The New Thai Government

With the official announcement of ministerial portfolios on 29 September, the new coalition government of Chuan Leekpai is now ready to start work. The task they face will not be an easy one: while the economy they have inherited from the Anand government is regarded as 'healthy', there are still enormous social, political and environmental problems to be dealt with. Among the issues which were pushed aside while the 'demons' and 'angels' fought it out were the widening disparity of incomes within the country, the relentless degradation of the environment, and the worsening situation within two of Thailand's neighbours, Cambodia and Burma. There remains a concern that despite the healing effect of the change in government on the wounds left by the events of 'the Black May Incident', these issues will continue to be neglected.

Chuan himself enjoys a clean and un-ostentatious reputation, although inclined to favour his southern backers, which is one reason his appointment was probably greeted with rather less enthusiasm in regions such as the Northeast than it was in the South. The appointment of Chavalit Yongchaiyudh as Interior Minister may serve to allay any fears in this regard, although his reported insistence on being given the position may have created other tensions within the government (FEER 8 October 1992). Another source of tension may come from Palang Tham's Prasong Soonsiri, the new Minister of Foreign Affairs, who is thought to hold views regarding relations with Burma and Cambodia which differ from those of Chuan (see also Letters section, p.27 in this issue). The close link between government and the military also continues, with appointments such as that of General Vichit Sukmark as Defence Minister and Sanan Kachornprasat, associated with Class 7, as Minister of Industry. With the inclusion in the cabinet of acknowledged fiscal conservatives such as Supachai Panitchpakdi and Amnuay Virawan as deputy prime ministers in charge of economic policy, and Tarrin Nimmanahaeminda as Finance Minister, there is not expected to be any change in economic policy. The general consensus appears to be that the Chuan cabinet is 'not as good as Anand II, but much better than any of the Chatichai cabinets' (Bangkok Post Weekly Review 2 October 1992).

Given the make-up of the Chuan government, there is little likelihood of any fundamental change in Thailand's direction despite the concern which has been expressed on certain issues. Regarding the problem of the increasing disparity of incomes between the rich and the poor, the government is reported to be proposing several measures...
including land reform, improvement of rural water supplies, and the development of infrastructure in poor rural areas which will attract investment away from Bangkok (FEER 2 October 1992). While any scheme which promises to relieve the congestion of Bangkok is to be welcomed, the effectiveness of these measures, in the absence of major political and social changes, must be open to doubt. Despite the claims of economists for a trickle-down effect, there is no evidence that the mere act of rubbing shoulders with the rich can result in a transfer of wealth to the poor. So, while the relocation of factories to the poorer provinces may save travelling time for migrant labour, not to mention making it easier to get seats on public transport at New Year, these moves need to be accompanied by more tangible measures such as labour, legal and tax reforms. With the exception of land reform, changes which would have an effect in these areas have so far not been mentioned.

Foreign policy, particularly in regard to Cambodia and Burma, is another area where some initiatives from the Chuan government would be welcomed internationally. A much stronger stance by Thailand with regard to the Khmer Rouge would improve considerably the UN's chances of achieving a settlement. Similarly, Thai support and involvement in sanctions against the SLORC would contribute greatly to the improvement of human rights in Burma. Again, based on Chuan's early statements regarding foreign policy, there is little prospect of any marked deviation from the position of previous governments on these issues (FEER 2 October 1992).

Related to both these issues is that of the environment. The despoilation of the natural environment in Thailand, and more recently in neighbouring countries, is a tragedy. The fact that so many economists can still pay obeisance to Thailand's 'astounding growth', without acknowledgement of the environmental price which has been paid, reflects sadly upon the extent to which the link between people and the environment is recognised. From the point of view of the Chuan government, the immediate problem is that presented by the continued involvement of the military and business interests, including, reputedly, members of the government, in such enterprises as logging operations along the Burmese and Cambodian borders and in the Lao PDR.

In sum, now that the dust has settled, it is clear that the new government of Chuan Leekpai faces some difficult problems, and that is without considering some of worldwide scope such as the HIV/AIDS epidemic. It is a daunting prospect, especially in view of the fact that even the widely acclaimed Anand government could do very little about them. However, unlike the appointed Anand government, whose mandate was to restore stability, the elected Chuan government has an opportunity to address these problems; it is hoped that they also have the strength to solve some of them.

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A Note on United Nations involvement in the Border Area Development Program

Doug J Porter

Over the past two years various agencies of the UN system have become closely associated with the Border Area Development Program first announced by the Burma-Myanmar government, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), in 1989. A large number of mission reports and project planning documents have been prepared by UN agencies but little has been made known about the range of activities the UN is now implicated in, nor about their intentions or the inevitable conundrums technical and moral that face development activities in the 'sovereign borders' of Burma-Myanmar.

I became involved in these activities through two missions undertaken for the UN Capital Development Fund, one of seven UN agencies that announced, in 1990, a commitment to SLORC's Border Area Development Program. These missions have provided an opportunity for extensive travel and, albeit constrained, observation of conditions in the Kokang, Wa and east Kengtung areas.

This article makes only brief remarks about the geography and history of the area, before outlining UN involvement; how it began, and the key activities that are now being developed. The UN agencies are operating under various
constraints, many of them self-imposed, since they have a range of prior operational prerequisites which must be
ceded, both by SLORC and the various 'militias' or command groupings which formed in the wake of the collapse
of the Communist Party of Burma and subsequent accords with SLORC. Most of these prerequisites are being
contested on the ground, but the question remains as to the impact, political as well as humanitarian, of UN activities.
This article closes with some speculative remarks about these impacts.

Background

Burma's 8-10 million ethnic minorities are found throughout the length of the borders extending from Bangladesh
around to Lao and Thailand. The SLORC's Border Area Development Program, announced in 1989 shortly after they
took control, covers all these seven regions namely, Kachin, Kokang, Chin, Lashio, Mawpha, Rakhine and Sagaing.
The Border Area Development Program, which has the perverse acronym, BAD Program, is under the control of the
Central Committee for the Development of Border Areas and National Races (otherwise known as CODEBAR)
chaired by Secretary 1, and a Working Committee formed to coordinate Border Area development and the 11 sub-
committees charged with implementation work.

The CODEBAR has announced an ambitious development objective for the seven regions concerned, as follows:

To create sustainable conditions under which people in the Border Areas can increase food production and cash crop
income, diversify economic activities to include small scale manufacturing, processing and services, achieve better
health and nutrition, have greater education and training opportunities and receive benefits of expanded and upgraded
infrastructure.

For the UN purposes however both the aims and the geographical scope of the Border Area Development Program is
much more confined in fact, to an area in many respects coincident with that until recently controlled by the
Communist Party of Burma or CPB. This is quite significant, and indeed gives rise to one of the oft quoted criticisms
of UN involvement in the program that the UN is simply providing a filip to the SLORC initiatives and little more.
This charge will be considered later.

Up until its collapse in 1989, the CPB area extended down from west of Mong Ko in the northeastern most corner of
Shan State, across the border from Man Hai in Yunnan. It was at Mong Ko that the CPB overran the Burma Army
garrison at the start of its invasion on the morning of New Year's Day in 1968. By the time the CPB took over
Panghsang in 1973, they controlled around 20,000 square kilometers of area along the Chinese border, extending down
to the Mekong district on the Lao border.

In addition to the old CPB command area, UN border area activities are also to be found in a small area west of
Tachilek, as well as another small area west of Kunlong, west of the Salween River, a so-called 'white area' which has
remained under the administration of the Burma government throughout. No reliable census data is available, but an
estimated 476,000 people are included in the area of UN operations (the shaded area on the map).

There is not space here for an analysis of the reasons for the collapse of the CPB, which have been well considered in
the writings of Bertil Lintner, but a few points should be made.

The decay of the CPB, its replacement by local militias, and the eventual involvement of the UN, occurred over a
fairly lengthy period; beginning perhaps, from the 1979 decision of the Chinese, under Deng Xiaoping, to drastically
cut their aid to the CPB. Bertil Lintner's interviews with the CPB leadership have estimated that, at the time, Chinese
aid amounted to 25 percent of the CPB's Kyat 56 million annual budget. Also significant in the demise of the CPB was
a further reduction in revenue which followed China's open door trading policies in 1980. This led to about 70
unofficially sanctioned gates for Burma-China trade, most of which were no longer controlled by the CPB cross border
taxation system.

Pressed for cash, the CPB became more involved in the only two cash crops available in their area tea and opium.
Previous efforts to replace opium, notably with Chinese wheat, had failed leading to famine conditions in one year,
1976. The failure of the substitution programs, along with the drastic cuts in revenue, all meant there were less
incentives for a hard line ideological opposition to poppy production.
The CPB's civil administration, reputedly once quite efficient, it began to break down; many schools and clinics closed for lack of funds (although some exist to this day), and Party cadres became quite lax, often more concerned with opium business not surprisingly, relations with the local population deteriorated.

In 1985 the CPB launched a campaign to improve discipline, to rebuild the civil administration and the Party image. The campaign saw severe punishment for private opium trading. Great frictions between the central leaders and local commanders were said to result.

During March 1989, Kokang CPB units openly mutinied and captured the Mong Ko command centre. Shortly after, Wa troops in the 12th Brigade took the Panghsang centre and within days, the CPB ceased to exist. SLORC acted quickly. Only a week after the CPB uprising in the Kokang, SLORC representatives visited the area to open discussions. Shortly after Panghsang fell in April, Brigadier-General Khin Nyunt, and the Commander of the northeastern command in Lashio flew to Kunlong to pay the first of a series of visits to areas up to Laukkai in the north.

The terms of the agreements are not widely known. They are said to provide for SLORC's extension of national sovereignty, the eradication of poppy, and the dissociation of the various militias from dissident activities. In return, SLORC acknowledges the administrative pre-eminence of local commands, promises unrestricted commercial activities and government investment in infrastructure and services. On the ground, the accords are quite fluid and, even within areas controlled by the same militia, are applied in different ways.

The point is that very soon after the first contacts between SLORC and the militias, the Border Area Development Program began to take shape on the ground; schools, bridges, hospitals, roads quickly were constructed in the order of Kyat 275 million is reported to have been spent over the first 18 months. This has mostly been concentrated on areas controlled by the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) (the units of Mong Ko and Kokang), the United Wa States Army (UWSA) to the east and south of SLORC controlled Hopang, and to the north east of Kengtung, the Burma (Eastern Shan State) National Democratic Army.

UN Involvement in the Border Areas

UN agency activities have been restricted either to areas continuously under the control of the Burma Army in recent years known as white areas, such as Hopang town to the south of Kunlong, or the Kokang, Wa and Shan area where truce and peace accords have been negotiated these areas are variously referred to as brown, black and grey areas depending on the nature of SLORC's agreements with local commands centres regarding access. This has meant that, so far, UN operational areas, although nominally ranging throughout the shaded areas noted on the map, have been restricted to particular localities within this.

But it is doubtful that SLORC ever imagined it would be able to move fast enough to consolidate these gains. The following points should be borne in mind:

i) While both government and militia leaders have a common stated intention 'to bring development to the area', years of hostilities and the uncertainties of the present accords create great scope for mistrust and unrealised expectations

Progress, in terms of the provision of facilities like schools, health clinics, or road construction, would always be slower than the expectations of local leaders formed during the optimism of the first negotiations. It should not be forgotten that local leaders also need the delivery of largesse to shore up their own legitimacy;
ii) The area is remote, the communities fragmented and dispersed with limited links amongst them or with the mainstream economies of either central Myanmar or adjacent countries. Experience elsewhere, notably from northern Thailand, shows the very high rates of investment, the very long lead times, and often, the correspondingly marginal impact of government engineered development activities;

iii) Not least important are the real constraints on SLORC’s coffers, at least as far as non-military expenditure is concerned. Central government revenue has fallen consistently in recent years and overall, given the official Kyat exchange rate, the growing public sector and foreign debt levels, the dwindling taxation revenue, as well as the low remuneration rates of public servants, it was always questionable whether SLORC would be able to meet either their expectations or the expectations of the militias with whom they are constantly negotiating that is, without external assistance.

