movement.[73]

Since the U.S. witnessed a dramatic expansion of communist regimes in the Asian countries until the end of Korean War in 1953, the CIA-OPC's political warfare programs in the region grew accordingly. The CIA provided a tremendous amount of financial support to political parties, politicians, and leaders of influential political factions in the threatened countries. At the same time, the CIA-OPC agents concentrated on acquiring "agent of influence" who could supply intelligence and carry out political provocation in times of need.[74] Under these schemes, the CIA could establish a worldwide infrastructure of covert agents with enhanced experience and techniques of covert military activities that had been experimented and practiced during the three years of Korean War. A Senate committee was organized to evaluate the U.S. Foreign and Military Intelligence in 1976, and concluded that the Korean War indeed "marked a turning point for the CIA."[75]

Finally, the Korean War made a clear demarcation between the friends and enemies of U.S.-led Free World. At the same time, it became clearer for the newly established leadership in the

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[72] *Foreign and Military Intelligence 1976,* 22, 106.

[73] *Foreign and Military Intelligence 1976,* 145.

[74] *Foreign and Military Intelligence 1976,* 146-147.

[75] *Foreign and Military Intelligence 1976,* 23.

independent Asian states where to seek economic aid and political support to strengthen their instable regimes and to circumscribe the challenges from the antigovernment groups. The Thai case is one of the most telling examples. The War provided a crucial opportunity for Field Marshall Phibun Songkhram to tighten his grip over the Thai military and other political rivals. As soon as the War broke, Phibun declared that Thailand would send troops to South Korea, and Thailand became the first Asian country that promised support for the U.S. involvement in the Korean War. In a written interview with the *New York Times* on July 21, 1950, Phibun reiterated the ways in which the U.S. economic and military aid would play a key role to guard Thailand from communists:

> *New York Times* Do you feel that American aid in sufficient quantities could insure Thailand permanently against communism?
> *Phibun* If we are given enough aid in the way of arms and equipment, we will be able to control the borders against anything short of a major invasion. But a major invasion could not be successfully resisted without outside equipment and troops. With enough arms we could withstand perhaps three divisions, but for anything above that we'd need help.
> *New York Times* What American aid specifically and how much does Thailand need most?
> *Phibun* The more the better. The more we can develop our country both militarily and economically the thicker our armor against communism will be.[76]

Even before the Thai troops had landed on the Korean peninsula, the U.S. and Phibun administration signed the Thai-American Economic and Technical Agreement on September 8, 1950. The agreement came into full force in October of that year, and the American government distributed approximately $8 million aid funds by the end of this year. The U.S. had also encouraged World Bank grants to Thailand, and the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development promised to finance aid totaling $250,000-400,000 for the development programs in Thailand. On October 17, 1950, both governments ratified the Military Assistance Agreement, expecting that the assistance "will enable Thailand to strengthen the security forces required for

[76] *New York Times*, July 21, 1950, 4.

the protection of her freedom and independence."[77] As the *New York Times* correspondent commented later in the same year, both the Thai and U.S. governments believed that Thailand "will consolidate its status as one of the most advanced and prosperous nations of Asia."[78]

In conclusion, the outbreak of Korean War in 1950 accelerated the construction of international Cold War system that imposed what Westad called "bipolar to the point of exclusivity," resulting in "lasting rebellions and insurgencies after decolonization."[79] As argued elsewhere, the bipolarized Cold War world did not come to reside in the minds of Americans or other nations until they witness the actual breakup of Korea in 1950. It was then imperative to the U.S. to "extend a protective umbrella over much of the globe" to preserve "the great principles of peace, freedom, and justice" among her allies.[80] The domino theory rose to prominence to accommodate presumed demands from the international community for the extended American commitment and to prevent the eventual total war with the Communist bloc. In this context, provision of the social stability and national security to these countries through the American military and economic aid programs became a central trait of its global mission from the early 1950s.

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[77] Thak Chaloemtiarana, ed. *Thai Politics: Extracts and Documents* (Bangkok: Social Science Association of Thailand, 1978), 814-815.

[78] *New York Times*, December 11, 1950, 6.

[79] Westad, *Global Cold War*, 89.

[80] Jervis, "Impact of the Korean War," 582.; *Recall of MacArthur.*

Spirits of Bandung and Failed Neutrality

> If you draw a line in advance then you serve notice on the enemy. At the same time you give him an opportunity to retreat or stay his hand which is not open to the enemy if you intervene in a war already under way.
>
> [John F. Dulles, Arthur W. Radford and others, May 9, 1954] [81]

The general spirits of Bandung Conference lies on its unfailing call for anticolonialism and nationalism against the White men's domination, and moreover, the neutrality against the emerging Cold War bipolarization as it had been visibly demonstrated by the establishment of Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) right before the 1955 conference.[82] Indeed, the establishment of SEATO in September 1954 vividly presents the U.S. effort to draw a line between its allies and enemies by lining up the pro-American countries on their side while decreasing its support for the neutralist leadership in Southeast Asia. In this respect, this brief examination on the impacts of SEATO establishment and Bandung Conference in 1954-1955 would allow us to view the ways in which the seemingly bipolarizing global power competition aroused concerns for the U.S. foreign policymakers and their Asian allies. The central questions in this survey are: first, how did the American foreign policy try to co-opt the postcolonial anticolonial nationalist movements into the Cold War system in the mid-1950s? Second, what are the implications of the Asian leaders' failure to persuade the U.S. of their neutrality? The answers to those questions will allow us to observe the further ideological developments in the U.S. foreign policymaking establishment in the early Cold War era.

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[81] "Memorandum of Conversation between Secretary of State John F. Dulles, Arthur W. Radford, Commander-in-chief, and others on May 9, 1954," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954: East Asia and the Pacific*, Vol.12, part.1, by the United States Department of State (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1952-1954), 465. [hereafter *FRUS 1952-54*].

[82] Derek McDougall, "Bandung as Politics," in *Bandung 1955: Little Histories*, eds. Antonia Finnane and Derek McDougall (Caulfield East, Vic.: Monash University Press, 2010), 133-134.

The year 1953 marked the beginning of a new and more hostile anticommunist policy in the U.S. government with the arrival of two prominent cold warriors: President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Allen W. Dulles, as Director of the CIA. From the time he campaigned for the presidency, Eisenhower cited the communist victory in China, the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe, and the Korean War as evidence of a passivity that had undermined U.S. foreign policy since World War II. His strident anticommunist policy called for the removal of communist sympathizers from public office.[83] Moreover, Eisenhower and others recognized the CIA as an essential element in implementing U.S. foreign policy. Since foreign policymakers regarded the CIA as the only body that could and did perform clandestine operations to circumscribe communist expansion abroad, its influence and role in U.S. foreign relations expanded greatly in the coming years.[84] Moreover, as a former war veteran in the OSS and a brother of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, Allen Dulles helped to narrow the chasm between the CIA and other branches of the intelligence community in the State and Defense Departments. At the same time, with his fraternal link to the State Department, Dulles's objectives at the CIA greatly influenced the entire U.S. foreign policymaking establishment. As an indication of the Agency's increased influence, CIA covert actions managed to avoid the limits and tight control that President Eisenhower exercised over most military defense spending.[85] In this context, the CIA undertook

[83] *Foreign and Military Intelligence 1976,* 109. For an in-depth discussions on the Eisenhower administration's policies during the Cold War, see, for example, Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Johns, eds., *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006).

[84] *Foreign and Military Intelligence 1976,* 110-111.

[85] Trevor Barnes, "The Secret Cold War: The C.I.A. and American Foreign Policy in Europe 1946-1956. Part II" in *Historical Journal* 25:3 (September 1982), 657.

clandestine operations such as political provocation, sabotage, support to democratic governments, and counterintelligence in the newly emerged nation-states.[86]

As discussed earlier, the Chinese decisive moves including the entry to Korean War opposing the American support for the Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, KMT) confirmed the U.S. government's suspicion against Sino-Soviet bloc's ambition of territorial expansion. In the early 1953, the Chinese communists formed a "Thai Autonomous People's Government" in Sipsongpanna in the Southern Chinese province of Yunnan that borders Burma and Vietnam. Not long after, Vietminh forces overran its borders and most of the Vietnamese countryside, finally arriving in Laos in March 1953. By April, they reached Luang Phrabang, the Lao capital that borders Northern Thailand. Alarmed by the rapid expansion of Vietminh, President Eisenhower approved the use of psychological warfare in Thailand and Laos in the second week of May, and the U.S. National Security Council ordered the Psychological Strategy board (PSB) to prepare detailed plans for such an undertaking. Finally, the board presented its report titled "U.S. Psychological Strategy with Respect to the Thai Peoples of Southeast Asia," on July 2, 1953.[87] Shortened as the PSB D-23, the plan suggested a wide-ranging set of mind operations under the unconventional warfare strategy in the country that could help build Thailand into an "anti-communist bastion."[88]

Several noticeable events that happened in the latter half of 1953, therefore, signaled the beginning of U.S. unconventional warfare in Thailand. In August, William Donovan arrived in

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[86] *Foreign and Military Intelligence 1976,* 111.

[87] Daniel Fineman, *A Special Relationship: the United States and Military Government in Thailand, 1947-1958* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), 170-171.

[88] Psychological Strategy Board (PSB) is initiated during the Harry Truman administration to overlook the psychological warfare in the Third World.: See more from Fineman, *Special Relationship,* 173: Originally from the PSB paper titled "U.S. Psychological Strategy with Respect to the Thai Peoples of Southeast Asia," 5. [hereafter, *PSB-D23*].

Thailand as U.S. ambassador succeeding Edwin Stanton. Donovan's appointment to Thailand implied more than bureaucratic changes. As mentioned before, Donovan was a father of the CIA and also the pioneer of clandestine operations in foreign countries during the Pacific War. He was also a superior official to Allen Dulles during wartime when Dulles worked on espionage and sabotage in Berlin. Even before he arrived in Bangkok, Donovan began to contact former OSS veterans to organize a group that would plan and carry out covert operations in Thailand.[89] According to a former CIA member who operated in Thailand at that time, Donovan had personal charge of the CIA agents and their activities while he was appointed as ambassador to Thailand between September 1953-August 1954.[90] Shortly after his arrival, Donovan helped to organize a high-ranking U.S.-Thai psychological warfare committee chaired by Prime Minister Phibun Songkhram in December.

In 1954, another significant event raised Thailand's importance in the eyes of U.S. foreign policymakers. After the partial defeat of Laos and Cambodia under Vietminh's aggression, several countries opened a conference in Geneva to discuss ways for bringing peace to Indochina. Against the U.S. opposition, representatives from the Vietminh, the Soviet Union and China declared an Agreement on the Cessation of hostilities with France and Ho Chi Minh on July 20, 1954. The 1954 Geneva Accord stipulated that the French would withdraw their military forces south of the seventeenth parallel and the Vietnamese withdraw north of that line. Unsatisfied with the result as it believed that the agreement was more favorable to northern Vietnamese, the U.S. immediately expressed its discomfort with both the Accord and the final declaration from the Soviet Union and China. Subsequently, the U.S. government issued a

[89] Fineman, *Special Relationship,* 181.

[90] Email communication with Gordon Young, November 21, 2011.

unilateral declaration that would form the basis for subsequent U.S. political and military support to the non-communist southern Vietnamese government.[91] In the ensuing months, the U.S. helped to organize the SEATO to deter communist expansion among the key pro-American supporters.

The establishment of SEATO was, in fact, contemplated well before 1954 as shown in the NSC-48/2 recommendation in 1949, that the United States "should make known its sympathy with the efforts of Asian leaders to form regional associations of non-Communist states of the various Asian areas." The recommendation also put a caveat that the U.S. "must not take such an active part in the early stages of the formation of such an association that it will be subject to the charge of using the Asiatic nations to further United States ambitions."[92] Prompted by the dramatic development of communist movements in the Asian region, Eisenhower, Dulles and other officials were finally convinced to bring a regional collective defense organization into life with the pro-American Asian and Western countries that were to play a leading role on behalf of the U.S. This effort emerged as the Manila Pact in September 1954, and the formal SEATO was established in the meeting in Bangkok among the eight representatives from United States, France, Great Britain, New Zealand, Australia, the Philippines, Thailand and Pakistan on February 19, 1955. While the U.S. government attempted to follow the NSC-48/2 warning by not being presented as the leader of SEATO, it was apparent to the non-aligned members of Asia and also to the eight members within the Treaty that the organization was to strengthen the military ties among the pro-American countries and the U.S. In this regard, Kai Dreisbach identifies

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[91] Robin Jeffrey, ed., *Asia - The Winning of Independence: The Philippines, India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaya* (London: Macmillan Press, 1981), 205.

[92] *FRUS 1949*, 1216.

SEATO as a "a component of a worldwide system of anticommunist military alliance under American leadership."[93]

The U.S. objectives in building the regional defense organization in Southeast Asia could vary but overall, the most important role that the SEATO played out in the years of 1954-1955 was its unequivocal demonstration of the member states' strong anticommunist proclivity and their anticipation for the larger flow of the U.S. aid.[94] More importantly, as Robert McMahon puts, the Treaty drew "a clear line in the sand for China or any potential aggressor," and this line would "serve notice on the enemy" as Dulles clarified above.[95] Indeed, SEATO became a medium where the Asian and Western member states could legitimately claim the U.S. aid and assistance to build up their military capacity. Moreover, those members could utilize their close alliance with the major Western superpowers as a warning sign to other non-aligned or communist regimes. Predictably, existence of this cross-regional defense alliance soon became a source of Southeast Asian regional conflicts since the political realignment in the region came to be identified with either the communist regimes or the SEATO members. On the other hand, the Treaty allowed a respite for the Eisenhower administration that had been pressured to cut a skyrocketing military budget after the end of Korean War. By establishing a regional defense organization with some Asian membership, Eisenhower could avoid both the commitment for dispatching the U.S. ground forces to troubling areas like Indochina and the accusation from the

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[93] Kai Dreisbach, "Between SEATO and ASEAN: The United States and the Regional Organization of Southeast Asia" in *The Transformation of Southeast Asia: International Perspectives on Decolonization*, eds. Marc Frey et al., (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2003), 247.

[94] The U.S. State Department designated the establishment of SEATO in 1954 as one of the key events for the U.S. foreign relations in the years between 1953-1960. See "Milestones: 1953-1960 – 1953 Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), 1954, " Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State, accessed November 25, 2011, http://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/SEATO.

[95] McMahon, *Limits of Empire*, 67.

Congress that the U.S. government was solely pouring the American money into foreign conflicts.[96]

When the news that the Asian-African Conference would be held in Bandung, Indonesia in 1955 was publicized, it quickly became one of the most celebrated and evident symbols of total independence among the indigenous anticolonialists. As such, the Conference was expected to reinvigorate the newly independent states' sovereign status within the international community and also their neutrality apart from the fast growing superpowers' power competitions. Expecting the Bandung Conference in a couple of months, the *New York Times* aptly made a comparison between the Asian-African conference and SEATO installment in February 1955, stating that these two meetings were "based on totally opposed concepts of the dangers facing Asia now." The article continued that the eight nations gathering at the Thai capital "will work on the premise that Communist expansion is the enemy" whereas the conference of some thirty nations at Bandung "has been planned on the premise that Western, white man's colonialism or imperialism is the principal menace confronting Asia and Africa."[97] In short, while the SEATO meeting in Bangkok in February 1955 was assumed by the American public as the fighting of anticommunism, the Asian-African Conference in Bandung in April 1955 was recognized as the reassurance of their anti-imperialism against the Western powers.[98]

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[96] Andrew J. Rotter, "Chronicle of a War Foretold: The United States and Vietnam, 1945-1954," in *The First Vietnam War: Colonial Conflict and Cold War Crisis*, eds. Mark Atwood Lawrence and Fredrik Logevall (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 301.

[97] *New York Times*, February 20, 1955.; Matthew Jones, "A "Segregated" Asia?: Race, the Bandung Conference, and Pan-Asianist Fears in American Thought and Policy, 1954-1955," in *Diplomatic History* 29:5 (November 2005), 854.

[98] Anticolonialism as a major driving force in convening the Bandung Conference has been demonstrated in its final communiqué and argued by the scholars of the Non-Aligned Movement. See, for example, George McTurnan Kahin, *The Asian-African Conference, Bandung, Indonesia, April 1955* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1956).; Guy J. Pauker, *Bandung in Perspective* (Cambridge: Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1956).; Antonia Finnane and Derek McDougall, eds., *Bandung 1955: Little Histories* (Caulfield East, Vic.: Monash University Press, 2010).; Jamie Mackie, *Bandung 1955: Non-Alignment and Afro-Asian Solidarity*

Much to the relief of the U.S., the outcome of the Bandung Conference did not entail the creation of another rival power bloc. Indeed, one of the major reasons why the Conference did not receive much attention from other global powers lies in its inability to build an integrative international institution.[99] Nonetheless, the meeting has much broader implications to viewing the course of actions of both the U.S. and Asian countries in the coming years. Among the several topics discussed in the meeting, four issues became the central elements that made the Bandung Conference distinctive: anticolonialism, peaceful co-existence, neutralism and regionalism. While the anticolonialism had been embedded from the earlier initiation of the non-alignment movement, the latter three elements were specifically related to the Bandung Conference because they show the participants' determination to avoid the bipolarized struggle between the U.S. and Sino-Soviet bloc.[100] Rather than splitting the world into the two camps and giving a leadership role to the superpowers, the participant countries expressed their aspiration for strengthening the regional integration as well as bringing long delayed peace and order in the region that had been suffering from endless internal and external conflicts in the past centuries. In this respect, the neutralism, or more correctly "non-alignment" advocated by the Asian leadership -- notably Sukarno in Indonesia, U Nu in Burma, and Sihanouk in Cambodia, should be considered as the key element that would, in turn, enable us to identify the Bandung Conference as a transition between decolonization and the Cold War in Southeast Asian history.

Eventually, the failure of the leaders to preserve their neutrality by not siding with the global powers after the Conference made their countries fall into the deepening struggles of Cold

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(Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2005).; Clive J. Christie, *Ideology and Revolution in Southeast Asia, 1900-1980: Political Ideas of the Anti-colonial Era* (Richmond: Curzon, 2001), 124-137.

[99] Antonia Finnane, "Bandung as History," in *Bandung 1955: Little Histories*, eds. Antonia Finnane and Derek McDougall (Caulfield East, Vic.: Monash University Press, 2010), 2.

[100] For example, see Jones, "Segregated" Asia," 857.; McDougall, "Bandung as Politics," 134.

War. It should be noted that even before the Bandung Conference, the U.S. had already assumed that the Asian neutralism is another form of communism. In particular, the Chinese attendance to the Conference had debilitated the American's suspicion to the whole objectives of the meeting because the U.S. saw the meeting with Chinese communist participation would present "the grimly amusing spectacle of world communism holding itself up as the protagonist of local nationalist movements and anti-colonialism."[101]

In conclusion, the Bandung conference in 1955, following the emergence of two preeminent cold warriors in the U.S. government in 1953 and the construction of an anticommunist military alliance in Southeast Asia in 1954, shows the historical and political juxtaposition between the drastically evolving American perspectives leaning towards bifurcating world politics on the one hand, and the growing resistance against the Cold War politics by the indigenous nationalists on the other. Asian nationalists were well aware of the potential damages that they would get if they were to engage in the imperialist power competition again. Hence their rejection of the prolonged suffering constituted the genuine "spirits of Bandung" in 1955. Nevertheless, as the Conference did not yield a concrete regional, international organization and neutralism was considered more or less communist inclination, and the spirits of Bandung did not last long. It was the non-aligned movement's failure in securing their neutrality and that eventually expedited the development of American-led Cold War in Southeast Asia. At the same time, it was the U.S. foreign policymakers' failure to recognize the neutrality that consequently drove them into the decades long warfare culminating in the Vietnam War.

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[101] Quoted in Jason Parker, "Cold War II: The Eisenhower Administration, the Bandung Conference, and the Reperiodization of the Postwar Era," in *Diplomatic History* 30:5 (November 2006), 875, 883. Originally from the Memorandum, "Exposing the Nature of the Afro-Asian Conference," McNair to Operations Coordinating Board (OCB), 21 January 1955, OCB Central File Series, WHO-NSC, Box 85, f: "OCB 092.3 (9)." Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

Chapter Conclusion

The coming of Cold War felt much closer in the latter half of the 1940s and in the early 1950s as Mao's communist party's victory seemed permanent and the ceasefire in the Korean peninsula seemed to stagnate with a barb-wired border between the communist and pro-American nationalists for years to come. Witnessing all these postcolonial chaos, leaders of the newly independent nation-states strove hard to avoid the Korean War-like civil war. Peaceful and orderly decolonization and also the liberation from the newly emerging Cold War politics, therefore, became the main agenda of the first Asian-African meeting in Bandung in 1955. Bandung Conference in 1955 indeed marked the first time that the decolonizing world came together to find a shared voice capable of transcending race, region and the superpowers' binary Cold War politics. However, the failure of neutralism reinforced the U.S. to carry on its self-assigned global mission for bringing security and stability to the politically volatile and economically feeble nation-states in Southeast Asia. In this light, nurturing the indigenous "agent of influence" came to the U.S. interest in the late 1940s. The Building of a Southeast Asian regional defense alliance symbolized by the SEATO was one move that the U.S. took, and the other task was to search for the local agent who could convey the American mission of spreading the Free World order, and could build the anticommunist bastion in their homelands. The Thai Border Patrol Police came into life in this context.

Chapter 2. Birth of the Thai Border Patrol Police

This chapter examines the three components of external factors for indigenization -- historical relations, geopolitical importance, and the internal stability assured by the able local elites -- to the shaping of Cold War alliance between Thailand and the U.S. The Border Patrol Police of Thailand (BPP) was formed to carry out the common goal of the American foreign policymakers and the Thai elites, which was the stabilization of the local society through the concerted efforts of the anticommunist campaign. From its formation until Sarit's coup in 1957, the BPP enjoyed privilege and prestige under the patronage of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and local strongman, Phao Siyanon. These favorable external conditions enabled a higher level of collaboration between the foreign and local elites and the latter group's indigenization of the global Cold War system to their cause.

Border Patrol Police: What's in a name?

Frequently, the name of an organization can confuse people about its nature and mission. The Thai Border Patrol Police is one of the most telling examples of such confusion. As its name indicates, this police unit should act as an internal security force to defend the territorial border and enforce Thai law upon both citizens and those who cross the border. We could assume this from general border police duties in various other countries. The Border Patrol Police of Thailand (BPP), however, has a different history that belies its name. First of all, its presence is not limited to the border areas. In fact, the Thai BPP operates mainly in highland villages, jungle areas, in the lowland rural areas and, occasionally, in major cities like Bangkok or Chiang Mai. The BPP's responsibilities include teaching Thai language to highland minority children, providing first-aid services, solving conflicts among villagers and, above all, promoting Thai unity to villagers wherever the unit stations. Sometimes, the BPP has not even bothered to carry out law enforcement duties to win the hearts-and-minds of villagers. In sum, the Thai BPP has a very distinctive mission to promote and protect "Thainess (*khuam pen thai*)" in border areas. Why does the BPP have such duties far beyond what anyone would expect from its name?

The BPP emerged from secret negotiations between the U.S. government and Thai military leaders in the beginning of Cold War. Although the organization was formed as a paramilitary

intelligence group, it has expanded its police work and influence beyond mere intelligence, eventually transforming itself into a symbolic agent of the Thai monarchy. To understand this transformation, it is crucial to identify the contextual and ideological underpinnings and early activities of the unit. As an armed force established by the Thai military and the American intelligence agents in the early 1950s, its formation can be fully understood in the context of changing U.S. foreign policy towards postcolonial Southeast Asia, and the complex power relations developing among the Thai local elites.

Before moving on to survey the general BPP history, I will briefly review the existing research on the BPP and its activities to highlight key traits of the BPP as well as professional researchers' perceptions on the Thai political developments during the decolonization and the early Cold War, which opened up a new dialogue to the beginning of indigenization process by the Thai local elites in this period. The Following section of the literature review will examine the BPP's early history to construct the historical, political contexts that attributed to the formation of this CIA-sponsored paramilitary group, and its transformation into an agent of civic actions that prepared the groundwork for its subsequent evolution to a symbolic royal force at the height of the Cold War.

Thai Border Patrol Police Histories

Official History by the BPP and PARU Members

As far as I have found, there are five official history accounts produced by the BPP and PARU. These are: *Border Patrol Police General Headquarters in Commemoration of Opening the General Headquarters Building* (1975); *History of Camp Naresuan* (1992) by the PARU Subdivision; *40 Years of the Border Patrol Police* (1993); *The History of the Border Patrol*

Police General Headquarters (1994) by Police Major General Manas Khantatatbumroong; and, *Under the Charismatic Royal Patronage, 50 Years of the Border Patrol Police* (2003).[1] In addition, there are three private accounts on the BPP and PARU histories; an unpublished manuscript by Police Major General Soem Yakhasem, entitled *Border Patrol Police Story* (1978); a published memoir *The Birth of Thai Paratroopers* (1987) by Police Major General Nakhon Siwanit, and most recently, *Long Road to Become the (Police) Paratrooper* (2004) edited by Narong Tharathong.[2]

Police Major General Manas Khantatatbumroong, former deputy commissioner of the BPP Headquarters in 1991-1992, has been a key editor and author of the BPP institutional history volumes published by the BPP Headquarters in Bangkok. Born in 1932, Manas was a son of police captain, but pursued his tertiary education in the Faculty of Liberal Arts in Chulalongkorn University from 1950. Thanks to his superb English skills, the BPP Headquarters hired him as a civilian officer specifically assigned to be a translator between the BPP and American officials since 1956.[3] He then served in the BPP's Fifth Regional Division in Chiang Mai during 1967-1972. Upon returning to Bangkok headquarters, he became a commander of development

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[1] Border Patrol Police Headquarters, *Kong banchakan tamruat trawen chaidaen thiraluek nai kanpoet akhan bocho tochodo, 7 phruetsaphakhom 2518* [Border Patrol Police Headquarters, Commemorative volume marking the opening of the headquarters building, 7 May 1975] (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1975).; Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit Subdivision, *Prawat khai naresuan* [History of Camp Naresuan] (Thailand: Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit Subdivision, Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1992).; Border Patrol Police Headquarters, *Sisippi tochodo, 6 phruetsaphakhom 2536* [40 Years of the Border Patrol Police, 6 May 1993] (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1993).; Manas Khantatatbumroong, *Prawat kongbanchakan tamruat trawen chaidaen, 18 phruetsachikayon 2537* [The History of the Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 18 November 1994], manuscript (November 1994).; Border Patrol Police Headquarters, *Tai rom phrabarami hasippi tochodo* [Under the Charismatic Royal Patronage, 50 Years of the Border Patrol Police] (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 2003).

[2] Soem Yakhasem. *Rueang tamruat trawen chaidaen, mokarakhom 2521* [Border Patrol Police Story, January 1978], unpublished manuscript (January 1978).; Nakhon Siwanit. *Kamnoet phonrom thai* [The Birth of Thai Paratroopers] (Bangkok: Doek Yah Printing Company, 1987).; Narong Tharathong, ed. *Kua cha pen (tamruat) phonrom* [Long Road to Become the (Police) Paratrooper] (Hua Hin: Hua Hin San, 2004).

[3] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, December 3, 2009.

activities that encompassed the Remote Area Security Development program, Border Patrol Police Schools and Village Scouts, and then served as commander of the Training and Operation Divisions in the Bangkok Headquarters until he became deputy commissioner in 1992.[4] These careers tell that Manas was, literally, one of the key officers who planned and implemented the BPP civic actions and worked with both the CIA and the United States Operations Mission to Thailand (USOM) -- the regional branch of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) -- from the mid-1950s to 1970s.

Manas was also the main interviewee during my field research in Thailand in 2009-2011. Before I met him, I had found his Master's Thesis entitled, *Welfare and Management Activities of Border Police Among the Hill Tribes in Northern Thailand* (1965) in the Chulalongkorn University Central Library.[5] Fortunately, I was able to have a series of interviews with Manas in person at the BPP Headquarters in Bangkok and throughout the interviews, I learned he was an actual author of several BPP history writings in the official volumes. In this regard, three BPP histories (1993, 1994, 2003) out of five official accounts are in fact compiled and written by one author -- that is, Manas, in the past three decades.[6] Manas also provided me with an unpublished manuscript written by another former deputy commissioner, Police Major General Soem Yakhasem that the author had prepared for the lectures in the military academy in 1978. In April 1992, the former commissioners of BPP Headquarters had gathered to create a committee on writing the BPP history and the results were reflected in the *40 Years of the Border Patrol Police*

[4] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, March 22, 2011.

[5] Manas Khantatatbumroong. *Kan songkhro chaokhao nai phak nuea khong tamruat phuthon chaidaen* [Welfare and Management Activities of Border Police Among the Hill Tribes in Northern Thailand] (Master's thesis, Thammasat University, 1965).

[6] Other two accounts -- the 1975 official volume and *History of Camp Naresuan* were written by other BPP and PARU officials.

published in 1993. Again, Manas was the leading editor of this committee and thus a year later, he wrote a separate, but more complete, version of the BPP history titled *The History of the Border Patrol Police General Headquarters*, which is not circulated in public.[7] Manas informed me that most of the historical backgrounds in his writings were borrowed from Soem's manuscript and his personal interviews with the retired and incumbent BPP officers. Therefore, the three official volumes and Soem's manuscript can be considered more or less the same, while Manas' 1994 accounts have updates and detailed information such as dates and names of place.

On the other hand, the existence of three publications on the PARU history tells us about an interesting historical background pertaining to the relationship between the BPP and PARU. As will be discussed in detail later, it could be said that although the PARU is a sub-organization under the command of the BPP Headquarters, its history and the PARU members' perception to their organizational status stand apart from those of the BPP. Simply put, there exist two separate histories between the BPP and PARU at least until the mid-1970s, although we could easily find similarities in their missions and operational goals from foundation to the present days. Finally, a recent memoir entitled *Long Road to Become the PARU* was prepared to commemorate the retirement of Police Lieutenant General Sarot Panya, a former commissioner to the BPP Headquarters in 2001-2004 and also a former commander of PARU Naresuan Camp in Hua Hin between 1980-1985. Almost half of the stories in this memoir are duplicates of the chapters in *The Birth of Thai Paratrooper* written by Police Major General Dr. Nakhon Siwanit, who was also a former commander of PARU Naresuan Camp in Hua Hin during 1955-1958.[8]

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[7] Manas, *Prawat kongbanchakan,* 36-37.; Border Patrol Police Headquarters. *Anuson phon tamruat ek suraphon chulaphram* [Cremation Volume, Police General Suraphon Chulaphram] (Bangkok: O.S. Printing House, 1996), 321. [hereafter, *Suraphon Chulaphram Cremation Volume*]. In this cremation volume, there is a photograph of the Committee members.

[8] Nakhon Siwanit was a military physician and thus, his title always includes "Doctor (*nai phet*)."

All these accounts by the BPP and PARU members share similar approaches in narrating their histories including three following key characteristics. First of all, these accounts dedicate rather a long portion of writings to the Southeast Asian decolonization processes that ultimately enabled the formation of its forerunner organizations in the early 1950s. The extended narratives on the historical, political developments of postcolonial Southeast Asia purports to stress out their central mission of defending border security in the process of breaking up the European empires in the region. More important, it is to make a clear presentation of their organization's raison d'être in the second half of the twentieth century by emphasizing the larger historical context and the Thai government's evolving views that affected its formation. Therefore, even though every official history account begins in the year 1951 when the prototype of BPP, called the Territorial Defense Police was formed, most historians mark the organization of Border Defense Police of Northeastern Region (*tamruat raksa chaidaen phak isan*) on May 6, 1953 under the Director-General Phao Siyanon as the official foundation of BPP. Similarly, PARU designates its founding date on April 27, 1954 when King Bhumibol visited the opening ceremony of the PARU Company's Naresuan Camp in Hua Hin.

Second, their descriptions of BPP history are most elaborate in the years between 1951 and 1957. The reason why the BPP accounts have focused on those years could be explained with the BPP's insecure institutional standing within the Thai government even to the present day. In the descriptions about the official foundation of Border Defense Police with Police General Phao Siyanon as the head of unit, BPP history accounts articulate how the Thai government at the time failed to incorporate the unit into the regular chain of command under the military and police. Their somewhat bitter narratives about the Sarit Thanarat's 1957 coup and consequent demotion of the BPP in 1960 also vividly support this assumption, which will be discussed in-depth later.

Finally, while the BPP and PARU's appreciation of the contribution the U.S. made is common in the writings on the formation years, their treatment of the role of American organizations to each unit's development after 1957 is different. Unlike the BPP histories, the PARU's special recognition of the CIA's support for this unit is exceptional, particularly during the years of training and the PARU's operation in Laos because PARU had worked more closely with the CIA rather than the BPP or Thai military until the early 1970s.[9] Nevertheless, both the BPP and PARU's official and unofficial historical accounts dedicate a considerable amount of writings to extol the contribution of Thai royal family. In sum, even though the U.S. government was one of the crucial founding fathers and ardent supporters of the BPP and PARU, these units came to appreciate the local leadership that had ultimately enabled the continuation of their organizations from 1957 to present.

BPP and PARU Histories by Foreign Scholars and Government Officials

There are two groups of foreign writers divided by professions and the purpose of writing about the BPP and PARU histories and operations: first, a group of foreign scholars who study about the Thai security forces' activities during the Cold War and second, a group of U.S. government officials in the USOM and other research and development consulting organizations that had worked with the U.S. and Thai governments. And most recently, Desmond Ball published two volumes of a book that generally explores the Border Patrol Police's current activities and organizations.[10]

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[9] Between 1953 and 1957, PARU was under the command of Police Motor Vehicle Division (*tamruat rot thang*) in the Thai National Police Department. See Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit Subdivision, *Prawat khai naresuan* [History of Camp Naresuan]. (Thailand: Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit Subdivision, Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1992), 9, 23. [hereafter, *Prawat khai naresuan*].

[10] Desmond Ball, *Tor Chor Dor: Thailand's Border Patrol Police (BPP)*, 2 volumes. (Bangkok: White Lotus Press, 2013).

Thomas Lobe's doctoral dissertation entitled *U.S. Police Assistance for the Third World* (1975) examines the bureaucratic history of the Office of Public Safety (OPS), a division of USAID, and the pioneering and most extensive study in English language of the BPP's history in 1950-1966.[11] Two years later, Lobe published a monograph titled *United States National Security Policy and Aid to the Thailand Police* (1977) that summarized his doctoral dissertation.[12] As such, Lobe studies the origins and development of the BPP in conjunction with the expansion of the OPS and the changing U.S. foreign policy in the "third world" in general. He chose Thailand for the case study because the early American counterinsurgency programs were tested and implemented in Thailand well before the Vietnam War. Additionally, Lobe could compare the police assistance policies of the CIA and OPS as they had coexisted, and competed with each other throughout the Thai counterinsurgency period.[13] As a former USAID intern in Washington, D.C. in 1968, Lobe gained access to OPS officials both in Thailand and the U.S. when he conducted his field research between 1972 and 1973. Hence his description of the BPP history from 1950 to 1966 is primarily based on his extensive interviews with USAID officials, CIA members, and anonymous Thai villagers and government officials. However, since his study focuses on the behavior of the U.S. personnel and bureaucratic agents within the OPS, Lobe's narratives on the BPP's formation largely concentrate on the U.S. foreign policymaking process and internal bureaucratic conflicts within the U.S. government.[14]

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[11] Thomas D. Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance for the Third World* (Ph.d. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1975).

[12] Thomas D. Lobe, *United States National Security Policy and Aid to the Thailand Police* (Denver: University of Denver, Graduate School of International Studies, 1977), xxi.

[13] Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*, 10.

[14] Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*, 515.

In this regard, Katherine Bowie's study of the Village Scout movement in the 1970s, *Rituals of National Loyalty* (1997) provides critical analysis of the BPP and Thai government's adaptation of the U.S. counterinsurgency programs. Bowie remarks that the idea for the Village Scout movement "might well have been stillborn had Somkhuan Harikul -- a BPP commander of the northeastern regional subdivision who founded the Village Scouts movement under the BPP civic action programs -- been involved with some other government agency."[15] The importance of Bowie's account in understanding the history of BPP lies in its contextualization of the long-term impacts that the BPP civic action programs had on the development of village security and mass right-wing movements in the 1970s. Her account also brings attention to the close relationship between the monarchy and BPP that helped the former to spread royalist nationalism by becoming a key patron of the Village Scout movement.[16] In sum, by examining the characteristics of the BPP and the role of royal family in the Village Scout movement, Bowie's work signifies the political role that the BPP played out and its continuing influence on Thai society in the 1970s.

While Bowie's work helps us to understand the role and characteristics of the BPP's civic action, Alfred McCoy's *The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade* (revised edition, 2003) contributes another significant analysis of the CIA's relationship to Police General Phao Siyanon. Phao played a key role in founding the BPP and McCoy's work helps to explain the intricate network between Phao and the CIA in the formation of the BPP as an elite paramilitary force of the both up to Sarit's coup in 1957. In addition, McCoy's examination on the use of the police force in Phao's illegal opium trade contributes valuable background

[15] Katherine A. Bowie, *Rituals of National Loyalty: An Anthropology of the State and the Village Scout Movement in Thailand* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 78.

[16] See more details from Bowie, *Rituals of National Loyalty,* 82-99.

information on the later tension between Phao Siyanon and Sarit Thanarat and the latter's contentious relationship with the CIA and BPP which eventually helped the BPP to transform into a civic action agent.[17]

In addition to these academic accounts, there are a number of reports produced by the USOM officials in Thailand and other research and development consulting organizations that briefly mention the BPP activities in their works. One of the notable English publications on the BPP produced by the Public Safety Division under the USOM with United States Information Services (USIS) is *The Civic Action Program of the Border Patrol Police and the USOM Public Safety Division* (1963). This pamphlet includes several photographs of the BPP's activities in the highlands and provides useful descriptions about the BPP works among the highland minorities in the remote border areas.[18] Additionally, among the USOM's internal reports on the BPP activities, Raymond Coffey's account, *Thailand: Public Safety/ Border Patrol Police Remote Area Security Development* (1971) and the document from the Thai Ministry of Interior entitled, *Border Patrol Police* (1968) could be considered a major account that describes the characteristics of the BPP, particularly emphasizing the unit's contribution in developing civilian counterinsurgency and rural development projects in the border areas during the 1960s and 1970s.[19]

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[17] Alfred W. McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade*. Revised Edition (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2003), 183-188.

[18] Public Safety Division. USOM to Thailand, *The Civic Action Program of the Border Patrol Police and the USOM Public Safety Division* (Bangkok: Public Safety Division, United States Operations Mission to Thailand, 1963). Later, I found out the author of this pamphlet was Gordon Young, the then advisor to the Border Patrol Police civic action program under the USOM-Thailand.

[19] Raymond Coffey, *Thailand: Public Safety/ Border Patrol Police Remote Area Security Development. An Approach to Counterinsurgency by the Border Patrol Police* (Bangkok: United States Operations Mission to Thailand, 1971).; Thailand National Police Department, Ministry of Interior. *Border Patrol Police* (1968). A USOM-Thailand officer unofficially translated the latter document to English.

Those accounts by the foreign scholars and U.S. and Thai government officials have an innate limitation. As is in the case of Lobe's monograph and dissertation, the accounts by foreign scholars and government officials mostly concentrate on analyzing the U.S. perspectives or a specific activity undertaken by the BPP with American sponsorship and thus, often omit the general political landscape of Thailand that has greatly attributed to the formation and transformation of this special police force. Likewise, the Thai government officials' accounts highlight the BPP's civic action programs that the U.S. government assisted or funded and thus their assessments of the BPP activities are rather technical and narrowly focused.

As it will become clearer, my narrative on the BPP history focuses on the Thai political developments more than that of the U.S., and at the same time, attempts to provide more comprehensive information by combining Thai and English sources. The missing puzzles in the documented history of the BPP are supplemented by my interviews with the retired and incumbent BPP officers, and former USOM and CIA members during my field research in Thailand between August 2009-June 2011 and in the United States in 2012-2013. Most importantly, this analysis will bring forward the changing Thai perspectives and behaviors towards the Cold War development reflected in the history of Thai BPP by interweaving the transformations of the BPP and the Thai-U.S. political changes.

Accordingly, the following survey will divide the period from 1951 to present into three phases punctuated by the major political events that had influenced over the changing characteristics of BPP: first, the formation of a paramilitary police force from 1950 to 1957; second, the transformation into a civic action agent from 1957 to 1962; third, eventually becoming a symbolic royal force from 1962 to present. The first period between 1950 and 1957 focuses on the context of the formation of a paramilitary force generated from the Thai local,

Southeast Asian regional and U.S. political developments in this period. As will be discussed shortly, the 1957 coup staged by Field Marshall Sarit Thanarat formidably challenged the existence of the BPP in the late 1950s and therefore, the transformation of the BPP into a civic action agency began from 1957. The 1960s were the heydays for the BPP as it could expand its civic action projects to the entirety of Thailand with the USOM and royal family's support. The year 1962 in particular marks the beginning of the Thai Counterinsurgency Era and the BPP's gradual shift of its loyalty to the Thai monarchy. At last, with the royal patronage given to the BPP, it could regain its official standing in 1972 and in this process, the BPP has become a symbolic force of the Thai monarchy to present.

In the following section, I am going to focus on the birth of BPP and its early activities as a CIA paramilitary intelligence unit until 1957, to understand the how the historical relations between Thailand and the U.S., and geopolitical importance and internal stability of Thailand provided an advantageous opportunity to the Thai elites to utilize the American Cold War politics to push forward their political goals.

Beginning of the Cold War Relationship

In November 1946, the postwar Thai government revoked the Act Concerning Communism proclaimed by the last absolute monarch King Prajadhipok in 1933 and in the following month, Thailand entered into the United Nations.[20] Entrance to the UN brought some changes to Thai foreign relations. First, by revoking the anticommunist act, Thailand could reestablish diplomatic

[20] Most of literatures about Thai history translate this act as an "Anti-Communist Act." Less hostile term, "The Act Concerning Communism," that I used here to indicate the neutrality of the law since it is more a symbolic manifestation rather than a practical execution. See the English translated version from; Thak, *Thai Politics,* 236-237.

relations with the Soviet Union.[21] The normalization of Thai-Soviet relations suggests that the Thais' fear against communism was rather low in this period. Furthermore, participation in the postwar international organization like the UN signals Thailand's entry into the larger international community. Instead of relying on traditional bilateral foreign relationships with European states, Thailand attempted to broaden its alliance with newly rising international powers in the postwar era. Then how and why did Thailand become an anticommunist bastion of the American-led Cold War in the late 1940s? And what are the historical and political conditions that attracted the U.S. to Southeast Asia and convinced it to form indigenous agents like the BPP in Thailand?

A special, covert relationship between the United States and Thailand started from the time when the Office of Strategic Services began cooperating with the Seri (Free) Thai group against the Japanese occupation in Southeast Asia. Until the V-J day, the OSS and U.S. State Department supported the Seri Thai movement by dropping guerrilla trainers, weapons, equipment and supplies into Thailand.[22] Although the Japanese abruptly ended the war before the Seri Thai and OSS agents staged open revolt, their initial contact and close ties through the Seri Thai operation in 1942-1945 endured well after the CIA replaced the OSS. When President Truman disbanded the OSS in 1945, some of its agents returned to Thailand.[23] Most of the OSS operatives, including William Donovan, moved to the CIA and continued their work in Asia. Indeed, as E. Bruce Reynolds contends, the OSS-Seri Thai operation during the World War II

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[21] Thak Chaloemtiarana. *Thailand, the Politics of Despotic Paternalism* (Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program Publications, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 2007), 20.

[22] *New York Times* (September 9, 1945), p.2.

[23] Like James Thompson, a former OSS officer in Thailand. He returned to Thailand and founded the Thai Silk Company in 1948. See "Timeline of U.S.-Thai Relations, Embassy of the United States Bangkok, Thailand," accessed December 2, 2011, http://bangkok.usembassy.gov/relation/timeline.html. Alexander MacDonald, a co-founder of Bangkok Post in 1946, was also an OSS veteran engaged in the Seri Thai operation.

served as the "opening wedge" in the development of the cold war alliance between Thailand and the U.S.[24]

Although Thailand did not fall into the maelstrom of decolonization like her neighboring countries, the aftermath of Pacific War felt heavy because the brief period of Japanese occupation opened a new arena for political infighting. The political domination of the Seri Thai group led by Pridi Banomyong in the postwar government had deteriorated the existing chasm between the civilian government and newly emerging military factions, finally resulting in the 1947 coup staged by the Coup Group (*khana ratthaprahan*).[25] When the Coup Group moved to overthrow the government on November 8, 1947, it consisted of about forty junior army officers with several commanding officers. Some of leading officers in this group had served in the battles in Shan states in 1941. While Pridi preoccupied himself with the Seri Thai groups' infighting, those officers did not receive sufficient attention and support from the government and thus felt bitterness toward Pridi. When the war ended, Khuang Aphaiwong's government agreed to return the Shan states to the British under Pridi's guidance and subsequently called for an immediate return of the Thai army troops back home. Adding to their bitterness from the hardship in the battles, sudden withdrawal from Shan states roused strong antipathy among these army officers against the civilian government.[26] Worse yet, as soon as the Seri Thai's factional competition settled down, Pridi began purging his political rival Phibun Songkhram's army factions and replaced them with the Seri Thai military groups.

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[24] E. Bruce Reynolds, "The Opening Wedge: The OSS in Thailand" in *The Secrets War: the Office of Strategic Services in World War II,* ed. George C. Chalou. (Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1992), 344.

[25] For a detailed discussion on the Seri Thai group under Pridi regime, see, for example, Sorasak Ngamcachonkulkid, *The Free Thai Movement and Thailand's Internal Political Conflicts, 1938-1949*. (Bangkok: Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, 1991).

[26] Thak, *Politics of Despotic Paternalism,* 26-27.

Among these embittered officers were Army Lieutenant General Phin Chunhawan, Colonel Kat Katsongkhram, Colonel Phao Siyanon and Colonel Sarit Thanarat who became the key members of the Coup Group in 1947. While Phin and Kat came from the old military establishment, Phao and Sarit represented a new generation of the military officers. Phao was a longtime aide and close associate of Phibun and also was the son-in-law of Phin. Sarit held a low political profile in the Coup Group but he was the army commander of the Bangkok-based First Regiment of the First Division that provided crucial support to the Coup Group.[27] As their hardships in the Shan states suggest, the Coup Group's grudge against the civilian government -- especially against Pridi's Seri Thai faction -- was profound. Therefore, these officers expected Phibun, in his role as the most respected and successful Field Marshal of the interwar period, to offer symbolic leadership to the Coup Group. Not surprisingly, Phibun returned to the power in 1948.

In these political changes, the United States' reluctant opposition to the military ruler Phibun over civilian leader Pridi is noteworthy. Although Pridi strove to achieve a democratic government and the U.S. had once been an ardent supporter of this effort, it came to learn that Pridi could not assure the stability that the U.S. sought in this critical period. U.S. officials grew skeptical of Pridi not only due to his socialist background, but also because of his fragile position within the loose coalition of the navy, the Seri Thai groups, and royalist groups. Until the coup in 1947, Pridi failed to demonstrate the ability to preserve political stability within the Thai civilian government and therefore became a less attractive leader in the eyes of the U.S. government. In contrast to Pridi, Phibun was viewed as a safer figure. Phibun was a renowned authoritarian leader who had promoted almost fascist-like national unity in his previous regime and more

[27] Fineman, *Special Relationship,* 37-38.

importantly, Phibun was, like Kobkua Suwannnathat-Pian describes, "a confirmed nationalist who found communism ideologically unacceptable."[28] The U.S. government's begrudging protest against Phibun's return in 1948 was therefore more about the tacit support for the return of military government in Thailand.

Nevertheless, when he returned to office in 1948, Phibun knew that he could no longer act as the sole military commander. Young junior officers like Army Colonel Sarit Thanarat and Colonel Phao Siyanon had quickly adjusted themselves to the political climate and made a strong bid for power. At the same time, both officers attempted to consolidate the fragmented military factions under their command to establish a constituency in the intensifying power struggle among the 1947 coup members. Phibun, while sitting uneasily in the middle of this competition, had to find an alternative source of power to protect his precarious position.

The U.S. caught his attention at this point. Phibun's effort to launch anticommunist policies and to purge old military hands from politics between the late 1940s and mid-1950s vividly reveal the ways in which Phibun attempted to win the U.S. support. Considering his far weakened power in the second administration, bringing lucrative economic-military aid as well as political support from the U.S. could help to legitimate Phibun's power against newly rising military power competitors.[29] His strong support towards the American anticommunist foreign policies was, therefore, aimed at winning more economic and military aid that, in turn, would

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[28] Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian, "Thai Wartime Leadership Reconsidered: Phibun and Pridi" in the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 27:1 (March 1996), 174-75. For the studies on the Phibun's premiership, see, Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian, *Thailand's Durable Premier: Phibun through Three Decades, 1932-1957* (Kuala Lumpur; New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).; B. J. Terwiel, *Field Marshal Plaek Phibun Songkhram* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1980).

[29] Kobkua contends that Phibun's position between 1948-51 was "secure without him having to resort to a shallow political trick to win foreign support."; Kobkua, "Thai Wartime Leadership Reconsidered," 175. Fineman and Thak's counterarguments on the other hand, address that the Phibun's power was less powerful than his first administration so that he had to find an external source of power legitimation. Phibun's attempt to induce military aid from the U.S. is detailed in Fineman, *Special Relationship,* 69. See also, Thak, *Politics of Despotic Paternalism,* 35-42.

garner popular support and the respect of various military factions. In this sense, it was Phibun's agenda to utilize the U.S. support that forced him to take a hard-line stance in the postwar anticommunist movement.[30]

Beginning in the early 1950's, the Chinese government began to harass the U.S. and its allies in Southeast Asia, accusing the U.S. of being an imperialist and its allies as being the collaborators of imperialism. On January 26, 1950, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs officially accused Phibun of mistreating local Chinese in Thailand. In addition to the protest from Beijing, the Chinese press in Thailand provoked local Chinese to resist Phibun.[31] In response, Phibun declared that the Thai Defense Board would exercise "resolute measures" against the communist activities and threatened to close pro-communist newspapers on February 1, 1950.[32] Shortly after, pressure of the American anticommunist alliance and fear of a Chinese grudge forced Phibun to formally recognize Bao Dai as the leader of South Vietnam on February 28, 1950. As a token of appreciation, the U.S. Congress sent Allen Griffin's hastily organized Economic Survey Mission to Southeast Asia to observe economic conditions and to propose appropriate levels of foreign aid to the countries in the region in April of 1950. Speaking about the Thai economic situation, the Mission team concluded the following:

> [t]here is hardly any important economic urgency. *There is a political urgency*. A quick gesture calculated to impress Government leaders and the people – particularly the educated elite in Bangkok – may produce much more desirable political results than a long range economic project…. As a country that has come out solidly for the West, Thailand needs prompt evidence that its partnership is valued.[33]

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[30] Fineman, *Special Relationship,* 75.

[31] Fineman, *Special Relationship,* 106-07.

[32] *New York Times*, February 2, 1950, 7.

[33] Quoted in J. Alexander Caldwell, *American Economic Aid to Thailand* (Lexington, Massachusetts: Lexington Books, 1974), 39. (emphasis is mine)

Based on this assumption, Griffin's survey team proposed $11.4 million dollars for economic and technical assistance to Thailand.[34] As shown in the survey report above, the U.S. believed that economic assistance would serve the goal of stabilizing political and economic conditions, and thus preventing communist expansion in Thailand.

The outbreak of the Korean War on June 25, 1950 changed the outlook of U.S. foreign policy and the U.S.-Thai relations as well. On July 3, 1950, Phibun announced Thailand would dispatch 4,000 Thai troops along with rice supplies to Korea. Although he boasted about the immediate deployment and Thailand became the first Asian country to send combat forces to the Korean War, the delivery did not actually take place until mid-November of that year. According to the *New York Times* on August 13, 1950, the Thai Ministry of Defense proudly reported that it had to stop receiving more volunteers for an expeditionary force to Korea since there were already nearly 11,000 applicants.[35] Within two weeks of this report's release, however, *Reuters* disclosed that lack of proper armament and clothing would delay the dispatch of troops for an uncertain amount of time.[36] By mid-September, another correspondent to the *New York Times* said that the original offer of 4,000 men has been scaled down since the Thai government could not assemble, equip, or train 4,000 men in time.[37] Finally, after receiving military equipment and winter clothing from the U.S. government, the Thai armed forces left for Korea at the end of 1950.

Although the Korean War did not seem to greatly disturb the Thai government, tensions between suspected communists at home and government officials did begin to arise. From late

[34] Fineman, *Special Relationship,* 115.

[35] *New York Times*, August 13, 1950, 3.

[36] *New York Times*, August 27, 1950, 39.

[37] *New York Times*, September 29, 1950, 3.

1950, the Thai government started to deport Chinese immigrants involved in political activity, crush labor unions, and use the military and Buddhist community (*sangha*) for anticommunist propaganda.[38] The state also tightened up press censorship right after the outbreak of the Korean War as part of its larger strategy to decimate the communist movement in Thailand. When Phibun decided to send troops to Korea, the press launched a barrage of criticism against the government's decision. Consequently, the police department issued a six-month ban prohibiting all publications and comments on international politics that may "adversely affect diplomatic relations with regard to Thailand" on July 20, 1950.[39] Chinese communist's support of the Vietminh and other Southeast Asian communist groups also became the source of concern that year. The fear intensified with rumors that the success of Vietminh forces would possibly bring Pridi back to Thailand as the leader of a new communist group.[40]

Meanwhile, the U.S. military aid mission team arrived in Bangkok on August 26, 1950 to survey the Thai military needs, and the Military Assistant Agreement between Thai and U.S. governments entered into force in mid-October. By the end of 1950, U.S. equipped Thai army battalions were stationed in the northeastern and northern region with American arms. Washington expected the refurbishment of Thai armed forces would not only strengthen the forces and prepare them to fight communist threats, but also uphold anticommunist morale with the firm evidence of U.S. support for Thailand.[41]

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[38] Chris Baker and Pasuk Phongpaichit, *A History of Thailand* (Port Melbourne, Vic., Australia; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 145.; *New York Times*, December 6, 1950, 6.

[39] Kasian Tejapira, *Commodifying Marxism: The Formation of Modern Thai Radical Culture, 1927-1958* (Kyoto: Kyoto University Press, 2001), 159.

[40] *New York Times*, May 8, 1950, 7.

[41] *New York Times*, November 30, 1950, 20.

While it seemed like Phibun had fared well with the U.S. government, he still had to cope with the deteriorating domestic politics. Despite Phibun's struggle to reinvigorate his power and control over rising new military factions, growing tension among the politicians in the parliament, a crumbling balance of power among old and new factions, and the increasing number of student protests against the government anticommunism policy all attributed to the instability of Thai society. Likewise, the sense of insecurity grew greatly among the 1947 Coup Group members. As a result, these conspirators made a radio announcement on November 29, 1951, suspending parliament and abrogating the 1949 Constitution. The so-called Radio Coup brought the 1932 constitution back into effect as a means to strengthen the Coup Group's control over an intractable parliament.

For this Radio Coup, it is noteworthy that the first communiqué among their series of radio announcements explicitly addressed concern about the growing communist threat and the government's incapability of dealing with the problem, as follows:

> Owing to the present state of emergency in world conditions, *serious communist danger is pressing*. The present Council of Ministers as well as Parliament is largely infiltrated by communist elements. Tried as it might, the Government has been unable to solve the communist problem. Nor has it been able to stamp out the so-called corruption as has been its intention. Disintegration has spread so deeply as to cause grave anxieties for the continued existence of the nation in its present political danger.[42]

As Thak Chaloemtiarana notes, the Radio Coup used the communist threat as a major justification for the coup for the first time in Thai history. Even if there was no serious concern about the communist activities within parliament, the Coup Group might have thought that its anticommunist stance would guarantee a smoother transition from the old to new cabinet without disturbing the U.S government. Thus, this new Radio Coup had to demonstrate that it would

[42] Thak, *Thai Politics,* 675. (emphasis is mine)

bring stability to domestic politics and the Coup Group's loyalty towards anticommunism and the U.S. unchanged. To its relief, Washington responded on the same day of the coup announcement that it anticipated no changes in the U.S. government's foreign policy to Thailand.[43]

The key members of Radio Coup group were the above-mentioned two junior officers, Sarit and Phao. For our study of BPP history, Phao deserves particular attention since he was the founding father and played the role of Thai counterpart of the CIA. To understand the special relationship between Phao and the CIA, we should first note the nature of U.S. foreign aid flowed to Thailand from 1950. Generally speaking, the U.S. military and economic aid brought not only money and materials to help building economic infrastructure to Asia, but also the various anticommunist schemes. Many U.S. foreign policymakers had in mind that the demands of the Cold War enabled the use of aid funds as "a contribution to governmental stability through support to whatever leaders may be found who possess enough organized strength to stave off collapse."[44] Therefore, the U.S. government utilized its economic and military aid to Thailand to support anticommunist politics and political strongmen who could create a favorable medium for the implementation of the U.S. foreign policy in Southeast Asia.

When the first set of military equipments and materials arrived in Bangkok in the late 1950, former OSS officers based in Thailand reunited to push a plan for increased military aid to Thailand. Thus they conspired and planned covert actions and intelligence activities within and beyond Thai borders by using their connections to CIA friends. In the view of the U.S. and especially the CIA, economic and military aid provided a particularly effective cover for the

[43] *New York Times*, November 30, 1951, 4.

[44] John D. Montgomery, *The Politics of Foreign Aid: American Experience in Southeast Asia* (New York: Published for the Council on Foreign Relations by Praeger, 1962), 276.

supply of arms and manpower to the Thai armed forces that could assist their anticommunist campaigns in Thailand and local allies in Southeast Asia. In this context, the CIA developed a close relationship with a figure that would become its local agent of influence -- that is, Phao Siyanon.

Among the rising figures and personalities in the Thai military during early 1950s, the growth of Phao's power and his police force shows the most dramatic case. Ironically, because Phao had earned notoriety for ruthlessly killing off his enemies, the CIA and the U.S. government viewed Phao as a reliable communist hunter. While Phao served the deputy director-general of the Thai National Police Department during 1949-1950, Phao strengthened the Department greatly with the help of Phibun. In 1949, the TNPD encompassed a mounted division, a mechanized division, a tank division, a mobile division, and even a speedboat division.[45] In addition, Washington generously supplied modern armaments and military trainers to Phao's police from the early 1950s. After Phao assumed the director-general position in 1951, the CIA also began to assist the police's anticommunist unit, the Criminal Investigation Department. As a result, Phao's police became the largest division of the Thai armed forces by mid-1951. Out of a total armed forces manpower estimated at 85,000, the militarized police force accounted for about 40,000. At its pinnacle, the size of the police force exceeded more than 53,000 men. Not only was the manpower of the police immense, but its stockpile of armaments were even more remarkable. TNPD possessed armored cars, Bren guns and mortars and a number of policemen trained in guerrilla warfare.[46]

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[45] Fineman, *Special Relationship,* 134.

[46] *New York Times*, July 23, 1951, 2.

Why, then, did Phibun and the U.S. government let Phao and his police expand rapidly in the early 1950s? In her memoir, Phibun's wife La-iad Phibunsongkhram marks that the U.S. aid given to Phao's police served the purpose of "keeping the police on a par with the army in strength so as to insure an internal balance of power," because Phibun was "no doubt interested in keeping an approximate balance of power between his two younger colleagues [Sarit and Phao]."[47] Surachart Bamrungsuk on the other hand contends that Phibun intentionally permitted the police force to be increased in order to counterbalance Kat Katsongkhram's popularity in the army, as well as the navy's influence in politics so that the Phibun's administration could be freed from both armed forces' intervention.[48] In any case, Phibun supported Phao and his police to counterbalance other Coup Group member's factions, which had played a key role in the past coups. The U.S. government, meanwhile, regarded Phao's police as "more flexible, more open to new roles and responsibilities than Sarit's bureaucratically entrenched armed forces."[49] The CIA likewise saw Phao's police as versatile enough to adopt new techniques in anti-guerrilla training and psychological warfare and it hoped the Thai police would play a central role in special paramilitary activities in Thailand and beyond.

With the U.S. covert assistance and Phibun's tacit approval, Phao began to hunt down his enemies under the guise of an anticommunist campaign. In February 1952, the government passed an Emergency Law that provided wide powers of arrest and press censorship.[50] In the same year, Phao wanted to reinstate an Anti-Communist Law that was nullified in 1946 so that

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[47] La-iad Phibun Songkhram, "Political Memoirs of Lady La-iad Pibul Songgram" in *Portraits of Thai Politics*. comp. Jayanta Kumar Ray. (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1972), 212-213.(explanation is mine.)

[48] Surachart Bamrungsuk, *United States Foreign Policy and Thai Military Rule, 1947-1977* (Bangkok: Editions Duangkamol, 1988), 58.

[49] Lobe, *United States National Security Policy and Aid,* 20.

[50] Thak, *Politics of Despotic Paternalism,* 69.

the law could aid police repression of communists and other suspicious groups. The draft presented in January 1952 entitled a "Draft Act on Control of Subversive Activities," outlawed all forms of association with organizations seeking "to promote economic transformation, by which private ownership of property and means of production shall be abolished entirely or partly and shall be transferred to the State by way of confiscation or otherwise."[51] While Phibun, Phao, and other officials debated about the anticommunist bill and its enforcement, the Thailand Peace Committee announced its plan of sending a delegation to the World Peace Conference in Beijing in October 1952. The announcement terminated the long and tedious debates and allowed Phao to take a lead in repressing communist activities.[52]

On October 27, 1952, Phao commanded the police department to take the "sternest action against all persons suspected of aiding the Communist cause, including those producing and distributing propaganda."[53] Beginning November 10, the police launched a sweep of all underground organizations and rounded up about one hundred people, including some army and navy officers as well as many members of the Thailand Peace Committee.[54] By November 12, the police released an announcement trumpeting their discovery of a communist revolutionary plot in Thailand. Additionally, Phao said the "Red cells" had infiltrated the Army, the police force, National Assembly and government offices. He also boasted that he had evidence showing that former premier Pridi was involved in this plot.[55] Following his merciless suppression, the

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[51] Quoted in Fineman, *Special Relationship,* 160-161.

[52] Thai Peace Committee (*khana kammakan santiphap haeng prathet thai*) was set up and coordinated by the Thai Communist Party in April 1951.: David A. Wilson, "China, Thailand and the Spirit of Bandung (Part I) in the *China Quarterly* 30 (April-June, 1967), 157.; Kasian. *Commodifying Marxism,* 299, fn.103.

[53] *New York Times*, October 28, 1952, 3.

[54] *New York Times*, November 11, 1952, 5.

[55] *New York Times*, November 13, 1952, 17.

parliament passed the Anti-Communist Activities Act on November 13, 1952. This bill provided sentences ranging from ten years to life for the communist party members, and it also mandated prison terms for those who join in communist discussions without reporting them to the authorities and those who aid communists with funds or dwelling and meeting places. Presses producing communist propaganda would also, according to this new bill, be liable to seizure.[56]

Overall, Phao's rise in the Thai politics and its special relationship with the CIA, and the rapidly changing Thai politics all affected the shaping of the BPP as a paramilitary that was to support Phao's power competition with Sarit.

Formation of a Paramilitary Police Force

The official histories of the Border Patrol Police formation begin from the independence of previously colonized neighboring countries and ensuing political instability in Southeast Asia, with a strong emphasis on the rise of communist movements in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia and Burma. Accordingly, increasing political infightings in the adjacent countries were assumed to be the direct trigger to form this paramilitary unit to defend deteriorating border security in the early 1950s.

On the other hand, former deputy commissioner Soem Yakhasem traces the unit's origin back further and concludes that there was indeed a forerunner of BPP before 1950: that is, the Police Field Force (*tamruat sanam,* PFF). Established by the order of Supreme Commander Phibun dated on November 28, 1940, this military police was appointed under the command of Army.[57] Soem explains in his 1978 account that this force "were to operate in the ground like

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[56] *New York Times*, November 14, 1952, 2.

[57] See a copy of this order from Soem, *Rueang tamruat trawen chaidaen,* 6-7.

military" similar to the Police Field Force of Malaysia, or the Constabulary in the Philippines. Therefore, he argues that the BPP inherited its paramilitary characteristics from the Thai Police Field Force.[58] Later in 1987, a former Director-General of the TNPD, Police General Sisuk Mahinthonrathep's in his memoir entitled "The Police Field Force and Border Patrol Police" confirmed Soem's conjecture. As one of the founding members of the Police Field Force of Thailand, Sisuk recalls that the TNPD ordered the building of four platoons for the PFF in Nakhon Phanom province to circumscribe the border skirmishes around the Mekhong River in late November 1940.[59] When fighting broke out between Thailand and France in the following month, TNPD released an official order dated December 5, 1940, for the establishment of PFF in thirteen border provinces of the northeastern and eastern provinces. Since the PFF was to fight alongside the army during wartime, the Provincial Police commanders including Sisuk trained the regular police force in conventional warfare, shooting, and military tactics.[60] A year later, when the tension in the borders began to trickle down, TNPD designated some regional subdivisions of the Provincial Police located by the territorial borderlines in north, northeast, east, west and south to become the PFF.[61] From his first-hand experience, Sisuk concludes that the PFF became the "model of the Border Defense Police and Border Patrol Police when the Police General Phao Siyanon came to office" because "their missions and military characteristics

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[58] Soem, *Rueang tamruat trawen chaidaen,* 6.

[59] Sisuk Mahinthonrathep, "The Police Field Force and Border Patrol Police (tosono kap tochodo)," in *Anuson ngan phraratchathan phloengsop phon tamruat ek sisuk mahinthonrathep* [Cremation Volume, Police General Sisuk Mahinthorathep] (Bangkok: Pro-Print Publishing Company, 1993), 135. His memoir on the Police Field Force was first published in the *Tamruat trawen chaidaen parithat* [Border Patrol Police Review] 4:13 (July-September 1987).

[60] Sisuk, "The Police Field Force," 136, 139, 141.

[61] Sisuk, "The Police Field Force," 142.

in carrying out the intelligence and counterinsurgency operations against the communist insurgents came to be similar."[62]

It might be true that the BPP had similar missions with the PFF as Soem and Sisuk suggest. However, the historical backgrounds of formation and the founders of these forces tell us that they actually possess quite different characteristics and histories. Simply put, while the U.S. government initiated the formation of BPP, the PFF was the Thai government's own project devised to defend deteriorating border security during the World War II. In conjunction with the earlier action taken to protect the Thai boundary in this period was the replacement of the Military Police Department with the Territorial Defense Department in 1938 by the new National Defense Act that had passed in the same year. Army Major General Yuth Somboon explains the Thai government felt the necessity of reorganizing territorial defense policies in 1938 in order to "educate the people in the field of discipline, courage, endurance, sacrifice, unity, honesty etc. and to educate them so that they are able to develop and protect their territory [*sic*]." [63] Subsequently, the Phibun administration ordered the formation of the PFF to mobilize against the possible attacks from the French colonialist during the Thailand-France border conflict in 1940-1941.

By contrast, the BPP was initiated, designed, and trained directly by the United States and the role of Thai military and police leaders were rather limited, at least in the formation years. Moreover, while the objectives to build the BPP lay in fighting the communist infiltrators and agitators in the border and rural areas, the PFF's goals were to fight against any foreign enemies that attempted to extend their influence into the Thai territory. Previously fluid territorial

[62] Sisuk, "The Police Field Force," 142.

[63] Yuth Somboon, *The Development of Thailand's Territorial Defense*. Draft Translation by Military Research and Development Center (Bangkok: College of National Defense, 1963), 1.

borderlines in Southeast Asia were almost fixed after 1945 and thus the concept of sovereign territory and boundary were also different in forming the PFF in 1940 and the BPP in the early 1950s. In short, the PFF were more of the locally initiated armed force to be mobilized in the conventional warfare against external enemy, whereas the BPP were the transnational cold warriors designed to operate in unconventional warfare against both the internal and external enemies.

In August 1950 when the U.S. technical experts traveled to Thailand, the first set of military equipment also arrived.[64] While undertaking an overt military assistant program, the U.S. also initiated covert operations in Thailand. Particularly in the early 1950s, former OSS officer Willis Bird emerged as a central figure in the organization of the covert programs. After the OSS disbanded, Bird moved permanently to Bangkok in 1946 and established himself as an exporter and investment broker.[65] He had a wide array of connections with both the Thai government and the CIA where his old battle friends from the Seri Thai operations had been working as influential military members and civilian intelligence agents. In particular, Air Marshal Siddhi Savetsila who had been a member of Seri Thai movement during the Pacific War had become a brother-in-law of Bird, and both Siddhi and Bird were the central liaison between the CIA and Phao Siyanon.[66] With these backgrounds and connections, Bird helped to organize a secret group of Thai military and political figures, later known as the Naresuan Committee in December 1950.

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[64] Edwin F. Stanton, "Spotlight on Thailand" in the *Foreign Affairs* 33:1 (October 1954), 83.

[65] Smith, *OSS,* 273, fn.u.

[66] Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 4-8.; Siddhi Savetsila, "*Tamruat trawen chaidaen nai khuam songcham khong khapchao* [Border Patrol Police in My Memory]," in *Kong banchakan tamruat trawen chaidaen thiraluek nai kanpoet akhan bocho tochodo, 7 phruetsaphakhom 2518* [Border Patrol Police Headquarters, Commemorative volume marking the opening of the headquarters building, 7 May 1975]. (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1975), 123. It is noteworthy that Siddhi Savetsila later served as the minister of foreign affairs between 1980 and 1990. See "Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Thailand," accessed December 11, 2011, http://www.mfa.go.th/web/2682.php.

As a close friend of Bird, William Donovan actively engaged in this Committee. According to former PARU commander Nakhon Siwanit's memoir, it was Donovan who convinced Phibun to create this secret joint meeting to develop an anticommunist program and a strategy for fighting the imminent communist threat.[67]

Finally, the Naresuan Committee was set up between leading Thai Army generals including Prime Minister Field Marshal Phibun Songkhram, Deputy Prime Minister Marshal Phin Chunhawan, Commander in Chief of the Royal Thai Army General Sarit Thanarat, Director-General of the TNPD Police General Luangchattrakankosin, the Deputy Director-General of TNPD Police Lieutenant General Phao Siyanon, Commander of Guards Division of Royal Thai Army Major General Thanom Kittikachorn, Air Chief Marshal Fuen Ro. Ritthakhani, Navy General Luang Chamnan Atthayut, Police Lieutenant General Lamai Utthayananon, Minister of Foreign Affairs Nai Worakanbancha and American representatives like William Donovan and some CIA officials. From April 1951, Siddhi joined the meeting with the Air Chief Marshal Fuen's recommendation and served the secretary of the Committee.[68] After several meetings, the members of the Committee came to an agreement to form a paramilitary police unit that could carry out the unconventional warfare with a considerable focus on psychological operations.[69]

Why, then, did the Thai and U.S. governments agree to build the police force as the first security force in the border areas? There are historical and political contexts that allowed the

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[67] Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 2-3. For the relationship between Willis Bird and William Donovan, see Smith. *OSS*, 273.

[68] Border Patrol Police Headquarters, *Sisippi tochodo, 6 phruetsaphakhom 2536* [40 Years of the Border Patrol Police, 6 May 1993]. *(*Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1993), 29. [hereafter, *Sisippi tochodo*].; Fineman, *Special Relationship,* 133.

[69] See more historical, political background from the official volume, Border Patrol Police Headquarters, *Tai rom phrabarami hasippi tochodo* [Under the Charismatic Royal Patronage, 50 Years of the Border Patrol Police]. (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 2003), 1-8. [hereafter, *Tai rom phrabarami*].

Thai police to become a frontier force to defend mostly land-locked Thai borders in 1950. After the border clash between Thailand and France, both governments signed a peace treaty in 1941 that prevented military activities in the border areas. Thus setting up a military force along the Mekhong River or border regions in the north, northeast and east side of Thailand was an apparent violation of the treaty and it could give rise to a direct confrontation with the neighboring countries.[70] This limitation to military buildup in the demilitarized border zones imposed by the treaty has been the central premise to form the military police in various official and unofficial accounts on the BPP history. The Thai government justified the building of a new police force in the border areas saying, "in time of peace only the police, and not the army, were allowed to patrol border areas."[71] In addition, as discussed before, it was Phibun who permitted the rise of the police force in the 1950s to control the other military factions by strengthening the counter force. It could also have been Phao's agenda to create a new police unit rather than mobilizing extant armed forces so that he could exercise direct control over this new police. In the end, the CIA promised Phibun that they would aid the Thai police and thus the Thai government was to take fewer burdens in financing the new paramilitary police force.[72]

As predicted by the Naresuan Committee, there grew more evident signs of aggravating regional security in the border areas of northeastern and northern Thailand from 1951. The clash between the Vietminh and French colonial government had extended to Laos and Cambodia. The dramatically increasing influence of the Vietminh forced the Thai government to become more

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[70] *Sisippi tochodo*, p.29; Manas, *Prawat kongbanchakan,* 2.; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Bilateral Treaties and Agreements between Thailand and Foreign Countries and International Organizations, Volume 5 (1937-1941)* (Bangkok: Treaty and Legal Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 1975), 225-226, article 5 and 6.

[71] La-iad, "Political Memoirs," 212.

[72] It is noteworthy that Phibun's wife, La-iad specifically name the "Sea Supplies" as the representative of the U.S. government. La-iad, "Political Memoirs," 212.

suspicious towards the Vietnamese refugee groups in the northeastern region of Thailand. In the north, KMT forces were stationed on the Burmese side of the border areas directly across from Fang district in Chiang Mai province, adding another concerns of border security to the Thai and U.S. governments.[73] In particular, prolonged tension between the Karen and Burmese government as well as the increased flow of southern Chinese immigrants (Yunnanese) led both governments to pay close attention to the presence of highland minorities in the Thailand's northern borders.[74] In the south, the expanding insurgencies by the Malay Communist Party against the British colonialist and indigenous Malay elites concerned the Thai government. Phibun had made a mutual agreement with the Malay government in 1949 that allowed Malay police to pursue communist guerrillas as far as ten miles from the Thai borderlines, but the conditions in 1951 were still seen threatening.[75]

As a result, the Thai government hastily organized a gendarmerie-type police unit with the help from U.S. advisory group, called the Territorial Defense Police (*tamruat raksa dinden,* TDP) under the command of the Office of the Inspector-General of the TNPD in 1951. To train this force, TNPD set up special police training camp around the border regions and the U.S. delivered modern armaments such as the Rifle M1, carbines, light machine guns, mortars, 2.6mm and 3.5mm bazookas, radios, grenades and others to the Quartermasters Division of TNPD. Since the Thai armed forces had not involved in major battles from the early 1940s, most

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[73] Border Patrol Police Headquarters, *Kong banchakan tamruat trawen chaidaen thiraluek nai kanpoet akhan bocho tochodo, 7 phruetsaphakhom 2518* [Border Patrol Police Headquarters, Commemorative volume marking the opening of the headquarters building, 7 May 1975]. (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1975), 103. [hereafter, *Kong banchakan 1975*].

[74] Wen-Chin Chang, *Beyond the Military: The Complex Migration and Resettlement of the KMT Yunnanese Chinese in Northern Thailand*. (Ph.d. Dissertation, Katholieke Universiteit te Leuven, 1999), 1-4, 96-99, 125-127.

[75] American University, Washington, D.C. Special Operations Research Office, *Casebook on Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: 23 Summary Accounts* (Washington, DC, 1962), 78.

armament in the military establishments were from the World War II period. Thus, compared to the old stockpiles of armaments in other forces, new Territorial Defense Police could enjoy such the privileged training with the most cutting-edge weapons from the United States.[76] In March 1952, TNPD ordered the building of a police camp in Udon Thani, later called Senironayut Camp, to train the first group of TDP. By April 1952, 120 policemen received the special weapons and guerrilla combat training in this camp and then the deputy commander of the Provincial Police's Forth Regional Division became the commander of this northeast region TDP Company. In the following month, Senironayut Camp convened an official opening and it became one of the first official BPP camps.[77] After completing an ad-hoc training, the first twenty-two platoons, constituted of 836 men, were deployed along the north, northeast and eastern sides of Thailand's borders.[78] However, because the force was deployed with great haste to counter rising tensions in the neighboring countries, this first gendarmerie unit lacked suitable training, operational regulation and official order of establishment from the government. Thus, the TDP encountered numerous problems from its inception.[79]

In the meantime, Phao ordered the preparation of a special training course for paratroopers in Lopburi province in April 1951.[80] Accordingly, the CIA and Bird worked closely to launch this special paratroopers training in Thailand. Paul Helliwell, an old friend of Bird's from the OSS who had become a lawyer in Florida, created a firm in Miami called the South East Asia Supply Corporation (hereafter, SEA Supply) as a cover organization for the CIA's operation in

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[76] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, April 9, 2010.

[77] *Tai rom phrabarami*, 185.

[78] Manas, *Prawat kongbanchakan,* 5; *Sisippi tochodo*, 33; *Suraphon Chulaphram Cremation Volume*, 81.

[79] *Kong banchakan 1975*, 105.

[80] *Prawat khai naresuan*, 5-6.

Thailand.[81] The CIA, in turn, helped Helliwell to open a SEA Supply branch office right across from the National Stadium, next to Rama I road in Bangkok in the same year.[82] Police General Suraphon Chulaphram, former commissioner of the BPP Headquarters and the Director-General of the TNPD, recalls that the U.S. government carried out their assistance for the Thai police with great caution. Therefore, all the CIA members ostensibly hired by the Sea Supply to train the Thai police -- especially the BPP and PARU, at that time disguised themselves as civilian advisors (*thi prueksa phonlaruean*) even though most BPP and PARU members were well aware that they were military veterans. In addition, the CIA sent only two "civilian advisors" at a time and frequently rotated them with new agents.[83]

The SEA Supply opened a paratrooper's training course in a military camp called Erawan Camp in Lopburi, which could train fifty policemen at a time in airborne and guerrilla warfare starting in April 1951.[84] To establish an eight-week course in parachuting, heavy weapons training and guerrilla warfare tactics, the CIA assigned James William Lair -- better known as 'Bill' Lair, who arrived in Bangkok in March 1951 on his first overseas CIA assignment.[85]

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[81] *Tai rom phrabarami*, 3.

[82] Suraphon Chulaphram, "*Tochodo nai yisip et pi thi phan ma* [BPP in the Last Twenty One Years]," in *Kong banchakan tamruat trawen chaidaen thiraluek nai kanpoet akhan bocho tochodo, 7 phruetsaphakhom 2518* [Border Patrol Police Headquarters, Commemorative volume marking the opening of the headquarters building, 7 May 1975]. (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1975), 81.; See also, Fineman, *Special Relationship,* 134.; Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, February 1, 2010. *New York Times* reports on September 20, 1957 that the "Sea Supplies Corporation is a private United States enterprise with headquarters in Miami. It has a contract with Thailand to train and equip Thai police." Quote from the article entitled, "Private Training Venture": *New York Times*, September 20, 1957, 7.

[83] Suraphon Chulaphram. "*Langchak kan chattang tamruat raksa chaidaen lae kong asa raksa dinden* [Behind the Scene of Border Defense Police and Volunteer Defense Corps' Establishment]," in *Anuson phon tamruat ek suraphon chulaphram* [Cremation Volume, Police General Suraphon Chulaphram]. (Bangkok: O.S. Printing House, 1996), 81.

[84] *Sisippi tochodo*, p.67.

[85] Kenneth J. Conboy, *Shadow War: the CIA's Secret War in Laos* (Boulder: Paladin Press, 1995), 57. To the PARU members, Bill Lair was introduced as the Police Colonel James William Lair. See *Prawat khai naresuan*, 7.; *Kong banchakan 1975*, 105.

Another training advisor Jeffrey Cheek also arrived around the same time.[86] On April 25, 1951, William Donovan and Phao invited Phibun, the Thai commander of the army, air force and navy, and some high-ranking military officers to the American trainers' demonstrations of parachuting, shooting of the U.S. special weapons and mortars in Erawan Camp.[87] After receiving compliments from the Thai military officials, the CIA moved on to training the police volunteers. From the beginning, the CIA and SEA Supply controlled both the selection and training procedures with the assistance from Thai military and police commanders.[88] As a result, the unconventional warfare course in Erawan Camp trained a total of eleven paratrooper teams within two-year period. The first three teams were consisted of the recruits from the police only, then from the forth term, the course admitted applicants from the army and air force.[89] However, trainings held with mixed security forces, especially those with instructors from the army and police, encountered a serious obstacle in the discrepancies in operational procedures within multiple branches of the security service, and a suitable compromise could not be reached. Thus, joint trainings with the police and army took place only once in 1951 during the Erawan Camp years.[90]

Out of the first group of five hundred trainees, Bill Lair and the Thai police commanders selected fifty men to constitute a unit called the Police Paratroopers (*tamruat phonrom*) in 1951,

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[86] In the BPP and PARU's accounts, there is confusion around the name of Jeffrey Cheek, often confused with Jefferson, as he was called "Jeff" all the time. Bill Lair confirmed me that it was Jeffrey Cheek. Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 8.; Interview with Bill Lair, February 14, 2013.

[87] *Prawat khai naresuan* , 5-6.

[88] Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*, 155.

[89] According to Suraphon, the fourth term trainees were comprised of 100 men from the police, 50 from the army and another 50 from the air force: Suraphon, "*Tochodo nai yisip et pi*," 80.

[90] *Kong banchakan 1975*, 105.

which became the PARU Company in 1953.[91] In the meantime, Phao helped Bill Lair to open the Naresuan Camp in Hua Hin, Prachuap Khirikhan province, directly across from the royal family's summer residence called Klai Kangwon Palace, as a central base for the newly established PARU Company under the Police Motor Vehicle Division of TNPD. After this unit completed another modern weapons training in Ubon Ratchathani and Chiang Mai, PARU Company and all the SEA Supply trainers moved to Hua Hin. Naresuan Camp became the major PARU base from its official opening with the presence of King and Queen on April 27, 1954 to the present.[92] The history of PARU will be further examined in Chapter Six.

The rapidly evolving political situation in Southeast Asia in 1953 convinced the Thai military government of the feasibility of Vietminh invasion to Thailand and also of the uncertainty of the future border security, particularly in the northeast and north regions. One intriguing anecdote about the deteriorating border security is told in Siddhi Savetsila's memoir. In 1953, Siddhi accompanied Phao and Donovan to inspect the regional security condition in Nakhon Phanom province. While they were walking around the border areas, they heard the sounds of gun shooting. Later he learned that the Thai government was unable to send any armed forces to investigate the incidents because of the 1941 peace treaty between Thailand and France. This experience alarmed all three inspectors of the urgency to create paramilitary police to guard the border areas in the peacetime.[93]

On the other hand, when the tension grew in Southeast Asia, Dwight D. Eisenhower came to office. Indeed, growing recognition to the police force from the early Cold War era also

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[91] *Prawat khai naresuan*, 6-7; *Sisippi tochodo*, 66-67.

[92] *Prawat khai naresuan*, 9; *Tai rom phrabarami*, 75-77.; *Sisippi tochodo*, 69.

[93] Siddhi, "*Tamruat trawen chaidaen*," 126.

reflects the changing perceptions in counterinsurgency concepts and strategies within the U.S. government. Although President Eisenhower weighed more on the use of military force in countering the communist expansion in Asian countries, he began to recognize the necessity of mobilizing the indigenous police in the local-level counterinsurgency. As discussed earlier, Eisenhower's renewed interest of utilizing the local police force in the U.S. anticommunist counterinsurgency was mainly drawn from the conclusion of the PSB-D23 report in 1953 that had emphasized the significance of the village level security guarded by the indigenous paramilitary groups.[94] In brief, the report suggested a two-phase plan. First, the U.S. should develop, expand, and accelerate programs for the creation and employment of indigenous guerrilla and paramilitary forces in Thailand. This objective would complement psychological warfare by American agents. In the second place, the project would help direct these Thai guerrilla and paramilitary forces toward the more general objective of self-defense.[95]

If this two-phase plan proposed an idea of building the indigenous paramilitaries to guard the local security, the Malay case gave a sort of confirmation to Eisenhower and CIA about mobilizing the local police with renewed counterinsurgency strategies. When Eisenhower came to office, the Malayan police force was leading the Emergency period to a victory for the British colonial government and the new Malay Federation. The Malay Communist Party members had continued fighting in the jungles near Thai-Malay borders but the numbers of guerrilla fighters rapidly decreased from 1952 after the implementation of the Briggs plan and Sir Gerald Templer's counterinsurgency strategy of wining hearts-and-minds of both Chinese and Malay communists. Inspired by the Malay experience, Eisenhower came to believe that such the

[94] *PSB-D23*, 5.

[95] *PSB-D23*, 23, 29, 35.

psychological warfare could yield satisfactory and permanent impacts if indigenous police fought what were in essence regional conflicts.[96] The CIA members and the Eisenhower administration were now assured that Thai police force should play a central role in the counterinsurgency campaigns in Thailand and throughout the Southeast Asian region. Thus, Eisenhower administration urged the necessity of "recognizing the police as the first line of defense against subversion and insurgency." [97]

Immediately following the Vietminh's invasion of Laos, Phao issued an official order for establishing the Border Defense Police for the Northeastern Region (*tamruat raksa chaidaen phak isan*) on May 6, 1953, and the TNPD began training the selected police force in Suranarai Camp in Nakhon Ratchasima province. To recruit the trainees, TNPD called for volunteers from the Provincial Police in sixty-eight provinces, and organized twelve personnel with one commissioned officer for each platoon. The first round of weapon and military tactics trainings took place in May 12-17, 1953. During the first year of training, the Training Office Center of Border Defense Police Headquarters in Nakhon Ratchasima received about a thousand volunteers.[98] After the first eight weeks of training, twenty-six platoons were dispatched to various towns in northeastern Thailand.[99] In the same year, the Burmese military and KMT forces clashed in the north, prompting the Ministry of Interior to establish the Border Defense Police for Phayap Region (*tamruat raksa chaidaen phak phayap*) with three companies of police

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[96] Fineman, *Special Relationship,* 173.

[97] Quoted in Michael D. Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms: The Failure of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 86. Originally from the USAID, Office of Public Safety. "History of OPS, 1955-Present," (January 1970), 45.

[98] Suraphon, "*Tochodo nai yisip et pi*," 76.

[99] *Tai rom phrabarami*, 11.

forces on August 3.[100] Phao took uncontested leadership of the newly founded Border Defense Police (BDP) from May 1953 on. By the time the Thai government issued an order to formalize the Border Patrol Police in late 1954, the force had grown to ninety-four platoons in total.[101]

However, confusion grew between the existing Territorial Defense Police and the newly founded Border Defense Police because of their conflicting responsibilities and field of operations, as the size of both units had grown rapidly.[102] For instance, the BDP could receive travel expenses reimbursement for their operational trips to the remote border areas whereas the TDP could not. The reason for this was, while the TDP was perceived as a local stationary force, the BDP was seen as the mobile police and thus only the BDP could get the travel support. Moreover, because of its hasty installation, the military capacity of TDP was far lower than the BDP, which had received more streamlined unconventional warfare training in Suranarai Camp before appointment. The line of command was also different: the BDP was directly controlled by Phao while the TDP was under the supervision of Provincial Police and regional military commanders.[103]

The confusion and conflicts between the TDP and BDP, on the other hand, demands further conceptual scrutiny. After the Naresuan Committee had already set up the paramilitary forces -- that is, the TDP-- why did the Thai government and the CIA form the BDP? Moreover, what was the implication in the changes of name from "territorial (*dinden*)" to "border (*chaidaen*)" between 1951 and 1953? First of all, it is important to understand the general political, historical

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[100] *Tai rom phrabarami*, 11.

[101] Suraphon, "*Langchak kan chattang*," 82.

[102] By 1954, the TDP had grown to 48 platoons and BDP to 44 platoons. See Soem, *Rueang tamruat trawen chaidaen,*13.

[103] *Kong banchakan 1975*, 106.

context that gave rise to the military police force -- including the Police Field Force in 1940 -- with different names. To summarize, the "territorial" means *inside* Thailand surrounded by national boundary and the "border" implies the actual boundary or the dividing line itself. Therefore, the Territorial Defense Police's operations could take place anywhere but *within* the Thailand's sovereign territory. On the contrary, the Border Defense Police were to operate mainly in the Thai side border towns, but sometimes, it could go *beyond* the Thai boundary to protect the Thailand's territorial borderlines. In this respect, the change of the name from "territorial" to "border" implies the Thai concept of national security has extended from "within the nation" to "intra-national" or "international." It also means that the Thai national security policies could be undertaken inside and outside of Thailand's borders, as the BPP and PARU's activities will vividly show in the following chapters. Although the Police Field Force, Territorial Defense Police or Border Defense Police are a small band of Thai armed forces, their separate formation vividly mirrors the gradual changes in the Thai perceptions on national and regional securities in the early years of the Cold War.

To end the confusion between the TDP and BDP, TNPD finally ordered the integration of both forces into the Border Patrol Police (*tamruat trawen chaidaen*, BPP) on December 15, 1954 and the reorganization became official on January 4, 1955.[104] Phao again assumed the position of first commissioner over the unit comprised of 114 platoons.[105] Upon establishing the Border

[104] The BPP was also known as the Gendarme Police Force among the foreign advisors in the early years but the BPP leaders decided to use only the Border Patrol Police from 1958. As an example, one of the BPP HQ's report published in 1956 in both Thai and English uses GPF, meaning Gendarmerie Police Force in English although its Thai title was *tamruat trawen chaidaen*, meaning Border Patrol Police. Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, February 21, 2011. The 1956 report is: Border Patrol Police Headquarters. *Kan songkhro chaopa chaokhao lae prachachon klai khamanakhom* [Aid given to hill tribes and people in remote areas]. (Bilingual report with English title, "Aid Given to Hill Tribe People and People far from Communication".) (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1956). [hereafter, *Aid Given to Hill Tribe*]

[105] Suraphon, "*Langchak kan chattang*," 82.

Patrol Police General Headquarters, the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense and the American advisory group outlined together the responsibilities of the BPP as following: this new police force was assigned to patrol the borders, counter infiltration, and suppress insurgencies in the border areas during the peacetime. In the wartime, the force was to support the military and defeat enemies' attack.[106]

Approximately five years between the official organization of the BPP in 1955 and its demotion under the Provincial Police in 1960, the BPP had launched several projects that, in turn, ultimately allowed the unit to survive the most crucial crisis in its history. The primary duties of BPP were to protect the border areas from the enemy's infiltration, to collect intelligence from the border people, and to suppress conflicts and illegal activities both in the peacetime and wartime. In addition to these missions, the BPP initiated civic actions called, "Development and Aid to Hill Tribe People and People Far from Communication (*kan songkhro chaopa chaokhao lae prachachon klai khamanakhom*)" under the auspices of Phibun administration.[107] To carry out this mission effectively, the BPP built schools, border patrol stations, community development centers, and medical clinics in the remote areas. One of the unit's primary duties was to collect intelligence among the villagers in the border areas to counter communist infiltration, so the BPP established contacts and close relations with the highland villages. Indeed, these activities permitted the BPP members to gain substantial knowledge and experience about the border villages and people.

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[106] *Kong banchakan 1975*, 106, 109.

[107] For this earlier civic actions of the Border Patrol Police, see Manas Khantatatbumroong, *Khrongkan phathana phuea khuammankhong* [Development for Security Project]. Internal report, September 28, 1975.; *Aid Given to Hill Tribe*. "*klai khamanakhom*" should be translated to "remote areas" in English but I followed the BPP's original English translation here: "far from communication".

In particular, the Border Patrol Police School project became the main symbol of BPP civic actions as a token of dedication to their mission of aiding and defending the marginalized people since then. In the beginning, PARU initiated the Border Information Center as a part of its intelligence mission. The Border Information Centers was designed to create a contact point with the villagers, mostly the highland minorities in the remote border areas but in the beginning years, the PARU members encountered a critical obstacle in collecting information from the border people: that is, language. Therefore, the PARU members began teaching Thai language in their Border Information Centers and from 1955 the BPP set up classes for the highland minority children in place of the Border Information Centers. In early 1956, BPP opened the first official Border Patrol Police School in Chiang Rai province. Overall, the BPP had accumulated experiences and knowledge about the remote border people, especially the highland minorities, and the latter group came to be familiar with the BPP's presence in their villages or vicinities whether they welcomed it or not. Building on these experiences and familiarity, BPP's could smoothly transform from the intelligence paramilitary to the rural development agency in the 1960s.

The BPP also facilitated several military training courses for the Village Defense Corps and other paramilitary forces. While waiting for the order of BPP establishment to be issued officially, Phao, with the King's approval, ordered the building of Volunteer Defense Corps (*kong asa raksa dinden*, VDC) under the Ministry of Interior as a supplementary civilian force for the BPP on February 10, 1954.[108] Although it was the Territorial Defense Department under the Ministry of Defense that had proposed the formation of this civilian defense group, Phao

[108] Volunteer Defense Corps Office, *Warasan asa raksa dinden chabap phiset – 57 pi kansathapna kong asa raksa dinden krasuang mahat thai 10 kumphaphan 2554* [Village Defense Corps Journal Special Volume - 57 Years of Village Defense Corps under the Ministry of Interior, 10 February 2011]. (Bangkok: Village Defense Corps Printing, 2011), 25. [hereafter, *Warasan asa raksa dinden*]

appointed the BPP as the main trainer and administrator of this unit.[109] Therefore, the BPP took the responsibility of recruiting, training, and administering the VDC operations from its formation. Police Colonel Krachang Phonlaphoem, who later became the third commissioner to the BPP Headquarters in 1961-1971, served as the head of VDC at the time. Under Krachang's leadership, BPP established the main VDC operational camp constituted with 960 officers. Additionally, in the BPP training camps, the BPP officers trained 2,359 civilian members and recruited 555 specialists among them nurses, radio officers and reserve forces to support the regular VDC members' operations. Those trained members served the role of village vigilante in their border hometowns next to Laos and Burma.[110]

Until the army took over the responsibility of administering this civilian defense organization, BPP trained approximately 25,000 VDC members.[111] According to Army Major General Yuth Somboon, this massive training offered to the VDC members by the BPP was possible because the unit received enormous amount of U.S. foreign aids and had enough manpower.[112] Another advantage that the BPP could take while developing the VDC was its regional deployment. Because the BPP units were widely spread around the border areas where the necessity of organizing the local defense groups was felt more urgently than urban areas, it could easily find a recruitment pool for the VDC membership.

In addition, because the BPP had received such modern military training in unconventional warfare and psychological operations, the unit could also organize training courses for foreign armed forces. In 1954, for instance, a total of twenty-four Cambodian military and police officers

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[109] Yuth, *The Development of Thailand's Territorial Defense*, 14.

[110] Suraphon, "*Tochodo nai yisip et pi*," 82.; *Warasan asa raksa dinden,* 25-33.

[111] Suraphon, "*Tochodo nai yisip et pi*," 82.

[112] Yuth, *The Development of Thailand's Territorial Defense*, 24.

came to Suranarai Camp, Nakhon Ratchasima province, to receive training in weapons and special combat for eight weeks. In 1955, twenty-six Vietnamese officers consisting of civilian, military and police received training from the BPP and PARU in basic intelligence, sabotage, tactics, unconventional warfare, special weapons training, and small-unit combat for eight weeks in Naresuan Camp.[113] Additionally, the BPP provided a special police training course for twenty-three Vietnamese commissioned police officers, twenty-four Cambodian commissioned police officers, and four hundred ninety six Lao commissioned police officers until 1957. According to a former BPP member's accounts, when there grew the political tension along with the Vietminh's overrun to Laos in 1953 and its aftermath, a total of ten thousand Lao forces resided and trained in every BPP training camps.[114] In this regard, while developing the unconventional warfare strategies and psychological operation programs in Thailand, BPP served as the transnational force that supported the U.S. government's indigenous military buildup in Southeast Asia. Predictably, the BPP gained much popularity among the national and foreign forces in those years.

To make this unit become the most qualified and disciplined force in Southeast Asia, the U.S. government not only offered money but also human resources. Because of the American's unfailing efforts to build a friendly and professional relationship with the BPP members, former commissioner Suraphon Chulaphram fondly remembers most CIA advisors who came to train the BPP. He particularly stresses out that those American advisors stayed with the BPP for

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[113] Pranet Ritreutchai, Samroeng Singhiran, Choetchamrat Chitkarunarat, Prasoet Kuangkaeo, Somnuek Kritsanasuwan, and Thongchai Limsuklam, "*Prawat kan fuek dot rom khong krom tamruat* [The History of Paratrooper Training of Thai National Police Department]," in *Kong banchakan tamruat trawen chaidaen thiraluek nai kanpoet akhan bocho tochodo, 7 phruetsaphakhom 2518* [Border Patrol Police Headquarters, Commemorative volume marking the opening of the headquarters building, 7 May 1975]. (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1975), 154.

[114] Suraphon, "*Tochodo nai yisip et pi*," 82, 85.

twenty-four-hours working, sleeping and eating Thai food together. Sometimes, conflicts occurred between the Thai and U.S. instructors but differences in their opinions and attitudes were easily resolved, and more importantly, the U.S. advisors did not show condescending attitudes toward the Thai counterparts. It was because, according to Suraphon's understanding, those advisors "love Thai people and Thailand very much." Owing to their help and dedication, Suraphon tells, "we could carry out our missions of defending the national security more effectively."[115]

Like the CIA members did, other American officials and military officers also showed their interest and respect to the BPP. While Donovan stayed in Thailand as a U.S. ambassador during 1953-1954, he often spent weekends in the Lopburi paramilitary training camp with his CIA friends and Phao.[116] In addition, the Director of the CIA, Allen W. Dulles, with a group of American military officers and SEA Supply managers, visited Naresuan Camp to inspect the PARU's training progress in 1956. The American visitors and Allen Dulles even spent a night with the PARU members in their jungle camp in Huay Sat Yai.[117] These informal contacts made Donovan and other CIA members a major supporter of Phao and the BPP/PARU.

In addition, Phao gained other foreign support as his police became popular among the Southeast Asian regional forces. Shortly after the formation of the BDP, Phao had a meeting with Malay government officials in Singapore in August 1953 and agreed to launch a joint action program among the Thai BDP, Malay constabulary and military to suppress Malay communist insurgencies in-between the southern Thai and northern Malay border areas.[118] On February 4,

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[115] Suraphon, "*Tochodo nai yisip et pi*," 90-91.

[116] Fineman, *Special Relationship,* 181.

[117] Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 2.

[118] *Sisippi tochodo*, 37-38.

1957, Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman paid a visit to Thailand to inspect the BPP trainings in Betong, Yala province and complimented the accomplishments of the Thai police in operating guerrilla warfare.[119]

The Thai monarchy's close relationship with Phao and the BPP was also remarkable. As a young and yet feeble monarch who had succeeded the throne after his brother's sudden death, King Bhumibol came to appreciate Phao's dominance over Thai politics and thus attempted to cultivate a close relationship with this police leader. Since his return to Thailand in 1951, the king frequently attended police ceremonies with Phao. Whenever he traveled to Klai Kangwon Palace in Hua Hin for vacations, he visited the PARU's Naresuan Camp -- which is conveniently located right across the Palace -- and played sports with the BPP members. One of his hobbies was range shooting at that time and thus the king often visited the BPP's camps either in Hua Hin or Lopburi to receive instruction from professional BPP and PARU shooters.[120] On November 11, 1955, the king and queen embarked on their first, twenty-day rural tour to the northeastern provinces. Despite the tight schedule, the king and queen made a visit to two BPP camps in the region: Suranarai Camp in Nakhon Ratchasima province on November 4, 1955 and Senironayut Camp in Udon Thani province on November 8, 2011.[121] Apparently, this direct contact with the king inspired loyalty among the BPP and PARU members towards the monarchy and created an intense feeling to protect the monarchy from any threats.

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[119] *Sisippi tochodo*, 80. See also, Suraphon, "*Tochodo nai yisip et pi*," 81-82.

[120] Paul Handley, *The King Never Smiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 124, 163.

[121] Manas Khantatatbumroong, *Bantuek khuam songcham phra maha karuna thikhun lon klao lon kra moem ke tamruat trawen chaidaen lae luksuea chaoban* [Memoir: Divine Grace of Their Majesties for the Border Patrol Police and Village Scout], unpublished manuscript (January 9, 2011), 2.

Having such the powerful supporters in their sides, the BPP and PARU could enjoy both the prestige and privilege that came with being among the region's most elite paramilitary forces trained by American war veterans with high-end armaments and being a distinctive armed force that received a special attention from such the powerful figures like the monarchy. From their formation, the CIA-SEA Supply provided extravagant amounts of money along with modern, sophisticated armaments and vehicles and the Thai Ministry of Defense also sponsored some of the BPP activities financially.[122] More importantly, the head of these units was one of the most influential figures within the Thai military government at that time -- that is, Phao Siyanon. The dramatic growth of the police force and the increase in modern armaments under Phao's leadership, and the support Phao had been given by the U.S. and royal family greatly rankled the Army General Sarit Thanarat. In the views of Sarit and other army officials, Phao was using the police department as a cover to build his own private military that could rival the army. In particular, the BPP's close connection with Phao, the CIA, and also the monarchy caused Sarit to become more suspicious about the presence of BPP over time. The time of change was coming near, as Sarit's suspicion and resentment towards Phao and the BPP grew further.