These points, about both expectation and constraint, give some understanding of the significance SLORC attaches to UN involvement in the Border Areas.

What were the key events leading to UN involvement? There has been considerable UN-SLORC contact over the Border Areas involving no fewer than seven UN agencies (UNICEF, FAO, IFAD, UNDCP, UNDP, UNCDF, Habitat) and this dates to just a few weeks after the Kokang and Wa mutinies of early 1989.

Some key events include the granting of Least Developed Country status to Myanmar in December 1987, (and subsequent increases in UNDP funding), the arrival of various project planning missions (from UNDP, UNCDF, IFAD, etc) from April 1989. The events of 1988 prompted a major reorientation in the UNDP Country Program, and subsequently the UNDP Governing Council decision of 1990 which stressed that the program should reinforce the government’s efforts to promote social and economic change; lay the ground for resumption of bilateral aid and regional cooperation; and concentrate on fewer key geographic areas (including the Border Area); through large scale programmes less subject to fragmentation and diffused impact.

Throughout 1989 and 1990 further missions firmed up on a border area focus until in March 1991, a Joint UN Agency Mission agreed to support a 'broad-ranging and long-term commitment' aimed at agricultural development and poppy eradication through on-farm assistance and support services, with complementary investments in infrastructure, social services and institution strengthening in the border areas of eastern Shan State.

During this period the UN has developed, and insisted on SLORC compliance with a set of operational prerequisites. Although the list is quite extensive, there are three key issues: i) that UN activities should be restricted to areas where security considerations do not impede or prejudice operations; ii) SLORC and the respective militias should ensure free and independent access to local communities, village leaders, farmers, etc, by UN agency staff; and iii) community participation must feature in the design, planning and execution of development activities.

Current Status of UN Border Area Activities

UN agency activities in the Border Areas are in early stages; few projects have actually commenced on the ground, and many appear to be continually under review especially since this year’s UN Governing Council decision to scale down Myanmar activities, and to restrict support to projects with a "clear humanitarian or grassroots" focus. UNDP Yangon is currently (September) reviewing the entire program and further Governing Council decisions are expected in October. So the summary below could be quite radically altered by November 1992.

Another matter which has a significant, yet quite itinerant effect, on the location, scale and scope of UN agency activities is what might be called the "poppy factor". The aim of eradicating poppy in the Border Areas figures highly in the agendas of G7 countries underwriting the UN involvement in fact, diplomats from one country have quite openly wielded the big stick to remind IFAD that financial support for their project depends on its direct association with a raft of poppy eradication aims. Yet it is quite clear that a large proportion of the upland population are dependent on poppy for food security. My own research indicates a majority of upland households experience food deficits in the order of 3-5 months, sometimes up to 7 months each year that is, without the supplementary value of poppy sales. Poppy has great advantages (low bulk, high value, easy transport) over other crops in the present circumstances and it is unlikely to be easily substituted within the six years agreed to by SLORC; 20 years is a
minimum, almost achieved in Thailand, but under much more positive conditions. Indeed, given the significance of poppy to the survival of a surprisingly large number of upland people, a vigorous eradication program should, I believe, be opposed on humanitarian grounds.

Another difficulty is that the 1990s are not the early 1970s. Many of the UN agency staff today in the Border Areas, were involved in the often heavy handed approaches to eradicate poppy in northern Thailand during the early 1970s. They are aware that successfully replacing poppy with other cash crops depends on a range of factors, most of which are beyond their control. They are also aware that eradication efforts, such as the show case public burnings that have occurred in Na Wee recently, are at worst disastrous for household food security, and at best hardly win the hearts and minds of the local people for the long haul. Consequently, it is encouraging to see much more attention being given to development and humanitarian objectives, without the poppy-eradication strings attached, in the objectives of the various UN agencies. Yet it is clear that powerful members of the international community have domestic constituencies to appease and it is difficult to predict how these needs will effect the overall shape of UN activities in the area.

Also reminiscent of Thailand in the 1970s, it is uncertain how far the international community will be prepared to go in accepting SLORC and militia assurances of their good intentions on poppy. While no-one has accurate time series data on production and refining of opium, reports of a steady increase in production, in both SLORC and militia controlled areas, cannot be ignored. One might expect that greater UN access (access that is increasingly unfettered) will make it difficult to ignore any inconsistency between rhetoric and reality in UN-SLORC negotiations, especially, if the UN delegates are pushed by a concerned international community.

With these provisos in mind, the current status of UN activities in the Border Areas are as follows:

UN Development Program is attempting to coordinate the initiatives of the different UN agencies in the Border Areas around a common UN strategy. But it has no overall authority. Each agency is responsible to its own management and is subject to different funding periods, development criteria and public scrutiny.

UN Drug Control Programme. The UNDCP has a regional approach, based on agreements with China, Thailand, Lao and Myanmar. These agreements provide for the participating countries to undertake work in the three areas of supply reduction, demand suppression and law enforcement. UNDCP is restricted almost exclusively to supply reduction programmes, which encourage farmers to turn to other crops, although law enforcement is important. The first project is in East Kengtung at Tachilek on the Thai border, and Hsilu in Mong Yang on the China border. It is expected that UNCDP will join with IFAD in their Border Hills Development Project, from 1994, and thus open a second area for UNDCP activities.

FAO. With financial support from UNDP, FAO has extended its Kinda Dam Pilot Watershed Management Project to undertake pilot work at three sites including Nam Thit in Ho Pang Township, and Mong Yu in East Kengtung. FAO is also undertaking a small-scale poultry and pig production project to serve as a basis for the development of appropriate recommendations for the IFAD project. In each area, it is expected that small-scale irrigation activities will be promoted.

UNDP. UNDP has commenced a community development project for Shan State although the specific village areas in which the project will work have not bee finalised no fewer than 27 areas were initially proposed. The project, over two years, has been designed to support the activities of projects supported under IFAD, UNDCP and UNCDF and would assist villagers to form groups to plan and implement activities at village level and to improve their access to government services.

IFAD. IFAD are investigating a five year project in Ho Pang and Kunlong Townships involving infrastructure, resource development and crop production, livestock development, credit and community development beginning in 1994. Further details are expected during 1993; it is expected to be the largest UN agency project commitment.

UNCDF. UNCDF are about to appraise a three year commitment to be implemented through the Rural Water Supply Division of the Ministry of Agriculture. A village water development project, based on gravity flow technology, would focus in the northern Hopang-Kunlong areas, but also extend into the southern/east Shan areas.
Likely Impact of UN agency Activity in Border Areas?

A recent article by Nicholas Tapp remarks that "It is a paradox of the formation of modern nationalism in the region ... that the boundaries formed at the margins of political states marking the limits of state control were the very areas which, because of their peripherality, became increasingly politically and economically valuable".

Tapp was referring to northern Thailand I think in the Myanmar Border Areas this is even more the case. The nationalistic desire of 'Burma proper' is very strong, especially when combined with the xenophobia of a military wishing to expunge the bitter memories of 20 years of CPB dominance over this area.

Further, but unlike the Thai situation 20 years ago, SLORC is rapidly becoming more dependent on cross border trade. Public sector industries (the State Economic Enterprises) are said to be operating at about one quarter capacity now and there has been no appreciable effort to privatise them. The SLORC reliance for consumer goods has shifted to the regularised and taxed cross border trade.

Given the importance of the Border Areas, what is the impact of UN activities? This is a complex subject which cannot be adequately treated in the space here. But a few remarks. At the national political level, some predictable remarks.

First, there is no question that SLORC squeezes the UN commitment to the Border Area for every ounce of legitimacy it can gain. The Working People's Daily tracks every move, every UN-SLORC meeting and no opportunity for fanfare is lost.

Second, consistent with neighbouring countries, the successful negotiation of 'a project' by line ministry officials is a key in political patronage. I am convinced that UN agency activities are not directly implicated in financial corruption amongst officials, but there need not be pecuniary benefits. In countries where government ministries are fiscally starved, externally supported projects are one of the few means where senior bureaucrats can secure additional revenue from treasury and thereby maintain their patron-client networks. To this extent there are political benefits for the government of the day. At the national economic level, the benefits and costs of the UN support are uncertain. Rather than providing an economic filip to SLORC, it can be argued that UN assistance will actually come at a cost. For instance, the UN program will cost SLORC in recurrent cost commitments (in the order of 5-6 per cent of public revenue) commitments that arguably might otherwise be going to more nefarious activities. Moreover, UN activity requires counterpart contributions in the form of staff salaries, fuel/oils, equipment, infrastructure. For instance, one project has a budget of $6.1 million, of which SLORC is obliged to provide $1.6 million by virtue of an agreement which triggers the UN funds.

Yet, as everyone knows, aid money is fungible. UN aid may replace funds which SLORC would otherwise have had to spend from their own sources. But this would depend on whether UN agencies are supporting things that in the normal course of events government agencies would be required to do anyway. This is not certain. Clearly, the odd village water supply or school would have to be provided, regardless of who was paying for it, as part of the patronage system that is cementing SLORC agreements with local militias. But the amount of national budget required is quite piffling given the stakes being played for in the border areas.

In important respects, it can be said that UN agencies are getting SLORC to do things they would not do in normal times. For instance, most UN agencies are targetting upland, ethnically marginal and poorer people. I have little doubt, for instance, that without UN funding, it would be a good 20 years before an upland Akha family heard the sound of a government ag extension officer's voice. Regarding the local or regional socio-economic impact of UN activities, two things can be noted.

First, to the extent that UN presence adds to the stability of the area, politically and administratively, and irrespective of whether this is a 'just stability', it will continue to result in a significant increase in commercial and trade activity, particularly in the lowland centres, such as Hopang, Laukkai, and south in the Hsilu and Mong La region. One could query the extent to which the benefits of this economic intensification will be distributed throughout the area and amongst the various sectors of the community, but this is a matter for another debate.
The question does arise as to whether this intensification would occur anyway, without UN presence. To an extent, the SLORC and the militia leadership have invested so much, politically and economically, in maintaining the accords, that a UN pull-out may not amount to much of a deterrent for further investment. But I believe that awareness of UN commitment to the area features in the decisions of ethnic Chinese and Shan investors, many of them expatriate, to invest in the area I doubt that without UN presence they would be maintaining the level of investment in shops, hotels, housing and small scale industry that is occurring in lowland centres, which would be extremely vulnerable in the event of a resumption of hostilities.

Second, as to the direct social and economic impact of UN project activities, the results in Thailand over the past 25 years suggest that the architects of the Border Area Development Program should be quite circumspect. There are great parallels between the Thai program (beginning in the mid-1950s) and the strategies being adopted in Kokang, Wa and eastern Shan areas. There are important differences. One is the level of investment in Thailand, much of the northern landscape was saturated with aid during the 1960-80s, amounting to around $25,000 per person; Border Area investment levels are not a fraction of this.

Humanitarian facilities, health, education, water supply, agricultural advice concerned with food security, depending on the way in which such assistance is delivered, no doubt will have a positive impact. But it will be a long time before the so called 'community participation' approaches so important for success in Thailand will be applied. This is not surprising given recent experience in the area, and that it took a good 15 years before such approaches proved workable in Thailand.

One should not underestimate the positive economic impact of improved health and educational facilities or extension services, but it is likely that the presence of the Yunnan and north Thai economies will dictate the pace and direction of development in the area not UN activities. Again, this is consistent with Thai experience where private commercial developments have been judged as being far more significant than aid activities, despite the unprecedented levels of aid investment.

As to the impact on poppy and heroin production and transit, the UN can expect to make a negligible impact. The level of resources available is inadequate. But more importantly the lack of other asset creating tradeable commodities in the area, as well as the degree of SLORC and militia involvement in what is now a highly sophisticated international drug network, incomparably better than operating in north Thailand in the 1970s, suggest it may be some time before poppy/heroin production in the area peaks and begins to decline.