Chapter Conclusion

The Thai Border Patrol Police was born out of the converged interest of the Thai and U.S. governments in establishing Thailand as an anticommunist bastion against the historical backdrop of decolonizing Southeast Asia. Although it was the U.S.-CIA that had initiated the building of this paramilitary, the Thai political leaders were able to push forward their own political agendas by creating a new police unit instead of mobilizing other armed forces. In this

[122] Lobe, *United States National Security Policy and Aid,* 23.; Suraphon, "*Tochodo nai yisip et pi*," 91-92.

respect, it is important to review the political and historical context that directly influenced the formation of the BPP.

First, as the U.S. government wanted to utilize Thailand as the strategic outpost of its anticommunist campaign, the CIA began to cultivate special relationships with key Thai military figures to obtain their support and help for its covert actions. The Thai military leaders, particularly Phibun and Phao, desired to capture the external support to strengthen their political power base and thus they actively utilized the U.S.-CIA anticommunist counterinsurgency campaigns in Thailand. The economic and military aid and high-end armaments to support the BPP and other police forces had greatly contributed in strengthening Phao's political power. Finally, when the BPP was formed in the early 1950s, both the U.S. and Thai leaders began to make this unit an elite, mobile paramilitary force that could operate not only in Thailand but also beyond the Thai borderlines. The founding fathers from both countries expected that the Thai BPP could extend its operations to counter the communist domination throughout Southeast Asia, and make Thailand the central base of anticommunism. Eventually, their dream came true but just halfway because the lavish attention and sources poured into the formation of this unit sowed discomfort to other political rivalries. As the power competition in the Thai military leaders intensified, this new paramilitary police had to face a life-or-death crisis.

Chapter 3. Modernization and Counterinsurgency

This chapter surveys the Thai elites' adaptation of American modernization and counterinsurgency policies and conflate them with the traditional Thai nationalism. This nationalism promotes nation, religion and monarchy as the symbols of national unity to construct the ideological infrastructure of nation-building. In this endeavor, the Thai elite allies actively harnessed Eisenhower and Kennedy's foreign aid and counterinsurgency policies to strengthen their political legitimacy and authority. The rise of the monarchy as the symbol of Thai national unity and progress during Sarit's regime thus reveals that this traditional institution was also gearing towards the power struggle, and soon brought forward the royalist nationalism that would spread to entire country at the height of the Cold War.

Modernization, Counterinsurgency and Nation-Building

> The weapons used by the BPP [Border Patrol Police] are of two kinds. The first one consists of M16 and M79 assault rifles which are light and can be carried anywhere… The second kind of weapon we use is the "political weapon." This, we use with the local people. To explain, it consists of providing education, forming schools, teaching young people in remote areas, providing medical assistance, advising them as to job opportunities so that they can improve their incomes, and rescuing and helping those suffering from both natural and man-made disasters. We consider this "political weapon" to be very important in giving the people security and happiness.
>
> [Police Lieutenant General Charoenrit Chamratromran, February 8, 1982] [1]

Oftentimes, the Cold War is represented as the ideological conflict between liberal democracy and communism or, power competition between the American-led Free World and Soviet-China's Communist bloc. The first caveat to these conventional assumptions is that under the name of Cold War, hot wars also took place and both the cold and hot wars were not mere clashes between the communist and anticommunist. Second, a number of new nation-states emerged in this period. Cold War history is, therefore, also a history of new nation-state building across the globe. Against the backdrop of intensifying cold and hot wars, these postcolonial nation-states began constructing its own sovereign states by developing a political system, ideology and leadership beyond the confines of liberal democracy or communism. In this context, this chapter will investigate the main characteristics of American modernization theory

[1] Vithoon Pungprasert, "BPP Commander Pol. Lt. Gen. Charoenrit Chamrasromran: Not only force but other 'weapons' to win the battles," *Nation*, February 8, 1982.

and counterinsurgency paradigm set against expansion of communist movement especially during the Dwight Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy administrations to understand how these American Cold War ideologies were refashioned and incorporated into the nation-building agendas of local elites, particularly the monarchy in the Thai case.

Modernization was, and perhaps still is, a nation-building ideology. Both in the U.S. and in the newly "emerging states," there has been no more influential ideology that has been almost unanimously agreed with, aggressively mobilized to, and widely advocated in building the postcolonial nation-states from the dawn of the Cold War to present. At the same time, modernization theories provided the central ideological background of the anticommunist counterinsurgency strategies during the Cold War. In this regard, a simplistic definition of the relationship between the modernization theory and counterinsurgency strategy could be "symbiotic." As one of the key slogans of the Public Safety Division in the USAID, "development for security" says, modernization of the postcolonial nation-states to "take-off" from traditional to modern societies could be insured by the effective implementation of counterinsurgency campaigns against not only the communist but also the antigovernment, or anti-state movements. In this respect, the modernization theories and counterinsurgency strategies share the same goal in its actual implementation: stabilization of the nation to preserve the hierarchical state order. In this way, national unity and progress became the main catchphrases of the local elite's nation-building programs, and these were largely rationalized by the American modernization and counterinsurgency paradigms. Let me elaborate this last point by briefly reviewing the literature on modernization and counterinsurgency.

Among the literatures that discuss the symbiotic relations between the American modernization theory and counterinsurgency strategies during the Cold War period, three

accounts stand out: they are Michael Latham's *Modernization as Ideology* (2000); D. Michael Shafer's *Deadly Paradigms* (1988); and Nils Gilman's *Mandarins of the Future* (2003).[2] In brief, Michael Latham argues that modernization was an ideology, rather than a mere social science theory, because it is "a conceptual framework that articulated a common collection of assumptions about the nature of American society and its ability to transform a world perceived as both materially and culturally deficient." In this way, modernization theory constituted a general "worldview," which has constantly "invoked older conceptions of America's destined role as world leader and redefined them through a supposedly objective developmental schema."[3]

D. Michael Shafer shares Latham's view of modernization as an ideological backdrop of the U.S. foreign policymaking establishment. Shafer explains that despite obvious failure, American counterinsurgency policy "did not change because policymaker's faulty understanding of insurgency did not change; and their understanding did not change because of the nature and functions of the ideas underlying it."[4] As a consequence, according to Shafer, American foreign policy that aimed at modernizing the underdeveloped, insurgency-plagued areas by providing lucrative economic and military aid to the target governments and supporting the local elites to lead the modernization of their own country, faced the two crucial problems: irrelevance and counterproductivity.[5]

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[2] Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).; D. Michael Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms: The Failure of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).; Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

[3] Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 5, 12, 13, 17.

[4] Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 3, 4.

[5] Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 5.

In a similar vein, Nils Gilman argues that postcolonial American views toward the non-Western peoples "had less to do with anything intrinsic to those people than it did with Americans' understanding of their own identity," and thus, "the project of development abroad" became "inseparable from a process of national self-definition at home."[6] Gilman further contends that in fact, the modernization theory turned "anti-Communism from the hysterical red-baiting populism of McCarthy into a social-scientifically respectable political position" by "promoting modernization as a high-concept version of Americanism: materialism without class conflict, secularism without irreverence, democracy without disobedience."[7]

Including the three accounts above, the recent accounts on the modernization theory by and large agree to the two key innate limitations.[8] The first limitation of the theory derives from its reductionist worldview. The theory reduced the dynamically transforming postcolonial world into an analyzable subject that the predictable variables and chartable data could explain the cause and consequences of the changes in simple terms. At the center of this limitation, there is the widely accepted modernization theory's key assumption that there exists a common, singular path of global historical changes from "traditional" to "modern" societies. Gilman therefore suggests that the modernization theorists' simplification of the global changes resulted in the theory becoming "hopelessly reductionist in its conception of change abroad, fundamentally conservative in its politics, and blindly reflective of the political and social prejudices of the mid-century American Establishment."[9] Second, building upon this reductionist view, the theory

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[6] Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future*, 12, 71.

[7] Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future*, 13.

[8] For example, See, David C. Engerman et al., *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development and the Global Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003).

[9] Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future*, 3.

takes a conservative statist approach in resolving instability and insecurity of the newly emerged nation-states. This statist approach argued that the local elites who received a "western education" -- and thus allegedly "modernized" -- should lead the transformation of their traditional, underdeveloped societies. In a similar vein, since they credited the modernizing local elites as the strongest indigenous supporter of the American global hegemony and liberal capitalism, proponents of the modernization theory more or less unanimously agreed with the necessity of promoting developmental dictatorship in the non-Western underdeveloped world.[10]

The statist-centered conception of the modernization theory and its impacts on the American foreign policymaking establishment can be more articulated by examining its rise and fall throughout the 1950s and 1960s. First of all, how did the modernization theory capture American academia and the policymakers' attention in this period? Gilman argues it was the postcolonial conditions that allowed the modernization theory to become a dominant paradigm among American liberal academia as well as policymakers. After the World War II, U.S. sought for the universal ideology that could surpass the lingering impacts of European imperialism as well as rapidly expanding communism. With its material affluence, the U.S. foreign policymakers and social scientists believed that their imposition of modernization, or "development" as the generic solution could resolve the increasing political instabilities and uncertainties in the postcolonial world. In this way, as Gilman says, the U.S. adopted development as a "mantra."[11] In a similar fashion, Latham argues that modernization theory could function powerfully during the 1960s because the American foreign policymakers perceived it as "a means to promote a liberal world in which the development of 'emerging'

[10] See, for example, Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future*, 11-12.; Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 63-64.

[11] Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future*, 32-33.

nations would protect the security of the United States," and because the theory "promised to accelerate the 'progress' of a world requiring America's resources and enlightened tutelage."[12]

Juxtaposed against these beliefs, why did modernization theory or the American effort to modernize the rest of the world eventually fail to meet its goal of spreading liberal democracy? Foremost, the modernization theory failed to bring about its predicted consequences because the theory made the assumption that modernization meant "Westernization" or more practically, "Americanization," revealing a narrow worldview of the modernization theorists. Edward Shils contends that modernity in the new states was "being Western without the onus of dependence on the West," agreeing with Reinhard Bendix's definition of modernization that refers "to all those *social* and *political* changes that accompanied industrialization in many countries of Western civilization.[13] In this respect, the American modernization theory resembled the civilizing mission of the European imperialist that was to justify their intervention to the local society. In addition, the dichotomization between "traditional" and "modern" societies bore falseness from its conception. Modernization theorists posited the difference between "traditional" and "modern" societies by defining the "traditional" as agriculture-centered, rural, apolitical and thus malleable, apathetic and conservative; and the "modern" as an industrial, urban, political and liberal. This reductionist dichotomy derives from the negligence of multifaceted local societies of postcolonial states. In this sense, as Carl Pletsch criticizes, the

[12] Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 209.

[13] Edward Shils, "Political Development in the New States," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2:3 (April 1960), 267.; Reinhard Bendix, *Nation-Building and Citizenship: Studies of Our Changing Social Order* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 6. (emphases in original)

modernization theorists were dealing with "a pair of abstract and hardly precise binary distinctions"[14] against the sophisticated, complex and rapidly changing world.

Finally, one of the last key assumptions of the theory was that the modernizing local elites would lead the traditional, peripheral, and malleable masses, which also ignored the possible backfire from these indigenous leaders who still sought the comfort from being an elite class in traditional way, and who strove to ensure their superiority over the population. As Latham argues, the elites in the "developing areas" took a hard look at modernization theory's categories and "selectively appropriated its ideals to suit their own diverse needs and purposes." [15] Shafer similarly states that leaders in the underdeveloped countries "used American aid to reinforce elements of their rule Americans considered source of insurgent strength."[16] In other words, the seemingly modern local elites who were expected to lead their own nations to modern society actually hijacked the American development aid and assistance to strengthen their traditional rule over the masses. As a consequence, the American efforts of modernization, as Latham argues, "rarely produced the kind of effects its advocates anticipated on paper."[17]

These innate limitations of the modernization theory are similarly reflected in the conception and development of anticommunist counterinsurgency strategies during the Cold War. In their studies on the impact of the counterinsurgency campaigns on state development, Rich and Stubbs concludes the institutional state could expand or disintegrate as a result of the

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[14] Carl E. Pletsch, "The Three Worlds, or the Division of Social Scientific Labor, Circa 1950-1975," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 23:4 (October 1981), 573.

[15] Michael E. Latham, "Introduction: Modernization, International History, and the Cold War World," in *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development and the Global Cold War*, eds. David C. Engerman et al. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 3.

[16] Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 5.

[17] Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 18.

counterinsurgency campaigns because they "can both enhance as well as destroy the legitimacy of state institutions."[18] Here, it should be remembered that any established governments or regimes do not automatically possess political legitimacy. In other words, the insurgency against the established authority and institution can be a test of its presumed right to rule and a test of the capability to cope with the opposition against them. In this respect, local resistance against state violence could be considered "an integral part" of the process of power consolidation in the national states, like Youssef Cohen, Brian Brown and A.F.K. Organski contend: "a significant amount of the political violence in new states is a function of the conflicts inherent in the process of primitive central state power accumulation."[19] In sum, the increased insurgencies could offer a chance to reinforce the regime's authority and legitimacy if its counterinsurgency campaign defeats the insurgents. In this vein, counterinsurgency campaigns can be defined as a response of the state apparatus to the questions from non- or anti-governmental groups on its right to rule in order to maintain the regime's legitimacy and authority.

To insure its successful implementation, counterinsurgency policies emphasized the role of the state, led by modernizing local elites, to transform an unstable traditional society into a modern, stable one. This statist-centered approach essentially agrees with the modernization theory's key assumption of the singular and vertical path to progress and security. Thus the postcolonial nation-building's key slogans, national unity and progress, which were backed up by the modernization and counterinsurgency ideologies, are inherently hierarchical. The local elites sought legitimation of their continuing power domination from these American Cold War

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[18] Paul B. Rich and Richard Stubbs, "Introduction: The Counter-Insurgent State," in *The Counter-Insurgent State: Guerrilla Warfare and State-Building in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Paul B. Rich and Richard Stubbs (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 4.

[19] Youssef Cohen et al., "The Paradoxical Nature of State Making: The Violent Creation of Order" in *American Political Science Review* 75:4 (December 1981), 909, 902.

ideologies because essentially, both opposed the hierarchical orders of state. Thus, the local elites voluntarily, and selectively, adapted the American modernization theories and counterinsurgency policies and utilized them for strengthening their ideological infrastructure of nation-building.

To have a better understanding of the relationship between the American modernization and counterinsurgency ideologies and the local nation-building agendas, it should be useful to review the foreign policies of Dwight Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy administrations that led the local elites to indigenize the American Cold War ideologies to fulfill their purpose.

Moving towards the "Decade of Development"

> We must become guardians of the development process rather than custodians of the *status quo*. We must be *pro*-modernization as well as *anti*-communist.
> [Secretary Dean Rusk, June 11, 1962 at the Department of State's Foreign Service Institute][20]

The major difference between the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations' foreign policies derives from the way each dealt with communist expansion in the postcolonial world. Whereas Eisenhower generally pursued the direct suppression of communist insurgency by military operations, Kennedy preferred to counter communism with more civilian measures. This does not necessarily mean that Kennedy overlooked or rejected military measures. On the contrary, by developing both overt and covert counterinsurgency programs disguised under the rhetoric of "development for security" and "modernization," Kennedy wanted to supplement military means with a broader focus on the role of economic, political and social developments on internal security.[21]

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[20] "Remarks by Secretary Rusk" in the Department of State's Foreign Service Institute on June 11, 1962. Reprinted in the *Department of State Bulletin*, July 2, 1962, under the title, "FSI Begins Seminars on Problems of Development and Internal Defense," 41-42. (emphasis in original)

[21] See more on the concept of Kennedy administration's counterinsurgency doctrine from Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 104-114.

In this respect, comparison of the two key components of Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations' foreign policies would allow us to perceive the central themes of American Cold War politics, which include foreign aid policies and counterinsurgency strategies. In brief, the Eisenhower administration's policies surrounding foreign aid and counterinsurgency programs abroad focused on dealing with tangible, imminent "security" issues and promoting military buildup. On the other hand, those of the Kennedy administration concentrated on the preemptive measures that emphasize the "development" of general social and political infrastructures and ideological awareness of the indigenous people, particularly by propagating the imperatives of modernization to improve internal security condition. Whether the emphasis was put on "development" or "security," however, both administrations' foreign policies reflect the same ideological underpinning of the American Cold War politics: that is, modernization. In this sense, it can be said that it was the Eisenhower administration's foreign policies that prepared the ground for the coming of Kennedy's "Decade of Development" or the civilian counterinsurgency era.

After the open-fire battle ended in the Korean peninsula in mid-1953, the Eisenhower administration was restricted from increasing foreign assistance spending. Therefore, Eisenhower asserted that U.S. foreign aid policies should return to "normality" which encourages "private initiative, vigorous competition, and the free market" in the global economy.[22] Accordingly, the Eisenhower administration's foreign aid policy was by and large limited to creating contingency plans, and responding directly to the issues related to the U.S. national

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[22] Michael R. Adamson, " "The Most Important Single Aspect of Our Foreign Policy"?: The Eisenhower Administration, Foreign Aid, and the Third World," in *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War*, eds. Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Johns (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 48-49.; See also Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future*, 174.

security and the changes of Soviet Union's foreign policies. To Eisenhower and his foreign policy advisers, foreign aid should aim at preventing "the expansion of international communism," and the administration should support the recipient's country's status quo rather than promoting drastic economic transformation. In this regard, Michael Adamson argues that Eisenhower was "ambivalent on the economic impact of aid, but hoped that it might serve as a catalyst for growth." [23]

The major changes in Washington's outlook on foreign aid policies came along with the so-called Soviet Union's "economic offensive" during the Eisenhower administration. To persuade the developing nation-states that socialism could save the people from protracted poverty, the Soviet Union began to provide development funds to Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin American from 1954.[24] Moscow's transformation into a patron of development seemed very intimidating, since the U.S. believed the changes of Soviet Union's foreign policy directly challenged the U.S. confidence in its material prosperity and modernity. Thus Washington criticized the Soviet communist's foreign aid program as a "political penetration in disguise."[25]

To counter this political penetration, the Eisenhower administration established the International Cooperation Administration (ICA) in June 1955. By the end of 1955, Eisenhower sent a letter to Secretary of State John F. Dulles to encourage foreign policymakers to pay close attention to "the economic phase of the Cold War," illuminating the fact that the Soviet Union's tactics "shift increasingly from threats and violence to more subtle methods for extending

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[23] Adamson, "The Most Important Single Aspect," 51.

[24] See for the details from Burton I. Kaufman, *Trade and Aid: Eisenhower's Foreign Economic Policy, 1953-1961* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 58-73.; Walt Whitman Rostow, *Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Foreign Aid* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), 13-35.

[25] Adamson, "The Most Important Single Aspect," 57.

communist influence across new borders."[26] The Eisenhower administration's restraint from increasing foreign aid thus declined drastically since the late 1955 and its foreign policy framework moved from "trade, not aid" to "trade and aid," which would eventually permit the coming administration's smooth transition to the "Decade of Development."[27] At the same time, the Cold War battle with the communist world began to expand from the ideological and political sphere, to the socio-economic fields where the U.S. had believed its hegemonic power centered.

Nevertheless, despite changes in the outlook and strategic framework of the foreign aid policy, the Eisenhower administration still believed in private initiatives as the central engine for boosting the global economy. In addition, the conditions of its foreign aid policy stated that only when the recipient governments adopt specific market-based reforms, could the aid play the role of "catalyst" that successfully promoted "local self-help, incentives, and initiatives in mobilizing local resources and developing sound programs."[28] Therefore, one of the most popular social science theorists Walt Whitman Rostow criticized that although there were some changes, the Eisenhower administration's new aid policy was still limited to permitting "the military aid pipeline to be run down."[29] Overall, the administration's inclination towards trade and market-based development initiatives did not bring about expansion of foreign aid policy. As a result, U.S. foreign aid fell twenty-three percent in real terms between 1953 and 1960, which invited harsh criticism from a young, ambitious senator from Massachusetts.[30]

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[26] Cited in Rostow, *Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Foreign Aid*, 112.

[27] Kaufman, *Trade and Aid*, 34-57.; See also Adamson, "The Most Important Single Aspect," 48.

[28] Adamson, "The Most Important Single Aspect," 52.

[29] Rostow, *Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Foreign Aid*, 113.

[30] Adamson, "The Most Important Single Aspect," 48.

In a speech given to the U.S. Senate on February 19, 1959, John F. Kennedy strongly criticized how the Eisenhower administration had based its foreign economic policy on "the requirement of the domestic budgetary and political situation." He, therefore, urged the Senate that:

> I am confident that this nation can recover the initiative, that we can give to a doubting world the realization that we, and not Russia and China, can help them achieve stability and growth…. We can give a convincing demonstration that we have not a propaganda or crisis interest but an enduring long-term interest in the productive economic growth of the less developed nations.[31]

Undoubtedly, the Kennedy administration's endeavor to expand foreign aid and assistance to the so-called "less developed nations" is outstanding in terms of its size, quantity and also its contribution to the survival of his young, democratic regime. At the same time, as Mark Haefele remarks, Kennedy's fight to launch a "Decade of Development" from the early 1960s not only "significantly changed U.S. foreign policy" but also "contributed to the globalization of the Cold War."[32] With suggestions from his policy mentor W. W. Rostow, Kennedy's "Decade of Development" policy envisioned the 1960s becoming the "period when many less developed nations make the transitions to self-sustained growth."[33]

Throughout the decades of undertaking to promote his modernization theory, Rostow argued that the transition from the "traditional" to "modern" society in the developing countries is "inherently painful and volatile." However, this instability can be reduced if the developing nations "concentrate their reactive nationalist impulses on the task of modernization itself as

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[31] Theodore C. Sorensen, ed., *"Let the Word Go Forth": The Speeches, Statements, and Writings of John F. Kennedy* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1991, 1988), 340-341.

[32] Mark H. Haefele, "Walt Rostow's Stages of Economic Growth: Ideas and Action," in *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development and the Global Cold War*, eds. David C. Engerman et al. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 81.

[33] Cited in Haefele, "Walt Rostow's Stages," 95.; See also Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future*, 198.

opposed to other possible expressions of nationalist sentiment." At the same time, if the U.S. as an advanced, modern society can "encourage that concentration of scarce talents, resources, and political energies as well as to provide supplementary external sources," then these transitional, instable countries would gain enough time "to find their feet and go forward on their own." [34] Convinced by the argument, the terminology from Rostow's modernization theories, such as "take-off" and "self-sustained/sustaining growth" were often used in the Kennedy's rhetoric of liberating the underdeveloped, postcolonial nation-states from encroaching communist imperialism through the expansion of U.S. foreign aid and assistance abroad.

As one of the first attempts to realize its ambitious foreign aid programs, Kennedy envisioned an institutionalized vehicle to drive the American initiative of modernizing the non-Western world. Accordingly, the U.S. Congress passed the Foreign Assistant Act on September 4, 1961. The act reorganized the former U.S. foreign assistant program ran by loosely coalesced interdepartmental organizations including the ICA, and separated military from economic aid. Subsequently, the Kennedy administration created the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in the same year.[35] According to its own remarks on its history, the USAID was "the first U.S. foreign assistance organization whose primary emphasis was on long-range economic and social development assistance to foreign countries," and the establishment took place in the context of administration's promotion of "tremendous growth in international

[34] Walt Whitman Rostow, "Development: The Political Economy of the Marshallian Long Period," in *Pioneers in Development*, eds. Gerald M. Meier and Dudley Seers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 238-239, 257-258.

[35] For the summary of Act, see United States Department of State, *Highlights of President Kennedy's New Act for International Development,* Department of State Publication 7211, General Foreign Policy Series 170 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1961).

development assistance."[36] When the new foreign assistance act was on the table, Kennedy proposed $4 billion dollars for the fiscal year 1962 consisting of $1.6 billion for military spending and $2.4 billion for economic assistance.[37] With the installment of USAID, the Kennedy administration could successfully secure the economic and military aid up to a total $6.9 billion dollars in 1962.[38]

What then were the motivations of the Kennedy administration in promoting the increased American assistance and aid for the less developed nations around the globe? A number of accounts emphasize the intention for safeguarding the American national security and economic interest through expansion of its involvement in the foreign national development. On the other hand, some scholars argue there existed a sense of moral obligation that drove the modernization advocates into this new type of Cold War. For instance, Rostow recalls in his 1984 essay:

> As individuals, most of us felt, I suspect, some kind of *moral or religious impulse* to help those striving to come forward through development. In that sense we were in the line that reached back a century and more to the *missionaries from Western societies* who went out to distant and often obscure places, not merely to promulgate the faith but also to teach and to heal. [39]

In a similar fashion, Kennedy himself also called for the American obligation in helping the poor and vulnerable new nations to escape from hunger as well as the threat from the "adversaries of freedom." In his speech to convince Congress to pass the Foreign Assistance Act in 1961, Kennedy strongly urged that the U.S. enact its moral obligations "as a wise leader and good

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[36] "USAID History," United States Agency for International Development,, accessed on February 20, 2012: http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/usaidhist.html.

[37] Kimber Charles Pearce, *Rostow, Kennedy, and The Rhetoric of Foreign Aid* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001), 97-98.

[38] From the data given in the essay by Hollis B. Chenery, "Objectives and Criteria for Foreign Assistance," in *Why Foreign Aid?* ed. Robert A. Goldwin (Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, 1971), 42.

[39] Rostow, "Development: The Political Economy," 240. (emphases are mine)

neighbor in the interdependent community of free nations" and this was also related to its economic obligation "as the wealthiest people in a world of largely poor people."[40]

The critics of modernization theory argue that in actuality, Kennedy and the modernization theorists' assumptions of the United States' moral, economic and political obligation cannot justify both the means and consequences of the administration's "antirevolutionary struggle." Burton Kaufman argues that the modernization theorists' assumption on the causal relationship between development aid and economic development, and between economic progress and political stability were "without foundation," because they failed to consider that the goals of "anticommunism, stability, and democracy were not necessarily compatible." Kaufman additionally points out that these theories were based on the presumption that "that the Western experience of economic and political development could easily be transplanted abroad".[41]

To summarize the comparison of foreign aid policies of the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations, the evolution of U.S. foreign aid policies in both governments are closely intertwined with the American national security interest as well as its growing sense of being a "leader of the Free World" in the postcolonial period.[42] If the Eisenhower administration's approach to foreign aid was framed by the military and budgetary tactics, his successor Kennedy, in a sense, amplified the voice of the American mission to liberate and modernize the less developed nations to preserve "a world environment within which our [American's] form of democratic society can persist and develop."[43]

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[40] President John F. Kennedy, "Foreign Aid, 1961," in *Why Foreign Aid?* ed. Robert A. Goldwin (Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, 1971), 3.

[41] Kaufman, *Trade and Aid*, 98.

[42] Painter, "Research Note," 530.

[43] Rostow, "Development: The Political Economy," 243.

Their similarity and differences in the development of U.S. foreign aid policies are also reflected in organizing the American counterinsurgency programs in the threatened areas of postcolonial world. Basically, the counterinsurgency program, whether it is military-centered or civilian-oriented, is an "explicitly *politico*-military doctrine," and its conceptual background is similar to that of the foreign aid programs.[44] As discussed above, the U.S. foreign aid policies were expected to bring about economic, social and political stability in less developed countries, and in order to assure the economic development program's success, the internal security conditions in those areas should be stabilized. Second, neither Eisenhower nor Kennedy wanted to repeat the mistake of sending American ground forces to the Korean War and they also did not want their administrations to be criticized for attempting to intervene in local politics by collaborating with military strongmen. Thus, foreign policymakers' attention was redirected to a new source of internal security: local police forces.

Mobilization of indigenous police had its advantage in channeling money and personnel overseas. Since a major part of U.S. foreign aid programs were designed to support the indigenous administrative reforms that could enable the smooth economic development, financial support for the police forces abroad could be easily covered under the development aid. During the Eisenhower administration, it was the Civil Police Administration (CPA) under the ICA that mandated the police assistance program following the president's order of developing police forces as a guardian of internal security. Most CPA programs focused on developing police services such as administration, records, traffic control and other technical duties.[45] Soon, the Kennedy administration reorganized the CPA into the Office of Public Safety (OPS), under

[44] Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 24. (emphasis in original)

[45] Lobe, *United States National Security Policy and Aid,* 4.

the auspices of USAID.[46] The OPS continued training and equipping police forces in foreign countries as its predecessor the CPA had done. However, since the Kennedy administration viewed indigenous police and paramilitary organizations as vital instruments for implementing its counterinsurgency program, the range of assignments delegated to the OPS continued to broaden. Since the U.S. government hoped police forces could serve the local communities and become a bridge between government and citizens, the OPS intended the police force to function as a builder and protector of democratic institutions. At the same time, it was also believed that the enhancement of the traditional police capacities would help to accelerate the more general objectives of socio-economic development. Therefore, the Kennedy administration emphasized security and development as focal concepts of its counterinsurgency program from the outset of OPS police assistance programs in the overseas.[47]

Another salient move made by the Kennedy administration in this period was the centralization of the police assistance programs. As shown in the case of the Thai Border Patrol Police's formation, multiple organizations, including the CIA, contributed to the development of paramilitary police forces in foreign countries. During the Eisenhower administration, the CPA distributed most of the major police assistance aid and concurrently the CIA continued its intelligence and advisory works exclusively with the BPP and the Special Branch under the Thai National Police Department by using the CPA program as a cover, especially since 1957.[48] Kennedy's new foreign assistance act did not break these informal channels. Because Kennedy

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[46] Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 87.

[47] Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 87-88.

[48] Various USOM-PSD documents mark that the Public Safety Division's work with the Thai National Police Department began with the CPA-ICA around 1955. See, for instance, Theodore J. Curtis, *A Brief History of USOM Support to the Thai National Police Department* (Bangkok: USOM, 1973), 4.; Agency for International Development, Office of Public Safety, *Termination Phase-Out Study, Public Safety Project, Thailand* (Washington, DC: Agency for International Development, Office of Public Safety, 1974), 3-4.

envisioned the OPS/USAID as the main organization for organizing counterinsurgency activities, he vested the organization with the responsibility of coordinating all U.S. assistance to police and paramilitary groups.[49] As a result, the Public Safety Division (PSD) under the auspice of United States Operations Mission to Thailand, a regional branch of the USAID, assumed the mandate in 1961.[50] To be discussed in depth in the following chapter, the PSD's role in modernizing the local police to make them a frontline counterinsurgency force was not confined to the framework of the internal security development, and also affected the redefining roles of police forces throughout the Cold War.

Why, then, did the police become the "first line of defense against subversion and insurgency" since the Eisenhower presidency? And in what way did the changing role of police illuminates the evolution of American counterinsurgency strategies during Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations? Eisenhower himself was a top-ranked army general and he did appreciate the military role in suppressing the communists. However, the U.S. military establishments did not welcome the inclusion of counterinsurgency doctrine into the national and foreign security policies. The general counterinsurgency programs, which was inclined more towards the psychological and civilian-centered operations to win hearts-and-minds of the target population, clearly "violated institutional norms" that commanded the military force to concentrate on "all-out conventional war." The military had been resistant to get involved in politics directly and thus when the Kennedy administration ardently promoted this "*politico*-military doctrine" backed by the modernization theorists, the U.S. military establishment felt that

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[49] Lobe, *United States National Security Policy and Aid,* 5.

[50] Lobe, *United States National Security Policy and Aid,* 30. For the details of the USOM's aid to the Thai police, see Marvin J. Jones and Philip D. Batson, *A Brief History of USOM Support to the Thai National Police Department* (Public Safety Division, USOM, 1969).

their essential raison d'être was trespassed and impaired.[51] The military's reluctance in pursuing a counterinsurgency doctrine eventually attributed to redirecting the U.S. government's attention to the police as a counterinsurgency force.

What then are the similarities and differences between the military and the police that eventually allowed the latter group to become a central counterinsurgency force? In short, both the military and the police have the primary duty of defending "security." Apparently, both are state-hired security forces but their targets are supposed to be separated: the military fights against the external enemy while the police are set against internal law-breakers. Like the military, the police also have a right to use arms against criminals. Although their use of arms is quite limited compared to the military's use of mass destructive weapons, only police can legally open fire on suspects or civilians. They can also dissolve violent demonstrators with their legalized form of coercion.[52] Another visible difference between the two forces is that while the latitude of military operations are confined to the battlefield, the police force stretches all over the society. Therefore, while the military moves in the concentrated form of groups, the police force carries out their duties in smaller size groups or oftentimes on a one-man-basis. In other words, the police are dispatched over a wider area than military in much smaller unit than that of military.

These characteristics highlight the "ubiquitousness" of a police force in the daily lives of the subjected population. Police are present in every corner of local townships or villages, while imposing non-coercive control of the law and order of the state. Thanks to their rather non-

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[51] Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 175.; Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 23-24.

[52] P.A. Jim Waddington, "Armed and Unarmed Policing," in *Policing Across the World: Issues for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Rob I. Mawby (London: UCL Press; New York: distributed in North America by Garland Pub., 1999), 153-54.

aggressive outfits and weapons, most civilians regard the police's ubiquitous presence in their neighborhoods rather mundane and routine. In this way, police represent non-coercive state control via their constant presence in the society, which in turn inculcates state order among ordinary citizens. In this respect, Robert Storch, who studied the police of Northern England, defines the role of English policemen as "domestic missionaries" who were assigned to reform the morale of the urban working classes in the late eighteenth century. Their mission was undertaken not by pursuing a policy of overt suppression but by applying constant surveillance on all the key institutions of the working-class neighborhood. At the same time, this missionary force was to bring about the "civilization and decorum" outlined by London to the northern England countryside, while at the same time regulating the local practices and "illegal behaviors."[53] These types of roles and characteristics were now demanded of local police in Southeast Asia for undertaking counterinsurgency programs. With these new ideas towards the role of police, the American counterinsurgency strategies promoted local police to become a frontier force of national security in the emerging nation-states.

Rostow spoke in front of eighty multinational military and police officers at Fort Bragg in June 1961, and stated that "communism is best understood as a disease of the transition to modernization."[54] Because he identified communist guerrilla warfare as the medium of transmitting this fatal disease to the minds of the people in the traditional, underdeveloped countries, Rostow asserted that a guerrilla war "must be fought primarily by those on the spot."[55]

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[53] Robert D. Storch, "The Policeman as Domestic Missionary: Urban Discipline and Popular Culture in Northern England, 1850-1880" in *Journal of Social History* 9:4 (Summer 1976), 481-509.

[54] The speech was reprinted in the *Army Magazine* in September 1961, and later in the following publication: Walt W. Rostow, "Countering Guerrilla Attack," in *Modern Guerrilla Warfare: Fighting Communist Guerrilla Movements, 1941-1961*, ed. Frank Mark Osanka (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1962), 466.

[55] Rostow "Countering Guerrilla Attack," 468-469.

In other words, the United States would support the fight with communism, a disease to the traditional and transitional societies, however the actual battle should be fought by the local police forces. War could bring the desired victory when it was fought by "the spirit and policy" of those on the spot, "not merely with weapons." Therefore, Rostow urged those officers at Fort Bragg to be the pro-modernization force: "Your job is to work with understanding, with your fellow citizens, in the whole creative process of modernization."[56] Although he did not specifically point out that the local force was the police in this speech, it was obvious that the pro-modernization force that could prevent the transmission of the communist disease to the minds of rural villagers was the police, not the military. The comments from a USAID administrator also confirms the above arguments: the police are "not only agents of order; they are also the agents of change" who help "shift dissatisfaction from the barricade to the ballot."[57]

Since the American modernization theorist and foreign policymakers viewed the indigenous police force more suitable for carrying out counterinsurgency programs abroad, the OPS under the direction from USAID and Kennedy administration established the International Police Academy in Washington, D.C. to train "representative police administrators from friendly nations." About a decade of its existence between 1963 and 1974, 5,024 students from 77 countries were trained and graduated.[58] The training of modern police also took place "on the spot" of battle. The PSD under the USAID's regional branches provided technical assistance to

[56] Rostow "Countering Guerrilla Attack," 471.

[57] From the speech by Dr. John A. Hannah in Washington D.C. on April 16, 1971. Quoted in Ernest W. Lefever, *U.S. Public Safety Assistance: An Assessment* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1973), 37.

[58] Comptroller General of the United States, *Stopping U.S. Assistance to Foreign Police and Prisons, Report to the Congress* (Washington, DC: U.S. General Accounting Office, 1976), 14-15.

the civil police. By mid-1973, 114 professional police advisers under the auspices of PSD-USOM were operating in eighteen non-western countries.[59]

In conclusion, the comparison of the similarities and differences in the foreign aid and counterinsurgency programs between the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations underlines the increasing influence of modernization theory and counterinsurgency policies on foreign policymaking establishments. Modernization theory provided ideological and rhetorical frameworks to the U.S. and the recipient countries for building the new nation-states. Born out of this Cold War paradigm, the foreign aid programs attempted to lubricate the underdeveloped countries' squeaking transition to modern societies, and the counterinsurgency programs expedited the emergence of indigenous anticommunist forces. As it will become clearer in the following discussion, American modernization efforts also contributed to the transformation of the indigenous traditional elites into a modern nation-builder during the Cold War.

Rise of the Indigenous Cold War Patrons

> Thailand maintains a strong traditional royal system and has preserved its independence through a long, turbulent history, yet has a market economy. I am also interested in the Thai model.
> [Kim Jongil to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright on October 24, 2000, Pyungyang] [60]

Despite the popular belief that Thailand, or Siam at the time, has never been colonized, it definitely shared common fear with the colonized neighbors because the European colonial governments' influence had extended to, and clashed with Siamese kingdom. In this vein, the recent critics of the Thai myth of the non-colonized Siam in the past and present historiography, particularly those who have raised questions on the semicoloniality of Siam during the colonial

[59] Lefever, *U.S. Public Safety Assistance*, 2.

[60] Cited in Madeleine Albright, *Madam Secretary*, with Bill Woodward (New York: Miramax Books, 2003), 466.

period, generally agree to the following three propositions.[61] First, the elite-centered discourse of the non-colonized Siam originated from the collective historical amnesia about the Siamese subservient status and the subservient attitudes towards the European imperialism during the colonial period. Second, conventional historiographies contend Siamese avoidance of colonialism was enabled by internal colonialism maneuvered by the Chakri monarchs. Finally, the Siamese/Thai elites' acceptance of colonial binarism imposed by the European and American colonialists ultimately resulted in its relatively early submission to the global Cold War system in the postcolonial period.[62] In this process, the Thai elites came to embrace the American view that communism was incompatible with their mission to preserve Thai independence as well as its modernization, including civilization of the peripheries.[63]

The myth of Siamese independence secured by the monarchy's modernization efforts essentially became the founding basis for constructing Thai exceptionalism. As Benedict Anderson argues in his *Studies of the Thai State: The State of Thai Studies* in 1978, Siam, "not being ex-colonial, was taken as *ipso facto* 'unique'" and this uniqueness was uncritically

[61] For further discussion on the Thai responses to the colonialism and semicolonialism, see, for example, Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of A Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994).; Thongchai Winichakul, "The Quest for 'Siwilai': A Geographical Discourse of Civilizational Thinking in the Late 19th and early 20th Century Siam," in *Journal of Asian Studies* 59:3 (August 2000), 528-549.; Thongchai Winichakul, "The Others Within: Travel and Ethno-Spatial Differentiation of Siamese Subjects 1885-1910" in *Civility and Savagery: Social Identity in Tai States*, ed. Andrew Turton (London: Curzon Press, 2000), 38-62.; Michael Herzfeld, "The Absent Presence: Discourses of Crypto-Colonialism," in the *South Atlantic Quarterly* 101:4 (Fall 2002), 899-926.; Hong Lysa, "'Stranger within the Gates': Knowing Semi-Colonial Siam as Extraterritorials" in *Modern Asian Studies* 38:2 (2004), 327-354; Hong Lysa, "Invisible Semicolony: the Postcolonial Condition and Royal National History in Thailand" in *Postcolonial Studies* 11:3 (2008), 315-327.; Chaiyan Rajchagool, *The Rise and Fall of the Thai Absolute Monarchy: Foundations of the Modern Thai State from Feudalism to Peripheral Capitalism* (Bangkok: White Lotus, 1994).; Peter A. Jackson, "The Performative State: Semi-coloniality and the Tyranny of Images in Modern Thailand," in *Sojourn* 19:2 (October 2004), 219-253.; Peter A. Jackson, "The Thai Regime of Images," in *Sojourn* 19:2 (2004), 181-218.; Tamara Loos, *Subject Siam: Family, Law and Colonial Modernity in Thailand* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).; Rachel Harrison, and Peter A. Jackson, eds., *The Ambiguous Allure of the West: Traces of the Colonial in Thailand* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press; Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 2010).

[62] Herzfeld, "Absent Presence," 919-920.

[63] Herzfeld, "Absent Presence," 904.; Thongchai, "Siwilai".; Thongchai, "Others Within".

"celebrated rather than studied or concretely demonstrated," and furthermore, "proudly" assumed by either the Thai or foreign specialists in the Thai studies.[64] Anderson's criticism against Thai studies indeed brings forward the widely accepted but not so explicitly examined ideological premise of Thai exceptionalism in the conventional Thai historiography. To the conventional Thai scholars, the uniqueness of Siamese independence from Western imperialism has become the evidence of its upper hand in modernization on a par with that of European colonialists. This belief in the Siamese never-colonized history may affirm that the country had enjoyed such the stability but on the other hand, it also means, like Jackson argues, "there was no compulsion from nineteenth century Western imperialists for non-colonized Siam to totally reform all levels of its social order."[65]

In this context, continuation of monarchy has been suggested as the clearest evidence of Thailand's stability in the conventional Thai historiography. Siamese monarchy not only saves the nation from the colonial crucible but also plays the role of mediator between the past and present, which was demarcated by the colonial interruption. Moreover, the Siamese kings' civilization efforts had been continued by the current Thai king who emerged from the aftermath of People's Party's abdication of absolute monarchy in 1932, and this new constitutional monarch would soon prove how his undying political and cultural influence make Thailand even more exceptional throughout the Cold War period. How then does this traditional institution make Thailand exceptional? In short, within the time span encompassing the colonial period to the Cold War, the role of the Thai monarchy has been identified with three characteristics which

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[64] Benedict Anderson, "Studies in the Thai State: The State of Thai Studies," in *The Study of Thailand: Analyses of Knowledge, Approaches and Prospects in Anthropology, Art History, Economics, History, and Political Science*, ed. Eliezer B. Ayal (Athens: Center for International Studies, Ohio University, 1978), 197-198. (emphasis in original)

[65] Jackson, "Performative State," 220.

became a major justification for the institution's legitimacy to present: first, a savior of the nation, similar to the role of the nationalists; second, a symbol of tradition and modernization; and third, a political legitimizer.

Benedict Anderson's critique against the conventional axioms constructed in the Thai studies questions the Chakri dynasty's historical role as a nationalist leader, equivalent of others in other areas of Southeast Asia such as Jose Rizal in the Philippines, Sukarno in Indonesia, or even Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam.[66] The conventional Thai historiography applauds the monarchs -- especially King Mongkut (Rama IV) and King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) -- who are credited with modernizing the nation in order to convince the European colonialists that Siam was more civilized than their colonies. Therefore, it was widely believed that the Siamese monarchs' "flexibility" in compromising with the Western powers over modernization and progress allowed them to preserve their independent nation, thereby making the role of Siamese monarchy during the colonial period was perceived as a savior of Thai nation as well as the patriotic nationalist leader.[67]

Nonetheless, like Anderson and later scholars, who agree with the semicoloniality of Thailand, Siam/Thailand could secure nominal sovereignty from European colonialists but was indirectly colonized due to being under the economic dominance of the British "informal empire."[68] In addition, the role of anticolonial nationalists during the colonial period was to create a shared sense of nationhood by integrating the nation, however the Thai kings' effort in

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[66] Anderson "Studies in the Thai State," 198-211.

[67] Thongchai, "Siwilai," 532.; Anderson "Studies in the Thai State," 199. For the Thai conventional historiography on the role of monarchy-led modernization in Siam, see, for example, Wyatt, *Thailand: A Short History*, 180-222.

[68] The concept of "informal empire" is proposed by two revisionist imperialism scholars John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson in 1953. See John Gallagher, and Ronald Robinson, "The Imperialism of Free Trade," in the *Economic History Review* (new series) 6:1 (1953), 1-15.

modernizing Siam instead aimed at expanding the monarchical rule, beyond peripheries, to subjugate the outlying populace under the Bangkok dominion.[69] In this regard, the absence of a colonial period in Thai written history has produced the myth that the monarchy played the role of a nationalist resisting the colonial crucible.

Another significant role of the monarchy constructed by the conventional Thai studies is the king as a symbol of tradition and modernization. Generally speaking, the institution of the monarchy itself is historical, if not anachronistic, and has been regarded as the guardian of tradition. However, the institution gradually became powerless and obsolete, starting in the colonial period, since most of these traditional rulers were defeated firstly by the European imperialists and subsequently by Cold War superpowers. In response to these dire realities, the conventional Thai historiographies assert that because the Siamese monarchs modernized themselves and stood together with the European counterparts, the institution could survive to the present day and that makes the Thai monarchy "modern."

What then is the implication of the monarchy's continuation to the present in the Thai history? In short, the presence of a constitutional monarchy from the colonial period to the Cold War was deliberately utilized in proving Thailand's stability and continuity against the changes in global power balance. The conventional studies above therefore perceive that the raison d'être of the Siamese state is directly related to the continuation of monarchy. Because the monarchy successfully forestalled colonial aggression, Thailand could safely and steadily move towards modernization without interruption. Moreover, its tradition could be preserved without external adulteration.[70] Building upon this assumption that the monarchy plays the role of mediator

[69] Chaiyan, *Rise and Fall of the Thai Absolute Monarchy*, xiv, 1-34.; Thongchai, "Others Within," 55.; Jackson, "Performative State," 235.

[70] Peter Jackson argues in the similar vein. See Jackson, "Performative State," 229.

between tradition and modernization, the current monarch King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX) became the modern nation-builder of Thailand during the Cold War as he "has become even more sacrosanct than ever as the embodiment of Thai virtues and values, and guide to a Thailand that has to navigate the globalized world economy and hybridization of culture at the turn of the millennium."[71]

Third, the role of the monarchy as a political legitimizer of Thai politics and society -- although the conventional studies often refuse to recognize the political influence of the monarchy because the institution supposedly remain "above" politics -- is particularly the most significant, and discernable characteristic of the current monarch since his return to Thailand in 1951. After the Radio Coup in November 1951, a formal recognition from the U.S. government for the new Thai military regime posed a hurdle that the Coup Group had to overcome. At this time, with his studies in Switzerland completed, the twenty-three-year-old young King Bhumibol permanently returned to Thailand on December 2, 1951 with his family. The King's return right after the Radio Coup had a special meaning to the coup members. If the King recognized the coup and the new regime, their status in international and domestic politics would become more legitimate.[72] To the coup member's great relief, the King met with cabinet members and heard an explanation from the then Prime Minister Phibun Songkhram about the coup and related changes in the government the day after his arrival. In his speech of greeting to the King, Phibun stated that he would transfer to the King the authority he had previously held as head of the temporary Regency. In response, King said that he would exert all efforts to cooperate with the

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[71] Cited in Hong, "Invisible Semicolony," 316. Originally from Chris Baker, and Pasuk Phongpaichit, *Thailand's Crisis* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies; Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2000).

[72] *New York Times*, December 2, 1951, 3.

government.[73] The King assigned Phibun to lead the process of reorganizing the cabinet. The coup cabinet resigned on the night of December 4 so that the King could go through the constitutional formality of appointing new ministries. Thereafter, the government could begin petitioning for the recognition of foreign nations.

As shown in his prompt political moves from the day of his return, the current king has not stayed above politics at all times. Indeed, the political role of the monarchy as a sole legitimizer of Thai society is an apparent historical legacy of Thailand's failure in overcoming its semicolonialism throughout the Cold War period and the present days. In this context, Herzfeld contends that the crypto-colonization process was well concealed, and so did the existence of "other hegemonies."[74] As the following empirical studies on the BPP activities under royal patronage will vividly show, the Thai monarchy has remained the domain of political power and legitimacy throughout the Cold War period.

The Cold War indeed offered a precious opportunity to the current king to construct the images of benevolent, legitimate leadership through its successful indigenization of the American Cold War politics in the second half of the twentieth century. One of the popular titles of current king, the "king of development" and numerous heroic stories about him are good examples that confirm how the Cold War permitted the monarchy to become a modern nation-builder. Indeed, it is easy to find the royal images in the streets of Thailand or in a google search of the photographs of the King clicking his camera, talking to the prostrated villagers and giving instructions to the local government officials when he travels the rural countryside. There are numerous reasons why this King has been so much beloved by the Thais and one of the most

[73] *New York Times*, December 4, 1951, 3.

[74] Herzfeld, "Absent Presence," 922.

powerful, and seemingly convincing, reasons would be his closeness with the ordinary Thai people. While I was conducting field research, I often heard Thai people's criticism against the politicians or wealthy businessmen and, most of the time, all these stories ended with the proclamation of their unfailing love and loyalty towards the King. They reasoned that only the King cared about the people and was devoted towards development for the country and for the betterment of Thai people.

These compliments are often reiterated in academic studies. Several researchers who study Thai politics during the Cold War emphasize the long tradition of national unity and independence as a critical factor in explaining Thailand's success in countering communist expansion. As in the conventional Thai historiography, the monarchy has received the most attention among the elements that sustained national unity and progress in Thailand and consequently, the institution has been regarded as the preeminent source of legitimacy, national unity and Thai culture and tradition.[75] Nevertheless, favorable attention given to the Thai monarchy in the early Cold War is somewhat puzzling because the American modernization theorists urged the underdeveloped countries to "take-off" from traditional society and the monarchy was at the apex of that seemingly outdated system.

Who then called for the return of this traditional patron? Thomas Lobe states that the CIA encouraged and nurtured the close relationship between the BPP/PARU and the royal family because such a strategic alliance with an "institution that has traditional respect and reverence" would give "their long-term efforts greater legitimacy as political leaders come and go," and thus these new paramilitary groups would be seen "as the protector of King and country."[76] Likewise,

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[75] Kevin Hewison, "The Monarchy and Democratisation" in *Political Change in Thailand: Democracy and Participation*, ed. Kevin Hewison (London; New York: Routledge, 1997), 59-61.

[76] Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*, 157, 460, fn.31-32.

several foreign observers interpreted the king as evidence of Thailand's long tradition of national unity as Donald E. Nuechterlein's argument as follows:[77]

> Thailand possesses a higher degree of national unity than, perhaps, any other country in Southeast Asia. A long tradition of monarchy, the dominance of Buddhism as a national religion, and the absence of a colonial heritage have contributed enormously to the relatively high degree of national identity that currently prevails.[78]

On the other hand, since the king remains "above" politics, the religious and cultural interpretations of the traditional kingship suggest that the king's source of power and legitimacy derives from the accumulated merit in his past life, not from his political maneuvering. In this way, the king's political power possesses a mystical aura.[79] As an example, one of the closest aides to the current king's royal project summarizes the characteristics of Thai monarchy as following:

> Our monarchy is quite distinctive from those in other countries. In one dimension it is an institution that stays above politics. Yet, in a spiritual dimension, the monarchy is a persuasive force that is more effective than the law itself. Apparently, as a constitutional monarch, His Majesty has no duty or power to relieve political gridlocks. But in crises when all existing systems are paralysed and failed to function properly, only His Majesty can promptly restore harmony to society.[80]

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[77] Hewison, "Monarchy and Democratisation," 62.; See also Frank C. Darling, *Thailand: New Challenges and the Struggle for a Political and Economic "Take-Off"* (New York: American Asian Educational Exchange, 1969), 36.; Douglas S. Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era: U.S. Doctrine and Performance, 1950 to the Present* (New York: Free Press, 1977), 171.

[78] Donald E. Nuechterlein, "Thailand: Another Vietnam?" in *Military Review* 47 (June 1967), 60.

[79] For example, Paul Handley explains this combination between religious and political concept of kingship with *dhammaraja*. See Handley, *King Never Smiles*, 19-25. It is also noteworthy that King once told one reporter that "I learned that politics is a filthy business.": Cited in "King Bhumibol: "Politics is a filthy business" in *Far Eastern Economic Review,* October 18, 1974. Reprinted in the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand, *The King of Thailand in World Focus: Articles and Images from the International Press, 1946-2006* (Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2007), 47.

[80] Dr. Sumet Tantivejkul, quoted in "The Working Monarch," *Bangkok Post*, June 13, 2006. accessed on April 17, 2012, http://www.bangkokpost.com/60yrsthrone/working/index.html.

Building upon the historical, cultural and religious backgrounds, the CIA and U.S. foreign policymaking establishment saw the Thai monarchy as a reliable alliance endowed with most powerful source of legitimacy. Likewise, as long as they share the same goal of making Thailand an anticommunist nation, there was no reason for the modernization advocates to refuse the return of this traditional institution.

How then did the Thai monarchy become an ardent promoter of anticommunism? First of all, it is important to recognize that the monarchy was a traditional institution placed under the harshest attack from communist and progressive public discourses in the postcolonial period. A preeminent Thai radical writer-cum-activist Jit Poumisak's *The Real Face of Thai Feudalism* (*chomna sakdina thai*) is one good example that affected to the renewed recognition of the king as the "big Land-Lord of *saktina* (feudalist system)" from the late 1950s. Although Jit himself did not confine his criticism against the *saktina* to the role of king, he indeed raised a consciousness that it was the king, his extended and extensive family "who monopolized the ruling class's privileges and rights to exploitation."[81] His provocative works that defined the traditional role of king as the pinnacle of feudal system triggered fierce debates. Consequently, Jit was accused of being a communist and arrested in 1957. The military government's rhetoric that communists were antiroyalist and thus needed to be isolated from the public justified Jit's six-year imprisonment.[82] Alongside the persecution of Jit Poumisak, merciless communist hunting committed by the military and police from the 1950s clearly reflects why the Thai monarchy could not coexist with communism. To put it simply, communism denied the role of

[81] Craig J. Reynolds, *Thai Radical Discourse: the Real Face of Thai Feudalism Today* (Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1987), 12. For more explanation on the Thai feudalism termed as Sakdina and Saktina, see Chaiyan, *Rise and Fall of the Thai Absolute Monarchy*, 41-80, 175.

[82] For more details about Jit Poumisak and the Thai radical discourses, see Reynolds, *Thai Radical Discourse*, 9-41.

monarchy and its political legitimacy because the institution was innately feudalist. The communist thesis itself was threatening enough and it immediately convinced the royal family to become a staunch anticommunist.[83]

The current monarch successfully demonstrated his inclination to anticommunism throughout the 1950s, which eventually permitted him to gradually extend his influence to the political arena. As it was to most Asian military politicians, anticommunism had already become a common currency to the Thai ruling elites to gain U.S. support. The Thai king also understood the importance of such anticommunist rhetoric for reinvigorating his power in the expanding global Cold War. More importantly, the King wholeheartedly supported this political campaign because communism was the very antithesis of monarchy. Like the American modernization theorists believed, even the military dictatorship would be justifiable if it could expel communism as expressed in the King's interview with the Look Magazine in 1967:

> Communism is impractical. Life is not each to his needs. The one who works today should get the money and the goods, not the one who doesn't work. Communism can be worse that the Nazis or the Fascists. In practice, it is more terrible than a dictatorship. If, however, a dictator is a good man, he can do many things for the people. For a short while, Mussolini did many good things for the Italian people. But once he was bitten by the 'bug of empire,' he was finished.[84]

Seeing the young Thai king's active protest against communism, the U.S. government was certain that he could serve a symbol of anticommunism in the region.

When the monarchy was gaining new recognition from the U.S., it was Sarit who exploited yet feeble royal influence for his own political cause. His predecessor Phibun actively sought to

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[83] As a good example for this equation, a recent biography on the King Bhumibol writes that "[A]s the Vietnam War escalated, the American military presence in Thailand grew dramatically to support the kingdom as a bulwark against the spread of communism – *the very antithesis of monarch*.": Cited in Grossman, Nicholas and Dominic Faulder, eds., *King Bhumibol Adulyadej: A Life's Work* (Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2011), 114. (emphasis is mine).

[84] From the article by Gereon Zimmerman. "A Visit with the King and Queen of Thailand," *Look*, June 27, 1967. Reprinted in the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand, *King of Thailand in World Focus*, 58.

restrain the role of monarchy in both politics and society. As a member of the 1932 coup set against the absolute monarchy, Phibun did not want the royal family to return to the public scene, which had, in turn, greatly frustrated the young King.[85] Therefore, it was only in 1955 after several debates with the palace that Phibun reluctantly allowed the royal family to conduct rural tours. On November 11, 1955, the King and Queen embarked upon their first rural tour to the northeastern provinces.[86] This trip, however, turned out to be a tremendous success for the monarch, as they could demonstrate to the people their popularity and virtue, which was lacking in other politicians, generals and elite groups. The royal couple's first tour also aroused considerable enthusiasm among rural people who could physically see the king and queen for the first time. Film footage and photographic records show people lining the roads or crowding temple courtyards as the King and Queen proceeded from one place to another. Sarit did not miss this grandiose drama and became more certain about the role that the monarchy could play out for his regime.

When he staged a coup against Phibun, Sarit already had confidence in king's approval for his regime because he was well aware of royal family's antipathy towards Phibun. Thus he remarked that, "[W]hat should the king say -- everything was already finished" right after the coup.[87] To Sarit, the monarchy could function as the most powerful political legitimizer of his regime and also as the symbolic representation of Thai national unity.[88] Therefore, Sarit sought to promote the royal family's social activities, which would raise the king's popularity, urging

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[85] Grossman and Faulder, *King Bhumibol Adulyadej*, 96-97.

[86] Handley, *King Never Smiles*, 127.

[87] From the article by Murray Fromson. "The King and Marshal Sarit," *The Associated Press*, September 17, 1957. Reprinted in the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand, *King of Thailand in World Focus*, 46.

[88] Thak, *Politics of Despotic Paternalism,* 205-206.

that "[i]t has become internationally well-known that Thailand is lucky to have a king worthy of worship."[89] Sarit encouraged the royal family to travel to every corner of the Thailand and abroad. As a result, the young royal couple could enjoy "a genuine renaissance on Sarit's watch."[90] The royal couple's second rural tour to the northern provinces came in March 1958. A year later, they traveled to the south.[91] Exposure to the enthusiastic support of the rural population consequently gave more confidence to the royal family and encouraged them to expand their popularity throughout the outlying provinces.

In sum, both the Thai military leaders and the U.S. saw that the revival of monarchical influence would be useful. The U.S. believed the Thai monarchy could serve a key role in its anticommunist campaign because this traditional institution allegedly represented the prolonged national unity and stability never tarnished by colonial interruptions. The Thai military elites, particularly Sarit, on the other hand actively utilized the monarchy as the political legitimizer of his regime. Most importantly, it should be reemphasized that the current monarch himself was an anticommunist who saw a new opportunity from the growing influence of the Cold War at home and aboard. Increasing popular support and the military's backup at home and the U.S. government's friendly approaches encouraged the young royal couple to extend their roles to political arenas and transform this traditional institution into a modern kingship of development. In this process, King Bhumiphol came to assume the position of the sole power legitimizer.[92]

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[89] Grossman and Faulder, *King Bhumibol Adulyadej*, 106.

[90] Grossman and Faulder, *King Bhumibol Adulyadej*, 107.

[91] Handley, *King Never Smiles*, 143. Note that during these trips to north and south, the royal couple also visited the Border Patrol Police Regional Camps.

[92] Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian, "The Monarchy and Constitutional Change since 1972" in *Reforming Thai politics*, ed. Duncan McCargo (Copenhagen: NIAS; Richmond: Curzon, 2002), 57.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter examined the central characteristics of American modernization theory and counterinsurgency policy that were incorporated in the local elite's nation-building agenda. Growing local insurgencies, along with the expansion of communist movements in Southeast Asia, led the U.S. government to catalyze its anticommunist campaign by increasing its foreign aid and counterinsurgency programs in the region. American modernization theory played a key role in persuading the U.S. foreign policymaking establishment under Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations to maximize its political and economic interventions to fight communism in the newly emerged nation-states. In particular, the Kennedy administration's promotion of the rhetoric "Decade of Development" provided a favorable condition for the Thai monarchy to transform the institution into a modern nation-builder. Building off of traditional Thai nationalism that centers nation, religion and monarchy as the symbols of unity, the royal family rose to the most influential patron of the Thailand's Cold War. On the other hand, both the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations' renewed recognition towards the role of local police as a frontier counterinsurgency force would bring a new opportunity for the BPP to revive its organization. Under the common goal of making Thailand an anticommunist bastion of Southeast Asia, the U.S. government, the Thai local elites, and the BPP were all moving towards the Thai Counterinsurgency Era.

Chapter 4. Beginning of the Thai Counterinsurgency Era

This chapter mainly discusses the general historical and political background of the Thai Counterinsurgency Era that permitted the local elite allies to actively indigenize the U.S. foreign aid and counterinsurgency policies for strengthening their power bases. The discussion begins with the transformation of the BPP from the CIA's paramilitary intelligence into the civic action agents with the coming of two new patrons: the USOM and royal family. Expansion of the BPP-USOM's modernization and counterinsurgency programs under the title of "Remote Area Security Development" and the royal family's gradual appropriation of these projects foretells how the monarchy came to take a lead in the Thai nation-building throughout the Thai Counterinsurgency Era and consolidated the royalist elite network in this process.

Context for the Transformations

Sarit's coup in 1957 considerably changed the characteristics of the Border Patrol Police. Because of the new regime's suspicion toward the military's strength and its potential as a base for political rivals, the BPP was constrained from any military activities. Some scholars explain the army's increasing suspicion towards the BPP originated from Phibun's second administration when he attempted to counterbalance Sarit's growing power by supporting Phao and his police as discussed earlier. If so, then were the BPP and PARU built as a political base to support the Phao's rise to power? Most scholars who study this politically chaotic period agree with the assumption that BPP was a political instrument created to help Phao strengthen his power over the armed forces. Furthermore, Alfred McCoy contends that the unit was specifically utilized in expanding Phao and CIA's lucrative drug business so that Phao could afford and widen his political bases.[1] In sum, the intense rivalry between Sarit and Phao has been understood as the central background for explaining Sarit's demotion of BPP after the 1957 coup.[2]

[1] McCoy, *Politics of Heroin*, 182-184.

[2] For instance, the following accounts support the rivalry between Sarit and Phao as the key reason for the BPP's demotion in 1957: Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*; Lobe, *United States National Security Policy and Aid*; Fineman, *Special Relationship*; and Conboy, *Shadow War*.

The BPP and PARU members have also asked the same question repetitively for years. They do not deny their strong ties and loyalty to Phao even to the present, but the BPP and PARU's analyses of the 1957 coup mostly conclude with a strong emphasis on their genuine commitment towards the guarding of national security, Thai people's well being and their unfailing loyalty to the monarchy. Nakhon Siwanit, the commander of the PARU company in 1957, himself questions: "if Phao established and mobilized the PARU to support his power, then why only a small number of PARU members were in Bangkok on the day of coup?" He answers this question as following:

> If the Director-General Phao prepared the PARU as a basis of his power, then he should have called the combat unit to Bangkok with the armaments, which were far superior to that of the army. Since I was a commander at that time, I should have known about the coup attempt beforehand. But I had no clues![3]

Air Marshal Siddhi who served the secretary to the National Security Council similarly rejects the conjecture that Phao used the BPP and PARU as a means of strengthening his power. He, instead, asserts the BPP and PARU have proved themselves to be useful for defending national security, and thus the Princess Mother and later the other royal families gave such the impressive support for these units.[4]

While I was conducting interviews with the retired BPP and PARU officers, I asked about the relationship between Sarit and Phao. Many interviewees responded to me that: "In the end, Sarit and Phao were friends and colleagues." This implies that most of the military politicians at that time were closely tied to each other through marital or fraternal relations and thus even if their political rivalries seemed intense to the outsiders, their intricate network could not be easily

[3] Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 6.

[4] Siddhi, "*Tamruat trawen chaidaen*,"127.

broken. Indeed, Sarit sent Phao to Switzerland without any retaliation on the night of coup. In this regard, the assumptions about their outright rivalry and Sarit's resentment toward Phao might not be the only trigger to emasculate Phao's police in 1957, including the BPP.

In fact, it was the Thai military's sense of insecurity about their own military capacity when compared to these modern paramilitary police units. Military's fear against the BPP and PARU was well demonstrated in Army General Praphat Charusathien's response to the request on reestablishing the Border Patrol Police Headquarters in the early 1970s. He marked that he was still suspicious about the principles of BPP because it operated like military. He added that if reestablished, this police organization would be still the "up in the air (*luk phi luk khon*)" force.[5] Likewise, because BPP was the most capable and most modernized armed force furnished by U.S. armaments and funding at that time, Sarit and other military thought the unit was too dangerous to keep within its circle. Thus, the reestablishment of BPP became a "must forbidden (*tong ham*)" issue among the armed forces until the early 1970s.[6]

In this respect, rather than assuming the rivalry between Sarit and Phao was the direct trigger for the 1957 coup and BPP's demotion, it is significant to survey the general changes in the Thai politics and society in the second half of the 1950s that demanded a new type of leadership and political realignment to cope with the rapidly evolving regional and global politics. What were the political and historical conditions that brought about Sarit's coup and consequent life-or-death crisis to the BPP in 1957?

After 1950, there are two salient changes in the patterns of Thai foreign relations and politics. First of all, the Thai officials broke with their traditional Euro-centric foreign relations.

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[5] The Thai idiom *"luk phi luk khon"* literally translates to "child of ghost, child of man." Some may translate it to "up in the air." Cited in: *Kong banchakan 1975*, 113.

[6] *Kong banchakan 1975*, 113.

Phibun was a Francophile and he imposed a European-style modernization during wartime. However, most of the new generations of Thai military like Sarit and Phao were domestically educated and they viewed European countries as waning powers compared to the fast rising American superpower. As a result, they sought the U.S. as their primary foreign supporter. Second, anticommunism and democracy became the most powerful means to augment political influence in this period. Phibun attempted to be a hardline anticommunist to attract U.S. support for his regime. Phao and Sarit similarly made visits to the U.S. in 1954 to appeal for increased military aid and political support for their anticommunist campaigns. In a broader context, these changes reveal that Thailand came to reach a better understanding of where they stood in global politics. Recognizing its strategic importance to the U.S., the Thai government could also learn that there was much to be gained from the Americans. Indeed, beginning in 1950, massive amounts of American dollars flowed into Thailand to develop its economy, to train armed forces, and to sustain a stable military regime. With this aid, Phao could enlarge the police and gave birth to the BPP and PARU, and Sarit could build one of the strongest developmental dictator regimes after the coup.

Whether the initiative came from the military government's proclamation of Thailand as a democratic country in the Free World, or from the policies of Phibun, several events occurred between 1955-1957 which show Phibun's attempts to shift the old military politics to a more populist strategy and, allegedly, towards a more democratic direction. Along with Phibun's effort to spread western style democracy, such as the establishment of a Hyde Park-style Speakers' Corner that Phibun had launched after his short trips to the U.S. and European countries, Sarit and Phao also competed to win popular support.[7] On April 17, 1955, for instance, Phao proposed

[7] James Ockey, "Civil Society and Street Politics: Lessons from the 1950s," in *Reforming Thai Politics*, ed. Duncan McCargo (Copenhagen: NIAS; Richmond: Curzon, 2002), 122.

the "Democracy by 1962" plan to make Thailand a "full-fledged democracy".[8] Phibun's suspicion nonetheless grew quickly against these young military rivals. Phibun came to see the growing threat posed by Phao and the possibility that Phao might plot a coup while he was out of country.[9] As a consequence, the purge of Phao began when he left for the U.S. and Japan to negotiate for an increase in economic aid in mid-1955. On August 25, Phibun, who had now assumed the status of Minister of Interior and Defense in addition to his premiership, took over the responsibility of supervising all police policies.[10] On September 2, Phibun announced large-scale police reforms and shortly after, he freed the press from police censorship and banned police officers from business activities. Additionally, Phibun issued new regulations assuming the sole right to declare police or military alerts and to order troop movements, except in case of war, martial law or revolt.[11]

Phibun, moreover, made further steps towards bogus democratization to consolidate his power basis. He reshuffled the cabinet and assumed the office of the Minister of Interior on August 2, 1955. He relieved Phao from Deputy Minister of Finance and Phin from the Deputy Minister of Defense.[12] As a replacement, Phibun appointed his supporter, Lieutenant General Thanom Kittikhachorn, the then commander of the First Army, as the Deputy Minister of Cooperative. With Thanom's appointment, the army could take over the almost 50,000 strong

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[8] *New York Times*, April 24, 1955, 7.

[9] Ockey, "Civil Society and Street Politics," 108.

[10] *New York Times*, August 26, 1955, 3.

[11] *New York Times*, September 4, 1955, 5.

[12] Thak, *Politics of Despotic Paternalism*, 71.

police force.[13] On August 9, the government announced the drafting of the Political Party Bill, which would permit military officers to join political parties.[14] With the enactment of 1955 Political Party Bill, a total of twenty-five parties competed in the election on February 26, 1957. Not surprisingly, Phibun's Seri Manangkhasila party (Government Party) won the majority in the cabinet and former premier Khuang's Democrat Party won the second majority. The press and many Democrat Party members protested against the result, accusing the victors for using illegal measures to guarantee Phibun's success. In response, Phibun proclaimed a state of emergency on March 2, justifying his order as a necessary measure to counter a plot to overthrow the government by force.[15] Sarit, who was also outraged by the result, said to reporters that "Thailand is now divided into three groups -- it is worse than China."[16]

Not long after, Sarit declared his resignation as the Minister of Defense on August 20, 1957, as Phibun tried to expose his illegal business connections. Subsequently, forty-six military leaders resigned from Phibun's party. At that time, Sarit commanded increasing popularity among the press, public and parliament. Therefore, Sarit knew that his resignation would critically damage Phibun as well as Phao. As expected, Phao resigned officially as the Minister of Interior and Secretary General of the Seri Manangkhasila party on September 12. On the following day, Sarit and his followers demanded Phibun's resignation. On September 15, crowds gathered in the Speakers' Corner of Sanam Luang and marched on to Sarit's house to support the army's demands. The very next day, Sarit staged a coup against Phibun's government.

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[13] *New York Times*, August 7, 1955, 11.

[14] *New York Times*, August 11, 1955, 3.

[15] *New York Times*, March 2, 1957, 3.

[16] *New York Times*, March 14, 1957, 9.

In a sense, the period 1955-1957 can be identified as a short experimental period of democracy by civil society in the Thai political history, like Ockey argues.[17] On the other hand, it should be noted that the Thai military government's effort to ostensibly "democratize" authoritarian rule in the period 1955-1957 eventually resulted in the development of populist military politics. Thai political leaders came to focus more on winning popular supports to strengthen their political base rather than actually democratize the political system or policies. At the same time, it came to be far clearer that all those leaders were competing to win the American's favor to extract more foreign aid that would enable them to augment their political influences.

As mentioned earlier, Phao and Sarit passionately sought the U.S. government's financial and political support in this period. Similarly, when some politicians requested that the government seek aid from other countries, including the communist bloc, to resolve the drought problems in the northeast region, Phibun responded that "[I]f Thailand ever wants to welcome foreign aid for the relief of the northeast, that aid must come from the United States and nowhere else."[18] Phibun's dependence on the U.S. influence and Sarit and Phao's struggle to divert the expanding foreign aid to their armed forces vividly show that those Thai military politicians came to perceive the U.S. as the most powerful and reliable foreign supporter not only for their country's survival but also for achieving their power domination within Thai politics. In this regard, the political battle among the triumvirate powers was not limited within the Thai national politics but, indeed, extended to the global politics that eventually forged the Thailand-U.S. relations into a Cold War alliance.

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[17] Ockey, "Civil Society and Street Politics," 107-108.

[18] *New York Times*, August 23, 1957, 2.

From a Paramilitary to a Civic Action Agent

Retired Thai BPP members remember the 1957 coup as a catastrophe. Manas described the coup as "the political storm that blew harshly to the extent it almost abolished our standing at that time."[19] On the night of coup, Sarit's army troops swept through Bangkok and the CIA station. The CIA advisors spent the night burning documents and in a few days, most advisors left the country fearing the possibility of Sarit's revenge. Thereafter, SEA Supply Company remained low profile for the ensuing months.[20]

Not knowing what was going on in Bangkok -- even the fact that eight members of the PARU got killed on the night of coup, those in Hua Hin were following their routine. That midnight, the PARU members finally learned about the coup and got an order from the army supreme command that had suspended all the police forces' activities. Two days later, army commanders came to Naresuan camp to confiscate the weapons, explosives, and parachutes, and left few army guards to stay in the camp. Up to this point, according to Nakhon, the PARU members did not realize how the coup would actually affect to their fate, but they could slightly sense that their autonomy had vanished.[21]

Shortly after, the Thai newspapers began to publish stories about the aborted coup by the "black tiger (*suea dam*)." The origin of naming PARU a black tiger came from the signs attached in one of the buildings in Naresuan camp that says, "We are gentlemen in the camp, but are wild tigers in the battlefield (*rao pen suphap burut nai khai te pen suea rai nai sanam rop*)." It was the Phim Thai newspaper that first used "black tiger" when reporting about the PARU's

[19] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, April 9, 2010.

[20] Conboy, *Shadow War*, 58.

[21] Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 273-274.

conspiracy to stage a coup under the command of CIA and Phao. Most of the articles that covered the PARU story right after the coup highlighted its outstanding military strength as well as extraordinary stockpile of modern armaments.[22] In a sense, those stories were told to legitimize Sarit's military coup by reminding the readers about coup attempts from a mysterious force under the CIA and Phao, hence the newspapers intentionally transforming the wild tigers into the "black" tigers.[23]

Without hesitation, Sarit immediately defanged Phao's police forces by eliminating the organization's military strength as well as institutional autonomy. On October 11, 1957, one of the Sarit's close junior officers, Brigadier General Chan Angsuchot got a phone call from General Sawai Sawaisenyakon, the then interim Director-General of TNPD, asking him to help resolve the BPP problems.[24] Sawai asked Chan to become an acting commissioner of the BPP Headquarters because the unit needed large-scale reform that could reduce their military characteristics and reorganize them to be a regular security force. In addition, since the BPP and PARU received a massive amount of American funding, Chan was assigned to manage the U.S. aid and assistance to these units and TNPD.[25] From then until 1961 when he was relieved from the police post, Chan served the second commissionership of the BPP Headquarters.

As Sawai requested, Chan's appointment was to neutralize the military characteristics of BPP through a vigorous reform. The Ministry of Interior order that had established the Border

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[22] Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 281.; Nakhon collected several newspaper articles on the PARU's suspicious activities with CIA and Phao and included them in his chapter: "History of Black Tiger (*prawat suea dam*)," 273-282.

[23] See Figure 1 and Figure 2.

[24] Army General Sawai Sawaisenyakon was appointed as the Director-General of TNPD by Sarit after Phao left.

[25] Chan Angsuchot. "*Phuean tamruat trawen chaidaen lae tamruat phonrom thi rak thang lai* [Dearest Friend the Border Patrol Police and PARU]," in *Kong banchakan tamruat trawen chaidaen thiraluek nai kanpoet akhan bocho tochodo, 7 phruetsaphakhom 2518* [Border Patrol Police Headquarters, Commemorative volume marking the opening of the headquarters building, 7 May 1975]. (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1975), 60.

Patrol Police General Headquarters was repealed on December 27, 1957.[26] The Police Motor Vehicle Division where the PARU belonged was dissolved, and most heavy weapons and modern vehicles in the division were confiscated and sent to the army. The majority of PARU's forces were transferred to Phitsanulok military camp and renamed as a "special battalion (*kongphan phiset*)," while the remaining PARU platoons were placed under the BPP.[27] Shortly after the second coup in October 1958, Sarit assumed the post of TNPD Director-General. Finally in 1960, despite the BPP's struggle to diminish Sarit's resentment and suspicion against its organization, Sarit demoted the BPP to fall under the command of the Provincial Police.[28] The Border Patrol Police was renamed the "Border Provincial Police (*tamruat phuthon chaidaen*)".

At least, the BPP and PARU were secured from being disbanded, although they were disarmed. There were endless rumors about destroying the BPP and PARU, or absorbing the forces into other military units. Nonetheless, some army officers like Chan Angsuchot believed there still existed significant missions that only the BPP and PARU could carry out and thus the organization should not be removed.[29] More importantly, the royal family's support for the BPP did not cease even after the coup. The current king and queen made an official visit to BPP's Camp Dararatsami in Chiang Mai on March 9, 1958 and the couple visited the Camp Bothoeng in Pattani on March 19, 1959 to encourage the BPP members to continue their activities in the responsible regions.[30]

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[26] Manas, *Prawat kongbanchakan,* 18.

[27] *Sisippi tochodo*, 69.

[28] *Kong banchakan 1975*, 110.

[29] Chan, "*Phuean tamruat trawen chaidaen*," 61-62.

[30] Manas, *Bantuek khuam songcham*, 2.

The period between Sarit's coup in 1957 and restoration of the BPP's autonomous institutional standing in 1972, therefore, became a critical test period to the BPP for proving their contribution to the Thailand's national security in order to sustain its organization. Although the demotion order forced the unit to become a subordinate to the Provincial Police from 1960, the BPP could maintain some autonomy from its superiors since its duties and activities could not be compromised with that of the Provincial Police. Therefore, the newly found Border Provincial Police Division could secure two operational wings: administration and support subdivisions with the Provincial Police Commissioner as a head of Division.[31] On the other hand, despite their unforeseeable future, BPP did not terminate its operations after 1957 coup. Instead, the BPP moved its operational focus to civic action programs in the remote areas of north and northeast regions. Eventually, this shift of operational focus saved the BPP from disbandment.

Officially, BPP began its first civic action, named "Development and Aid for Hill Tribe People and People Far from Communication," under the auspices of Ministry of Interior in 1956.[32] The then Minister of Interior Phibun had set up a "Committee to Aid Hill Tribe People and People Far from Communication (*khanakammakan songkhro prachachon klai khamanakhom*)" and the TNPD assigned the BPP to the project by the order of Ministry of Interior 653/2499 on August 7, 1956.[33] The Border Patrol Police -- also called as Gendarme Police Force at that time -- prepared a report both in Thai and English, entitled, *Aid Given to Hill*

[31] See, for example, the table of organization is available in *Kong banchakan 1975*, 111.

[32] Soem, *Rueang tamruat trawen chaidaen,* 39-40.

[33] The Committee was consisted of Under-Secretary of Interior, Director-General of the Thai National Police Department; Director-Generals of Interior Department, Health Department, Domestic Trade Department, Public Welfare Department, Land Department, Forestry Department; Representatives of Ministry of Education, Agriculture; Secretary General of National Institute of Culture, Commissioner of Gendarme Police Force (Border Patrol Police) General Headquarters; and Chief of Self-Settlement Section who served as a secretary of the Committee.: from *Aid Given to Hill Tribe*.

Tribe People and People Far from Communication (*kan songkhro chaopa chaokhao lae prachachon klai khamanakhom*) for the committee in 1956 to introduce its past and present services for the highland minorities and also to seek for material support from various governmental organizations.

According to this 1956 report, the central goals of the BPP's action plan were to provide security and protection; give advice on sanitation and health and provide medicine and medical treatment; establish schools for children and adult, and distribute free educational materials; give advice on how to improve their way of living and introduce the modern techniques to enhance the agriculture, trade, and lifestyles and; provide better communication tools like radios.[34] Why these aids were necessary for the people in the remote areas? The author of the report remarks that if these "uneducated" people are not "led to the right way," by the Thai government, they "may be a tool of the enemy [*sic*]".[35] In addition, since they were accustomed in jungle living, BPP could "use them as guide and carry things" in exchange of fair wages and they would become the "eyes and ears" for the Thai authority during the peacetime. In the wartime, the hill people could help the armed forces by guiding the ways and transporting supplies, and if they receive a proper training, they could also be "used to help in the combat".[36]

As mentioned before, the CIA created the BPP and PARU as the frontline paramilitary force to be mobilized in guerrilla fighting, intelligence gathering and psychological operations in the remote border areas. The earlier civic action programs as suggested in the 1956 report should be understood along the line of this original goal. The primary task of the BPP and PARU was to

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[34] *Aid Given to Hill Tribe*, 4-5.

[35] *Aid Given to Hill Tribe*, 4.

[36] *Aid Given to Hill Tribe*, 5.

collect information about the enemy infiltration and attack and also to befriend with the people in these areas to carry out their intelligence work more efficiently. It was also to create a reserve force in case of war. If the provision of medical treatment and daily goods were to win the border villagers' hearts-and-minds, establishment of the schools and deployment of patrol police were to expand their intelligence activities, psychological operations and state surveillance system in the remote border areas.

Accordingly, a proposal titled "making friend with hill tribe people" in the 1956 report, suggests the following five steps: first, the BPP units try to "meet children and leaders of the tribes" to make personal acquaintance; second, assign the BPP men to inspect the areas of responsibility to obtain "the knowledge about hill tribe people to plan the work in future"; third, start "distributing medicine, clothings [*sic*] and food" and establish schools and station the BPP teachers; fourth, if the previous procedure yields a certain result, then report to the director general of the police department "to request for co-operation from other departments"; and finally, report to the TNPD and the Ministry of Interior for further cooperation for the BPP's work in these villages.[37] Overall, this five-step procedure proposed and implemented by the BPP prepared a ground to expand the state surveillance by the Thai government and also the operational bases for another sponsor of its project: the CIA.

Not surprisingly, the author of the 1956 report does not mention about the support from the CIA or any relevant U.S. governmental organizations. However, the CIA -- through the SEA Supply, had funded the BPP's civic action programs in the remote border areas from formation years and also provided "advisors" to the BPP and PARU for an advanced intelligence activities. Even during the time when the USOM-Thailand's Public Safety Division took over the

[37] *Aid Given to Hill Tribe*, 7-8. (quotes from the original without revision).

responsibility of overlooking the BPP's remote area projects, CIA never ceased funding and manning the BPP operations. Before investigating the way in which the CIA channeled the funding to the BPP, let us first examine why the CIA and also the Thai government came to pay a close attention to the highland minorities in the border areas of Thailand in this period. For the U.S. side of story, we need to invite one significant figure who had worked for both the CIA and the USOM-PSD from the 1950s to the end of 1960s. He is, Oliver Gordon Young.

Born in Banna, Yunnan province in China in 1927, Gordon Young is the third generation of Young-s, who were Baptist missionaries, to live and work with the highland minorities in several Asian countries. His father Harold Mason Young and his younger brother William Young worked for the CIA in Thailand and Laos respectively, which made these two-generation of Young-s contribution to the American Cold War in Southeast Asia more distinctive and significant. Gordon was recruited and trained by the CIA in 1953 and when he arrived in Bangkok in the early 1954, William Donovan, then the American ambassador to Thailand and also a case officer in Bangkok CIA station, personally advised Harold and Gordon. One day, Donovan invited them for an informal meeting in a zoo and assigned them a special, deep-covered mission.[38] As for Gordon, Donovan assigned to survey the "stay behind areas" where the American and local special forces could battle with the enemy in case of shooting war break out in the adjunct areas of Thailand-Burma-China and also to build a "bridge" with the potential local militias. At the same time, Donovan instructed him that his assignment should be kept secret even from his other CIA-SEA Supply colleagues.[39]

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[38] Interview with Gordon Young, March 9, 2012.; See also his autobiography, Gordon Young, *Journey from Banna: My life, Times, and Adventures* (Bloomington: Xlibris Corp, 2011), 184.

[39] Interview with Gordon Young, March 9, 2012. Gordon characterized his mission as "covert" while that of the SEA Supply as "overt" CIA operations.

Therefore, Gordon began to recruit Lahu men whom he felt familiar with and relied upon, as he was born in a Chinese Lahu village, and traveled widely in the Thai-Burma-Lao border areas with his Lahu aides in the latter half of 1950s. In the meantime, his father Harold Young was assigned to work with the Shan people, who Harold himself felt comfortable. Two Young-s' deep-covered missions inform us that the original objectives of the CIA in mobilizing the highland minorities in the remote Thai border areas aimed at obtaining intelligence about the Chinese communist infiltration as well as spotting the areas for the future covert and overt operations behind the Chinese enemy lines, at least until the end of 1950s. The highland minorities that both Harold and Gordon had been familiar with and worked with were the most valuable sources that enabled the CIA intelligence activities as well as the recruitment of reserve forces for the future operations.

In addition, the opium cultivation and trade, especially by the KMT forces, caused great concern to the U.S. government at that time. As Alfred McCoy exhaustively investigated in his book, *The Politics of Heroin*, KMT utilized the opium trade as a source of funding for their battle against the communists and also for private ventures. The highland minorities who were the major opium cultivators and traders thus caught the attention from the CIA from the early 1950s. Chameh, one of Gordon's most intimate Lahu agents, who was conscripted by the KMT army as a coolie to carry their military gears and opium, offers an interesting example of the KMT's opium business and the ways in which the KMT had mobilized the capable jungle people.[40] Gordon's other half Lahu-half Lisu agent, Chanu, had also been an opium carrier for the Chinese "mafia" for years between Burma and Thailand but later ended this job when he was ambushed

[40] Interview with Gordon Young, March 16, 2012.; Young, *Journey from Banna*, 200-201.

and imprisoned by the Thai BPP.[41] Gordon's recruitment of these hill tribe men were accidental but at the same time, their personal histories tell the ways in which these mountain people got to engage in the opium trafficking in the golden triangle. Not only cultivating opium in the high mountain hills, highland minorities have also been trading with outsiders because it was a major source of cash income for their living. Accordingly, their opium business affected and shaped the CIA's knowledge and perception towards the ethnic minorities in the border areas.

For the Thai side of story, there were two additional, urgent problems related to the highland minorities and border security on top of the above issues as claimed by both the BPP and the government. The first was about environmental issues, particularly the problems of deforestation and conservation of watersheds. As mentioned in the 1956 report and other BPP reports, the traditional slash-and-burn cultivation of the mountain people had greatly damaged the natural resources in the mountainous border areas of northern Thailand. After the official tour of northern Thailand, Sarit gave a public address in 1961, raising the alarm that "60 million rais of the kingdom area have been exploited to be the rice field and other crop plantation, and only 180 million rais remain [as] an area of the national forest."[42] In a given estimation by Manas in 1965, no less that 400,000 rais of the forest in the northern border areas "has been destroyed" on the top of five million rais of land by the highland minorities' slash-and-burn cultivation. Manas reiterates that because of their ignorance about the modern agriculture and indifference to the significance of environmental preservation, particularly the forest and watersheds, the hill people tended to destroy the precious natural, and national resources.[43]

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[41] Interview with Gordon Young, March 14, 2012.; Young, *Journey from Banna*, 208-209.

[42] Manas, *Kan songkhro chaokhao nai phak nuea*, 3. "rai" is the Thai measure of land and equals approximately to 1600 square-meter. (explanation is mine)

[43] Manas, *Kan songkhro chaokhao nai phak nuea*, 4.

Another urgent issue that had rather slowly come to be recognized by the Thai government was the necessity of consolidating the border population and villages into the Thai nation-state in order to strengthen the national border security. Gordon remembers one interesting anecdote from 1960 when he was preparing to survey the highland minorities under the contract with the ICA -- that soon was replaced by the USOM. One of the Thai local officials wondered why Gordon was taking such a risky trip to the hills and so advised him: "There are only monkeys and squirrels in the mountains."[44] Gordon's report *The Hill Tribes of Northern Thailand* has now become one of the most valuable, realistic accounts on the Thai highland minorities in this context. Before this report was released in 1961, there were virtually no systemic governmental efforts to survey the highland minorities. Thus the Siam Society asked permission to reproduce the report, and the second edition came out as the first monograph of the Siam Society in 1962. Then the Society presented a silk-covered copy of the report to King Bhumibol and other royal family members, including Princess Mother Sangwan. From then on, the alleged "monkeys and squirrels in the mountains" came to receive both governmental and royal attention.[45]

While the Thai government was rather indifferent to the strategic importance of the mountain people, the BPP was not. When discussing the general historical background of the BPP School project in the mountainous border areas, Police General Suraphon Chulaphram mentions that in the early 1950s, the Thai state was not aware of the importance of containing the highland minorities in these remote areas. To draw an alert to the presence of potentially dangerous population, Suraphon adds that in the case of the First Indochina War, both the French and Vietnamese mobilized the ethnic minorities as their foot soldiers, and that these forces were

[44] Interview with Gordon Young, March 15, 2012.

[45] Interview with Gordon Young, March 10, 2012. See also, Young, *Journey from Banna*, 227-228.

very fierce.[46] Similarly, Police Lieutenant General Charoenrit Chamratromran provides his own experience during the Pacific War:

> I got a lesson about the hill tribes from the Pacific War. The military forces under my command were ambushed by Musser [Lahu] tribes. Eight soldiers were killed on site and only one survived. Later, I went to inspect the ambush site but only found twenty bullet casings. The corpses were severely damaged as far as I can remember. The military had superior weapons to the enemy though.[47]

As a good friend and colleague of Charoenrit in the 1960s, Gordon recalls the above story told by Charoenrit to him in person, repeating that " 'thousands' of Thai and Japanese soldiers died" by preeminent Lahu guerrilla leader Sara Chakaw's relentless attacks to their camps and convoys. Then Charoenrit told Gordon that the "Lahu literally broke my back" at that time.[48] These accounts from Suraphon and Charoenrit present the highland minorities as potential threat to the national security because the external enemies could easily manipulate them.[49] Furthermore, these people were accustomed to jungle living, so their military strength would not be negligible if fighting were to occur in the mountainous border areas of Thailand.

In sum, there were four objectives in expanding the state surveillance among the highland minorities in the remote border areas of Thailand by the CIA, Thai government and the BPP-PARU: first, to counter the communist infiltration and recruit the mountain people; second, to curtail the opium cultivation and trade; third, to preserve natural resources, and fourth, to consolidate and assimilate the border population within the Thai nation-state. These perceptions

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[46] Border Patrol Police Headquarters. *Sisippi rongrian tochodo* [40 Years of the Border Patrol Police School] (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1996), 50. [hereafter, *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*]

[47] *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 81. (explanation added)

[48] Interview with Gordon Young, March 14, 2012. See also, Young, *Journey from Banna*, 217-218. Interestingly enough, Sara Chakaw himself, after several years, confirmed Gordon about this fierce attack against the Thai and Japanese armed forces in Shan state in person.

[49] *Suraphon Chulaphram Cremation Volume*, 81.

ultimately provided the impetus to send PARU survey teams and their foreign advisors to the northern and northeastern borders. At the end of 1955, thirty teams of PARU members were dispatched to the various border areas to survey the conditions of remote villages, and to find a site for building a Border Information Center (*sun ruam khao chaidaen,* BIC).[50] According to the PARU's account, the basic objectives of establishing the BIC was to prepare the operational ground for unconventional warfare in the future; to facilitate the intelligence gathering by befriending with the villagers; to launch the basic civic action programs like building schools and providing medical service; and to expand the police surveillance over the population and areas of responsibility by stationing a lightly armed patrol team.[51]

Before the PARU survey teams left the Naresuan camp in Hua Hin, they were instructed to teach the Thai language to enable ongoing communication with the children. By teaching the highland children to speak Thai, the PARU was able to gather necessary information about the border villages. At the same time, by providing a mundane civilian service, the BPP and PARU members believed that these children would become a "bridge" between the police force and villagers.[52] Put simply, by teaching the hill tribe children, the BPP and PARU hoped to achieve three objectives: first, they could communicate with the children in Thai so that the unit could conduct intelligence tasks more efficiently; second, the school children could favorably acknowledge the BPP's presence in the border areas to their parents; third, by showing their dedication to the welfare of the highland minorities, the BPP could gain their trust and would be able to expand police surveillance in the community. If these objectives were accomplished, the

[50] Manas, *Khrongkan phathana*, 1.; Dora H. Layton, "Thailand's Border Patrol Police" in *Sawaddi* (August 1966), 26.; Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 209; See also *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 433.

[51] *Prawat khai naresuan*,15-16.

[52] *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 52.

BPP could inspect nearby areas freely and even more significantly, the villagers would willingly provide information about what are happening in the mountains ranges.

Accordingly, the first BIC was built in Tak province in the passageways between Thailand and Burma. As soon as the BIC camp building was prepared, the PARU members went out to search for children in the village. At first, they could find only three or four children willing to reside with strangers. The PARU members provided accommodation for these children in the BIC camp, and began teaching Thai language. Soon the number of students increased to two hundred.[53] Based on this success, the PARU-BIC teams managed to build a total of eleven Centers by the remote border areas of northern and northeastern Thailand.[54]

Not long after, this Border Information Center project developed into a larger, and more durable project: the Border Patrol Police School. The first official BPP School opened on January 7, 1956 in Chiang Rai province, and was named "Border Patrol Police Sponsored School No.1 (*rongrian tamruat trawen chaidaen bamrung thi nueng*)."[55] In the first year of the official School project, the BPP opened eighteen schools.[56] From 1956, the Ministry of Education supplied textbooks and notebooks, pencil and slate boards, rulers and erasers to the Schools.[57] Similarly, the Public Health Department provided Aspirin, Dover's tablets and Anti-Malaria tablet to be distributed among the highland minorities by the BPP in 1956. Following the suit of this kind of governmental support, the Public Welfare Department gave four thousand pieces of

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[53] Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 211.

[54] Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 209-210.; *Prawat khai naresuan,* 16. Two Border Information Centers (BIC) were built Tak province, one BIC in Buriram province, two BICs in Mae Hong Son province, three BICs in Nan province, two BICs in Nakhon Phanom province, and one BIC in Phetburi province.

[55] *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 41.

[56] *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 84; *Aid Given to Hill Tribe People,* 10-13.

[57] *Aid Given to Hill Tribe People,* 10.

clothes in early 1957.[58] In addition, the BPP began receiving private donations, and soon, the royal family became the mediating channel between the donors and BPP.[59]

The BPP's school building efforts were temporarily halted by Sarit's coup in September 1957. The Ministry of Education and the Public Welfare Division pulled their financial and material support for the BPP Schools. Despite the difficulties and limitations, the number of BPP Schools all the more increased drastically in the years following Sarit's coup. The BPP Headquarters was dissolved by an order dated December 27, 1957 but between the first coup in September 1957 and second coup on October 20, 1958, sixty-five new BPP schools were built. Even after the second coup by Sarit in 1958, the BPP managed to build some sixty more schools before being demoted under the Provincial Police in 1960.[60] In this way, as will be discussed further in the following chapter, the School project became the main emblem of BPP civic actions, and a token of dedication to their mission of aiding and defending the border population.

Overall, the earlier civic actions allowed the BPP members to gain substantial knowledge and experience of the border villages. In addition to launching a number of new civic action projects, the unit increased its efforts to build close relationships with highland villagers during this period by learning local dialects, volunteering to assist community projects in remote northern villages, and fraternizing with villagers as much as possible.[61] After the 1957 coup, the BPP increased its civic action programs to prove that it was the one and only force that could

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[58] *Aid Given to Hill Tribe People,* 9-10.

[59] Handley, *King Never Smiles*, 130-131.

[60] The number of new schools is the author's estimate, compiled from the list of schools with the years of official opening in the 40 Years Anniversary and 50 Years Anniversary volumes: *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 448-464; Border Patrol Police Headquarters. *Duai chongrak lae pakdi hasippi rongrian tochodo* [With Loyalty 50 Years of the Border Patrol Police School] (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 2006), 353-357, 364. [hereafter, *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*]

[61] Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*, 200.

sustain the remote area development projects. Chan Angsuchot, the then acting commissioner of the BPP Headquarters, came to learn that civic action programs carried out by the BPP had contributed in building the bridges between the government authority and the border people. Thus, Chan began persuading the military members about the necessity of keeping the BPP and its civic actions.

In this context, the BPP's shift from a paramilitary intelligence unit into a development agency for remote areas was rather smooth. The BPP asserted its institutional legitimacy to Sarit and other military groups with its contribution to the expansion of the police surveillance through its civic actions in the border areas. At the same time, its shift of operational focus to civic actions would reduce the army's suspicion against the BPP's military strength. However, the desired recognition did not come from Sarit's new military regime. BPP's chance at recovery in fact came from other powers in the early 1960s: President Kennedy and the Thai royal family.

Remote Area Security Development

The United States Operations Mission to Thailand began to assist some of the BPP's highland minority aid programs from mid-1961. The USOM officials, mostly transferred from the ICA or the CIA, were already well-informed about the BPP civic actions in the remote border areas and thus had a high regard for the BPP's activities and operational capability. For instance, Gordon Young, an actual author of the 1963 pamphlet entitled, *The Civic Action Program of the Border Patrol Police and the USOM Public Safety Division,* explains that civic action programs require "many years of experience and physical sturdiness for men to reach and work effectively among

the many different tribal peoples found in the remote areas" and that the BPP have "all these qualifications from over eight years of living and working with these remote peoples."[62]

The USOM's decision to support BPP civic actions was a strategic choice.[63] When the Public Safety Division was installed to make civilian-centered development programs a key component of U.S. counterinsurgency strategy in the early 1960s following the Kennedy Administration's "Decade of Development" paradigm, it could easily take advantage of the BPP's presence in the border areas, mostly as teachers of the BPP schools and members of the development platoon. In a similar time, the CIA could also resume its operation in Thailand under the guise of PSD advisors and strove to gain control of the BPP's civic action program from 1962.[64] In short, the coming of the PSD under the USOM reflects two critical changes of U.S. foreign policy under the Kennedy administration: first, the civilian counterinsurgency came to operate in a full-fledged, but hastened, fashion; second, the coexistence of the CIA and PSD under the one regional operational wing of USAID forecasted the eventual failure due to their confusion and conflict over the counterinsurgency concepts and operations.

It is interesting to note that there existed two parallel conflicts among the USOM, CIA and BPP in coordinating their joint civic action programs. One could be found in the relationship between the USOM-PSD and the CIA. As discussed extensively by Thomas Lobe's works in 1975 and 1977, the coexistence of the CIA and USOM-PSD in the same office room -- often located either in the American embassy or consul, caused an inconvenient and inefficient

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[62] Public Safety Division, *Civic Action Program*, 3-4.

[63] This statement is confirmed by various USOM reports such as: Jones and Batson, *Brief History of USOM Support*.; Agency for International Development. *USOM in Perspective* (Bangkok: USOM, 1971); Rey M. Hill, *An Overview of USAID Participation in the Thailand Programs of Development and Security, 1951 to 1973* (Bangkok: USOM, 1973); AD/PStaff. *Aid Program in Thailand* (Bangkok, 1968).; See also, Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*, 330-331.

[64] Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*, 334-335.

execution of the PSD's programs. To begin with, the BPP's civic action program was born out of the CIA's interest in enhancing the intelligence and paramilitary capacity of the unit. The early civic action programs of the BPP, including the aid and development projects for the highland minorities, were basically aimed at utilizing the border population for their missions and expanding the CIA action behind the enemy line -- that of the Chinese communist. While these earlier works ultimately helped the BPP to survive the coup debacle, the CIA lost its full control over the BPP's civic action when Sarit came into office and its Thai collaborator Phao left the country.

After Sarit expelled the CIA members who had aided the BPP and PARU in 1957, the U.S. government -- or more correctly the CIA, alternated its support through the Civilian Police Administration (CPA) under the ICA. The CIA operations went underground by using the cover of CPA, but a large portion of the U.S. material aid still went to these CIA sponsored organizations, and about half of the funds allocated for training the Thai police went to BPP, until the PSD assumed the mandate in 1961.[65] From the late 1960's after Sarit demoted the BPP under the Provincial Police, the CIA was no longer an attractive patron to the BPP because the unit had to show its distance from any types of political organization and clandestine operations devised by foreigners.

In this sense, the USOM's support for the BPP's civic action from 1961 came at just the right time, in the right format. Although many CIA members participated and took the advisor titles in the organization in a short amount of time, the PSD looked rather innocuous, civilian-oriented, and thus apolitical. The Division indeed sponsored more of the development-oriented projects like agriculture and husbandry by providing boar pigs, chickens and high-yielding crop

[65] Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*, 170-171.; Lobe, *United States National Security Policy and Aid,* 30.

seeds.[66] The official work plan between the PSD and BPP worked out in early 1962. The PSD appointed full-time civic action advisors and the BPP Headquarters designated a senior officer as a counterpart to these advisors, such as Gordon Young as the advisor to the BPP civic action program and the then Thai Police Colonel Charoenrit Chamratromran as a BPP staff officer, to jointly implement civic actions with the PSD. After streamlining the bureaucratic structure, PSD reviewed the previous BPP actions and planned to integrate education, medical assistance and agriculture fields into the PSD's development for security programs.

In 1962, like Gordon Young recalls, "changes began."[67] In mid-1961, the USAID director made a statement that foreign aid to the Thai police would phase out by the end of fiscal year 1962, because it concluded that the TNPD had received enough financial and technical support to enhance its police.[68] Nevertheless, the PSD decided to officially support the BPP's hill-tribe aid project from the fiscal year 1962 and named it as the Remote Area Security Development program (RASD). Soon the CIA joined the PSD-BPP civic action programs and began to refurnish the development activities with security objectives. Since the launch of RASD program, the PSD focused on improving elementary education, medical assistance, village development, economic promotion, youth activities, and psychological operations among the BPP's civic actions.[69] It is not clear which projects were specifically involved with the CIA intelligence operations and paramilitary buildup but it seems obvious that all these programs were aimed at winning the hearts-and-minds of a target population and gaining access to necessary information and informants in the remote border areas. To confirm, I once asked one

[66] Public Safety Division, *Civic Action Program*, 15.

[67] Young, *Journey from Banna*, 229.

[68] Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*, 173.

[69] Coffey, *Public Safety/ Border Patrol Police*, 2.

BPP officer whether the CIA continued funding the BPP-PSD's RASD program during the Sarit administration. The officer responded: "They are same. We still got money from the Americans anyway," implying that the CIA did not stop participating in the BPP civic actions even after the PSD assumed the official control.[70]

Witnessing the deteriorating internal security condition in Thailand after the outbreak of the first Thai communist insurgency in mid-1965, USOM decided to participate and fund the entire BPP's civic action project and created a separate budget for the program from the fiscal year 1966 which lasted until 1971.[71] Lobe and other scholars explain the reason why the previous phase-down plan was abandoned was that because the CIA's covert operation in Laos did not yield satisfactory result, Washington had to decide not to lower its level of assistance and cooperation with its most trusted ally in Southeast Asia.[72] As a consequence, there were no substantial cuts to the aid to the Thai police as well as general development aid to the Thai government. In fact, the level of U.S. foreign aid and assistance actually skyrocketed throughout the rest of 1960s. As the amount of aid grew, the tension between the USOM-PSD and CIA advisors to the RASD program also grew considerably because the increased aid meant a higher stake in the competition for assuming the control of counterinsurgency programs in Thailand. Although Thomas Lobe does not extend his survey to the BPP side of story, the confusion and conflicts between these two American advisory groups eventually offered a chance for enlarging the role of BPP and other local leadership that came to exert dominant influence over the program in due course.

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[70] Personal Communication, June 17, 2010.

[71] Coffey, *Public Safety/ Border Patrol Police*, 4.; Hill, *Overview of USAID Participation*, 6.; Curtis, *Brief History of USOM* Support, 26. Hill reported the RASD lasted until 1971, but Curtis marked that the program was terminated in the fiscal year 1970.

[72] For example, see Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*, 174-185.; Caldwell, *American Economic Aid to Thailand*, 47-62.

Another conflict could be found between the USOM and the BPP's civic action programs and its objectives. For instance, the title of project, Remote Area Security Development program, was used by the USOM but not by the BPP. When I asked Manas about his experience of working for the RASD program, Manas responded that he did not know the USOM called the BPP's civic action programs the Remote Area Security Development. Instead, he mentioned that among the BPP, its civic action was called "Development for Security and Safety Project (*khrongkan phathanakan phuea khuammankhong plotphai*)".[73] The disparity in the titles of the same project informs us of the difference their roles and visions vested in this joint project. To put it simply, the USOM-PSD acted as a sponsor and advisor to the civic action programs while the BPP served the actual operator of the projects. While both groups recognized the significance of the civic action program within their counterinsurgency scheme, the Thai BPP came to perceive the program as the raison d'être for the organization's continuation. In addition, while the U.S. represented the USOM-PSD and CIA expected the BPP's civic actions to play a key role in strengthening the Free World security in Southeast Asia, the actual practitioners of the programs envisioned that their development programs would greatly contribute to enhancing the national security as well as national unity, not the American influence. And these separate visions within the same program came to split further when the local leadership supplanted the role of the U.S., as will be discussed in detail shortly.

In any case, with the USOM's backing, the BPP's initial project had extended its field of operation from providing basic educational and medical services to setting up twelve official civic action programs including: medical projects, educational projects, development center

[73] Personal Communication, April 9, 2010; On the other hand, in the USOM/RTG budget reports, the USOM titled the project as Remote Area Security. USOM, AD/P, *Thai/Aid Projects, Dollar Costs, Purposes, and Descriptions FY 1966, FY 1967, FY 1968* (Bangkok: USOM, 1969), 3. To avoid confusion, I will use the Remote Area Security Development (RASD) instead of Development for Security and Safety and Remote Area Security.

projects, improvement of husbandry and vegetation projects, mobile development projects, public relations projects, disaster relief project under the royal patronages, hill tribe museum projects, hill tribe craft support projects, hill tribe projects under the royal patronage; volunteers for village security projects, and training for the officials and people projects.[74] Moreover, USOM's assistance and funds had greatly contributed to the expansion of the BPP's operational fields from the marginal border areas to the provincial towns. During the implementation of the RASD projects with USOM, the BPP established close contact with thirty-nine highland minority villages in the northern region and also launched a Key Village program at forty-four strategic villages along the Thai-Lao border.[75] Until the PSD ceased to operate in 1974, BPP had twelve development programs in the remote border areas funded by the RASD budget and from 1962 until 1971, and the USOM-PSD provided total 6.9 million dollars to support the BPP's implementation of RASD program.[76]

Thomas Lobe argues that this USOM-CIA and BPP supported civic action program turned out to be a great failure, which brought "death to the CIA/BPP."[77] While agreeing with the reason why Lobe saw the BPP civic action programs wasting an enormous amount of American money and energy, which was invested in revitalizing the Thai police force as the frontline security force and maximizing the impact of the BPP's remote area development programs in suppressing the subversions and insurgencies in the border areas, what he called "failure" should

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[74] Manas, *Khrongkan phathana*, 4.

[75] AID, *AID Programs in the Far East* (Washington, DC, 1966), 19.; Jones and Batson, *Brief History of USOM Support*, 19.

[76] See more information about the USOM project description and budget from: United States Operations Mission to Thailand, *RTG/USOM Economic and Technical Project Summary, FY1951-1972* (Bangkok: Research and Evaluation Staff, Program Office, USOM, 1973); Hill, *Overview of USAID Participation*, 6.

[77] Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*, 354.

be also examined in the context of a discrepancy in the perceptions and objectives between the USOM-PSD and BPP. From the U.S. standpoint, the BPP's civic action failed to bring an immediate, visible impact to the border population because what most of the USOM-PSD and CIA members had expected from these actions was basically to enhance intelligence gathering and subversion-insurgency suppression. On the other hand, as an operational force, the BPP had desired that their activities in the remote border areas would soon win hearts-and-minds of both the border people and the Thai government. If this goal were accomplished, it would allow the organization to regain institutional autonomy and security in the years to come.

Ultimately, with the money and programs sponsored by the USOM-PSD, BPP gained the most crucial portion of the heart and mind of the Thai political apparatus: the monarchy. In a sense, the CIA was at least successful in inducing this traditional but most influential political leader's heart for the BPP, although this would eventually affect the waning influence of the CIA in Thailand shortly.

"Border Patrol Police, My Child"

Before the Thai royal family actively engaged in the rural development programs in the 1960s, they had focused mainly on charitable activities. One of the earliest royal charity organizations called the Ananda Mahidol Scholarship (*thun ananda mahidon*) was launched in 1955 and awarded scholarships to students enrolled in medical studies to enable them to proceed to a higher education abroad. In 1959, the scholarship program became the first royally sponsored foundation, Ananda Mahidol Scholarship Foundation (*munithi ananda mahidon*).[78] Additionally,

[78] Chanida Chitbundid. *Khrongkan annueang ma chak phraratchadamri: kansathapna phrarat amnat nam nai phrabatsomdet phrachaoyuhua* [The Royally-Initiated Projects: The Making of King Bhumibol's Royal Hegemony] (Bangkok: The Foundation for the Promotion of Social Science and Humanities Textbooks Project, 2007), 64-65.;

the royal family made regular donations for other scholarships, temples and poor hospitals and schools in provincial areas. By representing themselves as generous donors for the poor and the alienated population, the royal family attempted to establish the image of a virtuous patron of the nation.[79]

As mentioned before, the palace's interest to the BPP came as early as mid-1950s when Phao was exerting dominant influence over the politics and the U.S. was furnishing this police group to become an elite paramilitary force in the region. Alike to the CIA, which did not cease its financial and advisory assistance for the BPP after Sarit's coup, the royal family also continued to visit the BPP and showed their confidence in its survival. In the meantime, the expanding civic action programs of the BPP, alongside the U.S.'s modernization project, seemed to be the right place to make a fresh start for the young, feeble royal couple that hoped to win the hearts-and-minds of the Thai population and strengthen its political power base. In this sense, the royal family's participation to the BPP's civic action program should be understood as a strategic decision to deepen their own image as a legitimate ruler of the country.

While administrative reforms and scandals surrounding Sarit's illegal wealth consumed the Thai government after his death, the royal family quietly stepped into the battle of development by publicly supporting the BPP's civic actions. Before the USOM joined the BPP's RASD project, the royal family had already begun their regular trips to Chiang Mai where the Thai Army built a new royal residence called Bhubing Palace. Built in the middle of Doi Suthep mountain nearby a sacred temple Wat Phrathat Doi Suthep, Bhubing Palace has been a royal

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"Six Amazing Decades," *Bangkok Post*, June 12, 2006. accessed April 17, 2012, http://www.bangkokpost.com/60yrsthrone/amazing/index.html.

[79] Handley, *King Never Smiles*, 122.; For a detailed description about the early royal projects, see, for example, Chanida, *Khrongkan annueang ma chak phraratchadamri*, 62-87.

winter residence since 1959 and also a place where the royal projects were conceived.[80] Interestingly enough, several accounts of the BPP tell that most of the early encounters with the royal family took place in this palace. For instance, Charoenrit Chamratromran, then a BPP Commander in charge of civic action, tells an anecdote how the current king and queen began to support the BPP School project. In early 1962, the King went to stay overnight in Bhubing Palace. When the King's motorcade approached the palace, BPP teachers who brought a group of Hmong students from Doi Pui hill ordered the children to sing the Royal Anthem (*sansoen phrabarami*). The King's car stopped in front of the students and the King asked his aide who had taught these hill tribe children to sing the Royal Anthem. The aide answered that it was the BPP teachers.[81] Not long after, the King and Queen made a visit to the BPP Area Division 5 camp in Chiang Mai and gave 13,500 baht to build more schools for the highland minorities under royal patronage.[82]

Another official BPP account recalls the moment of the first encounter with the Princess Mother in Bhubing palace. When Princess Mother Sangwan was spending her vacation in the palace between September 15-October 3, 1962, she somehow took a detour and walked all the way to the back gate of the palace. There, she saw several men in military fatigues standing. As inquisitive as she was, she asked one of the men where they were from. The then BPP platoon commander Police Colonel Praphan Yuktanon from BPP Area 5 camp answered that he was a Border Police. She responded that "Border Police? I thought that you were an army." Soon, she

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[80] Bhubing Palace was also the place where the royal family received several foreign royal and celebrity guests in 1959 including Sukarno from Indonesia. It was officially promoted to the Palace since 1962. See more explanation about the Palace history from Prayut Sitthiphan, *Wang chao* [Royal Palace] (Bangkok: Bunprakoep, 1978), 285-288.

[81] This anecdote is from Charoenrit's memoir in the *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 85. *"Doi"* means hill or mountain in Thai language.

[82] *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 111.

called the BPP commanders to palace to hear about their works and began sponsoring the BPP's civic action projects.[83]

These official accounts require cautious scrutiny even though their vivid descriptions may sound convincing. As discussed before, the royal family had known about the existence of the BPP from the very early years of its formation and the King and Queen had often mingled with the PARU force in Hua Hin or made official visits to the BPP camps in various regions before 1960s. Other than his personal visits to the PARU camp, the King launched his first rural development initiatives to build a communal road in Huai Mongkhon village in 1952, and at that time, he borrowed bulldozers from the PARU camp in Hua Hin.[84] Therefore, it would be surprising if they were not informed about the BPP's civic action programs including the school project until the early 1960s. Then the question should be directed to the reason why the royal family suddenly came to pay such the lavish attention to the BPP's civic action programs from the early 1960s.

It is not clear whether the CIA and U.S. officials, or the BPP themselves encouraged the royal family to join the civic action programs directly but there are several pieces of evidence that could inform us about the close relations among the royal family, BPP and the CIA. From the early 1960s, whenever the royal family made a trip to the provinces, it was the BPP unit that escorted them by helicopter and other land vehicles. The King frequently used the PARU's Bo Fai air base in Hua Hin to travel to other places.[85] Likewise, whenever the Princess Mother

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[83] Border Patrol Police Headquarters. *Tochodo sadudi 100 pi somdetya* [Border Patrol Police Honor the Hundredth Anniversary of the Birth of the Princess Mother] (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 2000), 3-5. [hereafter, *Tochodo sadudi*]

[84] Chanida, *Khrongkan annueang ma chak phraratchadamri*, 68. See also, "Six Amazing Decades" *Bangkok Post*, June 12, 2006.

[85] Handley, *King Never Smiles*, 124.

attended opening ceremonies of BPP schools and health clinics in the remote areas, the BPP members accompanied her in helicopters. All these helicopter trips were provided by the CIA-hired airway companies like Bird & Sons Inc. (Bird Air), Continental Air and Air America, and the CIA paid for fuel and other expenses for the trips under the USOM's cover.[86] When Bill Lair and PARU were undertaking secret missions in Laos, the King summoned him and eighteen PARU members to Klai Kangwon palace and gave him a medal of honor on August 27, 1964.[87]

Alternatively, it could have been the royal family's desire to reinforce its fragile institution against the fierce power competition among the military generals by having an elite, but seemingly apolitical, force on their side like its predecessor did. King Vajiravudh (Rama VI), for instance, initiated his private force called Wild Tiger Corps (*suea pa*) in competition with the state institutionalized army in 1911 and the Corps served as the active force that safeguarded royalist nationalism and the monarchy institution.[88] The BPP might have been expected to play the same role for this young, still politically insecure royal family.[89] Although the King did not have direct control over the BPP, there were certain advantages that he could take from this small band of police forces. First, the unit was furnished with American high-end armaments and financial support, but after 1957, it lacked an actual political leadership when Phao left Thailand. The size of the force was manageable and less conspicuous but at the same time, the unit was

[86] Interview with Gordon Young, March 14, 2012.

[87] Roger Warner says this occurred in the fall of Laos but in fact, Bill Lair received the medal from the King in 1964 according to Thai Rath newspaper published on August 27, 1964. See the photograph of medal presentation between Bill Lair and Warner's description from Roger Warner, *Shooting At the Moon: The Story of America's Clandestine War in Laos* (South Royalton: Steerforth Press, 1996), 373.

[88] Thongchai, *Siam Mapped*, 167.

[89] For the political role of Wild Tiger Corps, see, for example, Handley, *King Never Smiles*, 36-37.

highly qualified in unconventional warfare and psychological operation.[90] Besides, its civic action programs had been further expanded and strengthened with the accumulated experiences and outstanding knowledge about Thai border areas and people, and the USOM and CIA were in favor of continuing their sponsorship for the BPP. In sum, both the continuing sponsorship from the U.S. and its relatively apolitical, inconspicuous standing made the BPP a prospective candidate for a private royal force. In this regard, making the BPP a royal force was a symbolic political move by the King to restore his power over the Thai society.

In this context, the BPP's civic action program had provided such a fortuitous opportunity for the royal family to refurnish its institution with one of the most popular Cold War paradigm: modernization. The King's development project in the 1950s began with several pilot projects like the road building in Hua Hin, temperate zone vegetation projects for the highland minorities, and natural resource preservation in northern Thailand. In this process, the project for assisting the highland minority called *Royal Hill Tribe Development Project* (*khrongkan luang phathana chaokhao*) since 1965 became the founding stone of the general Royal Project (*khrongkan annueang ma chak phraratchadamri* or more popularly called, *khrongkan phraratchadamri*).[91] In his address at the Rotary Club Gala Dinner on February 27, 1969, the King explains why the royal project for aiding the highland minorities is imperative. He reasons that: "firstly, to give

[90] In his address to the Border Patrol Police in Chiang Mai on December 24, 1960, the King said although the BPP is a small, it has such the popularity among the people and therefore, the BPP and PARU could control the people and make them believe these two units.: from the Border Patrol Police Headquarters. *Phraboromratchowat khong phrasomdetphrachaoyuhua: phraratchathan ke nai tamruat trawen chaidaen na kongkamkapkan tamruat chaidaen khet 5 khai dararatsami amphoe maerim changwat chiangmai muawanpharuehat thi 24 thanwakhom phoso 2503* [Royal Guidance from the His Majesty for the Border Patrol Police in the Border Patrol Police Area Division 5, Dararatsami Camp, Amphoe Maerim, Chiang Mai Province on Thursday December 24, 1960], in the Border Patrol Police's 56th Anniversary, accessed September 26, 2009. www.bpp-56year.co.cc.

[91] Bhisatej Rajani. "*Khrongkan luang phatthana chao khao* [Royal Hill Tribe Development Project]," in *Khrongkan tangtang thi damnoen kantam phraratchadamri* [Various Project Implemented along the Royal Project], (Bangkok: hanghunsuan jamkat nonthachai, 1976), 57-68. Mom Chao Bhisatej Rajani was the first coordinator of the royal development project. For the definitions of naming royal project, see Chanida, *Khrongkan annueang ma chak phraratchadamri*, 6-7.

help to fellow men; secondly, to prevent and combat subversion by raising the standard of living of these people; and thirdly, to preserve national wealth and renown such as [to] prevent forest destruction and to halt traffic of narcotics, which has disastrous consequences for the country."[92] The BPP and CIA in fact had put similar objectives forward from the beginning of civic action more than a decade ago. In other words, the King also saw the remote area development projects would greatly contribute to strengthening the national security as well as to the national consolidation of the border areas and people. At the same time, like the civic action saved the BPP, the development project would offer more legitimate power basis for the young monarch.

Gradually, the King refashioned the American modernization scheme with the Thai Buddhist tradition by identifying the job as an "exercise to make merit." [93] RASD programs that had been undertaken by the BPP and USOM for almost a decade came to be incorporated into the royal project from 1969 and eventually this royal patronage for the border people produced one of the most powerful images of the current monarch as the "king of development" and "builder of nation".[94] In fact, the making of a working monarch started well before the beginning of royal project and the actual pioneer who took this initiative was the mother of current King.

Secretary General of the Chaipattana Foundation Dr. Sumet Tantivejkul, who has been one of the closest aides to the royal family's development projects, remarks that the true kingmaker was the Princess Mother Sangwan and that King Bhumibol had always been taught by the Princess Mother to "be a hero to those less fortunate than himself."[95] Born as a commoner,

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[92] Quoted in Bhisatej Rajani, *His Majesty's Assistance to Hill Tribes* (1970), 2.

[93] Bhisatej, *His Majesty's Assistance*, 1.

[94] Titles are from the collected articles of Bangkok Post in commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the King's accession to the throne, accessed April 17, 2012, http://www.bangkokpost.com/60yrsthrone/.

[95] Quoted in "Six Amazing Decades" *Bangkok Post*, June 12, 2006. For further information about the Chaipattana Foundation and its activities: Chaipattana Foundation, accessed April 19, 2012, http://www.chaipat.or.th/chaipat/.

trained as a nurse in her youth and also widely known for her compassion for the disadvantaged, marginalized people, the mother of current king, Princess Mother Sangwan emerged as the primary royal caretaker of the BPP and its civic action program. Through this process, she played the most important role in attracting favorable public attention to the BPP and royal family.

Her relationship with the BPP was very intimate. Since 1964, she made extensive visits to the remote areas with the BPP and when she visited villages with the BPP unit, the Princess Mother often wore BPP fatigues and a beret. Therefore, most BPP members that I have interviewed remember the Princess Mother affectionately, and without hesitation, they said the royal grandmother was the actual patron of the BPP. One PARU veteran recalled that when the Princess Mother was with the BPP, she called them "my sons".[96] Another anecdote regarding the close relationship between the Princess Mother and BPP comes from the history of the Princess Mother's Medical Volunteer Foundation (PMMV, *munithi phet asa somdetya phra si nakharin boromratchachonnani,* or *pho-o- sowo* in Thai acronym). When the Princess Mother was spending a vacation in Bhubing palace in 1964, she visited several BPP camps in hill areas. Wherever she visited, the Princess Mother saw the BPP members living in poor conditions like villagers. They were more vulnerable to endemic diseases in the jungles too. Thus, she invited some doctors and nurses from Bangkok to Bhubing palace in February 1969 and asked if they were willing to volunteer to provide medical services for the BPP and the villagers in remote jungles. This was the beginning of the Princess Mother's Medical Volunteer Foundation,

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[96] Personal Communication, April 27, 2010: Several Thai accounts about the Princess Mother and BPP say that she often called the unit members as "my grandchildren." See, for example, Cop's Magazine. "*Tha song pen ying kua bidonmanda tamruat trawen chaidaen* [She was more than the parents to the Border Patrol Police]" in *Cop's Magazine*, 2:14 (October 2007), 6.

established under royal patronage in 1969.[97] Like all these anecdotes state, the Princess Mother was "more than the parents to the Border Patrol Police."[98]

It is fair enough to say that the Princess Mother's, and subsequently the King's, royal projects for the hill people could not have come to life without the BPP's civic actions. Her major interest in education and sanitation for the people in the remote areas was realized in the BPP Schools projects that had come to be formally associated with the Princess Mother by 1964.[99] *Centenary of the Princess Mother*, published by the Thai embassy, claims that, "by her grace, all the BPP schools came under the patronage of the Princess Mother" and she "had generously given her own personal funds together with the funds presented to her by donors to establish hundreds of schools at BPP stations."[100] In total, the Princess Mother visited one hundred forty BPP schools to attend opening ceremonies and distribute school supplies and medicines to the villagers within the period 1963-1991.[101] Among the regular gifts from the Princes Mother to the students and villagers in those visits, there were national flag, map of Thailand, Buddha image and King's picture that represent the three pillars of Thai nationalism - the nation, religion, and monarchy. She instructed that by having those closely in their classroom, the children would learn to revere and to have loyalty to the Thai nation.[102]

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[97] Yongyut Satchawanit. "*Phet asa khong somdetya* [Medical Volunteers of Princess Mother]" in *Warasan pho-o-sowo* [PMMV Magazine], Volume 9 (October 1995-October 1996), 63-64.

[98] Cop's Magazine, *Tha song pen ying kua*, 4.

[99] *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 112.

[100] The Royal Thai Embassy in Washington D.C. *Centenary of the Princess Mother*, accessed January 16, 2007, http://www.thaiembdc.org/monarchy/srinagarinda/100y.html. [hereafter, *Centenary of the Princess Mother*]

[101] *Tochodo sadudi*, 209-223.

[102] *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 114.

As it turned out, her contribution to the BPP's civic action went well beyond simply bringing donations to remote areas, because the Princess Mother's close support for the program eventually drew more public affection to the monarchy and BPP. By utilizing the BPP civic actions, the royal family could promote the images of monarchy as the benevolent patron of the Thai nation, including the highland minorities. In particular, the images of the Princess Mother Sangwan descending from the BPP helicopters provided inspiration for legendary tales of her as a *Mae Fah Luang*, the royal mother from the sky.[103] Through her endeavors to bring development and modernization to the highland minorities, she has styled herself the royal mother of the marginalized, and thus she is often referred to as the "royal grandmother (*somdetya*)" or "royal mother from the sky" by the ordinary Thais to present.[104] The BPP, in turn, gained much from the direct and visible support of the Princess Mother because her royal patronage endowed the BPP with greater prestige than other governmental organizations. In this regard, the BPP's civic action program in the 1960s brought mutual victory for both the BPP and the monarchy within the military-centered Thai politics.

Their mutual victory also has a broader implication to the gradually indigenizing Cold War politics from the 1960s. Emergence of the Kennedy's "Decade of Development", USAID's modernization projects, Thai military government's rural development policies, and the Thai monarchy's initiation of royal projects during the first half of 1960s together forecasted the rapidly intensifying competition among the American and Thai leaders to gain dominance in the modernization and nation-building processes. As its involvement in the Vietnam War deepened, the U.S. government began doubling up its aid and assistance to Thailand to fortify the country

[103] Handley, *King Never Smiles*, 190; *Centenary of the Princess Mother.*

[104] Dora H. Layton, "Royal Mother from the Sky" in *Sawaddi* (January 1968), 6, 20.

as an outpost of anticommunist Free World. At the same time, the Thai monarch embarked a long journey to invigorate his influence in the Thai society by transforming himself into a king of development. In this context, the BPP gradually shifted to support the traditional leadership. As it will become clearer, the BPP's shift of loyalty from the U.S. to the Thai royal family foretold the successful indigenization of the Cold War by the latter.

Decline of the U.S. influence in the regional politics was mostly due to the inconsistency in its foreign policy, increasing infighting within its bureaucracy both at home and abroad, and its deepening involvement in the Vietnam War. On the other hand, the fundamental limitation of the American modernization and counterinsurgency programs derives from its negligence the potential that the local elites had as discussed earlier. The current Thai king has successfully hijacked the USOM-sponsored civic action programs and utilized them in order to consolidate domestic support for his power. In this respect, the King kept his promise to the U.S. that he made earlier. In his speech to a joint session of Congress of the United States on June 29, 1960, King Bhumibol stated that the U.S. foreign aid was viewed as "the old concept of family obligations [applied] upon the largest scale." And he added: "American assistance is to enable the Thai to achieve their objective *through their own efforts*. We are grateful for American aid. But we intend one day to do without it".[105]

[105] "A Royal Celebration," *Bangkok Post*, June 7, 2006, accessed April 18, 2012, http://www.bangkokpost.com/60yrsthrone/royal/index.html.; "At the White House" in *Time*, July 11, 1960. Reprinted in the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand, *King of Thailand in World Focus*, 62. (emphasis and explanation are in original).

Thai Counterinsurgency Era

On August 7, 1965, Thailand witnessed the Thai communist armed attack in Nakhon Phanom province in the northeast.[106] Before this so-called Gun-Firing Day (*wan siang puen tek*), the fighting against the communists was an imaginary war since the Thai military perceived communists as an external threat, not an internal enemy.[107] Because Sarit had exercised such an ironfisted rule against any types of political oppositions, Thanom Kittikhachorn inherited relatively stable government. In a seemingly peaceful political condition, his army factions busied themselves with jockeying for power rather than focusing on the national security after Sarit's death in 1963. Therefore, the incident has been regarded as an unexpected revolt staged by the Communist Party of Thailand.

In the previous studies on the Thai counterinsurgency, most scholars and policymakers identify this Gun-Firing Day as the beginning of the Thai Counterinsurgency Era because the incidence has been largely assumed as the first Thai communist attack against the government. In actuality, there were numerous armed attacks against the governmental institutions or personnel and skirmishes with the local insurgents before 1965, and both the Thai and U.S. governments were already well aware of those armed struggles by the rural insurgents.[108] Presumably, the reason why the Thai military accounts mark the 1965 incident as the beginning of the Thai Counterinsurgency Era could be due to, first, their reluctance to recognize the presence of indigenous armed struggles against Thanom's military regime and second, the refusal of the counterinsurgency doctrine itself. On the other hand, to justify the military

[106] Saiyud Kerdphol, *The Struggle for Thailand: Counter-insurgency, 1965-1985* (Bangkok: S. Research Center Co., 1986), 180.

[107] Chai-anan Samudavanija et al., *From Armed Suppression to Political Offensive* (Bangkok: Institute of Security and International Studies, 1990), 49.

[108] See for example, Jeffrey Race, "The War in Northern Thailand," in *Modern Asian Studies* 8:1 (1974), 90-95.

intervention to internal security, and also to ensure that the military's initiative could control of the Thai Counterinsurgency Era, the Thai government had to find a case that makes this "explicitly *politico*-military doctrine" become a part of military's wartime strategy. At the very least, there were internationally recognizable events before the 1965 incidents that would make their war against the Thais justifiable. Radio Hanoi and Radio Peking announced the formation of the Thailand Independence Movement in November 1964, and the Patriotic Front of Thailand in January 1965 to liberate Thailand via guerrilla warfare.[109] These two announcements led the Thai military regime to proclaim that its direct and official involvement to the counterinsurgency war was now inevitable.

Nevertheless, as there were apparent signs of increasing local insurgencies from 1962, the BPP and CIA-PSD had begun focusing on expanding counterinsurgency programs. Concurrently, Sarit also began to focus on expanding the military's counterinsurgency programs in the same year. In this respect, 1962 was an actual beginning of the Thai Counterinsurgency Era. First of all, the U.S. government changed its foreign policy, particularly dealing with the local communist insurgency from 1962. One of the triggers of the U.S. and Thai foreign policy changes was obviously the Vietminh's earnest beginning of involvement in Laos in February 1962.[110] To counter the expansion of the Lao communist movement, Sarit coordinated the demonstration of forces with the SEATO member states and staged a large joint-military maneuver in the northeast on April 15, 1962.[111] Subsequently on May 15, 1962, President

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[109] Peter A. Poole, "Thailand's Vietnamese Minority," in *Asian Survey* 7:12 (December 1967), 894, n.20.; Saiyud, *Struggle for Thailand*, 23-24.

[110] See, for example, Edward B. Hanrahan, *An Overview of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Thailand through 1973 – A Background Survey for Perspective and a Guide to the Literature* (CHECO/CORONA Harvest Division, Operations Analysis Office: HQ PACAF, 1 January 1975), 6-7.; Race, "War in Northern Thailand," 92-95.

[111] Thak, *Politics of Despotic Paternalism,* 165.

Kennedy declared the deployment of U.S. armed forces to Thailand and approximately 5,000 U.S. Army and Marine combat forces were dispatched.[112] Sarit also initiated the Thai military civic action called Mobile Development Units (MDU) from the late 1962 and at the same time, the CIA began filling out the USOM-PSD advisor positions. It should also be noted that the first time the Princess Mother came to be officially involved in the BPP civic actions was 1962. Indeed, like Gordon Young recalls, everything has changed from 1962.[113]

Inspired by the success of Vietminh and Pathet Lao, and also outraged by the direct U.S. intervention to Thai politics and economy, the Communist Party of Thailand formally declared its guerrilla fight against the government by launching its armed communist insurgency in the northeastern province in 1965, which is now called Gun-Firing Day. In response, the Thanom government declared that it would take control of counterinsurgency program in late 1965.[114] It hastily began to reexamine the counterinsurgency programs inherited from the Sarit's administration only to find that it lacked "effective methods to counter and destroy the threat."[115] Despite the lack of strategies and tactics, Thanom had to control both growing rural insurgencies within the border and communist aggression from the neighboring countries. More importantly, it had to prove the regime's durability as well as legitimacy through the successful counterinsurgency campaign.

Therefore, the Thanom government promptly increased its effort to establish counterinsurgency agencies and armed forces after the 1965 incident.[116] To oversee the general

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[112] Charles W. Koburger Jr., "Thailand, A Confrontation" in *Military Review* 47 (November 1967), 53.

[113] Young, *Journey from Banna*, 229.

[114] Hanrahan, *Overview of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency*, 57.

[115] Saiyud, *Struggle for Thailand*, 24.

[116] Saiyud, *Struggle for Thailand*, 13-14.

counterinsurgency projects, the Thai government established the Communist Suppression Operations Command (CSOC) in November 1965.[117] To assist the Thai military government's new civilian counterinsurgency initiatives, the USOM-supported Accelerated Rural Development Office (ARD) was set up as a department in the Office of the Prime Minister in January 1966 and Army General Praphat Charusathien chaired the Central Committee of ARD. With the administrative details finalized, the Committee established the provincial administration as a functioning local administrative body responsible for the ARD operations in six northeastern provinces.[118] Sarit's MDU project, on the other hand, began to expand its rural development projects and area coverage along with the increased ARD provinces from 1965 onward.[119] Interestingly, Thanom's government began to launch civic action programs similar to that of the USOM and the BPP but it operated separately with the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group (JUSMAG) and other governmental institutions. For instance, the Ministry of Health established special mobile medical teams to operate in insurgent areas and also sponsored the Protein Food Development, Potable Water, and Rural Health programs in that year. The Community Development program also began training village leaders and provided development funds.[120]

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[117] Under CSOC, several sub-organizations for village defense were organized such as Civilian-Police-Military (CPM) units, Village Security Teams (VSTs), and Joint Security Centers (JSCs). See detailed information from Saiyud, *Struggle for Thailand*, 29-33.

[118] Prasong Sukhum. "Development for Security: An Introduction to Accelerated Rural Development in Thailand," in *Community Digest* 3 (January-June 1969), 9. ; The first six ARD provinces include Ubon Ratchathanni, Nakhon Phanom, Sakon Nakhon, Nong Khai, Udon Thanni, and Loei. See, James W. Dawson and William R. Thomas. *A Brief History of USOM Support to the Office of Accelerated Rural Development* (USOM Office of Field Operations, September 1969), 1-3, Appendix A.

[119] See, for example, USOM. *Mobile Development Unit Project Review* (Bangkok: USOM, 1972), Appendix C. See also the Figure 5 and Figure 6.

[120] Hanrahan, *Overview of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency*, 54.

Nonetheless, the Thanom government's entry into the counterinsurgency war occurred rather late. The BPP had already established itself as the major agent of rural development and civic action program and the Thai monarchy began supplementing the role of U.S. government by making itself as the sponsor of the civilian counterinsurgency programs at home and abroad. Similar to the Thai military and conventional historiography not recognizing the year 1962 as the actual beginning of the Thai Counterinsurgency Era, the Thai military's delayed proclamation of the war against the local insurgencies ultimately reduced the role that its government could play out in Cold War politics. At least, Thanom quickly found that the monarchy could cover the weakness of his regime and thus swayed its loyalty to the current king. Ultimately, the war against Thai local insurgencies was ended not by Thanom but by one of his junior officers Prem Tinsulanonda in the 1980s.

In a broader historical and political perspective, there are three distinctive changes, which took place during the Thai Counterinsurgency Era between 1962-1980. First, the area of focus for the counterinsurgency campaign against the growing communism shifted along the American's deeper involvement in the Vietnam War. This change is actually well summarized in the Young family's involvement in the Cold War in Southeast Asia. When I interviewed Gordon Young, a former CIA agent and PSD advisor in Thailand during 1950s and 1960s, I asked him why the CIA hired him and had him working for a deeply covered mission in northern Thailand in the 1950s, and then why he later moved to the USOM-PSD in the early 1960s. He answered that in the 1950s, the U.S.-CIA was far more concerned about the growing influence of the Chinese communists so the intelligence activities, including the clandestine project of "building a bridge" with Chinese-origin ethnic minorities in northern Thailand, had received most of the U.S. attention and support. Therefore, Gordon and his father Harold Young worked with the

Lahu and Shan groups to collect intelligence about the Chinese communist activities nearby the Thai-Burmese border in the 1950s. However, the U.S. government's attention gradually moved to Indochina as it came to be increasingly involved in Lao and Vietnamese civil wars from the early 1960s. When Gordon was officially hired by the USOM-PSD in late 1961, he saw that other CIA agents began to flock into the USOM office. Meanwhile, his younger brother William Young was carrying out his first CIA assignment in Laos with a band of his multi-ethnic agents and CIA agents from his recruitment in 1958.[121] In short, the U.S. counterinsurgency project's area of focus moved from the north that bordered closely with China, to the northeastern region next to Laos-Vietnam in the mid-1960s. Through the Young family's vivid histories with the CIA-USOM as well as all the newly initiated rural development for security projects in the northeast from the mid-1960s show the shift of area focus from the northern to the northeastern region. The following examination of civic actions programs will supplement the empirical evidence to this argument.

Second, the target population of the U.S. government and Thai military regime's counterinsurgency also moved along with its shift of area focus. This transition of area and target focus is derived from several factors. In the 1950s, communism had been regarded as an external threat or enemy's bait thrown upon the border people or minority groups who did not have such the sense of belonging to any adjunct modern-nation states. In particular, the traditional, underdeveloped ethnic minorities in the jungles were often assumed as the most susceptible to the communist deception in the earlier period.[122] However, growing local insurgencies in the

[121] Interview with Gordon Young, March 9 and 12, 2012.

[122] For the changing Thai government's perception towards the highland minorities in the early 1960s, see, for example, Bowie, *Rituals of National Loyalty,* 55-111; Hjorleifur Jonsson, *Mien Relations: Mountain People and State Control in Thailand* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 44-72; Toyota Mika. "Subjects of the Nation Without Citizenship: The Case of 'Hill Tribes' in Thailand," in *Multiculturalism in Asia*, eds. Will Kymlicka and He Baogang (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 115-118; Christopher R. Duncan, "Legislating Modernity

rural areas of Thailand since the early 1960s convinced the U.S. and Thai military that rural communist insurgencies could have its "origins in domestic causes rather than external influences from China and Indochina."[123] Consequently, the target population of the U.S. and Thai governments had expanded from the border people to rural Thais in lowlands. Accordingly, 75% of the U.S. government's foreign aid to Thailand was invested in the programs related to the counterinsurgency campaign by 1969 and roughly 68% of the entire USOM program and were poured into the northeastern and northern regions.[124] At the same time, the demarcation between the enemy and friend had been narrowed down from the territorial borderlines to almost adjunct provinces to Bangkok and both the border and rural people became the potential enemy of the state.

These shifts of areas of focus and target populations largely reflect the changes in the counterinsurgency approaches between the U.S. and the indigenous leadership. The counterinsurgency campaigns during the Cold War have "a Janus-faced quality to them", which largely consisted of civilian and military approaches. The U.S. government had begun its fight against communists with military approaches during the Eisenhower administration but with the coming of Kennedy to office in the early 1960s, civilian counterinsurgency under the disguise of modernization gained more influence. Not long after Kennedy's unexpected death, the emphasis swung again to the military approaches as the Lyndon B. Johnson administration dove deeper

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among the Marginalized," in *Civilizing the Margins: Southeast Asian Government Policies for the Development of Minorities*, ed. Christopher R. Duncan (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 7-8.; Kathleen Gillogly, "Developing the "Hill Tribes" of Northern Thailand" in *Civilizing the Margins: Southeast Asian Government Policies for the Development of Minorities*, ed. Christopher R. Duncan (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 120-131.

[123] Shane P. Tarr, "The Nature of Military Intervention in the Countryside of Surat Thani, Southern Thailand," in *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 23:3 (July-September, 1991), 43.

[124] Office of Program, USOM to Thailand, *Summary of U.S. Economic AID to Thailand and Selected Statistical Data* (USOM Thailand, 1969), Table 4.

into the Vietnam War. From the mid-1960s, the U.S. government came to concentrate on the military operations and thus shifted its political support to the strong indigenous military regimes and their communist suppressions in Southeast Asia.

Thanom's military government followed the U.S. civilian counterinsurgency approaches and objectives under the disguise of rural development programs from the mid-1960s. However, because Thanom's regime hurriedly launched ad-hoc development programs to counter the growing local unrests and oppositions, its projects encountered numerous obstacles from the beginning years. Particularly, its strategic concentration on so-called sensitive regions and potentially subversive population with the American-initiated programs like the ARD and MDUs lacked the knowledge and understanding of the actual rural condition, as a 1965 memorandum from an American ARD advisor discloses:

> Perhaps the time is due for rethinking some of the implications of the ARD program. If the objective of program is counter-insurgency and counter-subversion, by having the rural people identity with government, this would surely imply that the activities which are undertaken must meet the "identified needs" of the villagers. Unless projects are selected which meet the criterion of "villager need" there cannot be a sense of involvement by the villagers. Without a sense of involvement, I suggest there cannot be effective identification by the rural people with the government.[125]

As this memorandum argues, it was apparent that Thanom's government was short of either knowledge about villagers or the authority that could convince the people to participate in the governmental projects for their village developments. Against the U.S. and Thai governments' expectations, the military's increased presence in the previously neglected, underdeveloped rural areas had not been welcomed by the local people as they saw the army as the state agent of repression or corruption rather than the agent of development, peace and order.[126]

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[125] John W. Limbert, *Memorandum to Mr. J. Sheldon Turner: Counter-Insurgency and ARD* (USOM, 1965).

[126] Tarr, "Nature of Military Intervention," 38, 42.

In this respect, the Thai Counterinsurgency Era became a battle of proving who would reign supreme in the Cold War political struggle and which strategy could bring about the desired political legitimacy and authority to the final victors. At last, the Thai military regime's counterinsurgency proved to be counterproductive not only in reducing the insurgencies but also in consolidating its political power. Its heavy reliance on U.S. money and advisory support eventually restricted its power consolidation process within the sensitive areas of northern and northeastern Thailand, particularly in the latter. Alternatively, while the military's counterinsurgency campaign floundered in northeastern region, the BPP and royal family's civic action projects have gradually expanded to the entirety of Thailand. In this regard, the Thai military regime's final shift to the political counterinsurgency in 1980 was clear evidence of the military's subjugation to non-military actors as well as their civilian approaches to the insurgency.

Finally, what makes the Thai Counterinsurgency Era significant in the course of nation-building? Most notably, the role of royal family and BPP as preeminent cold warriors gained recognition and respect from the U.S. and the Thai population, whereas the military government did not. In addition, the U.S. government and Thai monarch channeled sufficient funding that sustained the BPP activities, and from their special sponsorship, the BPP could also earn long-desired recognition for their presence. Indeed, the Thai Counterinsurgency Era became a fortuitous time that the unit could demonstrate its ability in fighting the newly posited enemy of state -- Thai communist. As mentioned before, the military regime's endless suspicion towards the BPP did not allow the unit to restore its organizational autonomy and armed strength until the early 1970s. However, the BPP's continuous field operations and development programs for

almost two decades gradually allowed the unit to gain respect from the local armed forces, like shown in the Thai National Police Department's comments to the role of BPP in 1968:

> The Border Patrol Police is the primary security force and representative of the Royal Thai Government in the border regions…The BPP purposely works directly with the population of the remote areas to win their confidence to insure their loyalty to the Thai Government and cooperation with security forces… The BPP is additionally tasked with the responsibility of identification and apprehension or destruction of these elements which disturb the security of rural border areas. While in years past this has included smugglers and bandits, since July 1965 the BPP has been directed against the major problem of deliberate, directed communist subversion and insurgency…The BPP also acts as the eyes and ears of the Thai government, reporting possible hostile intentions by neighboring countries against Thailand.[127]

Shortly after, when the Thai National Police Department initiated a special counterinsurgency training program in 1970, it ordered to build Counterinsurgency Training Centers (CITC) and appointed the BPP to provide instructorship to the training.[128] This appointment implies that whether the unit still possessed suspicious military strength or not, the past BPP activities in the border areas convinced the Thai state apparatuses to recognize its irreplaceable role in guarding the border security. Accordingly, a sign of recovery began to arise after Thanom, who was an ardent supporter of the royal family, executed a coup against his own government in November 1971.[129] His Revolutionary Council (*sapha borihan khana patiwat*) reviewed the BPP's appeal for restoring the Border Patrol Police General Headquarters again and finally issued order number 130, dated on April 22, 1972 in the Royal Gazettes (*ratchakitchanubeksa*) that officially separated the BPP from the Provincial Police and restored the original name Border Patrol Police.[130]

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[127] Thailand National Police Department, Ministry of Interior. *Border Patrol Police* (1968), 1.

[128] Curtis, *Brief History of USOM* Support, 11.

[129] Personal Communication, February 14, 2011.

[130] Border Patrol Police Headquarters. "*Botkhuam phiset: kongbanchakan tamruat trawen chaidaen prawat khuampenma* [Special Essay: Border Patrol Police General Headquarters History]," in *Tamruat trawen chaidaen parithat* [Border Patrol Police Review] 11:42 (February-May 1996), 54.; *Kong banchakan 1975*, 114.

After insisting on taming the BPP under the military and police for more than a decade, in what context did Thanom's military government reinstate the BPP Headquarters in 1972? At the very least, the Thai historical and political changes as a result of the Thai Counterinsurgency Era permit us to assume the following two conditions that had attributed to the reestablishment of BPP. First, the local communist insurgency had increased drastically since early 1960s and throughout the 1970s. The official beginning of armed struggle by the Communist Party of Thailand in 1965 forced the military to reassess its previous counterinsurgency strategies. One of the most notable conclusions of the evaluation was the renewed recognition of civilian counterinsurgency. According to the Prime Minister's Office Order in 1969, it began to show interest in shifting the counterinsurgency policies from armed suppression to political and psychological warfare:

> In the prevention and suppression [of communism], political measures and psychological operations and public relations are to be used principally. Whereas armed or other violent suppressive measures are to be used as supplement only when necessary.[131]

When the significance of political offensives was admitted by the military, then the next step was to find who could undertake this new strategic operation.

At that time, the BPP was more or less the only armed force that had received unconventional warfare training that could counter the communist insurgency from the early 1950s. The Thai military was not trained to fight internal enemies like the Thai communists.[132] Additional qualifications of the BPP derive from its completion of special weapons training, intelligence gathering, guerrilla fighting and most importantly, the first-hand field experiences

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[131] Cited in Chai-anan et al., *From Armed Suppression*, 60. (explanation in original): Originally from Harn Pongsithanonda. "The Thai Government's Responses to Insurgency," in *Regional and Minority Political Problems* (Bangkok: Sukhothai University, 1985), 363.

[132] Chai-anan et al., *From Armed Suppression*, 56.

and knowledge accumulated from more than two decades of operations in the remote border areas. Therefore, a PSD officer argued that the BPP should play a leading role in the general Thai counterinsurgency programs because of "their experiences in counterinsurgency operations and the availability of instructor cadre in this highly specialized field."[133] Similarly, former U.S. army officer Jeffrey Race's comparison of the efficiency of controlling the local unrest in northern region between the BPP and army clearly tells the BPP's ascendancy in handling the communist insurgencies in Thailand:

> "The BPP who had previously been responsible for operating in the upland areas of Thailand were specially trained and equipped for jungle operations, had individuals who spoke the tribal languages, and employed small-unit tactics which emphasized patrolling and engaging opponents outside of village complexes. The army, on the other hand, had not been trained for small-unit jungle operations, and had no hill-tribe language capability. Consequently, as soon as deployed the army forces began to suffer very heavy casualties, principally from sniping and booby traps."[134]

Because of the BPP's experiences and training, some military members were urged to relocate the unit under the Ministry of Defense to facilitate efficient communication and joint operations with the military.[135] In this regard, the BPP actions became an embodiment of civilian counterinsurgency that has gradually gained recognition from the military since mid 1960s.[136]

Second, the changing political leadership forced the military to recognize the BPP and PARU members' on-going missions inside and outside of Thailand. On the one end, the unit has been carrying out the civic actions to counter the increasing communist propaganda and to suppress the infiltration. On the other end, the CIA had mobilized the BPP and PARU to train

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[133] Curtis, *Brief History of USOM* Support, 11-12.

[134] Race, "War in Northern Thailand," 103.

[135] Yuth, *The Development of Thailand's Territorial Defense*, 24.

[136] The official accounts from the BPP states that the Thai government felt necessity of mobilizing the military and police forces together to resolve the tension from increasing insurgencies and because of the recognition, the BPP could restore the institution again in 1972. See, for example, *Tai rom phrabarami*, 18.

ethnic Hmong soldiers and to administer rural development projects in Laos since the early 1960s. The U.S. military officers had already approved the PARU's outstanding military capacity based on their joint operation experience in Laos, which will be discussed in-depth in the following chapter.[137] Most important, while the military regime was indifferent to the BPP's civilian activities in the border areas, the royal family stepped in. The current monarch not only supported the BPP's civic actions in the remote border areas but also maintained close relationship with the BPP and PARU. Their close relationship, according to former chief of the royal court police, Police General Vasit Dejkunjorn, became "well-known in uniformed circles."[138] The military government could not ignore the BPP's contribution to defending the national security over the two decades inside and outside of Thailand any longer and thus allowed the unit to restore institutional autonomy and its original name. In a sense, if Sarit's coup in 1957 pushed the BPP out of the politics, the USOM and Thai royal family's sponsorship to the BPP's civic actions brought the unit back into the politics.

At last, Thanom ordered the reinstatement of the Border Patrol Police and commanded the building of a new Headquarters building in Bangkok in 1972 as a token of appreciation for the BPP's contribution.[139] In addition, the PARU was also removed from the Provincial Police command and became a sub-unit of the BPP.[140] The 1972 order also assigned the specific duties and areas of responsibility for field operations for further improvement of BPP's performance

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[137] For instance, in a memorandum from Brigadier General Edward G. Lansdale to a President Kennedy's military advisor General Maxwell D. Taylor around July 1961, Lansdale comments that the PARU teams "have provided timely intelligence and have worked effectively with local tribes." See Neil Sheehan et al., *The Pentagon Papers*, as published by the New York Times, based on investigative reporting by Neil Sheehan, written by Neil Sheehan, Hedrick Smith, E.W. Kenworthy and Fox Butterfield (Toronto, New York, Bantam Books, 1971), 133.

[138] Vasit Dejkunjorn, *In His Majesty's Footsteps: A Personal Memoir* (Bangkok: Heaven Lake Press, 2006), 19.

[139] The building of new Headquarters completed in 1975. Personal Communication, February 14, 2011.

[140] *Prawat khai naresuan*, 24.

with a particular emphasis on the unit's principal missions in safeguarding border security, collecting intelligence, assisting the people in the remote areas and providing the counterinsurgency trainings for other forces.[141] In addition, after the National Administration Reformation Council executed a coup in October 6, 1976, the BPP was allowed to partake in the military operations under the Supreme Command of the Army.[142] Since then, the BPP has been actively engaged in the border security missions without significant institutional, political changes to present.

The end of the Thai Counterinsurgency Era is marked with the Thai government's proclamation of shifting its counterinsurgency from the military to political offensive in 1980. Known as Prime Minister order number 66/2523 entitled "policy to win over communism," this newly proposed approach in the anticommunist strategy weighed more on the political measures to win the war against the "people's war." [143] The declaration shows that the Thai military admitted the civilian counterinsurgency's wider applicability to ameliorate the worsening Thai security situations. At the same time, it was a clear sign that the global Cold War struggle transformed to local infightings and civil wars.

Overall, the Thai Counterinsurgency Era between 1962-1980 has two significant implications to the Thai Cold War history. First of all, it brought the four important cold warriors to the stage: Border Patrol Police, Thai military, royal family and the U.S. government. The period also saw the contest between the civilian counterinsurgency implemented by the BPP and royal family on the one side, and the military counterinsurgency approaches undertaken by the

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[141] Manas, *Prawat kongbanchakan,* 22.

[142] Manas, *Prawat kongbanchakan,* 24, 29.; *Tai rom phrabarami*, 18. For the original military orders, see Soem, *Rueang tamruat trawen chaidaen,* 50, 55-57.

[143] Surachart Bamrungsuk, *From Dominance to Power Sharing: The Military and Politics in Thailand, 1973-1992* (Ph.d. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1999), 118-119.; Chai-anan et al., *From Armed Suppression*, 8-9.

Thai military and the U.S. on the other side. As the 1980 declaration reveals, it was clearly the victory of the civilian, political counterinsurgency against the military one. This does not necessarily mean that the military approach to the anticommunist strategies had been abandoned after 1980. Instead, the essence of politico-military counterinsurgency doctrine, summed up in the slogan of winning hearts-and-minds of people, began to dominate the morale of military politics in the coming years. More importantly, the Thai military came to increasingly rely on the monarchy's power to extend its life span in the Thai politics.

It is apparent that the Thai royal family rose to dominance throughout the Thai Counterinsurgency Era. The Thai monarchy became a sole political legitimizer in Thai politics, even above the modern developmentalist military dictatorships. In this context, building of the anticommunist counterinsurgent state began to interweave with the traditional nationalism constituted by nation, religion and monarchy. Throughout the counterinsurgency campaign period, not only were the communists, but also the general insurgents in Thailand, identified as anti-Thai, anti-Buddhist, and antiroyalist, and they all became the enemy of state. Through its meticulous, cautious, and even laborious support for the BPP's civic action programs, the monarchy's influence has expanded to the entirety of Thailand and gained tremendous popular support. The nation-building during the Thai Counterinsurgency Era thus was the process of constructing royalist Thai nation through the royal family's indigenization of the American Cold War modernization and counterinsurgency.

Chapter Conclusion

Overall, this chapter has examined the transformation of the BPP from a paramilitary force into an agent of civic action and the beginning of the Thai Counterinsurgency Era in the early 1960s.

After Sarit's coup, the BPP came to focus on expanding its civic actions. While maintaining a low profile, the BPP gradually increased its influence in the remote border villages among the highland minorities by expanding its rural development programs. The CIA continued assisting the BPP under the guise of the USOM-Public Safety Division advisors. Therefore, American money and assistance for this indigenous paramilitary continued to flow in more overt, humanitarian guises.

The Beginning of the USOM's sponsorship for the BPP and its Remote Area Security Development program also contributed to the rapid expansion of the BPP's civic action to the entirety Thailand. In fact, the shift in the sponsorship from the CIA to USOM-PSD did not bring crucial changes in the BPP's activities but it did accelerate the transformation of the BPP into an agent of rural development. At the same time, as the U.S. government's aid for Thailand's development and security grew dramatically, the stakes were getting higher. Not only were the CIA and USOM competing to gain more influence over the increased budget and opportunities, the indigenous elites also began to make a bid. When the CIA and USOM advisors began to have conflict over the direction of RASD programs, the Thai royal family quietly stepped in the BPP's civic action programs and gradually took over the leadership role that the U.S. had played out.

The final part of the chapter discussed the Thai Counterinsurgency Era and its impacts on the general history of Thailand's Cold War. This discussion highlighted the rapidly evolving role and influence of the Thai royal family through its building of close relationships with the BPP as well as assuming leadership in the modernization programs. As the BPP gradually shifted its loyalty from the U.S. to this local elite, the Thai monarchy's indigenization of the American Cold War came into full force. At last, the BPP successfully transformed itself from a CIA's

paramilitary intelligence unit to a civic action agent and simultaneously the monarchy embarked on a long journey of building a royalist Thai nation from the early 1960s.

Chapter 5. Building a Human Border

This chapter examines the process of constructing an institutional infrastructure for nation-building by the Thai elite allies through the lens of the BPP's civic actions in northern Thailand under the auspices of U.S. and royal family. The monarchy's institution building was undertaken by adapting the existing Thai government organizations and USOM's sources and by conflating them with their royal projects. In this way, the BPP's civic action projects on education, sanitation and health, rural development, village security and antinarcotics campaigns came to constitute the main infrastructure of nation-building and augmented the authority and popularity of the royal family. Catalyzed by the expansion of the BPP and USOM's operational areas from the highland border communities to lowland rural villages, the monarchy became the symbol of Thai national unity and progress.

To the Borders

In its termination report submitted to USAID-Washington in mid-1974, the Public Safety Division of the USOM to Thailand concluded that its sixteen year long support to the Thai National Police Department was to enhance the law enforcement and counterinsurgency capability of the Thai police.[1] In sum, between 1957-1973, the U.S. government spent over $91.4 million to improve the TNPD and hired a total of 620 American personnel directly and indirectly to work with the Thai policemen to achieve these goals. According to the termination report, the majority of the effort of the U.S. government between 1957-1965 was directed toward the Border Patrol Police, the Central Investigations Bureau, Special Branch, the Immigration Division, and the Metropolitan Police.[2] From 1965, a major portion of the PSD budget as well as professional assistance were redistributed to other security-oriented projects while continuing its financial and material support for the BPP's Remote Area Security Development project. Overall, about 71 personnel out of total 620 (11.5%) were assigned to training the BPP between 1957-1973, although its manpower had hardly exceeded ten percent of the entire Thai police force in the

[1] Agency for International Development, Office of Public Safety, *Termination Phase-Out Study, Public Safety Project, Thailand* (Washington, DC: Agency for International Development, Office of Public Safety, 1974), 1.; Curtis, *Brief History of USOM* Support, 1.

[2] Curtis, *Brief History of USOM* Support, 4.; AID, *Termination Phase-Out Study*, 1.

same period. Since its beginning of sponsorship for the BPP in 1962, $8.4 million out of the $78.9 million (10.6 %) allocated for the TNPD was invested to the BPP's RASD projects until 1971.[3] Although it is unknown how much aid flowed from the CIA to the BPP, it is apparent that several CIA agents under the cover of the PSD advisory to the BPP attempted to induce bigger developmental projects and funding for the BPP.

The financial and advisory support from the U.S. to Thailand often fluctuated along the changes in the security conditions of Thailand and its neighboring countries, but in general, American aid and assistance began to decrease starting in the late 1960s. Despite the unpredictable conditions that could have threatened the continuation of the organization, PSD in Thailand did not cease to fund the BPP civic action programs in northern Thailand. Indeed, the first BPP civic action and the first official royal project all began in northern Thailand and the royal family has continued its material and moral support for the BPP's remote area development projects in this region to present. Their unfailing support for the BPP and its civic action program lead us to question the reason why this small band of paramilitary police and its activities in northern Thailand mattered so greatly to the U.S. and Thai monarchy during the Cold War.

To answer these questions, this section will briefly survey the geographical, demographical and historical-cultural settings of northern Thailand that eventually increased the necessity of the BPP, and the reasons the U.S. government and the Thai royal family had for assimilating the border population through counterinsurgency programs. Based on these surveys, the remaining chapter discussions will review civic action projects undertaken by the BPP, U.S. and Thai

[3] AID, *Termination Phase-Out Study*, 104. The number figures are compiled from various sources such as Office of Program, USOM to Thailand, *Summary of U.S. Economic AID to Thailand and Selected Statistical Data* (Thailand: USOM, 1969).; Research and Evaluation Staff, Program Office, United States Operations Missions to Thailand, *RTG/USOM Economic and Technical Project Summary FY 1951-1972* (Bangkok: USOM, 1973).; AID, *Termination Phase-Out Study.*; Curtis, *Brief History of USOM* Support.

governments, and the royal family during the Thai Counterinsurgency Era. There are three central goals in this review: first, the review will attempt to show the changes in the nature of BPP's civic action program pertaining to the general counterinsurgency campaign goals. Additionally, the review will investigate the competition between the BPP-Thai monarch and U.S.-Thai military to obtain political dominance over the Thai society and its long-term impacts to the Thai nation-building process during the Cold War. Finally, this chapter will give an overview of the ways in which the monarchy appropriated the U.S. and Thai governments' material, human and institutional resources and utilized them for creating the institutional infrastructure of the royal projects.

Northern Thailand and Its People

Each region in Thailand -- usually divided by central, northern, northeastern and southern regions -- has distinctive characteristics in its natural, geographical environment, people, and cultural heritage. Northern Thailand also has its own distinctive cultural and historical traits that convinced the BPP and royal family to initiate their first rural development projects in this region. In addition, it was one half of the areas where the counterinsurgency campaigns took place during the Cold War. Among several notable characteristics of northern Thailand, this survey will focus on the three key characteristics of northern Thailand that made the region a central counterinsurgency battleground, which include geographical, demographic and cultural-historical settings.

In his Masters thesis on the BPP's civic action program in 1965, Manas introduces the geographical conditions of the northern Thailand as "generally mountainous together with the eventual plains along the valleys where plantation and farming can be made." Forests which

cover 74.38 percent of land area yield the "most important natural resources" and "serve as the source of Chao Phya [Phraya] River."[4] Manas argues because of the importance of forest and watersheds in northern mountainous areas as vital natural resources, a proper governmental administration on these sources should be urgently requested. Additionally, because at least six out of eight provinces -- Mae Hong Son, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Tak, Nan and Uttaradit -- directly share borders with Burma and Laos, the region's significance to national security shall not be overlooked. In the mid-1960s, former Minister of Interior Army General Praphat Charusathien similarly expressed his concern about the security of northern Thailand by stating that: "because the region is mountainous and much of it jungle-covered, it could, under the right conditions, offer an ideal cover for the infiltration of foreign agents and the establishment of guerrilla base."[5]

Major Edward B. Hanrahan who was hired by the U.S. Air Force's research project in Southeast Asia, brings up another significant characteristics of northern Thailand in his 1975 overview report on the Thai counterinsurgency and insurgency. In his words, the Thai people in the north are "probably more culturally involved with the Central Thai than are either the northeasterners or the southerners."[6] This statement has two implications in identifying the northern region as a critical outpost for the U.S. counterinsurgency campaign. First, despite the strong cultural and historical identity of the northern Thai people, they were assumed to be a successful case of Siamese internal colonization. Commonly presented as Lanna heritage or

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[4] Manas, *Kan songkhro chaokhao nai phak nuea*, 22-23. (explanation added).

[5] Prapas Charusathira. *Chaokhao nai prathet thai* [Thailand's Hill Tribes]. Bilingual report with English title, "Thailand's Hill Tribes," (Bangkok: Ministry of Interior, Dept. of Public Welfare, Hill Tribes Welfare Committee, 1966), 1-2. Note that this author used the English name Praphat Charusathien because of its closeness to the sound of name. Prapas Charusathira is from the book cover of *Thailand's Hill Tribes*.

[6] Hanrahan, *Overview of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency*, 12, 16.

khonmueang culture, northern Thailand has distinguished itself from the Bangkok-centered nationhood as the bitter memory of being colonized by the Siamese-British rule in the late nineteenth century, which remained strong until the early twentieth century. Siamese rulers pushed forward their assimilation campaign aiming at getting rid of Lao heritage and thus, the use of local language in public offices was forbidden from the early twentieth century.[7]

Siamese rulers internal colonization of northern Thailand and its people and consequent local people's resentment towards the imposition of Thai identity and unity, nevertheless seemed less threatening compared to the presence of non-Thais in this region. In other words, the lowland Thais in northern Thailand or *chao bannok* as I will discuss shortly was not a source of concern to the Bangkok elites and counterinsurgency planners. It was the presence of ethnic minority groups that made northern Thailand most distinctive and thus more security-sensitive. Hanrahan marks the "4,000 to 5,000 armed insurgents under CPT [Communist Party of Thailand] control have been essentially highland tribal people," and "their dissatisfaction centers on cultural issues of land use in the mountains, economic pursuits, and political autonomy."[8] Because northern Thailand has the largest presence of highland minorities in the country, the area has provided a source of concern to Thai national security because of its differing cultural, political, and economic backgrounds. As Hanrahan's above statements show vividly, lowland Thais in northern Thailand were considered more or less integrated into the Thai nation while the ethnic minorities in the mountainous border areas were not, hence the latter being seen as problems for Thai internal security. In this regard, the Thai historical and cultural views toward

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[7] Tanet Charoenmuang, *Khon Mueang* [Khon Muang] (Chiang Mai, Thailand: Local Government Studies Project, Faculty of Social Science, Chiang Mai University, 2001), 6-7, 45-62. See also Chaiyan, *Rise and Fall of the Thai Absolute Monarchy*, 17-22. 93-99.

[8] Hanrahan, *Overview of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency*, 16. (Explanation added)

the border population demands an in-depth analysis because these perceptions toward the people in northern Thailand eventually became the most powerful criteria to define the national identity among the ethnic Thais and non-Thais throughout the Cold War and into the present day.

Thongchai Winichakul suggests two principal groups of what he called the "Others Within" of Thai nation: They are, *chao pa*, the wild, jungle people and *chao bannok,* the multi-ethnic villagers in the rural areas under the rule of Bangkok. He contends that this ethno-spatial discourse "has been more influential, on Siam's policies and treatment of ethnic minorities, than scholarly attribution of ethnic identification."[9] The BPP's civic action, in fact, provides a good example that supports his argument. Initially, the BPP's school building project was called the "School for the Hill Tribes and People Far from Communication (*rongrian chaokhao lae prachachon klai khamanakhom*)."[10] This project title discloses that the highland minorities and the people in the remote areas were to be targeted separately.

According to Manas and former commissioner Chan Angsuchot, "the people far from communication (*prachachon klai khamanakhom*)" are the Thai citizens who inhabited the remote areas and have thus been deprived of educational opportunity and other welfare services from the government. On the other hand, "hill tribes" (*chaokhao chaopa* or *chaokhao* in general) are the "minority groups who migrated from the Union of Burma and the Kingdom of Laos, and had

[9] Thongchai, "Others Within," 41.

[10] Manas Khantatatbumroong. "*Rongrian chaokhao lae prachachon klai khamanakhom* [School for the hill tribes and people far from communication]," in *Kong banchakan tamruat trawen chaidaen thiraluek nai kanpoet akhan bocho tochodo, 7 phruetsaphakhom 2518* [Border Patrol Police Headquarters, Commemorative volume marking the opening of the headquarters building, 7 May 1975], ed. Border Patrol Police Headquarters (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1975), 230.; Chan Angsuchot, "*Kan chattang rongrian tamruat chaidaen* [Building the Border Police School]," in *Kanprachum khru rongrian tamruat chaidaen duai khuam ruam mue rawang krom samansueksa lae krom tamruat na rongrian phayathai changwat phranakhon rawang wan thi 15-31 phruetsaphakhom 2501* [Meeting of the Border Police School Teachers with the Department of General Education and the Thai National Police Department in Phayathai School, Bangkok, during May 15-31, 1958], ed. Department of General Education (na, 1958), 13. "*klai khamanakhom*" shall be translated to "remote areas" in English but since the 1956 report on the BPP's original civic action program among the highland minorities translated it into "far from communication", I followed this translation.

dispersed in Thailand about a hundred years ago… their villages are located in the hills higher than three-hundred meters above sea level, and that made them the hill people."[11] As per Thongchai's definition, the people far from communication or the people from remote areas represent *chao bannok*, while the hill tribes are the jungle people, *chao pa*.

Notably, both Manas and Hanrahan agree to the "problems" they associate with highland minorities, such as opium growing and addiction, slash-and-burn cultivation, their migratory nature and lack of identification with the Thai nation.[12] Their description signifies that from the beginning, counterinsurgency planners including the BPP distinguished the people in remote areas -- but still the Thai ethnic -- and highland minorities, particularly in terms of their national identity and sense of belonging.[13] Moreover, while the remoteness of Thai people in the border areas is ascribed to the "deprivation" of opportunity to enjoy modern facilities, the same condition, when viewed in the highland minorities, is said to symbolize their "indifference" to progress and development, and these problems were blamed on the minority groups' otherness and ignorance.[14] For instance, an internal document entitled "Border Patrol Police: Program for the Hill Tribe Areas" written in May 1968 confirms this view with the following statement: "an ethnic minority is a ready-made target for communist subversive attempts," and the subversion of the "hill tribes becomes the forward edge of the communist offensive against Thailand." On the contrary, the people in remote areas, or *chao bannok* were perceived as rather docile as Hanrahan comments: the "dissent among the ethnic Thai who farm the lowland river valleys is

[11] Manas, *Khrongkan phathana*, 1.

[12] Manas, *Khrongkan phathana*, 1-2.; Hanrahan, *Overview of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency*, 16.

[13] Manas, *Kan songkhro chaokhao nai phak nuea*, 41.

[14] See more detailed description from Manas, *Kan songkhro chaokhao nai phak nuea*, 30-35.

low."[15] Therefore, communist insurgents have been mostly "working to bring the hill tribes into conflict with the Thais" rather than rural Thais.[16]

The demarcation between the *chao pa* and *chao bannok* has another implication, especially in relation to the construction of counterinsurgent nation-state. It was the process of identifying the enemy of state to determine whether they are the target of suppression or domestication, which resonates the Bangkok elites' view in the nineteenth century as Thongchai argues:

> The distinctive representation of these multi-ethnic *chao bannok* contrasted with the 'Wild People' indicates the discursive differentiation of Siamese subjects...Yet the point is that these people are capable of domestication. They are docile. The marked difference from the 'Wild People' is not race, but the tamed/untamed, 'civilizable/uncivilizable' differentiation. They might not be Thai; it did not matter, as long as they were 'subject'.[17]

The BPP's differentiation of the highland minorities from the people far from communication therefore shows that the target population of its counterinsurgency campaign was identified and divided by this political need.

Not only the BPP, but it was also the general Thai perception that shared the identification of "race" by ethno-spatial relationship. Nevertheless, one noteworthy difference in the approaches between the BPP and the military government implies their separate stance to the counterinsurgency strategies and goals as shown in Hanrahan's assessment to the Thanom government's counterinsurgency campaigns in 1975:

> CT [Communist Terrorists] incidents have largely been in Nan, Chiang Rai, and Tak provinces and have involved armed bands of hill tribesman attacking RTG [Royal Thai Government] projects and units. *While RTG concern has been mostly with the Northeast because of ethnic Thai involvement in the insurgency, the RTG has possibly been more aggressive in the North because of the low involvement of ethnic Thai.* The RTG policy in the North has been to bomb and burn the Meo [Hmong] into submission. The results have been to make the Meo insurgents more receptive to

[15] Hanrahan, *Overview of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency*, 16.

[16] "Border Patrol Police: Program for the Hill Tribes Areas" (na, 1968), 1. TIC.

[17] Thongchai, "Others Within," 49.

> communist support and to precipitate a virtual state of war between some Meo tribes and the RTG.[18]

Like the counterinsurgency operations between the BPP and Thai military vary, the Thai monarchy's approach to the *chao pa* and *chao bannok* bred different consequences.

What then are the civic action programs that the BPP and the royal family have invested tremendous amount of resources into to bring *chao pa* and *chao bannok* in to their Thai nation-building? Based on these historical backgrounds, I will move on to examining the five fields of the BPP's civic action program that the USOM-PSD and Thai royal family engaged in during the Thai Counterinsurgency Era.

From Civic Actions to the Nation-Building

In general, the civic action programs of the Thai BPP and PSD focused namely on the five fields of operation: education, health and sanitation, community and rural development, village security and narcotics suppression. There are two caveats for the following descriptions of each field. First of all, it was not only the BPP, USOM-PSD or the military that had undertaken these projects. Oftentimes, the BPP received material or financial support from the relevant governmental organizations, like the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Health or private organizations like the Thai Women's Society, or Princess Mother's Charities Fund, to name a few. Likewise, the USOM-PSD and CIA hired private consultancy groups to carry out its Remote Area Security Development programs between 1966-1974, like the Development Consultants International (DEVCON, as abbreviated by the PSD), or Air America. Also, it

[18] Hanrahan, *Overview of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency*, 16. (explanations and emphasis added). For a similar account, see, for example, Ralph Thaxton, "Modernization and Counter-revolution in Thailand," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 5:4 (1973), 34-37.

should be noted that the USOM supported both the BPP and Thai government. The PSD in particular was most directly engaged with the BPP's civic actions. Second, there was a parallel development of the goals and agendas between the BPP and USOM-PSD-CIA under the same project. Hence the names of the project were titled differently by respective language as shown in the case of the project's general title, "Remote Area Security Development" programs. To the BPP, the official title of its civic actions was called "Development for Security and Safety Project (*khrongkan phathanakan phuea khuammankhong plotphai*)." To the present, these programs have been routinely called as "civic actions (*ngankitchakan phonlaruean*)" among the BPP members.

The first priority in modernizing the highland minorities through the BPP civic actions was put on education and sanitation. The education project will be discussed separately in the ensuing section, so the survey on the civic actions will begin from the projects on sanitation and health.

Civic Action Field 2: Sanitation and Health

There had been a basic medical project within the BPP civic action plan since 1955. Before building schools, the BPP tried to gain attention and favor from the highland minority villagers by offering medical services and distributing pills free of charges. Initiation of the Border Patrol Police School project in fact promoted the expansion of more professional medical projects as the School became a semi-public health center where the villagers could get free medicines or basic medical treatment from the BPP teachers -- who had received medical training before assignment. From the mid-1950s, according to the PSD report in 1974, the BPP medics had treated approximately 100,000 villagers annually.[19] In addition, the BPP provided rehabilitation

[19] AID, *Termination Phase-Out Study*, 43. According to Manas, the BPP medics treated 252,138 people in the remote border areas in 1973. See, Manas, *Khrongkan phathana*, 5.

treatment for 150 opium addicts among the highland minorities between 1964-1966 and also trained 29 midwives, which were recruited from the 21 minority villages in 1965.[20] To assist the BPP's sanitation and health projects in the remote border areas, the PSD provided medical commodities as well as training for the BPP medics.[21] Consequently, the BPP Headquarters concluded that among the BPP civic action programs, the medical project had obtained most favorable receptions from the highland minorities.[22]

When the USOM began its aid to the BPP, the Princess Mother also joined the BPP's civic action projects. In the beginning, the Princess Mother brought professional doctors and financial assistance to treat the BPP members in the remote areas, and at the same time she enthusiastically encouraged the BPP medics to increase their medical service provisions for the remote area villagers. These earlier efforts prepared the groundwork for initiating the Princess Mother's Medical Volunteers (PMMV) project in 1969. In the early years of initiation, this pilot project was called the Volunteer Flying Doctor Units, but in 1985 its official name changed to the present day Princess Mother's Medical Volunteers Foundation (*munithi phet asa somdetphra sinakharindra boromratchachonani*), after the Princess Mother donated one million baht to reestablish it as a royally sponsored foundation.[23]

The PMMV project has been undertaken by the volunteer group consisting of doctors and nurses from major towns and these PMMV members traveled to the remote areas by helicopters during weekends to offer professional medical treatment and prescriptions for the villagers.

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[20] Manas, *Khrongkan phathana*, 6.

[21] For instance, see, John H. Brandt, *Training for BPP* (USOM/Public Health Division, 1965). TIC.

[22] "Border Patrol Police: Program for the Hill Tribes Areas" (na, 1968), 2. TIC.

[23] Yongyut, "*Phet asa khong somdetya*," 63-64.

Since the Princess Mother conceived of the project in conjunction with the BPP civic actions in the border areas, the target villages where the volunteer groups visit were determined by the BPP and also the trips were arranged by the BPP. According to the American president of the Princess Mother's Charities Fund of Thailand, there were 2,850 professional personnel who volunteered to join the Princess Mother's project in the first year.[24] In that year, the PMMV volunteers coordinated with the BPP officers in Area 5 camp in Chiang Mai and selected a total of 42 villages in northern Thailand to carry out the operation. Shortly after, a total of 20 PMMV local branches were built in most of the border provinces of Thailand in the first year. Between 1969-1982, the number of PMMV local branches extended to 48.[25] In support of the Princess Mother and BPP's medical project, the King commanded the royal medics to treat highland minority patients from over 40 villages in Chiang Rai and Nan provinces in the late 1960s.[26]

From the early 1960s, the USOM initiated several rural health projects under the title of "Comprehensive Rural Health programs". In mid-1966, this project was supplemented by the new initiative called "Medical Civic Action", which was designed to enhance the counterinsurgency capability of the Thai Ministry of Public Health.[27] Soon, the program integrated extant medical operations carried out separately by the U.S. Air Commandos, the BPP, paramedics from the Thai Ministry of Public Health and Mobile Medical Teams and

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[24] Betty Dumaine and Dora H. Layton. *Somdetphra boromratchachonani*. Bilingual publication with the English title, "The Princess Mother" (Thailand: Thai Watana Panich Press Co., Ltd., 1972), 137.

[25] Yongyut, "*Phet asa khong somdetya*," 65. The number of branches is compiled from the PMMV Foundation, "*Raicheu changwat phor or sor wor* [List of PMMV in provinces]," accessed June 8, 2012, http://www.pmmv.or.th/LinkContect/Province.html.

[26] Manas, *Khrongkan phathana*, 6.

[27] John H. Brandt, Chief Sanitarian Advisor to Kertin H. Tank, Acting Director. *Memorandum: Medical Civic Action Project, Ref your note 8/15/66* (1966). TIC.

developed into a joint project called "Medical Counterinsurgency Program (MEDCOIN)."[28] Soon, a Mobile Medical Team (MMT) was initiated as a part of the MEDCOIN programs in the fiscal year 1966, and in 1967, a total of 28 teams operated in 11 border provinces of northern and northeastern Thailand. Until October 1968, the number of MMT increased to 33 teams to cover a total of 14 provinces. In the period between fiscal year 1966 and 1971, the USOM provided commodity support for the MMT project like drugs, medical equipment and educational pamphlets for the villagers.[29] In sum, the USOM-Medical Civic Action's support for the medical activities in the rural and remote border areas of Thailand was more about being the instrument of propagandizing the Thai government's attention and interest for improving the people's health and sanitation.

One interesting disparity between the USOM-Thai government's MEDCOIN program and Princess Mother-BPP's PMMV is the program's area coverage. Whereas the PMMV branch offices spread all four regions of Thailand from the first year, the USOM-Thai government's program did not expand beyond the north and northeast because the project was tied to the USOM and Thai government-sponsored "Accelerated Rural Development" program that had only focused on so-called sensitive areas.[30] In this way, while the BPP and other royal projects were building their popular base from all sides of the borders in Thailand, the U.S. and Thai military government's rural development programs limited their area focus and objectives within the confine of security goals, which in a sense envisaged the eventual failure of their programs in the long run.

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[28] Nelson, R.B. *Medical Counterinsurgency in North and Northeast (MEDCOIN)*. (USOM/Social Development Division, 1967), 1. TIC.

[29] T. Wilson, *Project Paper (PROP) – Mobile Medical Team Non-Capital Project Paper* (Bangkok, 1968), 1-6. TIC.

[30] See the Figure 5 and Figure 8 for comparison.

Civic Action Field 3: Rural Economic Development

One of the U.S. government's first rural development programs had launched under the title of "Community Development" in 1957 and continued to fiscal year 1972. However, there were innate limitations in this rural development program from the beginning years. Namely, the project almost solely focused on providing trainings for the Thai officials and rural people rather than initiating or implementing actual development activities. Additionally, the project was heavily concentrated in the northeastern Thailand.[31] In the early 1960s, the USOM realized these constraints and consequently joined the BPP's civic action programs. Funded under the "Remote Area Security Development" project of the PSD, the initiative was to enhance the U.S. government's previous "Community Development" project along the line of BPP's civic actions.

After the 1965 event, the PSD's initiatives transformed into the "Development Center (*sun phathana*)" and "Key Village (*muban lak*)" project but the PSD still mobilized BPP's civic action as a foundation for operating these newly launched village development programs. Additionally, to make up its shortage in knowledge and operational techniques, the USOM contracted with the Development Consultants International to advise the Development Center project during fiscal year 1965-1966.[32] Upon arriving in Thailand, DEVCON advisors developed a program to train five-man teams of highland minority volunteers from 44 remote villages in agriculture, animal husbandry and medicine. Between 1965-1974, a total of 290 teams were

[31] For example, in 1967, out of total 27 provinces that had undertaken the USOM's Community Development program, 15 provinces from the northeastern Thailand, and 4 provinces from central, northern and southern Thailand participated in this program. See, D. Voran, *Statistics on CD Area Coverage in Operations of the Community Development Department* (USOM/Community Development Dept. Research & Evaluation Division, 1967). TIC.; *Non-Capital Project Paper (PROP) Community Development* (Bangkok: 1969). USAID DEC.

[32] According to Thomas Lobe's 1975 account, Suraphon Chulaphram went to Washington in 1965 and met with William Colby, the then CIA Far Eastern Bureau chief. Colby introduced Joseph Z. Taylor, an ex-marine and also a head of a CIA-front consulting firm DEVCON. Inc. to facilitate the BPP's civic action programs with the CIA assistance. See. Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*, 334.

trained under the project and sent back to the 44 Key Villages to build the Development Centers mostly in the northern and northeastern Thailand. The Centers where those trainees were to operate also oversaw the BPP School activities, Border Security Volunteer Teams, and other agricultural projects including that of the royal family.[33]

One of the central objectives of the Development Centers/Key Village program was to "incorporate the villages into the Thai border security system". Accordingly, a complete background survey including the names of villagers, households and relations with neighboring communities were recommended as the first mission. Then the BPP and PSD advisors were selected "those who the police feel can be trusted and offer them weapons and training" and these recruits soon developed into a village security group.[34] In short, the Development Center program was to strengthen the village-level security as well as the police surveillance to meet the USOM-PSD's objectives in creating the counterinsurgency infrastructure.

It is noteworthy that while the USOM-DEVCON initiated the Development Centers program in conjunction with the BPP's civic actions, the BPP had their own agenda. According to the BPP's account, the USOM-DEVCON's Development Center program was based on the BPP's own initiative called Hill Tribe Development Center (*sun phathana kan chaokhao*) and the BPP members focused mainly on the provision of basic trainings in agriculture and husbandry, and school buildings, in addition to their border security mission. Their separate perceptions of the Development Centers programs implies that while the USOM and BPP implemented similar projects, their goals and expectations were different. However, it also meant the BPP's level of cooperation in the USOM's project could play a pivotal role. As the BPP kept

[33] AID, *Termination Phase-Out Study*, 40-41.

[34] "Border Patrol Police: Program for the Hill Tribes Areas" (na, 1968), 2. TIC.

focusing on its project rather than wholly committing to the Development Centers, the project did not last long. In the end, the number of USOM's Development Centers decreased from 227 to 172 by 1974.[35]

In developing its civic actions in the border areas, the BPP had created a special unit called Development Platoons (*muat phathana*) as a key operational team normally consisting of construction teams and an advisory group for providing the agricultural and husbandry training for the villagers. To mobilize these units more effectively, the U.S. government funded a special training and development program for the BPP with a total of 39 men recruited from the U.S. naval construction team called "Seabee", between fiscal year 1967-1968. Seabee teams had been assigned to facilitate the rural development program, and in particular, to improve infrastructures in northeastern Thailand and Southern Vietnam since 1963; however from November 1966, the U.S. government redirected the group in order to cooperate with the BPP's Development Platoons under the RASD project.[36] At first, Seabee teams were supposed to provide training to the BPP in basic sanitation, construction, mechanical and electrical techniques required in lowland village civic action projects. These trainings were supposed to prevent "blowback" from the lowland Thais in case "they observe that the main force of this development attempt is directed at the hill people."[37] At the same time, the Seabee project was designed to demonstrate the Thai government's interest and compassion in the people in remote areas through

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[35] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, January 12, 2010. ; Manas, *Khrongkan phathana*, 7.

[36] G.E. Fowler, *SEABEE Teams in Thailand* (na, 1966). TIC. See: U.S. SEABEE, "U.S. SEE BEE Activities in Southeast Asia during the Cold War," accessed June 14, 2012. http://www.seabee.navy.mil/. See also the Figure 7 for the Seabee team deployment.

[37] Gilbert B. Layton, *Employment of the SEABEE Teams in Support of the Remote Area Security Development Program of the BPP* (na, 1966). TIC. It is noteworthy that Gilbert Layton, the then PSD advisor was actually a CIA official who stayed and actively engaged in the PSD-BPP operations during 1965-1968. See Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*, 536.; AID, *Termination Phase-Out Study*, 39.

psychological operations, or in Seabee's terms, "people to people assistance programs" with the BPP, thus a cautious and respectful approach to the local culture and people were strictly enforced. In a similar vein, intelligence gathering duties were primarily assigned to the BPP members within the joint Seabee-BPP development team as the central objectives lay in demonstrating how the Thai governmental apparatus was "seriously interested in helping the village" in order to gain confidence as well as necessary information from the local people.[38] Under these objectives, the first round of training was given to the BPP and some of selected highland minorities in BPP Area 5 camp in Chiang Mai between 1965-1966. From 1967, 15 BPP officers were selected from each subdivision camp, and in all, eight BPP-Provincial Police operational regions received training from the Seabee team in Camp Saritsena in Phitsanulok, which finally produced three classes of BPP trainees until 1968.[39]

In the meantime, a royal family initiated a project called "Bordercraft" -- also called, "Hill Tribe Handicraft Program" -- to promote cottage industries among the ethnic minorities from 1965. According to the BPP's account, the project was initially launched when the current king donated 10,000 baht to the BPP for establishing the "Center for Promoting the Hill Tribes Crafts under Royal Support (*sunsongsoem phlitphan chaokhao nai phraboromratchanukhro*)" in Chiang Mai in order to increase the alternative source of cash income for the minority groups in place of the opium cultivation.[40] In addition, the project was to expedite the highland minority's exposure to the market system in the lowland and to increase their communication and

[38] National Security Command, "Border Patrol Police and SEABEE Construction – Development – Operating Philosophy for Remote Area Security Development in Thailand" (Bangkok: National Security Command, 1966). TIC.

[39] *Sisippi tochodo*, 77.

[40] Lobe marks the program begun by American Christian missionaries but in the fall of 1966, the BPP provided 60,000 baht to increase this business. See Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*, 338.

experience with ordinary Thais.[41] In the beginning, village women of seven ethnic groups -- Hmong, Yunnanese immigrants (called *Chin Haw* by the Thais), Karen, Akha, Lahu, Thai Lue, and Lisu – from 17 northern provinces-- were employed and trained under this project.[42] The USOM provided advisory services and some funding for the project between 1967-1968 but after all the American advisors left, the Princess Mother loaned 30,000 baht to the BPP to continue the project.[43] As a result, over 2,000 highland minorities from 50 villages came to participate in the project between 1965-1974 under the direction of the Area 5 camp in Chiang Mai.[44]

In January 1980, the project finally became an official royal project and the Center for Promoting Hill Tribes Crafts became the "Thai hill Tribe Products Promotion Foundation under Royal Support (*munithi songsoem phlitphan chao thai phu khao nai phraboromratchanukhro*)." Currently, the shop and foundation are located in front of Wat Suandok in Chiang Mai, under the name of "BPP & Hill Tribe Shop" but the number of trainees and sponsorship for the project has decreased considerably from the 1980s.[45] Eventually, this "Bordercraft" project became a foundation stone for the Princess Mother's Mae Fah Luang Foundation, which was started in late 1980s.

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[41] *Sunsongsoem phlitphan chaokhao nai phraboromratchanukhro* [Center for Promoting the Hill Tribes Crafts under Royal Support], Internal report, (na, nd), 5.

[42] As for a foreign counterpart's observation on the bordercraft and Seabee projects, see, for example, Dora H. Layton, "The Road to Huai Fuang," *Sawaddi* 6:3 (January 1968), 3-5, 20-23.

[43] *Sunsongsoem phlitphan chaokhao*, 1. : AID, *Termination Phase-Out Study*, 39. On the other hand, Lobe argues it was DEVCON who persuaded the Princess Mother to loan 30,000 baht for this project. See Lobe, *U.S. Police Assistance*, 338.

[44] Manas, *Khrongkan phathana*, 9.

[45] *Sunsongsoem phlitphan chaokhao,* 1-2.: Personal Communication with the BPP officer in charge of the BPP & Hill Tribe Shop on June 15, 2010. The English translation of the Foundation is from the brochure available in the BPP & Hill Tribe Shop.

The Princess Mother's earlier development projects, including the Bordercraft project, were concentrated in northern Thailand, but soon her initiative began to expand to other regions. One notable rural development project that had resembled DEVCON's Key Villages program launched in the Kalasin province of northeastern Thailand under the title "Building Security in the Rural Villages Project under the Princess Mother's Royal Patronage (*khrongkan sang khuammankhong nai chonabot thi muban nai phra upatham somdetphra sinakharindra boromratchachonani*)."[46] Proposed by former commissioner to the BPP Headquarters Police General Wiphat Wipunlakon in 1977, and in 1981, the Project joined the list of royal projects under the Princess Mother's patronage. The project of Building Security in the Rural Villages primarily aimed at installing the BPP's development for security schemes to village-level governance and community activities, and thus the BPP members firstly conducted research about the natural, political, economic and social conditions in the remote villages of northeastern Thailand.[47] The Princess Mother donated a total of 1,350,000 baht in June 1981 and soon, a preeminent Thai businessman named Suwit Osathanukhro donated 2,650,000 baht so that the BPP could increase their project areas. Consequently the initial experiment in Kalasin province extended to adjunct and border provinces like Khon Kaen, Ubon Ratchathani, Sisaket, Loei, Phetburi and Tak.[48]

After the Princess Mother passed away in 1995, the project changed its primary mission statement to "commemorate the royal charity activities of the Princess Mother" and by 2005, the

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[46] Border Patrol Police Headquarters. "*Khrongkan sang khuammankhong nai chonabot thi muban nai phra upatham somdetphra sinakharindra boromratchachonani, (somobo tochodo sowo)* [Building Security in the Rural Villages Project under the Princess Mother's Royal Patronage]," in *Anuson phon tamruat ek wiphat wipunlakon* [Cremation Volume, Police General Wiphat Wipunlakon], ed. Border Patrol Police Headquarters (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 2005). 83. [hereafter, *Wiphat Wipunlakon Cremation Volume*].

[47] *Wiphat Wipunlakon Cremation Volume,* 83-85.

[48] *Wiphat Wipunlakon Cremation Volume,* 85.

project had extended to a total 173 villages in the rural provinces of northern and northeastern Thailand.[49] Like her medical project, the Princess Mother's rural development project also did not limit its operational area within northern border areas and highland minorities. Throughout the 1960s, her royal projects extended to the remote border areas and rural villages along with the BPP. In a sense, it could be said that wherever the BPP went, the royal project followed.

Civic Action Field 4: Village Security

Around 1965, 47 of the BPP's Reserve Platoons were deployed to "sensitive" areas, but the number was not sufficient enough to counter the growing communist threat, especially in the remote border villages. Thus, the BPP and PSD organized a new subunit called Mobile Reserve Platoons (MRP) with 35-man in each platoon, and dispatched them to eight BPP Area camps in September 1966.[50] The platoon was designed to operate as a quick reaction force, but as the BPP's qualification of being a paramilitary had received higher recognition than other Thai armed forces, these MRPs were also directly mobilized for TNPD-PSD's special missions, along with the Provincial Police's Special Action Forces.[51]

After witnessing the rapid increase of insurgencies by the highland minorities in northern Thailand around 1967-1968, which were believed to be incited by the Chinese communists, the BPP initiated a military training program for the highland villagers under the title of "Hill Tribe Volunteers Team (*chut ratsadon asa samak chaokhao*)" from September 1968 in the BPP's Mae Teng training camp in Chiang Mai. The primary goal of the program was to supplement the

[49] *Wiphat Wipunlakon Cremation Volume,* 86.

[50] See the deployment of the MRP, SAF, and other security forces from the Figure 4.

[51] AID, *Termination Phase-Out Study,* 26-27, 39.

shortage of BPP's manpower, particularly the Mobile Reserve Platoon and Line Platoon in the remote border areas of the northern provinces.[52] The initial training program for the Hill Tribe Volunteers Team covered weapons and their use, tactics, political indoctrination and psychological operations, village development and civic action, discipline, regulation and orders and morale.[53] After a six-month-long training and screening, the first ten 30-man Hill Tribe Volunteers Teams with the four-BPP men commanders called *ratsami* (meaning, radiance) in each team were deployed to Chiang Rai and Nan provinces in 1969.[54] Subsequently, the USOM and Thai CSOC joined the program and thus the project was officially established with a new title, Border Security Volunteer Teams (*chut chaokhao pongkan chaidaen,* BSVT) in September 1969.[55] Between 1970-1972, another 14 BSVT teams were trained and added, so that by mid-1974, 24 BSVT teams with total 712 men operated in almost all sides of border provinces in northern and northeastern Thailand.[56]

What makes this BSVT project stand out is that the project not only overtly trained highland minorities in military techniques, but also equipped them with the U.S.-BPP provided weapons. Nevertheless, the project faced several problems after the first group of BSVT teams dispatched to northern Thailand. Upon learning that the first group's activities had brought satisfactory results, the Thanom administration commanded the BPP to accelerate the project and increase the number of trainees immediately. At that time, the CSOC and BPP had been the major source

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[52] Phairot Pusayanawin, "*Somdetya kap kansakatkan kankhayai itthiphon khong phak khommunit haeng prathet thai* [Special Essay: Princess Mother and the Interception of the Communist Party of Thailand's Influence]," *Tamruat trawen chaidaen parithat* [Border Patrol Police Review] 11:41 (October 1995-January 1996), 58-59.

[53] John L. Champagne, *The Border Security Volunteer Team Program: An Appraisal* (Bangkok: USOM, 1971), 3.

[54] Phairot, "*Somdetya kap kansakatkan kankhayai itthiphon*," 59.

[55] Phairot, "*Somdetya kap kansakatkan kankhayai itthiphon*," 59.; AID, *Termination Phase-Out Study*, 39.

[56] Phairot, "*Somdetya kap kansakatkan kankhayai itthiphon*," 59-60.; AID, *Termination Phase-Out Study*, 39.

of funding for the project but neither the CSOC nor the government wanted to invest more budget resources in order to increase the trainees. The BPP could not spare additional financial resources for the project. Worse yet, even the CSOC funding did not transfer to the BPP on a regular basis, and thus both the BPP trainers and villager trainees felt that they lacked stable and reliable governmental support.[57]

Eventually, the Thai government closed out its funding for the project in 1975 and reasoned that it was due to the "ambiguous positions" of the ethnic minority trainees. Even though the aim of the BSVT project was to arm groups of non-Thai villagers to complement the BPP's border defense mission, the Thai military regime's suspicion toward ethnic minorities' loyalty to the Thai nation did not cease. In turn, the trainees also felt certain constraints from the government support. One telling example for this growing gap can be found from the weapon provisions to these ethnic minority volunteers. Most trainees received old weapons that the BPP had used but those were far inferior to their enemy's armament. The BPP also lacked authority to issue weapons to the villagers that they had selected and recruited for the BSVT project. In addition, because of their unsettled citizenship as well as lack of education and language proficiency, those ethnic minority trainees could not be promoted to official Thai civil service positions.[58]

At last, the BPP's inability to guarantee both the stable salary and better future for the BSVT members, and the military government's low interest in investing more resources to the ethnic minority volunteers resulted in slowing down the expansion of the BSVT project outside northern Thailand.[59] When the project faced an unclear future, the Princess Mother stepped in

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[57] Champagne, *Border Security Volunteer Team*, 8-10.

[58] Champagne, *Border Security Volunteer Team*, 9.

[59] "Border Patrol Police: Program for the Hill Tribes Areas" (na, 1968), 3. TIC.

again. As she recognized the significance and potential of the BSVT project, she provided funding for food and training to sustain the project. Therefore the project survived and later in the latter half of 1970s, these BSVT members were mobilized in the Princess Mother's Building Security in the Rural Villages Project in northeastern Thailand.[60] With the Princess Mother's assistance and aid, the project finally expanded to other regions along with the BPP's new rural development projects, and the number of forces reached a total 43 teams in mid-1990.[61]

To supplement the BSVT project, the BPP initiated another village-level volunteer force training program in northeastern Thailand. In early 1969, BPP Area Camp 4 in Udon Thani and Area camp 6 in Tak jointly launched a military training program for the rural Thai villagers and named it the "Volunteers of Border Villagers (*asa samak chaoban chaidaen*)". BPP members selected 30-men from four border villages and the first 120 trainees received training in Chiang Khan, Loei province between March-May 1969.[62] According to the BPP's account, the training for the first group had emphasized the friendly relations between the trainees and the BPP trainers and thus the BPP and villager volunteers maintained their relations like brothers and families.[63] After experimenting with various ways of organizing the rural Thais into vigilante groups, the then commander of BPP Area 4 Camp, Police Colonel Somkhuan Harikul, learned that the trained volunteers needed to be assisted by a larger reserve force. Therefore, the BPP Area 4 Camp launched a scout training with the Volunteers of Border Villagers and as a result,

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[60] *Wiphat Wipunlakon Cremation Volume,* p.85.

[61] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, May 26, 2010.; Phairot, "*Somdetya kap kansakatkan kankhayai itthiphon*," 60-61.

[62] Village Scout Operational Center, *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban* [History of the Village Scout]. (Bangkok: Modern Press Limited, 1987), 13. [hereafter, *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban*]. The first four villages under the Volunteers of Border Villagers are Ban Laokohok and Ban Sengpha in Loei, Ban Bophak in Phitsanulok, and Tambon Nadi in Samut Prakan provinces. Later, the Volunteer of Border Villages was officially called Border Villagers Defense Team (*chut cha ban raksa chaidaen*).

[63] *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban*, 14.

the first four groups of Border Village Scouts (*luksuea chaoban chaidaen*) were initiated on August 1971.[64] As will be discussed further in the following chapter, the Village Scout movement was born out of the BPP's numerous village security development projects that were intended to create auxiliary forces to supplement the unit's manpower and area coverage during wartime. This military origin of Village Scout strengthened during the rest of the 1970s when the tension between the military regime and democratization movements intensified.

Meanwhile, the Thanom administration built the Counterinsurgency Training Centers in security-sensitive regions and ordered the BPP to be in charge of training the general police forces as well as some civilian militia in unconventional warfare tactics. The first CITC was built in the previous Rama the Sixth's summer residence called Maruekkhathayawan Palace (*phraratchaniwet maruekkhathayawan*) in Cha-am, Phetburi province in 1970. Soon the CITC project was installed in Ubon Ratchathani, Udon Thani, Chiang Mai and Songkhla provinces in the same year, and a year later, the sixth CITC was built in Thungsong, Nakhon Si Thammarat province.[65] All these CITCs are now merged into the BPP's Special Training Division (*kongbangkhap kanfuek phiset*). To present day, the BPP is still in charge of training the rural security forces, such as the Volunteer Defense Corps and Village Security Force in the areas of responsibility to make those village militias serve the role of a reserve force. In the time of conflicts, these forces would assist the regular security forces like the Provincial Police and would serve as the vigilante group during the peacetime.[66]

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[64] *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban*, 14-15.

[65] Curtis, *Brief History of USOM* Support, 11.; AID, *Termination Phase-Out Study*, 38. Now, the palace shares the same compound with the BPP's Special Training Subdivision 1 Camp called Rama 6 Camp (*khai phraram hok*) which is right next to the new PARU's Naresuan Camp.

[66] Tarr, "Nature of Military Intervention," 40-42, 45-46.; AID, *Termination Phase-Out Study*, 27.

Apparently, most of the Thai government-sponsored village security forces concentrated in the northeastern provinces, as shown on the PSD's 1966 map on the deployment of security forces in Thailand. However, the BPP's MRP and its auxiliary forces like the BSVT, Volunteers of Border Villagers began to spread all over the border provinces in spite of their limited manpower and resources.[67] The discrepancy in their regional coverage reveals that while the Thai military regime was investing its counterinsurgency campaign and resources to the security-sensitive areas of northeastern region, where most of U.S. government's financial and human sources had already been concentrated, the BPP's activities and its auxiliary forces began to expand from the north to the general rural, border areas of Thailand. In addition, the ways in which mobilizing the general populace in the village security projects also developed separately between the BPP and military government -- particularly the CSOC, and thus their impact on Thai national security appeared differently. The building of village militias under the BPP civic action projects finally gained enough momentum to extend its influence to every corner of Thailand when the royal family came to sponsor the projects, especially the Village Scout movement from the early 1970s.

Civic Action Field 5: Narcotics Suppression

The BPP's complications with opium has a long history, as its founder Phao Siyanon had been deeply involved in the opium business when he was a head of the TNPD and the BPP Headquarters. Several former American advisors to the CIA and USOM programs confirmed to me that Phao ordered to transfer large amount of opium from northern Thailand to Bangkok by

[67] See Figure 4 for the deployment of security forces in Thailand in 1966.

the CIA-hired airplanes.[68] Nevertheless, Phao's involvement with the illegal opium business should not overshadow the general history of the BPP organization. Despite the fact that Phao utilized the BPP as a cover and instrument for his opium business, it does not necessarily mean that the BPP had benefited from Phao's personal, illegal business or the CIA complications with his drug business.

From the time when the BPP began to patrol and operate in the remote border areas, the unit had inevitably been exposed to this netherworld business. Since one of the primary duties of the BPP is intelligence collection in the border areas, the unit had been well aware of the presence of the opium cultivators, traffickers as well as the transporters. And this is the reason why the BPP had been regarded as one of the top security forces in the general narcotics suppression campaign to present. Nevertheless, these qualifications have been also detrimental to the BPP's operations. When I was conducting field research in northern Thailand in 2010-2011, I traveled to various remote villages in the northern border areas with the BPP officers. On one of the trips made in Chiang Mai province to visit a BPP School, a BPP driver refused to stay overnight in the village, which I had done routinely during my trips in northern Thailand. I asked the driver the reason why he did not want to stay in that village. He immediately answered that he did not want to get killed by the drug traffickers. At that moment, I noticed that the four-wheel truck that he was driving -- and I was riding in-- did not have a license plate because, as the driver explained to me, the truck could not be recognized or remembered by either the villagers or the traffickers.[69] Likewise, most BPP members in the field, like the BPP teachers and the patrol platoons, are

[68] Personal Communications, February 25, 2011 and March 10, 2012. See for a detailed description about Phao's involvement in the opium trade from McCoy, *Politics of Heroin*, 79-192.

[69] Personal communication and research notes, November 11, 2010.

unable to push the anti-drug campaign because they have been, literally, living in the middle of an enemy zone and thus became the easiest target for the drug dealers.

Having said this, it does not necessarily mean that the BPP members intentionally ignored the opium trades in the border areas for the sake of their survival. On the contrary, the BPP's duty in curtailing the drug trafficking flowing from the neighboring countries to the Thai border areas has become the central mission of the unit. To meet both objectives of collecting intelligence and suppressing narcotics, the BPP has campaigned more cautiously and less visibly against the opium and drug business. In this respect, since there are numerous accounts on the opium growing and trade, especially in relation to the highland minorities in northern Thailand, this survey will focus on the process of politicizing opium under the counterinsurgency campaign during the Cold War period, and how it has affected the BPP's civic action under royal patronage.