There are many dimensions of political and economic impact of UN activities which cannot be adequately addressed at this point, but it is useful to ask what might be the single most important impact of UN presence on the lives of the average, that is, the abysmally poor, upland people in the area. Although not written into statements of UN intention, nor the conditions of SLORC-militia accords, UN presence is contributing to the maintenance of peace in the area. One can justifiably question the justice of this peace, but after visiting village after village, particularly in the northern Wa area, and so frequently finding no males between about 15 to 45 years, I am acutely aware of how highly local families rate the present stability.

Certainly, upland people continue to be plundered by itinerant demands for duty labour and so on from either, and sometimes both SLORC and local command centres. But it is the tempering of these demands, not to mention making the resumption of hostilities less likely, that is the most frequently cited reason why local people are keen to have the UN in the area.

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Is China Building an Indian Ocean Base?

According to a report released by Reuters News Service on September 18 which quotes a release from Japan's Kyodo Agency dated September 17, China is helping to build a naval base on the coast of Myanmar (Burma) which China will in turn be allowed to use:
... sources who claim anonymity said the base is under construction on an island at the mouth of the Bassein River, in southern Burma, across the channel from the Indian naval facilities on the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Indian observers have reportedly confirmed an increase in the frequency of visits to the area by Chinese naval vessels since the beginning of the year, the agency said.

According to the sources, in return for China's cooperation in constructing the base, Burma will give China precedence in the use of the base. China is also reportedly constructing a radar facility on Burma's Coco [sic] Islands, which lie immediately north of the Andaman Islands. In a later report, Kyodo said that Japan had asked Burma about the naval base, but Burma 'had so far not confirmed or denied the rumour'.

[The Cocos Islands at the position reported are the seat of Burmese naval facilities Ed.]

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Report of the Preliminary Joint Survey Team On Opium Production and Consumption in the Union of Burma

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1. Organisational and Administrative Questions

A. Terms of reference of the preliminary Joint Survey Team.

1. The question of a survey of the economic and social requirements of an opium-producing region in Burma was initiated at the eighteenth session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs which fully supported the request of the observer of Burma and adopted Resolution Bill for action by the Economic and Social Council. Following upon this, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations adopted Resolution 962.B.II (XXXVI) inter alia, inviting the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Food and Agriculture Organisation, the World Health Organisation and, in particular, the Technical Co-operation authorities of the organisations of the United Nations family to give favourable consideration to a request of the Government of Burma for assistance in such a survey.

2. At the request of the Revolutionary Government, and in consultations between that Government and the Director of the Division of Narcotic Drugs and the UNTAB Resident Representative, it was agreed that a Preliminary Joint Survey Team (hereafter called the Team) should undertake a survey of the major opium-producing areas of Burma. This survey would cover not only the question of crop substitution, but would deal with all matters related to opium production and consumption in Burma.

B. Composition

3. The Team was agreed upon with the Revolutionary Government as follows:

- Dr J.F. Mabileau (Expert appointed by WHO) Current Chairman of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs;
- Mr H.S. Jhabvala (United Nations Division of Narcotic Drugs);
- Dr Khin-Maung Latt (Deputy Medical Superintendent, Tadagale Mental Hospital - appointed by the Government);
- U Thaung Pe (District Agricultural officer, Lashio - appointed by the Government).

C. Itinerary

4. Arrangements were made by the Government for the itinerary of the Team as follows:

- Rangoon to Lashio by train on 1 March 1964.
- Arrival at Lashio on 3 March.
- Departure from Lashio by helicopter for Kunlong on 5 March.
- Visit to Namkun island and boundary areas on 5 March.
- Visit to Mongmau and Panlong by helicopter on 6 March.
- Visit to Hopang by helicopter on 6 March.
- Return to Lashio from Kunlong on 7 March.
- Visit to Tangyan, Pangsan and Panyang by helicopter on 8 March.
- Departure for Kachin State on 9 March by train and arrival at Myitkyina on 11/3.
- Visit to Kandoayang, Naphaw and Sima by helicopter on 12 March.
• Visit to Tanal in Hukawng Valley by helicopter on 13 March.
• Departure from Myitkyina by BAF plane on 14 March for Kengtung.
• Departure from Kengtung on 15 March by UBA plane for Tachilek.
• Departure from Tachilek on 16 March by UBA plane for Rangoon.

D. Visits, Consultations and Discussions

5. During its major stop-overs at Lashio, Kunlong, Myitkyina and Kengtung, the Team was provided with briefings by the local officials. In all the places visited, members of the Team had opportunity to discuss aspects of the opium problem, either jointly or individually, with the local officials concerned. Whenever possible, the Team members visited opium shops (including smoking annexes), hospitals, police or customs offices and interviewed peasants representatives and opium addicts. In opium growing areas which were visited by helicopter and motor-boats, the Team obtained information through direct talks with local officials, opium growers, traders, addicts and it visited opium fields and observed the process of opium slicing and scraping. It also visited experimental agricultural and animal husbandry farms.

6. The Team was accompanied by Lt. Col. Than Nyunt, Administrator-General, Frontier Areas Administration and Chairman of the Burmese Opium Enquiry Commission and by members of that Commission. The Team received briefings and explanations from Lt. Col. Than Nyunt and had discussions with members of the Commission.

7. During its stay in Rangoon, Team members made, inter alia, visits to the Tadagale Mental Hospital and the Burma Pharmaceutical industry (BPI). Representatives of WHO, FAO and UNICEF in Rangoon were consulted, and the views of ECAFE Social Affairs Division were obtained.

E. Acknowledgements

8. All members of the Team wished to record their deep appreciation to the Revolutionary Government for the excellent arrangements made during its tour of the country, as well as the facilities provided for the work of the Team. The Team is particularly indebted to Lt. Col. Than Nyunt who accompanied the Team throughout its tour, despite the state of his health and against doctor's advice, and personally supervised all the arrangements for the Team's work. The Team also wished to record their thanks to all the locals officials, high and low, who were fully co-operative at every stage of the tour and in Rangoon. The UNTAB Resident Representative, Rangoon, provided excellent facilities for the work of the Team members who wished to express their appreciation.

F. Drafting of the Report of the Team

9. The report of the Team was agreed upon and drafted in Rangoon after survey of the areas visited, and transmitted to the Union Government for joint discussion. (At a meeting held on March, 1964, the report was approved by the Government).

II. Analysis of the Opium Question in the Union of Burma Paragraph

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Background of Opium Production and Consumption in Burma

It is not known when opium was first used in Burma. There are several accounts to show that opium was in use in
some parts of Burma over 300 years ago; During the 17th century there was regular overland trade between Burma and China, jade being a very important item of trade. At this time, poppy cultivation had become known especially in the province of Yunnan and along the Sino-Burmese border. But it may be emphasized that in the days of the Burmese kings, opium was strictly prohibited and its prohibition appears to have been enforced by the powerful sanctions of religion and public opinion.

While it is true that opium was known in Burma before the British annexation, addiction was generally confined to some groups of the population such as the Chinese, Shans and Kachins. Use was perhaps also made of opium in the preparation of certain indigenous medicines. Besides that, there were no serious problems of either cultivation, addiction or illicit traffic.

In the year 1826, the areas known as the Arakan and Tenasserim Divisions, were annexed to Bengal. When these provinces were annexed, the British Government in India conceived the idea of opening them up as markets for the Bengal monopoly. Opium shops were licensed for the sale of the drug. The licensees were found to take annually a certain amount of Government opium at a fixed price. The holders of the licences, usually Bengalis or Chinese, proceeded to create a demand for the drug.1

After the annexation, Burmese public opinion was opposed to the spread of opium and officials were concerned at the effect of opium smoking, and some even stated that opium was unknown in Burma until the country was conquered and annexed by the British.

The annexation or Arakan to Bengal and its treatment as a province of India led to increased opium consumption by the Arakanese since the regulations for the sale of opium in Bengal at that time would hardly be called stringent. Opium had also found its way from Bengal into Yunnan through Upper Burma vide Article 4 of the Commercial Treaty, 1862, between the King of Burma and the Viceroy of India.

After consulting local opinion and such administrative officers as were conversant with Burmese ways of life, the Chief Commissioner, British Burma, accepted the facts that opium did great harm to the Burmese people, that the great majority of the nation desired to see opium wholly prohibited and that it was the duty of Government to restrict, as far as possible, the tendency of the Burmese to indulge in the use of opium. Restrictive measures were adopted in 1881 and 1882 to reduce the number of incensed opium shops, and the wholesale price of opium issued from the Government stores was raised by 30 per cent. Thus the consumption of revenue-paying opium under these measures decreased more than 50 per cent during the years 1881-1886.

In the meantime, non-indigenous agencies within and outside Burma submitted representations bearing on opium consumption and its deleterious effects on the Burmese.2 These representations were referred to the Government of British Burma and the Chief Commissioner made several suggestions for implementing the prohibition of opium. Subsequently, by Opium direction No. 1, promulgated by Financial Commissioner's notification No. 173 of 5 September, 1910, Burmans in Upper Burma were forbidden to possess opium, while in Lower Burma the only Burmans permitted to possess opium were those who were registered as opium consumers during the years 1892 and 1900 to 1903 in a register. Government opium shops ceased from 1 April 1921. All opium smokers were permitted to register themselves as such in a register which after being kept open for six months, was then closed so that no more smokers could be registered.

At the same time, possession of prepared opium by anyone who was not a registered smoker was prohibited. The system of closed registers for Burmans and smokers stimulated the smuggling trade to such an alarming extent that the Government was obliged to reopen the registers of Burmans and smokers in the year 1931.

The Commission of Enquiry into the Control of Opium Smoking appointed by the Council of the League of Nations which visited Burma in 1929 recommended that the system of closed registers be abolished, as it stimulated opium smuggling, and that the demand for opium should be regarded as illegitimate except for medical and scientific purposes. Although registers of opium consumers and smokers were reopened since 1931, and opium sold to all races in Burma, nothing appears to have been done for the implementation of the latter recommendation up to the time the British Government evacuated Burma in May 1941. The opening of registers resulted in increased use of licit opium from 1931. In 1941 there were 216 opium shops all over Burma, excepting the Shan State and there were 48,233
registered addicts. The gross revenues from excise opium in 1940-41 amounted to Rs. 5,418,000. Opium required by unregistered addicts and by registered addicts who became advanced smokers came from illicit sources, being smuggled from India, the Shan State and Yunnan.

During the British regime, the Shan State was not included in ministerial Burma. It was placed directly under the Governor-in-Council, though the local administration was entrusted to Sawbwas or feudal lords, who ruled their states along with officially-appointed residents. The administration was not as advanced as in Burma proper, and the laws were defective. The authority of the Excise Commissioner did not extend to the Shan State and the Opium Act 1923 was the only piece of legislation meant to control sale of opium and poppy cultivation. There was no special machinery for the enforcement of narcotic laws. Though the sale of opium was stopped in Burma proper, opium was sold without interruption in the Shan State. Licences were disposed of annually by public auction. The licensee obtained his opium chiefly from opium growing areas east of the Salween River.

Transport permits were issued by the local authorities for this purpose. Each consumer was allowed to buy opium up to six tolas at a time. Daily sales registers were maintained at each opium shop. Raw opium, prepared opium and "beinchi" (i.e. the refuse remaining in opium pipe after the smoking of prepared opium) were sold as required by the buyer up to a total of six tolas. In the Bangkok agreement of 1931, the Shan State was specifically excluded from the application of the provisions of that treaty.

In the areas east of the Salween River, opium cultivation was lawful and was controlled only by customary law. This area was unadministered till the British evaluation and the administration has been very light since then. Much of the area lies in very difficult terrain, having no roads except foot-tracks and mule paths. The system of slash-and-burn cultivation generally prevails. Opium is the main cash crop of these areas and almost all the people there grow opium.

In the Kachin State, at the time of the British evacuation, opium cultivation was practised only in the area known as the Triangle and the Hukawng Valley. Administration in these areas was introduced only in 1931 and 1940 respectively. The Governor of Burma embarked on a project for the suppression of the poppy cultivation and the total suppression was to have taken place in Myitkyina district after the 1943 crop, but the Japanese invasion interrupted this plan. During the Second World War, a large quantity of opium was air-dropped to pay for intelligence and other war purposes, causing more addiction. The British Military Administration gave notice in 1945 that from May 1, 1946, the growing of poppy would not be permitted in the Triangle and the Hukawng Valley. it was also agreed that the Government would arrange to supply opium to addicts in these places. But this was not found to be possible and every sub-division in the Kachin Hill Tract went back to poppy cultivation.

During World War II, perhaps on the initiative of the Government of the USA, the British Government in November, 1943, announced its decision to prohibit opium smoking in the Far Eastern territories freed from the Japanese and that no opium monopoly system would be re-established on re-occupation. However, no effective action on this decision could be taken.

With the attainment of Independence, the Union Government took up the question as one of its first measures, and on 11 February, 1948, important decisions were made aiming at the suppression of all forms of opium consumption in the Union within five years. The policy, in brief, was as follows:

(a) That the sale of opium for profit should cease altogether and that a definite programme be drawn arriving at the gradual extinction of the habit of opium consumption within five years;
(b) Ways and means should be devised for substituting cash crops in poppy-growing areas with the effective assistance and co-operation of the Agricultural Department;
(c) Anti-opium clinic centres would be opened at places where there were hospitals and dispensaries for doling out opium to the addicts simultaneously with measures taken for curative treatment;
(d) The Excise Commissioner in consultation with the Director of Medical Services should make the detailed arrangements for the opening of anti-opium clinics not later than the third week of April, 1948; and
(e) The Director of Agriculture be requested to explore and depute Agricultural Assistants to the poppy-growing areas to find suitable alternative cash crops.
In order to strengthen enforcement, the laws relating to opium and dangerous drugs were revised to increase penalties, to facilitate confiscation of vehicles involved, and to include abetment and attempts, both inside and outside Burma, as punishable offences. The staff of the Excise Department was strengthened, in particular that of the Excise Bureau which dealt with inter-district and international smuggling. Statistics on addicts were called for in connection with the proposal to open anti-opium clinics in the Union where there are hospitals and dispensaries. The estimated number of opium addicts in Burma proper and in the Kachin State was reported to be 37,980 and 34,500 respectively. The first anti-opium clinic was opened at Tadagle on 26 August, 1949, (it was closed down due to financial reasons on 31 August, 1961.) In 1959, the Opium Den Suppression Act was enacted, but it extended only up to Rangoon Town, Hanthawaddy, Insein and Pegu. This Act was helpful to the members of the enforcement services in taking drastic action against den-keepers.

While efforts were being made to implement the new policy, the Government was faced at the outset with insurrection and insufficiency of funds. Owing to the breakdown of communications and the somewhat disturbed conditions in which parts of the country were then in, it was not possible to survey the frontier areas for recommending-substitute cash crops. Shortage of hospital staff and a scarcity of hospital accommodation combined with insufficient funds obstructed the opening of anti-opium clinics in districts other than Rangoon. In the Kachin State, the problem of anti-opium clinics was all the more difficult as opium addicts living in the Hill Tracts, where only dispensaries exist in insufficient number, would have to leave their homes to attend the headquarters hospital for treatment. As a result, the deadline of five years set for the implementation of the Government's new policy proved difficult to achieve, and the need was felt for an opium policy in which the constituent states of the Union could play their full part. In pursuance of this objective, and in order to enable the public to have their say on the problem of the eradication of the opium habit, the Government appointed in 1951 an Opium Enquiry Committee in which members from the Shan State and the Kachin State were represented. This Committee, after making extensive tours of the country and after having examined a large number of witnesses, submitted a report to the Government in 1953. Again, the political situation in the country did not permit the implementation of the Committee's recommendations.

A significant part of the difficulties experienced at this time in the border areas was caused by the presence of Kuomintang troops in the Shan State. In 1949, as the Chinese Government withdrew to Taiwan, a few thousand troops took refuge in the Shan State. At first they settled peacefully in the villages along the border, mixing with the local population, and they raised no urgent problem. In a few years, however, they began to regroup into a fighting force under one General Li Mi whom propaganda from Taiwan began to build into a hero leading an army of crusaders to reclaim mainland China. Also, the intruders reinforced by men and arms from outside, indulged in the lucrative business of smuggling opium and gold and of selling arms, and began to loot and plunder. The Burmese Government, harassed by rebellion, could do little to cope with the KMT situation beyond sending a few military expeditions against them whenever it could spare the troops. In 1953, Burma complained to the United Nations about the situation created by the KMT troops in her territory, and the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the subject in April 1953. Soon after, a joint committee on the evacuation of foreign troops from Burma was established, and through its efforts a part of the KMT troops was removed. Subsequently, the Union Government mounted major military operations against concentrated KMT groups which led to their breaking up and scattering. Nevertheless, it is estimated that some 3,000 KMT troops still roam about in the wild regions of the Burma-Thailand border area and are known to be engaged in the opium traffic and other unlawful activities.

During the caretaker regime of General Ne Win, the Union Government succeeded in depriving the local Dawbwas or chieftains in the Shan State of their hereditary right to collect revenue on opium. While this did not mean that an end had been put to opium consumption or opium production in that region, the first step had been taken in the introduction of Union authority in a part of the country which for long had followed an independent and harmful course with regard to narcotic drugs.

The present Revolutionary Government came into power on 2 March 1962 and took up the question of opium production and consumption in Burma as one of its first tasks. It established an Opium Enquiry Committee on 15 August 1962. The composition of this Committee, its duties and functions and the list of officers serving the Committee is contained in Annex I to this report. The Committee has already undertaken a detailed survey of the Eastern frontier areas region and experts on agriculture, fruit cultivation, terrace cultivation, animal husbandry and cottage industry have already been despatched to the area under the supervision of the OEC, a review of the existing
legislation on narcotics in the Union has been carried out with a view to co-ordinating the different types of existing legislation, and so as to bring them into line with international treaty obligations. Upon the recommendation of the OEC, quotas of opium to licensed opium shops in areas where consumption is permitted have been reduced by three-quarters.

Recently, upon the initiative of the OEC the Ministry of Health has undertaken the training, at Tadagale Hospital, of batches of doctors from different parts of the country in the medical treatment of addicts. Finally, the OEC has organized co-ordinated and combined action of all enforcement services in the fight against the illicit traffics, both internally and at the border.

An important measure of the Revolutionary Government has been the opening up of the Department of Frontier Areas Administration. FAA has established new administrative districts inter alia as follows: in Kachin State - East Putao Frontier District (5,196 sq. miles) and Lauklaung Frontier District ([1st digit illegible] 624 sq. miles) in the Shan State - Eastern Kengtung Frontier District (5,250 sq. miles); Eastern Tachilek Frontier District (3,100 sq. miles); Eastern Mongtong Frontier District (4,140 sq. miles) and Eastern Kunlong Frontier District (5,540 sq. miles). The FAA has embarked upon transport construction, setting up power stations, introduction of new occupations, extension of administrative and welfare services, etc., in this area.

B. The Present Situation

(i) Opium cultivation and production

28. Opium cultivation is prohibited by law throughout the Union of Burma, except in the areas of the Shan State, east of the Salween River. Opium cultivation, west of the Salween River, is prohibited but there is illicit cultivation. There is also a significant and persistent illicit cultivation of opium in the Kachin State. Details of the major areas under opium cultivation may be found in Part III of this report. The Team was informed officially that there was no cultivation of opium in Burma proper.

29. In the areas east of the Salween River in the Kunlong frontier district and the eastern frontier region, opium cultivation is traditional and has been known to exist for at least two centuries. In the Kachin area, its extension is more recent. The Kunlong district areas were closely linked with the Yunnan province of China politically and culturally and it was only in 1941 that the boundary with China was settled when the major portion of the Wa State was recognised as British. nevertheless, the Kokan and Wa States were never effectively administered in the past until the recent introduction of the Frontier Areas Administration about three years ago which is making serious efforts to bring these areas under effective administrative control. Even now, the administration of this area is very thin and Southern Wa has not been fully penetrated.

30. Kokan, Northern and Southern Wa which at present are included in Kunlong frontier district of the FAA lie at an average altitude of 5000-8000 ft. The terrain is extremely rugged, communications hardly exist and water is scarce. The Team had opportunities to observe the physical difficulties of the area and fully appreciate the arduous task undertaken by FAA in making inroads therein. In parts of Southern Wa, it is reported that head-hunting is still practised and the eating of dogs is common. In other opium producing areas of Burma, the Team observed that similar difficult physical conditions exist.

31. Opium is cultivated as the main cash crop by 90 per cent of the people in Kunlong frontier district. Similarly, it is the main cash crop in the eastern frontier region and in the Kachin area, though the percentage of growers may not be so high. It is usually grown at a height of 2000 to 5000 ft. and shifting cultivation on a slash-and-burn basis is practised in the hills, with resulting deforestation and unfavourable ecologic changes. The usual output of opium per average household of five members is about two viss per acre and the limit of cultivation appears to be about two acres per household. At times, the production may go up to 3 or 4 viss per household, but the hill cultivator generally spreads the seed at the time of sowing and does not take further trouble without which a higher yield is not possible. The sowing of opium takes place around September/October, though in some parts, it starts earlier, e.g. in Sadon and Simma areas, and harvesting commences in January/February lasting for about six weeks. In the Hukawng Valley, the later is collected on strips of cloth and such cloth-opium does not have a market outside the area of cultivation.
32. The Team attempted to estimate the possible annual opium production in Burma. While realising that any efforts in that direction are bound to be misleading in view of the general situation and the absence of accurate statistics, the Team concluded that the annual output should be at least about 300-400 tons. As Burma does not manufacture alkaloids and does not export opium, nor is an exporting country in accordance with the 1958 Opium Protocol, this quantity of opium is destined for quasi-medical use, or is smoked, eaten or drunk locally, or passes into the illicit traffic inside the country and abroad.

33. Opium moves from the fields into the hands of traders who either buy it in the producing areas or it is collected at various centres for disposal further on. The cash the cultivator receives, if any, is left after settling his debts, is usually spent in obtaining food or household necessities, clothing, etc. The price of raw opium is around Kyats 250-350 per viss in the growing areas, with about Kyats 50 per viss as the cost of transport to the next centre. The traders are more often than not Chinese merchants, called in some places "lawpans", and the cultivators are entirely at their mercy for disposing of their opium and obtaining their household necessities.

In places, the trader is also the moneylender and interest rates are extremely high (10 to 20 per cent per month). The Team noted that the trading system is a vicious one, but for the present there appears to be no immediate substitute for it. In any case, the cultivator's lot continues to be miserable and he is enmeshed in a system of production and trade that increasingly enslaves him to poppy cultivation. Like other forms of vice, the system has an inherent tendency to expand its area of operation, and the Team noted that the Government is aware of this danger to the nation, neighbouring countries and the world at large. Such a large base of uncontrolled opium cultivation and trade works to the benefit almost entirely of traffickers.

34. In this connection, the Team welcomed the determination of the Government to abolish the large base of opium cultivation in the country, as the main target of its anti-opium policy. In the first instance, an Opium Enquiry Committee has been established in 1962 to advise the Government on the measures to be taken and considerable basic data has been obtained by this Committee on the opium problem. Experiments under controlled conditions are under way in the frontier districts of Kunlong and its subdivisions, in the Kachin State and in Kengtung frontier district to develop alternative income-producing activities through different marketable agricultural products, such as fruits, grains, coffee, sericulture, etc., and improved animal husbandry. Some measures have been taken to introduce transport and a minimum of administration in opium growing areas which had never previously been penetrated, and health welfare and education services are gradually being expanded in these areas. Similarly, the Government is improving and expanding gradually the administration and social and economic services in the Shan areas west of the Salween River and in the Kachin area. The Team was impressed by the efforts made in the areas it visited and the results obtained in such a short period of time, particularly by the Frontier Areas Administration.