There are three main conditions that politicized opium during the Thai Counterinsurgency Era. First, the U.S. government saw the opium trade as a major financial source for strengthening the Chinese communist insurgents. In 1956, the CIA reported that the Chinese communist involvement in the opium business was to support its prolonged struggle and other various military groups' antigovernment protests.[70] In particular, the highland minorities such as the Hmong and Mien groups, had migrated from southern China and were opium cultivators as well as consumer and thus these groups of people had received primary attention from the U.S. from the beginning of its covert operations through the BPP's civic action programs.[71] Consequently,

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[70] See, for example, Central Intelligence Agency, *Intelligence Memorandum: An Examination of the Charges of Chinese Communist Involvement in the Illicit Opium Trade* (Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Research and Reports, 1956). There are several other known cases that the militias have used the golden triangle connection to fund their fight against the governments. See McCoy, *Politics of Heroin*, 127-192, 283-386.

[71] Hmong and Mien (Thai people often use the term Meo and Yao) had received most attention from the U.S.-CIA and the BPP because of their complication to the opium cultivation-trade and also the higher qualification in their

both the U.S. and Thai governments began to identify the highland minorities as opium growers and addicts, which provided a second condition that has politicized the opium business, particularly in northern Thailand.

As earlier descriptions from Manas and Hanrahan about the *chao pa* suggest, the largest presence of the non-Thai, jungle people and their involvement in opium cultivation and trade were viewed as the major source of security problems in northern Thailand. Together with the suspicion of their ethnic origins, and sympathy towards the Chinese communists, the highland minorities' opium cultivation became another criteria that differentiate them from the general Thais. A simplistic equation was created for the highland minorities, as they were seen as opium growers and addicts, and their non-Thainess was created and this equation became an influential instrument in making the ethnic minority groups in Thailand the potential enemy of state during the Thai Counterinsurgency Era.

In addition, as discussed elsewhere, one of the fastest rising political powers during the Counterinsurgency Era was the Thai monarchy, and thus the third element that made opium political in Thailand which cannot be avoided was how the monarchy influenced local leadership. Shortly after Phao left for Switzerland, Sarit declared an official ban on opium in June 1959, and invited various international and domestic organizations to join in the Thai government's counternarcotics campaigns. Sarit's counternarcotics campaign has several implications for the general opium history in Thailand, but for our discussion, it is important to pay attention to the relations between the Sarit regime and royal family from the early 1960s in order to observe how opium became a political weapon for strengthening their power.

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jungle fighting capability. See, for example, Coffey, Raymond et al, *Contractors Semi-Annual Report, Devcon Development Consultants in Support of Border Patrol Police Remote Area Security, August 1968-January 1969* (Bangkok: USOM, 1969). ; Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, December 3, 2009.

In brief, Sarit had promoted the revival of traditional leadership centered on the role of Thai monarchy and in return, the royal family almost wholeheartedly supported Sarit's dictatorship. At the same time, the young monarch began befriending other military leaders to strengthen his power base against the democratic civilian leaders particularly the group that had abdicated the absolute monarchy in 1932. There is one good example that shows how these power dynamics among the military and civilian leaders and the monarchy finally led to the royal family stepping into the symbolic opium war. In the late 1980s, the Princess Mother initiated a royal project called Doi Tung Development Project in Chiang Rai province, and the Hall of Opium was built under this project. In this Hall of Opium, the exhibition on the opium history in Thailand highlights the Sarit regime's determination to eliminate opium by declaring an official ban, demolishing the opium shops and dens in Bangkok. The history then contrasts Sarit's effort with the previous regime established by the People's Party members in 1932 as following:

> The 1932 political reform in Thailand not only continued opium trade in Thailand, but also expanded the government's role by promoting opium growing in the northern part of the country.[72]

Apparently, the statement implies that the civilian leaders failed to uproot this evil practice in northern Thailand and only after Sarit came to power, could the military take decisive, legal steps to eliminate opium trade.

After Sarit died, the current monarch and his family actively mobilized an anti-opium campaign by promoting alternative means of agriculture and trade among the highland minorities, which finally led to launching their own development project for the highland minorities in northern Thailand in late 1960s. Since then, almost all royal support for the BPP's civic actions and other rural development projects in northern Thailand were publicized as a key

[72] From the Hall of Opium exhibition. Research note. May 21, 2011. See the Figure 9.

part of the modernization movement against highland minorities' opium cultivation tradition. Over the years of the counternarcotics campaign, the royal family was seen as playing a leading role in eliminating the uncivil traditions of the non-Thai people in the remote border areas, and bringing civilization and modernization to secure these ethnic minorities from falling victim to primitive behavior as well as communist propaganda. In this way, the royal family could transform opium into a political weapon to strengthen their legitimacy.

To summarize, the highland minorities were viewed as the potential enemy of the state under the U.S.-Thai counterinsurgency campaign because they were seen as the easiest target of the Chinese communists, owing to their ethnic heritage. Additionally, their longtime involvement in opium cultivation was seen as a source of security problems. The Thai monarch's promotion of a counternarcotics campaign was therefore expected to achieve both objectives: to prevent the highland minorities from growing and trading opium and to consolidate these non-Thai ethnic minorities by instilling the belief that opium cultivation is a non-Thai tradition, or more precisely, an anti-Thai one. Therefore it was imperative for the royal family to correct these highland minorities' wrongdoings by introducing modernization and development, and Thainess.

The BPP had been assigned to suppress the opium cultivation and trade since the beginning of its border security mission in the mid-1950s but their daily counternarcotics operation had remained less visible as mentioned above. Then, a renewed recognition to the BPP's ability as well as efficiency in carrying out the counternarcotics mission was given after U.S. president Richard Nixon declared the "War on Drugs" in 1971. In September 1971, the U.S. and Thai governments agreed to work together to increase the counternarcotics campaigns by establishing the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (soon changed the name to the Drug Enforcement Administration, DEA) and Special Narcotics Organization in northern Thailand. After official

funding for the Remote Area Security Development projects ended in 1971, the USOM-PSD re-assigned the BPP in the narcotics suppression program centered in northern Thailand in 1973. A month before the TNPD officially established the Police Narcotics Suppression Center in March 1973, the BPP had organized eight-man narcotics suppression teams and the PSD allocated $11,430 in the same year for an additional purchase of commodities as well as payment for a special training to improve the unit's operations.[73] With the U.S.'s support, the number of BPP's counternarcotics unit grew to 40 teams in mid-1974. In addition, through the USAID project agreement with the Thai government, the U.S. government agreed to provide five rotary wing utility aircraft that added another $4.1 million allocation in order to equip "airlift capability for one BPP platoon" consisting of 58-man in May 1974.[74]

In support of the counternarcotics campaign, other pilot projects were initiated by the USOM to encourage the highland minorities in northern Thailand to abandon opium cultivation, which were in fact, enabling the U.S. to continue its support for the BPP's civic action programs.[75] By the time the PSD was preparing to wrap up its programs in Thailand, the USOM agreed to launch a new program called Uplands Development Project (UDP) from the fiscal year 1973 in order to reduce "international traffic in opium-based narcotics which have their origins in the Golden Triangle" and also to offer "income earning alternatives for hilltribe [*sic*] growers of the opium poppy," which is of "special significance" to both the Thai and U.S.

[73] AID, *Termination Phase-Out Study*, 95-98.

[74] "Project Agreement: Narcotics Enforcement" (Agreement No. 238-4024, May 20, 1974), 2. USAID DEC.

[75] USAID, Mission to Thailand, "Noncapital Project Paper: Uplands Development Project (UDP)," September 15, 1972.; USAID, Mission to Thailand, "Project Agreement: Highland Development, Sub Project C, Hilltribe Preserved Food," June 29, 1974. USAID DEC.

counterinsurgency interest in the areas.[76] The program initially aimed to collect scientific data about the region and people by taking photographs from the sky and conducting census surveys to assist the further planning on development projects in northern Thailand.

Generally speaking, the joint U.S.-Thai government's counternarcotics campaign during the 1960s and 1970s has been derived mostly from their interests in expanding counterinsurgency policies against the communist rebels. Therefore, the UDP primarily targeted the ethnic minorities that had been "obliged to use opium" as an analgesic and a source of cash income, and it legitimized this target by stating the Project would prevent ethnic minorities from joining the "foreign-inspired insurgency against the Government."[77] The Project was also to assist the Thai government for collecting detailed information about the populace in order to extend its surveillance system in the margins of Thailand. Under this UDP program, the USOM also aided the Thai monarchy's royal projects that were to create new sources of cash income for the highland minorities. One of the sub-projects of UDP was the "Hill Tribe Preserved Food" that had financially supported the Thai royal family's project for building small canning factories to process local fruits and vegetables produced by the minority groups in northern Thailand. USOM provided total $25,000 for this project in June 1973.[78] Ultimately, all these U.S.-sponsored highland development programs came to be incorporated into the royal project.

To sum up, the BPP's mission of suppressing opium cultivation and trade in the border areas has become politicized with the influence of the counterinsurgency campaign. The

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[76] The central objective of this new project was described as "more rapid economic development and increased Government presence and services should reduce the vulnerability of the population to Communist subversion.": "Non-Capital Project Paper (PROP) Uplands Development Project (UDP)" (Thailand: September 15, 1972), 2-3, 6. USAID DEC.

[77] AID, *Termination Phase-Out Study*, 95.; "Non-Capital Project Paper (PROP) Uplands Development Project (UDP)" (Thailand: September 15, 1972), 2. USAID DEC.

[78] "Project Agreement: Hill Tribe Preserved Food" (Agreement No.248-3027, June 30, 1973), 1-2. USAID DEC.

highland minorities who were viewed as opium cultivators and traders were also assumed to be the major target of communists by the BPP, U.S. and the royal family. In this way, the ethnic minority groups in northern Thailand became an enemy of state as well as the Thai nation. The BPP had been the first line of defense against the opium trade in the border areas, however at the same time, the BPP's counternarcotics mission was more or less forced to be carried out in a civilian fashion because the highland minorities in northern Thailand were the major target population that the BPP had worked with closely. As a consequence, the BPP counternarcotics actions had been so far focused on subjugating the ethnic minority groups to the Thai nation-state by eliminating their primitiveness as well as lack of sense of belonging than physically arresting the opium cultivators or traders.

Luckily, the BPP could receive continuous attention and funding from the USOM even when the PSD ceased its support for the TNPD because their civic action brought satisfactory results in the eyes of U.S. government. At the same time, the BPP gained royal support to effectively contain the opium trade and cultivation through their civic action programs. On the other hand, the royal family had launched numerous royal projects to provide alternative sources of income for the opium growing highland minorities in northern border areas, and in turn, the increasing numbers of royal projects became the source of political legitimacy and popularity for them throughout the Thai Counterinsurgency Era.

In conclusion, all of the BPP's civic action projects initiated and undertaken under the Remote Area Security Development project with the USOM-PSD sponsorship and further developed along the Thai monarchy's royal project in the 1960s and 1970s offer two significant implications to the changes of general counterinsurgency strategy in Thailand. First, previous BPP civic action programs and aid for the highland minorities and remote border people were

incorporated and developed by the PSD with a strong emphasis on the counterinsurgency objectives in the latter half of 1960s. Civic action projects like rural medical programs, Border Security Volunteer Teams, and the Uplands Development Programs had been carried out by the BPP in a rather un-institutionalized form since the mid-1950s, but after 1965, the PSD made all these projects to be official and a model project for other security agencies' counterinsurgency campaigns. It is apparent that the Thai military government's Mobile Medical Team project, Village Security Office/Force project, or the CSOC Operational Centers were modeled after the BPP's civic actions.

Second, because the U.S. and Thai military government wanted to cover their counterinsurgency campaigns with civilian clothes, they sought a non-political symbol that could make their actions be seen as "apolitical." In this context, the Thai monarchy came to receive lavish attention from the U.S. from the mid-1960s. Not only did the Thai royal family become the symbol of the civilian counterinsurgency campaign, but they also began to take lead in the entire Thai nation-building process against communist expansion. As shown above, most of the USOM-PSD's programs pertaining to the BPP civic actions were ultimately merged into the royal projects. The BPP School project, Bordercraft project, PMMV, and Hilltribe Preserved Food projects under the Uplands Development Programs are good examples that show how the royal family began hijacking the USOM's rural development programs through their participation to the BPP's civic actions. The royal family's appropriation of these American initiated and sponsored development programs eventually contributed to strengthening monarchy's political influence and legitimacy.

However, the U.S. government's awareness of the different attitudes of the Thai government and royal family toward the BPP's activities was revealed in the USOM-PSD

termination report in 1974. The report criticizes that the lack of coordination and direction by the Royal Thai Government towards the BPP's civic actions and concludes that its indifference eventually led the Thai government to fail to utilize "this highly trained unit" in controlling the "borders". On the other hand, the same report praises the royal family in maintaining "an excellent relationship" with the BPP and thus this institution deserves more recognition for its contribution to extending the counterinsurgency programs to the margins of Thailand.[79] Simply put, the U.S. government came to have a higher regard of the role of the royal family in leading the general counterinsurgency campaigns in Thailand.

Indeed, the Thai monarchy's counterinsurgency campaign circumscribing the communist subversion as well as rural unrest achieved success beyond the U.S. expectations, as will be further discussed in the following survey on educational project.

"My Teacher is a Policeman"

> On the mountains near the sky, no neon signs, no TV and no light.
> To change this society, education is the most important work to do.
> The heart of development depends on the equal education for everyone.
> Whether poor or rich, they all came to be born in Thailand.
> Whether you are in the mountains or elsewhere, we are all Thais.
> Education makes a human, so we came to the mountains to build a school.
> We build a school in *Lo To* village.
> Border Patrol Police came to build a school.
>
> [Sung by the Students in the Border Patrol Police School, 2010][80]

One of the most celebrated civic actions of the BPP is the Border Patrol Police School project. Accordingly, there is numerous research about the Border Patrol Police School project (hereafter,

[79] AID, *Termination Phase-Out Study*, 45-46. It is noteworthy that in this about 120 pages long report, only the BPP has a section conclusion titled "royal household attitude."

[80] From a research note on September 2, 2010 in Ban Lo To, Mae Ra Mat District, Tak Province. This song was sung by the Karen students in the Ban Lo To Border Patrol Police School where I visited for an interview with the BPP teachers and students. The students wrote this lyric for me and I translated from Thai. The title of the song is "On the Mountains near the Sky (*bon doi klai fa*)."

BPP School) both in English and Thai languages. The majority of the English accounts are from the USOM-Thailand that had worked closely with the BPP to carry out the Remote Area Security Development programs in the 1960s and the early 1970s. It is not difficult to find foreign anthropologists who referred the BPP activities in their research about the highland minorities from the 1960s to present. However, more elaborate accounts of the history of the BPP School can be found among the Thai sources such as the BPP Headquarters' official volumes and annual reports, evaluation reports from various governmental organizations, like the Ministry of Education or the Department of Public Welfare, and the academic theses written by Thai graduate students.

All of these accounts begin with similar questions: why did the police force engage in teaching ethnic minorities? What kind of roles did the BPP School play out in the border areas? The following historical analysis on the BPP School project is namely based on the accounts from the BPP Headquarters and the USOM, and the author's own field notes from the trips and interviews undertaken in 54 BPP Schools in northern Thailand between June-November 2010. By tracing the historical background and current activities in the Schools, this section will examine the key characteristics of Thai nation-building processes during the Cold War.

Official BPP School history records that the School project was conceived by Police Lieutenant Thawi Phanusophon in Chiang Rai regional company when he proposed to build a school for the highland minority youth groups for the civic action division in Dararatsami Camp in Mae Rim, Chiang Mai province in 1956.[81] At that time, Police Major Thawin Yuyen, Police Lieutenant Colonel Suraphon Chulaphram and Police Colonel Charoenrit Chamratromran, who

[81] Chan Angsuchot, "*Botkhuam phiset: ban lae sathaban khropkhrua kap khuampen rongrian phuenthan khong chiwit dek, rongrian tamruat trawen chaidaen* [Special Essay: House and family institution, and the school as a basis for children's lives in Border Patrol Police School]," *Tamruat trawen chaidaen parithat* [Border Patrol Police Review] 4:14 (October-December 1987), 51.

were in charge of the administrative subdivision in the BPP's Bangkok Headquarters, understood the necessity of building a school for the highland minorities and villagers in the remote border areas as no governmental organizations like the Ministry of Education could reach those areas. The initial goal of teaching Thai language to the border populace in the schools aimed at making them understand governmental policies and building a friendly relationship between the BPP and villagers for an efficient implementation of the BPP's border defense duties.[82]

In this background, there emerged two key figures who came to envision, design and implement the BPP civic action programs and the BPP School projects they are Police General Suraphon Chulaphram and Police Lieutenant General Charoenrit Chamratromran. A detailed description of these two figures will be provided in the following chapter, but in brief, Suraphon and Charoenrit were classmates and comrades who fought against the Japanese army during the Pacific War after graduating from Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy. After the war ended, Suraphon was assigned to form the Border Defense Police as well as Border Patrol Police in the early 1950s.[83] In the mid-1950s, they became the commanders of the administrative subdivision in the BPP Headquarters in Bangkok and also worked closely with the CIA-SEA Supply.[84]

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[82] *Rongrian chaokhao lae prachachon klai khamanakhom nai phra upatham khong somdet phra sinakharindra boromratchachonani kongbanchakan tamruat trawen chaidaen* [School for the Hill Tribes and People Far from Communication under the Patronage of the Her Royal Highness Princess Srinagarindra the Princess Mother, Border Patrol Police Headquarters] (Bangkok: Thai Khasem Publishing, 1982), 2. [hereafter, *Rongrian chaokhao lae prachachon klai 1982*].

[83] Their personal histories are compiled from various sources, including interviews with former Police Generals. Personal communication, March 22, 2011.

[84] According to a personal communication with a former BPP officer and Charoenrit's memoir, Charoenrit was close with Phao Siyanon and thus the impact of Sarit's coup had affected more to Charoenrit than Suraphon who were less active in the politics. On the other hand, Chan was close with Thanom Kittikachorn and both liked the BPP organization so both helped to reinstate the BPP in 1972. Later, Suraphon became the fourth Commissioner of the BPP General Headquarters (1971-1975), the Director-General of the Thai National Police Department (1981-1982), and Charoenrit became the seventh Commissioner of the BPP General Headquarters (1981-1982). See, for example, Royal Thai Police. *Phithak santi ratsadon* [Guarding the People's Peace] (Bangkok: Royal Thai Police, 2007),14,

It was these two BPP men who had brought the Thai government's attention to the presence of highland minorities in the remote border areas from the mid-1950s as they shared the experience of fighting the ethnic mercenaries during the Pacific War. Thus, upon receiving the proposal for building a school in the remote border areas from BPP Area Camp 5 in Chiang Mai, Charoenrit reported to the Director-General Phao Siyanon and explained the necessity of setting up a task force to deal with the highland minorities. As a result, the "Committee to Aid Hill Tribe People and People Far from Communication" was organized under the auspice of the Phibun administration, and Charoenrit served as the deputy secretary of the Committee. In the meantime, Charoenrit contacted the CIA-SEA Supply and asked for medical aid kits and other supplies to prepare for a survey trip to the northern border areas for the Committee. The CIA agreed with the plan and sent its airplanes and pilots to facilitate the trip, in addition to the requested items.[85] The BPP members in Chiang Mai were ordered to prepare and receive a group of Committee members, some professional medical doctors and students in the remote mountains, where the force had been building the Border Information Centers and patrol stations. After the Committee's visit, the BPP was officially appointed to be the central government agency to carry out the aid project for the highland minorities and shortly after, the BIC was merged with the BPP School project.

Until the early 1980s, there were two main conditions for the BPP to build a school in the border areas: One is the villagers' request and the other is by gathering a minimum of twenty-five children who were willing to study in the BPP School. However, these conditions were not

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120-123.; Chan Angsuchot, "*De phon tamruat ek suraphon chulaphram* [To Police General Suraphon Chulaphram]," in *Anuson phon tamruat ek suraphon chulaphram* [Cremation Volume, Police General Suraphon Chulaphram], edited by Border Patrol Police Headquarters (Bangkok: O.S. Printing House, 1996), 250.

[85] Charoenrit Chamratromran. "*Rongrian tochodo nai khuam songcham khong khapchao* [Border Patrol Police School in My Memory]," in *Sisippi rongrian tochodo* [40 Years of the Border Patrol Police School], edited by Border Patrol Police Headquarters (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1996), 81-82.

yet recognized or formalized by the Thai government in the mid-1950s. Charoenrit recalls in his memoir that the BPP's school building project for the highland minorities immediately encountered opposition from the Ministry of Education. The Ministry at that time stipulated that to build a school with more than seven students, the sponsor organization must obtain official permission first.[86] Thus, the previously established BPP Schools were not recognized as official educational institutions.

At last, after clearing up the bureaucratic matters with the Ministry of Education, the BPP could open its first official school on January 7, 1956 in Ban Don Mahawan in Chiang Khong district of Chiang Rai province, which was where Police Lieutenant Thawi had initially suggested to build a school. The school was named "Border Patrol Police Sponsored School No.1 (*rongrian tamruat trawen chaidaen bamrung thi nueng*).[87] The Ministry of Education still did not provide a budget for building a permanent school building, and thus this school was constructed with a budget and materials from the BPP and villagers.[88] From then on, and into the late 1990s, the BPP's school project had been called the "School for the Hill Tribes and People far from Communication (*rongrian chaokhao lae prachachon klai khamanakhom*)."[89] In the first year of the official BPP School opening, the BPP had built eighteen schools in northern and

[86] Charoenrit, "*Rongrian tochodo nai khuam songcham*," 84. Charoenrit showed a bit of bitter feeling towards the other governmental organizations including the Thai National Police Department in the same account by commenting that "I have never received even a penny [from the government]," because the high-ranking police officers and other officials did not agree to the importance of the BPP School project.

[87] *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 41.; Chan, "*Botkhuam phiset*," 51.

[88] *Rongrian chaokhao lae prachachon klai 1982*, 3.

[89] Manas, "*Rongrian chaokhao lae prachachon*," 230. It is unclear from when the BPP General Headquarters changed the name of project to the "BPP School Project" but it is most likely in the beginning of 2000.

northeastern border areas. Notably, fifteen out of eighteen schools were built in northern border provinces with various ethnic minority children.[90]

As discussed briefly before, increasing attention given to the highland minorities in the border areas derived from the renewed recognition of border defense against the historical backdrop of growing communist influence in Southeast Asia. From the beginning of BPP's civic actions in northern Thailand, both Suraphon and Charoenrit believed that keeping undocumented highland minorities within the Thai territory was like allowing the potential enemies to reside inside Thai neighborhoods. If these border people were well assimilated and consolidated within the Thai nation, they would willingly protect the country from the external enemies. If these jungle people were to remain strangers to the Thai nation-state, then they could be easily duped by the enemies and would become threats to the Thai national security from within.[91] The solution was clear: make them Thai people.

These initial schemes for launching the BPP schools in the remote border areas were rather ambiguously expressed among the BPP accounts and other research into the school projects. According to the fortieth and fiftieth anniversary volumes of the BPP School project, for instance, the project was conceived from its border defense operation in the northern border areas between 1954-1955. While the BPP patrol platoon was patrolling the border areas, they came to learn that the highland minority children of school age were illiterate and never had a

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[90] *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 84. Charoenrit states that the first year, BPP built 18 schools. Similarly, according to the Border Patrol Police General Headquarters report on the aid to the hill tribes possibly written in 1956-1957, there were 18 BPP schools in operation. However, it should be reminded that the number of schools listed in the first year could be different from the actual number of school that were operating unofficially and officially. These 18 schools included: 8 schools in Chiang Rai, 3 schools in Chiang Mai, 1 school in Mae Hong Son, 3 schools in Tak, 1 school in Prachinburi, 1 school in Sisakhet, and 1 school in Loei province. See *Aid Given to Hill Tribe People,* 10-13.

[91] Suraphon Chulaphram. "*Rongrian tochodo* [Border Patrol Police School]," in *Sisippi rongrian tamruat trawen chaidaen* [40 Years of the Border Patrol Police School], ed. Border Patrol Police Headquarters (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police General Headquarters, 1996), 432.

chance to receive formal education like other Thais in the lowlands. As the patrol members felt compassion for the deprivation of educational opportunities, the BPP began to teach these ethnic minority children and later extended to build a formal school for them in the remote border areas.[92]

In the beginning years of the school project, the BPP members in the remote villages taught children how to speak and read Thai language under the trees or in the backyards of the thatched houses. There was not enough budget to construct school buildings or to purchase desks or chairs and thus the BPP teachers and development platoons had to search for woods and rocks around the hills to build a classroom. Oftentimes, BPP teachers and villagers spent their own pocket money to buy nails and wire to build temporary classrooms.[93] To find other funds, either the Bangkok Headquarters or regional subdivisions advertised the BPP School projects to other governmental organizations to seek supplies and fringe funding. Sometimes, the BPP received donations from the private organizations or businesses.[94] Therefore, the official BPP School histories often emphasize it was the sacrifice and dedication of the BPP rather than the Thai government's support that contributed to the education of the highland minorities and remote villagers in the border areas.

The next task after building schools was to recruit the teachers. Since there were neither the people who were able to teach in such the remote areas nor the budget to hire regular teachers, the BPP members themselves became teachers. The qualifications of the police to be teacher, even though the target groups were illiterate in Thai language, was questionable and thus the

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[92] *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 37.; *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 99.

[93] *Rongrian chaokhao lae prachachon klai 1982*, 3.; *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 52, 84.

[94] The BPP Schools named after donors to build school buildings and other facilities. For the explanation of the school naming, see, for example, *Rongrian chaokhao lae prachachon klai 1982*, 5-6.; *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 44-46.

BPP Headquarters and the Ministry of Education jointly set up a training course for the BPP teachers starting in 1957.[95] In an opening speech to one of the trainings that had taken place in Phayathai School in Bangkok in 1958, the head of the Department of General Education (*krom samansueksa*) emphasized that the regular Thai curriculum or teaching skills were not appropriate for the BPP School since the majority of students in the School did not know Thai language and they were from different ethnic groups.[96] Therefore, the objectives for the training lied not only in the enhancement of instructional capabilities of the BPP teachers, but also finding the ways to narrow the gap between the Thai BPP teachers and border people, especially the highland minorities. Accordingly, in addition to producing a special curriculum for the BPP Schools by various teachers and professors from the formal Thai educational institutions, certain techniques to raise the target population's awareness to Thai nationhood were recommended: teaching the children songs to learn the meaning of three colors in the Thai national flag (*trai rong thong thai*), the five Buddhist precepts (*sin la ha*) and Thai national anthem.[97]

All of the BPP's efforts in building schools were temporarily halted by Sarit's coup in September 1957. Nevertheless, the BPP managed to overcome this critical moment by continuously undertaking, or even augmenting, the civic action projects. Notably, the number of BPP Schools almost tripled in the years following Sarit's coup. In addition, according to the then

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[95] *Rongrian chaokhao lae prachachon klai 1982*, 13.

[96] Department of General Education, *Kanprachum khru rongrian tamruat chaidaen duai khuam ruam mue rawang krom samansueksa lae krom tamruat na rongrian phayathai changwat phranakhon rawang wan thi 15-31 phruetsaphakhom 2501* [Meeting of the Border Police School Teachers with the Department of General Education and the Thai National Police Department in Phayathai School, Bangkok, during May 15-31, 1958], (na, 1958), *ko*.

[97] Bunruean Chaidet and Wichai Noiseni. "*Phleng samrap chan prathomsueksa* [Songs for the Elementary Education Level]," in *Kanprachum khru rongrian tamruat chaidaen duai khuam ruam mue rawang krom samansueksa lae krom tamruat na rongrian phayathai changwat phranakhon rawang wan thi 15-31 phruetsaphakhom 2501* [Meeting of the Border Police School Teachers with the Department of General Education and the Thai National Police Department in Phayathai School, Bangkok, during May 15-31, 1958], ed. Department of General Education (na, 1958),137-146.

interim commissioner of the BPP Headquarters Chan Angsuchot, the BPP had surveyed 95,721 people out of 300,000 highland minorities by May of 1958 through its extended civic actions in the remote border areas.[98] After the survey, the BPP started providing medical assistance and clothing for school children with the help from the Ministries of Health and Education, the Department of Public Welfare and the Thai Women's Society.[99]

In the early 1960s, the USOM began funding the BPP's civic actions through the Remote Area Security Development project. With USOM's wholehearted support, the BPP had constructed over 200 schools and distributed tools, seeds, breed animals, and medicines to the highland villagers from 1962 on. Along with the increase in the number of schools, the range of border areas that the BPP's school project had covered expanded from the remote areas to the central northern, northeastern Thailand.

At the same time, the royal family began to show its interest in the BPP's civic actions. The King donated money to build ten schools and thus the BPP named these schools "King Sponsored School (*chao pho luang upatham*)." Likewise, the Queen offered a budget to build two more schools for highland minority children, and these schools were named "Queen Sponsored School (*chao mae luang upatham*)."[100] Alongside the King and Queen's support for the BPP School, the Princess Mother Sangwan channeled various donations to build a total of

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[98] Chan, "*Kan chattang rongrian tamruat chaidaen*," 13. According to Gordon Young's report in 1961, an estimation of the number of highland minorities based on the known villages, average houses and persons per house, as of November 1960 is about 217,000. See Oliver Gordon Young, *The Hilltribes of Northern Thailand: A Socio-Ethnological Report* (Bangkok: USOM, May 1961), 113.

[99] Robert T. McMillan, *Report on Completion of Assignment: Community Development in Thailand* (Bangkok: USOM, November 1958), 20.

[100] The list of schools sponsored by the King and Queen can be found from: *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 62-67, 76-77.

140 BPP Schools and, moreover, she visited all these schools to attend opening ceremonies and distribute school supplies.[101]

Since the late 1970s, the number of visits the Princess Mother has made to the remote areas dropped virtually to zero. Nonetheless, as she had cared much about the BPP schools, so the Princess Mother ordered the daughter of the current king, Princess Sirindhorn, to visit the BPP Schools whenever she travels to the border areas on behalf of her.[102] Thus, Princess Sirindhorn has continued the works of the Princess Mother with the BPP and furthermore, she has initiated her own royal projects in the BPP Schools from 1980. At present, about 180 BPP Schools have been undertaken by the Princess Sirindhorn's royal project, which is titled, "Development of Children and Youth in the Remote Areas (*khrongkan kanphathana dek lae yawachon nai thin thurakandan*)," which encompasses total nine sub-projects in the fields of primary language education, nutrition, public health, higher education, natural resources and environment, vocational training and community development. I will discuss Princess Sirindhorn's royal projects in the BPP Schools again later in the chapter.

In sum, between January 1956 and May 2010, the BPP built 718 BPP Schools along the border areas of Thailand. Among them, 486 schools have been transferred to the Ministry of Education and local governments. 53 schools were closed as the border security deteriorated or the number of students was too small to sustain the school.[103] As of June 2013, the BPP

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[101] Sangwan is Princess Mother's given name. Her formal name and title is Her Royal Highness Princess Srinagarindra, the Princess Mother (*somdet phra sinakharindra boromratchachonani*). The Princess Mother had been widely known as the "Royal Patron to the Border Patrol Police" for the general Thai public and foreigners. See Layton, "Royal Mother from the Sky," 6-7, 19-20. See also *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 89.

[102] Winyu Bunyong, *Somdetya mae fa luang* [Princess Mother, the Royal Mother from the Sky]. (Bangkok: Chang Thong, 1996), 94.; *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 114.

[103] Ladawan Chatthai, *Kan hai kansueksa dek lae yawachon tam naewchaidaen lae thinthurakandan, rongrian tochodo* [Providing Education for the Children and Youth in the Border and Remote Areas, Border Patrol Police Schools], Internal report (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 2011), 3-4.

Headquarters was in charge of 177 BPP Schools, including two secondary schools, with a total of 22,895 students and 1,628 teachers.[104]

School of Nation-Building

The first priority of the BPP School project since the mid 1950s was teaching Thai language to the ethnic minorities, especially focusing on speaking and reading. As discussed before, the proficiency of Thai language was vital for the communication between the BPP and villagers to collect intelligence related to the border security. At the same time, the spread of "language-of-state" -- that is Thai, was a prerequisite for building a centralized state like James Scott states: "[o]f all state simplification, then, the imposition of a single official language may be the most powerful, and it is the precondition of many other simplification."[105] In other words, by enhancing the Thai literacy among the highland minorities, the BPP could build a feasible state authority as well as police surveillance in the remote areas. More importantly, learning and speaking Thai was propagandized as a prerequisite for obtaining a national identification to the highland minorities. Through the efforts of enhancing literacy, the BPP believed that if the highland minorities could speak Thai language, they would become gradually aware of where they belong. In this respect, language has become one of the clearest emblems of national identity.[106] In this regard, David Bradley asserts that accessible and regularized language education for the highland minorities would allow Thailand to gain the "gratitude and increased

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[104] From the internal report on the BPP Schools and students provided by Police Lieutenant Colonel Ladawan Chatthai via email on June 29, 2013.

[105] James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 72; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 84.

[106] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 40-41, 84-85.

loyalty of the traditional minorities; a better-informed and more easily administered population in various border regions; and greater unity in the country as a whole".[107]

In addition, language was considered a key to open a door first to civilized, modern Thailand. As one BPP officer noted, the short-term BPP civic action objectives lay on development, but in the long run, the action was "to make the hilltribes to be civilized [*sic*]."[108] Similarly, Chan Angsuchot affirms that teaching the Thai language would promote "the spread of modernization in the remote villages in the coming years… the new civilization (*arayatham*) process has not reached to these [highland minority] people" because they were illiterate in the Thai language.[109] A more meticulous instruction for introducing modern Thailand to the highland minorities through education was given by Police General Suraphon Chulaphram as following:

> When the BPP teachers befriended with the children, they should introduce the teaching and learning materials such as beautiful pictures of mountains, forests, streams, houses to their prospect students which may excite them. Then, the teachers present the pictures of Thai alphabets like *ko kai kho khai* and so on. Next, the pictures of King, Queen, Princess Mother and other royal family members, along with the pictures like motor vehicles, trains, airplanes, boats, roads, sea, beautiful sceneries of other provinces that the students had never seen before should be presented. *The hidden objective in these activities is to show the progress [khuam charoen] of Thailand.* Let the children become interested in those images first. Then their interests would make them be willing to learn Thai, and would induce them to go to school.[110]

In this way, the BPP teachers' instructions became an active initiative for persuading the highland minorities to step forward to be members of modern Thailand.

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[107] David Bradley, "Traditional Minorities and Language Education in Thailand," in *Papers in South-East Asian Linguistics No.9: Language Policy, language planning and sociolinguistics in South-East Asia*, ed. David Bradley (Pacific Linguistics Series A-67: Department of Linguistics; Australian National University, 1985), 99.

[108] Ministry of Interior, *The Border Patrol Police and Community Development Works* (na, 1962), 3. TIC. See also "Earlier Welfare Activities for Hill Tribes of border Provincial Police" (na, nd), 6. TIC.

[109] *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 56. (explanation is mine)

[110] *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 437. (translation, explanation and emphasis are mine)

The characterization of the School project as a pivotal step to the civilization and modernization of highland minorities has been reiterated among the civic action officers up to the present. One of the high-ranking officers in the civic action administration once mentioned to me that the role of the BPP Schools for the people in the remote border areas was like "opening a door" to the world beyond the hills.[111] Sometimes, when the ethnic minority villagers agreed to learn Thai language or to participate in the BPP's civic action programs, a sort of reward followed. In the early days of civic action programs, the BPP selected some villagers from different ethnic groups who could speak and read Thai, and took them to the government centers, train stations, airports, factories, and temples "to acquaint them with the ways of the world around them."[112] In short, the BPP believed that spread of Thai language would enable the communication between them and the highland minorities and furthermore, would raise the villagers' interest and respect towards modern Thailand. This objective has been considered to be the most fundamental step to move towards the development projects implementation in the BPP Schools.

Once the highland minorities' desire for modernizing their communities like other lowland Thai villages were communicated with the BPP teachers, then the School became the center of local development, as the Princess Sirindhorn states the following in 2007:

> Even in nongovernmental schools, we should consider that school is the place where knowledgeable persons are in charge. Therefore it is the base for development of all kinds of knowledge fundamental for lives. The teachers are agent of change in raising life quality of students and communities. [113]

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[111] Personal communication with Police Lieutenant Colonel Ladawan Chatthai, January 21, 2011.

[112] Layton. *Thai BPP*, p.29.; See, also, Sudchit Bhinyoying. "Hill Tribe Boys Come to Town" in *Bangkok Post*, May 4, 1971.

[113] Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Projects, *Development of Children and Youth in the Remote Areas,* A Lecture by Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, in the Sino-Thai Seminar of "Empowering Youth: Cooperation in Building Basic Quality of Life for the Future" Kasikorn Bank, Bangkok, Thailand, March 27, 2007 (Bangkok: Amarin Printing and Publishing Company, 2009), 5.

The USOM officials who worked in Thailand in the 1960s also had a similar perception. To justify its financial aid to the Remote Area Security Development programs, the USOM states that the agency supports the BPP's remote area schools because they "serve as local development centers and as information collection points."[114] In short, both accounts from the Princess and USOM emphasize the role of BPP School as a development agency in the remote areas that could offset the lack of governmental organizations related to rural development programs.[115] At the same time, the School was the center for spreading the development imperatives to the marginalized. By introducing Thai educational curriculums, new agricultural techniques, medicines, and modern ways of life to the students and their parents, the BPP School was expected to open a door to modern Thailand for this allegedly un-modernized population.

The final implication of the BPP School project can be found in the process of determining the new school locations, which has been further elaborated from the earlier regulation. Since the early 1980s, there have been three conditions to determine the locations of new BPP Schools. First, villagers from the remote areas request that the BPP build a school in their villages for the convenience of students who cannot travel far to go to schools in town. Second, some locations are determined for strategic purposes and thus depend upon the BPP's operations for defending border security. Last, other Thai authorities, especially the royal family, gives an order to build

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[114] USOM, AD/P, *Thai/Aid Projects, Dollar Costs, Purposes, and Descriptions FY 1966, FY 1967, FY 1968* (Bangkok: USOM, 1969), 3.

[115] Princess Sirindhorn remarks on the role of BPP teachers as following: "…actually those [BPP] teachers, being in the areas all the time, can help figure out how to transfer new ideas or knowledge to solve specific problems. In this way they assist the agricultural extension officers who cannot be in the areas all the time to do their work more effectively. Staying in school with the children all the time, the teachers can transfer knowledge anytime.": The Office of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects, *Development of Children and Youth in the Remote Areas*, 6. (Explanation added)

schools in certain areas where they feel the necessity of expanding formal education.[116] These three conditions denote that the School has not only been the educational facility for the highland minority children but also the operational base for the BPP's civic actions and royal projects.

In the Schools, the BPP carries out its key civic actions like the medical services and occupational training in new agricultural and husbandry techniques in addition to teaching children. In this way, the BPP teachers could build a friendly relationship with the villagers and that close relationship would bring more intelligence to the Schools, which is another central mission of the BPP. When the teachers are informed about the security-related problems in nearby villages, they relay the news to the area commanders. Then the commander of the BPP regional subdivisions sends the public relations team to survey the conditions of communities and people and also to make acquaintance with the villagers. Soon the BPP development team constructs a school building and accommodations for the BPP teachers. Once the school building is prepared and the teachers begin teaching, the BPP can stay in the village without suspicion from the villagers. In this way, the BPP School becomes an essential operational base for guarding national security in the frontiers, and the center of all the BPP's civic action activities that I have discussed before. In other words, the BPP School is not merely an educational institution but more so the development for security program package designed for remote villagers.

This is the reason why the number of BPP schools corresponds to the political and security conditions of each region. [117] The Chart 1 shows the number of BPP Schools by year and region in the period of 1956-2006. As shown in the chart, northern (Region 3) and northeastern (Region

[116] Personal Communication, June 23, 2010.

[117] The BPP divides its areas of responsibility in to four regions. Region 1 is central Thailand; Region 2 is northeastern Thailand; Region 3 is northern Thailand; and Region 4 is southern Thailand.

2) regions have maintained the highest numbers of BPP School, compared to central (Region 1) and southern (Region 4) regions until the late 1970s. The concentration on the north and northeast implies that these two regions had been considered the most security-sensitive areas from the beginning of BPP civic actions in the mid 1950s. In a similar vein, a gradual increase in the number of Schools in southern Thailand since the early 1980s reveals the BPP's increasing efforts to expand civilian counterinsurgency programs to suppress the region's unrest.[118] In particular, it is noteworthy that after 1957, the number of Schools jumped dramatically. The rapid increase of School numbers after 1957 illustrates the BPP's transformation into an agent of civic actions to secure its institutional survival from Sarit's military regime, as discussed earlier.

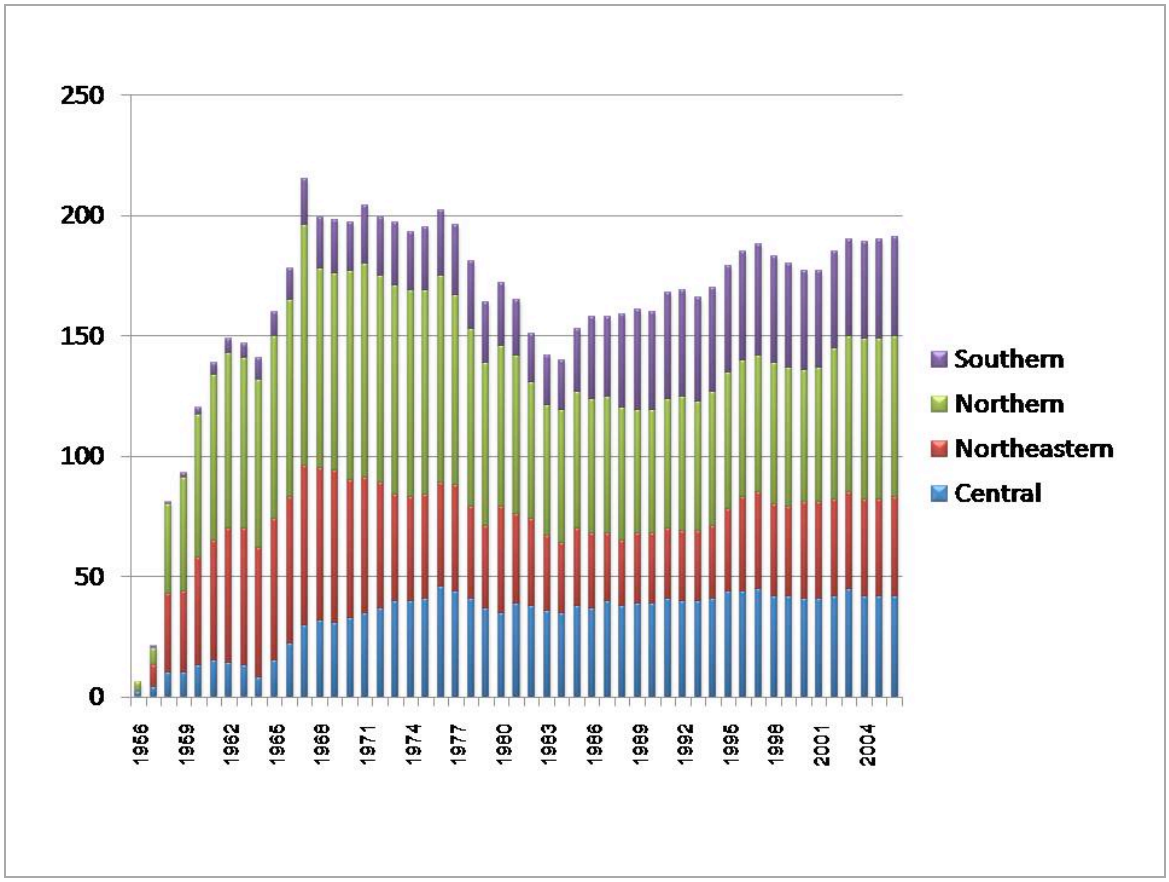
The correspondence between the Thai political conditions and BPP Schools is much clearer in Chart 2, which shows the number of newly built schools by year. There are three outstanding hikes in the School numbers in Chart 2: that is 1958, 1967, and 1985. The increase in 1958 is derived from the impact of Sarit's coup that eventually forced the BPP to shift its operation focus to civic actions. The second hike in 1967 generally reflects the BPP's expansion of civic actions from mid-1965 to counter the Thai communist's armed struggle from increasing. It is also noteworthy that a majority of new schools were built in the northern region after the outbreak of local insurgencies by the highland minorities, often called as "Red Meo [Hmong] War" in 1967.[119] However, in the following year, the number of Schools dropped rapidly in the northern region. Even though the Thai army and BPP attempted to suppress the local insurgencies and bring peace and order back to the region from early in 1967, thirteen BPP Schools in the north

[118] See the detailed explanation on the civilian counterinsurgency application in the southern Thailand from Matt Wheeler, "Legitimacy, Counterinsurgency, and the Legacy of Order 66/2523," *Rian Thai*, Vol.9 (2009), 205-213.

[119] For a detailed description about the insurgencies between 1967-68, see Race, "War in Northern Thailand," 85-112.

had to be closed within a year due to the uncertain security conditions.[120] Finally, in 1985, the number of newly built school increased considerably along with the expansion of Princess Sirindhorn's royal project with the BPP.

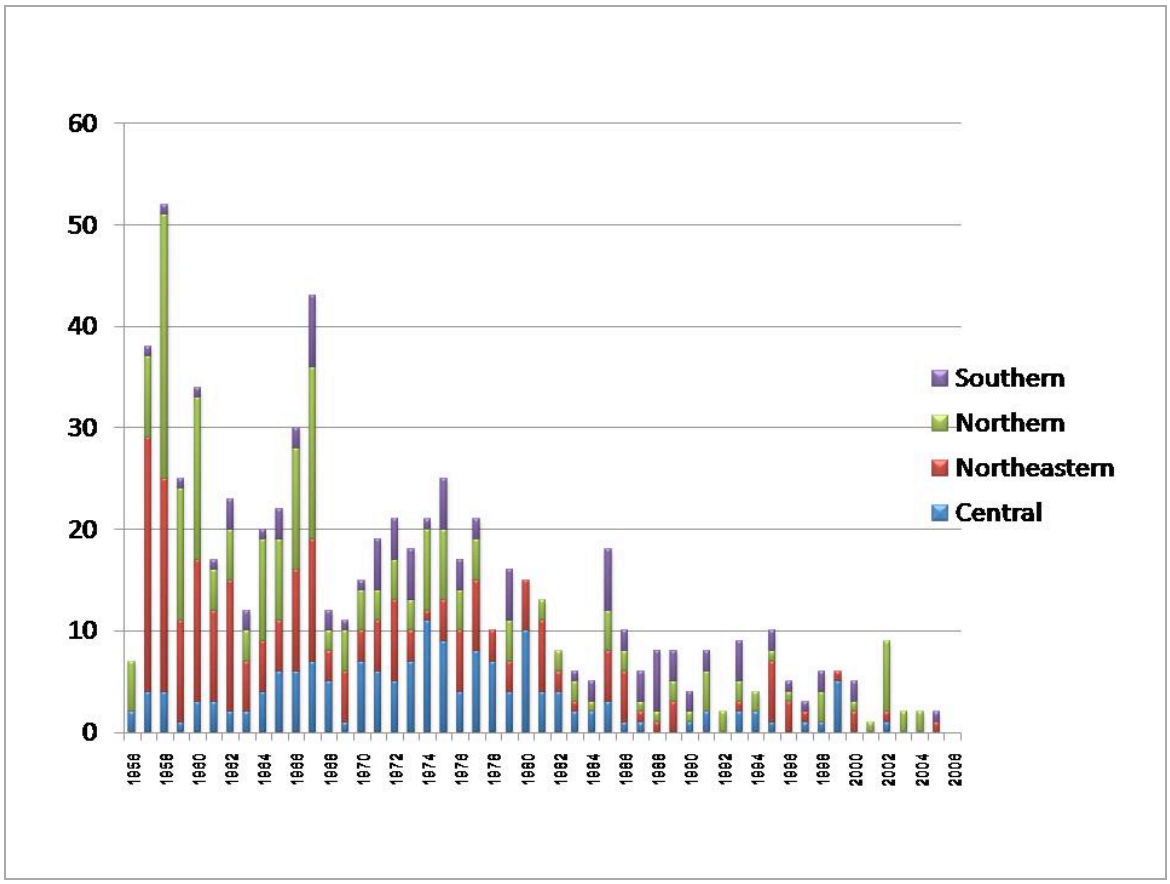
Chart 1. Number of BPP Schools, 1956-2006 [121]



[120] These 13 BPP Schools were dispersed in Chiang Rai (4 schools), Phayao (6 schools), Nan (2 schools) and Mae Hong Son (1 school) provinces and were operating in the areas where the clash between the government forces and Hmong took place: See the list of closed schools from, *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 464.

[121] The number of schools between the year 1956-1981 is my estimate compiled from the list of schools with the years of official opening in the 40 Years Anniversary and 50 Years Anniversary volumes: *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 448-464; *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 353-357, 364. The numbers of schools between 1982-2006 are from the official report on the BPP School Project from the Border Patrol Police General Headquarters in Bangkok.

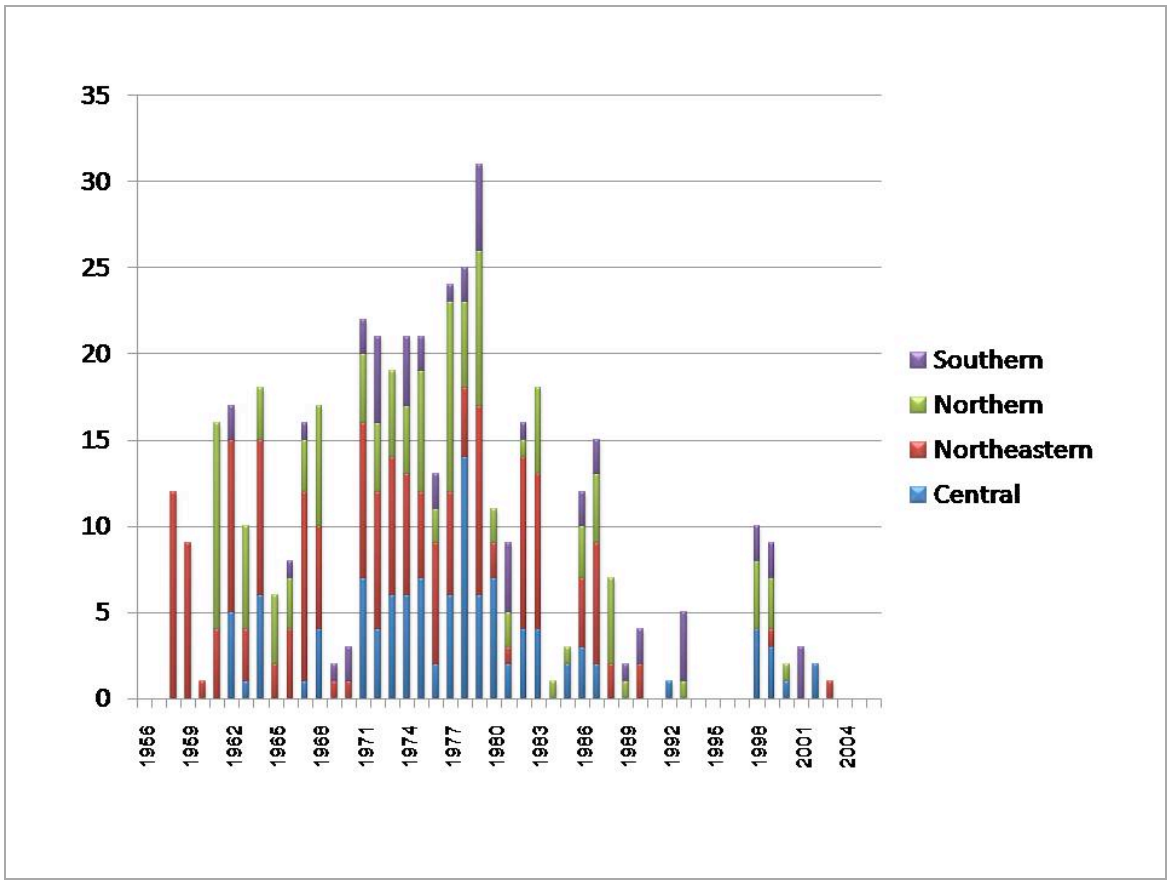
Chart 2. New BPP Schools built by year, 1956-2006



The last chart on the number of BPP Schools transferred to the Ministry of Education presents the leveling of insurgency and security problems in each region. The transfer of BPP School to the Ministry of Education must meet certain conditions stipulated by the Ministry. In any case, it is mandatory that the security and welfare conditions of the villages surrounding the School should have been stabilized so that the teachers employed by the Ministry of Education could safely reside and implement their work in the area.[122] Therefore, the number of transfers symbolizes the security and development conditions of the areas.

[122] According to the recent announcement about the criteria for transferring, the educational institutions should have been operated at least 5 years before transferring to the Ministry; the institution should be farther than 5 kilometers from the nearest school; the security condition of surrounding villages where the school locates must be safe and

Chart 3: BPP Schools Transferred to the Ministry of Education, 1956-2006



The Chart 3 shows that the largest number of School transfers occurred in the northeastern region, particularly between the 1970s and early 1980s. With the concentrated efforts from the Thai military and the U.S. governments to counter communist insurgency in the northeast, the region has progressed considerably to the extent that they do not need the BPP to build schools. The roads are paved so that the regions became more accessible for ordinary government

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stable; the students who attends the school must be more than 120 children; the school ground should be bigger than 6 rai and; the instructors in the schools may transfer to the Ministry if they meet the basic qualification. See Phonnipha Limpaphayom, *Prakat samnakngan khanakammakan kansueksa khanphuenthan rueang lakken kanrap-on sathansueksa chak nuaingan-uen khaosangkat samnak-ngan khanakammakan kansueksa khanphuenthan, phoso 2549* [Office of the Basic Education Commission announcement on the standard for receiving other educational institution under the supervision of Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2006] (na, 2006). 3.; and also from Personal communication, June 23, 2011.

employees. It is also confirmed from Chart 2 that the newly built BPP Schools in the northeastern region has declined since the 1970s when the transfer of schools began to increase. On the other hand, the large number of transfers also means lower presence of the BPP. Since the northeastern region became a stronghold for the Thai military during the Cold War, the BPP's civic actions were relatively less developed in this region. By contrast, the northern region has been a central base for the BPP's civic actions and police work since the formation of BPP to present owing to the region's mountainous environments and presence of the largest number of highland minorities.

To sum up, the above analysis on the number of BPP Schools explicitly tells the essential role of Schools as a base for operating civilian counterinsurgency centered on the development for security. More precisely, whether upon the villagers' requests, royal orders or BPP's own necessity, the BPP built schools in order to facilitate its civic actions and intelligence tasks for the defense of national security in the border areas. In this sense, the BPP School project not only aimed at expanding formal educational opportunities for the border population but also intended to build an outpost for implementing border security missions that had greatly contributed to strengthening the Thai national security state from the margins during the Cold War.

Overall, the BPP Schools have played multiple roles in modernizing and assimilating the highland minorities by teaching Thai language; by introducing Thai modernization; by propagating the development imperatives; and by assuring the border security with the presence of state agents. Essentially, all these activities in the BPP Schools were to accomplish one ultimate goal: that is, to build a "human border" along the territorial border.[123] As the unit operated in the frontiers of Thailand, the BPP was aware that the territorial boundary over the

[123] While the author was interviewing over a hundred BPP teachers, building a "human barrier" or "human border" was a recurring theme in their responses to the School objectives.

mountains and rivers were porous and even meaningless to the border people. Besides, those hill people inhibited a poor, "uncivilized" -- as they claimed, condition that could supposedly provide a suitable haven for external enemies like communists during the Cold War period.[124] Worse yet, the highland minorities who encircled the northern borders of Thailand could be either friends or enemies due to their lack of a sense of belonging to the nation.

Therefore, modernization through development of these highland minority people was imperative to build a modern, united Thailand. On the one hand, education and sanitation were considered fundamental elements to raise these marginalized people up to the level of Thai citizens.[125] At the same time, the BPP's dedicated services to enhance the villagers' educational qualification and welfare were expected to win the trust from them. On the other hand, the everyday practice of the Thai language, culture, tradition, and modern way of living in the School was expected to gradually bring the highland minorities under the influence of Thai authority so that they could become members of the Thai nation. Nevertheless, this integration process does not necessarily take place in a horizontal order. To put it simply, the BPP taught about the superiority and progress of the Thai nation and the ethnic minority students were to follow their teacher's instruction. This vertical relationship was the core of the integration -- or assimilation, process in the BPP Schools. Indeed, the crucial importance of BPP Schools in the Cold War nation-building process lies in its encouragement, if not enforcement, of the highland minorities to communicate with modern Thailand by speaking Thai language and by accepting the Thai superiority.

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[124] Ministry of Interior, *The Border Patrol Police and Community Development Works* (na, 1962), 17. TIC.

[125] Ministry of Interior, *The Border Patrol Police and Community Development Works* (na, 1962), 18. TIC.

Despite the Thai authorities' endeavor to consolidate the Thai nation from the border areas, their attempts had been restricted in the "border of Thainess" that rather reluctantly accepts the minorities inside the geo-body but not well into the domain of Thainess.[126] The Thai authorities still regard the ethnic minorities as subjects which demand care and instruction. In other words, even if the highland minorities have accepted the development imperatives taught by the BPP and other Thai authorities, they still remain students of Thai modernization. They cannot progress as much as other Thais do. A constant care and assistance must be provided to these wild people as was explicitly disclosed in the Princess Sirindhorn's lecture in 1990:

> In the past ten years, there occurred many changes in Thailand as we can see clearly and easily for ourselves…. Even though our missions exists far away from this progress, but we could not avoid the impacts so it is not true to say the impacts of progress are all bad. *There are good and bad impacts and this made me think what we should do more for the people that we are protecting and taking care of in terms of knowledge, ability and education.* When the country progress forward, it will give various opportunities to the people to develop for themselves and conditions for more. *The country opened the opportunities for the progress but we have to think carefully that people under our protection are able to develop further along the opportunities given for them or not*.[127]

Without difficulties, I had numerous opportunities to observe the way in which the highland minorities were treated like children by the lowland Thai people. In the winter seasons, various governmental and nongovernmental organizations from major towns donate winter jackets, socks, gloves, blankets and medicines to the BPP to distribute to the villagers in the provinces. In one of the charity events that I attended, the representative of the donation group was invited to speak to the Lisu villagers. The representative brought a first-aid kit to the podium that would be distributed to the villagers and began to explain in northern Thai dialect about how to use the contents in the box. The representative took out a bandage and explained, "[T]his is not for

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[126] Thongchai, *Siam Mapped*, 170.

[127] Quotes from Princess Sirindhorn's lecture on April 27, 1990, in the seminar for BPP school principals: *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 123. (emphasis added)

decorating a face. It is to cover the wounds." Then the representative took out an antiseptic solution bottle and said, "[D]o not eat! You cannot eat!" The representative's friendly gesture made other donors and BPP commanders laugh but none of the villagers responded to her.[128]

Similarly, I heard one repetitive complaint about the BPP community projects that illuminates the above-mentioned way of demonstrating the Thai ascendancy over the ethnic minorities when I was conducting field research. Basically, the School provides everything for the students and their parents, encompassing the school uniforms, textbooks, pencils, and milk, and sometimes, free accommodation for the students who live far away from the school. Therefore, a number of BPP teachers and civic action officials that I had interviewed said that the villagers actually became increasingly dependent on the School because: "[t]he villagers get everything free from the school so why would they bother to find things for themselves?" The villager's heavy reliance on the BPP's free services becomes more obvious when the BPP needs to transfer the School to the Ministry of Education. Oftentimes, the villagers do not want the BPP leave the school and village because the regular schools under the Ministry would cost more for them.[129] In this sense, one of the BPP teachers' criticisms on the role of BPP Schools in community development is very telling. The interviewee said: "the villagers are treated like a child. The School gives everything free and in that way, the villagers lose opportunity to develop for themselves."[130]

As discussed before, the BPP and PARU expect that the ethnic minority children would become a "bridge" between them and the highland villagers, once they win the hearts and

[128] Research notes, November 27, 2010.

[129] Personal Communication, June 23, 2010.

[130] Personal Communication, July 5, 2010.

attention of these children in the beginning years of its civic action projects among the highland minorities. Former commissioner Chan said in 1958 that it was easier for the BPP to deal with the children rather than the adults, like the Thai saying goes: "young sparrows are easy to tame, old sparrows are difficult to tame (*mai on dat ngai mai ke dat yak*)," and thus teaching the children would allow the BPP to get better results in its civic action.[131] However, even the mature ethnic minorities and mountain people were treated like children due to their otherness. Oftentimes, those villagers are presented to the Thai people as living evidence of exoticism and primitiveness, and have been widely utilized as a tourist attraction in northern Thailand not only for foreigners, but also for the Thai people.[132] All these anecdotes reveal that the notion of backwardness and immaturity of highland minorities still exists among the Thai authorities and also the BPP as well, in order for them to assure the superiority of the Thai over other ethnics.[133] In this respect, the BPP's civic action programs and the School project had contributed to maintaining the hierarchical ethnic relationship and also the sense of distance between the center and periphery throughout the Cold War and up to the present day.

In conclusion, the BPP's civic actions and its school building project was intended to build a united Thai nation-state by safeguarding the territorial border and by securing the loyalty of border population that would eventually constitute a "human border" at the Thailand's international territorial boundary. This human border was expected to be far more influential than the territorial border, because the borderlines over the jungles and rivers are not enforceable for transnational migrants and external enemies. The most workable and efficient way to protect

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[131] Chan, "*Kan chattang rongrian tamruat chaidaen*," 14.

[132] See, for example, Hayami Yoko, "Negotiating Ethnic Representation between Self and Other: The Case of Karen and Eco-tourism in Thailand," *Southeast Asian Studies* 44:3 (December 2006), 385-409.

[133] Thongchai, "Others Within," 52.

the Thailand's territorial border is to have the people who are aware of their sense of belonging to Thai nation at the frontiers of Thailand so that they can expel any deception and infiltrations from the external enemy. At the same time, the other underpinning of Cold War nation-building is maintaining the ascendancy of the Thai over other ethnicities, and Bangkok over peripheries. In this regard, a human border that the BPP and royal family has constructed through the civic actions and the School projects vividly demonstrates the hierarchical nature of Thai nation-building during the Thai Counterinsurgency Era and to present.

Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed the development and expansion of BPP's civic actions from the northern remote border areas to the rural provinces during the Thai Counterinsurgency Era. Overall, this examination reveals that first, the expansion and development of civilian counterinsurgency campaigns by the BPP and royal family were to circumscribe the demands of divergent interest groups, including ethnic minorities. Second, the royal family's active role in developing the BPP civic actions allowed them to appropriate the U.S.-Thai governments-sponsored rural development programs and merge them into the royal projects. Third, the BPP and royal family's nation-building contributed to reinvigorating the extant hierarchical relations among the ethnics, and their attempts of modernizing the highland minorities established a tutelary relationship between them. In this respect, I define the key agenda of Cold War nation-building undertaken by the BPP and royal family was the building of a "human border" at Thailand's territorial boundary. By constructing a human border constituted by the border people who possess their loyalty and sense of belonging towards the Thai nation and the monarchy, the BPP's civic actions were to defend the modern Thai nation-state under the royal patronage.

Through this process, the Thai monarchy could construct the institutional infrastructures for pushing forward their nation-building which eventually endowed them with political authority, legitimacy and popularity as well.

Chapter 6. Expanding the Cold Warriors Network

In this chapter, I will survey the PARU's history and its military counterinsurgency programs to understand the construction of an executive agency infrastructure for the monarchy's nation-building project. Compared to the BPP, PARU had been more closely working with the CIA. After his successful coup, Sarit merged the BPP and PARU into one organization and also permitted the PARU to collaborate with the Thai military in the Indochinese wars. Throughout the years of assisting the CIA's covert operations in Thailand and Laos, PARU established a close relationship with the young Thai military officers who soon came to constitute the key members of royalist elites from the 1970s. In this regard, PARU's transformation from the CIA's foot soldiers to the monarchy's security force in the mid-1970s provided crucial sources of elite networks and executive agencies to the royal family.

"Cork in the Bottle": The Secret War in Laos

> Senator Kennedy asked the President [Eisenhower] which he would prefer: coalition with the Communists to form a government in Laos or intervening through SEATO. The President replied that if would be far better to intervene through SEATO and referred to the example of the coalition with the Communists which was set up in China at the time General Marshall was sent there. The President pointed out that the unilateral intervention on the part of the United States would be a last desperate effort to save Laos, stating that the loss of Laos would be the loss of the "cork in the bottle" and the beginning of the loss of most of the Far East.
>
> [Conversation Between President-Elect Kennedy and President Eisenhower, January 19, 1961] [1]

Zachary Karabell characterizes the war in Laos as one in which "Laos was Vietnam before there was a Vietnam."[2] Many scholars agree that Laos had a strategic, geopolitical importance to the intensifying Vietnamese conflict, and that the U.S. intervened in Laos mainly to block the Ho Chi Minh trail and protect South Vietnam's borders.[3] Additionally, the war in Laos represented a prelude to the Vietnam War by its destructive patterns of aerial bombardment and local guerrilla

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[1] "Notes of Conversation Between President-Elect Kennedy and President Eisenhower, Washington, January 19, 1961," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963: Laos Crisis, Volume XXIV,* by the United States Department of State (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1994), 21. (Explanation added). [hereafter, *FRUS 1961-1963 Laos Crisis*]

[2] Zachary Karabell, *Architects of Intervention: the United States, the Third World, and the Cold War, 1946-1962* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999), 206.

[3] For example, John Prados, *Presidents' Secret Wars: CIA and Pentagon Covert Operations from World War II Through the Persian Gulf* (Chicago: I.R. Dee, 1996), 261.

fighting. Strictly speaking, these two conflicts were not wholly identical.[4] In this context, while it was the U.S. government that launched the secret war in Laos at the beginning phase of the Vietnam War, equal attention should be given to the regional political realignment which was a result of the decolonization process, and the role played by neighboring countries like Thailand, in providing bases and armed forces to the U.S., which ultimately contributed to transforming the national liberation struggle into the Cold War tragedies in Indochina.

Washington's suspicion of Laos' ambiguous political orientation began when the Lao Issara movement gradually split into three groups -- communists, neutralist, and rightwing groups. In August 1950, Prince Souphanouvong formed the Pathet Lao and subsequently Prince Souvanna Phouma became the prime minister of Laos in November 1951. During the First Indochinese War, Vietminh forces overran the Vietnamese countryside and swept across Laos, finally reaching Luang Phrabang in March 1953. Vietminh installed the procommunist Pathet Lao in Sam Neua, a provincial capital of Huaphan, that same month. In October 1953, France granted Laos its independence.

During the Geneva Conference, held between April-July 1954, representatives from the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Soviet Union and China declared an "Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities" on July 20, 1954 with France and Ho Chi Minh against the U.S. and Southern Vietnamese government's opposition.[5] The U.S. declared itself dissatisfied with both the Agreement and Final Declaration from the Soviet Union and China, and subsequently issued a unilateral declaration that would become the basis for the U.S. political and military support for

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[4] Fred Branfman, "Presidential War in Laos," in *Laos: War and Revolution*, ed. Nina S. Adams and Alfred W. McCoy (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 213.

[5] For a detailed explanation on the characteristics of final declaration in the 1954 Geneva Conference, see, for example, Asselin, "Choosing Peace," 97-100.

the anticommunist Vietnamese government.[6] At least until the Vietminh forces overran the Lao-Vietnamese border in 1953, the U.S. foreign policy was rather passive in intervening the political chaos in Laos. When it failed to restrain the Soviet-Chinese communist bloc's support for Vietminh in the 1954 Geneva Conference, however, the U.S. perceived the Soviet-Chinese bloc intended to secure Indochina as an outpost for expanding communist influence in the region.

In this context, the U.S. foreign policymakers came to reevaluate the strategic importance of Laos. Consequently, the U.S. began to intervene directly in the civil war with the renewed goal of transforming Laos into a buffer state between communist and non-communist forces. In August 1954, the National Security Council of the U.S. government resolved that it would "make every possible effort, not openly inconsistent with the U.S. government position as to the Geneva armistice agreements, to defeat communist subversion and influence and to maintain and support friendly non-communist governments in Southeast Asia."[7] Accordingly, the Eisenhower administration began to pour economic aid in Laos from 1955. When Secretary of the State John Foster Dulles visited the SEATO inaugural meeting held in Bangkok in the same year, he made a special trip to Vientiane and commanded a military buildup to strengthen the Royal Lao Army. More than ninety percent of nearly fifty million dollars of foreign aid to Laos therefore flowed into military buildup and it paid for the entire military budget of the 25,000-man Royal Lao Army.[8]

Although Pathet Lao, the leftwing party of Laos under Prince Souphanouvong, did not officially control provincial governments, the Eisenhower administration viewed the existence of

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[6] David Marr, "Vietnam: Harnessing the Whirlwind," in *Asia - The Winning of Independence: The Philippines, India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaya*, ed. Robin Jeffrey (London: Macmillan Press, 1981), 205.

[7] Karabell, *Architects of Intervention*, 209.

[8] Karabell, *Architects of Intervention*, 209.

this procommunist group with great concern. Rather than directly deploying its forces, Eisenhower recommended that Senator Kennedy utilize the regional organizations as a façade of intervention, particularly when approaching the Lao issues, as shown above.[9] Subsequently, the SEATO agreement was enacted and it allowed the signatory states like the U.S. and Thailand to commit to defending other protocol nations, including Laos, from a possible communist invasion.[10] However, neutralist Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma undermined the U.S. and Thai governments' efforts to debilitate communists, as he agreed to form a coalition government with Pathet Lao in November 1957. Prince Souphanouvong soon agreed to integrate Pathet Lao troops into the Royal Lao Army in February 1958, which greatly panicked the U.S. government.

Around this time, the CIA, discovered a pro-Western Lao military general Phoumi Nosavan, who seemed to be suitable for assisting its foreign policy implementations in Laos.[11] It is unclear whether the CIA recruited Phoumi because he was a relative of the then Thai premier Sarit, but from the time when the U.S. government began making a covert deal with him, they were well aware of the close relationship between Phoumi and Sarit.[12] In a parliamentary election held in February 1958, therefore, the CIA secretly funded Phoumi Nosavan's new conservative coalition and this group finally succeeded in ousting Prince Souvanna Phouma that August. With the help of the CIA, Phoumi Nosavan finally seized power in April 1960.[13]

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[9] "Notes of Conversation Between President-Elect Kennedy and President Eisenhower, Washington, January 19, 1961," in *FRUS 1961-1963 Laos Crisis*, 19-25.

[10] McCoy, Alfred W. "America's Secret War in Laos, 1955-1975," in *A Companion to the Vietnam War*, eds. Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 285.

[11] Blaufarb, *Counterinsurgency Era*, 141.

[12] Interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 14, 2013. Bill Lair added that his brother-in-law Willis Bird knew Phoumi well.

[13] McCoy, "America's Secret War in Laos," 286.

On August 9, 1960, Kong Le, a captain from the Royal Lao Army, led a coup and brought Souvanna Phouma back to power. Frustrated by the neutralists' victory, Phoumi allied with a Hmong leader Touby Lyfoung. The Hmong was one of the ethnic minority groups that constituted about eight percent of Laos' population and soon it became one of the major constituents of Phoumi's rightwing groups who opposed Kong Le's coup in 1960. From the fall of 1960, Hmong people began to draw military supplies from Phoumi Nosavan and his local supporter, notably Prince Boun Oum Champassak and CIA.[14] With the support from Hmong groups and other CIA-backed sources, Phoumi's forces marched on Vientiane and forced Kong Le and Pathet Lao to flee from the capital city in late 1960. Kong Le's troops retreated to the north and captured the Plaine des Jarres (Plain of Jars, PDJ) in Xieng Khouang province in January 1961. At this point, the North Vietnamese volunteer forces joined to assist Kong Le and the Pathet Lao troops. Simultaneously, the Soviet Union began to transport aircraft to the PDJ, now a major Pathet Lao base in Xieng Khouang plateau, to support these leftwing groups, eliciting intense protest from the U.S. government.[15]

In response to the growing tension in Laos, in 1954 the U.S. government launched covert operations to thwart the neutralist expansion. In this process, the CIA played a critical role in supplying trained forces to Phoumi's rightwing groups, particularly the Hmong ethnic groups under the Royal Lao Army Colonel Vang Pao. To train the Hmong paramilitary troops and building strategic posts for clandestine operations, the CIA mobilized the Thai PARU that was specially qualified for parachuting into isolated areas and conducting anti-guerrilla warfare. Before Kong Le's coup in 1960, the CIA had already dispatched the PARU's pathfinder unit to

[14] Prados, *Presidents' Secret Wars*, 266.

[15] McCoy, "America's Secret War in Laos," 286. Plain of Jars or Plaine des Jarres has been widely known with is codename PDJ.

the Lao border to establish strategic posts in Vientiane, Paksan on Lao side, and Mukdahan in Thai side across Savannakhet. From these posts, PARU could freely cross the border.[16] From early in 1961, the CIA dispatched the PARU members to Laos to form and train a Hmong guerrilla army under the command of Vang Pao. According to a memorandum from General Edward Lansdale to General Maxwell Taylor, President Kennedy's military advisor around mid-1961, 99 PARU personnel were introduced covertly to assist 18 CIA men and Special Forces in training and technical tasks, so that the CIA's large-scale operations possible to be handled by a few Americans in Laos.[17] When the CIA began mobilizing these Hmong guerrilla troops from the early 1960, the PARU literally fought with Hmong soldiers to curb Pathet Lao and Kong Le.

While the preparation for the CIA's covert operations in Laos was well underway during the Eisenhower administration, President John F. Kennedy came to office in early 1961. The Kennedy administration's perspective on the ongoing civil war in Laos was not very different from that of the Eisenhower administration. Following the line of President Eisenhower who had declared the "New Look Policy" to reduce conventional military buildup and expenditures in the early 1960, the then U.S. ambassador to Thailand Kenneth Landon submitted a paper titled "A New Look at Laos," prepared for the new administration in February 1961. In this paper, Landon stated: "[T]he United States wants no war, no appeasement and no collapse in Laos. To prevent all this we need a different kind of commitment and a radically new sort of action".[18] Accordingly, the Kennedy administration transformed seemingly passive intervention into a

[16] Conboy, *Shadow War*, 59.

[17] Neil Sheehan et al., *The Pentagon Papers,* 132-133.

[18] Karabell, *Architects of Intervention*, 216.

different kind of anticommunist campaign that would soon come to be known as counterinsurgency.

In short, the Kennedy administration's counterinsurgency program placed greater emphasis on rural warfare and arming rural villagers to fight communist insurgents. A former station chief of the CIA in Vientiane, named Douglas Blaufarb, praises the shift to counterinsurgency strategies in Laos by remarking that it intends an "engagement of people in defending newfound improvements in the quality of life and hopes for further progress along the same lines."[19] Nevertheless, the transformation from Eisenhower's conventional and political warfare to Kennedy's counterinsurgency program meant neither the cessation of military intervention nor the withdrawal of CIA's covert operations. By contrast, the number of mobile special force training units called White Star teams that had been dispatched to Laos in the fall of 1960 increased greatly in the first half of 1960s under the Kennedy administration. In addition, the USAID's backing for Vang Pao's guerrilla force and the CIA covert operations via rural development program expanded dramatically during 1963-1965.[20] As the number of Vietminh forces grew larger in Laos, Kennedy authorized the CIA to increase the size of the Hmong army and by the end of 1963, the number of this ethnic soldiers reached 20,000.[21]

One of the most urgent policy goals to achieve in the early years of Kennedy administration was to strengthen the anticommunist frontlines among Laos, Thailand and South Vietnam that could effectively counter the foreseeable collapse of Lao regional governments by the Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese forces. As a solution, the then President's Deputy Special Assistant for

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[19] Blaufarb, *Counterinsurgency Era*, 128-129.

[20] Prados, *Presidents' Secret Wars*, 292.

[21] William M. Leary, foreword to *Covert Ops: the CIA's Secret War in Laos*, by James E. Parker, Jr. (New York: St. Martin's Paperbacks, 1997), xiv.

National Security Affairs W.W. Rostow recommended Kennedy to "vigorously encourage cooperation among Phoumi, Sarit and [Ngo Dinh] Diem on a substantial basis to mop up and to hold southern Laos if the Pathet Lao should resume an overt offensive."[22] As recommended, this Southeast Asian anticommunist trio consisting of Phoumi, Sarit and Diem was to become a key mediator between the local military and the U.S. government because their intervention to Lao affairs would reduce the American's visible presence over the regional politics. However, each regional ally had critical shortcomings that could possibly undermine the general U.S. foreign policy in Laos. Following up his first memo of recommendation, Rostow pointed out that this trio was the "three fundamental weakness we face" because of "Diem's preoccupations, Sarit's uncertainties, and Phoumi's incompetence."[23] Gradually, the U.S. government came to rely on Sarit because Diem could not spare enough forces to counter the Pathet Lao invasion even to South Vietnamese borders and Phoumi's leadership and ability both as a Lao military commander and the internal collaborator to the American secret operations were viewed as unreliable.[24] By contrast, Sarit would readily commit to the American actions in Laos as long as he was assured that the U.S. would assist him in strengthening the Thai army, which in turn also heightened the geopolitical importance of Thailand in carrying out the American's Cold War in Southeast Asia.[25]

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[22] "Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow) to President Kennedy, Washington August 4, 1961," in *FRUS 1961-1963 Laos Crisis,* 344. (explanation added).

[23] "Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow) to President Kennedy, Washington, August 17, 1961," in *FRUS 1961-1963 Laos Crisis,* 371.

[24] "Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Laos, Washington, July 18, 1961, 9:35 p.m.," in *FRUS 1961-1963 Laos Crisis,* 304-305; *FRUS 1961-1963 Laos Crisis,* 371.

[25] *FRUS 1961-1963 Laos Crisis,* 344.; and *FRUS 1961-1963 Laos Crisis,* 371-372.

As the first step to intensifying their anticommunist protest against the Pathet Lao and Vietminh, the U.S. government and Sarit attempted to militarize the SEATO. Sarit insisted that the SEATO had to move away from being a passive collective defense group and should instead seek to be an Asian NATO that could exercise preemptive military strike against the communist groups.[26] Sarit's effort had resulted in coordinating a large joint-military maneuver by the SEATO member states in the Thailand's northeastern province on April 15, 1962. A month later, President Kennedy declared deployment of the U.S. armed forces to Thailand and in 1966, Thailand housed about 35,000 U.S. forces.[27]

At the same time, the U.S. government began to construct military bases in Thailand to lay the ground for air strike and paramilitary operations both in Laos and Vietnam. The American armed forces were thus distributed to four major air bases in the Thai northeastern provinces – Udon Thani, Nakhon Phanom, Ubon Ratchathani and Nakhon Ratchasima (Korat). The Thai government's proportional expenditure for this region also rose from 8.9% of the national total in 1960 to 15.5% of the total in 1965. Most of this increase went to building roads and airfields, as well as expanding electricity and communication.[28] At the dawn of the Vietnam War, air bases in Nakhon Sawan (Takhli), Udon Thani and Nakhon Phanom provinces had hundreds of helicopters, light planes, bombers that carried the CIA and U.S. military forces and millions of bombs from Thailand to Laos and Vietnam.[29] The primary CIA headquarters for the conduct of secret war disguised under the ambiguous name "Headquarters 333" located at Udon Royal Thai

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[26] Fineman, *Special Relationship*, 196.

[27] *New York Times*, September 4, 1966, 137.

[28] George J. Viksnins, "United States Military Spending and the Economy of Thailand, 1967-1972," *Asian Survey* 13:5 (May 1973), 446.

[29] Prados, *Presidents' Secret Wars*, 276.

Air Force base from the late 1950s.[30] In August 1966, one of the largest, best-equipped B-52 super-bomber bases with its 11,500-foot runways, the great Sattahip (U-Tapao) air base was inaugurated, celebrating the U.S. efforts in building military facilities in Thailand.[31]

Apparently, the Kennedy administration's growing disenchantment and suspicion with its Lao strongman worried Phoumi Nosavan, who now relied heavily on the CIA money and arms to secure his power.[32] Like Dean Rusk had warned a year earlier, Phoumi finally fabricated the communist aggression in Nam Tha province in May 1962 aggravating the U.S. government's effort to politically resolve the Lao issue with the Soviet. Shortly after the clash in Nam Tha, Kennedy met with Nikita Khrushchev in Vienna to discuss the internal situation in Laos. In the following months, the U.S. delegation, led by the diplomat Averell Harriman, joined the Geneva Conference and pushed an agreement with the Soviets to respect Lao's neutrality and to end all military operations inside the country.[33] This ostensible ceasefire between the U.S. and the Soviets did not bring any conspicuous signs of peace to Laos. The Kennedy administration on the contrary accelerated military buildup in Thailand and supplied more helicopters to the northeastern Thailand air bases. It also aided the Royal Lao Army in order to enhance its military strength. The CIA agents scattered around Xieng Khouang province built secret bases for Hmong guerrilla training and patrolled the Lao-Vietnamese border areas.

Finally, a full-scale battle broke out in February 1964 when Vietminh and Pathet Lao forces advanced to Thakhek near Savannakhet province. There were several skirmishes between the

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[30] William M. Leary, "The CIA and the 'Secret War' in Laos: The Battle for Skyline Ridge, 1971-1972," *Journal of Military History* 59:3 (July 1995), 511.

[31] *New York Times*, September 4, 1966, 137.

[32] Karabell, *Architects of Intervention*, 218.

[33] McCoy, "America's Secret War in Laos," 287.

Pathet Lao/Vietminh and Hmong armies in 1963 that resulted in heavy losses on the Hmong side. Since the strength of the Hmong army declined, the U.S. government decided to increase the use of air power to support ground forces.[34] In preparation for the air strike, the U.S. began to strengthen the Royal Lao Air Force (RLAF) and increased the number of a powerful World War II training aircraft T-28 starting in 1964. Although these aircraft were flying with RLAF markings, they were actually flown by Thai pilots – who wore the insignia and uniforms of the RLAF, to support Vang Pao's ground operations.[35] From 1965, the U.S. Air Force based in the northeastern Thai air bases began bombing the Pathet Lao and Vietminh supply lines. By 1969, Air America had 29 helicopters, 20 light planes, 19 medium transports and more than 8,000 employees.[36] Until 1968, the rate of sorties in Laos had remained at ten to twenty per day, but after the Tet Offensive in late 1968, the rate increased sharply, reaching three hundred per day.[37] From February 1970, after receiving a formal request from the Lao government, the U.S. began its first B-52 strikes on the PDJ, Xieng Khouang, which had become the main battlefield between the CIA's secret Army and the Pathet Lao since 1964. Between 1970 and 1973 when the bombing finally stopped, 2,518 sorties dropped 58,374 tons of bombs in northern Laos.[38]

Despite the increase in air support, the number of Hmong armies declined drastically and the poorly trained Lao army could not resist against the waves of Vietminh and Pathet Lao forces in the ground battles. When the Vietminh army occupied Sam Thong in Xieng Khouang on March 17, 1970, 3,000 Thai troops arrived at Long Cheng, a major base of the CIA, Vang Pao

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[34] Leary, foreword, xviii.

[35] Blaufarb, *Counterinsurgency Era*, 160.; *New York Times*, September 4, 1966, 137.

[36] Prados, *Presidents' Secret Wars*, 277.

[37] Leary, foreword, xviii.

[38] Leary, "CIA and the 'Secret War'," 508.; McCoy, "America's Secret War in Laos," 290-291.

and PARU, to support the operations in northern Laos.[39] In June 1970, the Lao government asked the Thai government to supply troops on a more regular basis to curb Vietnamese forces. Although the Thanom administration was well aware of the impending threat of the Vietminh forces, it also did not want to play a visible role in the war. Thus, the Thai government recruited volunteer forces instead of sending regular army troops. The U.S. government paid the cost of arming and dispatching these Thai volunteer battalions.[40] As the number of Hmong forces declined rapidly, Thai volunteers became the largest group among the secret forces, and by 1974 when the Thai forces withdrew from Laos, their numbers amounted to around 17,000.[41]

From December 1971 to May 1972, one of the crucial battles of the Vietnam War took place in Xieng Khouang province when 8,500 North Vietnamese forces attacked Hmong army in Long Cheng. Although Vang Pao managed to counterattack and recovered Long Cheng with the help of Thai volunteer forces and CIA's paramilitary troopers in April 1972, the battle turned out to be the last victory for the anticommunist forces in Laos.[42] Soon the U.S. and North Vietnam signed the peace agreements in Paris in February 1973 allowing the Lao government to organize a coalition government with Pathet Lao. At last, the Lao People's Revolutionary Party broke the agreement and took control in May, and established a communist regime, the Lao People's Democratic Republic in December 1975.

In sum, there occurred three critical changes between 1950-1964 that eventually provided a context for enduring civil wars in Laos since the mid-1960s. First, the U.S. foreign policy toward

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[39] Leary, "CIA and the 'Secret War'," 509. There are several translation for the village name Long Tieng, including Long Cheng. I use Long Cheng because the pronunciation is closer to the local Thai and Lao language.

[40] Leary, foreword, xix.

[41] Prados, *Presidents' Secret Wars*, 293.

[42] Leary, "CIA and the 'Secret War'," 505.

Laos changed from passive political protest to direct paramilitary intervention under the guise of counterinsurgency programs. Second, Kennedy's counterinsurgency program between 1961-1963 increased the use of indigenous and foreign forces, such as Hmong guerrilla troops and the Thai secret forces, to reduce the direct U.S. military participation in the war and to divert domestic and global criticism to the U.S. intervention in Laos. Third, the combination of economic-military aid and the military buildup under the Kennedy's counterinsurgency scheme provided a useful cover for the CIA's covert operation. In these processes, the Thai government and paramilitary units played a significant role in continuing the CIA covert operations in Laos.

Against this historical backdrop, a hot war broke out in Laos in the early 1964. Despite the tremendous amount of manpower and resources invested to stop Pathet Lao and Vietminh forces, the secret war in Laos did not bring about the desired consequences to the U.S. and its regional allies. In this havoc, there still emerged some winners of the war who actually did not gain a victory over the Indochinese communist but managed to obtain power and merit from the American's Cold War politics in Southeast Asia.

Sarit's Cold War Quartet

Whether the CIA or the U.S. government liked Sarit Thanarat as much as Phao Siyanon, he came to power after staging two successful coups in 1957 and 1958. Sarit appointed himself as prime minister in October 1958, and then he assumed the Director-Generalship of the Thai National Police Department in 1959. While consolidating political power, Sarit resumed building a close relationship with the U.S. government, particularly with the Department of Defense and the CIA. Most importantly, Sarit extended his invitation to the young monarch into the Thai political arena. By the time Kennedy came to office, Sarit completed organizing his Cold War quartet,

which was constituted of the U.S., the Royal Thai Army, the TNPD and the Thai royal family, all of which would play a significant role in implementing his Cold War policies as well as shaping Sarit's short-lived despotic paternalism in Thailand.

Unlike what Kennedy had jotted down in his memo in the meeting with the then President on January 19, 1961, Eisenhower had already paved a way for the CIA's secret war in Laos.[43] In the late 1960, PARU and the CIA had completed installing its secret commanding office in the Vientiane and deployed PARU operational teams to various regions of Laos. It was Sarit who planned and commanded this small group of secret Thai agents to build the operational headquarters in Laos as early as October 1960.

As mentioned earlier, Kennedy intended to create a regional trio that could support and assist the secret war in Laos: Sarit, Phoumi and Diem. Building a friendly relationship between Sarit and Phoumi was far easier because they were relatives and Sarit was strongly inclined to support Phoumi for stopping the Pathet Lao and Kong Le's coup group. Sarit also shared a common anticommunist nation-building vision with Diem. However, the other two leaders in Laos and Vietnam began wearing out the U.S. patience due to their inability to stabilize domestic political crisis and to utilize the U.S. aid program in showcasing the American modernization in their countries. Sarit was different. Even though he was seen as the typical local strongman who would make a move when the American dollars and firm guarantees were in his hand, Sarit quickly prevailed the political opposition groups and rivalries in the Thai political arena; in addition, his development policies began to show signs of success in the eyes of U.S. government. Moreover, when the U.S. government's suspicion against Phoumi's incompetence grew considerably in the latter half of 1961, Sarit was believed to be the one and only man who

[43] "Notes of Conversation Between President-Elect Kennedy and President Eisenhower, Washington, January 19, 1961" in *FRUS 1961-1963 Laos Crisis,* 19-22.

could control Phoumi. Dean Rusk, the then Secretary of State Department, advised the U.S. ambassador to Thailand Kenneth Young in late 1962 that "Sarit's influence with Phoumi is indispensable" and thus to encourage Sarit to stay in a close touch with Phoumi.[44] Notwithstanding the geopolitical position of Thailand, Sarit's leadership won the U.S. government's attention and favor to concentrate its money and personnel in Thailand to stymie communist domination in Southeast Asia.

The American government's courtship with Sarit compared to that of other two anticommunist leaders Diem and Phoumi was quite impressive. In May 1958, John Forster Dulles received a letter from Sarit requesting the increase of U.S. aid to Thailand. Dulles assessed that although Sarit's economic projects listed in the letter were seen to fortify his army primarily, he concluded that:

> An important consideration which has influenced US Government's discussions with Field Marshal [Sarit] regarding Thailand's economic problems in fact proposed defense support program formulated on basis needs Free World nations faced by Communist threat have already been presented Congress.[45]

Likewise, after receiving the Thai royal couple's visit to the U.S., President Eisenhower sent a thank letter to Sarit in November 1960. Addressing Sarit "Dear Mr. Prime Minister", Eisenhower wrote that he considered Thailand "a bulwark of free world strength in Asia, whose contribution towards mutual objectives is of such significance that we must strive together to reinforce and sustain its strength and well-being." As a token of his appreciation, Eisenhower highlighted that

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[44] "Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow) to President Kennedy, Washington, July 21, 1961" and "Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Laos, Washington, November 9, 1962, 4:50p.m.," in *FRUS 1961-1963 Laos Crisis,* pp. 307, 914.

[45] "Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Thailand, Washington June 28, 1958-8:17 p.m.," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958-1960: South and Southeast Asia, Volume XV*, the United States Department of State (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1992), 1036. (Explanation added). [hereafter, *FRUS 1958-1960 South and Southeast Asia*].

while the U.S. aid had decreased in many countries, defense support for Thailand in fiscal year 1961 was higher than the previous year and confirmed that "a substantially increased level of military assistance is programmed" for Sarit's government.[46] As the U.S. government's trust and reliance on Sarit's ironfisted rule grew considerably, even Sarit's health and succession became an issue that the Kennedy administration had to be prepared for. When the Director of CIA John McCone visited Thailand in June 1962, he had a meeting with Thailand's CIA country team and learned that Sarit's health condition was not getting any better. Upon returning, McCone wrote a note about his visit to Thailand and commented that "there is no assurance that, should he die, there would be an orderly succession, and hence a difficult situation might result" to the U.S.[47] Therefore, Sarit had received medical checkups from the U.S. military medical teams and his health condition was reported directly to the U.S. government until his death in December 1963.[48]

To Sarit, American intervention into the war in Laos was one of the most opportune chances that he could take full advantage of. From the beginning, Sarit was willing to cooperate with the CIA and Phoumi primarily because, Phoumi was his relative and second, Laos was just too close to Thailand and his home province -- Mukdahan. Losing Laos to communists meant opening a free passageway to Thailand for the Vietminh and Soviet-Chinese communist bloc. Luckily, the U.S. government had already shown him great enthusiasm for bringing in every possible

[46] "Letter from President Eisenhower to Prime Minister Sarit Thanarat. Washington, November 8, 1960," in *FRUS 1958-1960 South and Southeast Asia,* 1153-1154.

[47] "Editorial Note" in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963: Southeast Asia*, *Volume XXIII* the United States Department of State (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1994), 947. [hereafter, *FRUS 1961-1963 Southeast Asia*].

[48] One good example is the note by McCone as cited in the text above. A night before Sarit's death on December 8, 1963, American embassy in Bangkok reported to the Secretary of State a medical summary prepared by an American military general as of December 6.: From Declassified Documents Reference System, University of Wisconsin-Madison, "Telegram from CAS Bangkok to Secretary of State on December 7, 1963 7:23 AM," accessed October 12, 2012, http://galenet.galegroup.com.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/servlet/DDRS?loc ID=wisc_madison.

resource to defend Thailand from communists. Sarit wasted no time to demonstrate to the Thais that his rule could bring peace and prosperity by using U.S. dollars and professionals. At the same time, Sarit utilized the U.S. foreign aid to modernize his army and to make it a highly prestigious unit in Southeast Asia -- like Phao had done for the BPP and PARU. As promised earlier, Kennedy dispatched the U.S. armed forces to Thailand to enhance the training and qualification of Thai army in mid-1962.

In November 1962, the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs proposed the President Kennedy and his Security Council members to allocate almost twice more budgets to the Military Assistance Program (MAP) to Thailand compared to that of USAID in fiscal year 1963.[49] This lucrative budget proposal was to alleviate Sarit's protest against Kennedy's decision of withdrawing a portion of U.S. combat troops from Thailand and relocating them in other Asian ally countries. Although Sarit flatly acquiesced the redeployment plan, he made clear to the American ambassador Kenneth Young that he did not agree with the plan, but added: "we have no choice. We have jumped into pool with you and we are now swimming together."[50] Sensing that Sarit had turned sour, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara advised Dean Rusk to prepare a "package deal" that could ameliorate Sarit's resentment against the U.S. withdrawal decision.[51] Accordingly, the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs suggested that through the increase of the MAP budget, the U.S. government should provide training to enhance the Thai army's mobility and communication, movement into remote areas, and also could create new counterinsurgency and

[49] "Paper Prepared in the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, Washington, November 7, 1962. Thailand," in *FRUS 1961-1963 Southeast Asia,* 982-983.

[50] "Memorandum From the Director, Far East Region, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Heinz) to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Nitze), Washington, June 26, 1962," in *FRUS 1961-1963 Southeast Asia,* 949.

[51] "Memorandum From Secretary of Defense McNamara to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Bundy), Washington, August 13, 1962," in *FRUS 1961-1963 Southeast Asia,* 959.

conventional warfare units. Alongside the training, new types of equipment and construction of military facilities should be introduced to modernize the Thai armed forces and improve the speed and efficiency for the military's movement to remote areas.[52] In a similar fashion, the proposed USAID's development programs were concentrated on improving communication in the remote areas and building infrastructures that could facilitate the military's preparation for the wartime operations. In the same proposal, the Bureau also stressed the necessity of raising the strength of the BPP from 4800 men to 7000 in fiscal year 1963.[53]

Since the external support for his regime seemed reliable, Sarit turned to internal politics to build a stable ground that could maintain his anticommunist and development-oriented policies. The Royal Thai Army was already under his control so his energy was directed to third parties: the Thai police lacked a strong leadership after Phao had left; and the royal family that could provide fresh images of both traditional and modern leadership to Thai society, and most importantly, the desired legitimacy for Sarit's regime in the eyes of general Thais. With Sarit's enthusiastic support and coordination, the royal couple launched an impressive political debut of the global Cold War arena by making grandiose official visits to the European countries and the United States in 1960-1961. In the same thank you letter to Sarit in November 1960, Eisenhower mentioned the king had showed such great interest in keeping Thailand safe from the communist threat as following:

> The recent visit of Their Majesties the King and Queen to the United States was a major milestone in the long and happy history of relations between our two countries and I believe it was extraordinarily successful. … His Majesty and I likewise noted that the staunch adherence of Thailand and the United States to the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization demonstrates a mutual

[52] "Paper Prepared in the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, Washington, November 7, 1962. Thailand," in *FRUS 1961-1963 Southeast Asia,* 982-983.

[53] *FRUS 1961-1963 Southeast Asia,* 983.

> determination to preserve the frontiers of the free world from aggression and to promote the peaceful objectives shared by both countries.[54]

As discussed earlier, Sarit and royal family's perceptions to the U.S. Cold War in Southeast Asia and its utilization of Thailand as an anticommunist bastion shared a common interest. Above all, both Sarit and the young monarch wanted to reconstruct the political legitimacy for their own survival. To Sarit and the king, communism was seen as the most threatening ideological movement that could uproot the traditional elite and paternalistic leadership in Thai society, and thus they had to make a decisive move to counter the growing communist movements in the neighboring countries as well as the upsurge by still-dormant antigovernment and antiauthoritarian movements within Thailand.

In this regard, the year 1962 became a turning point for the U.S. and Thailand's Cold War. By 1962, Sarit had gathered all the necessary military and political forces around him and converged them into one entity. To promote Sarit's cold warriors, the CIA began to replace the USOM advisor positions in Thailand, and Kennedy dispatched the U.S. combat troops to Thailand. Simultaneously, the Thai army's involvement in the Lao affair began to form organizational wings like Headquarters 333, and the number of PARU teams deployed to Laos began to increase rapidly from 1962. While the Thai king and queen expanded their social activities, the Princess Mother stepped into the BPP's civic actions in this year. It should also be noted that Sarit had initiated the Thai army's civic action program under the Mobile Development Units project in late 1962.

At this time, one third of Sarit's Cold War quartet were in place. So it is time to turn to the last, but not the least, member of his Cold War quartet: Police, particularly the Police Aerial

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[54] "Letter from President Eisenhower to Prime Minister Sarit Thanarat. Washington, November 8, 1960," in *FRUS 1958-1960 South and Southeast Asia,* 1153.

Reinforcement Unit. PARU's history cannot be complete without the presence of this Thai strongman and also America's secret war in the land of a million elephants "before Vietnam". While the above historical review on the American and Thai interventions in the war in Laos tells rather widely-known official histories, the following history of the Thai PARU will disclose the stories that both the U.S. and Thai governments did not want to tell much.

Birth of the Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit

> In the beginning, it was not that a comfortable merge between the BPP and PARU. It is a long story… why difficult it was in the past, in the old days. Everything was difficult and insufficient but at least what we had in common was the unity (*samakhi*). Today is the day that we show our unity under the name of police paratroopers (*tamruat phonrom*).
>
> [Speech given by Sarot Panya in the PARU's Annual Reunion Party on April 27, 2011] [55]

Currently, the Border Patrol Police Headquarters have five divisions: General Staff Division, Support Division, Special Training Division, Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit Division and Regional Divisions in the four areas of responsibility.[56] To my sense, the composition of these subgroups should be coherent and unified to fulfill the general BPP missions. Thus, in the first place, it was somewhat surprising for me to learn that the PARU Division has a separate anniversary ceremony apart from that of the BPP and also the PARU members show a strong

[55] This speech was given by the former Commissioner to the Border Patrol Police General Headquarters and former Commander of the Naresuan Camp Police Lieutenant General Sarot Panya in the PARU's Annual Reunion Party in new Naresuan Camp, Cha-am, Prachuap Khirikhan province on April 27, 2011. He made this particular comment in response to the Commissioner of BPP General Headquarters who had stated before him that: "the PARU is anyway a part of BPP and the Royal Thai Police… the most important day for all of us is October 13, the National Police Day."

[56] Border Patrol Police Headquarters, *Khrongsang khong tamruat pi 2552 lae kamnoet laksana ngan radap ngan kongroi lae klumngan nai suan khong kongbanchakan tochodo* [Organization of Police in 2009 and the Specification and Characteristics of the Mission, by Tasks, Company and Divisions under the Border Patrol Police General Headquarters], Internal report (2009), 1.

attachment with their unit more than that of the BPP.[57] My curiosity to the PARU's independent, and in certain ways, parallel stance to its superior organization was finally confirmed when I attended the PARU's anniversary events and the reunion parties in 2010 and 2011. In the events, former and incumbent PARU members sang "Naresuan March" instead of the official BPP song and they stressed the unity of PARU, not the loyalty to its superiors -- the BPP. Particularly, the retired PARU members have stronger feelings towards their unit, and they usually addressed themselves as PARU, not the BPP. The very next day of anniversary event in 2010, I was invited to ride zip-line from the 34-feet-high tower and to practice parachute landing on the ground with the PARU instructor at Rama the Sixth Camp (*khai phraram hok*), located in the compound of Maruekkhathayawan Palace. The PARU commander of Hua Hin Naresuan Camp who had invited me to this unexpected adventure said that this was the first step to understand the PARU side of story.[58]

Aside from these adventurous experiences in Naresuan Camp, my almost two-year-long fieldwork in Thailand allowed me to perceive the parallel history. It is difficult to assume that the PARU is simply a subunit under the supervision of BPP because their characteristics, history and activities have not always been congruent or convergent with each other. PARU is one of the most highly qualified special police paratroopers in Thailand and also, owing to its origin and later involvement in the CIA covert operation in Laos, it was the CIA's favorite Southeast Asian mobile force during the Cold War. Additionally, considering the unit's operation to suppress

[57] There are several English translations of the title PARU such as Police Reconnaissance Unit or Police Aerial Resupply Units but most documents prefers to use the shorter term PARU. The abbreviation PARU, in fact, became popular when the unit began its secret operations in Laos. Until Laos, the general Thais called the unit "police paratrooper (*tamruat phonrom*)." As for the full name, the BPP and PARU members now prefer to use "Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit (*kongbangkhapkan sanapsanun thang akat*)." To avoid confusion, I use the abbreviation PARU rather than police paratroopers because most historical accounts and governmental documents use the abbreviation PARU more frequently.