35. The Team understands that the problem of opium production in the border areas of Burma is a delicate one, being inter-twined with other domestic, political, economic and administrative considerations as well as with the international situation in the region. It is a fact that opium production involves, besides Burma, other neighbouring countries. While the Team does not wish to elaborate on these aspects of the problem, clearly any long-term solution involves the co-operation of the local people in an atmosphere of stability and security, but it also needs co-operation from neighbouring countries in tackling the regional opium production which is somewhat similar to that in the Burmese frontier areas, and the Team hoped that some day it would be possible to obtain regional action, backed by unanimous world support, to deal with this problem.

36. In discussing what possible courses of action should be taken to deal with the large-scale opium production in Burma, the Team considered it advisable to divide the problem into two parts; (a) opium cultivation in the frontier districts, which is carried out in hilly areas on a shifting basis by more or less unsettled hill peoples; (b) opium cultivation in stabilised plots and at low levels, in particular, the Hukawng Valley.

37. Opium cultivation in the mountainous areas of Burma's frontier is traditional and is the natural economic response of the local people to an extremely rigorous physical and geographical situation. Poppy grows relatively easily without much human labour and opium has as assured price in the market. The Government is aware, on the basis of experience, that suppression of poppy cultivation is well-nigh impossible until the cultivators are provided with another equally valuable form of economic activity. Consequently the Team considers it necessary that a policy of opium...
eradication should proceed gradually and within a general framework of economic and social development of the affected regions. In this connection, the Team noticed that useful work has been already done by the FAA in some parts of the Kunlong frontier district and the eastern frontier region. The work thus commenced needs to be broadened and speeded up if progress is to be achieved in the foreseeable future.

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...experimental centres for viable crops within the general Burmese socialist planning as substitutes for opium cultivation. Such centres could also be the focus of general welfare activities for health improvement, extension of education facilities, child and maternity care, etc. In course of time, it is hoped these centres could also become the focus of cottage industries and small-scale co-operatives, naturally within the framework of a socialist plan covering the nation. The Team understands that the Government is considering the possibility of starting such centres at the earliest opportune time. It discussed with the UNTAB Resident Representative possibilities of international assistance to supplement the national effort in the setting up of such centres in areas such as the Hukawng Valley and it understands that some facilities are immediately available from savings under the EPTA programme. The Team hopes that the Government will take advantage of the available facilities.

40 In concluding its views on opium cultivation, the Team would stress the magnitude of the problem and the need for caution in the early stages of experimentation. A sure beginning on a small scale is a prime requirement before a broad policy of opium substitution can be undertaken.

[To be continued in issue Number 19 of the Newsletter]

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Acharn Kraisri and Phonetic Notation

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Referring to G. Wijeyewardene's sympathetic obituary of the fine old scholar, Kraisri Nimmanhaeminda, in nr. 17 or the Thai-Yunnan Project Newsletter (June issue, p. 19), I wish to make a brief comment on an aspect of Acharn Kraisri's achievements which is not explicitly covered by the Obituary, viz. his important documentary work on minority languages. It is important for the study of his linguistic data to be able to appraise his transcriptions properly, and this is the main point of the present note, although it leads over to a more general issue at the end.

As is probably widely known, Acharn Kraisri in 1961 and 1962 organized and headed two expeditions to the Khon Pa (the so-called 'Spirits of the Yellow Leaves') of Nan Province, Thailand. A result of this fieldwork is a set of papers which appeared in the Journal of the Siam Society LI, 2, 1963 (also published under separate cover as 'The Mrabri, Studies in the Field').

On his second expedition Kraisri himself took down the first usable list of 'Mrabri' words. His 1963-paper on the language presents this material and compares it both with Bernatzik's list of 'Yumbri' words from 1936 and with contemporary data from various Mon-Khmer languages which Kraisri had gathered himself. This is an impressive scholarly achievement for its time, considering how little had been done on Northern Mon-Khmer languages by 1961-62. Unfortunately, neither Bernatzik's nor Kraisri's expedition had had any professional linguist on the staff. One problem this poses for the linguistic world is the use of unauthorized phonetic (or quasi-phonetic) notation.

An intriguing feature of Kraisri's linguistic documentation (of Mlabri as well as T' in etc.) is that he provided two transcriptions of the same date: a Romanization and a transcription using Thai letters. Needless to say, a great deal of the important features of the data are shared by both sets of transcriptions. These features also include inaccuracies which are explicable by the specific setting: influence from Thai writing and pronunciation (e.g. Mlabri /g/ being rendered with the Thai letter k, or voiceless sonorants being rendered as voiced), and occasionally hypercorrection: influence from normative, educated Thai, which has had the unfortunate effect that Kraisri launched the name of the
tribe as 'Mrabri' with substitution of r for l (it was later established that the name is really Mlabri). There is nothing surprising in this. Nobody would expect field data from a first encounter with a new language to be flawless: even the most experienced linguist cannot help making many transcription mistakes especially in an early phase of his field work.

However, what is interesting about Kraisri's two transcriptions is that they are not at all equivalent; on the contrary they differ very much in adequacy, his Thai-based transcription being vastly superior to his Romanization.

From Kraisri's own remarks one gets a different impression. He explicitly says that the notation based on Thai script was included 'for the benefit of the lay Thai members [of the Siam Society, JR] who do not know phonetics'. From this one easily infers that he considered the Romanized data as a standard presentation for international scholarly reference. He did not make explicit comments on the design of his Romanization, which thus could be construed to be more 'phonetic' than it actually is. To my knowledge it is almost exclusively this Romanized version of Kraisri's 'Mrabri' data that has been used and quoted (exactly as it reads) in comparative Mon-Khmer research over the years.

On closer inspection, however, the relationship between the two kinds of notation turns out to be of a quite different nature: it is clearly the forms in Thai script that most faithfully represent Kraisri's aural impression. If read with the sound values of the letters in Central Thai (plus some conventions about the representation of sounds or sound combinations not occurring in modern Thai), these data are in many cases in perfect agreement with more recent linguistic data. Considering how difficult it is to get into such a language as Mlabri, this makes Kraisri's work on Northern Mon-Khmer languages an even more remarkable achievement, but it is important to consider why it is his transcription with Thai letters that works.

It is one of the most well-known characteristics of Southeast Asian languages that they share (to varying degrees) a number of typological characteristics concerning such phonetic and phonetic and phonological properties as syllable structure, prosody, consonant systems (with several different types of laryngeal control), and vowel systems (with rich inventories of 'pure' vowels including an unrounded back series). On all these points the English language, with its particular sound system and its orthographical and orthoepic idiosyncracies, is in fact extremely unfit as a reference for quasi-phonetic or quasi-phonological transcription systems. Thai, on the other hand, is on the whole (excepting certain important phenomena such as 'minor syllables' and 'register') in good typological accordance with languages of the Mon-Khmer stock.

All of this was entirely clear to Acharn Kraisri himself, who in his 1963 paper - after a very appropriate typological statement - concludes that 'one can [...] record the South East Asian languages, whether tonal or non-tonal, in Thai, as a good substitute for the phonetic system'. Partly for the just-mentioned reason and partly because of the cultural importance of Thai script, those (predominantly missionaries) who have been working on literacy in minority languages of this region have often used Thai script rather than some Romanization. What then about Kraisri's Romanization? Comparison of his Mlabri and T'in data with later data shows that his Romanization is very consistently based on the orthographical and orthoepic conventions of English. It is thus in a sense easy to read for non-linguists with an English background, but it does not give much real information about the phonetics of the wordforms which Kraisri has taken down, whereas the Thai-based notation is much more useful in this respect (a similar point was made by Smalley in 1963 with reference to Kraisri's Kammu data, which he had likewise given in two versions).

This leads over to some final remarks about an issue which is of relevance in a wider context, namely the old and apparently unsolvable question of Romanization of Thai.

I assume that anybody who has been exposed to information in Thai Romanization has been despairing over spellings which were a mess of elements representing different approaches to the orthographical problem. One approach is direct transliteration of Thai letters, which leads to a proliferation of silent letters or letters with inappropriate sound values in Romanizations of words of Indic origin. Another approach is use of Roman letter combinations with the sound values they have in English, which leads to much confusion e.g. with regard to stop consonants (such as the use of the letters d and t to somehow represent voiced, voiceless, and high and low voiceless-aspirated stops in Thai, etc.) and especially with regard to the qualities of vowels and diphthongs (with multiply ambiguous spellings such as 'aw').
This may cause acute despair if one wants to locate a person or an address from a slip of paper or even a map with inadequate Romanization, and it is no less of a nuisance in formal or scholarly contexts. The present writer has sometimes experienced being the chairman on conferences and having the otherwise pleasant task of introducing young Thai speakers with unfamiliar names. With a printed programme totally in English, and thus giving no cue to the actual pronunciation, such a situation can be quite embarrassing.

When will the scholarly World, above all our Thai colleagues, make the decisive effort to repair this situation? There is clearly a minor issue. The former is the technical problem of transliterating Thai adequately with Roman letters. The latter is the formidable problem of persuading the general public in and outside Thailand to use such a Romanization. Maybe it would take a scholar of Acharn Kraisri's standing and prestige to accomplish this latter goal?

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**An Anthropologist's Guide to the Literature on the Vietnamese Revolution**

Philip Taylor

This year saw the publication of a remarkable new anthropological work on Vietnam: Revolution in the Village, Tradition and Transformation in North Vietnam, 1925-1988 by Vietnamese-American anthropologist, Hy Van Luong. Faced by severe restrictions of access to his fieldsite, Luong has produced a model of inventive scholarship, skilfully combining the life histories of colonial exiles, detailed archival research and his short periods of fieldwork into a rich account of a momentous period. It is one of the few works that provide a village-level perspective on the Vietnamese revolution and counteract the overwhelmingly top-heavy emphasis of the literature (see also Trullinger, Hunt).

Revolution in the Village is also the first English-language, anthropological study of lowland Vietnam to be published in thirty years, the last being Gerald Hickey's Village in Vietnam. During this period, anthropology has come a long way, undergoing its own revolutions in theory. Luong's application of the latest theoretical developments in his study might be seen as his most remarkable achievement: in a single work, the last three decades of anthropological debate have been brought to bear on Vietnam.

However, despite the lack of (western) anthropological publications on Vietnam during this period, historians and political scientists have in fact been vigorously debating issues of interest to anthropologists, such as the impact of the World System on Vietnam, Vietnamese perspectives on colonization, the persistence and transformation of pre-colonial cultural forms and issues of power and discursive practices. The pre-eminent focus for these debates has been the Vietnamese revolution: how was the extraordinary success of the Vietnamese people in shrugging off the oppressive rule of three world powers to be explained? Luong was able to draw upon these debates to refine his anthropological approach to the Vietnamese revolution.

Luong's references drew me into the sizeable literature on the Vietnamese revolution and I began to survey it, in a more systematic manner, for arguments which seemed of interest to anthropologists. After a certain amount of reading, it appeared (to my anthropologist's eye) that there were three major issues which dominated all others in the various explanations given for the success of the revolution:

1. The role of cultural/ideological vs material factors.
2. The role of continuity vs discontinuity
3. A more sociological issue the role of elites vs non-elites.

Most authors were concerned to express their views on these matters. It seemed that it would be of use to anthropologists interested in Vietnam if an attempt were made to classify the various contributions to the debate, according to the position taken on these three sets of issues.

In the twilight years of French colonization, Paul Mus described Vietnam as "a nation off balance." French reorganization of the society had torn the Confucian literati from their spiritual traditions and traditional bonds of collectivity. The French education system "had stripped them of everything and given back only rationalism and
individualism, leaving them psychologically unbalanced, nervous and predisposed to violence" (McAlister & Mus: 94). Mus saw the revolution primarily as the struggle of the traditional elite to recover lost social cohesion, without which they would be driven to desolation and suicide (Ibid: 104).