[58] Research note, April 28, 2010.

anti-authoritarian protest in Thammasat University on October 6, 1976, PARU is the unit that possesses a key to open a door to the secret relations among the U.S.-CIA, Thai military and the royal family.

Having said this, it does not necessarily mean that PARU and BPP's histories have remained separately at all times. Indeed, both units share a common historical origin, founding fathers -- that is, Phao and the CIA, same concept of unconventional warfare strategy based on counterinsurgency and modernization, and most importantly, the same local patron, the Thai royal family. Since their central missions were to defend border security in the remote areas, the BPP and PARU have jointly operated in numerous missions and also, PARU has shared the same civic action programs with the BPP. As will be discussed shortly, one of the most notable joint actions undertaken by the BPP and PARU is the October 6 Massacre.

In this regard, this historical review on PARU will focus on the major historical events that PARU had been involved apart from, and also as a part of the BPP organization. In particular, the following investigation on the development of military counterinsurgency by the PARU will focus on the two specific questions: first, how does the PARU history illuminate the development of hot wars in Southeast Asia?; second, in what context did the PARU participate in the CIA's covert war in Laos? After briefly reviewing the history of PARU, this section will examine the transformation of the first Thai police paratroopers from a CIA's brainchild to a special guardian of the Thai royalist nationalism during the Cold War.

As discussed briefly in the formation of BPP earlier, PARU's history begins from the Erawan paratrooper's camp in Lopburi province. The Naresuan Committee comprised of the Prime Minister Phibun Songkhram, Marshal Phin Chunhawan, Army General Sarit Thanarat, Police General Luangchattrakankosin, Police Lieutenant General Phao Siyanon and Air Marshal

Siddhi Savetsila had envisioned a plan to build special police force that could defend the border areas with exclusive qualification in paramilitary tactics and guerrilla warfare. As a result, the Territorial Defense Police and PARU were formed in the early 1951.[59] In particular, the concepts and training of the PARU force illuminates the earlier U.S. government's blueprints for fighting communist expansion in Indochina in the two decades to come: first, the special weapons and unconventional warfare trainings, including parachuting, given to the first police trainees in Erawan camp, had been utilized and also transmitted to paramilitary units in Indochinese countries from the mid-1950s.; second, the PARU members themselves were actively mobilized in the CIA's covert operation behind the enemy lines from the late 1950s. In this respect, the formation and training of PARU forces in the early 1950s forecasted what would happen in Laos and Vietnam throughout the Cold War period.

In 1951, Police Captain Suchat Lueanchawi, who was then a commander of the first police company at the Pathumwan Police Constable School, received an order from the TNPD to join an English language class in the Ministry of Defense. Upon completing the three-month language training, the then Deputy Director-general Phao Siyanon summoned Suchat to the Parutsakawan Palace where the Secretariat of the House of Representatives had located. In this meeting, Suchat was appointed to be the first Thai commander of police paratrooper camp in Lopburi, which soon officially established under the name of "Erawan Special Weapon and Parachute Training Camp (*khai fuek awut phiset lae phonrom, erawan*)". Phao explained to Suchat that the TNPD was setting up a special training camp to form the first Thai police paratroopers with the help from the U.S. government and thus Suchat had to stay close with the American advisors in Lopburi. Suchat adds in his 1975 memoir that "to preserve the honor of a

[59] Pranet et al., *Prawat kan fuek dot rom*, 133.

Thai policeman who has to work with the American instructors and also to alleviate my family's burden," Phao generously created a special stipend for Suchat of about 2,000 baht per month on top of his regular police salary and allowances -- which was only 190 baht per month at that time.[60] After the appointment, Suchat had traveled between Bangkok and Lopburi with the American advisors and finally opened the Erawan camp at the site where the Japanese army had built a military camp during the Pacific War.

One intriguing tradition of the PARU that had started from the Erawan camp years is the naming of trainee classes or "*run*" in Thai, as we can see from Table 1.[61] Basically, the PARU *run* is named after the number of initial volunteers who entered training or the final number of trainees who completed the program.[62] As for the first PARU class called "*run* 500", the name means that the first batch of trainees who entered Erawan camp were five hundred people. However, not all the volunteers in the training became the police paratroopers. For instance, among the five hundred trainees in 1951, only one hundred of them became the PARU members, consisting of Erawan *run* one and two.[63] The initial five hundred police volunteers were the students from the Metropolitan Police School and they received an order to apply for the training

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[60] Suchat Lueanchawi. "*Prawat khai fuek awut phiset lae phonrom, erawan – chowo. lopburi* [The History of Special Weapon and Paratrooper Training Camp, Erawan, Lopburi Province]," in *Kong banchakan tamruat trawen chaidaen thiraluek nai kanpoet akhan bocho tochodo, 7 phruetsaphakhom 2518* [Border Patrol Police Headquarters, Commemorative volume marking the opening of the headquarters building, 7 May 1975], ed. Border Patrol Police Headquarters (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1975), 143.

[61] "*run*" literally means generation, age or period and when it is used for a batch of people in the military or civilian groups, it means a group of cohorts or class. For the armed forces in Thailand, it is used to indicate a group that received certain curricular trainings together so it can be translated to 'class.' I will use the transliteration "*run*" to emphasize the military origin and characteristics of BPP and PARU and later, of the Village Scout.

[62] There is no clear rule how the PARU decide the *run* names but surely it came out from the number of trainees. See the list of PARU "*run*" between 1951-1996 from *Prawat khai naresuan*, 77-78. Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit Division, "*Prapheni wan run* [Anniversary Tradition of the Class Day]," *Warasan naresuan samphan* [Naresuan Public Relations Magazine] 43:81 (January-April 1997), 38-51. In Table 1 is the compiled information from both sources. This class naming tradition has discontinued nowadays.

[63] Choetchamrat Chitkarunarat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom* [The Birth of Police Paratroopers]," *Nittayasan tamruat sayam* [Siam Police Magazine] 11:51 (February 2011), 19.

in Erawan camp in mid-1950. One of the trainees in the *run* 500 is Police Major General Choetchamrat Chitkarunarat. In his recent memoir published by a Thai police magazine as a special edition in 2011, Choetchamrat says he became a member of *run* 500 on July 24, 1950 and had received regular police training before he entered Erawan camp. Among the *run* 500, Thai police commanders and American instructors carefully selected 50 men who were single, physically strong, disciplined and had good morale, and included them in the first paratrooper's training in Erawan Camp started on March 13, 1951.[64]

American instructors gave two main courses for this first group of paratrooper trainees: weapons and tactics for the first four weeks and parachuting for the following four weeks -- the latter comprised of three week ground training and one week airborne parachute training.[65] The first half of the course was designed to cover the training in modern weapons, demolition, tactics, jungle survival, judo and jumping practice in the ground. The modern weapons training course covered the use of Carbine M3, light machine guns like Carbine 60 mm and 81 mm, M1 Garand Rifle .30mm, to name a few, in preparation of guerrilla and jungle fighting. The Training also included heavy weapons like mortar 60 mm, bazooka 2.6 mm and 3.5 mm, Grenade launcher M79, Grenade M .26mm and landmines to destroy bridges and trains. Demolition courses taught the use of various explosives like Plastic C4, TNT, dynamites and Molotov Cocktails for sabotage. Tactics were mostly concerned with guerrilla and jungle warfare. Considering the mountainous topography of general Southeast Asia, special courses on how to survive in the

[64] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 18.

[65] Pranet et al., *Prawat kan fuek dot rom*, 134.

jungles was also provided.[66] It is noteworthy that most weapons and tactics that had been practiced in the Erawan camp were soon used in the wars in Laos and Vietnam.[67]

Only after completing the weapon and tactics training, then the trainees could move on to the parachute training because the latter course required them to pass certain level of physical and psychological tests to meet the higher qualification for becoming a parachutist. After the three times of jumping from the airplanes like C46 or C47 --sponsored by the Air America through SEA Supply, the trainee was qualified to become a paratrooper.[68] The first group of trainees, however, had to postpone the parachute training because the 34-feet-high tower essential for the ground training was still under construction in Erawan camp when they had completed the weapon and tactics training in the end of April 1951.[69] So this first group returned to Bangkok and subsequently the American instructors received a second group of trainees and began training from early May in the same year. Choetchamrat was one of the trainees in this second group (Erawan *run* two). [70]

Notably, this second group received the training with other Thai armed forces: 50 men from the police (from *run* 500), 25 from the army and 25 from the air force. A total of 100 recruits entered the Erawan camp and received the training in weapons and tactics for about six weeks like their predecessors.[71] Finally, when construction of the 34-foot-high tower was completed,

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[66] Suchat "*Prawat khai fuek awut phiset*," 145-147.; Pranet et al., *Prawat kan fuek dot rom*, 134.; Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 24.

[67] See, for example, Wikipedia, "Weapons of the Vietnam War," accessed October 20, 2012, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weapons_of_the_Vietnam_War.

[68] Suchat "*Prawat khai fuek awut phiset*," 148.

[69] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 19.

[70] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 21-22.

[71] Pranet et al., *Prawat kan fuek dot rom*, 135.

the parachute training took place with the previous group of trainees from July 13, 1951.[72] To PARU, *run* 500 is considered a legend because they were the first Thai armed force that had received unconventional warfare and parachute training from the Americans and also most of the influential PARU leaders in its history came from this *run*. Additionally, only these first two groups received full eight-week training and later trainees were trained only about a month on average.[73]

While the training and recruiting were well under way, Erawan camp had an official opening ceremony on April 17, 1951 with the then Director-general of TNPD Police General Luangchattrakankosin as the head-host of ceremonies and several important military and police officers. As Phao had designated earlier, Police Captain Suchat Lueanchawi became the first commander of Erawan camp and Police Sub-Lieutenant Sane Sitthiphan, and Police Sub-Lieutenant Suwan Ratnachuen became the deputy commanders. Their counterparts were the American instructors hired by the SEA Supply. The head of the American instructors team in the Erawan Camp was Colonel Pete Joost, an American veteran who was a member of OSS during the World War II. He was a close friend of Willis Bird and William Donovan and thus became the vice president of SEA Supply Company in Bangkok branch office.[74]

Pete Joost led about ten American instructors in the camp including James William (Bill) Lair, a deputy commander in chief of the training who worked closely with the American Embassy; Ray Babino as the deputy chief of the training; Walter P. Kuzmak, a SEA Supply manager and also an instructor for parachute training; Jeffery Cheek, who was recruited from

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[72] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 19.

[73] Kamon Bunsoemsap, " "*Pharu rop nai lao*" *rue krathoplai nai phon vang pao* ["PARU's War in Laos" or with Vang Pao]," in *Kua cha pen (tamruat) phonrom* [Long Road to Become the (Police) Paratrooper], ed. Narong Tharathoeng (Hua Hin: Hua Hin San, 2004), 20.

[74] Interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 16, 2013.

Texas A&M with Bill Lair, and became an instructor for explosives and bombing; Richard Van Winkle, a former marine during the World War II and the instructor for the Underwater Demolition Team training; and Mr. Johnston and Mr. Jeri, physicians who had two more unnamed medical assistants and were in charge of medics training for the PARU members.[75] Most of these instructors were the experienced veterans who had operated in several European and Asian countries during the World War II and thus their training courses for the Thai police intended to prepare for the warfare, not simply for enhancing patrolling duties in the borders.

To facilitate the training more effectively with the Thai police, American instructors also selected a total of twenty Thai assistant-instructors from the *run* 500. Among them, four instructors became the group leader of 25-men and controlled the daily and special trainings. As was one of the assistant instructors, Choetchamrat praised this assistantship system because the American advisors and embassy often supported the Thai assistant-instructors to proceed to higher education and training so that they could advance to higher-ranking commissioned officers much faster than other Thai police.[76]

Since both the Thai and American commanders found that first two groups' training yielded satisfactory results, they increased the number of police trainees from 50 to 100 per class from the third round of training. While recruiting the trainees among the noncommissioned police officers or students, the TNPD also assigned 15 high-ranking commissioned military and police officers to parachute training. Among these, one notable figure was the military medical doctor

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[75] Compiled from Suchat "*Prawat khai fuek awut phiset*," 143-144.; Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 225.; Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 19, 27; and my interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 14-16, 2013. In Choetchamrat's account, more names like Jack, Paul, Bird, Jod are listed but there is no description about these instructors. For the Richard Van Winkle's personal record: Find a Grave, "Obituary of Richard Van Winkle," accessed October 7, 2012, http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=14767216.

[76] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 26-27. Earlier accounts from the BPP headquarters often marked that there were 18 assistant instructors. However, Choetchamrat who was one of the instructors listed the names of twenty Thai assistant instructor in his memoir.; See also, *Prawat khai naresuan*, 76.

Nakhon Siwanit, who later became the third commander of Naresuan Camp in Hua Hin. When the high-ranking officers entered Erawan to receive training from the SEA Supply instructors, Phao's special bodyguard-type police called *Asawin* also joined the training without registering their names.[77]

Meanwhile, to increase the number of paratroopers quickly, another special weapon training for the police took place in a temporary training camp located in the Police Constable School in Ubon Ratchathani province from 1952. This training camp was called "Ubon Ratchathani Special Weapon Training Camp (*khai fuek awut phiset ubon ratchathani*)" and the course yielded five more *run*-s of total of 450 men.[78] By February 1953, the SEA Supply's paratrooper program trained about 1,000 Thai armed forces-- mainly the police, comprised of eleven *run*-s in Erawan and five *run*-s in Ubon Ratchathani, and thus the total number of Thai armed force trainees who had received special weapons and parachute training from the American advisors reached about 1,500 in less than two years.[79]

The police paratrooper's training course in Erawan was halted in early 1953 as the Thai army reclaimed the camp from the TNPD. As for the reason why the Thai military suddenly requested the Erawan camp to be returned, Choetchamrat -- who had then served an assistant-instructor for the Americans after completing his training in Erawan and who is thus well-informed about the early history of the PARU and CIA -- provides an interesting explanation. According to what he had learned from the American instructors, the Harry Truman administration could not legally mobilize the U.S. armed forces to train foreign military forces

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[77] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 18.; See a short description about Phao's Asawin police from Thak, *Politics of Despotic Paternalism,* 58-59.

[78] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 18.

[79] Pranet et al., *Prawat kan fuek dot rom*, 135.; *Tai rom phrabarami*, 76.

abroad, so with the help of CIA, it created the SEA Supply to facilitate the secret operations abroad. When the CIA set up the Bangkok branch office of the SEA Supply, the then Prime Minister Phibun helped to cover the CIA operation in Thailand by ostensibly hiring the SEA Supply in the name of Thai government to train the Thai police force. However, all the expenses for building the training facilities, purchasing armaments, and even the salaries for both the American trainers and Thai trainees came out from the CIA-SEA Supply and this payment from the U.S. was kept secret by the Thai and U.S. governments throughout the 1950s. After the Korean War ended in 1953, the U.S. Congress finally lifted the bar against the increase of military budget and thus Eisenhower could send the U.S. army to train the foreign militaries abroad. This was the time when the U.S. military advisors came to Thailand to launch special military training for the Royal Thai Army and thus the Erawan camp was reclaimed.[80] Consequently, the American instructors and Thai paratrooper trainees returned Erawan camp to the Thai army on March 1, 1953 and moved to the Ubon camp temporarily.[81] While stationing in Ubon camp, a group of volunteer trainees received commandership training for about two months in preparation for organizing the administrative wings for the PARU company in Hua Hin.[82]

By the order of police dated on April 1, 1953, the TNPD legalized the formation of a police paratrooper team (*tamruat phonrom*) under the Motor Vehicle Division (*kong kamkapkan yanyon* or *tamruat rot thang*) in Naresuan Camp in Hua Hin.[83] When the first PARU company

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[80] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 19-20.

[81] For the detailed information about building this Ubon camp with the American advisors, see Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 116-124. This camp later became the Kromphraya Damrong Ratchanuphap Camp of the BPP Regional Division 2.

[82] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 29-30.; Pranet et al., *Prawat kan fuek dot rom*, 135.

[83] *Khai Naresuan* [Naresuan Camp]. Internal Report. circa 1975, 2. [hereafter, *Khai Naresuan*].

was established in Hua Hin, it had been called "Naresuan camp paratroopers unit (*nuai tamruat phonrom khai naresuan*)," until the TNPD changed its official title to Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit Subdivision in 1960. The Company had three platoons with 35 men in each. Volunteers among the trainees who had completed the above-mentioned trainings in Lopburi and Ubon Ratchathani constituted the first company of one hundred police paratroopers. Before the official establishment of the paratrooper company in Hua Hin, these trainees had to return to their original post upon completing the training. When the official PARU company was formed in Hua Hin, the TNPD received applications among these trainees and when accepted to become a PARU member, they were transferred to the Motor Vehicle Division.[84] In addition to original one hundred PARU members, TNPD received supplementary applicants who had foreign language proficiency and higher educational background.[85]

The first commander of Naresuan Camp was Police Captain Sane Sitthiphan, who was the deputy commander of Erawan Camp, whereas the platoon commanders were recruited from the new graduates in the Royal Police Cadet Academy and other police units. This group of commanders included Police Sub-Lieutenant Narong Suechit, Somkhuan Harikul and Wichian Kanchanarat. SEA Supply instructors, who had already received the formal Thai police title by then, constituted the American advisory group to the PARU: Police Colonel Bill Lair, Police Captain Jeffrey Cheek and Police Captain Jack Shirley.[86] Although the Naresuan camp opened in April 1953, most training still took place in the compound of Maruekkhathayawan Palace

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[84] *Tai rom phrabarami*, 77.

[85] *Prawat khai naresuan*, 9.

[86] According to Lair, Phao commanded that if the PARU company should be officially formed and operated under the TNPD, then the SEA Supply advisors should be also appointed as the Thai police officer. Therefore, Phao designated Lair, Cheek and Shirley the Thai police rank. Interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 14, 2013.

because the training facilities in Hua Hin camp were not ready to carry out the paratrooper's trainings.[87]

One of the first missions assigned to the police paratroopers between 1952-1954 was the joint operation with the BPP in the northeastern and northern Thailand. As noted before, Phao organized the predecessor of the BPP, the Border Defense Police, in the Northeastern Region in May 1953 to counter the Vietminh's infiltration to Thailand. To support BDP's mission, the Thai government ordered a deployment of paratrooper instructors and 70 volunteers from the Naresuan camp to suppress the communist insurgents at the nearby Thai-Lao border. In August 1953, another unit of the BDP was formed in Chiang Mai to defend the northern Thai border areas from the clashes between Burmese government and KMT forces and also to suppress the Yunnanese immigrant groups (*chin haw*) from expanding the drug trafficking. To curtail the opium flow and arrest the drug dealers and producers, TNPD ordered the police paratroopers in Hua Hin to operate with the BDP-Chiang Mai in 1954. Therefore, Bill Lair and three platoons of police paratroopers moved to a temporary camp in the compound of Suandok temple in Chiang Mai and coordinated the BDP's antinarcotics suppression. At the same time, the unit began collecting intelligence among the highland minority villages in border areas of northern Thailand.[88] While residing in this Wat Suandok camp, Bill Lair met with Gordon Young for the first time through the introduction of Gordon's father, Harold Young.[89]

In addition, TNPD gave a special mission to PARU of providing security services for the royal family.[90] In fact, it was not a coincidence that the PARU's original camp was built right

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[87] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 31.

[88] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 31.; *Prawat khai naresuan*, 11.

[89] Interview with Gordon Young, March 9, 2012.

[90] Pranet et al., *Prawat kan fuek dot rom*, 135.

across the royal family's summer residence called Klai Kangwon Palace. Before building Naresuan camp in Hua Hin, the camp site had been allocated to the army's royal guard to provide security to the royal family but as soon as Bill Lair proposed the site for building a camp for PARU, both Phao and the royal family agreed to give the land to Lair and PARU instead of the army.[91] From the time when he was determining where to build the PARU camp, Bill Lair had always been mindful about maintaining a close relationship with the royal family, as he believed that in the middle of turbulent, unpredictable Thai political conditions, only the king could provide a stable sponsorship to the people and also to PARU.[92] Additionally, the Boe Fai airfield nearby Maruekkhathayawan Palace was more or less abandoned and thus the PARU could use the field freely for training and operation.[93]

One day when training the PARU members in Maruekkhathayawan Palace, an aide of the royal family approached Lair and said the king wanted to have a sailing race with him. Shortly after, the king and Lair raced in the beach by the Maruekkhathayawan Palace and became close friends. Upon learning that the king was interested in range shooting, Lair prepared a shooting ground at the Naresuan camp. Thus the king literally walked to the camp from the Klai Kangwon Palace and freely practiced shooting with Lair and PARU members. Lair recalled that the king did not want the Thai public to see his shooting practice because it might remind the tragic

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[91] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 35.

[92] Interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 13, 2013.

[93] Interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 16, 2013.

accident that had killed his own brother.[94] Impressed by the king's sincere, intimate friendship, Lair told the king that if something happens to him, PARU would take him to a safe place.[95]

Finally, after all the SEA Supply trainers moved to Hua Hin and the basic camp facilities were prepared, Naresuan Camp convened an official opening ceremony on April 27, 1954 in the training ground next to the Maruekkhathayawan Palace in Cha-am, Phetburi province. To receive the special guests, the host prepared two big tents: One for the king and queen, Phao, and the then U.S. ambassador John Peurifoy and the other for unnamed guests of honor.[96] Since then April 27 became an official founding day of the PARU to present.

Alongside building the Naresuan camp facilities in Hua Hin, the SEA Supply instructors and Thai PARU commanders prepared a jungle training camp in Huai Sat Yai in Phetburi province to extend the training of PARU company in special warfare, parachuting, and intelligence gathering in the deep jungles. Also the camp was built to prepare for the case of PARU's retreat from Naresuan camp. In the end of 1954, Bill Lair proposed the then commander of Naresuan camp Nakhon Siwanit to build a secret jungle camp by the Thai-Burmese border and thus Lair's colleague Jeffery Cheek and a group of PARU members searched for a place to build a jungle camp. From early 1955, when they had completed building the Huai Sat Yai camp right next to the Burmese borderlines, it became mandatory for every new PARU trainee to

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[94] Interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 14-16, 2013.

[95] Vietnam Archive Oral History Project, "Interview with Bill Lair, Conducted by Steve Maxner on December 12, 2001" accessed October 28, 2012, http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/oralhistory/Transcripts/Lair_Bill.htm, 70. [hereafter, *Bill Lair Oral History*] (page numbers as indicated in the transcript.)

[96] Narong Tharathong, ed., *Kua cha pen (tamruat) phonrom* [Long Road to Become the (Police) Paratrooper] (Hua Hin: Hua Hin San, 2004), 117.

receive the special jungle warfare and parachute training in this camp for about three months to one year until the 1957 coup.[97]

Unlike the open setting of Naresuan camp in Hua Hin, this jungle camp has been the most suitable and safe place to undertake secret training and operations. Therefore, not only the jungle survival training, but also the special weapons trainings that was not allowed or publicized, could be carried out in this camp. On the other hand, Huai Sat Yai camp had the Border Information Center because it located near the Burmese borders and there were a number of Karen villages.[98] Thus, one of the first of PARU's civic actions was launched by PARU development platoon 712 in Ban Palau village and platoon 713 in Ban Padeng nearby the Huai Sat Yai camp. Appreciating their hard work, the king donated a D4 tractor to the PARU company to enhance their development projects in those villages. Soon these villages came under the king's royal development project.[99]

There are a few more anecdotes that highlight the importance of PARU's Huai Sat Yai camp. In 1956, a group of senior American military and government officials visited and spent a night with the PARU members in this camp to observe the PARU's training with the CIA-SEA Supply instructors. This group of American officials included: Allen W. Dulles, the Director of CIA; Army General Graves B. Erskine, the assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Special Operations; Max W. Bishop, the American ambassador to Thailand; Alfred C. Ulmer Jr., CIA officer in charge of Far East operations and also an inspector of SEA Supply company; Colonel Harry Lambert, Commander Chief of Staff in Hawaii; Colonel Eben F. Swift, U.S. Army's Third

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[97] Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 226-230.; *Prawat khai naresuan*, 10.

[98] *Prawat khai naresuan*, 16.

[99] *Prawat khai naresuan*, 10-11.

Paratrooper Team; Lieutenant Colonel Robert H. Zimmerman, Military advisor to Thailand; and Walter P. Kuzmak, a SEA Supply manager.[100] Every American visitor to the camp praised the unprecedented success of the CIA operation in Thailand and also the PARU's capability to build and operate in this kind of deep jungle setting. Notably, Allen Dulles wrote in the visitor's book that he was "impressed by the mastery that I want to see all the time. The operations undertaken here are most important".[101] Satisfied with PARU's overall activities and abilities, Dulles told Bill Lair that he could come straight to the DCI office and talk to Dulles if anything urgent happens to the PARU and Lair.[102]

A year later, as Bill Lair had envisioned, Huai Sat Yai served the original purpose of having a secret camp in the remote jungle. When Sarit staged a coup in 1957 and sent the Thai army to disarm the PARU, these army officers could easily confiscate the weapons from Naresuan camp. However, as for the army inspector assigned to investigate the Huai Sat Yai camp, even traveling to the campsite took a fair amount of time, and it was long enough for the PARU members in the jungle camp to bury the weapons and artilleries under the ground. At the very least, the PARU could secure some armaments from the army's confiscation only in Huai Sat Yai camp after the coup.[103]

There is another distinctive mission that PARU undertook before 1957. One of the objectives for building a jungle camp in Huai Sat Yai was to make PARU members get familiar

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[100] The original list of visitors and a short description are from Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 225. Each person's information was collected and compiled by this author via *Foreign Relations of the United States* and various newspapers. See, New York Times, "Obituary of Alfred C. Ulmer Jr.," accessed October 22, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2000/07/01/world/alfred-c-ulmer-jr-83-officer-in-us-intelligence-agencies.html.

[101] I was unable to find the visitor's book and there for, this is a translation from Thai quoted in Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 226.

[102] Interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 15, 2013.

[103] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 34-36.

with the jungle setting so that they could operate anywhere, particularly in the hilly border areas. Based on the training and experiences gained from this jungle camp, the PARU members could easily patrol the mountainous border areas of Thailand to the extent that the PARU members used to say: "there is no piece of land that we PARU do not know".[104] PARU's patrol team in the remote border areas were mainly to collect information from general geography and demography to the detailed information about border villages and people, their ethnicity and religion, the village politics and so on. Lair also added that throughout the patrol mission in the border areas, he could find an able man in the border areas who could become an excellent fighter.[105] The patrol team reported the survey results to the Naresuan camp commanders everyday and this information was relayed to Washington via the American instructors in the camp.[106]

Table 2. PARU's Border Information Centers *(sun ruam khao chaidaen)* [107]

Name	Ban (Village)	Tambon (Subdistrict)	Amphor (District)	Changwat (Province)
BIC. 1	Pueng Klueng	Mae Chan	Umphang	Tak
BIC. 2	Naranae	Lahansai	Lahansai	Buriram
BIC. 3	Mae Usu	Mae Tan	Tha Song Yang	Tak
BIC. 4	Mae Lana	Mae Lana	Mueang	Mae Hong Son
BIC. 5	Tha Tafang		Mae Sariang	Mae Hong Son
BIC. 6	Nam Muap		Sa	Nan
BIC. 7	Ngop		Thung Chang	Nan
BIC. 8	Buakmi		Pua	Nan
BIC. 9	Kaeng Nang	Koktum	Nakae	Nakhon Phanom
BIC. 10	Sanwae	Koktum	Nakae	Nakhon Phanom
BIC. 11	Huai Sat Yai	Songphinong	Kaengkrachan	Phetburi

[104] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 21-22.

[105] Interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 14, 2013.

[106] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 22.

[107] Each Border Information Center was called *so cho*, in a Thai abbreviation and each Center is named by Thai alphabetical order. Since the transliteration of Thai alphabet might be confusing, I used the numbers instead. It is not clear whether these centers were built according to the order of listing. See *Prawat khai naresuan*, 16.

The Border Information Center (*sun ruam khao chaidaen*, BIC) came out of this process to facilitate the PARU patrol team's intelligence duty more effectively. In 1955, 30 teams of PARU parachuted in to various border posts and began to patrol along the borderlines. During the operation, one of the patrol team leaders suggested establishing the BIC and thus the first Center was built in Puengkhlueng village located in the passageway between the Thai and Burmese border in Umphang district, Tak province.[108] Since then about eleven BIC were built in the northern and northeastern Thailand as the Table 2 shows.[109] These Centers became a base camp for the PARU members for carrying out intelligence under the cover of mundane police work, as well as in case of emergency.

As it was to the BPP, Sarit's coup in 1957 was the most severe crisis that the PARU had experienced in its history. In fact, Lair and Phao had sensed the army's growing jealousy against PARU and thus Lair tried to keep the unit to be seen as less military and less political. One of his attempts to protect the PARU from the army's resentment was giving the group a non-military name, the Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit. Another attempt was inviting military physician Nakhon Siwanit to the PARU commandership after the commander Police Major Asawin Tungkhadecha was killed by an airplane accident in 1955. By appointing a medical doctor to be the PARU commander, Lair could reduce the army's suspicion of PARU. This was also the reason why Lair and Phao kept the then Police Major Pranet Ritluechai as the deputy commander

[108] Nakhon, *Kamnoet phonrom thai,* 209-210. The leader of patrol team who suggested building BIC in Puengkhlueng was Police Lance Corporal China Wechakawi who later became the leader of PARU operational team to Laos in late 1960.

[109] *Prawat khai naresuan*, 16, or see the Table 2.

because unlike Nakhon, Pranet had more military background and a less uncompromising personality that could cause uncomfortable feelings among the army circles.[110]

When the Royal Thai Army came to confiscate the PARU's armaments in Naresuan camp, all the PARU members were summoned in the camp's training ground. An army lieutenant colonel quickly read the order from the coup group and suspended the entire training and operations of the company. Nevertheless, because this unit was one of the highly capable police forces, TNPD subsequently gave permission to each member of the PARU company for transferring to other police units without any disadvantage or retaliation. Shortly after the coup, commander Nakhon was transferred to another police unit and thus the deputy commander Police Major Pranet Ritluechai became an acting commander. Pranet encouraged the members to believe that whether the PARU was disbanded or not, they should stay together here in Naresuan Camp. As a result, no single PARU member moved out to other police units after the coup except Nakhon Siwanit.[111]

In fact, it was not only Pranet's urge that had convinced PARU members to remain in the Naresuan camp. It was basically due to their pride of being the first and most qualified paratroopers in the Thai history and also the pride of being a close guard of the royal family. From the beginning, Naresuan camp in Hua Hin could not be built without the royal family's permission for the use of their land and thus the PARU's loyalty as well as intimacy to the Thai monarchy was strong enough to become the prestige of being a PARU man. On the other hand, we can also assume that because the PARU was backed by the U.S. government and the royal

[110] Interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 16, 2013. See also Bill Lair's memorials to Pranet's cremation volume: Lair, James William, "To The Family of Police General Pranet Ritluechai, From Police Colonel Bill Lair, Date 1 December 2001," in *Anuson nueang nai phithi phraratchathan phloengsop phon tamruat ek pranet ritluechai wan pharuehat thi 28 kumphaphan phoso 2545* [Police General Pranet Ritluechai, Cremation Volume. February 28, 2002] (Bangkok: 2002), 63-64.

[111] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 35.

family, the members might have believed that they could certainly find a breakthrough from the coup crisis as long as they remained in the unit. Like Choetchamrat marks, the PARU members assured themselves at the time of crisis that "one day we would rise again (*sak wan nueng khong tong pen wan khong rao klap khuen ma*)."[112] Not long after, the CIA and the PARU commanders found a solution. The first solution was to move the PARU company under the Border Patrol Police, and the other was to mobilize the unit to the CIA's special operations in Laos in exchange of the U.S. government's increase of aid and assistance to Sarit's regime.

As above history of PARU narrates, it looks like the Unit had gone their separate ways from the BPP and except for a few occasions, the two paramilitaries did not act or exist together. However, that was not true to the higher-ranking level. The key connector between the BPP and PARU was doubtlessly Phao, the founding father of both units with the CIA. Under Phao, there were several commissioned army officers who had moved to the police department when Phao became the deputy director-general. Notably, Army Captains Charoenrit Chamratromran, Suraphon Chulaphram and Samak Waiyanon had transferred to the TNPD and the first two played a central role in establishing the Border Defense Police and PARU company since 1953.[113] In particular, as a close aide of Phao, Charoenrit had actively participated in building the Erawan camp with the CIA members from 1950, and also accompanied Phao whenever he visited the PARU training teams.[114] Meanwhile, PARU had several experiences of jointly operating with the BPP in the remote border areas before the coup, so that the members in the company had been familiar with the BPP force and its mission.

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[112] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 45.

[113] Suraphon, "*Langchak kan chattang*," 81-82. (in Thai).; Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 22-23.

[114] Suchat "*Prawat khai fuek awut phiset*," 143.; Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 30.

In this regard, it was not a coincidence that these two units came to be merged under the name of the Border Patrol Police, although we cannot overlook the bitter, inconvenient feelings of the PARU members because the coup deprived them of their autonomy from the TNPD and made the unit a subordinate to the BPP, as the remarks above by a former commander of Naresuan camp Sarot Panya tells vividly. Nevertheless, the confluence of the BPP and PARU ultimately secured both units from disbandment. Although the BPP was demoted under the Provincial Police and PARU became a subunit of the Border Provincial Police in 1960, they could survive unlike the PARU's previous superior. After Sarit's reform of the TNPD, the Motor Vehicle Division was dismantled and its armaments were transferred to the army. Since the reorganization in the 1960s, the Naresuan camp paratroopers unit officially changed its name to the Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit Subdivision (*kongkamkapkan sanapsanun thang akat*) under the Border Provincial Police.

Black Tiger in Laos

In late 1960, Bill Lair and Pranet, accompanied by the station chief of the CIA in Bangkok disguised under the first secretary of the U.S. Embassy, Robert J. Jantzen went to meet Sarit. They were invited to a secret residence in the compound of Suan Kulap Palace where the First Division of Royal Thai Army stationed. Upon arriving, Pranet and Bill Lair encountered Army Colonel Saiyud Kerdphol with an unnamed director general of army strategy officer. Their meeting with Sarit came to a conclusion that the Thai government would allow the CIA to mobilize PARU in its Lao actions and also the Thai army would jointly operate the secret projects to help the Lao army under Phoumi's command. However, since sending the Thai forces to Laos would violate the 1954 Geneva Convention and also may provoke the communist bloc's

protests, those who would be deployed in Laos must disguise themselves as volunteers, related to neither the Thai nor U.S. government. Therefore, all the "volunteers" must resign from their current official positions and shall depart to Laos secretly. The U.S. government had already promised to pay for all the expenses needed for purchasing weapons, conducting supplementary training, and living allowances for the volunteers.[115]

Basically, Sarit's objectives in supporting the CIA's covert operation in Laos lied in "taking both direct and indirect ways to agitate, attack, kill and destroy the communist enemy not to let them set up a base to invade across the Mekhong River and the mountain borders to Thailand".[116] Witnessing his relative Phoumihelplessly retreating from Vientiane after Kong Le's coup in August 1960, Sarit was indeed convinced that Pathet Lao and Northern Vietnamese communists could overflow across the porous borders between Thailand and Laos. He had to take a decisive action against these communist enemies but he could not make any overt movements against his neighboring countries. Therefore Sarit utilized the CIA's action plan to counter Lao and Vietnamese communists in Laos.

As a first step to control the secret actions in Laos, Sarit organized a military advisory group called "Administrative Committee on Countering Communist Infiltration (*khanakammakan amnuaikan totan kanseksuem khong communit,* or *khotho*)" under the Army's Tactical Operations Center 309 (*sunpathibatkan kongthapbok 309*).[117] Soon, the advisory group became

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[115] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 45. Bill Lair says that Robert Jantzen got along with Sarit very well. See, *Bill Lair Oral History,* p.82.

[116] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 19.

[117] Theerevat Pattamanont, trans. "Historical Background of Unknown Soldiers," in *Songkhram pokpong chat sasana kasat nai ratchanachak lao: suchibat kanprachumyai samanprachampi 2554 samakhom nakrop niranam 333. 2 mesayon 2554* [War to Guard Nation, Religion, Monarchy in the Kingdom of Laos: Program for Annual Conference of the Unknown Warrior Association 333 on April 2, 2011], edited by Unknown Warrior Association 333 (Bangkok: Unknown Warrior Association 333, 2011), 53.

the "Combined Task Force 333" or more popularly known "Headquarters 333 (*kongbanchakan nuai phasom 333,* or *boko 333*)" that controlled both the Thai military and PARU's operations in Laos.[118] The then Minister of Defense Army Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn became the first chairman of Combined Task Force 333.[119]

Subsequently in October 1960, the first group of Thai commanders carefully selected from the police and army left for Vientiane to build the regional headquarters of Combined Task Force 333 in Wattai Airport.[120] The U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group to Laos was established in Savannakhet at the same time and it worked closely with the Thai army groups.[121] Among the first seven commanders in Vientiane headquarters, Bill Lair and Pranet played a key role in forming the unconventional warfare tactics and guerilla units in Laos because the original covert action plan in Laos came out of these two protégés of the CIA.[122] Additionally, Sarit recruited an officer in charge of communication and intelligence in Naresuan camp, Police Sub-Lieutenant Amnuai Pradapphongsa.[123]

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[118] Theerevat, "Historical Background of Unknown Soldiers," 53.

[119] Unknown Warrior Association (UWA) 333, Editorial Department, "*Songkhram indochin phak 2 songkhram yen (songkhram latthi), kanrop khong nakrop niranam 333* [Second Indochina War during the Cold War (War of Ideology), Battle of the Unknown Warrior 333]," in *Songkhram pokpong chat sasana kasat nai ratchanachak lao: suchibat kanprachumyai samanprachampi 2554 samakhom nakrop niranam 333. 2 mesayon 2554* [War to Guard Nation, Religion, Monarchy in the Kingdom of Laos: Program for Annual Conference of the Unknown Warrior Association 333 on April 2, 2011], ed. Unknown Warrior Association 333 (Bangkok: Unknown Warrior Association 333, 2011), 217.

[120] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 24, 28, 49-50, 66-68. The seven commanders are: Army Major General Chamnian Phongphairot (Jak), Army Colonel Chawon Wannarat (Nop), Police Colonel Pranet Ritluechai (Non-Liwang), Police Colonel James Bill Lair (Khap), Major Prayun Bunnak (Phon), Captain Suchit Mongkhonkhamnuankhet (Don), and Police Sub-Lieutenant Amnuai Pradapphongsa (Ek). The names in parenthesis are their codenames.

[121] UWA 333, "*Songkhram indochin phak 2*," 217.

[122] Bill Lair in his memorial note in the Pranet's cremation volume implies that most projects that the PARU and CIA engaged in Thailand and Laos derived from their joint planning process. See, *Police General Pranet Ritluechai, Cremation Volume. February 28, 2002 (anuson nueang nai phithi phraratchathan phloengsop phon tamruat ek pranet Ritluechai wan pharuehat thi 28 kumphaphan phoso 2545)*, (Bangkok, Thailand, 2002), 62-64.

[123] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 66-67.

As the tension grew in northern Laos, the Combined Task Force 333 in Vientiane moved to Nong Khai in Thailand in October 1962 and then a year later to Udon Thani. When moved to Udon Air base in November 1963, the Combined Task Force changed its name to Headquarters 333 and the Army Colonel Vithoon Yasawat was appointed to the commander in chief of the Headquarters in July 1964.[124] Right after Vithoon joined the Udon Headquarters, twenty pilots from the Royal Thai Air Force were dispatched to Laos under the operation name "Firefly" and the first group Army's artillery company followed soon under the name "Sunrise". [125]

The historical and political rhetoric around the CIA's clandestine war in Laos and the Thai armed forces' participation to this action often emphasize national security objectives. Thai armies and PARU members say that it was their fundamental duty to defend Thailand's security before it collapsed and thus their bravery and sacrifice in Laos should not be undermined even if the action was clandestine and also failed. In addition, the PARU members who participated in the Lao mission often highlight that it was Sarit's own idea to mobilize their unit to assist the CIA program because PARU was more or less the only force qualified for undertaking covert unconventional warfare.[126]

In a similar fashion, the American rhetoric for defending its secret war was to resolve the growing political chaos among the Lao elite groups and to suppress the communist expansion to its neighboring countries. To deal with the Lao problem, it was better at utilizing the local forces

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[124] UWA 333, "*Songkhram indochin phak 2*," 218. A senior CIA officer comments that Vithoon Yasawat was the Thai general who had direct private access to both the Lao and Thai prime ministers, and was "the single most important player in the Laos program." Cited in William M. Leary, "Supporting the "Secret War": CIA Air Operations in Laos, 1955-1974," *Studies in Intelligence* (Winter 1999-2000), 81. For further information, see, Rueangyot Chanthonsiri, *Duai khuamrusuek lae songcham nai wanwan khong thep 333* [Feelings and Past Memories of Thep 333] (Bangkok: Samnakphim chiwit lae prasopkan, 1992).

[125] UWA 333, "*Songkhram indochin phak 2*," 218.

[126] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 47.; Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 18-19.

but neither Phoumi's Royal Lao Army nor Vang Pao's ethnic soldiers were prepared for fighting such ruthless Northern Vietnamese and Pathet Lao armies. As the then Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs W.W. Rostow said to President Kennedy in mid-1961, the U.S. government could not trust that "Phoumi's forces could, on their own, give a very good account of themselves if they were to be substantially engaged with the Pathet Lao," and therefore, he suggested bringing in American military advisors to enhance the Lao army's combat ability while seeking Sarit's cooperation.[127] In this way, the U.S. government believed it could avoid international and domestic criticism against its direct involvement in Lao affairs.

In the meantime, there also existed political calculation among the participant parties. As for Sarit, he believed that Thailand's support for the CIA covert operation in Laos, and the American foreign policy towards the Indochina, would induce the U.S. government to pay for his rural development programs and his armies. At the same time, like Pranet said, Sarit wanted to help his own relative Phoumi from losing a battle against the leftwing groups.[128] On the other hand, there are also different interpretations that explain the reason why Sarit endorsed the participation of Thai armed forces in the CIA operation in Laos. Kenneth Conboy observes that Sarit showed wholehearted support for the plan of mobilizing PARU in the CIA's Lao action because he wanted the PARU to suffer heavy losses.[129] Lair, by contrast, recalls that Sarit asked the CIA officials to use his army, not the PARU forces, in the CIA's Lao operation, so that the

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[127] "Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow) to President Kennedy, Washington, August 17, 1961" in *FRUS 1961-1963 Laos Crisis*, 371-372.

[128] Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit Division, "*Sonthana PARU, phon tamruat tho pranet ritluechai* [PARU Conversation, with Police Lieutenant General Pranet Ritluechai]," *Warasan naresuan samphan* [Naresuan Public Relations Magazine] 35:58 (1989), 12-14.

[129] Conboy, *Shadow War*, 66. n.4.

Thai army would win recognition from the U.S. government.[130] In either case, it is clear that Sarit did not want only the PARU to be mobilized in the CIA's covert operations in other Southeast Asian countries because the CIA's continuous support for the unit would maintain the PARU's military strength as well as prestige. While sending PARU to the Lao battleground, Sarit also wanted his army to play a key role within the massive and expensive American warfare so that it could take over the attention and privilege that the U.S. government and CIA had vested to the BPP and PARU.[131]

In contrast to Sarit's wish, PARU and Bill Lair had one significant objective to accomplish through the Lao action: survival. To put it simply, Bill Lair wanted to secure the PARU from disbandment by demonstrating its higher qualifications in countering the communist guerrillas in any conditions, and he was certain that PARU was the only unit that could carry out such the mission.[132] Likewise, to Pranet, it was such an invaluable opportunity that could restore the unit's institutional autonomy and prestige by showing the PARU's exceptional ability to undertake covert missions across the borders. As its earlier histories of training and operation speak vividly, the PARU was prepared to be mobilized in such the larger mission from its formation. One of the leaders of the PARU operational team in Laos testifies that the communication training by using modern American radio and code systems, patrol duties in the remotest areas of Thai border zones, and building of the Border Information Centers all helped the PARU company to readily carry out the CIA's covert actions in Laos.[133] Similarly, Lair's

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[130] *Bill Lair Oral History*, p.96. Interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 16, 2013.

[131] Theerevat, "Historical Background of Unknown Soldiers," 50.

[132] Interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 16, 2013. Bill Lair recalls that the then chief of the Far East Division Desmond FitzGerald in the CIA saved the PARU company with the accordance from Allen Dulles and asked Lair to write a report on how to mobilize the PARU in the Lao action. See, *Bill Lair Oral History,* 85-86.

[133] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 23-24.

initial goal to set up the Huai Sat Yai camp was to train the PARU in night parachuting in the jungles.[134]

PARU's other top-secret mission called "Operation Romeo" also proved the unit's exceptional capability in carrying out clandestine missions. The operation was to support the anticommunist movements in various Asian countries like China, Indonesia and Indochinese countries by using the Civil Air Transport (CAT). For this covert operation, the CIA brought a PARU team to Takhli Air Base, Nakhon Sawan province to assist the CAT's aerial reconnaissance.[135] In other words, the CIA had already conceived the general mission of PARU from the early 1950s as a region-wide mobile force that could be called into action wherever the CIA and U.S. government designated. In a sense, Sarit's coup had expedited these blueprints to be realized in the actual battleground.

After they received a green signal from Sarit in the secret meeting, Pranet and Lair returned to Hua Hin to finalize the Lao action plan. They organized five PARU operational teams with 5-men in each. The first five PARU operational teams' basic responsibilities were: collecting intelligence that need to be relayed to the Headquarters 333 in Vientiane; assisting the Lao army in the battlegrounds; and, setting up local militia groups among the ethnic minority volunteers, namely Hmong, Mien, Lao Thueng, Thai dam (Black Thai), Kha in Boloven region which were under the control of Phoumi.[136] On December 8, 1960, these five teams of total 25 PARU men boarded the Air America's Dakota C47 airplane in Boe Fai airport, Hua Hin at midnight and

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[134] *Bill Lair Oral History,* 67-68.

[135] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 26. Interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 15, 2013.

[136] Headquarters 333 was originally set up in Vientiane but as the security condition deteriorated, it moved to Nongkhai province in Thailand, and then to the Udon Thani airbase where the CIA had set up a secret office. Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 47-4; Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 24.

flew to Sepon Airport in Savannakhet, Laos. The reason why the first PARU teams arrived in Savannakhet province rather than other closer areas was because the CIA and Thai commanders had already built a friendly relationship with Prince Boun Oum Champassak, a head of southern Lao royal family and they believed Phoumi and Prince Boun Oum could facilitate the PARU's activities in Laos.[137] As soon as they arrived in Laos, the five team leaders received Royal Lao Army rank equal to Sub-Lieutenant to disguise them as local soldiers. Then, each team departed to their designated operational areas.

Choetchamrat was the leader of Team B and was in charge of assisting Phoumi's twenty-sixth Infantry Battalion in Pak Kading, Khammouane province. When this Lao army battalion attacked Kong Le's force in Vientiane, PARU's Team B was fighting with them. After recapturing Vientiane, Phoumi came to Choetchamrat and held his hand tightly, appreciating the Thai PARU's impressive assistance. To Choetchamrat, in fact, the battle in Vientiane was too easy to the point that the PARU members in his team did not even have to waste bullets.[138] Nonetheless, while retreating from Vientiane, Kong Le and the Pathet Lao group could successfully expel the twenty-first local Lao Army battalion under Vang Pao's command from PDJ. When Vang Pao's army retreated to Tha Vieng, Pranet and Lair arranged with the PARU operational team D leader to meet with Vang Pao.[139] Upon listening to Pranet and Lair's

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[137] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 47.

[138] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 47-48.

[139] William Leary marks that Bill Lair met with Vang Pao in late December 1959. It is, however, still unclear who had recruited Vang Pao in the first place. One of the key CIA members of the Lao operation was Gordon Young's brother William Young (Bill Young) and Gordon said in the interview with this author that he has believed it was his brother Bill Young who recruited Vang Pao in the first place because Bill Young can speak various ethnic languages and also he had been organizing ethnic groups to conduct intelligence in Laos since 1958-1959. Interestingly enough, only after 2 days when the New York Times published the first edition of Bill Young's obituary on April 3, 2011, correction was made on the earlier version saying that it was not Young but Bill Lair who recruited Vang Pao. See those comments from Leary, "Supporting the "Secret War," 77.; New York Times. "William Young, Who Helped U.S. Organize Secret War in Laos, is Dead at 76" in New York Times, April 3,

proposal to train the Hmong soldiers for the guerrilla warfare, Vang Pao gladly accepted their offer. Immediately, the three boarded a helicopter to decide where to build the operational headquarters. They came to the conclusion to build a temporary camp in Ban Padong, nearby Long Cheng in Xieng Khouang province.[140]

In the meantime, Sarit ordered the building of a secret battalion camp called Saritsena Camp in Phitsanulok province to prepare the Thai armed forces in guerrilla warfare.[141] From the beginning, PARU planned to be the central force that would play the roles of instructor, advisor and main fighter in the entire action. When the camp building in Phitsanulok was completed, about four hundred men in the Naresuan camp were divided into two units. Until 1963, 256 PARU members had moved and joined the special battalion in Saritsena camp and about 140 PARU men remained in Naresuan, Hua Hin.[142] Since rest of the PARU members in Hua Hin became a reserve force, they had to stay on duty to be readily called in to Saritsena Camp.[143] The training program for preparing the Thai armed force against the communist infiltration was organized among the recruits from army, police, air force, civilian and commercial aviation groups, immigration and custom officers, and other governmental organizations.[144] The PARU

2011." Accessed November 1, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com /2011/04/04/world/asia/04young.html?_r=2.; Interview with Gordon Young, March 11-12, 2012.

[140] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 50.

[141] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 45.

[142] *Khai Naresuan*, 10.

[143] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 26. Saritsena Special Battalion camp in Phitsanulok province was also called Phits camp among the PARU, Thai army and American advisors at that time.

[144] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 19.

received extra training called Air Rescue on top of the regular curricular in Saritsena between August and November 1964 with other American commanders.[145]

Generally speaking, there were two major tasks that the PARU were assigned to carry out in Laos: first, to train the local soldiers and militias, mainly the Hmong army under Vang Pao's command; and second, to assist the CIA and USOM officials' civic action in Laos by supplying the weapons, food, and armed forces. In particular for the latter, unknown number of BPP members were also sent to Laos to assist the civilian counterinsurgency projects. As for the first task, the BPP and PARU created two separate training courses for the Lao and Hmong guerrilla forces in Thailand and Laos.

From the mid-1950s, PARU and BPP had provided secret unconventional war training courses for foreign military and civilian officers as mentioned earlier in the BPP history part. In 1956, 60 noncommissioned officers selected from Sam Neua and Phongsali came to the Chiang Mai jungle camp located in Samong subdistrict and received training in guerrilla fighting from the BPP. Right after Kong Le's coup in Vientiane, 30 Lao soldiers from the Sixth Infantry Battalion in Savannakhet had received a three-week training in Maruekkhathayawan Palace camp under the supervision of PARU. Due to the urgency to push Kong Le's group out of Vientiane, these Lao army trainees received an intensive training in weapons, demolition, raid and sabotage and were dispatched immediately after the completion.[146] Once the war began in Laos and especially after Vang Pao joined the CIA operation in 1960, the size and frequency of BPP and PARU's foreign military training grew rapidly. Between 1961-1962, about 300 Hmong soldiers from the local battalions in the Military Region Two came to Thailand and received

[145] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 27.

[146] Pranet et al., *Prawat kan fuek dot rom*, 155.

training in communication and special operations. These officers were soon promoted to high-ranking commandership and assigned to various local military units in Laos.[147]

Right before the fourteen states signed in the international agreement on the neutrality of Laos in Geneva in July 1962, the PARU began focusing on the training of the civilians, such as militias or village security groups in the strategically important villages. Generally, this mission was called the Special Guerrilla Unit (*kong chon phiset*, SGU) training. According to official accounts, the PARU's SGU training began in 1962 in Maruekkhathayawan Palace camp. Choetchamrat, who had been temporarily released from Lao action due to the injury that he suffered in Laos, was ordered to oversee the SGU training in this camp. Since June 1962, each course trained a company size of Hmong and Lao Theung ethnic soldiers (100-men in each class) in weapons and guerrilla warfare so that the trainees could replace other Lao infantries or paramilitaries in various areas. With the U.S. government's material and financial support, weapons training covered the use of Mortar 4.2 mm, Recoilless rifle 57 mm, Mortar 81 mm, Bazooka 3.5, and machine gun .50. In sum, PARU trained three battalions of a total of 1,500 Hmong soldiers in Thailand and sent them back to the Lao battlefields.[148] To compliment and encourage the Hmong trainees in Thailand, Vang Pao flew to Hua Hin and inspected the training for himself.[149] Soon, because the training of Hmong soldiers in PARU's Maruekkhathayawan Palace camp could not remain secret from the public, this special guerrilla training moved to Saritsena camp in Phitsanulok province.[150]

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[147] Pranet et al., *Prawat kan fuek dot rom*, 155.

[148] Pranet et al., *Prawat kan fuek dot rom*, 155; Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 48.

[149] Interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 16, 2013.

[150] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 33.

In Laos, one of the first trainings of Vang Pao's ethnic armies took place by the PARU operational Team D in Ban Padong and by May 1961, PARU completed the training of twenty companies of Auto-Defense de Choc (ADC). The size of trainees grew too rapidly so the training program and PARU members moved to Pha Khao area nearby Long Cheng to build new training camps.[151]

While training the local militias, PARU and BPP also extended the United States Operations Mission to Laos' civic action programs. The U.S. economic and military aid had begun to flow to Laos since 1950 and in January 1955, the USOM established its Laos branch office in Vientiane. In June 1960, a legendary Indiana farmer named Edgar "Pop" Buell came to Laos and soon joined Lair's project for distributing the supplies and foods to the Hmong villagers nearby PDJ.[152] Since the U.S. government wanted to see an equal level of success in the civilian counterinsurgency programs between Thailand and Laos, the experienced BPP civic action agents were called in to reproduce similar developments for security programs in Laos from the early 1960s.

Long Cheng was on the priority list for this development for security project to showcase the American modernization model. According to several PARU members and others accounts, Long Cheng became a distinctively modern town in the mountaintop as soon as the CIA team called "SKY" built its base camp.[153] Unlike other rural villages in Laos, it had electricity, markets, paved roads, small and medium size airports with several airplanes flying between

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[151] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 51.

[152] Leary, "Supporting the "Secret War," 73, 78.

[153] Since the CIA members could not disclose they were belonging to the U.S. government, they used the codename SKY at all times. During the Lao operation period, there were on average 10-12 SKY team members. Interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 16, 2013.

Long Cheng and Vientiane.[154] In 1967, Vang Pao even built a royal palace for King Sisavang Vatthana in this modern town.[155]

One of the notable activities that the BPP had implemented in Long Cheng was opening of radio stations to implement psychological operation, or more precisely, the propaganda campaigns. Manas Khantatatbumroong, who had been in charge of BPP's civic action program in Thailand, was called in to Laos in 1966. Most BPP officers in Laos at that time carried out translator jobs but because Manas had an experience of working in the BPP radio stations in Thailand, he was assigned to work with the CIA advisor Edward Johnson to set up the "United Lao Ethnics Radio Station (*sathanni withayu lao ruam phao*)".[156] Until Manas returned to Thailand in 1967, he had broadcasted news about the situation in other areas of Laos and anticommunist propaganda three times a day in three languages -- Lao, Hmong, and Lao Theung.[157]

Another important development project assigned to the BPP in Laos was building the airstrips in the remote villages. From the early 1950s when the BPP members reached the remote villages in the mountainous border areas of Thailand, one of the first tasks was building a "Short Take-off and Landing (STOL)" so that the regional headquarters could send supplies, foods, medicines and other necessary materials for building schools or medical clinics in these villages by airplanes or helicopters. Likewise, when the CIA and Headquarters 333 designated an

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[154] For example, see Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 61.

[155] King Sisavang Vatthana also visited Long Cheng to open the first radio station set up by the BPP and CIA on March 17, 1967. See, Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 61-62.

[156] 2 CIA officers in the American SKY team who worked closely with the BPP and PARU in Laos, Louis O'Jibway and Edward Johnson died in an aircraft accident when they cross the Mekhong River from Laos to Udon Thani, Thailand on August 20, 1965. Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, February 21, 2011.; Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 48-49.; Leary, "CIA and the 'Secret War'," 517.

[157] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, January 24 , 2011 and February 21, 2011.

area of operation for the PARU operational teams, the villagers in the area were mobilized to build the STOL airstrips or at the very least, a parking spot called a "pad" so that the stationed PARU members could receive basic supplies including food, medicine, and weapons needed for the SGUs. While training the local militias, the PARU operational teams also built schools and medical clinics like the BPP did in Thailand.[158] Nonetheless, these development projects in strategic areas like Long Cheng basically aimed to facilitate military bases for the CIA, USOM-Laos, Thai and Lao armies and thus they did not yield satisfactory or long-term impacts on Laos.

All these efforts to secure Laos from communists and promote the development of security projects began to wane when full-scale fighting broke out and the combined forces of Northern Vietnamese communists and Pathet Lao attacked the PDJ in March 1964. In fact, several PARU operational teams in Laos had sensed the ominous signs of communist victory as well as growing local villagers' animosity against the presence of "strangers" like PARU and CIA not long after they launched the operation. In general, because the PARU operational team's program was designed for short-term development projects in key villages and more focused on the military training, it was common for the team members to stay in one area for a short time period and then move to other posts.[159] The reasons for terminating PARU's operations in the villages varied from area to area, but one notable incident in Mueang Ngat that had taken several PARU team members' lives and finally forced the team to discontinue its program, shows the reason why the CIA and PARU's covert operations had to close down, starting in the late 1960s.

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[158] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 38-43.

[159] Kamon explains that deployment of the PARU operational teams to Laos was based on contingency plan. Therefore, although the PARU operational teams used the alphabet to identify each team, it does not necessarily mean that those teams were dispatched in alphabetical-chronological order. The Table 3 and Figure 11 show summary information of each PARU operational team dispatched to Laos in the 1960s. Here, there are no information about the Team G, I, P, S, and X. As Kamon marks, these teams might have not been even existed. Also, it should be noted that the each team operated in the temporary basis and commanders and members of the team rotated when necessary or when the operation was completed or cancelled.

After successfully assisting the Phoumi's battle to recapture Vientiane, Choetchamrat was reassigned to be a leader of Team N and moved to Mueang Ngat village, which was only nine kilometers away from the Vietnamese border. Team N was assigned to train the villagers in guerrilla warfare and to create SGU under Vang Pao's command from June 1961. PARU instructors trained three-company size of local militias in shooting and destroying the enemy with machine-gun .50 mm and mortar 4.2mm. When the training was completed, they distributed weapons and ammunition so that those SGUs could defend their villages.[160] Only two days after completing the first round of SGU training, about three battalions of Northern Vietnamese communist forces attacked Mueang Ngat in October 1961. Against the PARU's recommendations, the trained local militias had heard about the Vietminh's attack to their villages in advance and a majority of them ran away, leaving less than forty SGUs behind with seven PARU members. In this battle, Choetchamrat lost three of his PARU subordinates and he got injured. Choetchamrat still recalls the Mueang Ngat battle bitterly not only because he lost his PARU friends but also because his own village trainees did not inform him about the attack and left the PARU in such the danger.

The bitter times continued among the PARU members in Laos. In early October 1962, Kamon Bunsoemsap, the leader of Team J in Ban Phu Hua Mui, Sayaburi province heard from the Team E leader China Wechakawi, that his team would move back to Thailand. Shortly after his friend left for Thailand, Kamon learned from the Hmong villagers the actual reason why the Team E had to return to Thailand. In short, China had a problem with the Hmong village headman in Phu Kong where Team E had operated and thus China had to ask the Headquarters to move the team to a safer place. Soon, Kamon heard that the son of village headman in Phu

[160] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 49.

Kong -- who had received the SGU training in Hua Hin in June 1962 -- secretly came to Ban Phu Hua Mui and asked the village militias not to befriend the Thai PARU and kill all the team members. The son said he would take over Kamon's position after the PARU members disappeared from the village. Kamon recalls that he did not give a serious thought to this information at that time, but shortly after he moved to other post, Team J was attacked by unidentified enemies and thus had to retreat to Long Cheng in October 1963 after losing several lives of the village militias.[161] Predictably, PARU operational team members began to be disenchanted about arming the local militias. Kamon says that he was not sure how far the son of Hmong village headman "felt embittered about the Thai people" at the time when he heard the rumor of attack but he sadly regrets that the almost two-year-long PARU effort to promote community development and to build the SGU in the village had to be terminated without any success.[162]

As the war prolonged, PARU's disillusion gradually transformed to an act of cold revenge especially when the Team O in Xieng Khouang province was attacked by the Lao Army Colonel Sombun, the then supervisor of local militia who was also trained by the PARU. In this surprise attack, PARU lost three members. Enraged by the betrayal, the remaining PARU members who survived chased Colonel Sombun for about two years and finally captured him. They beheaded and brought the traitor's head to Hua Hin to let "all the PARU know that we revenged the evil that had betrayed us". However, because the acting commander of Naresuan camp refused to let the members bring the traitor's head inside the camp, they burnt it in the jungle.[163] The level of

[161] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 41-42, 44.

[162] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 29, 44-45.

[163] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 29-30, 36-37, 55. The Colonel's last name is not given. It is noteworthy that Kamon repeats this story of revenge against Colonel Sombun three times in his memoir.

bitterness disclosed in this story may be one extreme example, however it shows the signs of crumbling relationship between the PARU and local people in Laos. Despite the PARU's growing suspicion and also the bitterness, they still had to recruit and train more local militia as the number of attacks from the Northern Vietnamese and Pathet Lao increased. Unlike the beginning, now the PARU members could not wholly trust their own trainees. They still continued teaching the villagers how to fight communists and also gave them weapons to defend themselves. However, the PARU teams were not sure which side the villagers' loyalty lied and also whether those trainees would fight communists before the communists convinced them to join their war against the Americans and Thais.

The war against the Vietminh and Pathet Lao turned from worse to the worst by early 1969. On March 1, 1969, Ban Nakhang village next to Sam Neua collapsed and several PARU members were captured or killed by the Vietminh forces.[164] Subsequently in late 1969, Vietminh forces surrendered Mueang Souy and Sam Thong, and then finally reached Long Cheng. According to Kamon, the American SKY advisors left Long Cheng by airplane as soon as they heard the Vietminh had approached the base. Vang Pao was in Vientiane at the time of attack and only 34 PARU members were in the Long Cheng Headquarters when Vietminh armies finally arrived nearby village. After a brief meeting, the leaders of PARU teams and the rest of members decided to remain and fight with the two battalions of Vietminh forces to save the honor of PARU. According to the PARU's later analysis, the Vietminh forces eventually did not attack on the night they had approached Long Cheng because they did not know why the Thai PARU members had not retreated from Long Cheng even after all the Americans left. In the early morning, the commander in Headquarters 333, Vithoon Yasawat decided to send special

[164] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 45-46.

forces from Thailand to Long Cheng and when the Thai armies arrived, the Vietminh soldiers retreated.[165] Until Long Cheng collapsed from the Vietminh's invasion in 1972, it was the PARU team that had secured this "skyline" town from the communist expansion.[166]

In January 1970, the Thanom government decided to deploy more armed forces under the disguise of "volunteers". Between 1963-1970, thirty battalion commando and six battalion artillery with approximately 550-men in each battalion had joined the Firefly and Sunrise teams in Laos, finally amounting over 20,000 of Thai soldiers to Laos.[167] In October 1970, one battalion of Thai Army Rangers (*thahan suea phran*) came to aid those units but still the force was insufficient.[168] Despite additional armed forces coming to secure the Long Cheng and Sam Thong areas, the weary Hmong and Thai soldiers could not resist against the endless waves of Vietminh and Pathet Lao armies. The battles between the CIA-Thai-Hmong soldiers and Vietnamese-Lao communist climaxed between December 1971-March 1972 around Long Cheng and finally, the ceasefire was declared on September 20, 1973.

After sacrificing 2,482 lives of their friends out of almost 40,000 Thai armed forces dispatched to Laos between 1961-1974, defeated and demoralized Thai soldiers and PARU members returned to Thailand between 1972-1974.[169] One of the last PARU men who had been

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[165] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 62, 76-77.

[166] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 61-63.

[167] UWA 333, "*Songkhram indochin phak 2*," 218-219.

[168] Pricha Nithisupha (Spotlight), "*Pattibatkan nakrop niranam 333, 2504-2517* [Activities of Unknown Warrior 333, 1961-1974]," in *Songkhram pokpong chat sasana kasat nai ratchanachak lao: suchibat kanprachumyai samanprachampi 2554 samakhom nakrop niranam 333. 2 mesayon 2554* [War to Guard Nation, Religion, Monarchy in the Kingdom of Laos: Program for Annual Conference of the Unknown Warrior Association 333 on April 2, 2011], ed. Unknown Warrior Association 333 (Bangkok: Unknown Warrior Association 333, 2011), 62.; Theerevat, "Historical Background of Unknown Soldiers," 56-57.

[169] UWA 333, "Songkhram indochin phak 2," 221.; Pricha Nithisupha (Spotlight), "*Prawatsat kanrop nai lao khong nakrop niranam 333* [History of the Unknown Warrior 333's War in Laos]," in *Songkhram indochin yuk songkhram yen lae botbat khong nakrop niranam 333: prachumyai samanprachampi 2553. 3 mesayon 2553* [Indochina War

captured in Laos in 1969 was among the total of 214 prisoners of war that the Thai and Vietnamese governments exchanged in September 19-29, 1974. After spending more than four years in various prisons from Laos to Vietnam, this PARU man finally made it home only to find that he had been promoted to the position of commissioned officer in the year when the Vietminh captured him. Without hesitance, this prisoner of war resigned from the Thai police and left PARU shortly after he returned home.[170]

Inglorious Return to Thailand

In the present, the PARU remembers the 1969 Long Cheng victory as one of the most important historical events that made the name PARU popular and honorable. However, returning to Thailand was not as glorious and honorable as they had expected. In an internal report prepared by the PARU in 1975, a company-size group of PARU members still remained in Saritsena camp. Since the PARU did not have a specifically designated area of operation, the then total 1,450 PARU men were redistributed in various security-sensitive areas like Mae Sot, located between the Thai and Burmese border, Chiang Rai that shares a border with Laos, or Nakhon Si Thammarat, mid-south border province. Under the command of BPP Headquarters, PARU was assigned to undertake special duties like assisting the BPP force in the border security operations or supporting the civic actions such as the BPP Schools and development centers. At the same time, the PARU members were mobilized in assisting the royal projects in southern provinces.[171]

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during the Cold War and the Role of Unknown Warrior 333, Annual Conference on April 3, 2010], ed. Unknown Warrior Association 333 (Bangkok: Unknown Warrior Association 333, 2010), 12. During the operation in Laos between 1963-1972, officially 90 PARU members lost lives and 41 men got injured. Considering the average number of each team had five men, it is not a small number of casualties. Worse yet, most of those dead bodies could not be taken back to Thailand. See the number of casualties in Lao action from *Khai Naresuan*, 18.

[170] Kamon, "*Pharu rop nai lao*," 46.

[171] *Khai Naresuan*, 18-21.

However, as the number of internal insurgencies grew rapidly in Thailand from the mid-1960s, the number of PARU casualties increased accordingly, most notably from the early 1970s. In other words, when the PARU and the CIA were losing the battles against the Vietminh and Pathet Lao in Laos from the late 1960s, a number of PARU members were also losing their lives in Thailand. The war against the communists in Laos was simultaneously taking place in Thailand and in fact, the Thai rural insurgencies had increased drastically by the time the PARU operational teams in Laos returned home. Indeed, the number of PARU casualties in Thailand in the late 1960s exceeded the number of PARU man who died in Laos for more than a decade long operation. [172]

As the Sarot Panya's speech in the PARU's reunion party in 2011 discloses, the PARU members in the mid-1970s felt that "everything was difficult and insufficient". As for the PARU returnees, the experience from Laos left more bitterness than a sense of honor when returning home. One of the private aviation company's pilots recalls the time when the survived Thai troops retreated from the PDJ on December 20, 1971, which resonates with the traumatic memories of PARU members in the last phase of war in Laos:

> By 1300 local, our efforts were confined to picking up the wounded and survivors of the fire bases. Most of them were working their way to LS-15 [Ban Na]. A pitiful sight from two weeks before. The majority were shell shocked and most were suffering from wounds, exposure, or shock in one form or another.[173]

As the earlier anecdotes of betrayal by the local militias tell vividly, PARU members had already been disillusioned from arming the indigenous people to fight communism because they believed the local villagers could be easily duped by the communist propagandists. In addition, they had

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[172] See, for example, the list of PARU casualties in Thailand and Laos from *Prawat khai naresuan*, 175-178.

[173] "Notes on PDJ Battle, December 17-20," December 23, 1971 by the Continental Air Services pilot Edwin B. Dearborn. Cited in Leary, "CIA and the 'Secret War'," 514.

witnessed that even their ardent supporter like the American SKY team could simply abandon the PARU if they were to risk their lives. The memories of war and the moments of honor and victory were quickly submerged with the bitterness and confusion by the time the PARU members came back home.

The homecoming in Thailand was also unsatisfying. The PARU members had resigned from the Thai police when they left for Laos. Resignation from official positions meant that all those Thai soldiers and PARU members had given up the right to official compensation even if they got killed or wounded in action because the entire Laos operation had been still a top secret until recently.[174] For instance, when Choetchamrat got injured in Mueang Ngat in October 1961 and was transferred to Thailand for medical treatment, Police Colonel Suraphon Chulaphram, who was then in charge of the administrative subdivision in the BPP Headquarters, received Choetchamrat in Don Mueang Airport. Promptly and secretly, Suraphon took him to a private clinic where the BPP and CIA had made a contract to treat the injured from Laos. For the next three months of rehabilitation, Choetchamrat was forbidden to enter public medical installations, and as soon as he was recovered, he was sent to train the SGU in Maruekkhathayawan Palace camp.[175]

Aside from injuries and casualties, it was difficult for the PARU returnees to accept that their honorable actions in Laos to help the Free World allies for stopping communist expansion

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[174] Theerevat, "Historical Background of Unknown Soldiers," 57. According to the Unknown Warrior Association accounts, the Association got a semi-official approval from the Thai government to disclose their activities in Laos in 2010. See the details from: Unknown Warrior Association 333, "*Sarup khuampenpai rueang khoyokluek chankhuamlap boko phasom 333* [Briefing on the Possibility to Declassify about the Combined Task Force 333]," in *Songkhram pokpong chat sasana kasat nai ratchanachak lao: suchibat kanprachumyai samanprachampi 2554 samakhom nakrop niranam 333. 2 mesayon 2554* [War to Guard Nation, Religion, Monarchy in the Kingdom of Laos: Program for Annual Conference of the Unknown Warrior Association 333 on April 2, 2011], ed. Unknown Warrior Association 333 (Bangkok: Unknown Warrior Association 333, 2011), 16-18.

[175] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 48, 50-51,

had to remain silent from the public. The Thai government's treatment of these cold warriors was disappointing because not only did their activities go unrecognized, but also their compensation was not fairly distributed, while their wounds and shock from the war were still too fresh. Sarot said that at least, PARU had the unity to maintain the unit's strength and honor, but in fact, a number of returnees actually left PARU shortly.[176] Many commissioned officers of PARU who had participated in the Lao operations were promoted to higher-level positions but some of them also left PARU.

One of the central elements that had kept the PARU members in unison was the royal presence. The Thai royal family had constantly visited the PARU camps during the turbulent 1960s and 1970s. In 1965, the crown prince Vajiralongkorn came to practice riding zip-line and ground parachuting with the PARU instructors. While the crown prince was attending the Australian military academy, he again came to receive private parachute training in Naresuan camp in 1971. On this occasion, Vajiralongkorn insisted on jumping from the real airplane like the other PARU parachutists. Since Pranet had such a friendly relationship with the crown prince, he joked back and told him the big airplane that the crown prince had wanted to board might destroy the entire jumping ground in Hua Hin camp.[177]

Whenever the royal family came to Hua Hin, Prachuap Khirikhan or Phetburi province, they often made official and unofficial visits to the PARU camps to build closer relations with the PARU members.[178] On April 10, 1966, the royal couple traveled to the Huai Sat Yai camp

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[176] Personal Communication with retired PARU members in the Reunion Party in Cha-am Naresuan Camp, April 27, 2010. This PARU member who had been in Laos also moved to the Provincial Police after he returned to Thailand.

[177] Pranet et al., *Prawat kan fuek dot rom*,; Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 36.

[178] One of the unofficial visits by the royal couple and their invitation of the PARU members to Klai Kangwon Palace dinner are well documented in Vasit's memoir. See, Vasit, *In His Majesty's Footsteps*, 1-6.

and adjunct Karen villages to inspect the PARU's activities in developing the camp and local communities. A year later, the king visited the Hua Hin camp and gave a Husky Beagle light aircraft to the PARU to be used in its operations. On the fourteenth anniversary of the Naresuan Camp opening in 1968, the then U.S. ambassador to Thailand Leonard S. Unger accompanied the royal couple to Maruekkhathayawan Palace camp and watched the PARU's parachuting and artillery demonstration with other foreign guests. Other than these official visits, there were numerous informal occasions that the royal family made to meet and encourage the PARU members in Hua Hin and Phetburi during the 1960s and to mid-1970s. [179]

Finally, Pathet Lao defeated the Royal Lao Government and forced the Lao king to abdicate the throne in December 1975. Communists had already seized power in Cambodia and Vietnam. The nightmare of domino theory began haunting Thailand. While the Thai royal family had rapidly increased their visits to the rural areas to propagate the danger of communism, the U.S. government announced the withdrawal of its armed forces from Thailand. In the middle of dramatically developing political chaos, one of the most painful and unacceptable defeats for the PARU members would have been the success of the October 14th movement in 1973, which were seen as the victory of communists in disguise of democratization. Worse yet, the student activists heightened their criticism against the now ousted Thanom government for supporting the unjustifiable American wars in Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia, which had deeply demoralizing impacts to the PARU returnees.[180]

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[179] See, Bureau of Royal Household, Public Relations Office, *Sadet praphatton ma pen khrongkan phraratchadamri, phoso 2502-2518* [Royal Journey Becomes the Royal Project, 1959-1975] (Bangkok: Amarin Printing and Publishing, Ltd., 1996), 148-179, 210-225, 264-275, 344-351.

[180] David Morell and Chai-anan Samudavanija, *Political Conflict in Thailand: Reform, Reaction, Revolution* (Cambridge: Oelgeschlager, Gunn & Hain, 1981), 165.

The PARU members, in a way, could have sympathized with the democratization movement at home. Choetchamrat remarks: "the Americans spent a fortune to fight communists and to protect Thailand. The enemy side spent much less. So the war in Laos was the war between the rich and poor (*pen kansurop rawang khonruai kap khonchon*)".[181] Likewise, the growing tension in Thailand was the war between the rich and poor because what the student and civilian activists arduously called for during the 1973-1976 period was the social conscience for eliminating the authoritarian leadership, unfair redistribution of wealth, and heavy reliance on American domination and political injustice, which all had contributed to maintaining the unequal, hierarchical Thai society.[182] Nonetheless, the lessons learned from Laos were quickly prevailed upon by the growing confusion and bitterness from the aftermath of war at home. American defeat in the Vietnam Wars had indeed more detrimental impacts to the local supporters because now, they had to find the way to survive the political crisis without their U.S. patron. It was time to make their war against the local people's calls for change because that very change could dismantle the local elite group's standing built upon the Cold War system. The war, therefore, did not end, either to Thailand or to PARU. In this sense, the end of the Vietnam War was only the beginning of civil wars in Southeast Asia.

Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined the formation and activities of the PARU and intensifying Indochinese civil wars to illuminate the following: first, the consolidation of the cold warrior's network among the PARU and Thai military, and second the nature of the Cold War that

[181] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 49.

[182] Suthachai Yimprasert, *Saithan prawatsat prachathipatai thai* [The Stream of Thai Democracy History] (Bangkok: P. Press, 2008), 138-149.

transformed national liberation struggles into hot wars in Southeast Asia. In this context, this chapter attempted to show how the Thai elites indigenized the American secret war in Laos to their cause -- either for their power domination or defending Thailand from communist invasion. Their indigenization of the American Cold War eventually saved the PARU like it did for the BPP. If Sarit did not merge the PARU under BPP in 1960, and more important, if the PARU did not become a direct security guard of the royal family, this CIA brainchild could have disappeared like other secret soldiers when the U.S. withdrew from Indochina at the end of the Vietnam Wars. On the other hand, while the rural insurgencies in Thailand increased and the secret war in Laos intensified, both the BPP and PARU witnessed the increasing demand of democratization by the Thai civilians which culminated with the October 14th movement. Their respective missions of guarding the border inside and outside of Thailand therefore converged again in Bangkok in 1976.

Chapter 7. Crusade from the Borders to Center

This chapter investigates how the Thai monarchy and BPP were able to successfully consolidate popular support for their nation-building during the Thai Counterinsurgency Era. As a case study, I observe the process of forming and developing the Village Scout movement by the BPP to create the popular support infrastructure, which spread royalist nationalism. With this popular base entrenched in every corner of Thailand, by 1973 the monarchy could finally prevail over the military and confirm its symbolic role as the center of Thai national unity. The examination of the October 6 Massacre, and ensuing coup by military forces in 1976, therefore articulates that these historical events vividly show the royalist elite's victory through successful indigenization of the American Cold War system.

One of the lasting impacts and legacies of the Cold War in the world of academic studies and contemporary societies should be the persistence of a bipolarized worldview, like the dichotomy between the Free World and the Communist bloc. This dichotomy has allowed the supposedly two superpower-centered Cold War politics to absorb divergent visions and actions of the postcolonial world into the two categories: communism and democracy, if not communism and anticommunism. In this context, the anticommunist elites propagated that the calls for changes were the communist propaganda.

It was this bifurcating political environment that actually nurtured the radicalizing social and political movements. Even if the advocates of liberal democracy attempted to achieve an equal and diverse society by toppling the military dictatorship and reducing the influence of the global superpowers to the local, the anticommunist group's heightened antipathy and purposeful terrors forced the democratization movements to become both radicalized and militarized. The growing influence of the anticommunist movement had been attributed to a bipolarizing of indigenous society as they began drawing a clear, visible line between the anticommunist and communist, us and others, and friends and foes. In this context, a military coup took place on October 6, 1976 in Thailand after staging one of the most brutal, inhumane anticommunist campaigns in history.

The BPP, PARU and Village Scouts were the key perpetrators of this tragic massacre. While they do not completely deny their presence in the scene, their official histories about the October 6 massacre still remain blank. In this respect, this chapter will look closely at the reasons why the BPP, PARU and Village Scout groups made an inglorious crusade from the rural, border areas to Bangkok in 1976 and why their participation to the October 6 massacre remain ambivalent, if not silenced, in the discussion of the Thai Cold War history. After surveying the Village Scout history and its characteristics, the following analysis on the October 6 massacre will examine the impacts of indigenized Cold War politics that had ultimately bred incessant civil wars in Thailand and beyond. By reviewing one's victorious and simultaneously other's traumatic pasts in the Thai modern history, this chapter will allow us to perceive the roots of conflicts that had grown out of the process of indigenizing Cold War politics in postcolonial Southeast Asia.

"Not So Civilian" Village Scout Movement

> The outcomes of Village Scout training and implementation of this project are good enough to benefit oneself and the others. This project is making democracy reside inside yourself and also in your moral.
>
> [Princess Mother's speech in the Village Scout Training in Buriram Province, January 13, 1974] [1]

> I hope everyone becomes the Village Scout.
>
> [King Bhumibol's speech in the Village Scout training in Satun Province, September 9, 1975] [2]

> Village Scouts are democratic people (*mueanchon prachatthipattai*). The Border Patrol Police operates among the people and that is the reason why the Village Scout plays the mediator role in mass public relations between the BPP and people. Border Patrol Police and Village Scout have therefore existed like palm and the back of the hand.
>
> [Manas Khantatatbumroong in the Village Scout Operational Center, May 3, 2011] [3]

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[1] *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban*, 41.

[2] See *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban*, 67.

[3] Manas Khantatatbumroong had been appointed as the head of administrative division in the Village Scout Operational Center since 1978. The quote is from this author's interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong in the Village Scout Operational Center. May 3, 2011.

The history of Village Scout is full of contradictions. Like Manas says above, it is a "significant other" of the BPP but the academic attention dedicated to this phenomenal mass socio-political movement has been even scarcer than that of the BPP.

In this regard, Katherine Bowie's book *Rituals of National Loyalty* (1997) made a tremendous contribution to Thai Cold War studies.[4] Based on her first-hand experiences of observing the Village Scout initiation and living in Thailand during such a pivotal time, Bowie's analysis raises several significant questions to the actual nature of Thai nation-building during the Cold War. In brief, Bowie argues that the Village Scout movement sought to have the rural villagers transcend classes and unite under the Thai nation through the seemingly unthreatening scouting activities. However, as the royal family began its patronage to the Village Scout and the national and local politicians came to be uncontrollably involved in the movement, the BPP's civilian counterinsurgency project transformed into a purposeful campaign to politicize the rural populace guarded by the three pillars of Thai nationalism -- nation, religion and monarchy. In this context, Bowie's account permits us to broaden our understanding of the historical and political background of the October 6 massacre as she vividly shows the process of making the Thai rural villagers an ideological force of royalist nationalism.

Other than Bowie's account, there are no sufficient studies available about the Village Scout movement although it was one of the biggest, most influential mass movements in the Thai history at the height of the Cold War period. Two assumptions can be suggested to explain this first contradiction of the Village Scout history. First, I assume that the Village Scout's

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[4] Katherine A. Bowie, *Rituals of National Loyalty: An Anthropology of the State and the Village Scout Movement in Thailand* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997). Another English account focuses on the Village Scout movement and also widely referred is Marjorie A. Muecke, "The Village Scouts of Thailand," *Asian Survey* 20: 4 (April 1980), 407-27. The Thai accounts are mostly produced by the Village Scout Operational Centers and the Border Patrol Police Headquarters and some memoirs and interviews by the Thai founders like Somkhuan Harikul and Charoenrit Chamratromran supplement the history of Village Scout.

participation in the October 6, 1976 massacre at Thammasat University had created a sense of reluctance among academics to further study this mass movement. Since this massacre has been discussed very sparingly, or, like Thongchai argues, silenced, the key perpetrator's stories were also erased from academic and public discourses. Second, the movement gradually disappeared from the public eye after the massacre and the political and social influence of the Village Scouts at present seems insignificant. The Village Scout movement drastically declined about a month after the coup when the government enforced a moratorium. I will discuss in more detail the aftermath of the massacre in conjunction with this moratorium shortly.

The second contradiction lies on its civilian-ness. The name "Village Scout" could mislead us to think that this movement originated and was nurtured as a grass-root activity among the rural Thais. However, as it will become clearer in the ensuing investigation on its history, the Village Scouts were more of a paramilitary buildup project that had been "conceived" by a Cold War veteran and "pioneered" by the long-time military warrior. From the beginning, the Village Scout movement was not a mere civilian movement designed to promote national unity and loyalty among the general Thais but rather, a project to create a massive reserve force for the royalists to defend the monarchy from growing communist and democratization movements. As a result, although the Princess Mother and Manas say above that the Village Scout movement is a democratic movement, their activities, including the participation in the October 6 massacre, contributed to strengthening the authoritarianism and Cold War binarism in Thailand.

To understand these historical contradictions, the following review on the Village Scout movement history will bring forward the BPP's evolving perspectives to the intensifying Cold War struggles both at home and abroad and will examine the context of the BPP and royal

family's changing strategies and missions to counter expanding communism in Southeast Asia and democratization movements in Thailand from the early 1970s.

Thailand adopted British scouting in May 1911 by Rama the Sixth -- more popularly known as King Vajiravudh. Like the Scouting founder Robert Baden-Powell had envisioned, Vajiravudh's Wild Tiger Corps (*kong suea pa*) also intended to train civilians to form a kind of home guard or local militia. Whereas the original scouting encourages the general youth groups to practice military-like discipline, King Vajiravudh's scouts and its training were "to spread the spirit of Wild Tigers amongst the King's compatriots and to instill in them a spirit of sacrifice for the lives of their fellows and for King, Nation and Religion (*chat, banmuang* [*sic*], *sasana*)".[5] In other words, the Wild Tiger Corps was a patriotic movement among the royalists during King Vajiravudh's reign.[6] Since King Vajiravudh is regarded as the father of scout movement in Thailand, a series of his speeches to the Wild Tiger Corps in the founding year were compiled into one text titled, "Instilling the Wild Tiger Spirit" and has been reproduced in school textbooks by the Ministry of Education and other history books in the past century. The speech also has been regarded as the beginning of Vajiravudh's propagation of the three pillars of Thai nationalism: king, nation and religion.[7] Starting in the early twentieth century, scouting was introduced to the general Thai educational system and consequently, the number of scout groups

[5] Eiji Murashima, "The Origin of Modern Official State Ideology in Thailand," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 19:1 (March 1988), 91.

[6] Murashima, "Origin of Modern Official State Ideology," 91.

[7] Murashima, "Origin of Modern Official State Ideology," 91. See also the history of National Scout Organizations of Thailand and Vajiravudh's founding objectives from: National Scout Organizations of Thailand, "History," accessed November 10, 2012. http://www.scout thailand.org.

has increased drastically. At present, every primary and secondary school in Thailand have scouting as part of its mandatory curriculum.

As mentioned earlier, Somkhuan Harikul, the founder of Village Scout movement, conceived forming a civilian defense group for village security in the late 1960s to counter the growing rural insurgencies alongside the intensifying hot wars in Laos and Vietnam. One of the direct triggers that reinforced Somkhuan's motivation in building the village security group was a series of Hmong insurgents' intrusions to the BPP Schools in Loei province. After surveying the highland minority villages in the Phukhithao mountain ranges that connect Loei, Phetchatbun and Phitsanulok provinces, Somkhuan, the then commander of BPP Area 4, and his BPP development team chose two border villages to build BPP Schools in 1967 that could accommodate both the BPP development and patrol units. In less than a year after opening, Hmong insurgents began attacking these schools and nearby villages and finally at the end of 1968, the schools were burnt down. In one of the battles that took place in Phukhithao jungles, one BPP platoon was ambushed by the insurgents and several members lost their lives. Somkhuan boarded a helicopter to find the corpses and remains of his fellow BPP members and brought them back to the Senironayut camp in Udon Thani where the BPP Area 4 camp had been located. As Bowie vividly describes, this disheartening memory led Somkhuan to launch the Village Scout movement in 1971.[8]

Based on the BPP experiences of carrying out border security missions, Somkhuan's first attempt to strengthen the village defense was building local militias following the example of the

[8] Village Scout Operational Center, *Khomopkai thawaiwai naibueangbat haeng phrarakhurat rueangsi tai rom phraboromratchachakriwong, chatphim naiwara 100 pi sua pa lae 40 pi luksuea chaoban, phutthasakkarat 2554* [Entrusting Ourselves to the Royal Land Under the Chakri Dynasty, Published in the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of Wild Tiger Corps and 40th Anniversary of the Village Scout, 2011] (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Printing House, 2011), 153-154. [hereafter, *Khomopkai thawaiwai*]. See also Katherine Bowie's interview with Somkhuan in her book. Bowie, *Rituals of National Loyalty*, 56-59.

Border Security Volunteer Teams project in northern Thailand. Not long after the battle and the school burning, Somkhuan established the Border Village Volunteers (*asa samak chaoban chaidaen*) in the BPP Area 4 in 1969. The first training of this border village defense group took place between March 5-May 14 in Loei province and the Communist Suppression Operations Command sponsored the training.[9] In his memoir, Army General Saiyud Kerdphol recalls when Somkhuan came to ask Saiyud, the then director-general of the CSOC in Army Region 2, to support the BPP's new project of building the civilian defense group in the northeastern region. Saiyud remarks that the then Police Lieutenant Colonel Somkhuan had a profound understanding about fighting communism and also agreed with Saiyud's counterinsurgency strategy that aimed at instilling anticommunism and patriotism to the general populace through the coordinated campaigns by the civilian, police and military (CPM, *phototho* in Thai abbreviation).[10]

Despite Saiyud's wholehearted assistance and sponsorship, however, Somkhuan encountered several problems with the first group of trainees because they wanted the BPP to guarantee official status and payments after the completion of training. Although Somkhuan had eventually resolved the issue with the border villager trainees, this inconvenient experience of training local militias taught him at least two lessons: first, it was imperative to have a stable and reliable financial support for the project and second it was more efficient to create civilian self-help groups rather than militias as the former does not require official standing, salary and the provision of weapons.[11]

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[9] *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban*, 13.

[10] Saiyud Kerdphol, "*Waialai phon tamruat tho somkhuan harikun* [Mourning for Police Lieutenant General Somkhuan Harikul])," in *Anuson ngan phraratchathan phloengsop phon tamruat tho somkhuan harikun* [Police Lieutenant General Somkhuan Harikul, Cremation Volume] (Bangkok: Phim Aksoen Limited Partnership, 2004), 47.

[11] *Song phrakaruna protklao protkramoem haiphim phraratchathan nueang nai ngan phraratchathan phloengsop phon tamruat tho somkhuan harikun wan sao thi 24 mokarakhom phutthasakkarat 2547* [Royally Ordered to Print

Since the first training did not bring about satisfactory results, Somkhuan suspended the Border Village Volunteers project and changed the strategy. To have stable funding, he first created the Border Patrol Police Area 4 Members Organization (*ongkon samachik tamruat trawen chaidaen khet 4*) in 1970. The organization included local politicians like sub-district chief (*kamnan*), village headman (*phuyaiban*) and the wealthy businessmen to its membership so that they could provide continuing financial support for the BPP's civic action program. In the first year of launching the organization, the BPP in Area 4 managed to invite total 4,421 members from Nakhon Phanom, Loei and Nong Khai provinces.[12]

In the course of searching for a way to train a village-level civilian defense group that could also offset the BPP's shortage of manpower in the border areas, Somkhuan came to be interested in the scout movement. As part of the civic action program, the BPP had established Cub Scout (*luksuea samrong*) curriculum in the BPP Schools since July 1966. To assist the scouting in these schools, the BPP Headquarters ordered its officers and BPP teachers to receive scout training from the national scout organization and the Ministry of Education. Somkhuan was one of the BPP commanders who had attended the seven-day Senior Scout training in Sakon Nakhon province in 1969.[13] Realizing that scouting in the BPP Schools and Senior Scout initiations produced a solid training discipline and enabled the quick establishment of friendship among

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on the Occasion of Police Lieutenant General Somkhuan Harikul's Cremation, January 24, 2004] (Bangkok: Amarin Printing and Publishing Public Company Limited, 2004), 12-13. [hereafter, *Somkhuan Harikul, Royal Cremation Volume*]. A similar story is printed in other cremation volume of Somkhuan. See *Chulasan kongthun phon tamruat tho somkhuan harikun khong chomrom luksuea chaoban changwat songkhla, 8 minakhom 2553* [Police Lieutenant General Somkhuan Harikul Fund Pamphlet, Village Scout Association in Songkhla Province, March 8, 2010] (na, 2010), 17.

[12] *Anuson ngan phraratchathan phloengsop phon tamruat tho somkhuan harikun* [Police Lieutenant General Somkhuan Harikul, Cremation Volume] (Bangkok: Phim Aksoen Limited Partnership, 2004), 19. [hereafter, *Somkhuan Harikul Cremation Volume*].

[13] *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 158. The first BPP Schools that had initiated the Cub Scout trainings on July 19, 1966 were the royally sponsored schools: Chao Pho Luang Upatham 1 in Doi Pui and Chao Mae Luang Upatham 2 in Mae Rim, Chiang Mai.

Scout members, Somkhuan decided to adopt the scouting model into the village defense system. Therefore, Somkhuan extended the scout training from children to adults, in particular among the border villagers who had been regarded as the most vulnerable to the communist infiltration, to construct the grass-roots border security system.[14]

On August 1, 1971, Somkhuan invited local governors and officials from the Ministry of Education provincial branches to a preparatory meeting to set up the training curriculum and to select the scout instructors. A week later, Somkhuan initiated the first "Border Village Scout (*luksuea chaoban chaidaen*)" training and a total 125 people came to receive the training in Ban Laow Ko Hok in Loei province during August 9-12.[15] There was symbolic meaning for launching this first training in Ban Laow Ko Hok because the village was located in the same subdistrict where the deadly battle between the BPP and Hmong insurgents took place in 1968. The first group of Border Village Volunteers was also selected from this village in 1969.[16]

After the first training in August 1971, eight more Village Scout trainings followed in the same year in Loei, Nong Khai, Mukdahan, Udon Thani and Nakhon Phanom provinces. Until the first eight Village Scout trainings were completed, however, the BPP Headquarters did not show any particular attention to this project titled "Border Village Scout Training Project in Area 4 (*khrongkan fuek oprom luksuea chaoban chaidaen khet 4*)".[17] Therefore, Somkhuan traveled to meet Charoenrit Chamratromran, the then assistant commissioner of the BPP Headquarters, in

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[14] Charoenrit Chamratromran. "*Somkhuan tonkhit charoenrit bukboek* [Somkhuan Conceived, Charoenrit Pioneered]." In *Song phrakaruna protklao protkramoem haiphim phraratchathan nueang nai ngan phraratchathan phloengsop phon tamruat tho somkhuan harikun wan sao thi 24 mokarakhom phutthasakkarat 2547* [Royally Ordered to Print on the Occasion of Police Lieutenant General Somkhuan Harikul's Cremation, January 24, 2004] (Bangkok: Amarin Printing and Publishing Public Company Limited, 2004), 58.

[15] *Somkhuan Harikul Cremation Volume*, 22, 24.

[16] *Somkhuan Harikul Cremation Volume*, 17, 24.

[17] Charoenrit, "*Somkhuan tonkhit charoenrit bukboek*," 58.

Nakhon Si Thammarat province where he had been engaged in the communist suppression operation, and asked Charoenrit to promote the Village Scout project in the Bangkok Headquarters. Not long after Somkhuan's visit, Charoenrit traveled to observe one of the trainings in the northeastern province. In this visit, Charoenrit immediately recognized that the project indeed had the potential to create a massive popular movement to fight communists.[18]

Only a few months after the Village Scout training began, an ardent supporter of the BPP civic action programs, the Princess Mother, accompanied by Princess Galyani and Army commanders from the Region 2 -- Army Lieutenant Phayom Phahunrat and Army Major Prem Tinsulanond, visited the Village Scout training in Nakhon Phanom province on November 29, 1971, marking this trip as the first official royal visit to the Village Scout training.[19] During the time of visit, the Princess Mother summoned Somkhuan to explain the Village Scout training and its strengths and weaknesses. After learning that it was urgent to have more trained scout instructors to outstretch the Village Scout movement to other regions, the Princess Mother gave 238,000 baht to Somkhuan to fund the instructor's training courses.[20]

After 26 classes of Village Scout trainings were completed in the northeastern provinces, Charoenrit went to give a report to the King and Queen about the project and the expected consequences if it were to be expanded to the entire country.[21] Intrigued by Charoenrit's introduction, the King and Queen visited the BPP Area 4 Division's Senironayut camp on March 19, 1972 to learn more about the Village Scout project and also to see the training for

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[18] Charoenrit, "*Somkhuan tonkhit charoenrit bukboek*," 58-59.

[19] *Somkhuan Harikul Cremation Volume*, 24, 39.; *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 206.

[20] *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 215.

[21] *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 220.

themselves. One week after the visit, the King summoned Charoenrit and Somkhuan and gave official permission to instate the Village Scout under royal patronage.

Table 4. Village Scout Trainees and Royal Donations, 1971-1993 [22]

Year	Number of Village Scout Classes	Number of Village Scout Trainees	Royal Donations (Thai baht)
1971	8	2,000	Nil
1972	113	24,516	Nil
1973	413	98,375	381,250
1974	680	193,279	1,410,582.25
1975	690	198,891	2,105,170.10
1976	2,497	1,032,703	8,535,107.74
1977	2,606	588,106	5,955,693.40
1978	2,650	802,615	4,731,999
1979	1,310	393,000	5,363,819.95
1980	421	84,493	NA
1981	212	41,205	
1982	263	163,803	
1983	192	36,519	
1984	213	38,935	
1985	200	37,926	
1986	201	36,320	
1987	251	43,196	
1988	196	30,128	
1989	195	26,413	
1990	511	83,462	
1991	329	48,936	
1992	225	33,204	
1993	230	35,224	
Total	**14,606 classes**	**4,073,249 people**	

[22] The numbers of Village Scout and royal donations between 1971-1982 are compiled from the following sources: Village Scout Operational Center, *Rai-ngan kitchakan luksuea chaoban pi 2522* [Report on the Village Scout Activities in 1979], Internal Report (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1979), 1, 25, appendix.; Manas Khantatatbumroong. *Kanborihan ngan luksuea chaoban nai khuam rapphitchoep khong sun pattibatkan luksuea chaoban* [Administration of the Village Scout Under the Responsibility of Village Scout Operational Center], Thesis (Bangkok: Royal Thai Army War College, 1983), 13. The numbers of Village Scout between 1983-1993 are from: Village Scout Operational Center. *23 pi luksuea chaoban nai phraboromratchanukhro* [23 Years of Village Scout under the Royal Patronage] (Bangkok: Village Scout Operational Center, 1994), 134. Although the 1994 data has comprehensive number of Village Scout, I use the earlier sources provided by Manas Khantatatbumroong, who was in charge of Village Scout project in the 1970s because he mentioned that the number in the later Village Scout Operational Center's official volumes were exaggerated. Thus the grand total numbers are my calculation. In the 1994 account, the total numbers of Village Scout trained between 1971-1993 were given as following: total 14,270 classes, total 5,095,170 members.

The King also donated 100,000 baht to produce scarves, scarf buckles, tiger-face badges, identification cards and certificates for the Village Scout members who complete the training.[23] To administer the royal donations for making the Village Scout scarves and other accessories, the BPP Headquarters invited the Housewife Volunteers Foundation (*munithi maeban asa*) to the project in 1972.[24] The organization was initially established by the wives of politicians, police and army -- who mostly had received the noble title of "*khun ying*" -- with the Princess Mother's donation to help the military, police and volunteers in the border areas.[25]

With the royal family's support and Charoenrit's coordination, Somkhuan finally proposed a meeting in mid-1972 at the BPP Headquarters, Royal Thai Army Region 2, with the Ministry of Education and the National Scout Organization of Thailand to expand the movement. From then on, the Village Scout training suddenly snowballed in number and size and stretched out from the northeastern provinces to the rural villages of entire area of Thailand, as shown in the Table 4. To administer the rapidly expanding Village Scout movement, the BPP Headquarters declared that the project would be a part of official BPP civic action in July 1972.[26] After the Village Scout movement was established as an official civic action program of the BPP and also came under the royal patronage, the governmental support for the movement followed immediately. By the order dated October 30, 1972, from the Minister of Interior Army Marshal Praphat Charusathien, all local governors were appointed as the director of Village Scouts in

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[23] Charoenrit, "*Somkhuan tonkhit charoenrit bukboek*," 62-64.; *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban*, 47.

[24] Village Scout Operational Center. *23 pi luksuea chaoban nai phraboromratchanukhro* [23 Years of Village Scout under the Royal Patronage] (Bangkok: Village Scout Operational Center, 1994), 254. [hereafter, *23 pi luksuea chaoban*].

[25] Kukrit Pramoj. "*Colom soi suan phlu* [Column Soi Suan Phlu]," in *23 pi luksuea chaoban nai phraboromratchanukhro* [23 Years of Village Scout under the Royal Patronage], ed. Village Scout Operational Center (Bangkok: Village Scout Operational Center, 1994), 100. Originally published in *Sayamrat Raiwan* Newspaper, March 7, 1973.

[26] Village Scout Operational Center, *Rai-ngan kitchakan luksuea chaoban pi 2522*, 15.; *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 182.

their respective provinces (*changwat*), districts (*amphoe*) and subdistricts (*tambon*). Since the appointment was official, the government paid for the travel expenses for those local governors when they attend the Village Scout-related events.[27] In August 1976, the Secretariat of the Cabinet again made it clear that the Village Scout activities were a part of government business so that the provincial governors were mandated to attend the Village Scout events. Again, it promised the travel expense reimbursement to all the officials involved in the event.[28]

The Ministry of Education had refused to admit the Village Scouts as members of the national scout movement in the beginning years because the form of Village Scouting was not in accordance with the normal regulations of the scouting movement, such as its regulation of not wearing the scout uniform other than scarf.[29] However, witnessing the dramatic increase of Village Scout membership alongside the growing presence of royal support from 1972, the National Scout Organization of Thailand finally authorized the Village Scouts as an official member of the Thai national scout movement in July 1973.

To summarize, although it was the BPP who had initiated and carried out the Village Scout project as a part of its civic action, the rapid expansion of the movement was the outcome of close coordination among the government, some army supporters, the BPP and royal family. Praphat remarked in his 1972 order that the implementation of the Village Scout movement was "to affect the psychology of villager groups to extend their unity (*samakhi*) as the King purported". Similarly, in 1973, former Prime Minister Kukrit Pramoj wrote a complementary article in a newspaper that this rising grassroots organization along with the direct support of the

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[27] See the copy of Ministry of Interior order *motho* 0100/*wo* 430 on October 30, 1972 in the *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban*, 96-97.

[28] *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban*, 104. The copy of this document *soro* 0201/14802 on August 27, 1976 is in the *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban*, 104.

[29] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, May 3, 2011.

Housewife Volunteers Foundation bore the self-help style movement by teaching unity to general public.[30]

Witnessing the dramatic expansion of the Village Scout movement, the local governors, politicians, businessmen, and commissioned military officers came to participate and assist in the promotion of the Village Scout movement in their areas of responsibility.[31] Indeed, after the October 1972 order from the Ministry of Interior, the Village Scout training provided a legitimate political ground where the local politicians could widen their social and political networks with the villagers, military leaders, government officials, and the royal family. This, in turn, implies that the mobilization of Village Scout members in the local events were not strictly under the charge of the BPP only and the local governors were also able to organize the Village Scout-involved events with the help of regional BPP commanders. In this respect, from 1972, the rapid growth of the Village Scout movement should not be counted as the BPP's sole effort but more so the collective promotion by the various political interest groups and the royal family.[32]

To those political supporters of Village Scout movement, the Scout members and the BPP, the October 6, 1976 event was regarded as concrete evidence that the Village Scouts could fight communism and antiroyalism through their demonstration of unity and loyalty towards the nation, religion and king. Manas therefore concluded in his confidential report in 1985 that the Village Scout movement was an example of "how our government attempts to defeat the

[30] Kukrit, "*Colom soi suan phlu*," 100-103.

[31] For detailed descriptions on the local politicians and bureaucrats' participation to the Village Scout and their tensions with the movement, see, Bowie, *Rituals of National Loyalty,* 83-84, 118-125.

[32] *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban*, 96. Charoenrit also confirmed that without the royal support, the Village Scout project could not be successful in his memoir. See Charoenrit, "*Somkhuan tonkhit charoenrit bukboek*," 57.

Communist Party of Thailand" and it proved to be successful.[33] Accordingly, immediately after coming into the office of prime minister, Army General Kriangsak Chomanan visited the BPP Headquarters compound to open the Village Scout Operational Center's building in 1978.[34] In the following year, with the then Deputy Minister of Interior Army General Prem Tinsulanond's recommendation, Kriangsak issued a prime minister order dated on April 18, 1979 that legalized the establishment of Village Scout Operational Center (*sun pattibatkan luksuea chaoban nai phraboromratchanukhro,* VSOC) and appointed Charoenrit as the director and Somkhuan as the deputy director of the Center.[35] The royal family's visit to the Village Scout training and events had continued after the 1976 coup and to the present. Notably, the Queen hosted 23 exclusive banquets for the Village Scout members of all regions between 1994-2004.[36] Additionally, since his official appointment to the Privy Council, General Pichit Kullawanit has attended the national gathering of Village Scouts to show his and the royal palace's support for the arduous work of the Village Scouts in promoting national unity and local development under royal patronage.

Overall, this brief survey on the Village Scout history shows clearly that the movement was not simply one of the BPP's civic action programs but more so the intended political campaign that had absorbed the general populace and the local and national-level politicians since the 1970s. Most importantly, from the immediate years of initiation, the Village Scouts became the symbolic force of the monarchy by the close coordination among the BPP, the government and

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[33] Manas Khantatatbumroong, *Village Scout of Thailand, A Movement to National Unity: A Report on the Case Study of Ideological, Organizational, Psychological and Mass Warfare* (Bilingual confidential report submitted to Fu Hsing Kang College, October 29, 1985), 2.

[34] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, February 21, 2011.

[35] *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 197. The copy of this document *soro* 75/2521 on April 18, 1979 along with the order from the Prem, *motho* 0204/6149 are in the *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban*, 106-109.

[36] *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 282.

the royal family. Therefore, the following examination will proceed to investigate the intricate network among the BPP, Village Scout, military and the royal family and the ways in which these close relations among the key political actors managed create the royal force that extended its influence from the margins to the center in less than five years.

Creating the Royal Force

On May 13, 1980, Charoenrit and Somkhuan went to receive the excellence in leadership award from the Prime Minister Army General Prem Tinsulanond in the Government House. On this occasion, Dr. Niphon Sasithorn, the then rector of Srinakharinwirot University, praised these two fathers of the Village Scout movement by depicting the founding process as, "Somkhuan conceived, Charoenrit pioneered."[37] The symbolic praise given to these awardees reveals the reasons why the Village Scout movement was not entirely Somkhuan's invention and at the same time, how this mass organization could have been conceived as a part of the BPP and royal family's anticommunist nation-building projects.

Somkhuan Harikul was not a mundane BPP officer who had graduated a police academy in Thailand and followed the track of promotion like his cohorts. Born in a poor family in Krabi province, Somkhuan was a sort of self-made man who luckily grabbed an opportunity to enter the Royal Police Cadet Academy in 1950 after serving the police draft in a local provincial police station for two years. When Somkhuan began his third year in the Academy, he met Charoenrit, who had been appointed to the Academy to teach the tactics class. Since then, Somkhuan called Charoenrit "teacher."

[37] Charoenrit, "*Somkhuan tonkhit charoenrit bukboek*," 57.

Before graduation, Charoenrit recruited Somkhuan and his cohort, Wichian Kanchanarat -- who later became the assistant director-general of the TNPD, and sent them to the newly founded Border Defense Police. Soon Somkhuan and Wichian were reassigned to the police paratrooper's camp in Hua Hin, and Somkhuan became the deputy commander of PARU company in 1953.[38] While receiving the paratrooper's training in Naresuan, Somkhuan also received additional degrees in intelligence, psychological operations and both the police and army commander courses in various military institutions.[39] Through these processes, Somkhuan became a highly-qualified PARU man who had passed unconventional warfare and parachute trainings and had worked closely with the SEA Supply advisors in Naresuan Camp for ten years before he moved to the BPP Area 4 Division in Udon Thani in 1963.

Notably, there is a blank period in Somkhuan's police career. According to several accounts on his personal history, Somkhuan served for a special governmental mission in a third country between 1961-1963 while he still belonged to the PARU company, but there are no explanations which state where he worked. Later, I found out from the former SEA Supply advisor Bill Lair that Somkhuan should have been in Laos -- and possibly in Cambodia too -- since almost every PARU member in Hua Hin was sent to Laos to assist the CIA's covert operation there.[40] Additionally, Somkhuan was also assigned to inspect policing in the Philippines and South Vietnam before he went on to the special mission.

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[38] Charoenrit Chamratromran, "*Kitthueng khun somkhuan* [Missing Somkhuan]," in *Anuson ngan phraratchathan phloengsop phon tamruat tho somkhuan harikun* [Police Lieutenant General Somkhuan Harikul, Cremation Volume] (Bangkok: Phim Aksoen Limited Partnership, 2004), 60.

[39] *Somkhuan Harikul Cremation Volume,* 12-13, 19.; *Somkhuan Harikul Royal Cremation Volume*, 23; *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban*, 136-137.

[40] Interview with James William (Bill) Lair, February 14, 2013.

Ultimately, Somkhuan's lifetime teacher Charoenrit had not only helped his student become a PARU and BPP commander but also made him the father of the Village Scouts. As mentioned earlier, BPP Headquarters was not interested in Somkhuan's Border Village Scout project. Consequently, before proposing it to the commissioner Suraphon, Somkhuan asked for advice and help from his teacher Charoenrit first. Charoenrit recalls that Suraphon neither showed interest in promoting the Village Scout movement nor fully committed to the project as much as he did.[41] As Somkhuan had expected, Charoenrit wholeheartedly supported his project because Charoenrit's thoughts on the Village Scout project had extended to the possibility that this village group could act like the Volunteer Defense Corps under the command of BPP and carry out the unconventional warfare.[42] Therefore Charoenrit gave Somkhuan an opportunity to introduce the Village Scout project to the King and Queen and as it turned out, royal promotion of the project was mutually beneficial for enlarging the movement and strengthening these patrons' power.

In the meantime, while Somkhuan served commandership in the BPP Area 4 Camp in Udon Thani, he also befriended army officers, especially Army General Saiyud Kerdphol and Prem Tinsulanond, who had shared a common interest in developing the civilian counterinsurgency strategies for the anticommunist campaign. Through the Village Scout movement, Somkhuan also came to meet Chuan Leekphai, a former Thai prime minister.[43] In short, Somkhuan's project of creating the border villager defense group and the Village Scouts was born from his mixed experiences of being an elite paramilitary commander both in Thailand and in foreign countries,

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[41] Charoenrit, "*Somkhuan tonkhit charoenrit bukboek*," 63.

[42] Charoenrit Chamratromran. *90 pi kap khuamsongcham phon tamruat tho charoenrit chamratromran* [Ninety Years and Memories, Police Lieutenant General Charoenrit Chamratromran] (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Printing House, 2011), 160.

[43] *Somkhuan Harikul Royal Cremation Volume*, 46, 67.

and the project developed further through his close coordination with Charoenrit, the royal family, and army generals in the northeastern region.

In the creation this intricate network among the BPP, Thai army, politicians, and the royal family, there is one key person: Charoenrit Chamratromran. His name has been everywhere in the BPP history since its formation under Phao Siyanon and indeed, due to his contribution in securing the BPP -- and perhaps the current monarch too, Charoenrit's personal history deserves close observation. Born in a military family, Charoenrit graduated the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy and became an army officer in the Cavalry Squadron in 1940. In an autobiography published to commemorate his ninetieth birthday in 2011, Charoenrit writes that he absolutely did not want to become a police officer because he wanted to continue family tradition and he believed that he was born to be in the army, like most his army friends had thought. Although there were some graduates from Chulachomklao who had volunteered for positions in the police department, the majority of army students did not want to become police officers because the latter was regarded as lower and meaner than the army.[44] Nonetheless, Phao finally convinced and recruited Charoenrit when he became the deputy director-general of the TNPD after 1947 coup. As it turned out, during his brief army career, the personal network that he had established before he was transferred to the TNPD, and also the military heritage built from his grandfather, became a useful asset when Charoenrit became a police officer.

Phao had assigned a special mission to Charoenrit as soon as he moved to the TNPD: first, to prepare the action plans in cases of military coup in Bangkok; second, to enhance the Police Education Bureau; third, to establish the official ceremony of the Thai national police; and finally, to attend international meetings, like the Geneva Conference and SEATO meeting in

[44] Charoenrit, *90 pi kap khuamsongcham*, 83-84.

Manila in 1954, as a Thai police delegate.[45] Essentially, from the time he became the deputy director-general of TNPD, Phao had a vision to militarize the Thai police in such as way that could match the army and thus, he wanted to bring several capable army officers like Charoenrit to the police department. To Phao, Charoenrit, who had experienced the war in Shan state under the command of Phin Chunhawan, and also had built up a military career in various positions within a relatively short time, was the right person that could renovate the entire police organization. On the other hand, although Charoenrit did not want to be transferred to the TNPD, he soon found that Phao had the qualities of being a real "boss." Indeed, Phao had enthusiastically encouraged Charoenrit's military capabilities to be fully demonstrated in the police department.[46] In this regard, it could be said that the actual militarization of the Thai police started in 1949 when Charoenrit and other army members joined the TNPD under Phao's intimate sponsorship.

Broadly speaking, Charoenrit's army and police career reflects the intricate army network prevalent among the Thai elites. After the 1947 coup, several important figures in the Royal Thai Army had been transferred to other armed force organizations but still had kept the army connection with their classmates or had extended it through marital relations. For instance, Chan Angsuchot's daughter married Thanom's son, and thus when he was appointed as an acting commissioner of the BPP right after the 1957 coup, he could still get the needed support to save the BPP from his connections in the coup group.[47] Likewise, Charoenrit invited his old classmates from Chulachomklao and comrades from the various army missions in the border

[45] Charoenrit, *90 pi kap khuamsongcham*, 85-101.

[46] Charoenrit, *90 pi kap khuamsongcham*, 84-85.

[47] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, January 24, 2011.

areas to support his new paramilitary police units -- the BPP and PARU. His close classmates Suraphon and Thawin Yuyen came to serve the administrative commandership from the years when Charoenrit and Phao formed the Border Defense Police. The other friend from Chulachomklao, Chit Lilayut, became the commander of BPP Area 5 Division and had launched the BPP civic action project in the mid-1950s. [48]

In addition, it is noteworthy that Charoenrit's cohorts in Chulachomklao, called class 2, graduated on 12 December 1940, and had included several army generals who later played a key role in the Thai politics throughout the 1970s: Army General Chatichai Chunhawan, Chalat Hiransiri, Soem Na Nakhon, Saiyud Kerdphol, and Chao Sawatdisongkhram to name a few. Charoenrit was elected as the president of this Class's alumni association between 1975-1976.[49] Through this personal network, Charoenrit could also stay close with the reemerged old Phibun-Phin-Phao clique after October 1973, representatively Army General Praman Adireksan and Chatichai Chunhawan, and could obtain support from several military factions when expanding the BPP and Village Scout activities in the 1970s.[50]

Most importantly, Phao attracted royal attention for the BPP and Charoenrit before the 1957 coup. It was Phao and Charoenrit who had created the National Police Day (*wan tamruat*) in 1951 and the first assignment for Charoenrit was to invite the newly married royal couple to the ceremony.[51] Additionally, to strengthen the royal support for his police, Phao ordered Charoenrit to provide protection to the royal couple when they visited the Klai Kangwon Palace in Hua Hin for their wedding anniversaries. Thus Hua Hin was the first place where Charoenrit had a

[48] Charoenrit, *90 pi kap khuamsongcham*, 10, 16.

[49] Charoenrit, *90 pi kap khuamsongcham*, 10, 16-17.

[50] Morell and Chai-anan, *Political Conflict in Thailand*, 259.

[51] Charoenrit, *90 pi kap khuamsongcham*, 93-94.

personal encounter with the current monarch in the early 1950s.[52] Indeed, Phao Siyanon was the real boss who had, like Charoenrit describes, "destined my life to be a parasitic plant of the police (*phu likhit chiwit tamruat kafak khong khapchao*)" and had prepared the necessary political network and experiences that Charoenrit could effectively utilize when he developed the BPP, PARU and Village Scout movement throughout the Cold War period.[53]

In consideration of this background, the Village Scout movement conceived by Somkhuan and pioneered by Charoenrit was, therefore, a collective political campaign that had been further developed by the closely knitted elite network among the government, military, BPP and royal family. Their individual purposes in promoting the movement could have been varied but the ultimate goal was congruent: save the monarchy to continue elite domination against the growing quest for changes. Although the communists were presented as the first enemy, their actual enemy was the leftwing politicians and activists that had upheld the democracy without military dictatorship and feudalist leadership (*sakdina*), overturning the traditional political and social hierarchies. In this respect, it should be useful to know the kinds of doctrines which were propagated in the Village Scout training to understand how the rural Thais' perceptions of the democratization and leftist movements were affected by the Bangkok elite-centered politics, particularly between 1973-1976.

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[52] Akkhawat Osathanukhro, "*Phrabatsomdetphrachaoyuhua kap phrarat koraniyakit, samphat phon tamruat tri charoenrit chamratromran rongphubanchakan tamruat trawen chaidaen, 9 phruetsachikayon 2519* [His Majesty and the King's Royal Duties along the Village Scout, Interview with Police Major General Charoenrit Chamratromran, Deputy Commissioner of the Border Patrol Police General Headquarters, on November 9, 1976]," in *Nai luang khong rao, samphat 15 kharatchakan chanphuyai lae phu klaichit buang phrayukhonlabat* [Our King: Interview with fifteen high-ranking officials and who remains close to His Majesty's footsteps] (Bangkok: Dok Ya Group, 2002), 186.; Charoenrit, *90 pi kap khuamsongcham*, 89-90.

[53] Charoenrit's memoir book begins with the picture of Phao Siyanon with the description: "the person who destined my life to be a parasitic plant of the police (*phu likhit chiwit tamruat kafak khong khapchao*)" and in the writings of his police career, Charoenrit repetitively presents how influential Phao was as the leader of police and army, and for the BPP and PARU.

According to the manual book for the Village Scout instructors published in 1973, organizing a Village Scout training should demonstrate that the event is locally-oriented and villager-centered. Therefore, the organizers were commanded to encourage the villagers to freely come and see the Village Scout training and invite the local leaders and government officials in the areas to the events. In the beginning, the number of trainees was limited to a maximum 200 people per training. Composition of each group, called "class (*run)*" was also carefully designed with following criteria: At least 30 percent of participants should be female; 35 percents of participants in the age between 15-19; 30 percents from age between 20-35; 20 percents from age between 36-45; and the rest of 15 percents from other age groups.[54] Since the creation of unity among the participants was one of the most significant goals of the training, the instructors were to emphasize that anyone over age fifteen had an equal opportunity to join the Village Scout training, even if the candidates were insurgents or "wicked person (*khon chuea*)".[55]

All the trainees should help themselves by bringing foods and supplies enough for five days and the necessary tools to build their own camp and other facilities for the training.[56] The training location should be selected among the school ground, temple compound, or any places in the village where the villagers can get together. During the training, regular scarves or armbands in different colors were used to identify each team. Only when the members completed

[54] Border Patrol Police Headquarters, *Khumue kanfuekoprom luksuea chaoban nai phraboromratchanukhro (chabap prapprung khrangthi 4), 9 singhakhom 2516* [Manual Book for Training the Village Scout under the Royal Patronage (Fourth Revised Edition), August 9, 1973] (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1973), 18. [hereafter, *Khumue kanfuekoprom luksuea chaoban 1973*].

[55] *Khumue kanfuekoprom luksuea chaoban 1973*, 42-43.

[56] *Khumue kanfuekoprom luksuea chaoban 1973*, 18.

the five nights-six days of training, could the administrators of training give the Village Scout scarves, the tiger-face badges and other accessories to the scouts in the closing ceremony.[57]

Since the training should be villager-centered and locally-oriented, the instructors were given orders to use the local language or dialect, if capable, to make their instructions easily understandable; and to be restrained from giving a lecture for more than thirty minutes; to sing songs frequently so as not to let trainees get bored; and to use the examples from the daily lives of local people when teaching scout principles and regulations.[58] In particular, singing the Village Scout songs has been considered "an integral part of the training activities" and thus one third of the course had to be devoted to singing.[59] By utilizing those instructional techniques, the foreground objectives lied in creating a sense of loyalty to the nation, religion and monarchy; the sense of fraternity (*khuam pen phi nong kan*); and the sense of unity (*samakhi*) derived from the team activities system.

Up to this preparatory stage, the Thai Village Scouts seemed to follow the primary characteristics of general scouting. Nonetheless, the BPP gave a local twist to this movement. Like all the scouts do, the Village Scouts have the Scout Promise. The general scout movement has the Scout Promise that reads: "On my honor I promise that I will do my best to do my duty to God and the King (or to God and my Country), to help other people at all times, and to obey the

[57] *Khumue kanfuekoprom luksuea chaoban 1973*, 19.

[58] *Khumue kanfuekoprom luksuea chaoban 1973*, 20-21, 40-41.

[59] Manas, *Village Scout of Thailand*, 6.

Scout Law".[60] On the other hand, the Village Scout version of Scout Promise changed the first line of Promise into: "On my honor, I promise to be loyal to nation, religion and monarchy".[61]

In addition to the Scout Promise and Law, the Village Scout movement has the royal regulations that the King specifically bestowed to the organization. After visiting the Village Scout training in Udon Thani in 1972, the King ordered the BPP commanders to do the following: First, do not bring in the Village Scouts to Bangkok and do not arrange any field activities in the developed, major towns; second, do not use the budget and operational plan from the CSOC and do not present the officials from any military suppression divisions, and do not have the officers in uniform and weapons in the Village Scout activities; third, do not advertise publicly or announce deliberately the Village Scout activities. Have the Village Scout members promote the movement for themselves after completing their activities.[62] Later, Charoenrit had compiled the orders from the King in various occasions and created the Royal Policy (*phraboromratchobai*) in the Village Scout Activities consisting of twelve articles, as following:

1. Do not let the Village Scout activities to be related to the politics.
2. Do not present the military practices in the Village Scout activities.
3. Do not let the officials to use the Village Scout activities for their own purpose.
4. Village Scout should not have uniforms or any symbols.
5. Have the Village Scout activities to be done of the people, by the people and for the people.
6. Have the Village Scouts to become the leader of development of self, profession and local areas.
7. Have the Village Scout to be the leader of building rules, disciplines and thriftiness.
8. Do not make extravagant spending in the training and the campfire events and do not allow any alcoholic drinks during the training.
9. Adhere to the team system of the Village Scout and disclose it to the general public to create the sense that the unity and unanimity are the one and only thing to keep.
10. Do not use the budget from the political parties in the Village Scout activities

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[60] For the general Scout Promise and Law, see, World Organization of the Scout Movement, "Scout Promise and Law," accessed November 14, 2012. http://www.scout.org/en/about_scouting/promise_and_law.

[61] *Khumue kanfuekoprom luksuea chaoban 1973*, 52.; English translation is from Manas, *Village Scout of Thailand*, 7. (editing is mine).

[62] *Khumue kanfuekoprom luksuea chaoban 1973*, 135.

11. Have the Village Scout to become the leader of using the Thai goods and consuming the Thai produce.
12. Have the Village Scout to become the leader of restoring and reserving the good tradition and culture in the local areas where they belong.

Since 1976, this Royal Policy became the key guideline for the Village Scout members.[63]

As shown in the Royal Policy, one noteworthy characteristic of the Village Scout movement shaped by the King's order and BPP's instruction is its non-partisanship, or maintaining it as an apolitical organization. Throughout the training procedures and regular activities, instructors and leaders of the Village Scout group were strictly restrained from talking about politics, as the following article in the instructional technique shows:

> 7. The instructors must not talk about the political ideology, military issues, or any types of [current] news, and must only talk about the nation, religion, monarchy, tradition, law, regulations, cultures, scout disciplines, unity and daily life issues that could be useful for the villagers such as occupation, diligence, behavior, society and so on.[64]

At the same time, the instructors must make sure that the trainees voluntarily advertise to other fellow villagers that the Village Scouts are not harmful and do not kill anyone, even the communist insurgents.[65]

Charoenrit contends that the BPP and Scout instructors never talked directly about who was the enemy of Village Scout.[66] Nevertheless, as the origin of Village Scouts project speaks for

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[63] Border Patrol Police Headquarters, *Khumue kanfuekoprom withayakon luksuea chaoban, changwat kamphengphet khetkansueksa 7, 11-15 phruetsachikayon 2519* [Manual Book for Training the Village Scout Instructor, Kamphengphet Province, Educational Area 7, November 11-15, 1976], (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1976), 1. (translation is mine). [hereafter, *Khumue kanfuekoprom withayakon 1976*].; See also, *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 231.

[64] *Khumue kanfuekoprom luksuea chaoban 1973*, 21. (translation is mine).

[65] *Khumue kanfuekoprom luksuea chaoban 1973*, 43. (translation and explanation are mine).

[66] Charoenrit Chamratromran, "*Khrangrek khong luksuea chaoban* [The Beginning of Village Scout]," in *34 pi luksuea chaoban nai phraboromratchanukhro, 9 singhakhom 2548 wankhlai wankamnoet luksuea chaoban* [34 Years of Village Scout under the Royal Patronage, August 9, 2005 Village Scout Anniversary], ed. Village Scout Operational Center (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Printing House, 2005), 99.

itself, and also Manas revealed in his 1985 confidential report, the movement began as a part of an "ideological, organization [*sic*] and psychological warfare" under the BPP civic action programs. Indeed, this particular project could have not expanded at such a great speed and size without the political support from the government and royal family.[67] More importantly, the anticommunist campaign was not simply a national security project but more so the political movement during the Cold War in Thailand and elsewhere, notwithstanding whether the organizers were the civilian or military. Even if there were no visible military training, political discussion, or outright social protest in the Village Scout training, the actual outcome of its political orientation and practices are well demonstrated by the October 6 massacre.

In a sense, somewhat excessive emphasis given to the non-partisanship of the Village Scout could be interpreted in three ways. First, it is due to the fact that the Village Scout training was part of the BPP's civic action program that had been carrying out the psychological operation tactics of winning hearts and minds of the people. The BPP civic action program has, therefore, attempted to maintain its non-partisan characteristics in order to gain villagers' trusts and favor. In this respect, the BPP has arduously publicized their mission to bring forward development and modernization, not the politics, to the remote rural villages. Since the founders of Village Scouts were the two BPP commanders -- that is, Somkhuan and Charoenrit, the movement should have remained in accordance with the BPP non-partisanship principle, at least on the surface.

Second, it should be noted that the King has industriously promoted that the Thai monarchy stays *above* politics, because "politics is a filthy business".[68] Like the King had ordered to the

[67] Manas, *Village Scout of Thailand*, 2.

[68] "King Bhumibol: "Politics is a filthy business," in *Far Eastern Economic Review*, October 18, 1974. Reprinted in Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand. *The King of Thailand in World Focus: Articles and Images from the International Press, 1946-2006* (Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2007), 47.

Village Scout and BPP commanders, these two representative royal forces had to stay *apart* from politics so that they could freely convey and expand royalist nationalism among the fellow rural villagers. That is the reason why the first Royal Policy was not to let the Village Scouts get involved in political activities or relate with the politicians.

Last but not the least, the villagers in the rural areas were flatly assumed to be the kind of people who were not able to talk about politics. In this regard, Thongchai Winichakul's argument on the ethno-spatial hierarchy in his article "Others Within" illuminates the continuation of the vertical ethnic-spatial relations among the Bangkokian-rural villagers (*chao bannok*)-highland minorities (*chao pa*) within the Village Scout movement.[69] Thongchai argues that those rural villagers categorized in to *chao bannok* were presumed to be more docile and tamable and thus to be less problematic than *chao pa*, the wild, jungle people. Nevertheless, because *chao bannok* were still perceived as lower than the Bangkok people, the old assumptions about the characteristics of *chao bannok* as less informed, less intellectual like *chao pa* remained strong among the BPP and Village Scout instructors. This is one of the main reasons why the instructional techniques and contents for the Village Scout focused on creating a fun, intriguing training atmosphere for the villagers, like singing songs, preparing performances and skits for the campfire events or playing games.

In a similar vein, the first Village Scout training was launched in Bangkok in late 1972 after most provinces of Thailand had at least one or two more villages that completed the Village Scout training. As Table 5 on the regional distribution of membership shows, most Village Scout trainings took place in the border villages of northeastern and northern Thailand, which had been considered to be security-sensitive regions. The reason for late initiation of the Village Scout

[69] Thongchai, "Others Within," 49.

movement in Bangkok was firstly because the King did not want to have the Village Scouts to visibly operate in bigger towns and also because the Bangkokians were not considered "villagers (*chaoban* or *chao bannok*)".[70] Just as the BPP operations should remain in the border areas, the Village Scouts should stay in the rural villages where the trainings by the BPP and Village Scout instructors could exert more influence in defending local and national security.

Table 5. Village Scout Membership Distribution, 1971-1986 [71]

Region/Area *	Number of *run*-s	Number of Membership		Total
		Male	Female	
Region 1/ Area 2	1,593	262,077	226,826	488,903
Region 1/ Area 7	1,511	266,900	214,781	481,681
Bangkok (Area 1)	403	64,759	57,687	122,446
Region 1 Total	**3,507**	**595,199**	**501,062**	**1,096,171**
Region 2/ Area 3	1,663	271,181	137,925	409,106
Region 2/ Area 4	2,095	337,705	184,940	522,645
Region 2 Total	**3,758**	**616,465**	**328,885**	**945,350**
Region 3/ Area 5	1,704	279,292	206,638	485,903
Region 3/ Area 6	1,206	203,797	134,018	337, 805
Region 3 Total	**2,910**	**487,484**	**344,173**	**831,657**
Region 4/ Area 8	882	119,225	103,262	222,487
Region 4/ Area 9	823	101,146	42,680	143,826
Region 4 Total	**1,705**	**222,386**	**147,203**	**369,589**
Grand Total	**11,864**	**1,921,678**	**1,321,335**	**3,243,013**

[70] Charoenrit also explains the difference in the Bangkok Village Scout movement and comments that it is more political than the rural membership because most of the leaders of each *class* in Bangkok have been members of Parliament. See, Charoenrit, *90 pi kap khuamsongcham*, 196.; *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 179.

[71] From *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban*, 239. Originally from the Village Scout report in November 1985. The division of Village Scout Region and Area is same with those of the area of responsibility of BPP. **Region 1: Central Thailand** including Area 2 (Chachengsao) and Area 7 (Kanjanaburi): Prachinburi, Nakhon Nayok, Chacheongsao, Chonburi, Rayong, Trat, Samut Prakan, Saraburi, Pathum Thanni, Ayuthaya, Janthaburi, Lopburi, Angthong, Chainat, Suphanburi, Samut Songkhram, Singburi, Samut Sakhon, Prachuap Khirikhan, Nonthaburi, Phetburi, Kanjanaburi, Ratchaburi, Nakhon Pathom.: **Region 2: Northeastern Thailand** including Area 3 (Ubon Ratchathanni) and Area 4 (Udon Thanni): Ubon Ratchathanni, Sisakhet, Surin, Nakhon Ratchasima, Chaiphumi, Buriram, Yasothorn, Kalasin, Khon Kaen, Nong Khai, Udon Thanni, Sakon Nakhon, Roi-et, Mahasarakham, Loei, Nakhon Phanom, Mukdahan.: **Region 3: Northern Thailand** including Area 5 (Chiang Mai) and Area 6 (Tak): Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Lamphun, Lampang, Phrae, Phayao, Nan, Mae Hong Son, Uthai Thanni, Nakhon Sawan, Phetchatbun, Phitsanulok, Sukhothai, Tak, Kamphengphet, Uttaradit, Phichit.: **Region 4: Southern Thailand** including Area 8 (Nakhon Si Thammarat) and Area 9 (Songkhla): Nakhon Si Thammarat, Surat Thanni, Krabi, Phuket, Chumphon, Phangnga, Ranong, Phatthalung, Trang, Narathiwat, Pattani, Yala, Songkhla, Satun. Now the Village Scout regions are divided into six regions: North, Northeast, West, East, South and Bangkok. See the details on the Village Scout operational areas from *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 197.

How then did the BPP and Village Scout movement perceive the growing communist and democratization movements in Thailand? The BPP and Village Scout leaders had been acutely observing the leftist's reaction to the Village Scouts. According to the official Village Scout accounts, the BPP and scout members had received a sort of warning sign from the Communist Party of Thailand shortly after the Village Scout training had begun in August 1971.[72] Among some skirmishes and conflicts, the most frequently cited attack against the Village Scouts in the BPP and Village Scout's accounts occurred in Surat Thani province in September 1975. When the Village Scout training in the Khiangsai district completed on September 7, 22 Village Scout instructors were allegedly ambushed by the Thai liberation army on their way home, which resulted three instructors' deaths and nineteen injured. Subsequently, on September 11, the King and Queen visited Surat Thani provincial hospital to console the injured members, and donated money for their medical treatment.[73] Not only because their instructors were ambushed, Village Scout members remember the Khiangsai incident with special bitterness because it had been seen as an ultimatum that the communist terrorists provoked against the democratic Village Scout movement. Accordingly, several Village Scout accounts explain that the communists attempted to break down their non-partisan morale by accusing the organization of being a political weapon of the military dictators and royal family, finally proclaiming that the first enemy of the Thai liberation army was the Village Scout movement.[74]

To the BPP and relevant parties, the victory of the 1973 democratization movement engendered the increase of communists, and because the number of enemies increased, the BPP

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[72] *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 310.

[73] *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 314-316.

[74] *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 310.; *Chulasan kongthun phon tamruat tho somkhuan harikun*, 8.

were pressured to create more reserve forces that could voluntarily fight against the radical movements. However, this political condition alone does not fully explain the reason why the Village Scout membership could impulsively increase during the 1973-1976 period, reaching a climax in the first half of 1976. One of the most important pre-conditions for this dramatic expansion of the Village Scout movement derived from the King's order to Charoenrit and Somkhuan in his first visit to the Village Scout meeting in Udon Thani on March 19, 1972. The King said that if the number of Village Scout memberships increased up to five million, then this movement could solve the problems within national politics before 1977.[75]

Whether intended or not, the King's special gifts for the Village Scouts indeed contributed to the skyrocketing number of trainees. According to Manas, who was in charge of the BPP civic actions including the Village Scouts during the 1970s, the central reason why the villagers were attracted by the Village Scout movement was because of the free royal gifts like the scarves, buckles and scout badges. Most rural villagers considered the royally given symbols to the Village Scout members to be sacred amulets that could fight against evil spirits and thus wanted to join the training to get those royal presents.[76] Kukrit also asserted that those royal symbols bestowed on the Village Scout members would make them believe that it would bring them fortune and luck and thus would elicit more villagers into the organization.[77]

In addition, the Village Scout training provided a ground where the villagers could socialize and feel a sense of bonding. The Village Scout training attempted to inculcate unity among the members through the practices of five sharing (*ha ruam*) -- that is, eating together, staying together, studying together, working together and solving problems together -- during the

[75] Akkhawat, "*Phrabatsomdetphrachaoyuhua*," 190.; Charoenrit, *90 pi kap khuamsongcham*, 163.

[76] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, May 3, 2011.
[77] Kukrit, "*Colom soi suan phlu*," 103.

training. To heighten the sense of bonding, the instructors and members repetitively, and deliberately, said, "we are brothers (*rao phi nong kan*)" inside and outside the training camps.[78] Notably, the BPP commanders had also created the sense of belonging among the training cohorts by naming them "class (*run*)" like PARU or other armed forces did, and the King gave the royally-sponsored Village Scout flag to represent individual *run*. This "*run*" system had created not only a fraternity but also a sort of military-like hierarchical relationship among the Village Scout members. Like Manas told me, naming the Village Scout after their "*run*" has been one single most effective measure to strengthen their physical and emotional attachment to the general Village Scout organization to the present days.[79]

Through these conscientious efforts to build unity and sense of bonding, the Village Scout members could transform into a family of loyal patriots. As a result, as Bowie observed in the closing ceremony, almost all the Village Scout members broke in to tears when they had to close out the training and leave their brothers and sisters behind.[80] After completing the training in one of the villages where the BPP had spent difficult times to invite the villagers to join the Village Scout training, Somkhuan finally saw the tears breaking out among the trainees in the closing ceremony. Moved by the tears of villagers while remembering the hardship from bringing the training in this village, Somkhuan also shed tears. He then turned to Charoenrit who had come to attend the closing ceremony and said, "*Achan*, we won already. We won for sure!"[81]

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[78] For instance, see one of the Village Scout member's essay: *Muea phukhian oprom luksuea chaoban run 999/1, krungthep 23 khai wang saranrom* [When this Author was Trained to be a Village Scout, Run 999/1, Bangkok 23, Saranrom Palace Camp] (Bangkok: Thai Kasem Press, 1976). The phrase "*rao phi nong kan"* have been repetitively said throughout the essay. See also, *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 162.

[79] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, May 3, 2011.

[80] Bowie, *Rituals of National Loyalty,* 228-232.

[81] *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 320.

Nevertheless, this was not the victory that the general BPP and Village Scouts remember up to the present day. The real victory over their enemy was about to come just three years after the success of the democratization movement in 1973. As the influence of the leftists grew large, their counterparts also increased. As the number of Village Scout memberships expanded, the frequency of the royal visits to the training grounds soared. As the civilian government faltered by internal fighting and the military's factional rivalries, and as the leftwing groups sharpened their criticism against the elites, the time was getting ripe for the BPP and Village Scouts to expel the enemy from the borders and resolve the confusion and crisis in the society. The year 1976 that had engraved the names of the BPP and Village Scout movement in one of the most tragic and traumatic events in the Thai political history came close, but somewhat, unsurprisingly.

Crusade from the Borders to Bangkok

> After this miraculous event [on August 12, 1976], Village Scout leader's oath resulted in subsiding the October 6, 1976 incident and let our country return to normal. The event was the true evidence that idiosyncratic characteristics, culture and tradition of the Thai nation - that had constantly allowed us to adjust ourselves to various conditions - proved to be able to turn even the mishap (*het rai*) into good deeds in the end.
>
> [Police Major General Manas Khantatatbumroong, 1994] [82]

On August 12, 1976, Queen Sirikit invited the leaders of the Village Scout organization from all provinces to a special banquet in the royal palace prepared for celebrating her birthday. After a modest feast, these leaders were invited to the Thai traditional play (*lakhon*) theater in Dusit Royal Palace to watch "King Naresuan". When the Queen invited about one thousand Village Scout leaders to make merit at the Emerald Buddha, they vowed that in the time of difficulties,

[82] Manas Khantatatbumroong, "*Khuam saksit khong phrakaew morakot* [Sacredness of the Emerald Buddha]," in *23 pi luksuea chaoban nai phraboromratchanukhro* [23 Years of Village Scout under the Royal Patronage], ed. Village Scout Operational Center (Bangkok: Village Scout Operational Center, 1994), 88.

the Village Scouts would unite to bring stability and to protect Thailand from various dangers and disasters.[83] While fondly remembering the royal generosity offered to the Village Scout leaders on the day of Queen's birthday in 1976, Manas reaffirmed in 1994 that because of the oath that the Village Scout leaders made in front of the Emerald Buddha and the Queen, they could bring peace and normalcy to Thailand on October 6, 1976.[84]

In 2011, Manas told me since the Village Scouts had successfully protested against communists in Thammasat University on October 6, 1976, Thailand had not seen any communist threats to its nation since then.[85] He might have forgotten the fact that in actuality, there was almost an explosion of communist insurgencies in the rural areas of Thailand after 1976 incident and the Prem administration proclaimed the cessation of the military counterinsurgency only in the early 1980s, declaring that the previous regime's anticommunist policies had failed to bring the desired peace and order. It was not Thailand but perhaps the Bangkokians who did not see communist threats in their land.

Although the Village Scouts and BPP members remember October 6 (*hok tula*) as the first real victory against the Thai communist movement, there have been no substantial accounts on the event either from the BPP Headquarters or Village Scout Operational Center. Thongchai Winichakul, who was a student activist at Thammasat University at the time of massacre, argues in his article entitled "Remembering/Silencing the Traumatic Past" that October 6 has remained ambivalent or lost in the history of Thailand because of the three forms of silencing mechanism: the threat of political repercussions, sense of guilt among the victims and perpetrators, and the

[83] *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 269-279.

[84] *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 86-88.

[85] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, February 21, 2011.

ideology of national history that excludes anomalies.[86] This does not necessarily mean that there are no studies available on this event.[87] On the contrary, whereas there are numerous academic researches undertaken to explain and locate the October 6 massacre in the political and historical context of democratization movements culminating between 1973-1976, these accounts have been largely concentrated on the military politics around the 1976 coup group. It is quite telling from my personal experience too. One of the first questions from the Thai scholars who had learned that I was conducting a dissertation research about the Border Patrol Police was: "so who ordered the killing in 1976?" I have to admit that I too have only speculations about the political contexts, but no straightforward answers.

This historical narrative on the October 6 massacre is therefore not an investigation on "who did what" but more so an attempt to bring in the voices from the key rightwing groups, namely the BPP, the PARU and the Village Scout movement, to reconstruct the event from the perpetrator's view. As mentioned earlier, there are no official or unofficial accounts available from these groups but at least, the following examination attempts to garner the scattered information and analyzes the reason why the BPP, PARU and Village Scouts were in the scene of the atrocity, and more importantly, why they have tried to obliterate the supposedly 'victorious' past of theirs to the present days.

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[86] Thongchai Winichakul, "Remembering/Silencing the Traumatic Past: The Ambivalent Memories of the October 1976 Massacre in Bangkok," in *Cultural Crisis and Social Memory: Modernity and Identity in Thailand and Laos*, edited by Shigeharu Tanabe and Charles F. Keyes (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 246.

[87] In addition to Thongchai's article, for the studies on the October 6, 1976 event, see, for example: Benedict Anderson. "Withdrawal Symptoms," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 9:3 (July-September 1977), 13-30.; Puey Ungphakorn, "Violence and the Military Coup in Thailand," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 9:3 (July-September 1977), 4-12.; Marian Mallet, "Causes and Consequences of the October '76 Coup" in *Thailand, Roots of Conflict* eds. by Andrew Turton, Jonathan Fast, Malcolm Caldwell (Nottingham: Spokesman Books, 1978), 80-103.; Ji Giles Ungpakorn, "From the City, via the Jungle, to Defeat: The 6th October 1976 Bloodbath and the C.P.T" in *Radicalising Thailand: New Political Perspectives*, ed. by Ji Giles Ungpakorn (Bangkok: Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, 2003), 187-225.

The opening of the rightist's narratives on the October 6 incident has to begin from Somkhuan Harikul's interview with a Thai magazine named *Sarakhadi* in 1996 published in the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of *hok tula.* In this interview, Somkhuan plainly denied that the Village Scout members had participated in the October 6 massacre and instead remarked that there were "third hand (*mue thi sam*)" that could have possibly fabricated the presence of the Village Scouts.[88] Only about a month after the incident in 1976, however, Somkhuan had given a special warning related to the violent actions of the Village Scout leaders who came to attend the Village Scout instructors' training during November 11-15 in Kamphengphet province, northern Thailand. Under the title of, "The way of Training," Somkhuan advised the instructors to avoid the militant protest or political demonstration and also announced the ban on using illegal weapons by the Village Scout members. Somkhuan subsequently stressed that in order not to become an enemy of the "other" people, Village Scouts must not hold any weapons. Village Scout members were only to use officially permitted weapons when circumstances were beyond their capacity. But before that, they were to persuade the enemy first that unity was the most important weapon to fight the political crisis and Thai should not fight against Thai.[89] Interestingly enough, Somkhuan had written a number of instructional articles about how to train the Village Scouts and their leaders until the fourth revised edition of an instructor's manual in 1973, but this particular emphasis on forbidding the armed protest and the use of weapons was

[88] "Police Lieutenant General Somkhuan Harikul, the leader of Village Scout (*phon tamruat tho somkhuan harikul, phunam luksuea chaoban*)," in the "Testimonies of people of the October 6 1976 generation (*khamhaikan khong khon run 6 tula 19*)," *Sarakhadi (Feature Magazine)*, 12:140 (October 1996), 158-159. The excerpts of this interview was posted in the October 6 commemoration website called 2519.net and then reprinted in Somkhuan's cremation volume in 2004. Currently, the web link to this interview in 2519.net is no longer accessible. See, *Somkhuan Harikul Cremation Volume*, 186-189.

[89] *Khumue kanfuekoprom withayakon 1976*, 14-15.

only included in this special booklet prepared for the November 1976 training.[90] In other words, his speech only a month later on the October 6 massacre reveals that Somkhuan was well aware of the fact that the Village Scouts could demonstrate such forbidden violence and brutal retaliation against its enemy even if it was against the Village Scout's regulation.

A couple of days before this November 1976 training, Charoenrit had an interview, which was published later in 2002 in a compilation of interviews with the key political figures under the title *Our King* (*nai luang khong rao*). In this interview, Charoenrit said to the interviewer that from his informant, he had gotten intelligence before October 1976 that there would be a group of people who would demonstrate during royal activities. He was assured that the Village Scouts could demonstrate their loyalty to protect the monarchy and nation by stopping the agitation so he allowed the members to gather up in Dusit Zoo and commanded them to wait until the order came. He then emphasized that most Village Scouts who came to Dusit Zoo were the members from the provinces, not "only" from Bangkok. As soon as the Village Scouts in the provinces heard the news that there would be about twenty thousands protesters, they mobilized local members that could prevail this number of agitators and came to Bangkok without an order from the BPP Headquarters. At this point, Charoenrit added that he himself had to send groups from about ten provinces back home, ensuring them nothing would happen.[91]

Again in 1982 in his interview with the Nation newspaper, he stressed that he tried to control the Village Scout crowds to remain calm.

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[90] The fourth edition was published on August 9, 1973 and the fifth revised edition came out in 1998. See Somkhuan's foreword to the fifth edition from: Village Scout Operational Center, Administrative Division. *Khumue kanfuekoprom luksuea chaoban samrap phuamnuai kanfuek lae withayakon (chabap prapprung khrangthi 5), 2541* [Manual Book for the Administrator and Instructor of the Village Scout Training (Fifth Revised Edition), 1998]. Internal Report (Bangkok: Village Scout Operational Center, 1998).

[91] Akkhawat, "*Phrabatsomdetphrachaoyuhua*," 197.

> As to the events on October 6, here we must think carefully. There were pictures which pointed to Lese Majeste. But, the scouts turned up, and no one told them to come out. I told them to stay where they were and not to create any trouble. To stay calm and let the government do the job. If they turned up without any discipline, then, the whole thing would have become a real mess. They understand now. So there is no need to worry. [92]

Similarly, Manas said there was a gathering of the Bangkok Village Scout members before the massacre. He added that there were too many Village Scout members from provinces who wanted to join in this anticommunist protest gathering in Bangkok and thus, the BPP had to control the amount of people who would participate in the Bangkok gathering beforehand.[93]

Again, in his essay published in Somkhuan's cremation volume in 2004, Charoenrit remarks that the October 6 protest by the Village Scouts was the first time in the Village Scout history when the members came to Bangkok without an order from the BPP to fight the enemy that had showed disloyalty to the monarchy.[94] After learning that the radical student activist groups had staged a provocative play against the royal family by humiliating the crown prince, the Village Scout members from all provinces had insisted on coming and protesting against these "wicked people." Consequently, about one hundred thousand members of Village Scouts paid for the travel expenses on their own and set up the three-day national Village Scout gathering in Bangkok at that time.[95] To summarize all these mixed accounts, the BPP members in charge of the Village Scout program had already known about the Scouts' protest in Bangkok before October 6, 1976 and thus, it would be nonsensical if Somkhuan, who was then the assistant

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[92] Vithoon, "BPP Commander Pol. Lt. Gen. Charoenrit Chamrasromran."

[93] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, February 21, 2011.

[94] Charoenrit, "*Somkhuan tonkhit charoenrit bukboek*," 66.

[95] Charoenrit, "*Somkhuan tonkhit charoenrit bukboek*," 66.

commissioner of the BPP Headquarters in Bangkok and also the father of Village Scouts, was not informed about the gathering at that time.

Then who are the key BPP members involved in this incident? There are few notable members in the organizational restructuring between 1975-1976. Commissioner of the BPP Headquarters Suraphon Chulaphram was promoted to the assistant director-general of TNPD in 1975.[96] The Director-general of the TNPD at that time was Police General Sisuk Mahinthonrathep, who had assisted the Border Defense Police Area 5 Division from September 1953 when he served as the commander of Provincial Police in Chiang Mai. It is very likely that Sisuk had called Suraphon to TNPD when he became the director-general in October 1975 because he had maintained such a close relationship with Suraphon and they had shared the same career experiences before both came to the director-general office.[97]

While Suraphon held the acting commissionership in the BPP Headquarters after he moved to the TNPD, the then deputy commissioner, Police Major General Angkun Thatanon was appointed to the commissionership on March 10, 1976, and then on October 1, he was promoted to the Police Lieutenant General. Unlike Suraphon or Charoenrit, Angkun is still a less-known figure in the BPP history. Only a few noteworthy professional histories of Angkun are recorded. First, Angkun was one of the first commanders of the Border Defense Police in the northeastern region established in 1953.[98] Like most of the first group of commanders of BDP and BPP, Angkun had also been a commander of the army infantry battalion before he moved to the Provincial Police in 1951 and he had served as the chief of royal guard army division between

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[96] *Suraphon Chulaphram Cremation Volume*, pp.39-40.

[97] *Anuson ngan phraratchathan phloengsop phon tamruat ek sisuk mahinthonrathep* [Cremation Volume, Police General Sisuk Mahinthonrathep] (Bangkok: Pro-Print Publishing Company, 1993), 11, 74-75. [hereafter, *Sisuk Mahinthonrathep Cremation Volume*].

[98] *Sisippi tochodo*, 40-43.

1946-1948.[99] He was appointed as the commander of BPP Area 5 Division in Chiang Mai since April 1958 and thus had an opportunity to receive frequent royal visits especially from the Princess Mother. According to Charoenrit, Angkun was a close aide to the Princess Mother and had traveled with her whenever she made royal visits to the provinces.[100]

Pranet Ritluechai was deputy commissioner under Angkun. Pranet, a legendary PARU man who had served in the Naresuan camp commandership for more than fifteen years finally moved to Bangkok when the BPP Headquarters was officially reestablished in May 1972 by the order of Prime Minister Thanom. He was firstly appointed to assistant commissioner in 1972 and then became deputy commissioner in 1974.[101] In place of Pranet, the then Police Lieutenant Colonel Prasoet Kuangkaeo became the commander of PARU beginning in 1975, succeeding Police Colonel Samroeng Singhiran. Prasoet was one of the first PARU operational team commanders that had been dispatched to Laos from December 1960, and Samroeng and Prasoet shared the common experiences of fighting Pathet Lao and Vietminh in Laos before they returned to Hua Hin.[102] Another of PARU's legendary figures, Police Major Sarot Panya who had also participated in the Laos action with the CIA, became the deputy commander of PARU when Prasoet held the commandership. In short, the PARU veterans who had operated in Laos came to dominate the commandership of the BPP and PARU since 1974.

From the various sources and interviews that I have gathered, the BPP force from Hua Hin was called into the operation in Thammasat University on October 6, 1976 is most likely the

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[99] *Phon tamruat tho angkun thatanon* [Police Lieutenant General Angkun Thatanon] (Bangkok: 2005).

[100] Charoenrit, *90 pi kap khuamsongcham*, 165.

[101] *Anuson nueang nai phithi phraratchathan phloengsop phon tamruat ek pranet Ritluechai wan pharuehat thi 28 kumphaphan phoso 2545* [Police General Pranet Ritluechai, Cremation Volume. February 28, 2002] (Bangkok: 2002), 21. [hereafter, Pranet Ritluechai Cremation Volume].

[102] Choetchamrat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom*," 41-42.

PARU. First of all, PARU is the only police unit that could be mobilized into action within short notice at that time. According to an internal report of the PARU in 1975, this unit is particularly qualified in quick-reaction and mobile operation and thus, it is capable of reaching any designated areas in Thailand within four hours.[103] It means even if the deployment of the unit was a contingency plan or not planned beforehand, the PARU in Naresuan camp could send the necessary amount of forces to the operational area in time.

In addition, most PARU commanders at that time including the commander Prasoet, Sarot and also Pranet in the BPP Headquarters had close, personal relations with the key army figures in the 1976 coup group because a number of rising military leadership at that time shared common experiences of participating in the covert mission in Laos. As mentioned earlier, their inglorious return to Thailand left growing bitterness against the indigenous communists as well as the Thai civilian government that had not given the desired reward or even recognition of their sacrifice in Laos. After the secret operation in Laos failed, most of the returned PARU members were demoralized and disenchanted by the government's insufficient recognition, and thus a considerable number of PARU members began to depart the unit. In this regard, it was time for the PARU commanders to demonstrate that the unit could yield successful results in defeating communist so that they could heighten the PARU members' morale and unity.

Last but not the least, PARU was the only unit among the BPP that was straightforwardly assigned to provide protection to the royal family members and thus, if the royal family's safety was at risk, the first BPP unit that should be mobilized in action was/is PARU. Since the immediate trigger that incited the rightwing groups' attack against the student and civilian activists gathered in Thammasat University was the doctored picture of the crown prince, the

[103] *Khai Naresuan*, 13.

protesters were seen as the direct threat against the monarchy. Thus, the armed force that was assigned to provide protection to the royal family -- that is PARU, should be sent to clear up the agitation. Indeed, the Naresuan camp history records that on October 7, 1976, a company of PARU's special action forces and a weapons platoon were deployed to Thammasat University and Sarot Panya was in charge of this "anti-riot operation (*pattibatkan kotdan prappram kanko chalachon*)." [104]

According to Thongchai's "Remembering/Silencing the Traumatic Past", Chatichai Chunhawan, a former Prime Minister, brought Charoenrit to a special cabinet meeting that was held in the morning of October 6 to declare a state emergency in order to disperse all the rightwing and leftwing gatherings around Thammasat University and adjunct areas. In this meeting, Chatichai, along with Charoenrit and the then Vice Prime Minister Praman Adireksan, argued that the incident could turn out to be an opportunity to uproot the students and "erase the name of the National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT)," the leading student activist organization at that time.[105] In this regard, on the contrary to what he said to the interviewers in 1976 and 1982, Charoenrit was well aware of the coup group's intention and also the consequence if the Village Scout and BPP-PARU demonstrated against the civilian protest groups in Thammasat University. At the same time, Charoenrit might have thought that the BPP and Village Scout must execute the mission to suppress the radical civilians because they were the symbolic forces of royal family. His longtime friend General Chatichai might have concurred with Charoenrit on this point. Even if their decisions on the massacre turned out to be wrong and miscalculated, Charoenrit and Chatichai could still survive under the royal protection and that

[104] *Prawat khai naresuan*, 136-137

[105] Thongchai, "Remembering/Silencing the Traumatic Past," 250-251.

should be the reason why Charoenrit was able to confidently assure the cabinet members that these combined forces of civilians and police could eradicate the radical student activists and communists from Bangkok.

Nevertheless, Charoenrit's own political calculation alone does not explain the unimaginable brutality and violence undertaken by the Village Scout members on that day. More importantly, this supposedly victorious moment of the Village Scouts, BPP and PARU repelling communists from Bangkok was not remembered or honored by themselves even to present. Then, what happened to these perpetrators after the *hok tula*? How do they remember this tragic, ugly atrocity in Thai history that they had committed in the present days?

Remembering/Silencing the "Victorious" Past

As mentioned earlier, the official history accounts from the BPP, PARU and Village Scouts have a blank period, which is 1976. The BPP and PARU's historical accounts are mostly concentrated on their formation process with the CIA and Phao Siyanon and their expansion of civic action along with the royal family. Likewise, the Village Scout's official histories namely focused on the origin of movement by Somkhuan Harikul and the royal visits and patronage to the Village Scout organization. In the overall history of the BPP, the PARU and the Village Scouts, there are only a few things recorded about the post-1976. By the order of the National Administrative Reform Council 45/2519 dated on October 21, 1976, the BPP Headquarters reorganized its divisions and subdivisions to meet the newly assigned national security missions. In June 1977, by the Prime Minister's order, the BPP Headquarters came under the command of the army's Supreme Command Headquarters and the army assumed the direct command of mobilizing the

BPP in its military operations.[106] Therefore, the BPP Headquarters has been not only under the direct control of TNPD/Royal Thai Police but also the Ministry of Defense since 1977.[107] Other than these descriptions on 1976-1977 institutional restructure, the BPP history remains obscure until the 1986 police reform.

As for the Village Scouts, according to the Thai newspapers, the new military regime halted further initiations of the Village Scout a month after the *hok tula* massacre until mid-May 1977.[108] Actually, the Village Scout trainings and initiations continued despite the publicly declared cessation. Between November 1976 and May 1977, the Princess Mother made 19 royal visits to personally bestow the flags and scarves to the Village Scout members in southern, northeastern, and northern provinces.[109] According to the list of Village Scout trainings that I acquired from a BPP officer in charge of Village Scouts in northern Thailand, between October 1976 and May 1977, there were 18 initiations in Kamphengphet province, 28 in Nakhon Sawan province, 13 in Tak province and 19 initiations in Uthai Thani province.[110] Notably, there were 23 initiations in October including the day of massacre and 31 initiations at least in those four provinces of northern Thailand in November after the cessation was officially declared by the

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[106] *Tai rom phrabarami*, 18.; *Sisippi tochodo*, 57-61.

[107] See the organizational chart in *Sisippi tochodo*, 61.

[108] *Thai Rath* and *Daily News,* November 16, 1976, from Bowie, *Rituals of National Loyalty,* 113.

[109] Notably, Princess Mother's visits to the Village Scout initiations concentrated on southern, northeastern and northern provinces in this alleged cessation period. She made 12 visits to the southern provinces including Ranong (3), Phangnga (2), Phuket (2), Krabi (3), Suphanburi (1) and Ratchaburi (1) between December 1976-February 1977; and 4 visits to the northeast including Khon Kaen (2) and Chaiphumi (2) in March 1977; and for the northern provinces, 3 visits to Chiang Mai (1), Nan (1) and Phrae (1) between April-May 1977. See, *Tochodo sadudi*, 221-222.

[110] Border Patrol Police Regional Subdivision 34, *Sathitikan fue oprom luksuea chaoban phuenthi sopoko luksuea chaoban 34* [Training Statistics of the Village Scout in the areas of responsibility under the Village Scout Operational Center of Subdivision 34], Internal report. The list was provided by a BPP officer in charge of Village Scout to this researcher in Tak province on August 11, 2010. The list includes the initiations took place in Kamphengphet, Nakhon Sawan, Tak and Uthai Thani provinces since 1972.

new military regime. There were a brief vacation between January-April 1977 for these provinces' initiations but by and large, the BPP did not stop training more Village Scout members in these alleged moratorium period. The discrepancy between the official moratorium and actual "vacation" of the BPP's training of the Village Scout does not necessarily contradict what Bowie describes about the moratorium in her account. Rather, it should be noted that the BPP attempted to normalize the Village Scout movement and return it to antebellum status while controlling the number of initiations and membership in this transitional period.[111]

As shown in the Table 4, the number of trainings increased after 1976 but the number of initiates was reduced. The decline of the total initiate's number is in a sense natural because each Village Scout training should have about two hundred trainees at a time. In this respect, the astronomical number of initiates in 1976 was unusual. Additionally, as we can see from the Table 4, the number of initiations only started decreasing from 1979 when the royal donations to the Village Scout reduced, implying that the movement still maintained its strength and influence in the aftermath of the 1976 massacre. More importantly, the Village Scout Operational Center was officially established by the order of the then Prime Minister Kriangsak Chomanan and Vice Minister of Interior Prem Tinsulanond, and Charoenrit Chamratromran was appointed to the first director of VSOC in April 1977.[112] In other words, like Manas explained to me, the Village Scout movement returned from the abnormal 1976 to normalcy after October 6 massacre and thus it was the time of normalization of the movement.[113]

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[111] For the characteristics of "moratorium" period, see Bowie, *Rituals of National Loyalty,* 113-143.

[112] *Prawatsat luksuea chaoban*, 106-108.

[113] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, February 21, 2011.

In the meantime, one of the most resentfully remembered incidents occurred to PARU when the BPP and Village Scouts were adjusting to the new regime. In the early morning of March 3, 1977, about one hundred communists attacked the PARU force in Huay Sat Yai camp, killing five and injuring seven PARU members out of 22 personnel that had stationed in the camp at that time. The PARU official history records that the intruders were undoubtedly the members of CPT, implying that it was an act of retaliation in response to the PARU's suppression operation in Bangkok six months earlier.[114]

Other than these official accounts, the year 1976 is by and large void in the memories of the BPP and Village Scout movement. Considering the effort given to describing the earlier history, and also the comments made by Charoenrit or other BPP members that the Village Scout's participation in the October 6 was victorious, this silence seems rather mysterious. To understand the reason of silence, therefore, we need to investigate the BPP and Village Scout's perceptions of their participation in the October 6 operation and its impacts to both organizations in the immediate years.

The former and incumbent BPP officers who have been in charge of the Village Scout movement say while the instructors center their primary goal in raising the sense of unity among the Village Scout trainees, they also state that the movement is democratic, as it is based on grass-roots participation, overcoming the barriers of gender and generation, educational or social hierarchies, and regional discriminations. Furthermore, the instructors underline that the legitimate political system in Thailand is democracy under the constitutional monarchy. Therefore, the BPP and Village Scout members have assumed that their activities and disciplines are democratic, or conducive to a democratic system since the beginning of the movement.

[114] *Prawat khai naresuan*, 137-140, 161-166.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that the democratic system and practices that the BPP and Village Scouts have promoted is a democracy with the king as the head of state, and unity of the nation under the king's paternalistic leadership. The way in which the BPP and Village Scouts viewed the rising student activism between 1973-1976 should be understood in this context. To put it simply, the Village Scouts assumed that their organization was a civilian movement that upheld the democracy with the monarchy as the head of the state, whereas the student activists upheld the non-Thai definition of democracy that denies the role of traditional elite, including the monarchy. Accordingly, the latter group became the rival of the Village Scouts.

The Village Scout and BPP's perception that the Village Scout movement is a democratization movement, and also that the student activists were their competitors, are expressed in various sources, like in the manual books, Scout members' memoirs and in their songs. One noteworthy account is from Charoenrit. While Sanya Thammasak was holding the premiership, a leader of a student group called Yung Thong, one of the member groups of the NSCT in Thammasat University, contacted the BPP Headquarters and asked if he could observe the Village Scout movement. Therefore, the BPP sent this student leader to the Village Scout trainings in the provinces and big towns. Upon returning, the student leader wrote a report and submitted both to the NSCT and the BPP Headquarters. Charoenrit received a copy of this report and was delighted to find that this student leader's assessment on the Village Scout movement was unexpectedly favorable. In Charoenrit's summary, the student leader concluded: "The Village Scout movement is the training that induces the people to be interested in the democratic system by introducing it in a easier way. Therefore, the NSCT does not have to send the democracy propaganda program team to the villages where the Village Scout training takes

place".[115] After reading this report, Charoenrit said to Somkhuan: "Somkhuan, we won already". As far as Charoenrit recalls, this was the first victory that the Village Scout movement had gained from its rivals of democratic movement and a student leader from Thammasat University proved it. Interestingly enough, Charoenrit has repeated this anecdote several times in his memoirs or writings, emphasizing the democratic characteristics of the Village Scout movement that had even won a favorable comment from a student activist.[116]

Assuming that the Village Scouts are a democratic movement, one of the highly-emphasized objectives of the Village Scout training for the BPP instructors was explaining how to treat the group of people categorized as "wicked people (*khon chuea*)" to uproot the fundamental cause of social, political unrest in Thai society.[117] According to the Village Scout manual in 1976, there is a special instruction to "help suppressing the wicked people". The manual defined *khon chuea* as the harmful people against the society like thieves, argumentative persons, bullies and the lazy people who do not work and earn a living by exploiting others. Therefore, the Village Scouts should help those to become good people so that the *khon chuea* would be extinct in Thai society. If those could not be corrected by the Village Scout, then the members should inform the BPP commanders to fix the problem. Nonetheless, there is a warning as follows: "Do not forget that as for the good Village Scouts, the best way to fix the problem is not to use violence but rather treat those *khon chuea* gently to have them feel they are the Thais

[115] See, Charoenrit, *90 pi kap khuamsongcham*, 176.; Charoenrit, "*Somkhuan tonkhit charoenrit bukboek*," 62.; Charoenrit, "*Khrangrek khong luksuea chaoban*," 100.

[116] Charoenrit, "*Khrangrek khong luksuea chaoban*," 100.

[117] In Thongchai's account, those leftwingers were also called "the deceived (*phu long phit*)." See Thongchai, *Siam Mapped*, 169-170.; Thongchai, "Remembering/Silencing the Traumatic Past," 253.

like us".[118] In short, it was the duty of the Village Scout and their instructors to eliminate the potential threat against the Thai society, firstly by persuading that the Thais do not argue each other and then by trying to correct them under the BPP commander's order.

In short, the belief that the Village Scouts were the democratic organization identified "other" democratization movements as the disloyal acts of *khon chuea* that the Scouts and BPP had to correct or eliminate to preserve the unity of Thai nation. In this respect, the meaning of unity for the Village Scout is not integrative. On the contrary, the excessive emphasis on the concept of "unity" forced the Village Scout members to believe that because their cause and activism were unity-oriented, others who were against them should be regarded as "disunity-oriented". Accordingly, opponents of the Village Scout movement automatically constituted an enemy of the united Thai nation. Defining the enemy as the unity-breakers could be found from the various accounts in the trainings and lectures given by the BPP commanders and Village Scout instructors. Furthermore, the royal family relentlessly criticized the civilian government between 1973-1976 had only brought disunity among the Thai people.[119] In this way, the central mission of the Village Scouts was to demonstrate the prowess of the united Thais against the "wicked" enemy who attempted to break down their national unity and the already-established Thai democratic system under the king as the head of state.

The complex characteristics of the Village Scout movement and its role against, or with, the rising democratization movement is well summed up in the following Village Scout song. In one of my visits to Hua Hin Naresuan Camp to attend the PARU anniversary event, one PARU

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[118] Charoenrit Chamratromran, "*Kamnoet luksuea chaoban* [Birth of the Village Scout]," in *Luksuea si phendin* [Scouts in the Four Reigns], ed. Prayut Sitthiphan (Bangkok: Editorial Department, Ruam Khao Newspaper, 1976), 465.

[119] For instance, see *23 pi luksuea chaoban*, 86.

commander gave me a digital copy of this song telling me that it was the song that Village Scout members sang when they marched to fight communists in the past.[120] The lyrics of the song seem plain, but it contains every symbol of Village Scout movement -- unity, scarves given by the royal family, singing and cheerfulness, as well as the Village Scout's perception of the radical activists at that time.

Oh cheerful, exuberantly cheerful
When the sky turns to golden color, who will die?

Because we came to the Village Scout training to unite,
Do not insult that we are only as small as toothpicks.
We can be bigger when tied together.

Oh cheerful, exuberantly cheerful
When the sky turns to golden color, who will die?

Because we are here, we can eat rice with chicken,
And we can drink coffee, with eggs and *patangko*, as usual.[121]
Even at the least, we can still have rice with curry,
which is much better than the sun-dried rice.

Oh cheerful, exuberantly cheerful
When the sky turns to golden color, who will die?

This is the scarf that the royal family gave to us.
Village Scouts are truly delighted.
It is the symbol of unity that we Village Scout admire.

Oh cheerful, exuberantly cheerful
When the sky turns to golden color, who will die?

Pastimes here are enjoyable and everyone is entertained, not like in the jungles.
Life in the jungle is so pitiful.
We are singing merrily to relieve the sadness,
Whether they envy us or not, you comrades.

[120] Personal communication with a PARU commander, April 27, 2011.

[121] *Patangko* is a sort of fried dough and it is popular snack served with coffee or tea for breakfast.

The repetitive phrase "when the sky turns to golden color" came from one of the popular catchphrases of the leftist movements at that time, which is: "When the sky turns to golden color, people will reign over their land (*mua thongfa sithong fong amphai prachachon cha pen yai nai phendin*)".[122] To the Village Scouts, when the sky turns to golden color, meaning when the leftist achieves their revolution, then it would be the time that someone has to disappear or die hence the phrase "who will die?" follows. The rest of the lyrics depicting what they eat and what they do in the Village Scout training are to show that their conditions are much better than the ones in the jungles, indicating the communists who had launched armed resistance in the mountains and the student groups who had fled to the jungles after the 1976 massacre. Therefore, this song is telling those "comrades (*sahai*)" cannot guarantee anything good by saying that even the modest meal with rice and curry in the Village Scout camp is still much better than eating the sun-dried rice in the jungles.

Overall, as the comparison between the Village Scouts and the leftists in this song presents, the Scout members perceived the radical activists as the rival in their competition to bring democracy to Thailand, but eventually, they were assured that the victory was on their side. However, in actuality, the victory against communists did not automatically make them the winner. What then happened to the participants of the massacre after October 6, 1976?

In the political arena, there was a clear division between the winners and losers after the new military group declared a coup later in the day on October 6. The military factions outside the coup group were gently advised to leave the country or disappear from the public scene as shown in the case of Vithoon Yasawat, who had been suspected of belonging to an opposite

[122] The phrase is actually a part of poem called "October 14 (*sipsi tula*)" written by Wisa Khanthap on October 6, 1973. See the whole text from: Chulalongkorn University's Faculty of Arts, "Wisa Khanthap. *Sipsi tula* [October 14]," accessed November 27, 2012. http://www.arts.chula.ac.th/~complit/etext/octobertext/octtext/wisa.htm.

military faction.[123] As for director-general Sisuk, who was apparently not part of the coup scheme, was removed from the TNPD and transferred to the Ministry of Interior. During the massacre, the army radio had accused Sisuk of being "weak-minded and timid," but when he was forced to move to the Office of the Permanent Secretary under Ministry of Interior, Sisuk's new appointment was widely announced through the TV and radio broadcastings to show off the coup group's inclusion of all parties and factions into the new regime. Sisuk therefore left with a bittersweet outcry to this government's appointment in 1979: "Chaiyo!"[124] On the other hand, his subordinate Suraphon remained in the TNPD and soon promoted to the director-general in 1981. In a sense, Suraphon was neither a winner nor a loser because he did not express a sense of attachment or loyalty to any military factions. What then happened to Charoenrit, who was the key advocate for mobilizing the BPP-PARU and Village Scouts in the massacre?

In retrospect, when Charoenrit and Suraphon graduated from Chulachomklao in the same year, Charoenrit had the upper hand on getting into the higher-level positions because he had inherited a military connection that had been established by his family for generations. Juxtaposed against this, Suraphon only had an outstanding quality in his educational achievement and leadership. When Suraphon was in trouble after the 1947 coup, it was Charoenrit who had secured Suraphon from being trapped in the middle of a military factional fight and helped Suraphon to work with his grandfather, the then director of Territorial Defense Department. Then again, Charoenrit recruited Suraphon to work with the BDP and BPP in 1953. Charoenrit's prestige, however, started to turn upside down in 1957. Because Charoenrit was the

[123] See the detailed accounts on the deportation of Vithoon from Thailand after 1976 coup from Rueangyot Chanthonsiri, *Duai khuamrusuek lae songcham nai wanwan khong thep 333*, 166-172.

[124] Sisuk was one of the fourteen people who were included in the National Administrative Reform Council (NARC) after the coup and he regretted that this had jeopardized his life and name in the end. See *Sisuk Mahinthonrathep Cremation Volume*, 113.

closest aide to Phao, his track of promotion in the police and army was affected by Sarit's coup severely. Then his unequivocal influence in the Village Scouts as well as intimate relationship with the royal family finally forced him to adopt a low profile. In 1996, Charoenrit regrettably remarked on the reversed fate between him and his close friend, saying that: "since then, I became the subordinate (*luk nong*) to Suraphon at all times".[125]

While Suraphon retired with the rank of Police General after serving as the director-general of TNPD, Charoenrit retired as the Police Lieutenant General and his last position was the commissioner of the BPP General Headquarters and director of the Village Scout Operational Center. His faithful student, Somkhuan Harikul, was promoted to the post of Police Lieutenant General and admired as the father of Village Scouts to present day. Yet, Somkhuan could not reach to the BPP commissionership and had to be satisfied with his retirement as the deputy commissioner in 1985. By contrast, Pranet immediately succeeded Angkun Thatanon and became the BPP commissioner in 1980. Considering the fact that Charoenrit had achieved the commissionership after Pranet in 1981 -- when Suraphon became the director-general of TNPD, Pranet's rise to power seems quite impressive. He retired after serving as the deputy director-general of the TNPD in 1986 and became a senator. Additionally, he received the Police General rank after his retirement from the TNPD.[126] Feeling sorry that Pranet did not have a proper house to match his rank and title, the King bestowed land and a house to Pranet's family.[127] His subordinate, who was in charge of Thammasat University operation in 1976, Sarot became the BPP Headquarters commissioner between 2001-2004 -- which is quite a lengthy appointment

[125] *Suraphon Chulaphram Cremation Volume*, 260-261.

[126] *Pranet Ritluechai Cremation Volume*, 21-22.

[127] From Siddhi Savetsila's memorial note to Pranet in *Pranet Ritluechai Cremation Volume*, 57.

compared to previous commissioners, and after his retirement, he subsequently served as the director of VSOC.

While the key figures who had been directly or indirectly involved in the 1976 massacre and coup scheme saw the rise and fall of their names in the wildly changing politics, still the year 1976 remained unchanging, or more correctly, "void" among these big men or the BPP history in general. After interviewing and talking with a number of BPP and PARU members, and also eye-witnessing their activities and key ceremonies for about two years, I came to the conclusion that the BPP is still submerged with what Thongchai called "the perpetrators' ambivalence". Basically, the most important source of pride for the BPP is that they are the most people-oriented police force, as their civic actions and other police work is supposedly aimed towards helping the people in the margins of Thai nation-state. By showing their dedication to these marginalized people, the BPP could contribute not only to bringing forward modernization but also to building the royalist Thai nation stretched from the borders to center.

However, their brutal suppression of civilians at Thammasat University in 1976 had greatly tarnished their "people-oriented" images and also the "civilian-minded" principles. This does not necessarily mean that there were no opponents or enemies against the BPP before or after 1976. Also, it does not mean that the BPP or PARU had not been involved in any brutal atrocities before or after 1976. Nonetheless, even the fiercest battles between the BPP and their enemies like the opium traders or rural insurgents did not make their name (in)famous as much as the 1976 case. In fact, the BPP has been struggling to bring more public attention and recognition to their contribution to defending the national security and leading the rural development in the remote border areas. Ironically, it finally gained popularity and attention by inscribing the name BPP in the most traumatic event in the Thai history.

In this vein, there are two conditions that force the BPP and Village Scouts not to talk about their alleged victory over communists through the participation in the October 6 massacre. The first condition is, to put simply, that the October 6 operation in Bangkok contradicts the Border Patrol Police and its principles. As its name tells, their primary police duty should have been limited to the remote border areas that cannot be reached either by the provincial police or other governmental agencies. The BPP's participation in the 1976 massacre therefore leaves questions on what kind of "border" that the BPP has been defending and which "border" that the BPP had to protect in Bangkok in 1976. As long as these questions to their identity and mission are not clearly answered, their victorious past in 1976 cannot be remembered or openly discussed.

Second, it is a well-known fact that the BPP and PARU have been the most beloved forces of the royal family since the early 1950s. Therefore, the implications of these royal forces' central role in the 1976 massacre should be questioned. In other words, the presence of BPP, PARU and Village Scouts in Thammasat University on October 6, 1976 provokes more suspicion on the indirect and direct involvement of the monarchy in the massacre and coup on that day. To avoid the questions on the possible involvement of royal family through the BPP, PARU and Village Scouts, they were restrained from speaking about their participation to the massacre. In short, the abnormality of operating in Bangkok and the BPP, PARU and Village Scout's symbolic role as the royal forces had silenced their alleged victory against communist in October 6.

At last, before the sky turned to golden color, the BPP, PARU and Village Scouts crushed down on the leftwing groups in Bangkok and brought the desired victory. Yet, their stories of victory have not found a place in the BPP, PARU and Village Scout histories to present. In a way, their silence might have permitted them to survive until the present by remembering the

unfailing pride of being the royal force for guarding the nation, religion and king and, by not remembering the traumatic past.

Indigenization of the Cold War

Between 1973-1976, the antiwar and democratization movement grew large in Thailand. Particularly after the success of the October 14th democratization movement, student activists increased their criticism against the Thai military governments for its collaboration with the U.S. in implementing the inexcusable wars in Southeast Asia. At the same time, student activists demanded immediate, full withdrawal of the American troops so that Thailand could be truly independent from imperialism. In fact, before the students' massive protest in front of the American embassy on March 21, 1976, the U.S. had declared its troops withdrawal but did not meet its promised deadline in late March 1976. Pressed by the student protests, the ambassador instead asked for four-month extension for the Thai government. Consequently, the students increased street demonstrations against the Thai and U.S. governments' decision to delay the complete withdrawal.[128]

Student activists' protests against the presence of American troops in Thailand had deeply agitated the Thai military circles because the withdrawal of U.S. armed forces from Thailand meant not only the removal of American combat troops but also the loss of major financial sources for the Thai army. The U.S. military aid since 1950 had greatly expanded the Thai army establishment. To sustain these already overgrown forces, the U.S. government's continuous support for its troops in Thailand and its host government were essential to the Thai military. In addition, large numbers of pro-American Thais believed the presence of U.S. troops in their

[128] For the description on the Thai student's anti-American movement after 1973, see, for example, Suthachai, *Saithan prawatsat prachathipatai*, 143-145.; Morell and Chai-anan, *Political Conflict in Thailand*, 164-167.

home country served as a barrier against the communist influx from its neighboring countries. For the U.S., although the government was under the harsh criticism on the Vietnam quagmire by the antiwar movements at home, Thailand was still -- but not as great as before -- one of the most vital American allies to fight communism in Southeast Asia. Thus, the U.S. government was hesitant to withdraw the entirety of its armed forces in Thailand, since it would affect its future foreign policy in the region.

In this context, there had been speculations on the potential American support for the 1976 massacre and the coup, especially through the CIA, to secure the U.S.-friendly Thai governments. Thomas Lobe, who conducted research about the CIA, USOM and BPP in the early 1970s comments that the U.S. government's aid and assistance to develop the Thai police and military had "played a significant role in the buildup for the [1976] coup and are now playing a major role in running the country".[129] He also argues that the U.S. government's "careful and consistent application of certain kinds of foreign assistance over years, has created the pre-conditions, the infrastructure, the readiness for a more coercive, repressive, and vehemently anti-communist set of political-military leaders".[130] Indeed, several army generals and high-ranking police officers involved in the massacre and the coup had worked closely with the U.S. government since the Sarit administration, and it is true that their experiences, which were gained from the numerous military operations sponsored by the U.S. government's money and strategic plans, contributed to building up the higher-level military's career and power.

However, the question of to what extent the experience and knowledge that the Thai armed forces had accumulated from the American Cold War policies and aid affected their internal

[129] Lobe, *United States National Security Policy and Aid,* 121.

[130] Lobe, *United States National Security Policy and Aid,* 123.

power competitions and rivalries demands more careful scrutiny. In addition, it is still debatable as to whether the U.S. government could exercise such the influence over the military factions as well as Thai government after 1975. Not only the Thais, but the whole world had witnessed the extravagant American war in Vietnam, as the U.S. was helplessly defeated by the indigenous communists. Moreover, the War also contributed to the increase of antiwar and anti-authoritarian protests in the U.S. and the rest of world, resulting in the growing questions on the strength and legitimacy of the U.S. as a global superpower. A prolonged Vietnam War thus jeopardized the superiority of the U.S. leadership in the area of global politics, as well as damaging its capability to bring victory over communism in the eyes of the local allies.

I agree with Lobe that U.S. Cold War foreign policies and aid had prepared the ground for nurturing new generations of military leadership and for enlarging their political standing throughout the Cold War in Southeast Asia. But at the same time, I contend that this background should not be extended as the main context of the U.S.'s possible involvement or the influence in the 1976 massacre and coup. Oftentimes, scholars in the Cold War studies, or the activists in the anti-American imperialism movements, are inclined to exaggerate the U.S. influence in the local politics as if this superpower has omnipotent power over the seemingly lesser powers. The speculation on the possibility of U.S. involvement in the October 6 massacre and coup shares the same perception, which is popularly called "Pax Americana." Lobe highlights the U.S. influence in the 1976 event by stressing the fact that the CIA-PSD trained BPP was deployed to Thammasat with the American M-16 rifles to kill the communist.[131] However, even if the weapons used during the massacre were from the U.S., the level of brutality was beyond what

[131] Lobe, *United States National Security Policy and Aid,* 119.

the weapons could do, as Thongchai recalls: "It was a Wednesday morning in which the deaths by gunshot seemed to be the least painful and most civilized of murders."[132]

In fact, October 6 represents a punctuation mark in the divergent discourses on political change as well as on Thainess. Many Thai citizens watched the massacre on TV before coverage was blacked-out by government censors that morning.[133] Unimaginable atrocities had crushed the Thai's widely perceived pride in their peaceful history and also the public discourses around the meaning of democracy. Furthermore, the Village Scouts' and royal family's fervent calls for the unity of the Thai nation in fact catalyzed disunity in the Thai society because from the beginning, the meaning of unity among the Village Scout, BPP and royal family was the unity of a Thai nation who could live as loyal subjects of royal family. In this sense, the call for unity divided people between friends and enemies, and once identified as an enemy, they could not be Thais, which is why the leftwing students were called Vietnamese.[134] It was the rigidity of defining unity, and the limitation of Thainess that had greatly contributed to the endless insurgencies and growing conflicts throughout the Cold War, and finally culminated in the October 6 massacre.

In addition, the massacre was also a symbolic confirmation that the U.S. was not a superpower in Thailand. The public discourse on the withdrawal of the U.S. armed forces heightened the tension between the rightwing and leftwing movements before the massacre. However, it is significant to note that the direct trigger of the massacre was the mysteriously doctored picture of the crown prince and the perpetrators of the massacre called for the defense of nation, religion and king from the communists who supposedly did not abide by these pillars

[132] Thongchai, "Remembering/Silencing the Traumatic Past," 244.

[133] Ji Giles, "From the City, via the Jungle, to Defeat," 191.

[134] Suthachai, *Saithan prawatsat prachathipatai*, 152.; Thongchai, *Siam Mapped*, 169-170.

of Thai nationalism. As a result, communists, in the Thai sense, came to represent antinationalists, anti-Buddhists, and antiroyalists. As the above examinations on the general histories of the BPP, PARU and Village Scout and their activities show, the monarchy became the most influential source of authority and legitimacy in Thai society through the process of nation-building during the Thai Counterinsurgency Era. Therefore, the rapid expansion of the Village Scout movement and its participation in the October 6 massacre clearly reveal that the Thai elites had successfully indigenized the Cold War system to sustain and justify their continuous power domination.

In this regard, the main implication of the October 6 massacre in the general Cold War history lies in its demonstrations of the successful indigenization of the Cold War system by the Thai local elites, especially the monarchy. Throughout the examination on the transformations of the BPP, development of its civic actions, expansion of royal influence and the growing domestic and external support for the monarchy's anticommunist modernization campaigns during the Thai Counterinsurgency Era, we can see two historical continuities, which constitute key components of the "indigenization" process. First, the Thai local elites, military leaders, and the royal family pushed forward their own political agendas before the U.S. Cold War foreign policies. Second, the Thai local elites constantly and actively utilized the U.S. agendas for making Thailand an anticommunist bastion to strengthen their political authority and legitimacy. In other words, the U.S. foreign policies were implemented by the Thai elites on the premise of achieving mutual interests as well as meeting the local elites' demands. The contrasting images between the monarchy's successful consolidation of domestic support for its role as the father of the Thai nation, and the growing questions on the role of the U.S. as a global superpower at home and abroad after the Vietnam War quagmire, and the unimaginable atrocities committed by

the BPP, PARU and the Village Scouts in the morning of October 6, 1976 therefore help us to see who the final victor of the Cold War in Thailand is.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter surveys a brief history of Village Scout movement and its involvement in the October 6, 1976 massacre in Thammasat University. As the study on the Village Scout history tells, this massive socio-political movement was designed to constitute the popular support infrastructure for the nation-building projects undertaken by the BPP and royal family. Therefore, it is significant to view the formation and development of the Village Scout movement in the context of the changes of BPP's counterinsurgency strategies and objectives. This historical analysis, therefore, perceives the BPP and Village Scouts as becoming symbolic royal forces that propagated royalist nationalism in the margins, and their influence soon expanded to the entirety of Thailand with the ardent support of the royal family throughout the turbulent 1970s. In addition, examination of the historical and political backgrounds as well as key actors of the October 6 massacre allow us to see clearly who was the final winner of the Cold War in Thailand. Even the silence, or perhaps a purposeful oblivion, of the victims and perpetrators in the massacre, is in fact the concrete evidence that the Thai monarchy has successfully indigenized American Cold War politics and put it forward to strengthen its power during the Cold War.

Chapter 8. Nation-Building under the *Phrabarami*

*This chapter focuses on the creation of the kingship as an image of development and as a supporter of the Thai people by the Princess Mother, as well as the current king and Princess Sirindhorn, through the expansion of royal projects and their exposure to public spaces, which has endowed the monarchy with tremendous popularity and political authority. Following in the footsteps of Princess Mother, the King transformed the monarchy into a modern institution by participating in the BPP's rural development and counterinsurgency programs, and initiating its own royal projects. Royalist elites' reinvigoration of Thai-style democracy and discourse as well as royalist nationalism also contributed to the Thai monarchy's successful indigenization of the Cold War, thereby continuing the impacts of nation-building under the charismatic royal power (*phrabarami*) to the post-Cold War Thai society.*

The Thai monarchy is a nominal head of state and the institution is supposed to stay "above" politics. To support this norm, one of the BPP's political campaigns under the "Building Security in the Rural Villages Project under the Princess Mother's Royal Patronage" from 1977 to the present days has been inculcating the ideas about "democracy under constitutional monarchy (*prachathipatai an mi phramahakasat pen pramuk*)" among the rural villagers.[1] Meanwhile, a number of tourist and backpackers who visit Thailand would be overwhelmed by the invariant, almost religious voice of the Thai people expressing their love towards the monarchy as well as the enormous quantity and frequency of royal exposures in the public space. This in turn makes them question: "why do Thai people love their king so much?"

There are several academic analyses that attempt to define the role and characteristics of the Thai monarchy, ranging from constitutional monarchy to network monarchy, and the dhammaraja king.[2] The complexity of defining the current monarch's political, cultural and

[1] *Wiphat Wipunlakon Cremation Volume*, 84, 86.

[2] For the studies on the political characteristics of current Thai monarchy, see, for example, Anderson "Studies in the Thai State."; Handley, *King Never Smiles*.; Duncan McCargo, "Network Monarchy and Legitimacy Crises in Thailand," *Pacific Review* 18:4 (December 2005), 499-519.; Hewison, "Monarchy and Democratisation," 58-74.; Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian, *Kings, Country and Constitutions: Thailand's Political Development, 1932-2000* (Richmond: Curzon, 2003).; Kobkua, "Monarchy and Constitutional Change," 57-71.; James Ockey, "Monarch, Monarchy, Succession and Stability in Thailand" *Asia Pacific Viewpoint* 46:2 (August 2005), 115-127.; Soren Ivarsson and Lotte Isager, eds. *Saying the Unsayable: Monarchy and Democracy in Thailand* (Copenhagen: NIAS

historical role in a sense imply that the institution has never fully belonged to either the state or the nation but remained *above* both. Like the author Paul Handley, who wrote the controversial biography *The King Never Smiles* argues, many studies, as well as the general Thai public, agree on that the current Thai monarchy has a powerful and somewhat unworldly aura, but this has actually confused the role of the current king. In other words, we clearly know how influential the King is, but we do not know what role he is supposed to play.

The Thai royal family has been revered as a demigod and their popular titles often have a story that refurnishes their sacredness. *Mae Fah Luang*, the royal mother from the sky is one good example. This overview on the royal family's rise to both sacred and secular power during the Cold War thus begins with the discussion on the Princess Mother's work with the BPP that gave birth to the legend of *Mae Fah Luang* and will investigate the general legacies of her royal patronage to the BPP and border people during the Thai Counterinsurgency Era. Ensuing discussion will examine the transformation of the monarchy from traditional patron to modern nation-builder through the undertakings of royal project and royal visits in the rural areas. I will elaborate on the impacts of the indigenizing Cold War politics through an analysis on the Thai-style democracy discourses and the nature of royalist nationalism. Building upon these surveys, I will argue that the Thai monarchy has endeavored to bring the border and rural Thai people under royal influence through its successful indigenization of the American Cold War foreign policies and counterinsurgency programs. In this process, the King became the symbol of Thai national unity and progress that provided political authority and legitimacy to continue the traditional institution's power ascendancy to present.

Press, 2010).; Roger Kershaw, *Monarchy in South-East Asia: the Faces of Tradition in Transition* (London; New York: Routledge, 2001), 136-153.

Legend and Legacy of Mae Fah Luang

Upon hearing the loud helicopter propeller sound, the villagers begin to sit down in the hastily paved road and the BPP teachers check the students lined up in the schoolyard for the last time. When the Thai National Police Department helicopter lands, a tiny old lady steps outside and greets the BPP commanders, provincial governors, and other local politicians who have been waiting for her arrival. She then walks quickly towards the school leaving the prostrated villagers in their ethnic dresses behind. Thereafter, the Princess Mother starts her duty of being a royal mother by inspecting the school grounds along the designated route, opening the school buildings and distributing the gifts to the students and villagers that she brought from the lowlands. These were the scenes that created the legend of *Mae Fah Luang*, royal mother from the sky.

There are several speculations about the origin of the name *Mae Fah Luang.* Manas told me that the title possibly originated from the Princess Mother's Medical Volunteer Foundation because the initial name of the organization was the Volunteer Flying Doctor Units and thus the images of Princess Mother descending from the sky summed up to her popular title the royal mother from the sky.[3] Another version of the legend that has been the widely publicized can be found in the Mae Fah Luang Foundation under Royal Patronage (*munithi mae fa luang nai phraboromratchupatham*) and it goes as following:

> Mae Fah Luang is the title given to Princess Srinagarindra by the hill tribe people in the north of Thailand. Since the late 1960s, the Princess Mother worked to improve the living conditions of rural Thais, particularly the ethnic minorities in remote mountainous areas that were only accessible by helicopter. … It was this very image of the Princess Mother descending from the skies that gave rise to the name "Mae Fah Luang" (meaning Royal Mother from the Sky) and became the affectionate title by which the local people address the Princess Mother.[4]

[3] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, January 12, 2010.

[4] Mae Fah Luang Foundation under Royal Patronage, "Founder," accessed June 29, 2012. http://www.maefahluang.org/index.php?option=com_flexicontent&view=items&cid=19&id=2&Itemid=8&lang=en. Dora Layton

This is almost a standard story that the Thais reiterate today.

Another intriguing analysis can be found from a commemoration volume for the Princess Mother published by the Princess Sirindhorn's order in 1998. In this volume, the author suggests that it was the BPP who coined the name around 1967. The author's explanation to the reason why the BPP created the title begins with the question about the strange combination of "sky (*fah*)" and "royal (*luang*)." "*fah*" and "*luang*" are central Thai vocabulary words and *luang* has been conventionally used to imply a sovereign ruler both in central and northern Thailand. However, since the combination between "sky" and "royal" is not common in the Thai royal custom, the author hypothesizes that *fah* is a Thai word but it came to be added to signify the highland minorities' contribution because the ethnic minorities use the word "sky" to indicate the heavenly, sacred leadership. Therefore, the author argues that the BPP translated the highland minority's vocabulary for a ruler into the Thai equivalent word for "sky" and attached it to the general Thai term "*luang*". "*mae*" means mother in central Thai so the combination of these three words, *Mae Fah Luang* make a unique title for the Princess Mother whose work and dedicated for the highland minorities is well known.

Another reason why the author believes the BPP coined this title derives from the previous examples of naming the royal projects. The BPP Schools built with the king's donation were named *Chao Pho Luang* and those of queen's as *Chao Mae Luang* in the early 1960s. Therefore, when the Princess Mother began to sponsor the BPP School project, the BPP members created the title *Chao Mae Ya Luang*, meaning the royal paternal grandmother, but as the villagers did

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wrote pretty much the same story about the origin of Mae Fah Luang in 1968. See Layton, "Royal Mother from the Sky," 6.

not use the term much, it soon disappeared.[5] In fact, *Mae Fah Luang* had not been used very often among the highland minorities either. This title suddenly became popular among the lowland Thais in 1984-1985 when the Mae Fah Luang Foundation was officially launched in place of the previous Thai Hillcrafts Foundation (Bordercraft Project), and the story about the origin of *Mae Fah Luang* began to spread out through mass medias.[6] In short, it is very likely that the BPP coined and started using the name *Mae Fah Luang* with the villagers in the remote areas and later when the Princess Mother's royal project took it on as an official title of the foundation, the stories about *Mae Fah Luang* became a standard legend.

In fact, most Thai people, and the highland minorities as well, call the Princess Mother "*somdetya*," which might have been also created by the BPP.[7] In other words, the context of how and why the Princess Mother gained the title *Mae Fah Luang* could be true, but it was not the term that the highland minorities created or used in the past. It is the mythical power of legend mostly consumed by the outsiders like the Bangkokians that make the standard story of the *Mae Fah Luang* more popular and credible. In this sense, it is a purposeful legend invented to exalt the Princess Mother as royal mother of the highland minorities in the eyes of general Thai public. In this regard, the legend should not mislead us to perceive the Princess Mother's dedication for helping the marginalized in the remote border areas was derived from her altruism and

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[5] Supharat Loetphanitkun, ed., *Phrama malaisokla lueangsuk: phrarat prawat lae phrarat koranikit nai somdetphra sinakharindra bromratchachonani* [After Princess Mother came, sadness disappeared and happiness remained: Royal Histories and Duties of the Her Royal Highness Princess Mother], Vol. 2 (Bangkok: Krungthep Press, 1984), 562-564.

[6] Mae Fah Luang Foundation Under Royal Patronage. *Doi Tung Development Project, Chiang Rai, Thailand*, pamphlet, (nd), 3.

[7] Former BPP members say that it was the BPP who began calling the Princess Mother "*somdetyah*" from the mid-1960s. See, Cop's Magazine, *Tha song pen ying kua*, p.6.

benevolence only. In fact, the Princess Mother's royal projects and her numerous trips to the border areas did not stay completely "above" politics.

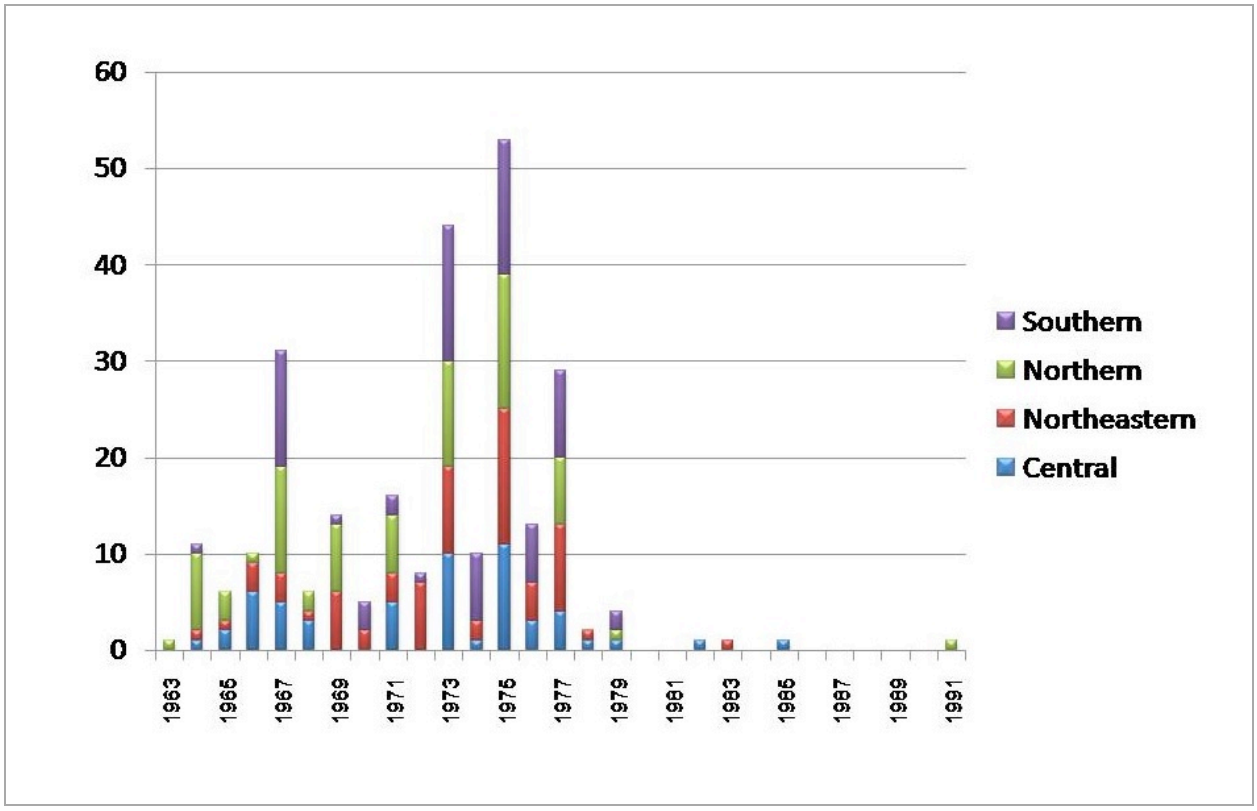
As mentioned in the previous chapters, the Princess Mother's royal projects built upon the BPP civic actions and have extended from the provision of basic medical services and education to the development of rural economy and security volunteers projects. Particularly during the 1960s and 1970s, she frequently made royal visits (*kansadet*) to demonstrate royal sponsorship for the BPP projects and in this process, she exposed herself to the general public to remind them the actual presence of monarchy in every corner of Thailand. However, it should be noted that like the distribution of the BPP Schools, she corresponds to the political and security conditions of each region, as did the Princess Mother's trips in the rural areas. According to the BPP's accounts, the Princess Mother made a total of 267 royal visits to the BPP-related events between 1963 and 1991. While the regional distribution of her trips to the BPP-related activities are quite balanced among the four regions, it is noteworthy that 263 out of 267 trips were made before 1980, as we can see from the Chart 4.[8]

The Princess Mother's royal visit to the BPP-related events consists of the school opening, donating supplies to the BPP members in area camps and the Village Scout initiations after 1971. Not surprisingly, her visits to the BPP Schools constitute more than half of the total (140 times) and her attendance at the Village Scouts initiation (85 times) ranks the second. As shown in Chart 4, the Princess Mother's royal visit took place most extensively in the year 1967 (31 times), 1973 (44 times), and peaked in 1975 (53 times). In 1967, 11 out of 31 trips were made to open new BPP schools in northern Thailand. Considering the fact that she only made total 10 visits in the previous year, the number of the Princess Mother's royal trips tripled in the year

[8] The number of Princess Mother's royal visit between the year 1963-1991 is compiled from the list of her visit to BPP in *Tochodo sadudi*, 209-223.

1967, corresponds to Chart 1 (in Chapter 5), which shows the rapid increase of school numbers in northern region in the same year. As the tension grew from the escalating insurgencies in the north, the BPP accelerated their civic action programs by building more schools and initiating new projects like Border Security Volunteer Team and Seabee training in 1967. In addition, this is also the year that the Princess Mother began participating in and became a royal patron of the Bordercraft project, the forerunner of Mae Fah Luang Foundation.

Chart 4. Princess Mother's Visit to the BPP-related Activities



The number of trips climaxes in 1973 and 1975. One notable difference between 1973 and 1975 is her destination. In 1973, out of total 44 trips, the Princess Mother visited total 29 schools and 4 Village Scout initiations -- one initiation per region. In 1975, however, out of total 53

visits, she attended 35 Village Scout initiations. In consideration of the fact that she only made 15 trips to open new BPP Schools in the same year, the changes in the frequency and destination of her royal visits between 1973 and 1975 are quite remarkable because they clearly tell where the royal attention was concentrated at that time. Finally, it is noteworthy that the number of her royal visits dropped dramatically after 1977. The Princess Mother made a total of 29 trips to the provinces to attend the BPP-sponsored events in 1977, but in the very next year, she only visited two Village Scout initiations in Nakhon Nayok and Nakhon Ratchasima provinces, which are close to Bangkok. In short, the Princess Mother's royal visits took place where security concerns arose, where the number of insurgents grew, and where the presence of authority was urgently demanded to lead a successful counterinsurgency campaign.

When the Princess Mother visited BPP School opening ceremonies or BPP camps, she did not go with empty hands. Usually, she brought school supplies, uniforms, books, toys, photos of the king and queen, Buddha images to distribute to the students, and medicine, food, clothes, and transistor radios for the villagers.[9] She also donated money to build or repair the facilities in the BPP camps. One of the first two BPP Schools built under the Princess Mother's sponsorship was Ananda Border Patrol Police School in Palau village, Prachuap Khirikhan province -- which is apparently built in commemoration of her late son, and Walai Border Patrol Police School in Hua Hin. To build these two schools, she donated 110,000 baht to the BPP in 1964.[10] However, these schools are rare cases that received direct funding from the Princess Mother among the royal-sponsored BPP Schools. According to the BPP's account, there are actually only ten schools that were built by the Princess Mother's money alone and thus, these schools are named

[9] *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 114.

[10] *Tochodo sadudi*, 210. See also, *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 112.

and numbered after the Princess Mother like "Sangwanwit" or "Somdet phraratchachonani."[11] Otherwise, the Princess Mother normally received donations from individuals or other governmental and nongovernmental organizations to support the BPP's civic action programs in the remote areas.[12] In the end, the royal family supported the building of a total of 198 BPP Schools by donating almost 16 million baht between 1962-2006 and the schools that received full or partial support from the Princess Mother between 1963-1991counts 140.[13] Now, the question is where this money came from.