Mus is the first writer to give a cultural determinist explanation for the revolution and makes it in the most uncompromising terms. In 1972, his views became popularized in the Pulitzer Prize-winning Fire in the Lake by Frances Fitzgerald.

Forty years down the track, Hy Van Luong's work has returned to a position surprisingly close to that of Mus. Luong studied a village north-west of Hanoi. He explains revolutionary activity, in this region at least, as a manifestation of the egalitarian principle inherent in the villages of northern (and central) Vietnam. This is the principle which in pre-colonial times, had demanded the periodic redistribution of communal village land.

Interestingly, he is the only one of these writers to attempt to account for the failure of the revolution to deliver substantial improvements in the position of Vietnamese women. He explains this enduring inequality in terms of the hierarchical principle, which alongside the egalitarian principle, shaped life in precolonial village communities and has continued to exert its influence over Vietnamese society.

To these two writers the revolution occurred under the sign of continuity. The following two, whilst maintaining the emphasis on cultural/ideological factors, place greater stress on discontinuity.

In Community and Revolution in Modern Vietnam, Alexander Woodside argues that the driving force behind the struggle against the French was a cognitive crisis afflicting the traditional Vietnamese elite:

It does not slander the political contributions of one of the most hard-working and resourceful peasantries in all Asia to point out ... that the Vietnamese revolution was led for the most part by the sons of the traditional intelligentsia, and this was the section of Vietnamese society which found itself earliest and most often in demeaning circumstances of cultural and political conflict with the colonial power. (Woodside: 303)

Their dramatic loss of status sent them on a recuperative mission during which they tried to revitalize old forms as well as hunting for new organizational forms with which to combat the French. This led them eventually to Marxism-Leninism an approach whose ethical concerns resonated with their Confucian past, but whose pretensions to being scientific represented a disjuncture they were willing to experiment with. Woodside's description of Ho Chi Minh and others of his generation as "Mandarin Proletarians" expresses this mixture of the old and the new influences on the Vietnamese revolution.

Of those writers emphasizing the cultural/ideological factors behind the Vietnamese revolution, David Marr makes the strongest claim for an ideological rupture with the past. Writing of the small, yet influential class of urban intellectuals emerging under colonial rule, he argues that for them, the period 1920-1945 (that is, the 25 years preceding the August Revolution) brought profound changes in political and social consciousness. As his title, Vietnamese Tradition on Trial, 1920-1945, suggests, during this period previously unquestioned obedience to tradition and morality was superseded by intellectual curiosity, criticism, and a search for new ideas that could solve Vietnam's problems.

Opposed to the above authors are those inspired by Marxist thinking, for whom the origins of revolution lay in the material conditions of global capitalism.

Jean Chesneaux argues that the driving force behind the revolution was a new class, the proletariat, created by the expansion of French capitalism into Southeast Asia a class driven by the laws of history to rebel. Its an approach which in its great simplicity, overlooks the fact that those in leadership positions in the Vietminh the movement which fought against and defeated the French in 1954 were not working class, but as Woodside has indicated, mostly descendants of the pre-colonial scholar-gentry.

Martin Murray, in The Development of Capitalism in Colonial Indochina, 1870-1940, also sees the proletariat as the powerhouse of the revolution driven by exploitation and fierce repression in the plantations and factories of Indochina, they frequently rebelled and achieved a high level of class consciousness. Unlike Chesneaux, he does consider the role
of non-proletarian Communist Party organizers, however sees their role as merely giving voice to the class interests of the proletariat.

These writers see the proletariat's small size as being disproportionate to their influence. Robequain and Murray argue that the considerable turnover in labour supply at French plantations and factories had the effect of extending the influence of the new mode of production to a large proportion of the population. Hence, as David Marr points out, Vietnam's subsistence farmers, poor peasants and agricultural labourers had a great deal of exposure to proletarian political formulations a factor of no little significance in the unfolding of rural events from 1930 onward (Marr 1981: 30).

Despite the important insights afforded by the above, authors, I'd have to call theirs an inadequate approach in its failure to explain the social make up of that key organization, the Communist Party or give an adequate account of the Party leadership's motivations.

In terms of the three sets of issues found to dominate the literature on the revolution, such writers see the material forces of history as all-important. In characterising the revolution as a reaction to French capitalism, they emphasise discontinuity. In their focus upon the proletariat, they locate the origins of the revolution in the non-elite domain. It is the latter term in each of the three pairs of factors which is stressed:

Cultural/Ideological vs Material

Continuity vs Discontinuity

Elite vs Non-elite

By taking a position with respect to each of the three pairs of factors, such authors have defined a distinct approach towards the Vietnamese revolution. In purely hypothetical terms, there would be eight such positions. This can be shown by placing this latter group of writers within a three-dimensional figure defined by the three pairs of factors (see Figure 1).

The approach to revolution pursued by these writers sits fairly comfortably within such a figure. To what extent are the remaining seven hypothetical approaches it defines matched by actual approaches in the literature?

Neo-classical economists are not usually grouped with Marxist authors, however the approach towards the Vietnamese revolution pursued by Samuel Popkin in The Rational Peasant: The Political Economy of Rural Society in Vietnam, has a lot in common with the above authors. As the title suggests, his explanation also focusses on a non-elite group, in this case, the peasantry. And his emphasis on that group's materialistic motivations as distinct from culturally-shaped motivations, places his explanation alongside other materialist ones. However, he parts company with the Marxists in seeing peasants as "political entrepreneurs," whose actions are guided by rational cost-benefit analysis. As such, he is proposing that peasants operated within a framework of free-choice, which couldn't be further from the Marxists' emphasis upon the structuring effects of French capitalism upon individual action in colonial Vietnam.

Popkin argues that Vietnamese peasants supported the Communists' program for revolution because their self-interest lay most clearly in that direction. In particular, the Communists' land reform initiatives appeared a better alternative than the policies of the colonial regime. Peasant revolutionary action thus represented no critical disjuncture with past behaviour, which continued to be guided by a cool-headed investment logic. Therefore it can be seen that Popkin's approach is defined by the same non-elite, materialist focus as the Marxists' approach, yet constitutes a second, distinct approach in its emphasis on the continuity of peasant motivation. (Figure 2)

Apart from overlooking the structuring influence of class, Popkin's maddeningly simple explanation ignores the environmental and cultural parameters within which Vietnamese peasants operated (Luong 1985). It would appear in the last resort that he is guilty of projecting a value from his own socio-cultural background mid-twentieth-century American capitalism on to the Vietnamese.

There are other writers who share Popkin's and the Marxists' emphasis on the non-elite origins of the revolution in this
case its the peasantry yet who downplay material factors and stress the role of enduring cultural/ideological formations.

Nguyen Khac Vien in his influential essay "Confucianism and Marxism in Vietnam," argues that there was strong continuity between the this-worldly, moral concerns of Confucianism and those of Vietnamese Marxism. We've seen his influence on Woodside already. But Nguyen Khac Vien argues that in "traditional Vietnam" there had always been a split between the Confucianism of the mandarins and the Confucianism of the people. The latter was as activist and as anti-authoritarian as the former was oppressive and hierarchical. He argues that Confucian scholars living at the village level and deeply immersed in peoples' problems had played a key role in articulating the grievances of the people and leading their rebellions against the oppressive Confucianism of the court. It was the Communists ex-school teachers and offspring of village scholars such as Ho Chi Minh and Vo Nguyen Giap those who understood grass-roots problems, who had become the new defenders of the Confucianism of the people.

Thomas Hodgkin similarly argues that village scholars served as conduits for the aspirations of the people, yet according to him, those aspirations were for Nationalism rather than Confucianism. He cites a primordial peasant Nationalism as being the key factor behind the Vietnamese revolution. Peasants had acted concertedly against the French and Americans just as they had repeatedly defended their national integrity against foreign aggressors from the north for the past two millenia.

For Steven Young, it was a purely peasant revolution (no scholars involved) this time motivated by Buddhist and Taoist peasant traditions. However Communist elites had hijacked the revolution just as in the past, the Confucian court had insinuated themselves back into power after peasants had rid the country of foreign invaders.

In terms of the model outlined above, these three writers clearly represent a third approach to the revolution: the struggle for power by a non-elite group (the peasantry) acting according to enduring pre-colonial norms. (Figure 2)

These authors only disagree as to the nature of those normative traditions.

James Scott's analysis of the 1930 Nghe-Tinh soviets could arguably be slotted in here. In the Moral Economy of the Peasant, he argues that the pre-colonial peasant village was marked by a strong subsistence ethic. According to Scott, the system might have been exploitative, but peasants were always guaranteed a minimum basic subsistence. During the Depression in 1930, the French breached this subsistence ethic by continuing to tax peasants at a constant rate which was now beyond their ability to pay and still survive. It was in defence of the old normative order that peasants rose up against local landlords and created the rural soviets.

Hy Van Luong argues against Scott that on many other occasions, the subsistence ethic had been breached, however the peasants had not rebelled. What was notable about the Nghe-Tinh soviets was the involvement of members of the indigenous elite in their capacity as local members of the Communist Party. This group were able to mobilize the peasantry both through hierarchical kinship links and patron-client ties, as well as appeals to the "radical egalitarian principle" which, he argues, was also constitutive of the pre-colonial village. Luong argues that while Scott is right in perceiving the influence of the pre-capitalist normative order, he misses the fact that it was made effective through the agency of the local elite. As does Woodside, he sees this group's involvement as a bid to reduce the cognitive dissonance resulting from their dramatic loss of status under French rule (Luong 1985).

It could be argued that Luong's argument represents a fourth approach to the revolution, defined by the same concerns with enduring, normative structures as Nguyen Khac Vien et al, yet differing from them in his focus on the elite. However the fact that he also regards the peasantry's role in the revolution as vital, makes it impossible to neatly fit him into one of the eight hypothetical approaches defined by the figure. One might perhaps characterise his explanation of the "traditional" elite's influence upon the peasantry by means of an arrow drawn from the elite to the non-elite positions in the figure, which are defined by cultural/ideological continuity. (Figure 2)

According to Luong, the local elites were able to draw upon a common socio-cultural tradition when communicating with the peasantry. According to Mus, however, the western-educated elite had permanently lost hold of their Confucian traditions and sought to regain psychological balance in the collectivism and spiritual purpose provided by Communism. How were they to communicate this foreign doctrine to the peasantry, who, according to him, had remained firmly embedded in their cultural traditions?
The problem was solved by the Communists' skilled use of the "traditional language of politics," which disposed the peasantry to see Communism as "more a fulfilment than a break with the past." (Mus: 116) To convey the concept of "socialising landed property" crucial to Communism, the Communists used the phrase Xa Hoi Hoa which, Mus argued, appealed to the peasants' sense of how regimes should change, expressed their belief in the spiritual nature of the village, suggested a return to unity, resonated with traditional communal values and implied the blessing of heaven. Some of these meanings he extracted from the Chinese roots of the phrase (Mus: 119).

Ever the classicist he has clearly wrung meanings out of the phrase that most villagers would never suspect were there. This is an interpretive sin Alexander Woodside could also on occasion be accused of. However he does engage a problem faced by those who see action guided by meaning: how was the new, esoteric knowledge of the westernized elite communicated to the great bulk of the population whom they sought to mobilize? In raising this problem, he sketches out a more complex approach to revolution. Again, it is more complex than any one of the approaches defined by the figure: it involves an important elite-peasantry interaction and a translation of new ideological messages into old, familiar forms. It might be illustrated on Figure 2 by means of an arrow drawn from the position marking the elite's concern with a foreign or discontinuous ideology to the position marking the peasants' concerns with "traditional" or continuous conceptions.