There are thousands of donors to the royal project ranging from an individual to major business companies, which generally get tax-deduction for their charitable activities. Most of the royally sponsored non-profit foundations rely on donations and thus the money given to the BPP civic action programs "through" the royal family are not completely from their pockets. So did the Princess Mother's projects and sponsorship. One of the notable sources of funding that has enabled Princess Mother's sponsorship to support the BPP civic action programs is the "Princess Mother's Charities Fund of Thailand, Inc., (*munithi kongthun kankuson somdetphra sinakharindra boromratchachonani,* PMCF)." It is unclear when this non-profit corporation was established but according to a former committee member of the organization, it became an official royal foundation in November 1980 to celebrate the Princess Mother's eightieth birthday.[14] For the first four years of the establishment, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs

[11] *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 84-85.

[12] For example, see *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 86-88 for the list of schools that received external donations through Princess Mother.

[13] *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 89, 113.

[14] Sangwon Krairoek. "*Munithi kongthun kankuson somdetphra sinakharindra boromratchachonani, chai chue yoh PMCF* [The Princess Mother's Charities Fund of Thailand, Inc.]." In *Tamruat trawen chaidaen parithat* [Border Patrol Police Review] 11:38 (October 1994-January 1995), 54.

and the then head of Democrat Party, Thanat Khoman served the presidency of the central committee in the foundation.[15]

An actual leader of the PMCF, however, was a lifetime friend of the Princess Mother, Betty Dumaine. As a boarding schoolmate of the Princess Mother in Boston since 1919, Dumaine wanted to set up a non-profit organization that could financially support her royal friend's project in Thailand. She therefore established the PMCF in Pinehurst, North Carolina first and then set up a branch office in Sathon Road in Bangkok. Interestingly, the PMCF attracted several notable figures like Lieutenant General Richard G. Stilwell, who had served the Commander of the U.S. Military Assistance Command in Thailand (MACTHAI) between 1965-1967 and also a German pharmacist and businessman Herbert Link, who later offered their building to the PMCF office for free.[16]

One of the first projects that the PMCF undertook was rebuilding the Betty Dumaine Border Patrol Police School in Chiang Rai province that had been allegedly burned down by the communist terrorists. To reconstruct the school building, Dumaine brought 50,000 dollars from the U.S. in 1967.[17] After the official foundation was established in Thailand in 1980, the PMCF set a goal to sponsor an additional five charity organizations: Aid for Border Patrol Police, Aid of the Crippled, New Life Foundation, Aid of Lepers in Lampang province and the Princess Mother's Medical Volunteers. Up to the present, the donations from the PMCF continue to flow

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[15] Sangwon, "*Munithi kongthun kankuson somdetphra*," 54-55.

[16] *Princess Mother's Charities Fund of Thailand, INC*. Pamphlet, na, nd.; Link family has owned one of the oldest companies in Thailand and the ancestors of Herbert Link was the official pharmacists to the Thai royal family from the late nineteenth century. Now, Herald Link, a son of Herbert Link's brother is the Chairman of the PMCF Foundation as well as the B.Grimm Group in Thailand. See the details from: B. Grimm Group, "History," accessed June 29, 2012, http://www.bgrimmgroup.com/en/index.php.

[17] Sangwon, "*Munithi kongthun kankuson somdetphra*," 57. Betty Dumaine School History presented by the School Principal to the author on July 3, 2010 in Phayao province.

to the BPP Schools, as well as provide a scholarship called the Princess Mother's Scholarship (*thun somdetya*) to the students in the BPP Schools.[18] To show her appreciation, the Princess Mother bestowed Betty Dumaine *than phuying*, the highest conferred non-inheritable lifetime title for a non-royal woman. Soon, there emerged a number of non-profit organizations under the Princess Mother's royal patronage to support the BPP civic action, such as the Mae Fah Luang Foundation and Princess Srinagarindra Award Organization (*munithi rangwan somdetphra sinakharindra boromratchachonani*) to name a few.[19]

There were also a number of local support groups to the Princess Mother's projects. One notable group that had begun supporting the BPP civic actions from the early years is the Thai Women's Society (*samakhom satri thai*).[20] Before Phao Siyanon moved to the Thai National Police Department, his wife Udomlak Siyanon -- a daughter of Army General Phin Chunhawan, had served in the Committee of the Thai Women's Society. After she became head of the Society in 1954, Udomlak could extend the Society's charities to the BPP School projects by donating money and school supplies until 1957 when she left for Switzerland -- as a result of Sarit's coup.[21] A year after Phao's death in Switzerland, Udomlak returned Thailand in 1961 and resumed her charity activities. She served again in the Committee of the Thai Women Society

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[18] Sangwon, "*Munithi kongthun kankuson somdetphra*," 54.; See the current Chairman of the PMCF Herald Link awarding the Princess Mother's Scholarship to the BPP School Students in November 2011, from: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, "Border Patrol Police School Project," accessed June 28, 2012, http://www2.bpp.go.th/bppmain_school/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=431:-24-11-2554&catid=80:2010-07-13-08-12-51&Itemid=18.

[19] See the detailed information from: Mae Fah Luang Foundation under Royal Patronage, accessed December 11, 2014, http://www.maefahluang.org/index.php?lang=en, and Princess Srinagarindra Award Organization, accessed June 29, 2012, http://www.princess-srinagarindraaward.org/en.

[20] Manas, "*Rongrian chaokhao lae prachachon*," 232.

[21] *Anuson ngan phraratchathan phloengsop khun ying udomlak siyanon pomo, thocho, na wat phra si mahathattu wan angkhan thi 29 thanwakhom phoso 2524* [Khun Ying Udomlak Siyanon's Cremation Volume, December 29, 1981], (na, 1981), no pagination.

from 1975 until she deceased in 1981. According to the memoirs by former commissioners to the BPP Headquarters and TNPD, Udomlak had actively aided the welfare services for the Thai policemen, alongside her generous support for the BPP activities, especially the Princess Mother's Building Security in the Rural Villages Project, after she returned from Switzerland.[22]

In addition, numerous social organizations both at home and abroad have been making donations to the royal family to be conveyed to the BPP civic action projects such as Red Cross in Thailand, Faculty of Medicine in Siriraj Hospital and Young Buddhist Association of Thailand.[23] Also, major business companies like Siam Cement Corporation, OSOTSPA. Co. Ltd., and popular politicians like Prime Minister Thanom Kittikachorn and U.S. Ambassador to Thailand made personal donations to the Princess Mother.[24] All this financial and material support for the BPP services in the remote border and rural areas were collective efforts by the various social, political and business groups to develop the Thailand's margins, but most of the time, it was the royal family who gained attention and consequent affection from the general Thais.

In the eyes of public and also the BPP, these organizations and political figures made merit by donating money to the monarchy and the royal family, who generously redistributed the resources to their royal projects and other charities to help people in need. This donation system indeed derives from one significant Buddhist tradition of "merit-making (*tham bun*)". In Thai society, it is believed that donating to the people in high places would make greater merit, hence the royal projects or royally sponsored organizations have received continuous, stable support.

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[22] *Anuson ngan phraratchathan phloengsop khun ying udomlak siyanon*.; *Wiphat Wipunlakon Cremation Volume,* 85.

[23] Manas, "*Rongrian chaokhao lae prachachon*," 232.

[24] Dumaine and Layton, *Somdetphra boromratchachonani*, 48-49. Manas, *Kan songkhro chaokhao nai phak nuea*, 12-13.

As a consequence, the collective support given to the royal project and to the BPP civic action programs from various social, business and political organizations all the more signified the generous and people-oriented images of the current monarch and Princess Mother. In this way, the Princess Mother could make herself the direct royal patron of the BPP and the marginalized people in the remote border areas.

What then is the legacy of the Princess Mother's work with the BPP and Thai society during the Cold War until the time of her death in 1995? Basically, there are two central implications of the Princess Mother's work with the BPP. First, she brought the marginal people to the center of Thai society and politics and through this process, she embodied both the sacred and secular kingship. As a commoner who married a royal prince and gave birth to two kings of Thailand, her lifetime story was more or less the "script for a fairy tale."[25] On top of this humble, modest commoner's background, her tireless commitment to "open a path to civilization for remote border villages" had created an image of the Princess Mother and furthermore the entire monarchy as the benevolent royal savior from the sky.[26] Often this royal effort to bring the highland minorities into the Thai nation was interpreted by the general Thai people as the extended generosity and compassion of the Thai monarchy for the marginalized, because other Thai state apparatuses seemed to remain indifferent to these people. Through the process of bringing the marginalized into the center, the Princess Mother founded two significant images of the current monarchy: one as a sacred mother of the nation and the other as the secular, humane monarch who is close to her subject. The combination of a royal mother from the sky and a half-

[25] Tom Mintier, "The Fairy Tale life of the Thai Royal Grandmother," in *The King of Thailand in World Focus: Articles and Images from the International Press, 1946-2006*, ed. Foreign Correspondent's Club of Thailand (Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2007), 194. Originally published in the *Cable News Network*, October 28, 1995.

[26] Layton, "Royal Mother from the Sky," 7.

royal and half-commoner monarch of the marginalized transcended the gap between sacredness and secularity, generating a popular legend.

Second, as the Princess Mother's projects in northern Thailand became the foundation stone for the first official royal project launched in 1969, she actually created the source of political authority and legitimacy for the current monarch. It should be noted that the king began to build his political influence on the basis of his own mother's work from the late 1960s by presenting himself as the development king. More precisely, it was the Princess Mother who first created the images of a working monarch. In this respect, the Princess Mother laid the ground for the survival of Thai monarchy both as a traditional patron of the nation and also a modern, professional state apparatus in the present day. In sum, through her participation in the BPP civic actions, the Princess Mother first constructed the symbolic images of a royal mother who cares about the marginalized. Based on these images, she expanded her royal projects covering education, health and sanitation, rural economic development, and also the border security projects, which became key components of building the institutional infrastructure of the monarchy's nation-building. In this process, the Princess Mother secured the BPP too. Because of her vested interest in expanding royal projects with the BPP, the Thai military government could not express its outright suspicion and discomfort of the existence of BPP. At the same time, the BPP, as a beloved child of the Princess Mother, has benefited from the images of the Princess Mother as a professional, benevolent monarch because the unit was the closest of her royal agents as well as other royal family members.

The legacy of the Princess Mother's work is still visible today. As she commanded Princess Sirindhorn to take over her work with the BPP, since 1980, Sirindhorn has been in charge of the BPP School project. Meanwhile, Princess Galyani, elder sister of the current king, took over the

PMMV and acted as the royal patron of general Thai medical studies and institutions following her mother's example.[27] When Princess Galyani passed away in 2008, she was a direct royal patron to 63 social organizations and foundations in support of the education and public health.[28] Additionally, even after the Princess Mother passed away more than a decade ago, multiple organizations and foundations that were initiated under her patronage were still growing in size and number and continue to carry out the Princess Mother's works including their aid for the BPP's civic actions. As a result, the BPP members do not hesitate to say that it was the Princess Mother who truly saved the unit from possible removal by the military government and also guaranteed its continuation to present.

Keeping in mind her contribution to bring attention to the BPP and the marginalized in the remote, rural areas of Thailand, and to creating both sacred and secular images of the monarchy, now it is time to see what the implications are of these legends and legacies of the Princess Mother's work towards the Cold War nation-building by the current king.

"In His Majesty's Footsteps"

Former chief of the royal court police, Police General Vasit Dejkunjorn published a memoir in 2001 entitled, *In His Majesty's Footsteps*, to share his own experiences from providing safeguards to the royal family's trips in the rural areas. Two years after the English translation of this book came out, Thai graduate student Prakan Klinfung wrote an article in a journal with the same title to describe what was the actual goal of those royal visits to the rural areas during the

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[27] For the social, academic and charitable works of the Princess Galyani, see, for example, Ministry of Culture. *To Honor Her Royal Highness Princess Galyani Vadhana Krom Luang Naradhiwas Rachanagarindra on the Occasion of the Seventh Cycle Birthday Anniversary May 6, B.E. 2550 (2007)*. Bangkok: Rung Silp Printing Company Limited, 2007.

[28] Welcome to Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai, "Thailand's Beloved Princess," last modified January 22, 2008, accessed June 30, 2012. http://www.chiangmai-chiangrai.com/thailands-beloved-princess.html.

Cold War.[29] In brief, while the well-known royalist Police General Vasit tells his personal reflection about the King's tireless effort to meet the marginalized people in rural Thailand, Prakan's article on the contrary argues that the King's journey was a purposeful public display to show his outright promotion of anticommunist movements in the rural areas. At least, these two accounts share a common presumption that royal visits or *kansadet*, are basically aimed at increasing the royal exposure to generate its popularity among the general Thais and also show to the extent the royal family has been involved in the anticommunist Thai nation-building during the Cold War period.

From the legends of the royal mother from the sky to the legacies of *phrabarami* (charismatic royal power), the images of the Thai monarch as a people-oriented, selfless ruler have been laboriously created and reproduced from the countless photographs and footage of their royal journeys in the past half a century. In the nineteenth century, the royal family's travel outside Bangkok was in the form of recreational trip called *sadet praphatton* (royal journey), which has been regarded as "the rulers' attempts to overcome or suspend social distance and hierarchy by traveling in disguise."[30] During the Cold War period, this royal journey transformed to a publicized field trip by the royal family to learn more about its subjects and their grievances, and also to demonstrate that its influence could reach the remotest areas of the Thai territorial boundaries unlike other state apparatuses. One good example of this transition is shown in an illustrated book published by the Bureau of Royal Household in 1996 entitled, *Royal Journey becomes the Royal Project* (*sadet praphatton ma pen khrongkan phraratchadamri*)," that

[29] Vasit, *In His Majesty's Footsteps*.; Prakan Klinfung, "*Tam roi phrayukhonlabat: kansadet phraratchadamnoen chonabot kap kantotan communit* [In His Majesty's Footsteps: Royal Visits to the Provincial Areas and Anticommunism]," *Fa Diao Kan* 6:4 (October-December 2008), 176-212.

[30] Thongchai, "Others Within," 44.

presents more than a couple thousand photographs of both the recreational trips and formal visits of the royal family during the 1960s and 1970s.[31] Usually, the Thai government and the U.S. Information Services would produce millions of photographs and footage from the *kansadet*, and the photos of the royal family's down-to-earth attitude towards the rural people were immediately and massively displayed in public spaces.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that the King and Queen's visits to the rural areas and the symbolic images of the development king began to be popularized in the 1970s. Like Prakan points out, until the early 1960s, most royal trips to the provincial areas by King Bhumibol and Queen Sirikit were to receive the foreign royal guests in the provincial royal residences or to undertake the royal rituals in particular towns.[32] In the 1960s, a majority of royal visits took place in the military camps, newly built royal palaces, and adjunct villages in the provinces.[33] The images of the king working with the government officials and local governors in the rural areas began to replace the recreational trips from the early 1970s. Like the title indicates, *Royal Journey becomes the Royal Project* vividly show the evolution between the 1960s and 1970s by combining two groups of photos. On the one hand, the photos of king playing music in a boat while a number of anonymous *farang* (foreigner) guests watch the king and his band playing; and the photos which record the royal couple's visit to a military camp, in uniform, practicing shooting and inspecting the camp grounds on the other. The actual proliferation of the "development king" images started at the height of the Cold War and therefore, Chanida

[31] Bureau of Royal Household, Public Relations Office. *Sadet praphatton ma pen khrongkan*.

[32] Prakan, "*Tam roi phrayukhonlabat*," 179-183.

[33] Chanida, *Khrongkan annueang ma chak phraratchadamri*, 133-134.

Chitbundit defines the *kansadet* as a means to spread the "invented tradition" of the current monarch.[34]

In the meantime, the Princess Mother began initiating medical and educational projects with the BPP in the remote areas of northern Thailand from the early 1960s. Therefore, the Princess Mother's *kansadet* between the early 1960s and late 1970s are often depicted as professional and work-oriented, mostly focusing on her trips to the BPP Schools and camps to distribute school supplies and medicine for the villagers. While the young Thai royal couple busied with making themselves public celebrities and increasing its ties with influential military generals, the Princess Mother brought the Thai and foreign sponsorship to her royal projects in the border areas. Dressed in the BPP fatigues and beret, the Princess Mother had arduously traveled to the remote border areas of Thailand with the CIA-sponsored helicopters. By leaving her footsteps in every border of Thailand, she had constructed an image of a modest and modern royal patron of the people. Finally, all her efforts to civilize and modernize the marginal people transformed into the first official royal project with the highland minorities in 1969. When the current king came to fully commit to the Princess Mother's development projects in the late 1960s, it was time for the young royal couple to take over the role of father and mother of Thai nation. In this respect, it was the Princess Mother who had pioneered the path for transforming the traditional monarchy into a more modern, professional, and people-oriented institution by preparing ground for developing royal projects in northern Thailand with the BPP and by creating the images of a working monarch.

To summarize, there are three mediums that assisted in the invention of the images of monarch as "sacred, popular and democratic" throughout the Thai Counterinsurgency Era and to

[34] Chanida, *Khrongkan annueang ma chak phraratchadamri*, 140-141.

the present.[35] They are legends, royal projects, and *kansadet*. As discussed, the sacredness of the royal family has been preserved through the creation and reproduction of numerous legendary stories like the stories of *Mae Fah Luang*, the dhammaraja or demigod kingship. On the other hand, the secularity of the current monarchy has been largely demonstrated by the voluntary exposure to its subject, which has been mainly undertaken by the *kansadet* process. By making endless official and unofficial visits to meet the people in the rural areas, the royal family has demonstrated they are the people's monarchy and are able to act beyond the confines of hallowed royalty. In this respect, the most significant medium that connects sacredness and secularity are the royal projects that provide royal visits and the chance to construct numerous legendary stories of the royal family. At present, thousands of royal projects initiated by Princess Mother, the King and Princess Sirindhorn cover the entirety of Thailand, enabling the continuation of the royal visits and creation of legends. What then are the implications of the Princess Mother's legacies to the current Thai monarchy?

As discussed earlier, the Princess Mother founded the mixed images of the monarch of being both sacred and secular based on her half-royal and half-commoner background and the images of the royal mother from the sky that has spread through her royal projects and *kansadet*. The current king has benefited the most from the Princess Mother's building of sacred and secular images of monarchy because he could strengthen his political legitimacy and popularity on the basis of these already built-in images of modern royalty. One notable difference in compromising the sacredness with secularity between the Princess Mother and the King is while the commoner background of the Princess Mother has contributed to narrowing the gap between divine royalty and her subjects, the King lacks the advantage of that hybridity, and has utilized

[35] Thongchai Winichakul, "Toppling Democracy," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 38:1 (February 2008), 21.

his popularity among the people as a basis of making him a democratic king. Indeed, he considered himself "really an elected king," as he said in June 1967 in an interview with an American journalist. He added that: "If the people do not want me, they can throw me out, eh? Then I will be out of a job."[36] By claiming that he is a democratic king who works for the subject's wellbeing, the current monarch could strengthen his image as the king of the people.

Another significant legacy that the Princess Mother endeavored to transform the traditional monarchy into a modern nation-builder is well demonstrated by one of the most beloved royal members, Princess Sirindhorn. She often emphasizes that the initial motive for her royal projects are the lessons and experiences she received from accompanying her parents and Princess Mother when they visited the rural areas.

> As far as I can remember, I saw His Majesty the King, Her Majesty the Queen and Her Royal Highness Princess Srinagarindra (His Majesty's Mother) try to find ways to improve living conditions of Thai people. As I accompanied them to places, I saw my fellow citizens who are in deprived conditions. I pledged that I would help them. I would not neglect them. So when I grew up, I automatically did what I could to help those people, by following Their Majesties' words or ideas. *Helping people is the duty of the monarchy. We consider it our permanent job.* Helping those who are in hardships also complies with teachings in Buddhism. Those who do good deeds get the happiness and joy of making merits. [37]

Like her parents and grandmother, Princess Sirindhorn has gained popularity and authority through her sponsorship for the various rural and border area development projects including, that of the BPP. As mentioned earlier, the Princess Mother made almost zero visits to the BPP Schools or to the border areas starting in the late 1970s. Instead, she asked Princess Sirindhorn to continue royal sponsorship for the BPP civic actions, especially the BPP School project when

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[36] Gereon Zimmerman, "A visit with the King and Queen of Thailand," in *The King of Thailand in World Focus: Articles and Images from the International Press, 1946-2006*, ed. Foreign Correspondent's Club of Thailand (Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2007), 57-59. Originally published in *Look* Magazine, June 27, 1967.

[37] Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Projects, *Building Good Nutrition: Foundation for Development, Thirty Years of Work by Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn* (Bangkok: Amarin Printing and Publishing Company Limited, 2010), 5. (emphasis is mine).

she stopped traveling to the rural provinces. Indeed, Princess Sirindhorn has sincerely complied with what her grandmother ordered and thus, she promptly launched her first royal project in the BPP School in 1980.

Reflecting this shift of royal patrons, the BPP's official volume on commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the BPP School projects divides its history into three periods: Pioneering period (1956-1964); Expanding period (1965-1979); and Development period (1980-1998). While the first period explains the general historical background of the BPP School project and the number of schools built and transferred, the second and third periods focus on the role of the Princess Mother and Princess Sirindhorn in developing the royal projects in the BPP Schools respectively.[38] This periodization tells us that the official history of the BPP School cannot be identified without these two important royal patrons. Additionally, it should be noted that Princess Sirindhorn succeeded the role of royal mother from the sky for the BPP and remote area people by continuing royal sponsorship for the BPP civic actions. Through the process of developing her own royal projects in the BPP Schools, she has gained the popularity and legitimacy needed in order to inherit her parent's role as a modern nation-builder.[39]

At present, the Princess's royal project titled "Development of Children and Youth in the Remote Areas (*kanphathana dek lae yawachon nai thinthurakandan*)" has extended to cover a total of nine projects in the BPP Schools. They are: Agriculture for School Lunch Project (since 1980); Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders Project (since 1990); Promotion of Maternal and Child Nutrition and Sanitation in the Remote Areas Project (since 1996); Improvement of Educational Quality Project (since 1983); H.R.H. Maha Chakri Princess Sirindhorn's Royal

[38] *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 109-129.

[39] Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian, *Kings, Country and Constitutions: Thailand's Political Development, 1932-2000* (Richmond: Curzon, 2003), 187-188, 201-202, 208.

Scholarship for Children Project (since 1988); Vocational Training Project (since 1988); Promotion of Cooperative Project (since 1991); Conservation of Natural Resources and Environment Project (since 1991); and the Medical Station Project (since 2009).[40] Although the level of progress and concentration and the necessity of each project differs from school to school, every BPP School must carry out the first eight royal projects, unlike other regular Thai schools.[41] According to a pamphlet produced in 2010 to advertise the thirtieth anniversary ceremony of Princess Sirindhorn's royal project, more than seven hundred primary and secondary schools in over fifty provinces of Thailand are implementing the Princess's royal project.[42] Since there were 179 BPP Schools in 2010, roughly 25 percent of the Thai schools that undertake the Princess's royal projects are BPP Schools.[43]

Even from the cursory look at the titles of the Princess' royal projects, it is easy to find that Princess Sirindhorn inherited the Princess Mother's self-assigned mission to bring about civilization and modernization to the highland minorities and remote area villagers through the enhancement of educational and sanitation conditions. In addition, Princess Sirindhorn has been

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[40] See the detailed description about the first eight Princess' royal project from: *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 125-129.; Office of H.R.H Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Projects, *Building Good Nutrition*.; Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Projects, *Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Development Works in Remote Areas* (Bangkok: Amarin Printing and Publishing Company, 2000). For the recently added Medical Station Project, see Suthat Kongkhunthot. *Rai-ngan khuam kaona kan damnoen ngan khrongkan suksala phraratchathan rongrian tamruat trawen chaidaen krom sanapsanun borikan sukhaphap krasuang satharanasuk ruam kap naksueksa wopo-or 2546, pi 2552* [Progress Report on Implementation of the Royal Medical Station Project in the Border Patrol Police School, Health Service Support Department, Ministry of Public Health with National Defence College of Thailand Class 2003, in 2009]. Internal report (2009), 2.

[41] The recent project, Medical Station (*suksala*) has been implemented in nine BPP Schools by December 2013. Email communication with Ladawan Chatthai, December 11, 2013.

[42] Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Projects. *Sam thotsawat kanphathana dek lae yawachon nai thinthurakandan tam phraratchadamri somdet phrathep ratnaratchasuda sayamboromratchakumari* [Thirty Years of H.R.H. Maha Chakri Princess Sirindhorn's Development of Children and Youth in the Remote Areas]. Pamphlet (2010).

[43] In Academic Year 2012, there were 177 BPP Schools in operation. The Academic Year 2012 data from the report of the BPP School Conditions in Academic Year 2013, provided by Ladawan Chatthai via email, June 29, 2013.

following the ways in which Princess Mother styled herself as the royal patron of the marginalized by making frequent inspectional visits to the BPP Schools by helicopters, and performing the public rituals of distributing gifts and supplies to the BPP School students and villagers in person. Therefore, it is not difficult to find almost identical photographs and footages of both Princess Sirindhorn and the Princess Mother while visiting the border areas in the past and present. Nowadays, Princess Sirindhorn's royal visits to the border areas and BPP Schools are televised through the government sponsored broadcasting stations like Channel 3 or National Broadcasting Services of Thailand (NBT), every night at 8:00 PM so that the general Thai public can be reminded that the Princess is fulfilling her duty of being a member of a benevolent and professional monarchy.

In this regard, it could be said that Princess Sirindhorn's popularity and political legitimacy vividly demonstrates the monarchy's adaptability. By pursuing the Princess Mother's principles of improving education and sanitation conditions for the border people and by accommodating the King's ideas of a working monarch, she has demonstrated that royal family's mission of developing and modernizing Thailand is permanent and durable.[44] At the same time, by adding more projects, she has confirmed that this traditional patron of a modern nation is progressing onward. In this respect, the making of a traditional patron of a modern nation is an on-going process, since the Princess Sirindhorn -- who her father called a "permanent secretary working

[44] According to the BPP General Headquarters' report, the BPP Schools serves as an example that shows how a small size educational institution could play a multiple role, which includes the demonstration of self-sufficiency economy as the foundation of local development. Ladawan Chatthai, *Kan hai kansueksa dek lae yawachon tam naewchaidaen lae thinthurakandan, rongrian tochodo* [Providing Education for the Children and Youth in the Border and Remote Areas, Border Patrol Police Schools], internal report (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 2011), 19-20. See also, Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Projects, *Phraratchaniphon somdet phrathep ratnaratchasuda sayamboromratchakumari kiaokap rongrian tamruat trawen chaidaen* [Royal Writings of the HRH Maha Charki Princess Sirindhorn about the Border Patrol Police School] (Bangkok: Amarin Printing and Publishing Company, 2008), 5. The article was originally published in *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 8-19.

for the Thai people," has taken over the role of monarchy as a sacred and popular leader of Thailand.[45]

One notable difference between the Princess Mother, the King and Princess Sirindhorn is their distance from the politics. For example, the Princess Mother made visits to the BPP Schools and attended related events throughout the 1960s and 1970s, and in the later years of this period, she focused on making the royal presence felt in the Village Scout events more than in the BPP Schools. However, the Village Scout's participation in the October 6 Massacre was seen as too political. Thus, Princess Sirindhorn has kept her distance from the Village Scout since the early 1980s when she initiated her direct patronage for the BPP civic actions. While her mother Queen Sirikit and her brother Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn have remained passionate advocates of the Village Scouts, Princess Sirindhorn has not been publicly involved in any of the Village Scout-related events until the present day.[46] One of her formal visits to the Village Scout events after 1980 occurred in September 1997 in Suphan Buri province. Other than this official visit, Princess Sirindhorn has not made a notable involvement in the Village Scout movement.[47]

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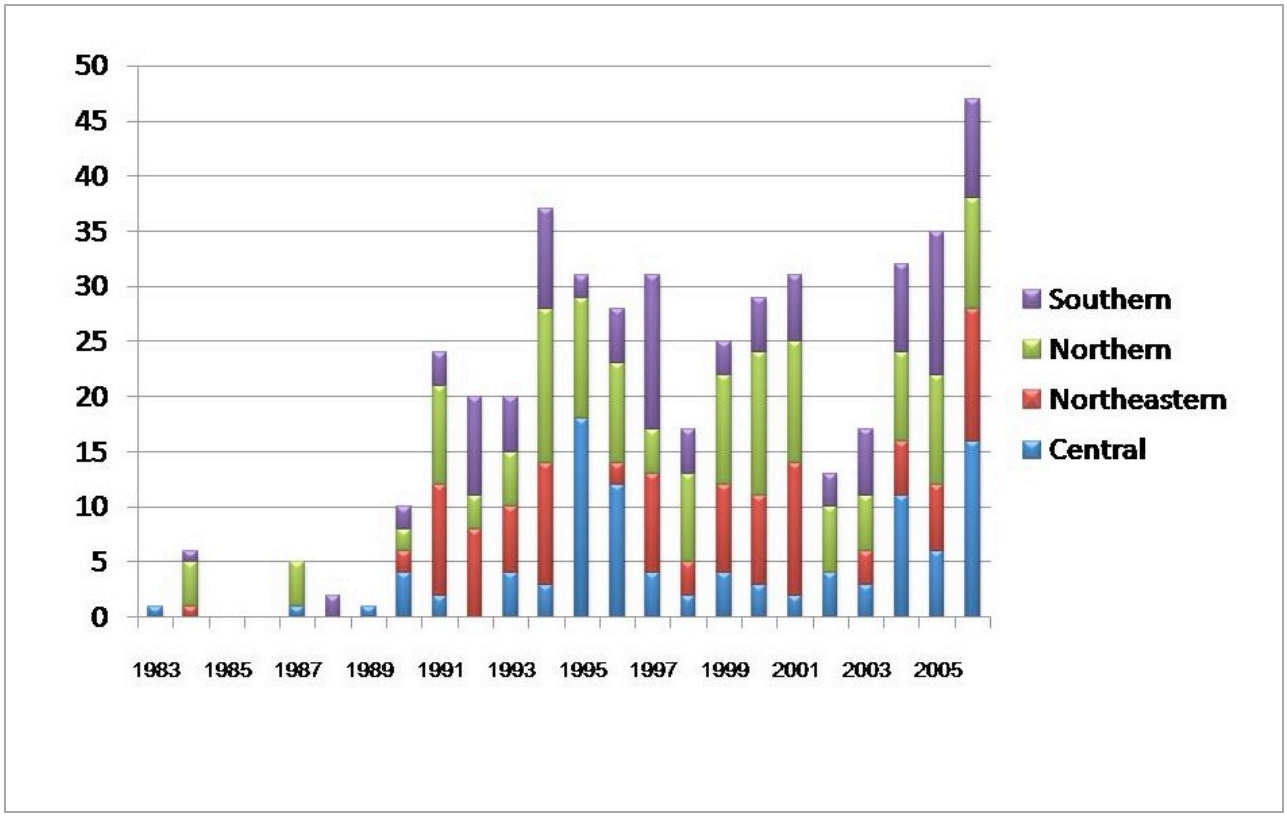
[45] Nancy Chng, "Thailand's beloved royal social worker devotes her life to her people," in *The King of Thailand in World Focus: Articles and Images from the International Press, 1946-2006*, ed. Foreign Correspondent's Club of Thailand (Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2007), 144-145. Originally published in the *Straits Times*, July 25, 1985.

[46] For example, over the five National Village Scout Gatherings, only Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn attended in the events three times: in year 1992, 1996, and 1999. He has also continued to attend the Village Scout training to bestow royally-sponsored Village Scout flags in the 1990s and between 2010-2011. On the other hand, Queen Sirikit held a formal feast for the Village Scout leaders and instructors for 23 times between 1994-2004. For the last two National Village Scout Gatherings in year 2008 and 2010, the events were held to celebrate Queen's birthday. See *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 282-291, 346-362.

[47] *Khomopkai thawaiwai*, 263. Most BPP members also informed me that Princess Sirindhorn has not been close to the Village Scout. Her distance is more apparent in the Village Scout history volumes as the frequency of her appearance is rather scarce compared to that of Queen and Crown Prince.

According to the commemoration volume of the BPP School's fiftieth anniversary, the number of Princess Sirindhorn's visits to the BPP Schools is well distributed among the four regions, while still her stronghold remains in the north.

Chart 5. Princess Sirindhorn's Visit to the BPP Schools, 1983-2006



In total, the Princess made 462 royal visits to the BPP Schools between 1983-2006 as shown in the Chart 5.[48] Among these visits, she made trips to the central region 101 times, 106 trips to the northeast, 146 trips to the north and 109 trips to southern Thailand. The number of Princess Sirindhorn's visits to the BPP Schools hiked from 1991 after she had initiated six more royal

[48] The number of Princess Sirindhorn's visits to the BPP Schools here is compiled from the list of her visits in the BPP Schools fiftieth anniversary volume: *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 387-397.

projects of her own. It is noteworthy that in 2001 when the local insurgency resurged in southern Thailand, the Princess made 14 trips out of total 31 visits of that year to the BPP Schools in the south. In the ensuing year when Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra came to office, the number of her trips coincidently dropped to 17 and the Princess' visits to the BPP Schools came to concentrate on the northern region. Another distinctive year on Chart 5 is 2006 when she made a total of 47 visits to the BPP Schools. Notably, 46 trips were made before the September 19, 2006 coup.

Overall, Princess Sirindhorn has kept her balance in making royal visits to the BPP Schools in all four regions while maintaining her special attention to northern Thailand, because it is the area where the representative BPP's civic action programs are concentrated. Northern Thailand is also the region where the Princess Mother's legacy remains strong, with the continuation of her royal projects like Doi Tung Development Project. By successfully demonstrating her close linkage with the Princess Mother and at the same time keeping her distance from the politics, Princess Sirindhorn has preserved an untainted reputation, which eventually constitutes her forte in the foreseeable aftermath around the succession issue.

What then is the broader historical and political implication of the Princess Sirindhorn's continuation of the Princess Mother and her father's role as a modern nation-builder to the contemporary Thai society? As mentioned, Princess Sirindhorn's inheritance of her grandmother and father's role as a traditional patron of the modern nation proves the Thai monarchy's adaptability. At the same time, the on-going process of making modern royalty in the post-Cold War era through the Princess Sirindhorn's development projects have established the criteria that the successor of Thai monarchy has to pursue in the long run, as shown in the Chart 6.

As mentioned earlier, it should be noted that unlike the Princess Mother and the King, Princess Sirindhorn's actual adaptability to the rapidly evolving contemporary Thai politics lies in her proclaimed and seemingly genuine refusal to get involved in politics. By remaining "apart" from the politics, Princess Sirindhorn, "being simultaneously ordinary and extraordinary" has come to assemble the common model of a monarch that strives "to achieve the performative balance appropriate to the political and cultural conditions in their particular countries."[49] As far as I have been informed and learned first hand, the general Thai people have real affection toward Princess Sirindhorn, and she has not been judged as harshly as other royal members. Unlike her family members, Princess Sirindhorn's role as a sacred, secular, and working monarch have been gaining a more favorable reception from the Thai people in the present day, although this does not necessarily mean that her task of defending the monarchy as a modern nation-builder can remain indefinitely justifiable and acceptable.

Chart 6. Traditional Patron of Modern Nation in Making

	Founder : Princess Mother	**Developer** : King Bhumibol	**Defender** : Princess Sirindhorn
Sacred Monarchy	Royal Mother from the Sky (*Mae Fah Luang*)	Demi-god King, (*Dhammaraja*)	Princess Angel (*Phrathep*)
Working Monarchy	Royal Project	Royal Project	Royal Project
Secular Monarchy (People's Monarchy)	half-royal, half-commoner	"Democratic King"	"Permanent secretary working for the Thai people"

This set model of professional monarchy that was derived from the Princess Mother's endeavor to transform the traditional monarchy, to a modern nation-builder however, reveals a

[49] Søren Ivarsson, and Lotte Isager, "Introduction: Challenging the Standard Total View of the Thai Monarchy," in *Saying the Unsayable: Monarchy and Democracy in Thailand*, edited by Soren Ivarsson and Lotte Isager (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2010), 4.

significant loophole. One notable but rather understated pitfall of the Princess Mother's effort to save the current monarch derives from her implicit emphasis on the Mahidol lineage. As a commoner married to a descendant of the Chakri dynasty and eventually becoming a mother of two kings of Chakri, the Princess Mother's royal projects had always put forward the heritage of Prince Mahidol as the "father of modern medicine and public health of Thailand." Her daughter Princess Galyani, Princess Sirindhorn, and now the youngest daughter of current King, Princess Chulabhorn Walailak, are all following this legacy.[50]

As a telling example, the Princess Mother's commemorative hall at the Doi Tung Development Project area in Chiang Rai province house is called the "Hall of Inspiration." The Hall is dedicated to exhibit the contribution of the Mahidol family for enhancing the quality of life and welfare of the border population through the visions of Prince Mahidol and Princess Mother Sangwan, and their children Princess Galyani, Princess Ananda and the current King Bhumibol.[51] Interestingly, in the Hall where the photos of royal family are exhibited as the "inspirations" of Thai modernization, we find Prince Mahidol, Princess Mother Sangwan, Prince Ananda and the current king's three daughters and one son, but there is no Queen Sirikit.

It may not be too strange to see the absence of the Queen in this hall as it is dedicated to the Mahidol family, but at the same time, this omission in a sense mirrors the apparent chasm between the Mahidol family and Queen Sirikit. As is popularly known, Queen Sirikit has been paving her own political path by showing up at official events with political groups like the

[50] After Princess Galyani passed away, Princess Chulabhorn has taken over the royal patronage to the Princess Mother's Medical Volunteer (PMMV) Foundation. See, PMMV Foundation, accessed June 29, 2013, http://www.pmmv.or.th/.

[51] See, for example, Doi Tung Development Project. "Hall of Inspiration," accessed June 25, 2013. http://www.doitung.org/ tourism_attraction_commemorative_hall.php.

Village Scouts or making public statements on certain political issues.[52] In other words, the making of the house of the Mahidol family as the center of the Chakri dynasty has unwittingly but constantly alienated other royal bloodlines, in this case, that of the Queen Sirikit. Not surprisingly, this alienation has sown the seed of conflict within the monarchy in the past decades to present.

In conclusion, the King and Princess Sirindhorn have successfully inherited the symbolic images of a modern nation-builder that have been pioneered and established by the Princess Mother. Throughout the process of expanding his royal projects through Thailand and by making numerous royal visits to meet his subjects, the King has been regarded as a sacred, working monarch who dedicates his life for the betterment of the people. Princess Sirindhorn has also followed her grandmother and father's path while artfully keeping her distance from politics. In this respect, the making of a traditional patron of the modern Thai nation that was initiated by Princess Mother at the height of the Cold War is still an on-going project, although its fate in the post-Cold War is plagued with formidable challenges from within, and from below.

Thai-Style Democracy and Nationalism

We have examined the legacies of the Princess Mother's endeavor of transforming the traditional patron of the nation into a modern nation-builder; the current King's effort to establish a developmentalist kingship throughout the Cold War era, and Princess Sirindhorn's continuation of undertaking the royal duties in the post-Cold War period. The continuation of the monarchy's

[52] See examples of the Queen Sirikit's political activities and influence from: Bowie, *Rituals of National Loyalty*, 140-141.; Morell and Chai-anan, *Political Conflict in Thailand*, 272.; David Streckfuss, "The Future of the Monarchy in Thailand," *Kyoto Review of Southeast Asia* 13 (March 2013), accessed June 26, 2013, http://kyotoreview.org/2013/03/issue-13/.; Michael K. Connors, "When the Walls Come Crumbling Down: The Monarchy and Thai-style Democracy," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 41:4 (November 2011), 661.; McCargo, "Network Monarchy," 514.

political influence and popularity to the present therefore allows us to understand why the monarchy's nation-building through the indigenization of the Cold War was successful. What then are the impacts of the monarchy's successful indigenization of the global Cold War system on contemporary Thai politics? In sum, indigenization of the Cold War system to push forward the Thai elite's nation-building resulted in two notable phenomena: reemergence of "Thai-style democracy" discourses and strengthening of royalist nationalism.

As several scholars have noted, the King's perception of democracy was heavily influenced by Sarit's political philosophy, which asserted that Western-style democracy does not fit Thailand and that Thai society is more inclined to a strong leader who could unify and stabilize the country. The powerful leader was expected to rule the nation, which is presumed to be a patriarchal family. In this context, the practice of democracy by national leaders was to be accomplished by representing the benevolence of the father of the nation, like Thak Chaloemtiarana says: "the father-leader visits his children to listen and to observe their needs directly."[53] Kukrit Pramoj, the promoter of "Thai-style government," thus proposed that the king make more rural visits to "create a sense of belonging and, as a consequence, the monarchy would be identified as one with the people." [54] In short, the making of the current monarchy into a modern democratic king has heavily focused on instilling the paternalistic images of the king so that the general notion of democracy based on freedom and equality could be compromised with Thailand's longstanding hierarchical system. How then did the King perceive his monarchical role within democracy?

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[53] Thak, *Politics of Despotic Paternalism,* xiii, 100-106.; Kevin Hewison and Kengkij Kitirianglarp, "'Thai-Style Democracy': The Royalist Struggle for Thailand's Politics," in *Saying the Unsayable: Monarchy and Democracy in Thailand*, eds. Soren Ivarsson and Lotte Isager (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2010), 187.

[54] Michael K. Connors, "Article of Faith: The Failure of Royal Liberalism in Thailand," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 38:1 (February 2008), 149.

In December 1970, the King asserted that the Thais must "create genuine and appropriate democracy" because "[D]emocracy without wisdom will turn into chaos. And that chaos will develop into anarchy."[55] To avoid possible anarchy, the King defined the role of constitutional monarchy as following.

> The word monarch or king or queen is difficult to understand -- even in the minds of some of the people who read your magazine, who are themselves leaders. A king is like a fairytale. Even a constitutional monarch is like a fairytale. It is very difficult to describe the role of the king, because each situation is different. *But the basic role of our constitutional monarch is to be the head of state. In fact, it is like a figurehead*. *But we must have a figurehead like we have a country.* Even the communist countries have names for their countries, and they also have their leaders. A leader is like a symbol, whether he happens to have power or not. *So a constitutional monarch is first a symbol of the country and if that constitutional monarch is successful he must become a living symbol of the country*. He must change with the country but, at the same time, he must keep the spirit of the country. It's like being a representative of our embodiment, or the soul of the country. That means that all the people who compose a country have different characters, but the *common character of a people must embodied by the king* […] [56]

As reflected in these speeches, the current monarch's definition of democracy is confined within the concept of "democracy with the monarchy as the head of the state." And because the King is presumed to be the highest moral authority that surpasses those of the ordinary politicians, his perception of democracy with the king as a "living symbol of the country" has paved the way of locating himself "above" normal politics.[57]

In fact, the King's perception of democracy is quite similar to that of the military leaders, not only Sarit but also several rising army factions in the late 1970s, like the Young Turks and

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[55] Bangkok Post, "Royal Wisdom," accessed June 27, 2013, http://www.bangkokpost.com/60yrsthrone/royalwisdom/index.html.

[56] Leaders Magazine, "Give more, take less: An Interview with His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Kingdom of Thailand," in *The King of Thailand in World Focus: Articles and Images from the International Press, 1946-2006*, ed. Foreign Correspondent's Club of Thailand (Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2007), 160-161. Originally published in the *Leaders* Magazine (April-June 1982). (emphasis is mine).

[57] Far Eastern Economic Review, "King Bhumibol: "Politics is a filthy business," in *The King of Thailand in World Focus: Articles and Images from the International Press, 1946-2006*, ed. Foreign Correspondent's Club of Thailand (Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2007), 47. Originally published in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, October 18, 1974.; Thongchai, "Toppling Democracy," 20.

the Democratic Soldiers. As a former Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Thai Army and also a mastermind of Prime Minister Order 66/2523, General Chavalit Yongchaiyudh blamed the "dark influences" consisting of corrupted, unprincipled politicians and local businessmen as the most crucial obstacle to achieve democracy in Thailand. However, Chavailit and other army leaders' criticism on the "dark influences" was the means of derogating the importance of electoral politics. As Suchit Bunbongkarn argues, the Army viewed that an election "may not necessarily be a democratic process if it cannot produce responsible and honest legislative members." Instead, they believed that "appointed senators, carefully selected from all walks of life is [*sic.*] a prerequisite of a "true" democracy."[58] In this sense, the Army's sharpened criticism against corruption has replaced the role of "communism" from the end of the Thai Counterinsurgency Era.[59] As the propagation of so-called "clean politics" stepped up by the public intellectuals and army leaders, it eventually added to the increase of suspicion towards electoral process as a "trustworthy means to democracy" and at the same time, it provided the ground to promote "moral authority as the superior and ultimate legitimacy."[60] These perceptions have constituted the basis of re-emerging discourses on the "Thai-style democracy," especially after the 2006 coup.

One of the promoters of "Thai-style democracy," Pattana Kitiarsa, states that the ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra represents an "amoral capitalist leader/agent," and his administration greatly deteriorated Thailand's democracy by corrupting and dividing the nation. As for a counterpart of amoral politicians, Pattana views that King Bhumibol is "at the apex of

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[58] Suchit Bunbongkarn, *The Military in Thai Politics, 1981-1986* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1987), 70-73.

[59] Thongchai, "Toppling Democracy," 25.

[60] Thongchai, "Toppling Democracy," 27-28.

his undisputed charisma as well as political authority." He therefore argues that the novel form of Thai democracy "must be based on Buddhist principles, which include the ideas of good governance, a righteous ruler, and Buddhist Dhammic kingship" which apparently implies the current king and his rule.[61] Another well-known advocate of Thai-style democracy, Borwornsak Uwanno asserts that the King plays the role of "center of unity of all Thais," and thus, the monarchy should remain as "the main pillar of the country's government." In particular, Borwornsak emphasizes that the King exercises the "royal prerogative as 'the supreme mediator' when the country faces a crisis that political and other institutions are unable to resolve through any political means available," indicating that the King's political intervention is legitimate.[62] Indeed, both Pattana and Borwornsak's promotion of the Thai-style democracy reflect the general perception of the irreplaceable role of the King as a highly moral and democratic leader in contemporary Thai society.

Nevertheless, although proponents of the Thai-style democracy contend that it has emerged as "a legitimate alternative to Western-style democracy," they cannot avoid the criticism against its strong adherence to the ambiguous concept of "democracy with the monarchy as the head of the state." In this vein, Kevin Hewison argues that Thai-style democracy is at best a "semi-democracy," that focuses on "loyalty, traditionalism, nationalism and paternalism."[63] In other words, this alternative to the western concept of liberal democracy has not developed any further from the earlier discourse on the Thai-style democracy or government during the Sarit regime. More importantly, the Thai-style democracy discourse has been utilized to strengthen the

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[61] Pattana Kitiarsa. *In Defense of the Thai-Style Democracy*. Singapore: Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, 2006. Accessed June 26, 2013. www.ari.nus.edu.sg/showfile.asp?event fileid=188, 3.

[62] Borwornsak Uwanno, *Dynamics of Thai Politics* (Bangkok: King Prajadhipok's Institute, nd), accessed June 25, 2013. http://www.kpi.ac.th/kpith/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=119& Itemid=214.

[63] Hewison and Kengkij, "Thai-Style Democracy," 180-181, 198.

hegemonic influence of the monarchy and royalist elites in contemporary Thai society by constantly reminding the Thai people that the monarchy is the supreme moral authority and should rule and reign the Thai nation.

Apparently, the reemergence of Thai-style democracy discourse in the post-Cold War era reveals undying influence of royalist nationalism that has been refashioned through King Vajiravudh's creation of three pillars of Thai nationalism in the late nineteenth century; and, has been extensively propagated by the royalist elites and current monarch throughout the Cold War. The process of constructing the images of the royal family as a sacred, popular and democratic monarchy has indeed permitted the current king to become an embodiment of the Thai nation like Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian's puts:

> After fifty-three years of royal dedication, the people solidly belong to the King. The Throne, the dynasty and the nation have become one. They are personified in Bhumibol, Somdet Phra Phathara Maharaja, the Beloved Great King.[64]

Based on this premise, the Thai government has promoted the King and Queen as father and mother of the nation, and not surprisingly, Thailand's father's and mother's days are the birthdays of the current King and Queen.[65]

When I was conducting field research in northern Thailand, I visited one Border Patrol Police School in Tha Song Yang district in Tak province. As a typical official procedure of receiving a guest, a BPP schoolmaster asked students to be attired in their ethnic dress -- the Karen one, and ordered them to follow me when I was looking around the school compound and interviewing the BPP teachers. When I spotted the pictures of the king and queen in front of the main classroom building, I stopped. I pointed out the picture of king and asked the students:

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[64] Kobkua, *Kings, Country and Constitutions*, *149*.

[65] Connors, "When the Walls Come Crumbling Down," 661.; Thongchai, "Toppling Democracy," 21.

"Who is this?" The student entourage unanimously answered: "father (*pho*)." I again pointed out the picture of queen and asked the same question. Then the students of the BPP School answered me back: "mother (*mae*)." [66] It is not important to interrogate whether these children were lying or not here. What this anecdote tells for our discussion on the spread of royalist nationalism is its level of acculturation within the Thai society. Whether it is truthful or pretentious, "Thais love the King (*rao rak nai luang*)" has become a way of being or becoming Thai in the present day. In this context, unity has become the most significant value that the Thais should preserve to move its nation forward, as the King said on July 3, 1973:

> Unity is how everyone can work for the general benefit, and develop themselves, loving each other, so the country can be at peace and attain rapid development.[67]

As the king has become the center of national unity and progress, loyalty to the king has become the crucial component of Thainess.

Now, let us put the spread of royalist nationalism into historical perspective. The postcolonial condition demanded the indigenous leaders to build a sovereign, independent, and modern nation-state to counter the global superpowers' intervention. In this context, the first priority was conflation of the nations and a state. However, the consolidation of the nation was, and still is, a more complex task than drawing a line between the countries because it is the process of constructing the psychological borders of nationhood among the people. Worse yet, the rise of the communist movement in the decolonization period further complicated this process because, in theory, communism denies the role of traditional elites as it categorized them into a group of feudalists. Additionally, communism denies land property rights, which means

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[66] Research note, Technic Asa 1 Border Patrol Police School in Tak, August 7, 2010.

[67] Bangkok Post, "Royal Wisdom," accessed June 27, 2013, http://www.bangkokpost.com/60yrsthrone/royalwisdom/index.html.

the sense of belonging to the "land" and individual possession of land could be dismantled, which would greatly harm the standing of traditional elites that had survived colonial and immediate postcolonial maelstroms thanks to their economic, social and political assets. Therefore, to the monarchy and traditional elites, communism was seen much more threatening than liberal democracy because this particular political movement attempted to destroy the traditional elite groups by redistributing their power and possessions to the people. To prevent the communists from building a nation-state that denies the presence of traditional elites or feudalists, it was inevitable for the royalists to make people believe communists were the antinationalist.[68]

In the process of stigmatizing communists as antinationalist, the royalist nationalism has developed a contradictory quality - "disintegrative" and "integrative" - that has still remained effective within current Thai politics. First, the quality of royalist nationalism lies in its disintegrative function. Since the early nineteenth century when the three pillars of Thai nationalism -- nation, religion and monarchy -- were proclaimed by the King Vajiravudh, they became the criteria for differentiating the Thais from others. In this vein, communists were depicted as the opponents of all these three symbols. Observing the Thai military intervention to the rural development for security projects in the south, Shane Tarr remarks that the military often equated Thai communists with "dark forces" and this propaganda was "complemented by more subtle references to communists being opposed to the monarchy and opposing all forms of Buddhism."[69]

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[68] Indeed, the Communist Party of Thailand and radical student activists who fled to join the Communist group in jungles especially after 1976 massacre often criticized the current monarch as "archfeudalist." See the detailed accounts on the attacks against the monarchy from Thomas A. Marks, "The Thai Monarchy Under Siege," *Asian Quarterly* 2 (1978), 123-140.

[69] Tarr, "Nature of Military Intervention," 44.

Another example that resonates with this observation can be found from the October 6, 1976 massacre at Thammasat University, which indeed epitomizes the divisive nature of royalist nationalism. According to the former rector of Thammasat University Puey Ungphakorn's testimony in 1977, when the rightwing groups harassed the students and activists who were forced to lie down on the football field, they began tearing off Buddhist emblems and said that "these communists are not really Buddhists."[70] The reason why those innocent people in the October 6 massacre deserved an unimaginably brutal killing was justified under this royalist nationalism that declared "[A]ny type of socialism is Communism," and it was "not sinful to kill Communist" by rightwing politicians and monk Kittiwutho.[71] Above all, considering the fact that the actual trigger of this massacre was a fabricated photo of the strangled crown prince published by rightwing newspapers, it is obvious that the monarchy finally prevailed upon the other two pillars which became the core of Thai nationalism.[72] Accordingly, communists were viewed as antiroyalist and antinationalist. It was the royalist nationalism that has divided Thailand between the royalist and antiroyalist by equating this division with nationalist versus antinationalist.

Despite its divisive nature, the royalist nationalism has been indoctrinated as a source of unity. Although there existed insurmountable barriers among Bangkok elites, lowland Thai villagers, and highland minorities, the latter two groups could be accepted within the border of Thainess as long as they believed in the Thai nation, Buddhism and monarchy. In this way, royalist nationalism became the statist's means of assimilation. Royalist nationalism has been inculcated in the general Thai people through the various campaigns, but mostly and subtly by

[70] Puey "Violence and the Military Coup," 8.

[71] Puey "Violence and the Military Coup," 4.

[72] Thongchai, "Remembering/Silencing the Traumatic Past," 249.

everyday exposure to physical signs such as pictures of royal family in the street or TV news. At the same time, this particular type of Thai nationalism has been guarded by the state through the imposition of lése májesty law, which has "always served the primary 'enemy function'."[73]

Nevertheless, it does not mean that all these groups who believe in royalist nationalism are equally treated within the domain of Thainess. In addition, when any type of opposition groups against the state or government emerge, they are quickly pushed outside the border of Thainess and stigmatized as antiroyalists and antinationalist. Despite the belief in the role of monarchy as the axis of Thai unity, the royalists' effort to consolidate the nation "under the charismatic royal power (*tai rom phrabarami*)" has indeed been a hierarchical assimilation process. In this respect, the royalist and monarchy's call for unity under Thai-style nationalism and Thai-style democracy in actuality has been an attempt to conceal the divisive nature of royalist nationalism.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter discusses the impacts of the Thai elite's indigenization of the global Cold War by observing the process of inventing the role of modern monarchy and the reemergence of royalist discourses on nationalism and democracy. The Princess Mother pioneered the royal path that transformed the traditional monarch into a modern nation-builder by increasing her sponsorship for the border people and expanding royal projects. In this way, the Princess Mother laid the ground for creating the images of working monarch. Following his mother's path, the current king began promoting himself as a king of development and people from the late 1960s. Catalyzed by the rapid expansion of royal projects, the monarchy became the symbol of national unity and progress, which in turn contributed to enlarging the popular support as well as the

[73] David Streckfuss, "The Intricacies of Lese-Majesty: A Comparative Study of Imperial Germany and Modern Thailand," in *Saying the Unsayable: Monarchy and Democracy in Thailand*, eds. Soren Ivarsson and Lotte Isager (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2010), 129.

King's growing political influence over Thai society. In this context, the royalist's reinvigoration of the discourse on Thai-style democracy was primarily to justify their demands for the monarchy's active role in the politics. Indeed, the Thai royalist elite's creation of working monarch images and their promotion of royalist nationalism and Thai-style democracy could not have gained popular support without the monarchy's successful indigenization of the Cold War. Finally, the BPP's nation-building under the *phrabarami* elevated the monarchy to the center of national unity and progress and at the same time, it enabled this cold warrior to continue in the post-Cold War era, although the organization's durability still remains in question.

Chapter 9. Cold Warriors in the Post-Cold War

In this chapter, I will discuss the sustainability of the BPP organization and its civic actions in the post-Cold War by analyzing continuing problems pertaining to its role, identity and operational capability. Based on my field research and interviews with the incumbent BPP members, this examination reveals that the BPP's problems on the lack of professionalism and stability largely derives from the multiple missions assigned by the monarchy for spreading royalist nationalism and consolidating popular support for the institution. In this respect, the analysis of the incumbent BPP members' responses to the on-going royal projects in the BPP School allows us to perceive the reason why the royal family's successful indigenization of the Cold War system eventually failed to bring about the claimed national unity and progress in the present days.

> The mission of the Special Training Division is to build the qualified, honorable and ideal Border Patrol Police that can operate effectively as military, police and civilian.
>
> [Mission Statement of the Border Patrol Police Special Training Division] [1]

> BPP Commander: Sinae, the Border Patrol Police is like a duck. Do you know why?
> Sinae: No, why?
> BPP Commander: Can a duck fly?
> Sinae: Yes.
> BPP Commander: Can a duck swim?
> Sinae: Yes.
> BPP Commander: Duck can run too?
> Sinae: Right.
> BPP Commander: So a duck can fly, swim and run, right?
> Sinae: Right!
> BPP Commander: But can a duck run faster than a horse?
> Sinae: No, it cannot.
> BPP Commander: Can a duck dive deeper than fish? Can a duck fly higher than bird?
> Sinae: No, surely not.
> BPP Commander: Duck cannot beat them. That is the Border Patrol Police.
>
> [Personal conversation with a BPP commander, December 27, 2010]

Ironically, the Border Patrol Police has become such an ambiguous security force that it cannot be identified with any of its stated characteristics -- that is military, police and civilian. One of the good examples that represent the questionable nature of the BPP is that the unit as a police force has no legal power to conduct investigation.[2] When the BPP rounds up suspects, they must

[1] See Figure 10. Mission Statement of the Border Patrol Police.

[2] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, May 3, 2011. Manas said that the BPP has a right to inquire (*suepsuan*) but no right to investigate (*sopsuan*) suspects.

be transferred to the Provincial Police or other police investigation divisions. Hence, like one BPP area commander describes in the personal conversation above, the BPP could do everything or nothing as a security force. How then did this ambiguous security force survive well into the present day? Additionally, what does the BPP's presence in the post-Cold War era imply to the Thai society and politics? What are the implications of the BPP's continuation of the indigenization of Cold War politics and postcolonial nation-building process in Thailand, and beyond?

In this chapter, I will briefly overview the BPP's history after its participation in the October 6 massacre in Thammasat University to define the political and historical context that allowed this unit to continue to operate in the present days. In conjunction with the discussion on the BPP's continuation, I will also examine the presence of the other cold warrior, the monarchy, which may influence the fate of BPP organization in the near future. By observing these two cold warrior's continuation of nation-building through the royal projects in the border areas, I will examine the impacts of indigenized Cold War politics on contemporary Thai history, politics, and society.

Cold Warriors Moving in to the Post-Cold War Era

What happened to the BPP after the October 6 coup in 1976? Prime Minister Thanin Kraivichien issued an order to integrate the BPP under the command of the army's Supreme Command in 1977, while the Ministry of Interior and Thai National Police Department still held the direct command over the unit.[3] There had been organizational reforms in 1979 and 1986 but these

[3] The Thai National Police Department (*krom tamruat haeng chat*) was transferred from the Ministry of Interior to be under the Office of the Prime Minister and changed its official title to Royal Thai Police (*samnak-ngan tamruat haeng chat*) in 1998.

changes were rather minor adjustments to the changing administrative structures of the government, and the BPP's mission has remained by and large the same since the early 1960s. According to the TNPD's guidelines in relation to the BPP organization released on April 24, 1987, missions of the BPP are: to defend peace and order and prevent crime and drug trafficking; to defend border security and to conduct counterinsurgency operations; to assist civilian development programs for national security; to provide training and instructions for the police force; and to administer security units under the BPP's command.[4]

Whereas no drastic changes occurred to the BPP organization since 1972 reestablishment, the Thai society has gone through several important turning points particularly in 1980, which I posit as the end of Thai Counterinsurgency Era. In this year, a staunch royalist and army commander-in-chief General Prem Tinsulanond officially assumed premiership. In April 1980, Prem proclaimed a shift of the Thai government's anticommunist counterinsurgency from armed suppression to political offensive, through the Prime Ministerial Order No. 66/2523 entitled, "Policy of Struggle to Win Over Communism". The bottom line of this Order 66/2523 is the government's anticommunist policies are to promote democratic political system and national socio-economic development, rather than pursuing militant operations to suppress communist insurgencies. This actually means that the military's counterinsurgency came to take the civilian clothes, as clearly disclosed in the ensuing Prime Ministerial Order No. 65/2525, "Plan for Political Offensive" in May 1982. Thus, the Order 66/2523 prepared a ground for the armed

[4] *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 63.; Manas, *Prawat kongbanchakan,* 36. See the BPP's areas of responsibility from Figure 3.

forces to legitimately participate in the civilian politics by advocating for a democratic government with the king as the head of state.[5]

At this point, we need to reconsider the meaning of Order 66/2523 in the broader historical and political context of the Cold War indigenization in Thailand. The shift to political offensive by the Thai military government in 1980 implies that the modernization as a counterinsurgency paradigm came to constitute one critical element for continuing the military rule. In retrospect, it was Sarit who first attempted to integrate this civilian counterinsurgency by promoting development for security projects under the U.S. guidance and foreign aid to legitimize his authoritarian rule. However, Sarit's development-centered counterinsurgency had been reluctantly continued by his successors because this *politico*-military strategy was seen derailing from the original duties and traits of the military establishment. Instead, the Thanom administration almost blindly accepted the American-led modernization projects and had allowed an influx of American development agencies and non-governmental consultants to launch rural development projects in northeastern Thailand, which in turn helped the U.S. government to utilize the region as bases for overt and covert operations during the Vietnam War.

In the second half of the 1970s, there emerged several Thai military factions that attempted to enlarge the role of military within politics. "Democratic soldiers" are one of these rising factions. They attempted to reverse the ideology of communist liberation and created the concept of "democratic revolution" that promoted democratization and development of the country to defeat communism, finally giving birth to the Order 66/2523.[6] Just as the monarchy utilized its

[5] For the further discussion on the meaning and impact of Order 66/2523 and Order 65/2525, see, for example, Surachart, *From Dominance to Power Sharing*, 118-123.; Chai-anan et al., *From Armed Suppression*, 67-77.; Suchit, *Military in Thai Politics*, 68-76.

[6] See the description about the Democratic Soldiers and their ideologies from Surachart, *From Dominance to Power Sharing*,74-77; Suchit, *Military in Thai Politics*, 14-16.; Chai-anan et al., *From Armed Suppression*, 118-122.

participation to the BPP's civic action to transform its traditional institution into a modern nation-builder, this new generation of Thai military sought to gain political legitimacy and ascendancy by ostensibly promoting democratization and national development. For instance, Order 66/2523 proclaims that the new policy will advocate democracy to meet the people's needs and to resolve facing the political, economic and social problems, as following:

> The Government is determined to maintain strictly the nation, religion and monarchy and the democratic form of government with the King as the head of state to administer the country, taking into consideration of the people's welfare; harmonize the people's interests and preserve the Thai national identity; resolve economic, political, and social problems justly and peacefully, and instill in the Thais a sense of idealism, especially one which encourages the sacrifice of personal for common interest. … The armed forces will have as its major role the defense of nation, the protection of national independence and democracy with the King as head of state.[7]

Nevertheless, neither Democratic Soldiers' nor the Prem administration's propagation of democracy should mislead us into thinking that these groups were promoting a genuine "democratic revolution" that allows open participation of the people. As clearly expressed in this Order 66/2523, the democratic government that they advocated should be compatible with the Thai-style democracy with the king as a head of state plays the role of "supreme mediator" and "center of unity of all Thais" in the time of crisis.[8]

What then were the impacts of the Order 66/2523 and the shift of military ideologies pertaining to the anticommunist counterinsurgency campaign of the BPP? When I asked Manas Khantatatbumroong, former deputy commissioner of the BPP Headquarters, he told me that the Order 66/2523 and the changes of military's thinking did not affect the BPP organization, because the unit had already undertaken the political offensives from the mid-1950s through its

[7] Excerpts of Prime Ministerial Order No. 66/2523: "Policy of Struggle to Win Over Communism," from Suchit, *Military in Thai Politics*, 90. Appendix 2.

[8] Borwornsak, *Dynamics of Thai Politics.*

extended civic action.[9] Indeed, the BPP had pioneered developing political counterinsurgency strategies to uproot the communist movement from its formation as the previous examination of the BPP's civic actions vividly show. One good example of the BPP's pioneering role in developing a political counterinsurgency is the initiation of the Village Scout project in the early 1970s, and it remained the largest and most influential rural political movement until the early 1980s.[10] Reflecting on this historical lesson, Order 65/2525 in 1982 emphasizes the "popular participation" to enable "the people to have more practical experience which can serve to strength their attachment to an understanding of the principles of popular sovereignty."[11] Accordingly, the army began to organize local organizations such as the National Defense Volunteers, Volunteer Development, and Self-Defense Villages, but these turned out to be less successful in terms of their size and impact when compared to that of the Village Scouts.[12] Overall, the military government's political and strategic changes that took place after the proclamation of Order 66/2523 had little, if not insignificant, impacts on the mission and characteristics of the BPP.

Despite the BPP members perception of Order 66/2523 and Order 65/2525, they did not bring about substantial changes to the organization, and thus the unit could not avoid reemerging suspicions to the role of BPP as a security force. The momentous change in the Thai government's counterinsurgency policies in the beginning of the 1980s generated the necessity of reevaluations on the existing security forces including the BPP, to determine whether these

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[9] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, January 24, 2011.

[10] Bowie, *Rituals of National Loyalty*, 8, 21-23.

[11] Excerpts of Prime Ministerial Order No. 65/2525: "Plan for Political Offensive," from Suchit, *Military in Thai Politics*, 96. Appendix 3.

[12] Surachart, *From Dominance to Power Sharing*, 133-140.

armed forces were capable of embracing the new security paradigm. To prevent another life-or-death crisis, similar to the one that took place in 1957 with Sarit's coup, the BPP Headquarters organized a seminar during its annual meeting in December 1983 to receive recommendations and comments from high-ranking military and civilian officials, in order to enhance the role of the BPP on along the lines of the new national security policies.

One notable speaker at this seminar was Army General Athit Kamlang-ek, the then commander-in-chief of the Supreme Command Headquarters. General Athit complimented the past deeds and contribution of the BPP to defending national security first and then pointed out the ambiguous characteristics of the unit would lead the BPP to encounter a number of challenges. To solve the problems, Athit emphasized improving the 'military' and 'police' characteristics of the BPP in order to carry out combat and intelligence duties with the army more closely.[13] On the other hand, in the same seminar, Deputy Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Interior Charoenchit Na Songkhla strongly encouraged the BPP to further develop its 'police' and 'civilian' missions as well as the public relations programs like the Village Scouts. Charoenchit commented as long as the BPP is committed to the remote area development programs, especially the BPP School projects, and work closely with the local governments and governmental agencies, the Ministry of Interior would continue its support for the BPP.[14]

In retrospect, the BPP could have chosen to focus on limited missions like General Athit and Charoenchit suggested or to continue being the multipurpose force that it had been in the past three decades. While the BPP was undecided about its future, the beginning of Princess

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[13] Athit Kamlang-ek, *Naew khuamkhit nai kan chai tochodo khong boko. thahan sungsut lae thobo nai anakhot* [Special Lecture: Concepts of the Supreme Command Headquarters and Army for the Use of the Border Patrol Police in the Future] (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1983).

[14] Charoenchit Na Songkhla, *Naew khuamkhit nai kanchai tochodo khong krasuang mahatthai* [Concepts of the Ministry of Interior for the Use of the Border Patrol Police]. (Bangkok: Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1983).

Sirindhorn's royal projects with the BPP in 1980 actually stymied any substantial assessment of the role of the BPP. Instead, it made the unit overstay as a nebulous security force with the mixed characteristics of military, police and civilian.

Why then did the military leaders, especially Prime Minister General Prem, come to be supportive to the BPP after distrusting and envying the unit's existence for almost three decades? What kind of role had the BPP played which had persuaded the Thai military leaders to let this obscure security force survive well into the post-Cold War period? In fact, the closest identification of the BPP's characteristics other than military, police or civilian, is as a "royal agent." As discussed earlier, the BPP's role as a symbolic missionary of royalist nationalism has become irreplaceable for demonstrating the monarchy's benevolence and political legitimacy since the early 1960s. Therefore, despite its ambiguous characteristics as a national security force, the Thai military government could not simply remove or reorganize the BPP, because it was one of the symbolic forces of the monarchy. As long as the monarchy survives and its vested interest to the royal development projects in collaboration with the BPP's civic action continues, the BPP shall remain active and continue to carry out the same mission. This in turn means that royal projects have become the most significant raison d'être of the BPP force to the present day, as its fate is now tied up with the monarchy.

Border Patrol Police Today

> Some people say that a royal project cannot be touched. This is a mistaken view, or a view that is not quite right. If a royal project cannot be commented on, Thailand cannot develop. A royal project is a royal opinion. If a royal opinion cannot be touched, it would mean that Thailand cannot progress.[15]
>
> [from the King Bhumibol's speech on December 4, 1993]

[15] Bangkok Post, "Royal Wisdom," accessed June 27, 2013, http://www.bangkokpost.com/60yrsthrone/royalwisdom/index.html.

To understand the impacts of the BPP's civic actions and its implication on the organization's future, I will examine the incumbent BPP member's perspectives on the on-going royal projects, its mission, and the organization's sustainability, based on my interviews with the BPP members and field research in Thailand during 2009-2011.

Princess Sirindhorn and Her Royal Projects

How do the incumbent BPP members perceive the Princess Sirindhorn's royal projects and her patronage for the BPP civic actions?[16] Like the general Thai population, the BPP members are heavily in favor of Princess Sirindhorn, and they believe that the Princess is the righteous successor of Princess Mother and the current monarch. On the other hand, the BPP members are well aware of the fact that because of the unceasing royal patronage by the Princesses, the organization can continue to operate with such prestige and pride in their organization, despite its ambiguous characteristics as a security force. Thus, as one BPP schoolmaster told me in an interview, the BPP has become "the hands of Princess and *somdetya*" and the Princess [Sirindhorn] has become "our inspiration."[17] To sum, the royal projects in the BPP Schools have become the key post where the Princess Mother, Princess Sirindhorn and the BPP's purpose of undertaking development projects converge. Accordingly, like a civic action official in the BPP Headquarters remarks, Princess Sirindhorn's royal projects have been the "factor of progress

[16] Following accounts on the BPP's responses to the Princess royal projects are based on my interviews with the 123 BPP teachers and 30 BPP civic action officials including the officials in charge of Village Scout and PMMV projects 9 northern provinces (Phayao, Chiang Rai, Tak, Phitsanulok, Uttaradit, Phetchabun, Chiang Mai, Mae Hong Son and Nan) between June - December 2010. Since the interviewees are incumbent members, I will not disclose their name, rank or affiliation and instead, indicate it by the date of interview and the province where the interview took place. 5 BPP teacher interviews were done in paper and the rest of 148 interviews are recorded by a digital voice recorder.

[17] Interview with a BPP Schoolmaster in Chiang Mai, September 28, 2010.

(*patchai khuam samret*)" and identity of the BPP at present.[18] As a consequence, apart from the rigid limitations on denouncing the monarchy in Thailand enforced by the lése májesty law, the incumbent BPP members are restrained from criticizing or even discussing the necessity of the royal projects in the BPP Schools.

During my field research in Thailand, I interviewed a total 123 BPP teachers consisting of 38 schoolmasters and 85 heritage teachers in 54 BPP Schools in northern Thailand between June and November 2010. As mentioned above, every BPP School must carry out eight royal projects of the Princess regardless of the discrepancies in each school's location, demography, or socio-economic conditions. When I raised a question about the impacts of the eight royal projects on the development of BPP Schools and village communities, the BPP teacher interviewees unanimously and immediately answered that all the projects are beneficial for the students and villagers.

Then I asked the interviewees to select one most and one least important and beneficial royal project in their schools respectively.[19] Interestingly enough, out of a total of 123 interviewees, 90 BPP teachers answered the most important project and only 37 teachers answered about the least important project.[20] In other words, complimenting the royal project is much easier than criticizing it the BPP teachers.

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[18] Ladawan, *Kan hai kansueksa dek lae yawachon*, *9*.

[19] There are total nine royal projects under the Princess Sirindhorn's patronage at present but the Medical Station Project initiated in late 2009 is still at the experimental stage and thus has not been spread to the every BPP Schools. Therefore, I asked to pick one most and one least important projects among the eight on-going projects. For the answers of the BPP Teachers, see Table 6.

[20] Most of my interviews with the BPP teachers were conducted individually in a separate, closed room. Some exceptions to these conditions occurred when I had to have the group interviews, especially with the BPP schoolmasters. As for the heritage teachers, the number of interviewee in a group interview did not exceed more than 5 teachers. It is noteworthy that most of the interviewees who told me about why some projects are least important were alone in a closed room setting.

Then, in the incumbent BPP teachers' point of view, which of the Princess's royal projects is the most and least important? Among the 90 teachers who selected one most important and beneficial royal project in their schools, 61 teachers chose the Agriculture for School Lunch Project (*khrongkan kaset phuea ahan klangwan*). Most teachers said that this is actually the heart of Princess's royal project as it encompasses other projects on health and sanitation as well as education.

Table 6. BPP Teacher's Response to the Princess Royal Project in the BPP Schools

Project	Most Important Project			Least Important Project		
	BPP School -masters	Heritage Teachers	**Total (%)** [a]	BPP School -masters	Heritage Teachers	**Total (%)** [b]
Agriculture for School Lunch	16	45	**61 (67.8%)**	–	–	–
Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders	–	–	–	5	15	**20 (54.1%)**
Promotion of Maternal and Child Nutrition and Sanitation	2	4	6 (6.7%)	1	1	2 (5.4%)
Improvement of Educational Quality	5	3	8 (8.9%)	–	–	–
Royal Scholarship for Children	–	6	6 (6.7%)	1	–	1 (2.7%)
Vocational Training	1	4	5 (5.5%)	3	6	**9 (24.3%)**
Cooperative Promotion	–	4	4 (4.4%)	–	2	2 (5.4%)
Conservation of Natural Resources and Environment	–	–	–	–	3	3 (8.1%)
Total	**24 (63.2%)** [c]	**66 (77.6%)** [d]	**90**	**10 (26.3%)** [c]	**27 (31.8%)** [d]	**37**

Notes: Total 123 Interviewees consisting of 38 BPP Schoolmasters and 85 Heritage Teachers
a. Percentage of the answers to Most Important Project out of total 90
b. Percentage of the answers to Least Important Project out of total 37
c. Percentage of the Regular BPP Teacher's answers to Royal Project out of total 38
d. Percentage of the Heritage Teacher's answers to Royal Project out of total 85

According to Princess Sirindhorn's own account, she was inspired about this lunch project by the husband of the late Princess Vibhavadi Rangsit, who was killed by a communist attack in February 1977, when she was traveling to southern Thailand to visit the Thai armed forces in Surat Thani province. Princess Vibhavadi's husband, Prince (*momchao*) Piya Rangsit told Princess Sirindhorn that instead of bringing supplies to distribute, have the children grow vegetables and raise livestock to feed themselves. After a couple more years of consideration and preparation, Princess Sirindhorn consulted with the then BPP Headquarters commissioner, Police General Pranet Ritluechai, and decided to try out her idea of the "Lunch Project" in three BPP Schools in western Thailand from April 1980. As the project yielded satisfactory results, Princess Sirindhorn expanded the lunch project to the entire country starting in 1981, and finally formalized it under the title "Agriculture for School Lunch Project" in 1982.[21]

Like Prince Rangsit recommended, the Agriculture for School Lunch Project primarily intends to have the BPP School students learn how to grow vegetables and fruits, and how to raise pigs, chickens, ducks and fish in the school farms. The produce from this school farm is mostly used for preparing school lunches for the students and the excess goes to the school cooperatives to sell to villagers. Every student in the BPP School therefore has their own assignments for this project. When they come to school early in the morning, students go to the farm to water vegetables or to feed animals. After class, students go back to the areas they are responsible for and do the remaining farm work. According to the BPP teachers that I interviewed, their students spend at least one hour a day taking care of this project and

[21] Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Projects, "*Rongrian tamruat trawen chaidaen* [Border Patrol Police School]," in *Phraratchaniphon somdet phrathep ratnaratchasuda sayamboromratchakumari kiaokap rongrian tamruat trawen chaidaen* [Royal Writings of the HRH Maha Charki Princess Sirindhorn about the Border Patrol Police School] (Bangkok: Amarin Printing and Publishing Company, 2008), 6-7. The article was originally published in *Sisippi rongrian tochodo*, 8-19. Princess Vibhavadi Rangsit was killed in February 16, 1977 but somehow, Princess Sirindhorn recalls and writes in this account that she was killed in 1976.

sometimes, the villagers come to school to help the children and BPP teachers. In this way, the Princess envisioned that the children could get an opportunity to develop new modern agriculture skills, and it would eventually become useful for their occupations in the future. At the same time, children in the school could learn how to eat right and have balanced meals through this project and the practice would help to improve to their overall nutritional conditions in the long run.[22]

What then is the least beneficial royal project in the BPP Schools? 20 interviewees out of 37 who answered this question said that the Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders Project (*khrongkan khuapkhum rok bat san aiodin*) was outdated or unnecessary due to the enhanced nutritional conditions among the villagers and students. In practice, every BPP School has a small hut with two jars of water under the sign "Iodine Kiosk" and the students are to drink this iodine-mixed water at their will. Also the cooking assistants in the School add iodine in the food prepared for the student's lunches, so that the children can get enough iodine. Since the number of iodine deficiency symptoms has decreased considerably, however, demands for the project have declined accordingly.[23] Nevertheless, the project will continue to be maintained in the BPP Schools since Princess Sirindhorn received an honorable recognition for this project from the International Council for Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders (ICCIDD) in August 2004, which means the project has become one of the representative successes of the Princess's royal initiatives.[24]

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[22] Office of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Projects, *Sirindhorn's Development Works*, 6-12.

[23] The chart on decrease of goiter rate among the school children can be found from: *Building Good Nutrition*, p.23. The author additionally explains that: "At present, the situation of IDD (Iodine Deficiency Disorders) in remote areas is under control… However, to ensure that the problem will not recur, the consumption of iodized salt and iodized drinking water continue in the remote areas".

[24] Office of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Projects, *Sirindhorn's Development Works*, 3, 54-55.

Another notable project that the BPP teachers answered as being least important is the Vocational Training (*khrongkan fuek achip*). This project has had a mixed reception among the BPP teachers as well as the civic action officers. Some selected the Vocational Training as the most important while others said it is least beneficial. These mixed answers particularly reflect the discrepancy of the socio-economic conditions of the villages where the BPP Schools are located. The teachers who answered that the Vocational Training Project was least important reasoned that the curriculum of the project does not meet the students' actual needs. In the villages where the central economic activities are focused on agriculture, students and villagers are more skillful and knowledgeable than the BPP teachers and thus, the teachers cannot give useful or advanced knowledge to them. In the more socio-economically developed villages, students look for different occupations like engineer, businessman, tour guide, government officials, or want to proceed to higher education. However, the Vocational Training Project cannot accommodate these diversifying needs and interests of the students as well as the villagers. Some BPP civic action officers said that the BPP School's occupational training programs are not the only option among the local people and in fact, the OTOP (One Tambon One Product) project in the local government offers better and more practical courses for the children and villagers.[25]

The teachers' opinions on the limitation of the Vocational Training Project also coincide with their selection of two other most important projects: Improvement of Educational Quality Project (*khrongkan songsoem khunaphap kansueksa*) and the H.R.H. Maha Chakri Princess Sirindhorn's Royal Scholarship for Children Project (*khrongkan nakrian nai phraratchanukhro somdet phrathep ratnaratchasuda sayamborom-ratchakumari*). Those who selected these

[25] Interview with five BPP civic action officers. August 30, 2010.

projects as the most important believe that rather than the School providing limited, outdated job training and distributing its inadequate resources, budgets and manpower to less beneficial royal projects, the BPP teachers should concentrate on enhancing the instructional quality as well as securing the financial sources to support more students to proceed to secondary education.

After asking their opinions on the most and least important royal projects, I asked the BPP teachers whether the BPP Schools need to maintain all eight royal projects of the Princess since, during the interviews, many of them mentioned the excessive workload derived from carrying out royal projects in the BPP Schools, as well as the teachers' lack of professional techniques to cover various projects. A majority of interviewees answered that still the BPP School must keep all the royal projects under Princess's patronage, while some responded that few projects could discontinue. Among those who said that all eight projects needed to continue, most interviewees reasoned that the Princess's royal projects automatically bring in other governmental and non-governmental institutional support for the BPP Schools.

As mentioned earlier, Princess Sirindhorn makes regular inspectional visits to the BPP Schools to check the progress of her royal projects and to reward the teachers, students and villagers. Her regular visits to the BPP Schools are always accompanied by a long entourage consisting of local governors, military and police leaders, and high-ranking officials from the various government agencies. According to the account from the BPP's Third Regional Division Headquarters in Chiang Mai, there are at least ten governmental organizations involved in the Princess's royal projects in the BPP Schools, and thus all come to receive the Princess at her royal visit to the BPP Schools every year. They are: Department of Agricultural Extension, Department of Livestock Development, Department of Fisheries, Cooperatives Promotion Department, Cooperative Auditing Department, Department of Public Health, Department of

Disease Control, the Institute of Vocational Education in coordination with Rajabhat University, and the Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology.[26] Also several groups of private or governmental donors follow the Princess and present their gifts and money to her to be distributed in the BPP Schools. In this respect, the BPP teachers' fear in reducing the number of royal projects in the BPP Schools mainly derives from the possible disconnection with the Princess and other institutional support for the School.

The above questions and answers about the impact of the Princess Sirindhorn's royal project in the present day illuminate two significant problems that the BPP Schools and teachers are now facing. First of all, is the question of the BPP teachers' professionalism. Basically, the BPP teachers must undertake both the policing and teaching missions, but neither of them can be fulfilled completely. The presence of the BPP teachers can at least assure the feelings of security and easier access to the educational opportunities for the remote villagers but due to the heavy workloads in the BPP Schools, the BPP teachers can concentrate neither on the policing nor the teaching. As shown in the interviewees' responses to the Vocational Training Project, they are lacking advanced skills and knowledge in order to transfer these skills to the quickly modernizing remote border people. Most importantly, the enduring weakness of the BPP teachers -- which is also a problem the BPP teachers themselves are well aware of -- has not resolved yet: that is, they are police who lack adequate, professional teaching skills.

In the present day, there are more teaching-oriented personnel, like the heritage teachers and the student volunteers from the teachers' college, in the BPP Schools, and also the BPP Headquarters and Princess Sirindhorn provide some grants to encourage the BPP teachers to obtain at least a bachelor's degree in education. However, funding opportunities are scarce, and

[26] Border Patrol Police Third Regional Division Headquarters, *Prawat khuampenma lae kan damnoen ngan*, 2. Rajabhat Universities are one of the university systems in Thailand that focuses on training teachers.

still a majority of the BPP teachers' professionalism as a trained educational instructor remains largely in question.[27] As a result, when the graduates of a BPP School proceed to the secondary schools in lowlands or cities, they feel less competitive compared to the lowland Thai students who went to regular primary schools, because the BPP School education has been too focused on Thai language and agricultural training.

Second, the stability of the BPP School project itself remains in question. As mentioned before, the Princess's royal projects bring other governmental and nongovernmental organization's support to the BPP Schools. For instance, one of the biggest Thai conglomerates, Charoen Pokphand Group (CP Group), supplies chickens to the BPP Schools in support of Princess Sirindhorn's Agriculture for School Lunch Project. The BPP School students take care of chickens and collect eggs every morning to be consumed in their lunch or to be sold in the School cooperatives. The Fishery Department supplies fish and frogs to the School, and the Ministry of Public Health provides medicines and instructional manuals for the teachers and villagers. The Ministry of Education provides textbooks for the BPP School students and numerous non-governmental or private organizations donates stationery, clothes, tools and other necessary gadgets to the Schools in support of Princess Sirindhorn's cause for expanding educational opportunity for the marginalized.[28]

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[27] Interview with five BPP Civic Action Officers, August 30, 2010. For the description about the scholarships for BPP teachers, see, Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Projects, "*Rongrian tamruat trawen chaidaen hasippi* [50 Years of the Border Patrol Police School]," in *Phraratchaniphon somdet phrathep ratnaratchasuda sayamboromratchakumari kiaokap rongrian tamruat trawen chaidaen* [Royal Writings of the HRH Maha Charki Princess Sirindhorn about the Border Patrol Police School] (Bangkok: Amarin Printing and Publishing Company, 2008), 26. The article was originally published in *Duai chongrak lae pakdi*, 20-53. See also, Ladawan, *Kan hai kansueksa dek lae yawachon*, 6-7.; Office of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Projects, *Sirindhorn's Development Works*, 22.

[28] Ladawan, *Kan hai kansueksa dek lae yawachon*, 7.

As a result, several BPP teacher and civic action official interviewees told me that the BPP Schools are now heavily relying on external donations aside from the Princess's royal fund and Royal Thai Police's budget allocation. All of the BPP members that I interviewed or conversed with believe that the Princess Sirindhorn would not cease her sponsorship for the BPP Schools anytime soon but at the same time, they said most BPP teachers and civic action officials had to become fundraisers in order to find additional financial and material sources to improve the School project. The students and teachers in the BPP School are therefore always prepared to receive the guests who come to donate money or goods, and sometimes open the new school facilities constructed with their donations.[29]

Questions on the professionalism and stability of the BPP School project have indeed contributed to making the BPP teacher the least desired position among the general BPP members. Compared to the overwhelming sacrifice and workload, the possibility of promotion within either in the Royal Thai Police or Ministry of Education and the betterment or welfare for the BPP teachers are far limited. Although the BPP teachers play the role of both the police and teacher, their salaries are determined by the Royal Thai Police ranking system and thus, even the monthly income for a BPP schoolmaster -- normally in the rank of Police Captain or Lieutenant level -- is less than a junior teacher hired by the Ministry of Education.[30] Usually, the BPP teachers station in the School for twenty-four hours and have to be on duty at all times, but since

[29] Research notes and photographs taken by the researcher in Than Phuying Chanat Piya-ui Border Patrol Police School in Chiang Rai, July 4, 2010. In fact, most of the BPP Schools' buildings are built by donations from various charities, non-governmental organizations and individuals and thus, often the buildings are named after the donors, and even the school name itself are the names of major donors like this school's name, Than Phuying Chanat Piya-ui.

[30] Interview with BPP Civic Action Officers, August 4 and 30, 2010, and September 24, 2010.

their excessive work burden and passion for their jobs and children are undervalued, most teachers gradually lose motivation over time.[31]

In sum, despite the good intentions and benefits that the Princess Sirindhorn's royal project, as well as the BPP School project, may have in enhancing the educational opportunity and living conditions of children in the remote border areas, limitations on openly discussing the projects' strengths and weaknesses among the BPP have attributed to deteriorating extant problems. Because of the heavy workload and instable budget for operating projects, the BPP teachers still lack adequate teaching skills and the BPP schools cannot provide quality education to students. The level of sacrifice demanded for the BPP teachers often exceeds what they would gain from the position and thus, like some BPP members told me, being appointed to be a BPP teacher is regarded a sort of a punishment among the BPP in the present day.[32] Accordingly, the BPP School has always suffered from a shortage of teachers and personnel.

Human Border of Thailand Today

To compensate for the insufficient number of teachers in the BPP Schools and also to provide occupational opportunities for the BPP School graduates, the BPP Headquarters launched "Border Patrol Police Heritage Teachers Program (*khrongkan khru kharuthayat tamruat trawen chaidaen*)" under the auspices of Princess Sirindhorn on July 25, 1997.[33] Under this project, the regional headquarters in four regions recruit twenty applicants among the former students of BPP

[31] Interview with a BPP Schoolmaster in Phayao, July 3, 2010.

[32] From the personal conversation with a BPP civic action official who once was a BPP teacher in Chiang Mai province. I asked him why he did not stay in the school and he responded me that from the beginning he was not interested in becoming a teacher but because he had made some mistakes, he was assigned to become a BPP teacher in the past. Field notes by the researcher, June 23, 2010.

[33] Office of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Projects, "*Rongrian tamruat trawen chaidaen*," 15.

Schools to train them to become BPP teachers. From the first year to present, over eight hundred BPP heritage teachers have been trained. Originally, the project was to be implemented between 1998-2002 to produce a total of four hundred heritage teachers (*khru kharuthayat*). However, since the project yielded positive results by producing more capable teachers, and the number of BPP volunteers for the teacher's position decreased considerably in the past few decades, the Bangkok Headquarters decided to rerun the project between 2007-2011, and trained another four hundred heritage teachers in this period.[34]

When I was conducting field research in northern Thailand, I came to learn about this project and thought that by interviewing these heritage teachers, I could gain a better understanding of the impact of the BPP School project upon the lives of border people in the past half a century, since almost all the heritage teachers in northern Thailand are from the highland minority groups. Therefore, I requested the list of heritage teachers from the Third Regional Division Headquarters in Chiang Mai and began traveling to the BPP Schools to interview these teachers. In sum, I interviewed a total of 85 BPP heritage teachers from 54 BPP Schools in northern Thailand.

Applicants to the heritage teachers project consist of the former students of BPP Schools who had completed at least a secondary education in regular Thai educational institutions. When I asked the heritage teachers about their experience of moving from the BPP Schools to town to continue to secondary education, they said, more often than not, the lowland Thai children expressed contempt against them because they were poor ethnic minorities perceived as being ignorant about modern culture. Worse yet, the BPP School instructions were too focused on

[34] Border Patrol Police Third Regional Division Headquarters, *Nangsue anuson 10 pi khru kharuthayat tamruat trawen chaidaen* [Commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the Border Patrol Police Heritage Teachers Program] (Chiang Mai: 2011), 13-14.

teaching Thai language and agricultural training, so the former BPP School students often felt that they were incompetent compared to the lowland children. Nevertheless, like many heritage teachers and BPP School alumni told me, the BPP School students have strong pride that helps them to overcome these insulting experiences: That is, they are the "children of royal family." A majority of the BPP heritage teachers had received scholarships from the Princess Mother or Princess Sirindhorn, and thus they could advance to secondary school or onto higher education. Additionally, these children have first-hand experiences of having an audience with the royal family in the BPP School at least once in their lives, which is a rare experience for the lowland children. And by the time they finish secondary education, these former BPP School students become eligible for the heritage teachers project under the Princess Sirindhorn's royal patronage.

Those who were selected for the "Border Patrol Police Heritage Teachers Program" receive two separate trainings for about a year: policing and teaching. Once they complete both trainings, the BPP heritage teachers usually return to their own villages and begin teaching in the BPP Schools. If the BPP transferred the administration of their school to the Ministry of Education due to the enhanced socio-economic and security conditions of the villages, then the BPP heritage teachers are assigned to different villages where the same ethnic people reside, so that they can communicate with the villagers in local languages. Since they get the opportunity to serve in their own village and schools as a BPP teacher with the help of royal sponsorships, the heritage teachers often identify themselves as the "delegates (*phu then*) of the Princess Sirindhorn's royal mission" in the border areas. Indeed, the foremost objective of the heritage teachers project indicates that the project is supposed to support and deliver the royally assigned missions in the BPP Schools by these former students.[35] These royal delegates are to carry out

[35] Interview with a heritage teacher in Phitsanulok, July 28, 2010.; Border Patrol Police Third Regional Division Headquarters, *Nangsue anuson 10 pi khru kharuthayat*, 13

the regular BPP teachers' missions such as teaching in the Schools, offering basic medical services, providing modern agricultural training under the royal projects and guarding the village security through mundane police work. However, the heritage teachers can become full BPP officers only after working in the BPP Schools a minimum two years.[36]

As I came to learn from the interviews with the heritage teachers, they usually encounter numerous problems with other BPP members as well as the local villagers when they begin working as a BPP teacher. A sense of ethnic hierarchy still exists between the regular BPP and the heritage teachers. During our interviews, the BPP heritage teachers, after some hesitation, showed dissatisfaction with their relationship with the regular BPP teachers because firstly, the heritage teachers are still treated like children or students, and thus do not feel respect from the latter groups. The BPP teachers on the other hand expressed their uneasiness with the heritage teachers because the latter group was regarded neither as police nor as teachers. Whereas the regular BPP members have completed comprehensive police training and received additional training on teaching, BPP heritage teachers received mixed, and thus seemingly insufficient, training to become BPP teachers. For the regular BPP members, police work is more critical than teaching and thus, they are often suspicious as to whether the heritage teachers could provide security services as effectively as ordinary Thai police. In addition, although the heritage teachers spoke Thai fluently, their non-native accent and pronunciation were also considered inappropriate to give Thai language instruction to the highland minority children by the regular BPP teachers as well as the BPP civic action officials.[37]

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[36] Border Patrol Police Third Regional Division Headquarters, *Nangsue anuson 10 pi khru kharuthayat*, 14.

[37] Interview with a BPP civic action officer in the BPP subdivision for Region Thirty-Three in Sansai district, Chiang Mai province, 23 June 2010.

In addition, there are other noteworthy tensions between the heritage teachers and the local villagers. I asked the heritage teachers how they felt about working in their own birthplaces. Most of the time, they first started with the emphasis on the pride they felt in assisting village development and enhancing educational quality for the children, who were their families and relatives. As the interview progressed, they complained that even the villagers did not give them the respect they desired. It could be partly due to jealousy because those heritage teachers have become Thai government officials, which in theory means that they have become fully Thai. However, having known these teachers from their childhood, the villagers could not give the trust and respect to the heritage teachers that they felt they deserved for being police officers and teachers at the BPP School. Those heritage teachers that I interviewed had a difficult time explaining their complex relationship with the villagers because, in my understanding, they did not want to speak directly about the problems that seemingly derived from local villagers' jealousy or bitter feelings over the alleged betrayal of their ethnicity.

These problems are often reflected in the heritage teachers' answers to my questions on their strengths and weaknesses, especially when compared to the regular Thai BPP teachers. Out of a total of 85 heritage teachers, 70 teachers answered their strengths and 54 teachers answered about the weaknesses. To summarize the specifics of the 70 interviewees' answers on the strengths of heritage teachers: 22 teachers answered their familiarity and knowledge about the local village conditions; 20 teachers said their closeness and affection to the villagers as they share the same ethnic background or minority status; 17 teachers answered their language proficiency, which sometimes covers multiple ethnic minority languages; and 18 teachers said their advanced teaching skills in comparison with the BPP teachers. In other words, the heritage teachers' priority is in teaching, not policing. In general, almost all of the heritage teachers

answered that local language proficiency and being accessible to the villagers are their most distinctive and important roles.

What then are the weaknesses of the heritage teachers compared to regular Thai BPP teachers? Among the 54 answers to this question: 22 teachers answered their lower qualifications of being in the position of a BPP officer or a regular Thai police officer, which often prevents them from proceeding to other or higher positions; 12 teachers said that they still lacked the adequate professional teaching skills when compared with other regular teachers hired by the Ministry of Education; 9 teachers answered regarding their conflict with the local villagers due to the latter group's mistrust and jealousy; 7 teachers said their non-native Thai speaking skills caused problems in teaching children and also communicating with other Thai BPP and local officials; and 4 teachers answered regarding their conflict with the regular Thai BPP teachers derived from the latter groups' disfavor and distrust. In sum, the weakness of the heritage teachers lies in their lack of sufficient professional training both in teaching and policing, and their ambiguous standing between their Thai colleagues and ethnic minority villagers. Simply put, they are neither teachers nor police like the regular BPP teachers, and on top of that, they are neither fully Thai nor fully an ethnic minority in the eyes of local villagers and the Thai people. As a consequence, even though they can serve as a mediator between these two parallel groups of people, they cannot gain due respect or trust from both groups.

Although it may sound trivial, these problems disclose the broader issue of current ethnic identity struggles as well as the contradictory nature of Thai policies in promoting the ethnic minorities' culture and tradition. For example, Princess Sirindhorn has promoted ethnic culture as a part of Thailand's heritage, and this campaign is also "to encourage many minority people to

keep their language."[38] Ironically, there is a prohibition on speaking ethnic minority languages in BPP Schools. In other words, the students and teachers in the BPP Schools must speak Thai at all times.[39] This constraint actually causes a dilemma among the teachers and students. It is natural that the children in the school feel more comfortable speaking their mother language with the teachers and thus, they often find the BPP heritage teachers more friendly and communicative than the regular Thai BPP teachers. Since the regular Thai BPP teachers have to enforce the rule of speaking Thai in the BPP Schools, they generally feel alienated from the students and also the villagers.

In a sense, these Thai BPP teachers are the actual minority in the villages they serve, because whereas the heritage teachers share a common ethnic and cultural background with the villagers, the regular BPP teachers are from lowland villages or towns and thus unfamiliar with the highland minority culture and society. As the heritage teachers project continues producing more teachers, the number of BPP heritage teachers has grown large. According to the statistics on the number of BPP teachers that I retrieved in 2010, there were 152 heritage teachers out of a total of 507 BPP teachers in the 61 BPP Schools in northern Thailand, which means almost 30 percent of the BPP teachers in the schools are heritage teachers.[40] Predictably, the chasm

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[38] Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Projects, *Including the Excluded,* A Lecture by Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for the Empowerment of Minority Children through Education and through the Preservation of their Intangible Cultural Heritage, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Center, Bangkok, Thailand, November 25, 2005 (Bangkok: UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, 2008), 14.

[39] Interview with a BPP civic action officer in the BPP subdivision for Area 34 in Tak city, Tak province, 10 August 2010.

[40] The number of BPP and heritage teachers is compiled from the list of teachers provided from the Border Patrol Police General Headquarters and the four subdivisions of Third Regional Division Headquarters of Border Patrol Police in 2010. The number of heritage teachers given here only included the incumbent members. In total, there are 187 heritage teachers under the Third Regional Division as of 2010. According to the heritage teachers Association in the Northern Thailand's account, the Region 3 has a total of 181 heritage teachers that excludes the number of Teachers who moved to other region. See Border Patrol Police Third Regional Division Headquarters, *Nangsue anuson 10 pi khru kharuthayat*, 15.

between the regular BPP and heritage teachers will widen further if the Princess' royal project continues to recruit more heritage teachers because in the end, they will become the majority among teachers in the BPP Schools.

Last, what is the implication of the Princess's royal projects in the BPP School on current Thai society as reflected in the BPP teachers and highland minority villagers' experiences of nation-building in northern Thailand in the past half a century? The BPP School was expected to build a human border for Thailand by modernizing the ethnic minorities in the border areas and by instilling a sense of belonging to the superior Thai nation. In a simplistic sense, this objective of the BPP School project has been achieved, as now the ethnic minority villagers know that they are governed by the Thai government and are willing to send their children to the BPP Schools or regular Thai schools so that their children can find better opportunities, and get a stable job or advance to higher education, as the BPP heritage teachers have done.[41] Several recent ethnographical accounts similarly argue that the state- or private-driven development projects and the process of national integration more generally do not always incur the disfavor of Thailand's ethnic minorities.[42] More often than not, as Toyota Mika contends, members of ethnic minorities themselves "voluntarily" move into the dominant national group "in order to acquire the status that comes with membership of the dominant group".[43]

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[41] See for example, Mukdawan Sakboon, "The Borders Within: The Akha at the Frontiers of National Integration," paper presented at the conference of "Critical Transitions in the Mekong Region," Chiang Mai, January 29-31 2007, accessed March 2, 2014, http://rcsd.soc.cmu.ac.th/InterConf/paper/paper33.pdf.

[42] See, for example, Jonsson. *Mien Relations*, 9-15.; J. Peter Brosius, "The Forest and the Nation: Negotiating Citizenship in Sarawak, East Malaysia," in *Cultural Citizenship in Island Southeast Asia: Nation and Belonging in the Hinterlands*, ed. Renato Rosaldo (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003), 78-92.; Hayami, "Negotiating Ethnic Representation," 399-407.

[43] Toyota, "Subjects of the Nation Without Citizenship," 134.

Nevertheless, it should also be noted that the previously less visible conflict between ethnic-minority identities and Thai national identities has gradually become apparent, as the problems faced by heritage teachers in their relations with regular BPP teachers and villagers suggest. First of all, the villagers became gradually aware of the necessity to defend their ethnic identity from outsiders. I visited a BPP School in a village in Chiang Rai province where the community was composed of Chinese Yunnanese migrants (often called *chin haw* by the Thai people), as well as Akha and Thai Yai ethnics. Right next to the BPP School, there was a Chinese language school with a signboard in Chinese language. I asked a BPP schoolmaster about the Chinese school and he told me that after class ended for the day, a large number of students from his school went to the Chinese school to learn their mother language.[44] Usually, I stayed overnight in the BPP Schools during the trips and thus could meet the heritage teachers' families and children who resided in the same village or in the teacher's house in the school compound. The heritage teachers normally spoke their ethnic languages with their parents and children. When I asked the heritage teachers whether they wished to send their children to the BPP School, they unanimously said "yes", because by doing so, they could help their children become fully Thai and the children would have a better future than other uneducated, non-Thai villagers. At the same time, the heritage teachers still wished to teach their own ethnic languages and traditions to their children so that they would not be completely alienated from the village community. From their experience, they knew that becoming fully Thai could have negative impacts on their sense of ethnic belonging, as well as their relationships with fellow villagers.[45]

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[44] Research notes and photographs taken by the researcher nearby Ban Nato Border Patrol Police School Mae Fah Luang District in Chiang Rai, July 1, 2010.