Expanding on this theme, Woodside saw the Vietnamese revolutionaries as cultural engineers who skilfully used existing aesthetic forms, traditional communications techniques and provincial symbolism to communicate their "imported inspirations." As he demonstrates, for instance, during the 1930 soviets, cadres made use of the popular rhythmic talking song genre in an attempt to rally the peasantry. Borrowing from a sub-title in a well-known 15th Century poem, "A Wife's Advice to her Husband," the cadres came up with "A Wife's Advice to her Husband to Make Revolution." The lyrics of this song spoke of the people's attempt to seize power during the Paris Commune (Woodside: 181).

Woodside argues that the Vietnamese revolutionaries strength was their perception that their large-scale movement "could derive cohesion and even dynamism from multitudes of small-group attachments which fell short, in practice, of attachments to the movement's most complex central ideologies and philosophical doctrines" provided those attachments harmonised with the movement's overall purposes (Woodside: 179). For example, David Marr argues that by the 1930s, Vietnamese intellectuals had a sound grasp of the Historical Dialectic. However, when they turned their attention to mass mobilization, they realised they would need to exploit the more idealistic conceptions of history popular amongst the Vietnamese masses: Thus while World War II was being interpreted publicly in the manner of a vast morality play, internal ICP documents relied on the theory of contradictions to analyse the primary Allied-Axis confrontation and other tensions within the allied camp and the Japanese-Vichy entente (Marr 1981: 417). While exploiting the "traditional language of politics," the ICP also made strenuous efforts to educate the masses in revolutionary theory and practice. The mass literacy campaign was directed to this end. Newspapers and magazines became increasingly important as outlets for the propagation of new ideas. Colonial prisons also functioned as schools for the dissemination of revolutionary knowledge as did plantations and other industrial sites. Workers' and peasants' schooling in a new conception of the world and a new language of politics Marxism-Leninism thus gave a renewed impetus to the Vietnamese revolution (Woodside: 199, Marr 1981: 183).

Those who stress the importance of the workers' and peasants' acceptance of new, revolutionary ideas seem to be advancing another approach to the revolution. It is again, a more complex approach than any of the eight positions defined by the figure. It could be represented by means of an arrow drawn from the position marking elite, discontinuous, ideological factors to that marking non-elite, discontinuous, ideological factors.

Yet here we see that the term "approach" which may have sufficed when classifying some of the earlier authors, no longer captures the totality of these latter authors' thoughts on the causes of the revolution. Woodside, for instance, detects both continuity and discontinuity in elite ideology and with respect to their attempt to mobilize non-elites, sees them communicating both directly and through the "traditional language of politics." His reflections on the revolution in fact encompass at least three of the "approaches" already delineated (Figure 2). The same could be said for Luong and Marr, whose ideological/cultural emphases are balanced by an acceptance of the role of material factors. Increasingly, the authors in this debate have moved away from reductionist stances choosing rather to emphasise a
particular constellation of factors amongst the many they see as pertinent.

It may be argued that with the increasing sophistication of the debate, the figure has outlived its usefulness. No longer do authors sit neatly within it but their arguments burst its limits and lines tracing their thought processes messily intersect its formal lines. Nonetheless, I would argue, it retains its usefulness for plotting the different conceptual moves these authors have made in relation to a widely accepted set of pertinent factors.

As one of the latest authors to publish, William Duiker in The Communist Road to Power in Vietnam, also acknowledges the role of a variety of causal factors. Yet perhaps his most important contribution is to focus in a new way upon the relationship between the Vietnamese elite and the masses. Like many other authors, he draws attention to the fact that the ICP leadership came substantially from descendants of the former generation of scholar-patriots. In addressing the motivation of these elites, he invokes Mus' explanation of elite behaviour, "In a world of rapid change, where the moorings of traditional beliefs had been severely shaken, Marxist-Leninist doctrine represented a comforting and persuasive antidote ... the radical intellectual might find Marxism congenial because it possessed certain comfortable similarities to the belief system inherited from the past." (Duiker 1981: 26).

On the other hand he argues that peasant uprisings against the French such as the 1908 peasant riots were provoked mainly by economic and social conditions (Duiker: 11). However, left to themselves, the peasants' inchoate anger and frustration at their progressive immiseration would at best only manifest itself in regional rebellions that would not seriously threaten colonial rule. The exploitation of the proletariat might manifest itself in working-class discontent, however, it was only with the return from Paris of the radical labour organizer, Ton Duc Thang, in the early twenties, that the first unions were formed (Duiker: 10).

He sees the relationship of the ICP elite and the proletariat and peasantry as that of the Leninist vanguard party and the masses in Leninist theory. Amongst its other strategems, the Party attempted to exacerbate the tensions in Vietnamese society, to provoke conflict, and thereby drive workers and peasants towards the inescapable conclusion that the French had to be ejected if they were to survive. Its an approach which downplays the role of non-elite ideology in revolutionary action. Culture and ideology which is all-important for the elites, does not appear in his analysis of the working-class or peasantry.

Yet in a sense, Duiker's argument represents the most complex explanation of the revolution reviewed thus far. For it touches on the entire range of variables in one conceptual move. The new philosophy of the intelligentsia, Marxism-Leninism, adopted for its similarity to their lost cultural heritage (In terms of the figure, elite, cultural continuity), led them to mobilize the peasantry by intensifying the effects of French repression upon them (non-elite, material discontinuity). This represents a far cry from those simple cultural-continuity and material discontinuity approaches that seemed not to recognize any sociological complexity in Vietnam's revolutionary movements.

Nonetheless a word of criticism. Duiker attributes the Communists' victory to their superiority in political skills over those of the South Vietnamese regime. Whilst credit must be given to the stategists of the Party one must not undersell the peasants own perceptions of the regime nor their ability to evaluate National Liberation Front initiatives.

Two of the positions suggested by the figure are as yet unaccounted for. Without going into the complexities of more accounts of the Vietnamese revolution, I should nevertheless indicate that they have been taken into account in the literature.

Eric Wolf suggests that the involvement of French-educated petty officials of the colonial bureaucracy in anticolonial political movements was in part a compensation for this group's divorce from traditional sources of power (Wolf 1969: 289). As one element in a complex analysis, his description of the elites' recuperative quest for power introduces the role of elite, material continuity in the Vietnamese revolution.

Serving as a corrective to Popkin's decontextualized explanation of peasant involvement in revolutionary action, Wolf also describes the role of non-elite, material continuity in a more context-specific way. He argues that the peasantry's hostility towards the Diem regime was in part due to the latter's "land-reform" campaign under which peasants actually lost land granted to them in earlier NLF land reform initiatives (Wolf 1969). Thus part of the peasantry's support for the NLF after this event was motivated by a restorative impulse to regain lost ground.
Writing about the same period, Jeffrey Race speaks of the repressiveness shown by the South Vietnamese Government towards all sectors of society in Long An Province as a factor enhancing the appeal of the NLF (Race 1972). The provincial elite would have been motivated by this factor, and hence we can see the role of elite, material discontinuity in the revolution.

A Final Word on the Figure.

Each of the eight hypothetical approaches it suggests has in fact figured in the debate. Some have been seen as determinant, however none have been thrown out of court as inconsequential. There has been a degree of merit in virtually all of the arguments summarised so far.

With respect to the contributors to the debate, there are some whose explanations could be "pigeon-holed" in one of the eight positions defined by the figure:

- The Marxists who describe it as a proletarian revolution.
- Those who describe it as a peasant revolution.
- Popkin, who explains it in terms of peasants' rational self-interest.

Most however cannot be pigeon-holed as they have seen the revolution as a more complex interrelation of factors; for example, Mus, Woodside and Marr's notion of the new knowledge of the intelligentsia being conveyed to the peasantry in old, familiar forms. Many of these have not reduced the revolution to even these complex interrelations of factors but have seen several parallel processes at work.

I think it best to follow the lead of such writers, who see the Vietnamese revolution as an extremely complex phenomenon an insight which is probably true of all revolutions. To explain it satisfactorily, I would argue, you need to touch base on each of the positions defined in the figure. It is also a matter of identifying the relationships between factors. And finally, it involves acknowledging the parallel operation of a number of such processes. My vision of an ideal explanation of the revolution is thus captured by the messy profusion of lines and crosses cross-cutting the diagram.

Reference List

Evans, Grant 1985. "Vietnamese Communist Anthropology" Canberra Anthropology 8: (1-2).
Thai-Vietnamese Dictionary (Hanoi Edition)

Thawi Swangpanyangkoon

Pham c Dng et al, eds., Photchanaanukrom Thai-Wiatnaam/T ien Thilan-Vit (Thai-Vietnamese Dictionary), Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, Hanoi, 1990. Hard cover, 10 x 6.5 inches (25.5 x 16.5 cm) 987 pages.

An important step in the spread of Thai language in Vietnam was the publication in 1990 of the Thai-Vietnamese Dictionary by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Hanoi. This came four years after Banchong Wacharaprapha, a Vietnamese by birth, published his Thai-Vietnamese Dictionary in Bangkok.

The Hanoi Edition of the Thai-Vietnamese Dictionary is the result of the efforts of a team consisting of Mr Pham c Dng, head of the team through his position of director of the Institute, Mr Nguyen Chi Thong, editor and former student at the Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, together with an editorial team of another four people. Publication was subsidised by the Toyota Foundation.

The Thai-Vietnamese Dictionary (Hanoi Edition) is a complete dictionary, that is it contains more than 20,000 entries almost all the words contained in the Thai Dictionary (the Royal Thai Institute Edition hereafter RTID, Ed.). In this regard it differs from Banchong's Thai-Vietnamese Dictionary which is incomplete and doesn't follow the RTID and has spellings and explanations which do not accord with that work.

In the Hanoi Edition the editors have not only translated the text of the RTID, they have also attempted to augment certain sections by devising their own examples and adding the roots of Thai words. This sometimes leads to a lack of clarity.

For the most part, the Hanoi Edition of the Thai-Vietnamese Dictionary is deserving of praise as an effort by a group working for little personal gain and lacking equipment such as typewriters and computers, as well as contact with Thailand and Thai experts. All the same, there are still deficiencies which could be remedied in future editions. The most obvious of these are the handwritten corrections made to the printed edition which are more numerous than usual. These lead the reader to think that he or she is reading a corrected draft manuscript, rather than a printed edition. In addition to the handwriting (probably that of the member of the editorial committee most skilled in Thai), there are mistakes in spelling Thai words, and numerous typographical errors, which is unusual for a dictionary, irrespective of the language.

The attempt to devise their own examples is evidence of the wholehearted and laudable efforts of the editorial team. As it happens, however, some examples are constructed on the wrong linguistic and cultural basis. For example the terms 'kat ma mae' (kadmQEEm, page 83), 'kaakun' (k;kul, page 87), and 'kaap chaluu (k;bCIU) Gip Su' (page 89). The editorial committee is probably unaware that in these compounds the first word is not Thai but Tai, that is the language of people who speak languages similar to Thai, but who live outside the Kingdom of Thailand. The examples which have been devised by the committee are thus terms composed of words from two languages, and in contradiction to the Thai, Tai and Vietnamese calendars. 'Kaap' the first ranked 'mother of the year' (mae pii) cannot be combined with
'chaluu', the second-ranked 'nakasat'. In the Vietnamese calendar there is Gip T and At Su but no Gip Su; the Vietnamese calendar has no such term as Gip Su.

The attempt to follow the RTID is appropriate, but the deficiencies of that work must also be understood in order that its mistakes are not repeated. The word 'koon' (ok=n) which the RTID mistranslates as 'bee or honey comb' is similarly mistranslated in the Hanoi Edition (the Tai Dam language of Vietnam also has the word 'koon' which means 'cavity or hollow'). The word 'saathit' is translated by So Sethaputra as 'demonstration' but the Thai-Vietnam Dictionary translates this term with the single meaning of thanh cng ('success').

On the whole the Thai-Vietnamese Dictionary is a praiseworthy piece of work. It is only hoped that the team which produced it will be more careful in examining the spelling and arrangement of text in future editions. The manuscript should also be given wider exposure, allowing a greater number of knowledgeable people throughout Vietnam and in Thailand to have a consultative role, in order to produce a better piece of work.

Trans Scott Bamber


The dictionary under review is concerned with Dehong Tai or Chinese Shan, a Tai dialect in the northwest of Yunnan Province in south western China in the Sino-Burmese and Sino-Thai border area. It offers a rich source of primary data for Tai comparativists. It marks a major progress in historical Tai studies. The publication of this dictionary has filled an important gap in comparative Tai. Due to difficulties in access to the language, research on this particular dialect has been scarce and narrow in scope. Very little was available in Western sources until the mid 70s when scholars like Gedney and Harris1 offered some account of dialects in this group, which may better serve for other purposes as their data contain a great deal of dialect mixing. Earlier work by Chinese scholars also suffered from similar limitations as this dialect has been officially grouped under Dai by Chinese authorities with Tai Lue, a better-known variety in Sipsongpanna.

This volume is by far the most comprehensive account of Dehong Tai. It contains a preface, two indexes, a Chinese-Dai lexicon, and four appendixes. The preface states the aim of the dictionary, which is 'for the use of translators, teachers, and researchers as well as for learners of Dehong Dai'. The two indexes follow conventional ways of Chinese dictionary making, providing reference both in Chinese alphabetical order (in pinyin) and in Chinese stroke order. The appendixes consist of names of the ten Heavenly Stems and twelve Earthly Branches and their combinations for the sixty-year cycle, names for the other minority nationalities in China, a table of Chinese history listing the past dynasties in chronological order from the early times of Xia down to the present and a table of Chinese pinyin, together with a table of Dehong phonemic inventory in both Roman alphabet and Dehong script. The main part of the dictionary is the lexicon. Included here are more than 30,000 lexical items in Chinese script and Dehong script. Where there is no one-to-one translation, examples are provided to spell out the semantic differences between the two languages. Among this huge corpus of data one finds such core Tai cognates as xau4 'rice, grain, food', k3 'to exit, (to go) out', pi6 'year', la2 'rice field', ln6 'month, the moon', ta6 'eye', wan2 'the sun, day', mu1 'pig', fai2 'fire', tau6 'ashes', kon2 'man, people', yu6 'to be in (a place), to stay' and so on, which are shared by all members of the Tai group, as well as some inherited items such as ya2 'to have', sum2 'to be defeated', kon1 'trousers', xa1 'snow', so1 'money', pt1 'to be short (in length)', hm1 'to kill', among others. Dehong has challenged some current views on Tai dialect subgrouping. Although Dehong seems to fit into the Southwestern Branch in Li Fang Kuei's 3-branch scheme2, having a number of typical SW words such as phet5 'spicy', fa4 'sky', ln6 'to run', lot5 'beard' which are not found in the Northern dialects, it does not always follow this scheme. One finds in Dehong quite a few items which Li labelled as 'not found in SW dialects' or 'typical NT words', e.g. li5 'steep', abrupt', ts3 'umbrella', tau5 'shuttle of the loom', and so on. In some cases Dehong uses both the SW form and the NT form, e.g., kan6 (SW) -- hom6 (NT) 'together', phau1 -- sm3 (NT) 'to burn', tsep3 (SW) -- xin4 (NT) 'painful'. In terms of phonology, Dehong is like most Tai dialects in having 6 tones. Although the aspirated-unaspirated distinction is still retained in Dehong between labial and alveolar stops, preglottalized stops have disappeared, which have merged into other consonants. Nasal /n/ is not used as initial consonant, which is quite extraordinary.
On the syntactic plane, Dehong may, on account of the identification of some grammatical elements, offer some insight into Tai diachronic syntax, an area previously much neglected. An analogy is made for some items between Chinese and Dehong. For example, Dehong li6 (from Proto Tai *dii (Tone A1, literally 'good') is similar in meaning and function to Chinese ke (p. 446), a modal prefix translatable into English as '-able, -ful', e.g., li6tsa2 'hateful', li6hak4 'lovable, lovely'. This item is also found in some Northern Tai dialects with similar distribution, which may be considered a typological feature of the Tai group. Also of interest are items such as the passive marker tso4 (developed from the lexical verb meaning 'to hit (the mark)', which is related to thuk4 (p. 1061)), which displays some syntactic features involving agentivity. With typical transitive verbs, it comes before the verb, otherwise it follows the verb, e.g. tso4 mai1 'be punished', and tsi4tso4 'be scared' (pp. 744-5). More work needs to be done into this area.

As a medium-sized reference dictionary, A Chinese-Dai Dictionary is up to the standard in scope, but it could have been more useful to those who are not familiar with Dehong script if phonetic transcriptions had been provided for Dehong. Also, the dictionary has laid too much emphasis on Chinese lexemes at the cost of leaving out a fair number of indigenous items such as the dual number for pronouns and some cognates like man4 'firm, steadfast', xok4 'water mill' and so on.

In spite of its shortcomings, A Chinese-Dehong Tai Dictionary will no doubt serve as an indispensible reference to Tai studies for the years to come. Meng and Fang should be congratulated for their remarkable achievement in Tai scholarship.

Reviewed by LUO Yongxian

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Letters

Kevin Heppner writes from Manerplaw, 15th September 1992:

Around here, militarily, things are still pretty quiet, as the rain is still pouring down, although fighting is going on up in northern Karen State in the area around Tee Moo Khee. The SLORC still hasn't withdrawn from any of their positions and is making all the preparatory moves for an upcoming offensive. Karen education representatives from the provinces (in town for a recent conference) said the enemy is still taking a lot of porters to help them stockpile at the frontline. This is combined with their announcement in April that they've increased the official 'defence' budget by US$200 million to a total of US$20 billion for the coming year. As British FM Douglas Hurd says this is 'obscene for a poor country with no outside enemies'. And yet it's countries like Britain and Canada and Australia and the USA and Japan who are giving them the cash. They get gun-money out of UN Aid Agencies, the World Bank, everybody's in on it! 'Mr Solidarity' Lech Walesa just delivered them a load Mi2 helicopter gunships. Vaclav Havel nominated Aung San Suu Kyi for the Nobel Prize and shortly thereafter Czechoslovakia sent the SLORC a whole shipment of light arms. Japan violated its own Constitution by sending them hundreds of trucks 'for commercial use' - all painted army green. The USA claims an arms embargo, yet Bell Helicopters is negotiating to sell parts and repairs to the SLORC's Bell fleet. After all they are not military helicopters, they were a gift of the USA in 1974 to spray opium poppies, right? Wrong - they were never used to spray poppy, but only as gunships and troop transports. But for purposes of the 'arms embargo', how they're used doesn't seem to count. Australia put on a similar 'embargo', but on the one occasion since then that an Aussie company wanted to sell engine parts for the SLORC bombers, GEE WHADDYA KNOW? IT SLIPPED THROUGH CUSTOMS!! Awfully sorry say the politicians, it won't happen again at least not until the next potential sale.

It's getting so the foreign connection is starting to infuriate me much more even than the SLORC itself. ASEAN seems to be gearing up to accept the SLORC into the fold, and I dread to think of the consequences. They would immediately throw up a wall against any foreign initiatives, particularly from Australia. Thailand was behind the idea, but as you know they've just had an election, and with the Democrats and PDP on top people are somewhat optimistic (although understandably wary). Now if only they give Prasong the FM post, maybe we can even have a party! (He thinks 'constructive engagement' is a bad idea.)
Dr Yozo Yakoto, UN Human Rights Commission's Special Rapporteur on Burma, is due in Rangoon in October or November. But the real news is that he's coming here. This is an absolute precedent-setting first in 43 years of revolution as far as I am aware. Is the UN about to actually realize these people exist? On one side my head is buzzing trying to figure out how best to prepare for this, although on the other side I can't help being utterly cynical about anything with UN in front of it. After all, everyone thought Jan Eliasson's mission in Rangoon earlier this year was to put the final thumbs down on the SLORC, but it turned out his real mission was to have Rangoon saying 'Everything's OK now, you can all forget about Burma again' even after being flatly refused on every issue he suggested to Khin Nyunt. Maybe Yakoto's mission is simply not to listen, so the UN can then say 'We've sent a fact finding mission to Manerplaw, and it found out everything is just as our SLORC friends told us'.

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Peter Hinton in Patterns and Illusions

In the paper by Peter Hinton 'Meetings as ritual: Thai officials, Western consultants and development planning in northern Thailand' in Patterns and Illusions: Thai history and thought (see notice of publication in Newsletter Number 17), a formatting error may confuse readers. The initial citation from Walter Benjamin which Hinton uses as the epigraph for his paper should have been indented and separated from his text. Unfortunately this formatting was lost. On behalf of the editors I apologize to readers and to Dr Hinton.

Gehan Wijeyewardene

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First International Exhibition of Tai Textiles and Culture

The first exhibition of the textiles of the Tai people of mainland Southeast Asia, organised by the Textile Museum, Washington D.C., will be presented at four international venues in 1992 and 1993. Textiles and the Tai Experience in Southeast Asia includes over 100 textiles, drawn from public and private collections from around the world. The exhibition, honoured by the official patronage of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit of Thailand, opened in Bangkok in July 1992 in honor of Her Majesty's 60th birthday. The Textile Museum will premier the exhibition in North America from October 2, 1992 to January 3, 1993. The exhibition will then travel to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (February-April 1993) and the Royal Ontario Museum (May-August 1993). A fully illustrated catalogue documenting the groundbreaking research of the exhibition's curators Dr Mattiebelle Gittinger, Research Associate, the Textile Museum, and Dr Leedom Lefferts of Drew University, will accompany the exhibition.

The exhibition is presented in three sections which explore the vital role textiles play in Tai culture:

1. Textiles and Religion
2. Textiles and the Monarchy
3. Textiles and Self Identity

Further information is available from George Rogers, Public Information Officer, The Textile Museum, phone (202) 232 7223, fax (202) 483 0994.

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Contributions, preferably on Disk, may also be mailed direct to the Editor, at: CHRTU, Department of General Practice, UWA, Nedlands, Western Australia 6009.

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1 Australian National University.

2 I was a consultant as part of two UNCDF missions, the first of which also involved people from IFAD, UNICEF, the FAO Investment Centre and the UNDP. The normal disclaimers apply; these views should not be attributed to UNCDF, nor to other agencies I am associated with. My visits to the border areas of eastern Shan State occurred in November-December 1991 and May-June 1992. Thanks to Kay Dancey for producing the accompanying map.

1 In support of the allegation, an extract from the "Report of the Select Committee on East India Finance, 1871" is reproduced - Assistant Commissioner Hind reported: "Organised efforts were made by Bengal agents to introduce the use of the drug and to create a taste for it amongst the rising generation. The general plan was to open a shop with a few cakes of opium and to invite the young men and distribute it gratuitously. To confirmed opium consumers, the drug is sold in its crude state; to novices or to those altogether ignorant of the taste of opium, a preparation called "kunbon" is sold or given away. Kunbon is sliced betel-leaf steeped in a decoction of opium and is chewed. It is made up in small packets which are sold at a pice or two a packet, or more frequently, perhaps given away gratis, especially if the victim be a lad twelve or fourteen years old. Pure opium would probably at first inspire disgust in one so young. His taste are, therefore, consulted and he is invited to take the drug in a milder form. Thus he is lured to evil courses, which soon develop into evil habits, the sequel to which is [remaining text illegible].

2 Thus the Baptist Missionary Conference in Rangoon, in a letter of 19 December, 1885, addressed to the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, requested that orders may be issued prohibiting or restricting the importation of opium into Upper Burma. Similarly, the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade (in England) in their letter of 4 March, 1886 to the Principal Secretary of State for India, urged that the sale and use of opium in Lower and Upper Burma be interdicted and that the import and export of the drug across the frontier between Burma and China be prohibited.

1 Vietnamese anthropologists have been at work during this period, yet within a very different paradigm from that of western-trained anthropologists (Evans 1985).


3 SEAsia Centre/National Thai Studies Centre, ANU

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