[45] Interview with BPP heritage teachers in Aoyama Border Patrol Police School in Fang district, Chiang Mai province, September 27-28, 2010.

These mixed feelings and responses from the BPP heritage teachers and also the ethnic minority villagers force us to rethink the reason why these groups cannot comfortably reside within the border of Thailand and the border of Thainess. In a sense, it is more convenient for the ethnic minority people to have the Thai nationality as officially designated by the Thai government, so that their lives within the Thai territorial boundary could be stable and secure. On the other hand, the ethnic minority people have come to realize that even if they accept Thai nationality and have the sense of belonging to the Thai nation, they are still regarded as a lower rung of the Thai nation which demands constant instruction and guidance by the ethnic Thai people.[46]

In this vein, Mukdawan Sakboon highlights the contradictory quality of the modern Thai nation-building processes through case studies of Thai local government's issuance of citizenship for ethnic minorities. She argues that national integration policy tends to be one that "alienates instead of incorporates the hill ethnic minorities, as local administrators politicized, ethicized and racialized the issue of citizenship and other related rights pertain to it".[47] Similarly, Joseph Harris, in his examination of the differential effects of universal healthcare reforms on citizens, migrants and stateless people, concludes that the Thai state's integration efforts have been constrained in "uneven inclusion". As a notable example, Harris brings up the system of assigning numbers on identity cards that delineates differences between citizens and ethnic minority people, so that the state officials can easily discern the ethnic hierarchy between the Thai and non-Thai.[48] In sum, the Thai people still maintain their superiority in ethnic relations

[46] Toyota, "Subjects of the Nation Without Citizenship," 131-132.

[47] Mukdawan, "The Borders Within," 19.

[48] Joseph Harris, "Uneven Inclusion: Consequences of Universal Healthcare in Thailand," *Citizenship Studies* 17:1 (2013), 113. See also Toyota, "Subjects of the Nation Without Citizenship," 120-123.

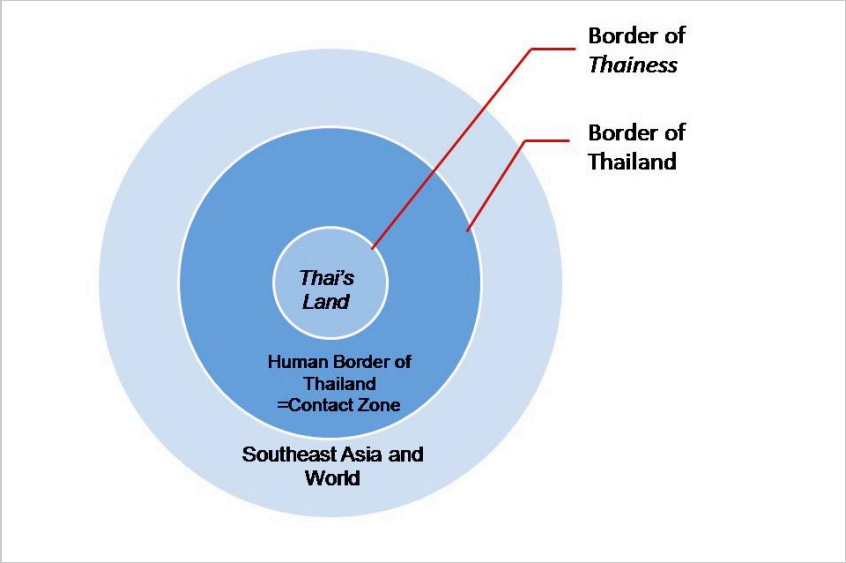
within the domain of Thai nationalism and the state bureaucracy. Consequently, ethnic minorities are now well aware of the fact that even if they have been assimilated by the BPP and other governmental organizations, they are still integrated into the Thai nation-state on an unequal basis, and still considered as inferior peoples that demand constant surveillance and instruction by the Thai nation-state.

The human border of Thailand that the BPP and the royal family strove to build at Thailand's state boundary during the past century ironically led ethnic minority villagers in the border areas to realize that if they were to remain at the bottom of the hierarchy of ethnic relations within the Thai nation-state, then there is no need to admire the seemingly less modern Thais more than any other ethnicity or country. In a sense, the efforts to build a human border for Thailand among the highland minorities have left Thainess in competition with various ethnic and national identities, in which boundaries are still porous and becoming a brick in Thailand's human border remains optional. Granting Thai national identity does not guarantee national loyalty among the border people. On the contrary, the hierarchical integration of highland minorities within the Thai nation-state may in fact foster a process of disintegration, which may ultimately leave the Thai nation encircled by a human border of stateless or non-Thai citizens, similar to what happened to the regular BPP teachers who have become a minority in the border villages.

Then another question arises in Thailand's management of the gap between the border of Thainess which encircles the "Thai's land", and border of Thailand at the international boundary that directly faces the Southeast Asian region, or the world beyond Thailand, as shown in the Chart 7. In short, the building of a human border has been undertaken within the gap between the border of Thainess and border of Thailand. This gap, or say, a "contact zone" has never been

fixed or stabilized despite the Thai state and the royal family's efforts to narrow it by filling it with a population that has loyalty and sense of belonging to the Thai nation in the past half a century.

Chart 7. Contact Zone between *Thai's Land* and Beyond



As it turned out, it is this contact zone where most border problems, such as the flow of transnational migrants and refugees, drug and human trafficking, as well as the skirmishes over boundaries occur. To present, neither defending state boundaries by dispatching state agents, or building a human border by assimilating the border people by the Thai government and royal family yield the desired outcome of matching the border of Thailand with border of Thainess. On the contrary, the question on whether the "Thai's land" can overcome the human border of Thailand and directly face the Southeast Asian region and the world still remain unanswered, because the open-ended, if not widening, gap between the border of Thainess and border of Thailand would harbor more of a possibility of disintegration, as reflected in the experiences of

the heritage teachers above, more broadly, in consideration of the Thailand's longstanding dilemma in defining the ethnicity and nationality.[49]

Impulse of "Do Good By Stealth"

Another significant implication that we can glean from the BPP teachers' responses to Princess Sirindhorn's royal project and the role of BPP School and BPP teachers is what I call the dilemma of "*pit thong lang phra* (do good by stealth)" and "*phakchi roi na* (window dressing)." The "*pit thong lang phra*" side mainly represents the source of popularity and accountability that the monarchy, including Princess Sirindhorn and the BPP, have gained from their continuous mission to develop and modernize the border people's lives, while the "*phakchi roi na*" side reflects the BPP's reality that conceals a lack of professionalism and stability in maintaining the civic action programs as well as royal projects.

Indeed, these are the most familiar and frequent Thai expressions that I heard when I was conducing field research in Thailand between 2009-2011. Almost every BPP member that I met in the headquarters, camps, border areas and BPP Schools described his/her work with "*pit thong lang phra*." In my understanding, the use of "*pit thong lang phra*" by the BPP was to tell about their hardships in the remote areas where modern comfort and convenience had not been reached yet. At the same time, I also learned that the demonstration of "*pit thong lang phra*" is operated by the system of "*phakchi roi na*." Like the BPP teachers' hesitation to discuss the negative impacts of the royal projects implies, only the progress and benefits of the royal project should

[49] See the discussion on the disparity and gap between ethnicity and nationality from Thongchai Winichakul, "Rethinking Thai Nationalism," in *The Phantasm in Southern Thailand: Historical Writings on Patani and the Islamic World*, Vol. 2, eds., Patrick Jory and Jirawat Saengthong. Proceedings of the conference of the same title at Chulalongkorn University, December 2009, 794-796.; Thongchai, "Others Within," 40-41.; Jonsson. *Mien Relations*, 5-6.; Toyota, "Subjects of the Nation Without Citizenship," 115.

be presented to the Thai public who are eager to see the "result" not the "process." The reality that the BPP members learn immediately after their arrival in the border areas, however, is the lack of time, energy, and resources required to accomplish development and security. Despite the support from the royal family and government, the BPP is still a small band of police that cannot do miracles all at once. Thus, a considerable amount of positive outcomes of royal projects undertaken in the BPP Schools presented to the public come out from an ad-hoc treatment.

From my own experience of traveling to 56 BPP Schools in northern Thailand, this dilemma of "*pit thong lang phra*" and "*phakchi roi na*" reaches a climax when having the royal visits (*rapsadet*) of Princess Sirindhorn in the BPP Schools.[50] Every year, Princess Sirindhorn makes a regular inspectional visit to the BPP Schools and in northern Thailand, this grandeur of *rapsadet* occurs during the dry season, generally between December-January. According to the report by the commander of civic action at the BPP Headquarters, Princess Sirindhorn comes to inspect the BPP Schools, along with the governmental and private delegates, on regular basis to see the "real" conditions and progress of her royal projects in the BPP Schools, so that the BPP teachers and villagers are be motivated to continue improving the School's conditions.[51]

In fact, according to several BPP civic action officers in northern Thailand, the Princess's visit to the BPP Schools brings "prompt" development and modernization, because in order to properly receive her royal visit, the BPP and local governments concentrate sources and personnel to immediately "develop" the villages and nearby areas.[52] For instance, when I was traveling to the remote border areas, I usually got to ride on the BPP's four-wheel truck that can

[50] *rapsadet* literally means welcoming the royal visit, *kansadet*.

[51] Ladawan, *Kan hai kansueksa dek lae yawachon*, 9, 13.

[52] Interview with four BPP civic action officers, August 4, 2010.

travel unpaved, hilly roads in the mountains. Looking at me bumping inside the truck while driving the dusty, uneven roads, a BPP driver said that the Thailand's development project is all about "20 meters of progress (*khuam charoen yisip met*)." He said this because, in the long way of traveling to the BPP Schools, we drove a short length of cemented road but soon encountered muddy, dusty unpaved roads for a long time. Then another short length of cemented road began. So I asked why these roads are not completely cemented. The driver said either the Provincial and Subdistrict Administrative Organizations do not have enough of a budget to cover the entire road so they cemented it bit by bit, sometimes ten meters, five meters or twenty meters depending on their budget. Then, I asked if the Princess Sirindhorn had also traveled the same road to the BPP Schools. The driver answered that would be the only way to solve this never-ending road building problem, but she usually travels to the BPP Schools by helicopter. Another BPP officer sitting behind us added: "Yes, if the Princess is to travel by land, this road would be completely cemented within a month, and then in the following month, it would start cracking."[53]

Around the time I completed my trips to the BPP Schools at the end of 2010, I was invited to attend the thirtieth anniversary ceremony of Princess Sirindhorn's royal project in Tak province. I was instructed regarding the dress code, camera use and proper behavior in the royal presence about two weeks before I arrived in Tak because I would be observing the *rapsadet* process in a BPP School after ceremony. The school that the Princess would visit in Mae Ra Mat district was the school that I had visited on September 22, 2010. When I visited this school before, I saw broken windows in the classrooms, almost barren school farms, and the students and villagers hanging out in the tables nearby the kitchen without any BPP teachers' presence.

[53] Research notes and photographs taken by the researcher during the trips to the BPP Schools in Chiang Mai, November 13, 2010.

Not surprisingly, when I returned to the same school at the end of December 2010, a day before the Princess Sirindhorn's scheduled visit, I saw all the classrooms were cleaned and their windows and doors were all fixed, and even decorated with colorful ribbons and brand-new posters. The BPP development unit built new toilets in the school compound and repaired all the broken facilities that I had seen three months ago. One of the most impressive scenes was the school farm filled with the green vegetables, which were obviously planted just a couple of days ago, because I had heard from a BPP member about transporting the plants to this School to be transplanted in the farm. I myself saw a BPP teacher planting green buds nearby the School pond, drawing the word "soybean (*thua rae*)" on that day. The barren, empty school compound suddenly became a green, flourishing, and vibrant center of development in less than three months.[54]

I spent an overnight in another school, which was about fourteen kilometers away, and also was to receive the royal visit. On the morning of the *rapsadet*, I saw that the purple tents that the medical volunteers and local development workers had set up to provide dental checkups and blood tests were crowded with students and villagers.[55] The villagers, dressed in their ethnic dress were sitting under the tents next to the Village Scout members. Local government officials in uniform were busily cleaning their responsible areas like the school's nursing room, cooperatives and vocational training center. Royal guards from the Royal Thai Police and Royal Thai Army were busily patrolling the area for the final check while the Explosive Ordinance Disposal Teams were inspecting the corners of school compound. Four female PARU members,

[54] Research notes and photographs taken by the researcher in Ban Khanechuetha Study Center of the Border Patrol Police School in Tak, September 22, 2010 and December 28, 2010. Study Center (*sun kanrian*) is a branch center of the BPP Schools which was initiated by the Princess Sirindhorn's order in 2002.

[55] Purple is the birthday color of Princess Sirindhorn like yellow color stands for king and blue represents the queen. There was a sign in front of the tent showing "*Nuai phet phraratchathan* [Royally Sponsored Medical Team]."

assigned to be the personal bodyguards of Princess, were also checking the designated path for the Princess's inspection along with other royal guards. Student volunteers from Rajabhat University in Tak province were cooking lunch under their professors' direction and the BPP School students and teachers who would give a presentation to the Princess about the progress of royal projects in the school were memorizing their scripts in the classrooms. Luckily, the school that I went to observe the *rapsadet* could serve lunch for the Princess but to the people who were preparing this event, her lunch break also meant that the extended hours of reception and presentation, unlike other schools that Princess would visit, would stay less than two hours.[56]

One evening, in my conversations over dinner with a regional commander in northern Thailand, I asked how the BPP prepared for the Princess' royal visit to the BPP School. The commander said that all the preparation process starts three months before *rapsadet*. Since the Princess does not inform the BPP of which school she wants to visit, the regional commanders select three or four schools that she has not gone to in the past years. Then the commander sends the BPP engineers and development unit to repair the school facilities. Two months before the visit, the commander orders the selected schools to continue cleaning and plant all the vegetables that the royal project recommends, and trains the students and villagers to properly behave in the royal presence. Sometimes, the BPP teachers began teaching royal vocabularies (*ratchasap*) to some selected students to answer the Princess's inquiries. Finally, a month before, the royal secretary office of the Princess sends an order to the BPP Headquarters to inform them which schools she will visit. Then the commander and regional divisions pull the supplies and engineer

[56] Research notes and photographs taken by the researcher in Ban Wakalekho Border Patrol Police Study Center in Tak, December 29, 2010.

units from the school that is not selected and concentrate these sources on the selected schools for the *rapsadet*.[57]

How then does this preparation for *rapsadet* actually affect the BPP School students and teachers? One of the heritage teachers that I interviewed in Chiang Rai province told me that students have to spend at least two months cleaning and preparing for the royal visit. The teacher added that "children cannot focus on studying for about two months before the Princess's visit. That is the busiest time period for both the BPP School teachers and students." [58]

These accounts are not to depreciate the Princess Sirindhorn's efforts to improve her royal project in the BPP Schools and the remote border villages and also not to undervalue the genuine affection and loyalty of the BPP members toward Princess. It is to tell how the "*pit thong lang phra*" ideal operates by "*phakchi roi na*" system in the BPP Schools and possibly in general Thai society. And furthermore, it is to reconsider the ways in which the royal presence in the Thai socio-political history has played out as more than the "above politics" role. As discussed earlier, the BPP School project has encountered problems, such as the lack of professionalism and stability in the past decades, which indeed signifies the ambiguity of the BPP teacher's position as a teacher and a policeman at once. Just as the BPP teachers hesitated to answer whether the School needs to keep all eight royal projects, the efficiency and necessity of the royal projects still cannot be openly discussed. Even though the BPP teachers and civic action officials are aware of the counter-productiveness of sustaining all of the projects, none of the royal projects

[57] Research notes by the researcher in Phayao, July 6, 2010.

[58] Research notes by the researcher in Chiang Rai, July 1, 2010.

can be abandoned for the sake of the BPP's mission of spreading royal initiatives and of demonstrating royal patronage to the people.[59]

This in turn deteriorates extant problems of the BPP teachers who lack professionalism in both teaching and policing, because the enormous amount of workload staves off the teachers and also the students' time and energy to improve their weaknesses. Worse yet, the lack of a suitable reward or adequate compensation for the teachers' sacrifice to maintain the School as the focal point of remote area development and center of education often exhaust their motivation. In my own experience of meeting and interviewing over a hundred BPP teachers, a majority of them have the "*pit thong lang phra*" ideal but their dedication and energies were drained by the "*phakchi roi na*" system that sustains the face value of the royal project in the BPP Schools, not for the border people per se but for the Bangkok people or the Thais who want to see why the monarchy's benevolence has been a "factor of progress" for the Thai nation. In this sense, it is not surprising to see the repetitive problems occurring in the School like the teachers' delinquency, and conflict among the colleagues and with the villagers and students. Most importantly, the BPP School has been constantly suffering from the debilitating quality of education due to its failure to accommodate the rapidly changing socio-economic conditions and the diversifying needs of the students and villagers.[60]

As a consequence, a considerable number of BPP teachers and also the BPP civic action officers said that the sooner the BPP transfer its schools to the Ministry of Education, the better for students, so that they can get more professional, qualified education for their long-term progress. And for some teachers, they may get better and more appropriate treatment if they are

[59] Ladawan, *Kan hai kansueksa dek lae yawachon*, 9.

[60] Interview with a BPP civic action officer. September 24, 2010. The BPP teachers' relationship with the villagers and their delinquency is also observed by Mukdawan, "The Borders Within," 9-17.

lucky enough to be transferred to the school under the Ministry.[61] In fact, the number of BPP Schools and students began to decline in 2008 when the government announced the "free education for 15 years" policy, and not a small number of BPP School students transferred to the regular Thai elementary schools.[62] The decrease in the number of students in the BPP Schools, especially after 2008, indicates that if the parents can afford some extra costs, they would prefer to send their children to a regular elementary school rather than the BPP School in their villages. This does not necessarily mean that the BPP Schools are not effective or beneficial for the remote villagers. It is to argue that if the BPP Schools continue to operate as the symbolic theater of demonstrating the monarchical benevolence and professionalism, particularly by insisting on having all eight royal projects, and by constantly delaying enhancement of the educational quality for both teachers and students, the BPP's civic action project would remain more of a symbol of "*phakchi roi na*", not the system of "*pit thong lang phra*."

In conclusion, Princess Sirindhorn has succeeded in the royal mission of the Princess Mother who aimed to bring development and modernization to the border people to build a human border in Thailand. Through the process of maintaining the Princess Mother's mission and also developing her own royal project in the BPP Schools, Princess Sirindhorn has gained enormous popularity and political authority. Consequently, her royal projects in the School have become the most visible and significant mediator which connects the Princess and the BPP. In this respect, it is likely that Princess's royal projects in the BPP Schools will continue to operate without significant modification, because the royal project is so closely intertwined with the BPP

[61] In some cases, but not always, if the BPP teacher has accumulated enough career experience and educational qualification, and also for the smooth transition, the Ministry of Education hires the BPP teachers in the transferred BPP Schools to continue their teaching jobs.

[62] Ladawan, *Kan hai kansueksa dek lae yawachon*, 16-17.

organization's raison d'être and the Princess Sirindhorn's mission of defending the monarchy in the post-Cold War era.

Chapter Conclusion

Reestablishment of the BPP as an official branch of the Thai national police in 1972 permitted the organization to continue its role as the symbolic missionary of royalist nationalism to the post-Cold War era. In this regard, I discussed about the facing problems of the BPP today that may affect its fate in the near future. The first problem that the BPP members are now facing is lack of professionalism to meet their multifaceted missions grown out of its royal patron's indigenization of the Cold War. The second is lack of institutional stability owing to its primary role as an executive agency of current monarchy. As long as the BPP cling onto its role as a royal agent, this cold warrior's survival in the post-Cold War era would continue to be entangled with the monarchy's fate. The generic breakthrough for resolving the BPP's sustainability problem can be drawn from the open, critical discussion on the role of BPP as a symbolic missionary of royalist nationalism and furthermore, the role of current monarch as the sole embodiment of "the dynasty and the nation" in the years to come.[63]

[63] Kobkua, *Kings, Country and Constitutions*, 149.

Paradoxes of the National Unity and Progress

On December 5, 2013, king of Thailand Bhumibol Adulyadej delivered his annual birthday speech:

> Our nation has always been in peace for a very long time because there is unity in our nation… Each of us performs our duties in a harmonious manner for the sake of our country… Every Thai should realize this, and perform their given duties to benefit the broader public.[1]

The speech was given to the Thai public amid antigovernment protests led by former member of Parliament Suthep Thaugsuban who had agreed to take a temporary break to celebrate the king's birthday. Five months later, Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra was toppled by a military coup on May 22, 2014. The king's belief that Thai unity has kept the nation peaceful for a very long time was again proven to be wrong. In fact, since the 1950s, Thailand has experienced military coups at least once a decade and the two in 1976 and 1992 caused a number of civilian deaths, inscribing the images of Thai military's bloody suppressions of people through the world's media.

Throughout this dissertation, I have argued that local elites indigenized the American Cold War system through their nation-building programs to achieve power domination. The nature of elite-centered nation-building was the hierarchical assimilation of various power relations in the name of national unity and progress. The international Cold War system provided certain conditions that could catalyze these two slogans of nation-building, thus the local elites "indigenized" this global system. To understand the interactive developments of the international Cold War system and local nation-building infrastructures, I examined the history of the Thai Border Patrol Police and its civilian and military counterinsurgency programs in the second half

[1] Kocha Olam, "Thailand protests: Revered king asks for unity in birthday speech," *CNN.com*, accessed August 15, 2014, http://www.cnn.com/2013/12/05/world/asia/thailand-protests/.

of the twentieth century. The formation of the BPP was a contingency plan of the U.S. government to create indigenous agents of intelligence to undertake their anticommunist campaigns in Southeast Asia. For this reason the BPP could have been disbanded when its sponsor, be it the Thai government or the CIA, closed out the special operations assigned to this unit. Additionally, there are multiple security forces that could carry out the missions that the BPP has implemented. Nevertheless, the BPP have not ceased to operate to the present.

The continuation of this Cold War contingency force well into the post-Cold War era suggests that on the one hand, their missions are not completed and on the other, that there is an influential sponsor that needs the BPP. As the transformation of the BPP into a symbolic missionary of royalist nationalism tells vividly, Thai monarchy supplanted the role of the U.S. and became the most powerful patron for this paramilitary police. In retrospect, the Thai royal family and the BPP were one of the most politically vulnerable groups in the beginning of the Cold War. Nevertheless, the Thai monarchy's successful indigenization of the Cold War eventually saved the BPP and made the current monarch the actual victor of the Cold War as played out in Thailand. In this regard, history of the BPP is simultaneously a history of the Thai monarchy that has emerged as the actual head of state, through the Cold War struggle.

The reinvigoration of monarchical power over contemporary Thai politics and society thus prompts us to raise questions on the ways in which traditional elites could regain power domination. My dissertation thus focused on identifying the intersection where the development of the global Cold War system and local nation-building converged and led foreign and local elites to collaborate with each other; and more importantly, how the local elites indigenized the foreign policies in order to push forward their own political agendas. Additionally, this research

critically examines the nature of modern Thai nation-building that have almost systemically enforced hierarchical national unity and progress throughout the Cold War.

In order to understand the ways in which the U.S.-led global Cold War system catalyzed this hierarchical nation-building, this dissertation begins with a survey of the historical and conceptual development of the international Cold War system as well as local nation-building from the end of the Pacific War. The political realignment in Southeast Asia as discussed in Chapter One, allows us to see the specific postwar conditions that invited the U.S. to play an active role in regional decolonization processes. With this background, Chapter Two surveys the historical relationship between the U.S. and Thailand, along with the latter's geopolitical importance, which convinced the U.S. to launch its anticommunist campaign, by building up local paramilitary units in the early 1950s. Narratives on the formation of the Thai Border Patrol Police explicates the beginnings of U.S. governmental support of Thai strongmen as a strategy to assure internal stability as well as smooth implementation of its foreign policies in Thailand. At the same time, the BPP's formation process also reveals the earnest beginning of the Thai elite's indigenization of the American Cold War system. The ensuing chapter on the discussion of modernization and counterinsurgency concepts presents the ways in which the Thai elites adapted these American Cold War paradigms and conflated them with existing concepts of Thai nationalism in order to create an ideological infrastructure for their nation-building. In this way, national unity and progress came to constitute the key slogans of local elite's nation-building. The U.S. enthusiastically supported these nation-building slogans because both local and foreign elites shared a common goal of stabilizing the blowback of decolonization while continuing the extant order of power relations among various interest groups.

Having mapped the historical and ideological background, I moved on to the empirical analyses of the Thai BPP's modernization and counterinsurgency projects, alongside the evolution of the U.S. and Thai monarchy's leadership roles in these programs, to see how the latter group harnessed the U.S. material and ideological resources to strengthen its own power. Chapter Four begins with descriptions of the BPP's first transformation from a CIA paramilitary intelligence unit, into the USOM's civic action agency. Additionally, I detailed the coming of the Princess Mother and her immediate takeover of patronage to the BPP-USOM's Remote Area Security Development programs, signaling the beginning of the Thai Counterinsurgency Era. In Chapter Five, I detailed the BPP's civic action program and how it contributed to building a human border of Thainess under the auspices of the Thai royal family. This chapter particularly illuminates the construction of the royal family's institutional infrastructure that initially started from the remote border areas of northern Thailand and rapidly expanded throughout the country by the end of 1960s. It is noteworthy here that both the Thai military and royal family separately pursued counterinsurgency and modernization projects. Eventually the monarchy prevailed against both the U.S. and Thai military in their competition for authority and popularity. By appropriating the extant Thai bureaucracies and the USOM's development programs, the royal family could construct the institutional infrastructure of their royal projects, which would in turn legitimize their power domination.

The formation of PARU and their covert operations in Thailand and Laos was examined in Chapter Six, this context together with its merger with the BPP as discussed in Chapter Four shows yet another example of infrastructures for nation-building: executive agency. Throughout their secret missions within and outside Thailand, PARU maintained a close relationship with the CIA and also the young Thai military officers who rose to power through their participation in

the American wars in Indochina. Although PARU did not wholeheartedly agree to be merged with the BPP after Sarit's coup, the amalgam of these two units eventually became one of the most significant operative sources for the monarchy's nation-building. If the BPP has become a symbolic mission that spread royalist nationalism through civic action programs among the general populace, the PARU has provided direct security services for the monarchy and carrying out military counterinsurgencies up to the present. In this sense, it is not a coincidence that the PARU was the key armed perpetrator of the October 6 Massacre in 1976. Overall, throughout Chapter Four and Six, I discussed the ways in which these two paramilitary forces were conflated and transformed to be the key executive agency of the monarchy's nation-building, which eventually ensured the survival of these cold warriors long past the Cold War.

With these institutional and executive agency infrastructures, the BPP and royal family could generate the last driving force of their nation-building in the early 1970s: the Village Scout. The dramatic expansion of the Village Scout movement within five years of its formation and its involvement in the October 6 Massacre as discussed in Chapter Seven, confirms the significance of popular support as an infrastructure for nation-building. In the process of creating this royal force, the Thai royal family has become the center of Thai national unity and progress, endowed with authority and legends, which elevated them above both politics and politicians. The October 6 Massacre and following military coup that very evening therefore serves as undeniable evidence of the monarchy's victory in their power struggle with both the military and politicians. At the same time, the BPP, PARU and Village Scout's participation in this massacre confirms that the royal family's nation-building goals had surpassed the international Cold War system as the motivation for the continued endurance of these organizations. Accordingly, the

indigenization effort by the local elites gradually declined when the U.S. armed forces began withdrawing after the fall of Saigon.

Chapter Eight in this context highlights the ideological infrastructures of the monarchy's nation-building and its legacies to the present day. Indeed, the final winner of the Cold War in Thailand is the current monarch who had gained uncontested authority and legitimacy by refashioning himself as the king of development and people. The Princess Mother's beginning of royal patronage to the BPP's civic action in the early 1960s was crucial to transforming the image of monarchy into a modern nation-builder, leading the current king to become the symbol of Thai national unity and progress.

Despite the overgrowth of political infighting around succession issues, the current monarch continues to emanate tremendous influence in the present Thai society, especially with the assistance of the Crown Princess Sirindhorn. Because of her special esteem, in Chapter Nine I examined Princess Sirindhorn's development of royal projects with the BPP like her grandmother before her and how these projects helped her become a beloved princess of the Thai people. This chapter also explores the limitations and problems that the BPP is facing in terms of their role, identity and ability to serve the royal agenda since the Cold War, based on interviews with incumbent BPP officers and teachers, as well as extensive field research. I concluded that the continuation of the BPP organization and its civic actions in the post-Cold War would remain contingent on the fate of its direct royal patrons and royal projects. Therefore, the BPP may encounter another life-or-death crisis in the near future.

To recapitulate, the general themes of this dissertation relies on two significant legacies of indigenized Cold War politics in contemporary Thai society. The first is the paradox of national unity and progress that have been the key slogans of both Cold War politics and local nation-

building, and the second is the role of traditional elites in the contemporary Asia. Building on these analyses, I will discuss the potential future of the BPP organization.

Hierarchies of the National Unity and Progress

The popularly used term "nation-state" has two innate limitations. First, it presumes the conflation between one nation and one state. On the contrary, the postcolonial reality that former colonies faced were the emergence of transcultural states consisting of numerous interest groups that represented various ethnic, cultural, spatial and socio-economic demands. Thus, the nation-building led by local elites or ruling ethnic groups aimed at caging these multifaceted groups into one nation by imposing the state order. The second limitation lies in the presumed homogeneity between the nation and state. In other words, that diverse demands from various groups should abide by one goal -- that is, the unification of nations within the literal lines of international boundaries. Like the anticolonial movement, during which it was claimed that national solidarity would lead to the achievement of full independence, national unity, in the postcolonial period, has been almost indoctrinated as the prerequisite to achieving national progress against potential economic or political intrusion by global superpower's. At the same time, unity and progress were to make the nation "as a community in which history requires and produces destiny -- a particular national destiny."[2] With these assumptions, the governing elites identified the nation like a family or a biological organism that shares the same fate and destiny. National unity and progress would bring them to the future of full independence and freedom from the shackles of *ancien régime* and colonial conventions.

[2] Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, 30.

In this way, these innate limitations were temporarily reconciled with, or concealed by, the goal of building a new, sovereign nation-state without foreign intrusions in the postcolonial period. Nevertheless, this new sovereign nation-state did not bring about the full accomplishment of independence and liberation for every walk of life. Indigenization of the global Cold War system by the local elites was to circumscribe the diversifying demands from various interest groups unleashed by decolonization and to assimilate them into the extant state order. In this process, national progress and unity based on the existing hierarchical order became almost a mantra, which legitmized the local elites and ruling ethnic group's domination over society. Therefore, I argue that the rhetoric of national unity and progress propagated by the local elite's efforts at nation-building are inherently hierarchical.

The main reason for local elites to actively indigenize the global Cold War system was because its modernization theories and counterinsurgency strategies effectively provided a rationale the hierarchical nature of elite-centered nation-building. American modernization theory provided an ideology that advocated a singular, vertical path of progress, thereby simplifying "the complicated world-historical problems of decolonization and industrialization, helping to guide American economic aid and military intervention in postcolonial regions."[3] Counterinsurgency strategy on the other hand is a politico-military doctrine that assumes security and development to be the generic solution for stabilizing a society beleaguered with the pressure for change from below.[4] To achieve this goal, the doctrine emphasized centralized power led by

[3] Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future*, 3.

[4] Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 4, 63.

the small cadre of "modernizing leaders" for mobilizing and rationalizing "resources of society with a view to achieving greater control, efficiency, and production." [5]

These two Cold War ideologies -- or paradigm as Shafer defines, legitimized the local elite's nation-building agendas to achieve the "assimilation of people newly mobilized by modernization and the innovation of policy necessary for political modernization and the destruction of the periphery."[6] In this context, the preexisting nations and *ethnies* that were not able to assume governing power in the postcolonial period were categorized as potential insurgents, such as in the origin of the BPP's civic action in northern Thailand. Indeed, the presence of ethnic minorities in the northern border areas became visibly problematized from the Cold War period, and Thai elites accused their lack of national loyalty, identity affinities and overall awareness of the central government as a serious threat to national security. Building a human border of Thainess was therefore carried out under the belief that those highland minorities require constant surveillance and guidance by the advanced Thai nation-state.

In this sense, although the global superpowers claimed that the Cold War system was a departure from past colonial governing mechanisms, they were still pursuing the larger historical continuum of hierarchical power relations. The system sustained the existing patron-client relations between superpowers and local nation-states on the one hand, and the singular, vertical power relations within local societies on the other, in order to accomplish quick stabilization of domestic and international polities. The Cold War in this regard should be viewed as another name for the global governing system, which was created to justify the intentions of old and new

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[5] Cyril E. Black, *The Dynamics of Modernization: A Study in Comparative History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 13: quoted in Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 57-58.

[6] Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 63.

global superpowers to maintain hierarchical relations between in both the micro and macro scales.

Enduring internal conflicts in Thailand and possibly other Asian countries derived from the constant imposition of the hierarchical -- and evermore suppressive -- rhetoric of the national unity and progress, which ironically sowed the seeds of disintegration. Present political infightings have become more multifaceted and multi-dimensional, consisting of interests represented by groups such as progressives and conservatives, or by generations, ethnicities, regions, to name a few. Some countries are plagued with regional insurgencies or border conflicts, some are witnessing rapidly growing nongovernmental organizations demanding changes in government policies, and some are still experiencing repressive authoritarianism and repetitive military coups to the present day. The end of the Cold War in fact signaled the beginning of civil wars that had been further developed with a build up of tensions since the decolonization period. The diversifying demands of the interests groups in the postcolonial societies were once stifled in the name of national unity and progress but these groups have learned that the national destiny that the statists envision would be the same old hierarchical nation-state dominated by a small group of ruling elites who have imposed their nation-building agenda to the general populace over centuries.

This historical lesson gained from the Cold War has contributed to a rapidly polarizing Thai society and politics in the present day, particularly concerning the role of monarchy as the symbol of national unity and progress, as a monarchical succession is approaching. The soaring number of lése májesty charges and strict censorship of both the media and academia after the 2006 coup, heightened the Thai public's awareness towards the monarchy's role as the center of hierarchical unity and progress. The presence of monarchy therefore became the main source of

disintegration and political schisms, because the presence of this institution would mean the continuation of the traditional hierarchical system with the royal family at the apex of this order. Then, what are the factors that enable these traditional elites to continue the hierarchical order of Thai nation-state in the post-Cold War period?

Re-Quest for the Traditional

Thai elites mobilized the U.S. government's material and ideological sources to build their power bases. In this process, the Thai monarchy strengthened ideological, institutional, executive agency and popular support infrastructures to assist its nation-building. At the same time, this process created what Duncan McCargo calls a "network monarchy" that has become a recruitment pool of political strongmen for maintaining the domination of royalist elite's.[7] With these assets, the royal family became the symbol of Thai national unity and progress and prevailed over other power competitors at the height of the Cold War. The endurance of royalist domination in Thai society and politics today thus illuminates the monarchy's successful indigenization of the global Cold War system and its continued influence on post-Cold War Thailand. As a consequence, the post-Cold War reality that Thais are faced with, is the overgrowth of an anachronistic quest for the traditional, as vividly shown by the recent coup in May 2014.

There are two main factors that have sustained traditional elites' domination in the post-Cold War period. The first factor is the creation of legends or syndrome by the ruling elites to sustain popular support. Success of statist's nation-building largely depends on the influence of what Eric Hobsbawm called "invented tradition" that refers to the "responses to novel situations

[7] Duncan McCargo, "Network Monarchy," 505.

which take the form of reference to old situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetition."[8] In the beginning of the Cold War, the Siamese' never-colonized myth facilitated the fashioning of Thai monarchy as the savior of nation, similar to the roles of anticolonial nationalist like Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam or Jose Rizal in the Philippines.[9] During the Cold War, the monarchy's nationalist image further strengthened and the institution became, like Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian describes, a "soul of the nation," and "the most valuable socio-political pillar on which rests the nation's identity, strength and well-being."[10] The popular support enjoyed by the current king grew out from the widely circulated photographs and footage from the royal family's visits to meet rural villagers and border people as well as to oversee various development programs during the Cold War. By being the figurehead of the rural development and anticommunist campaigns, the current monarch restyled himself as a king of development and people. This imaginary transformation of traditional royalty into a new type of monarchy that came to be characterized as "sacred, popular and democratic" during the Cold War constitutes the common basis of royalist nationalism among the elites and general populace today.[11]

From the early 1980s, royalist elites under Prem's regime began the systematic invention of traditions that have instilled royalist nationalism in everyday practice. For example, the king's birthday became a public ceremony since 1979, when the "Foundation of King Rama Nine, The Great (*munithi 5 thanwa maharat*)" began sponsoring the event. In fact, this is one of numerous "grass-roots" organizations that were created to spread royalist nationalism among the general

[8] Hobsbawm, "Inventing Traditions," 2.

[9] Anderson "Studies in the Thai State," 198-211.

[10] Kobkua, *Kings, Country and Constitutions*, 180.

[11] Thongchai, "Toppling Democracy," 21-22.

populace. The foundation's intention of spreading royalist nationalism is clearly demonstrated in its mission statement. It says the foundation was established with four purposes: to support the people for demonstrating their loyalty to nation, religion and monarchy; to help the Thai people from every walk of life; to support other institutions that have similar intentions; and, to engage in the various public charity works that support the "democracy with the monarchy as the head of the state" and not to give financial, material support to the politicians and political parties.[12] By promoting the Thai people's unquestioned loyalty to "democracy with the monarchy as the head of the state," these nongovernmental, civilian organizations have acted as the popular force for safeguarding the monarchy, like the Village Scouts have done since the early 1970s. The visible and invisible support for this kind of popular movements by elite groups, which was another form of "invented tradition" during the Cold War, fostered "the corporate sense of *superiority* of elites" contributing to maintain the royalist elite network into the post-Cold War period.[13]

Given this context, the second factor that contributes to the persistence of traditional elites' domination is the overgrowth of the royalist elite network that has become a "para-political institution" for sustaining a "form of semi-monarchical rule."[14] The symbiotic relationship between the monarchy and royalist elite network had begun centuries ago but it was further tightened during the Cold War, reaching its climax with Prem's presidency in the Privy Council in the late 1990s. To highlight the historical origin of recent para-political royalist network during the Cold War, I detailed the role of Sarit Thanarat in bringing the monarchy back into politics and for consolidating the royalist network under his ironfisted rule from the late 1950s.

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[12] Foundation of King Rama Nine, the Great, "History of the Foundation," accessed August 13, 2014, http://www.belovedking.com/ index.php/2008-10-30-03-17-11.html.

[13] Hobsbawm, "Inventing Traditions," 10.

[14] McCargo, "Network Monarchy," 501.

By making himself an avatar of the paternalistic despot, while reviving monarchical patronage over the Thai society, Sarit brought traditional elites back to the political arena. It should be also noted that Sarit persistently emphasized the value of national unity, arguing that the Thai nation is a family headed by the father -- Sarit himself, and on top of him, the king.[15] Consequently, the current monarch began accumulating his power base since Sarit's regime, allowing the young, feeble royal couple to enjoy "a genuine renaissance on Sarit's watch" from the late 1950s on.[16] After Sarit passed away, the king took over the role that Sarit had played out: the (despotic) father of the nation and the leader of national development.

The "Thai Counterinsurgency Era" from the early 1960s were the heydays of the monarchy's indigenization of the Cold War that ultimately endowed the King with tremendous authority and legitimacy as well as the consolidated royalist elite network. After Sarit died in 1963, the succeeding military regime's desire to bring in American material and ideological resources to enhance their authority continued to grow, because the threats of external communist advancements and internal political, social instabilities heightened by Sarit's authoritarian rule began to spread from the borders to the rural areas. Meanwhile, Thailand's geopolitical importance to the U.S. increased greatly as tensions from the Vietnam War escalated and the nightmare of the domino theory proved daunting for U.S. foreign policymaking. In this context, the Thai monarchy came to play a leading role in consolidating the Thai nation-state by appropriating the U.S. and Thai governments' resources and their Cold War policies from the early 1960s. Under the rapidly growing power of the monarchy, the Thai elite network

[15] For the detailed accounts on Sarit Thanarat and his interaction with the U.S., see Thak, *Politics of Despotic Paternalism*.; Fineman, *Special Relationship*.

[16] Grossman and Faulder, *King Bhumibol Adulyadej*, 107.

strengthened its solidarity and assisted the royal family's nation-building projects under the slogan of national unity and progress.

There are two key outcomes of the monarchy's indigenization of the Cold War that now sustains the royalist elite network: the royal project and the discourse of Thai-style democracy. Building off from the BPP's civic action program in northern Thailand, the royal family launched its first royal project in 1969. As I discussed throughout the dissertation, the royal project provided institutional, ideological, personnel and popular infrastructures for forwarding the monarchy's nation-building during the Cold War. In particular, it should be noted that the monarchy could expand its network into government bureaucrats, militaries, local politicians and the civilians as well through the implementation of royal projects. Whenever the royal family visited rural areas to oversee their development projects, most of the influential local politicians and bureaucrats from government ministries followed their majesty's footsteps, reporting what had been done and what needed to be done more. Special royal guard consisted of military and police also followed the entourage to assure the royal family's safety. Seeds, livestock, tools, machines, books and medicines provided by the U.S. and Thai governments all went to support the royal projects. In this way, the monarchy's royal projects came to constitute another major part of state services for the enhancement of people's welfare and rural development. The entourage of the royal family, carefully selected by the royal secretaries before visits, became the royal bureaucrats who would undertake the monarchy's initiatives. This is the main reason why annual appointments of military or key positions in the government bureaucracy sought approval

from the royal family, as the appointees eventually serve the monarchy's nation-building agendas.[17]

In addition, in order to promote the current monarch as a democratic king, the definition of democracy was readjusted, as the term "Thai-style democracy" reveals. Making of the current monarch as the symbol of national unity and progress has instilled the paternalistic image of the king. At the same time, the king's role as a head of state above politics made him the "supreme mediator" when the country faces a crisis that political and other institutions are "unable to resolve through any political means available."[18] This justification implies that the monarchy is "simply underwriting a series of inept governments" and that the network monarchy's desires to preserve "a partly dysfunctional political order" demand's intervention by the monarchy.[19] In this respect, Thai-style democracy is at best a "semi-democracy," which prefers a bureaucratic polity and denies the leadership role of politicians who have been elected by the people.[20] In the eyes of the royalist elites, politics is "a filthy business" like the king said in 1974, and thus figures with perceived high moral authorities, such as the monarchy, should guide Thai politics.[21] In this way, the royalist elites have justified the military coups in 2006 that toppled the then Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and again in 2014 that ousted Thaksin's sister, Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra. The discourses of Thai-style democracy, which allegedly has low

[17] Thongchai Winichakul. "The Antidemocratic Roots of the Thai Protesters" *Al Jazeera America*, December 26, 2013. Accessed August 14, 2014. http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2013/12/the-antidemocraticrootsofthethaiprotesters.html.; McCargo, "Network Monarchy," 499-519.

[18] Borwornsak, *Dynamics of Thai Politics.*

[19] Duncan McCargo, "Network Monarchy," 504, 506.

[20] Hewison and Kengkij, "Thai-Style Democracy," 180-181, 198.; Thongchai, "Antidemocratic Roots."

[21] Far Eastern Economic Review, "Politics is a filthy business."

toleration with immoral, corrupt politicians, have in fact, made military coups a vector of change in Thailand, a change built into the continuation of royalist domination.

In this respect, the indigenization of the international Cold War system by the ruling elites in order to push forward their nation-building agendas, has far more enduring impacts to the dynamics of change and stabilization in the contemporary society. On the one hand, the ideal leadership for undertaking modernization and democratization in the local style has been perceived more as the paternalistic patron rather than the progressive or professional politician. The history of development and modernization during the Cold War period has been associated with personified regimes in Thailand and in several Asia countries. The elite network that had solidified and expanded under local strongmen continued to reproduce legends and syndromes about the father of national development, to the extent that people may believe without these fathers, the country would not have modernized at the pace that it has.

The Cold War generation had been constantly indoctrinated by governmental propaganda and such legal enforcements like the lése májesty law and National Security Act, to the point where the government or national leaders cannot do wrong. No open criticism or defamation against people in high places has been allowed and thus, those national leaders and fathers have stayed more or less untouchable. The impacts of these state propaganda and indoctrination tactics vary from person to person, from society to society, but at the least, it is not negligible. Indeed, the growing re-quest for a charismatic, paternalistic leader, as a potential breakthrough for the current economic and political crises in many Asian countries today reveals that the invented tradition of national unity and progress under the fathers of modernization during the Cold War emanates considerable influence over post-Cold War societies.

Will the Cold Warriors Survive?

When I first started making conversation in the Thai language, I noticed that Thai people pronounced the final consonant "L" with the "N" sound. So whenever the BPP members pronounce their name Border Patrol Police in English, I always heard the "Border Patron Police." As I think of this trivial experience now, their unintended way of introducing the name Border Patrol Police in English in fact illuminates the core trait of this Thai cold warriors unit in the past, present and possibly in the future.

As discussed earlier, the most notable outcome of the BPP's civic actions of engaging in the nation-building process is the development of its multifaceted police work that integrates the characteristics of military, police and civilian. This three-tier mission has been absorbed into the BPP organization in order to defend the three mandates of Thailand's Cold War struggle, they are: anticommunism, border and royalist nationalism. "Anticommunism" signifies its origin, as the unit was conceived as a local paramilitary force to defend Thailand from communist domination in the beginning of the Cold War. The "border" marks where Thainess must be set against otherness and for the BPP, it is the most important symbol since the unit's central mission has concentrated on defending both the borders of Thailand and the borders of Thainess. Finally, the "royalist nationalism" illuminates an ideological underpinning of the BPP's modernization and counterinsurgency programs. After all, the BPP's missions of assimilating and modernizing the border population intended to build a human border constituted by the people who had their loyalty to the symbols of Thai nationalism, particularly the monarchy. Therefore, the border that the BPP patrols and "patronizes" is not only the state boundary but also the border of Thainess constructed under *phrabarami*. This is the reason why I identify the

BPP as a royal agent. And until today, the BPP is playing the role of royal agent in the uniforms of military, police and civilian, to spread monarchical influence over Thai society.

Over the years of researching about the history of the Border Patrol Police during the Cold War and post-Cold War period, I have learned that the strength of the BPP is actually its most fatal weakness. The BPP's claimed versatility, of operating like the military, the police or as civilians, has largely contributed to diluting its institutional identity as the police, resulting in its ambiguous standing as a national security force and uncertainty of its sustainability. At the same time, as a royal agent, the BPP's continuation is now inevitably tied up with the fate of the monarchy. As long as the Thai monarchy continues to play the role of modern nation-builder, the BPP will survive to spread the royal cause. In this regard, the two crucial problems of the BPP -- lack of professionalism and stability -- are also the problem of current Thai politics that has become enormously contingent on royalist nationalism. Therefore, we should examine the issue of the BPP's survival in conjunction with the political influence of royalist nationalism in contemporary Thai history and politics.

Since the BPP has been complicating its police mission with by claiming the identity of a multitask force, we first need to question the reason why the BPP cannot discard this nebulous identity. When I asked this question to the BPP members, they often responded to me that it is because of the nature of their field of operations. The BPP should play multiple roles in the border areas because none of the governmental agencies or organizations can reach these villages, or they are simply not interested in villages in remote areas. They also added that only the monarchy has been interested in these remote, unreachable margins of Thailand.

I then asked how the royal family came to know about those villages that do not even exist on the map. One telling case I heard from a civic action commander was the building of the

Study Center of the Border Patrol Police School (*sun kanrian rongrian tamruat trawen chaidaen*) in the remotest areas of northern Thailand. In 2002, Princess Sirindhorn was traveling to the BPP Schools by helicopter and through her binocular; she saw small clustered villages on the mountains. She checked those areas with the BPP and other officials and found that there were no educational facilities. Therefore the Princess ordered the BPP to build branch centers of the BPP School, saying that because those highland villagers are living within Thai territories, the BPP must teach them Thai customs and language, to make them Thais.[22]

Building those Study Centers (*sun kanrian*) in such a remote, unknown mountain was not a special task for the BPP members, but it does not necessarily mean that the mission was easier for the BPP. Between February and the beginning of April in 2002, within only two months from the time that Princess Sirindhorn ordered it, the BPP Regional Subdivision 34 in Tak province managed to build seven Study Centers and began to transport school supplies like stationeries, sports equipments, medicines and cookers. The Subdivision 34 also deployed three BPP teachers to each Center and they started teaching Thai language to children during the daytime and to the villagers in the evening. As soon as the Thai language classes began, a BPP operational unit started building school farms to launch the Agriculture for School Lunch project. The Office of H.R.H Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Projects, coordinated closely with the BPP's Third Regional Headquarters and Subdivision camps, to undertake the mission and also provided the budget to build classrooms and to equip other facilities for the royal projects.

[22] From the conversations with BPP deputy commander and a Civic Action officer. Research notes, June 11, 2010 and September 3, 2010.

In the end of 2002, a summary report on building the seven Study Centers submitted by the BPP Regional Subdivision 34 concluded that all the Centers were in full operation.[23] The same process repeated a year later, adding four more Study Centers in Tak province between 2003-2004, and four other Study Centers in Mae Hong Son province between 2007-2008. In 2013, the total number of Study Centers reached sixteen -- fifteen Centers in northern Thailand and one in northeastern Thailand.[24]

Given the short time period devoted to building the schools and also the low number of BPP personnel -- six men in each team -- assigned for construction, the building of fifteen fully-operational Study Centers within six years is quite a remarkable achievement. The speed and efficiency in building these Study Centers was mainly due to the fact the BPP is a direct royal agent of Princess Sirindhorn. The process of building the Study Centers was coordinated between the Princess' royal project office and the BPP Bangkok Headquarters and its regional divisions without inviting other governmental organizations, and instead, the local villagers and prospective students were mobilized to complete the mission. The objective of building the Study Center was clear: to spread Thai language and royal causes among the highland minorities and remote border people. From this case, I could see that the actual mission of the BPP is to facilitate royal initiatives and demonstrate the omnipotence of monarchy. In order to implement this task, their demarcation as an organization between military, police and civilian should be permeable. Like the BPP members told me, they must become a multiplayer and be prepared for any assignments. The depth or width of professionalism is not an issue because being a BPP man

[23] Border Patrol Police Regional Subdivision 34, *Sarupphon kandamnoen-ngan sunkanrian rongrian tamruat trawen chaidaen tangte 7 kumphaphan 2545 thueng 24 thanwakhom 2545* [Summary Report on Building Study Center of the Border Patrol Police from February 7, 2002 to December 24, 2002], internal report (2002).

[24] From the internal report on the BPP Schools and students in Academic Year 2013, provided by Police Lieutenant Colonel Ladawan Chatthai via email on June 25, 2013.

means they can carry out anything that the royal family commands. Additionally, since on-going BPP civic action programs are heavily dependent on royal donations, BPP members cannot openly criticize the validity, efficiency, or necessity of royal projects, which has now become the heart of their civic action mission.

The second problem that the BPP is now facing as discussed earlier is the stability of the organization. Because of the excessive workload and scanty recognition and reward for their hardships and sacrifice, the BPP organization has suffered from the shortage of personnel in the past years. According to an internal report on the number of police personnel that I received from the BPP Bangkok Headquarters in July 2013, the Royal Thai Police authorized to employ 36,946 men to carry out the BPP's mission but as of January 2012, the Headquarters had only 21,450 men, which only amounts to 68% of the required manpower.[25] The shortage of personnel was also a recurring issue when I asked about the current problems to the BPP officers and teachers during my field research in Thailand between 2009-2011. As a deputy commander bitterly emphasized in our interviews in 2010, many BPP members wanted to move to other police units if there were any chances.[26] Therefore, it is predictable that personnel deficiency within the BPP will continue to be a persisting problem of the unit.

The lack of professionalism and stability of the BPP organization now boils down to the question of the necessity of keeping its civic action programs, because their incapability of managing their triangular role becomes most obvious when carrying out civic action programs. When I asked the former deputy commissioner Manas Khantatatbumroong whether the BPP

[25] Administrative Subdivision, the Border Patrol Police Headquarters, *Rai-ngan sathanphap kamlangphon kharatchakan tamruat prachamduean mokarakhom 2555* [Report on the conditions of police force in January 2012], Internal report (2012).

[26] From a conversation with a BPP deputy commander. Research notes, September 3, 2010.

should continue its civic action programs in the future, he answered, "yes" because the civic action program is a distinctive characteristic of the BPP. Moreover, through civic actions the BPP assist people in the border areas and in turn, the unit can receive help from the people.[27] Manas' answer in fact reflects the general opinion of the BPP civic action officers and teachers that I interviewed. Most of the BPP members that I had met agreed that civic action is the key element that distinguishes the BPP from other police units and draws mass support for the BPP in the border areas.

Nevertheless, this does not necessarily mean that every civic action program is worthwhile to keep or maintained in the ways in which it has been. For instance, one of the most representative and celebrated programs of the BPP's civic action, the BPP School project may need to continue into the future but its efficiency remains in question, as there are few BPP members who want to work for the School project. Another representative civic action program of the BPP is the Village Scout. Manas said that the Village Scout is the most significant project to the BPP for sustaining mass support for the unit and also preserving the royal prestige.[28] However, the political or social influence of the Village Scout movement have wound down since the late 1970s, and as a consequence the number of scout members and training has declined considerably since then, as this be observed from the Table 4 (in Chapter 7).[29] Currently, most of the retired BPP commissioners serve the leadership and advisory role in the Village Scout Operational Centers and they all try to increase the number of membership alongside annual events and mundane Village Scout activities. However, whether the Village

[27] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, May 3, 2011.

[28] Interview with Manas Khantatatbumroong, May 3, 2011.

[29] See the explanation on the declining influence of the Village Scouts from the early 1980s from Bowie, *Rituals of National Loyalty*, 8, 113-143.

Scout can revive its political, social influence as it had in the 1970s is still questionable. So does the necessity of preserving this BPP's basis of mass mobilization.

In a broader perspective, the stability and sustainability of the BPP organization has become more uncertain, as the monarchical succession issue comes to the center of political conflicts in the past years. In a sense, the BPP has made a clever choice, whether intended or not, to stay close to Princess Sirindhorn's side because the Princess has been regarded as the more apolitical and people-oriented heir. Unlike the official successor Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn, Princess Sirindhorn has accumulated massive popularity and accountability among the general Thai public through her decades of dedication in undertaking royal projects in every corner of Thailand. After 2006 military coup, she has especially maintained her distance from Bangkokian politics and redirected her attention to northern Thailand. Between 2007-2009, for instance, Princess Sirindhorn continued her regular royal visits to the BPP Schools, but among her 111 visits in this period, she traveled to northern Thailand 48 times, which totaled 43 percent of her total number of royal visits to BPP Schools in all four regions.[30] In these years, she has expanded the BPP Study Center projects and initiated new royal project like the Medical Station (*khrongkan suksala*) in 2009. Through the process of expanding her royal projects in the BPP Schools, Princess Sirindhorn has strengthened a close relationship with the governmental organizations like the Ministries of Education, Public Health, Agriculture and Cooperatives, and Ministry of Culture to name a few. In the meantime, Princess Sirindhorn assumed the role of Special Commander of the Chulachomklao Royal Thai Military Academy in August 2010.[31] In

[30] Border Patrol Police Third Regional Division Headquarters, *Prawat khuampenma lae kan damnoen ngan khong rongrian tamruat trawen chaidaen* [Historical Background and Implementation of the Border Patrol Police School], internal report (circa 2009), 3.

[31] See, Chulachomklao Royal Thai Military Academy. "Special Commander," accessed June 17, 2013. http://www2.crma.ac.th/organ/commanders.html.

this regard, Princess Sirindhorn has built a solid power base that could counter possible political contestation of her role as a legitimate successor to the current monarch, not only in Bangkok but in borders as well. Accordingly, the BPP's close relationship with Princess Sirindhorn may preserve the organization in the future.

Nevertheless, Princess Sirindhorn's popularity and political legitimacy do not automatically guarantee the durability of the BPP organization in the long run. One most salient deficit of the Princess' royal project and her political role within the current Thai politics is that she lacks her own successor. Since she herself has played such a dominant role in the royal projects with the BPP, there has been no royal candidate who could take over Princess Sirindhorn mission in the future. On the other hand, the BPP has been immensely relying on royal grants and external donations that have flowed into the BPP to support the Princess's royal initiatives. This means the continuation of the BPP's civic actions would most likely suffer from the fate of the Thai monarchy in the very near future. It is always possible to dissemble the BPP's missions and incorporate to other extant governmental organizations. For example, the BPP Schools can be incorporated into the Office of Non-Formal and Informal Education under the Ministry of Education; the drug suppression and illegal immigrant issues can be dealt by the Narcotics Suppression and Immigration Police bureaus; and other paramilitary duties can be easily integrated to the various Thai army organizations. As such, it is the BPP's ambiguous identity that has become the main sources of its organization's insecurity.

In fact, the BPP's ambiguous identity mirrors the role of the Thai monarchy in the post-Cold War period. Like the BPP serves all-purposes, the current Thai monarchy is supposed to serve all seasons.[32] In this sense, the reason why the BPP have to preserve its role as a multitask

[32] Kershaw, *Monarchy in South-East Asia*, 141.

force, derives from the role of the Thai monarchy constructed through his nation-building programs. The current monarch has been acting like an omnipotent, omnipresent patron of the Thai nation-state. The exhaustive list of royal projects initiated by royal family is the undeniable evidence of this monarch's multifaceted, multiplied role in the past six decades. Nevertheless, the presumable omnipotent and omnipresent influence of the King in the process of making modern Thai nation-state cannot be done by him alone. The actual pitfall of the symbolic images of the current king as a working monarch in the past six decades is that while the monarchy has established unchallengeable power and commands the unquestioned affection of his people, the invisible hands of the royal family like the BPP that has actually built the present Thailand have become publicly insignificant actors.[33] Here again, we encounter the irony of "*pit thong lang phra*." All the working personnel, agencies, and the people of Thailand that have dedicated to make modern Thai nation-state still remain behind (*lang*) the "*phra.*"[34]

To summarize, the BPP as a symbolic missionary of royalist nationalism may encounter another life-or-death crisis in the near future because the monarchical succession issue is most likely to engender vigorous restructuring of the Thai society. As long as the BPP continues to play the role of royal agent in the border areas, the sustainability of the BPP unit will remain contingent on the fate of its direct royal patron and their projects. The question on sustainability of the BPP organization would also concur with the durability of royal project in the long run. The over four thousand royal projects initiated are not permanent fixtures in government policy or regulation. Like Chanida Chitbundid argues, royal projects have become a political instrument to expand royal hegemony in the past decades and the Thai government has only promoted and

[33] Kobkua, *Kings, Country and Constitutions*, 148.

[34] *Phra* in Thai language means both the Buddhist monk and the royalty.

subsidized the project without integrating into its policies.[35] This means whether the royal project can continuously improve the "lot of his underprivileged subjects" will become uncertain.[36] To ensure its long-term stability and sustainability, the BPP should search for a breakthrough in reestablishing its organization that will conform to its name, the Border Patrol Police like its counterparts in other countries and find a long-term survival strategy.

Postscript: Is the Indigenization Concept Applicable to Others?

In this dissertation, I examined the interactive developments of global Cold War system and local nation-building through the analytical framework of "indigenization" in the second half of the twentieth century. Although my empirical studies are focused on Thailand during the Cold War, I believe the "indigenization" concept is applicable to other countries and times. As such, there are several questions that could be further explored to elaborate the concept of "indigenization" and increase its applicability.

First of all, my research largely focuses on the case of successful indigenization. From the beginning, my conception of indigenization came from the local elite's creative use of global interventionist strategies and resources in order to put forward their own political agendas, although the result is not always positive. In this sense, my examination on the role of Thai monarchy and its overgrown influence over Thai society today does not delve into the external and internal factors that could have slowed down or stymied local elite's indigenization attempts. In this respect, a separate research on the case of failed indigenization, such as by the Thai military, with the suggested internal and external factors may help to increase the indigenization framework's applicability to other cases.

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[35] Chanida, *Khrongkan annueang ma chak phraratchadamri*, 460-461, 490-491.

[36] Kobkua, *Kings, Country and Constitutions*, 148.

Second, building off from the first question, I also want to explore other internal and external factors that determine the degree of indigenization other than I discussed in this dissertation. Depending on the countries and time periods, the external and internal factors that affect local elites' desire to bring in foreign influence would vary. This dissertation mainly examines the political history of Thailand and the U.S. during the Cold War and thus, cultural factors like religion has limited implications to the level of indigenization. In a similar vain, I am also interested in applying the indigenization to other historical times, such as colonial period. There are a number of studies examining the local elite's collaboration with the colonial governments and thus indigenization framework may find testable cases from the colonial period. Here again, defining the internal factors that enabled local elites to appropriate and utilize the colonial system to put forward their own agenda would be quite different from the Cold War period. In this respect, I believe the list of internal and external factors of indigenization here are inexhaustible.

Finally, there are numerous indigenous agents like the Thai BPP that were formed by external powers and appropriated by local elites. Therefore a comparative analysis on the similarities and differences of the local auxiliary forces or agents in their missions, organizational developments and relations with the ruling elites would provide an insight to enhance indigenization framework. Through this comparative analysis, I will be able to generalize the historical and political contexts that attributed to the rise and fall of these cold warriors, and the durability and transformability of the indigenous agents sponsored by the foreign organizations.

In this regard, my postdoctoral research will pursue a comparative analysis on the indigenization of the American Cold War by examining the nation-building experiences of South

Korea, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines. I chose these four countries because firstly, they were the direct recipients of U.S. foreign aid and assistance from the beginning of the Cold War and second, these countries were the closest military allies of the U.S. throughout the War. This means that these four countries share similar external factors, especially the geopolitical importance and the presence of local strongmen to support the implementation of U.S. foreign policies in the region. Their historical relationship with the U.S. had differences, the Philippines for example experienced direct colonization by the U.S. In consideration of these general similarities in their external conditions, identification of internal factors that affected the degree of collaboration in each country would greatly help me to refine the concept of indigenization. In sum, I expect a comparative analysis on the four countries' experiences of nation-building by indigenizing the American Cold War politics and their impacts to the contemporary politics and society will strengthen the "indigenization" framework's applicability to other countries.

Overall, I believe there are many more geographical areas and historical times that could test out the indigenization concept. I believe my dissertation research can contribute to highlighting the importance of local narratives for broadening our understanding of world history, and also to opening up new dialogues in Cold War and nation-building studies.

Illustrations and Tables

Figure 1. PARU's Sign in Naresuan Camp, Hua Hin
Source: Photo taken by the author in the Naresuan Camp, Hua Hin, April 26, 2010.





Figure 2. PARU's Black Tiger Statue in Naresuan Camp, Hua Hin
Source: Photo taken by the author in the Naresuan Camp, Hua Hin, April 26, 2010.



Figure 3. Border Patrol Police's Areas of Responsibility (since 1986)
Source: Color Copy from Manas Khantatatbumroong, May 3, 2010. Original version can be found from: Manas Khantatatbumroong, *Prawat kongbanchakan tamruat trawen chaidaen, 18 phruetsachikayon 2537* [The History of the Border Patrol Police General Headquarters, 18 November 1994], Internal publication (November 1994), 33.

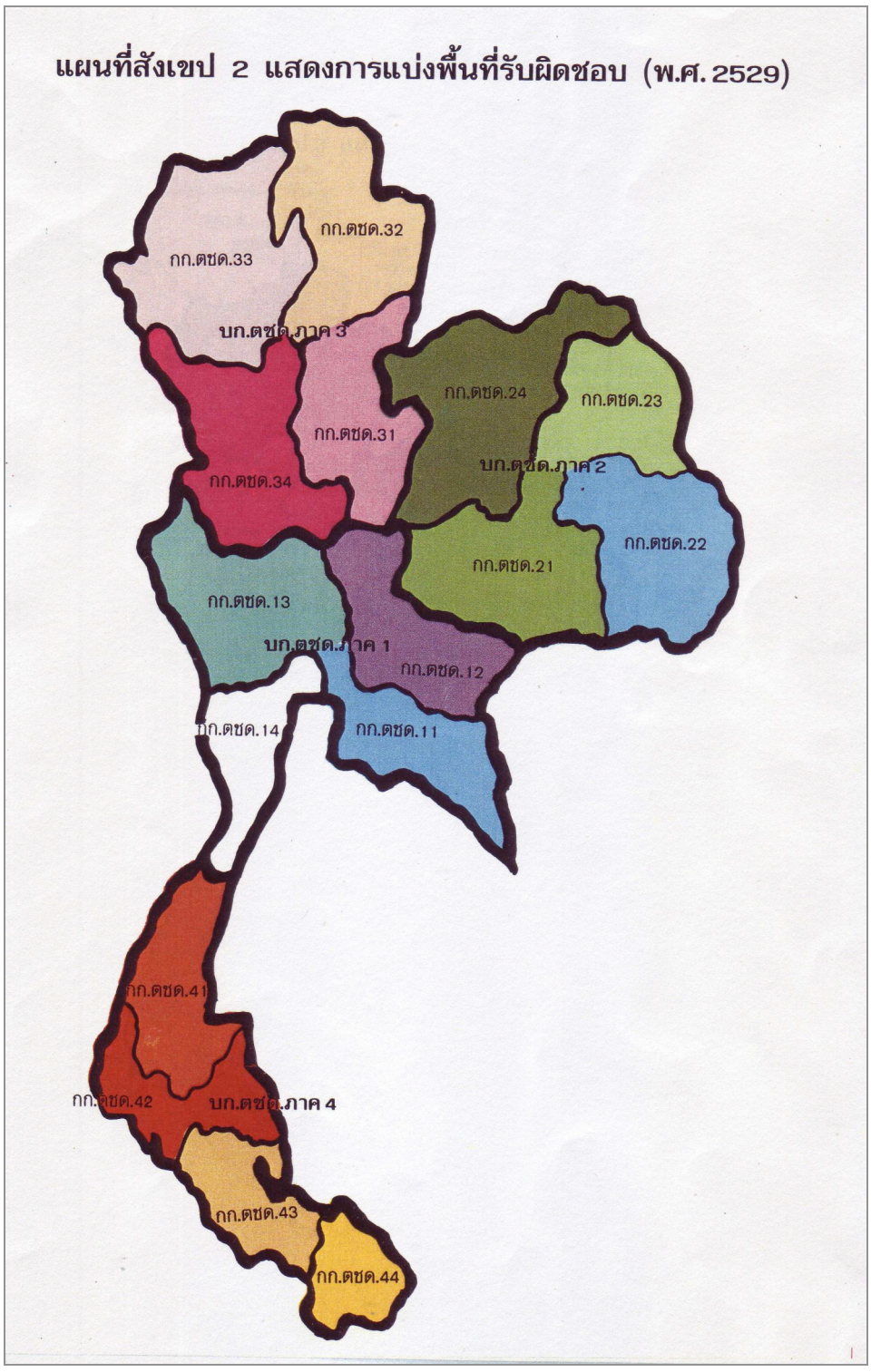


Figure 4. Public Safety Division Activities in Thailand, September 1966
Source: Public Safety Division, *Map of Thailand – Symbols of Public Safety Division* (1966).

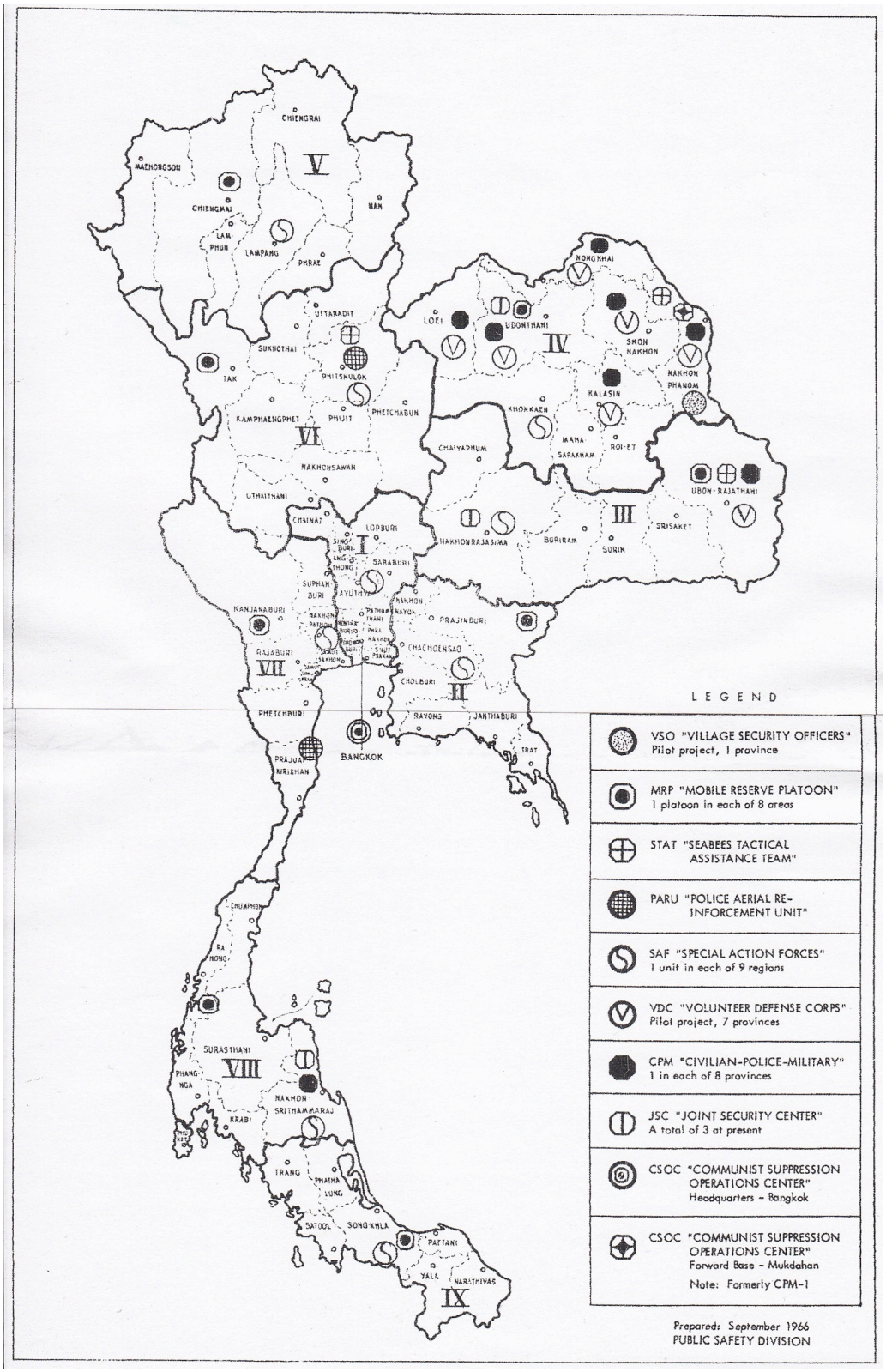


Figure 5. Accelerated Rural Development (ARD) Provinces Map, September 1969
Source: James W. Dawson and William R. Thomas, *A Brief History of USOM Support to the Office of Accelerated Rural Development* (Office of Field Operations, 1969), Appendix A.

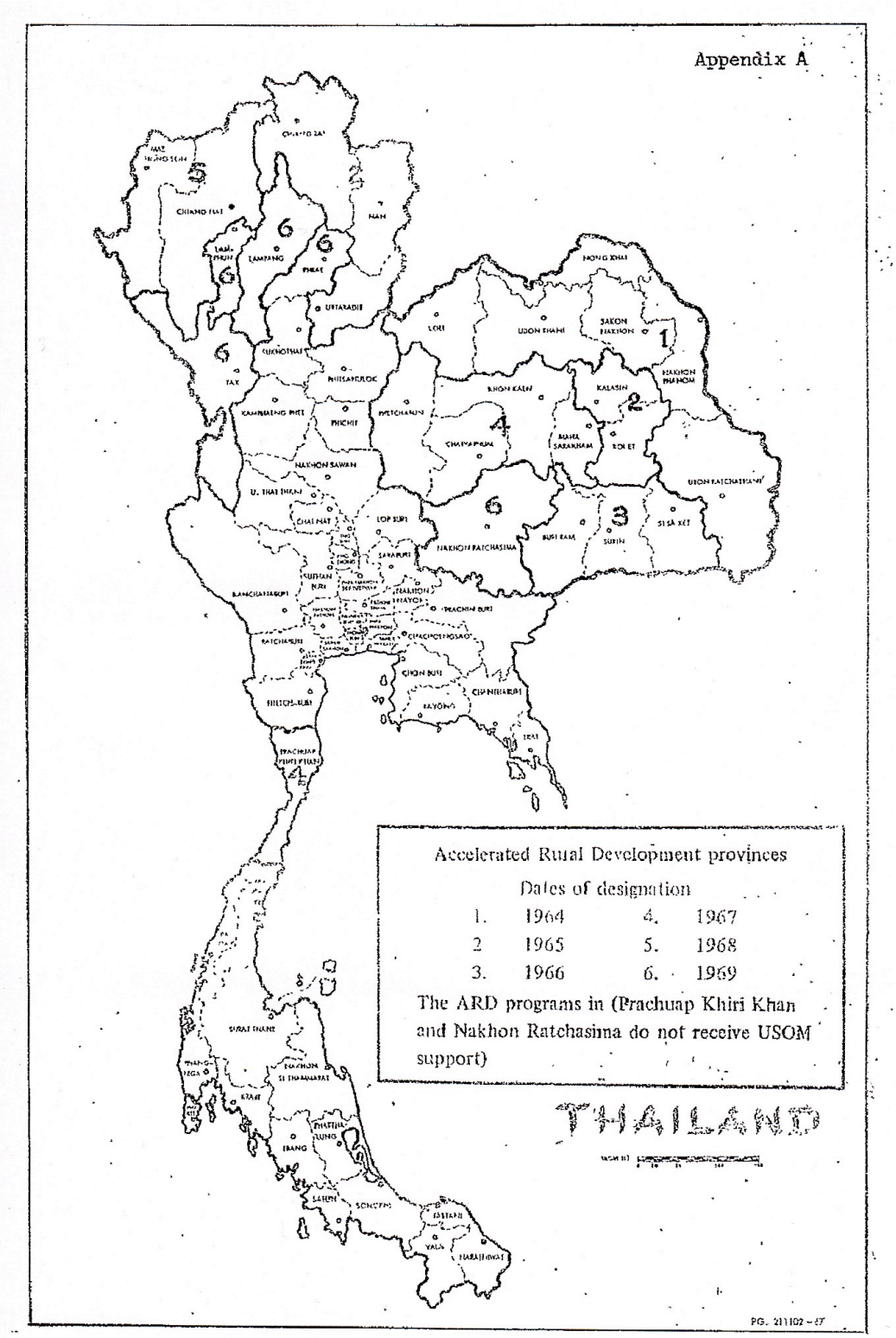
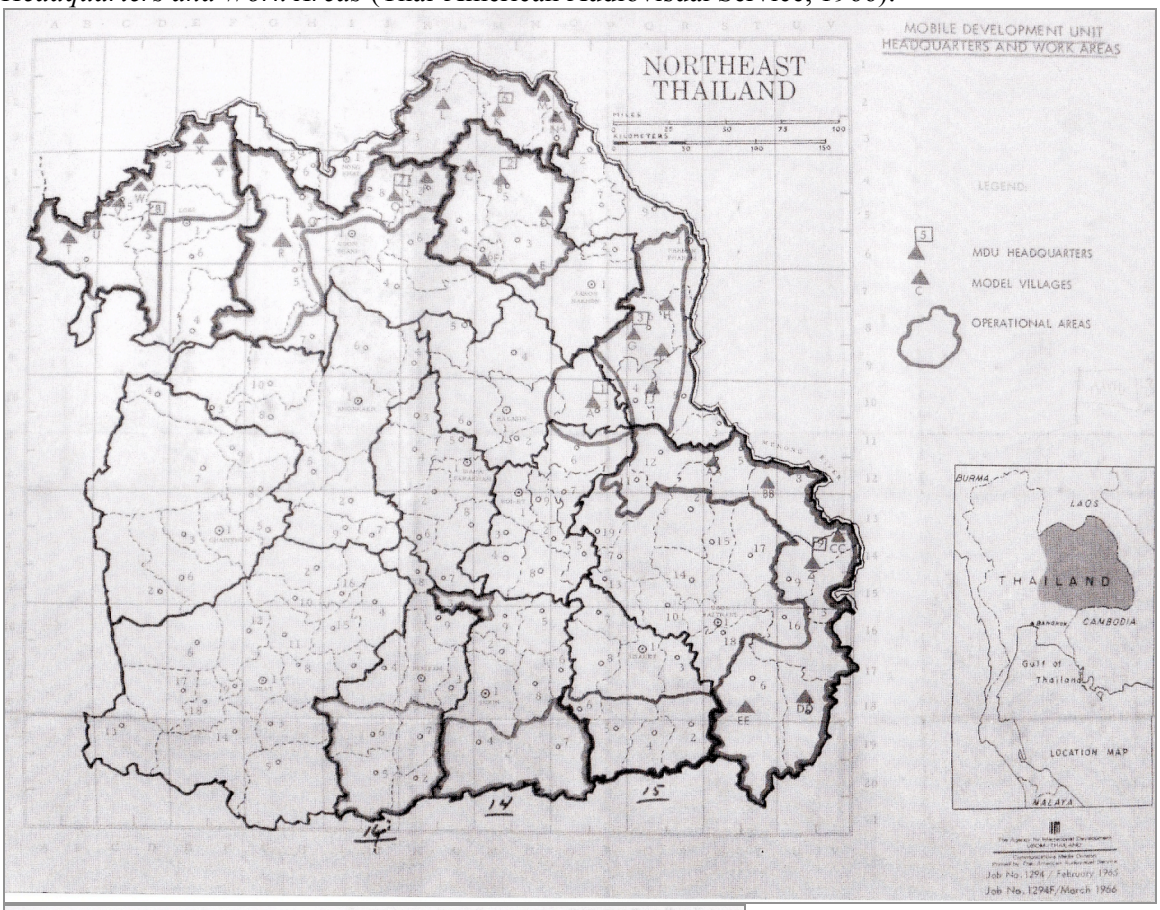


Figure 6. Mobile Development Unit Headquarters and Work Areas, March 1966

Source: Agency for International Development, USOM/Thailand, *Mobile Development Unit Headquarters and Work Areas* (Thai-American Audiovisual Service, 1966).



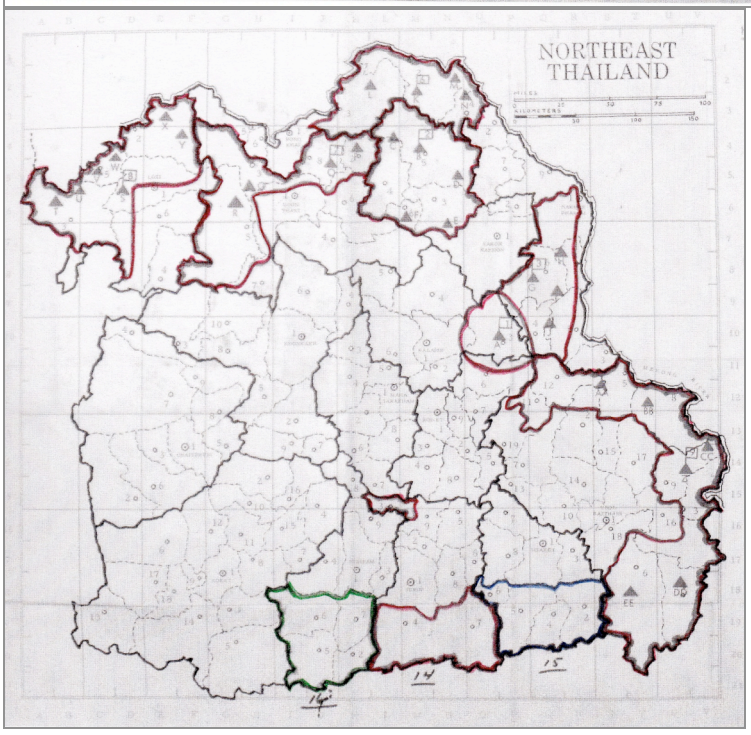


Figure 7. SEABEE Locations in Thailand, February 1965
Source: SEABEE Locations in Thailand (Bangkok: USOM, Capital Project Division, 1965).

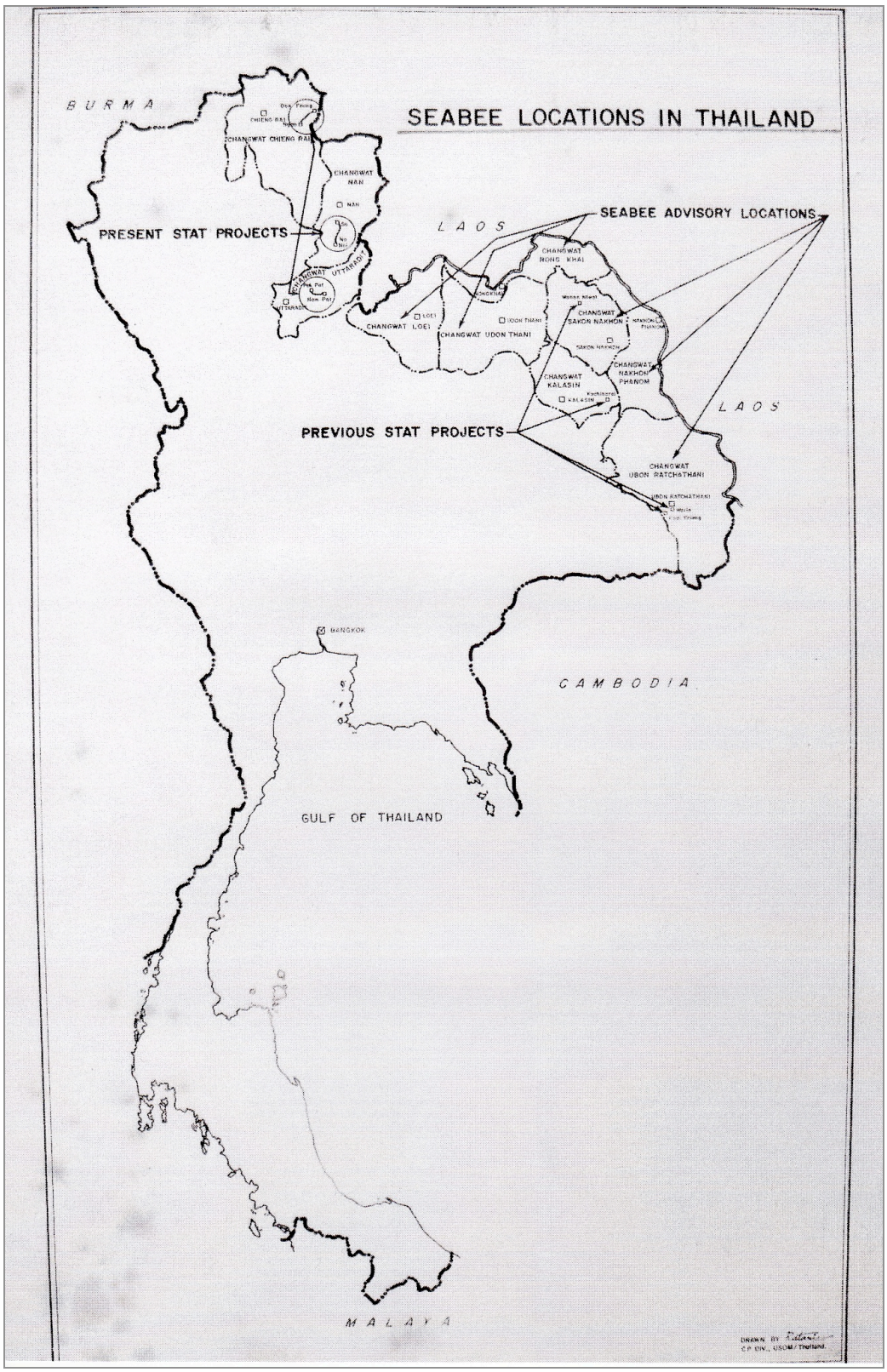


Figure 8. Operation Areas of the Volunteer Flying Doctor, 1972
Source: Dumaine, Betty and Dora H. Layton. *Somdetphra boromratchachonani*. Bilingual publication with the English title, "The Princess Mother," (Thailand: Thai Watana Panich Press Co., Ltd., 1972), 138.



Figure 9. "Opium Trade after the 1932 Political Reform" in the Hall of Opium
Source: Photo taken by the author in the Hall of Opium in Chiang Saen, Chiang Rai Province, May 21, 2011.

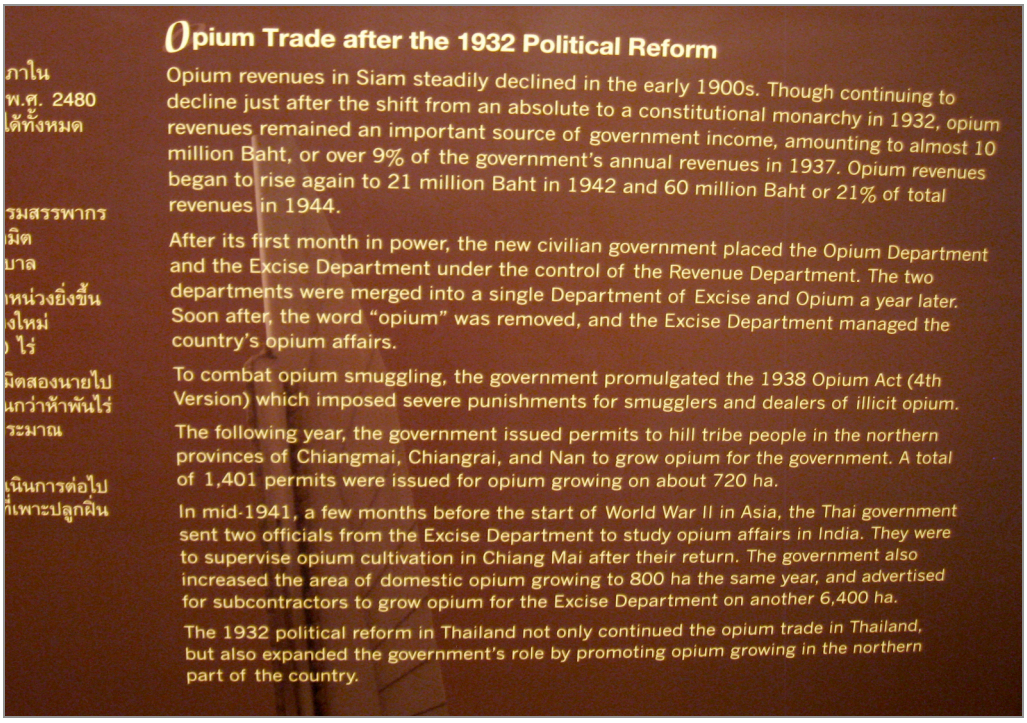


Figure 10. Mission Statement of the Border Patrol Police
Source: Photo taken by the author in the Border Patrol Police Special Training Division in the BPP General Headquarters, Bangkok, January 19, 2010.

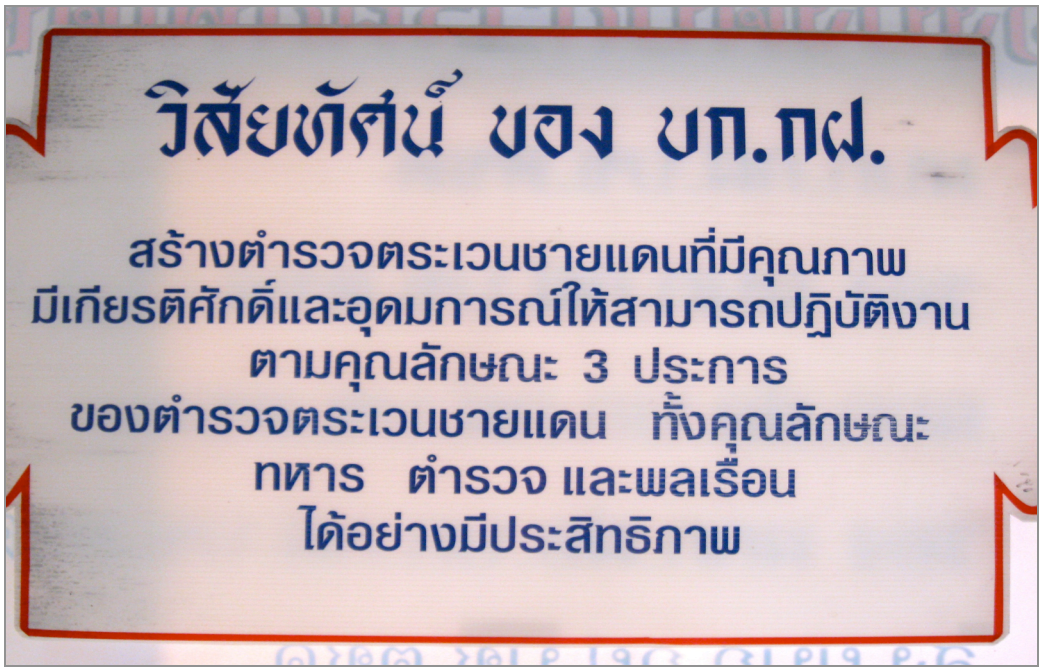


Table 1. PARU *Run* Names and Dates of Anniversary, 1951-1996

Source: Compiled by the author from the following sources: Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit Subdivision, *Prawat khai naresuan* [History of Camp Naresuan] (Thailand: Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit Subdivision, Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 1992), 77-78.; Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit Division, "*Prapheni wan run* [Anniversary Tradition of the Class Day]," *Warasan naresuan samphan* [Naresuan Public Relations Magazine] 43:81 (January-April 1997), 38-51.

No.	Year	Run Number and Name	Training Camp	Date of Anniversary
1	1950	Run 500	Erawan	July 18
2	1951	Run 300		
3	1954	Run 60	Naresuan	
4		Run 130		
5		Run 24		
6	1955	Run 92		
7	1960	Run 9 (*na*)		
8		Run 33		June 2
9	1962	Run 31		April 25
10		Run 180 *		June 28
11	1965	Run 9 (*lang*)		
12	1966	Run 102 (*traimit*) **		January 10
13	1969	Run 100		November 22
14	1970	Run 80		December 21
15	1971	Run 230		July 5
16		Run 83 (*traichak*)		April 1
17	1972	Run 119		March 12
18	1973	Run 214		May 15
19	1974	Run 19		May 10
20	1977	Run 104		August 29
21	1978	Run 100/21 ***		June 28
22		Run 81 (Female PARU)		July 2
23	1980	Run 115		May 30
24	1981	Run 196		March 1
25	1984	Run 235		February 17
26	1985	Run 132		July 5
27		Run 20		November 1
28	1986	Run 37		August 8
29	1988	Run 40 (Female PARU)		August 18
30	1990	Run 131		September 29
31	1991	Run 45 (*Yotthong*)		October 28
32	1992	Run 64 (Female PARU)		July 3
33	1994	Run 49		February 4
34		Run 61 (*po wo cho*) ****		January 18
35		Run 217		June 1
36		Run 50		April 5
37	1996	Run 100/39 ***		August 23

* Run 180: PARU-Naresuan began to receive applicants from the Border Patrol Police in Ubon Ratchatthani, Udon Thanni, Chiang Mai, Songkhla and Hua Hin. Most trainees in this *Run* became commissioned officers and promoted to the general rank.
** Run 102 (*traimit*): This group initially received 76 Special Police and 95 Border Patrol Police applicants and later only total 102 men completed the training. Since the *run* is comprised of three difference police units, PARU created a special name "three friends (*traimit*)" for this particular *run*.
*** Run 100/21 and 100/39: /21 means Buddhist Era 2521 (1978) and /39 means 2539 (1996), to distinguish two 100 *run*-s.
**** Run 61 (*po wo cho*): Usually, the PARU receives applications for its parachute and unconventional warfare training from the Provincial or Border Patrol Police or other police cadet schools. In 1994, however, PARU recruited students who had earned vocational diploma (called *po wo cho*) and thus this *run* got the particular name accordingly.

Table 3. PARU Operational Teams in Laos

Source: Compiled from by the author from the following sources: Choetchamrat Chitkarunarat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom* [The Birth of Police Paratroopers]," *Nittayasan tamruat sayam* [Siam Police Magazine] 11:51 (February 2011).; Kamon Bunsoemsap, " "*Pharu rop nai lao*" *rue krathoplai nai phon vang pao* ["PARU's War in Laos" or with Vang Pao]," in *Kua cha pen (tamruat) phonrom* [Long Road to Become the (Police) Paratrooper], ed. Narong Tharathoeng (Hua Hin: Hua Hin San, 2004), 17-75.

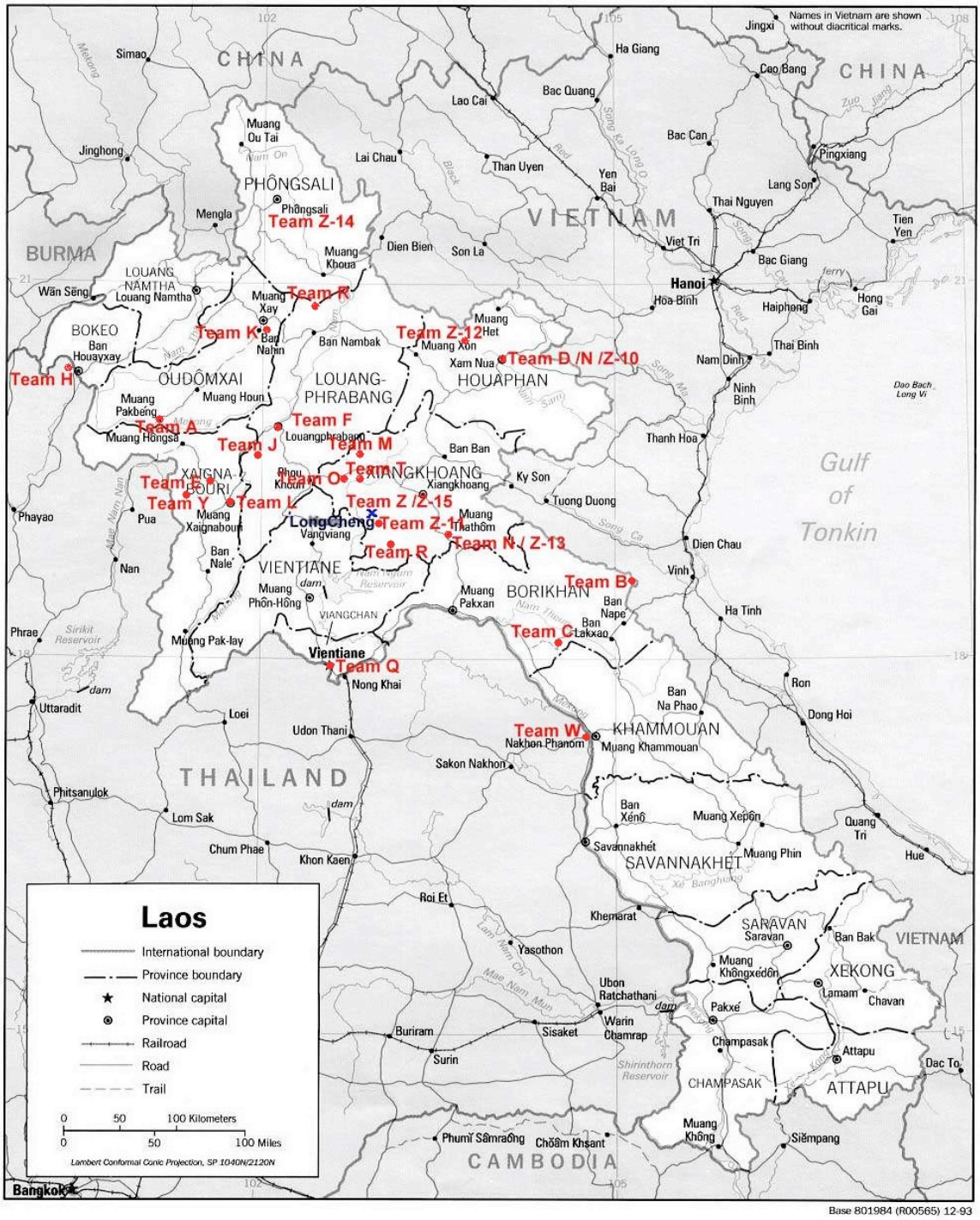
Team	Beginning of Operation	Termination of Operation	Cause of Termination * Note	Operational Areas-chronological (province, MR)	Initial Team Leaders (Codename)
A	December 8, 1960			Pak Beng (Udomxay, MR1)	Sombun Sithong
B	December 8, 1960			Pak Kading (Bolikhamxay, MR 5)	Choetchamrat Chitkarunarat (Chit)
C	December 8, 1960			Mueang Khamkuet (Bolikhamxay, MR 5)	Prasoet Kuangkaeo
D	December 8, 1960	May 1964	Completion of program * replaced by Team V	Ban Padong → Pha Khao → Phu Vieng (Xieng Khuang, MR 2) → Huai Tom → Hong Non (Huaphan, MR 2)	Suthep Tonphao
E	December 8, 1960	Early 1965		Ban Phu Kong, Sayaburi (or Xaignabouly, MR 1) → Thailand (October 1962)	China Wechakawi
F		Early 1965	Completion of program	Vientiane (MR 5) → Luang Phrabang (MR1)	Samroeng Singhiran (Ran)
G	Information Not Available				
H				Chiang Khong (Chiang Rai, Thailand)	
I	Information Not Available				
J	February 2, 1962	October 1963	Communist attack	Ban Phu Hua Mui → Ban San Joe, Sayaburi (or Xaignabouly, MR 1)	Kamon Bunsoemsap
K	February 1961	Early 1965	Transferred to other area	Ban Nami (Udomxay, MR1)	Mokon Wisutthiphet (Phae)
L				Sayaburi (or Xaignabouly, MR 1)	Pramuan Chitloet
M			* Road Demolition	Phu Nong Phi (Xieng Khuang, MR 2)	Decha Adunrat (Yan)
N	June 1961	October 1961	Vietminh attack	Mueang Ngat (Xieng Khuang, MR 2)	Choetchamrat Chitkarunarat (Chit)
O			* Assist Team T	Chiang Daet (Xieng Khuang, MR 2)	Chadet Topradit
P	Information Not Available				
Q				Wattai Airport, Vientiane (MR 5)	Surayut Patthomdilok (Thom)
R	May 1961			Padong → Pha Khao (June 1961) (Xieng Khuang, MR 2)	Santi Udomsak

S	Information Not Available				
T				Nam Chong → San Luang (Xieng Khuang, MR 2)	
U	Information Not Available				
V	May 1964	January 1965		Hong Non (Huaphan, MR 2)	Mayura Bunyaket
W				Nakhon Phanom (Thailand)	
X	Information Not Available				
Y		October 1965		Sayaburi (or Xaignabouly, MR 1)	Sukit Khetsamut
Z	September 1962			Long Cheng (Xieng Khuang, MR 2, LS98/20A) * became the commanding headquarters since May 1964	Mokon Wisutthiphet (Phae)
Z-10	January 1965	1969	Vietminh attack	Hong Non (Huaphan, MR 2) → Ban Nakhang (Huaphan, MR2, LS36)	Santi Ouaiprasoet
Z-11		October 1965	Communist attack	Pha Lang Mu	Prayong Samphatphong
Z-12	January 1965		Communist attack	Phathi (Huaphan, MR 2) → Ban Nong Khang (December 1965)	Praphat Panpomthong
Z-13			Completion of program	Tha Thom (Xieng Khuang, MR 2)	Chaloem Rochanawithit
Z-14		April 1964	Communist attack	Phu Sali	Prakop Panthranon
Z-15				Long Cheng (Xieng Khuang, MR 2, LS98/20A)	Wachara Singmani

* **MR**: Military Region in Laos. There were 5 Military Regional Divisions. See Lao military regions from: Wikipedia, "History of Laos," accessed November 1, 2012, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Laos#Conflict.
LS: Lima Site, Air America designation for STOL (Short Take-Off and Landing) landing strips in Laos

Figure 11. PARU Operational Teams in Laos

Source: Compiled from by the author from the following sources: Choetchamrat Chitkarunarat, "*Kamnoet tamruat phonrom* [The Birth of Police Paratroopers]," *Nittayasan tamruat sayam* [Siam Police Magazine] 11:51 (February 2011).; Kamon Bunsoemsap, " "*Pharu rop nai lao*" *rue krathoplai nai phon vang pao* ["PARU's War in Laos" or with Vang Pao]," in *Kua cha pen (tamruat) phonrom* [Long Road to Become the (Police) Paratrooper], ed. Narong Tharathoeng (Hua Hin: Hua Hin San, 2004), 17-75.



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