PATRONAGE AND POLITICIZATION

A Study of a Thai Factory in the 1970s

Mary Edmunds

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Master of Arts of the Australian National University

April, 1979
The thesis is all my own work
and all sources used have been
acknowledged.

Mary Commons.
PREFACE

In the latter half of 1976, the Faculty of Economics at Chulalongkorn University held one of its courses in industrial relations for representatives from business and industry in Bangkok. It was through this course that I made contact with the Deputy Personnel Manager from the factory that is the subject of this study. I would like to thank Supachai Manusphaibool for arranging this meeting at a time when the prospect of ever finding a factory willing to allow me to carry out research on an ongoing basis was becoming increasingly remote. Without his intervention, I doubt that I would have had access to a factory at all. The same can be said for the Deputy Personnel Manager, who listened with an open mind to my proposal, and arranged the necessary permissions. His courtesy and accessibility throughout the time of my fieldwork, moreover, made it easy for me to approach him at any time with queries or problems. The same courtesy and helpfulness was extended to me by all those in administration and management with whom I had dealings: the Vice-President, Factory Manager, Deputy Factory Manager, Assistant Manager (Administration), Nylon Department Head and Nylon Section Chiefs. Without their understanding and encouragement, it would not have been possible for me to have built up the day to day relationship with the employees to gather the material essential for this study. To the employees themselves, of course, goes my very special gratitude. They made me welcome on all occasions, patiently unravelled and answered my questions, and gave very generously of their time and friendship. All of these people have left me with very happy
memories of my contact with the Factory and those who made up its community. The fact that I have not given actual names - either here or in the text - is simply to preserve the anonymity of the Factory itself and the confidentiality of my informants.

There were others in Bangkok also who gave me much needed help, and to them, too, go my thanks. Foremost among these was my tutor in Thai language, Chanute Tantyaporn, whose continuing friendship I cherish. Sumitra Phongsathorn and Piyaporn Erbrasarthsook passed on to me books and articles related to my work that I would not otherwise have come across. Professor Amara Pongsaphich of Chulalongkorn University helped me to set up my project. I would also like to mention some of the staff of the Thammasat Economics and Political Science Faculties and the students, Usa, Mot and Suphorn, who helped me in the early stages of my work, and through whom I made valuable contact with workers from Omnoy and a number of others involved in the labour movement. Although the coup brought an end to this contact, I regard this contact as among the most exciting experiences of my time in Thailand.

In the writing up of my material, I received valuable and constructive advice, criticism, and suggestions from the Professor of Anthropology in the Department of Prehistory and Anthropology in the School of General Studies at the Australian National University, Anthony Forge, from my supervisors, Richard Davis and Geoffrey Benjamin, and from other post-graduate students in the Department, particularly Jon Altman, with whom I shared discussion and ideas. Aree
Hardy and Chamnan Vongvipak willingly gave their time to help me tie up loose ethnographic ends which I discovered still to be dangling on my return to Australia. I would like to thank also Margaret Lanigan, who typed the thesis for me, and Joan Goodrum and Doug Jervis, who embellished it with appropriate diagrams.

Last, but not least, my special thanks go to those neighbours and members of my family who came to the rescue in looking after my children in times of emergency; to my husband, Brendan Doran, who kept the home fires burning when I was in need of extra periods of peaceful study; and to my children, without whom the thesis would have been finished with far less enjoyment and in half the time.
ABSTRACT

This thesis is an analysis of the changes being wrought in traditional social relationships in a factory in Bangkok in the mid-1970s. The analysis looks at the different structures of meaning being developed by the two major groups involved in this essentially novel situation - the employer/manager group and the employees. It is suggested that, while relationships derived from the agrarian nature of traditional Thai society still operate in a residual sense in the Factory, they are in fact emphasized and promoted by management in an attempt to forestall and contain the development of alternative structures by the workers. Nevertheless, despite these, in many ways, successful attempts, there is evidence that a new form of consciousness is in fact emerging amongst the workers, best described as the development of class consciousness based on their situation as industrial employees in a capitalist mode of production. The main evidence for this is found in the setting up of a Trade Union - still a minority worker organization in Thailand - within the Factory, and in its history both before and after the coup d'état of October, 1976. This has meant the co-existence of two essentially incompatible systems within the Factory - a patron-client system and a growing class system.

At the time under discussion (September 1976 to April 1977), the development of class consciousness was limited to very specific actions and areas, and was, in general, peripheral to the life of the Factory. The patron-client relation is still very dominant, although its own ongoing
development is in the direction of increasing systematization. It is only marginally challenged, but, where this does happen, the challenge is in terms of emerging class consciousness on the part of the workers, and not in its own terms. Moreover, conflict between these two systems is seen to be endemic, because of the ambiguities inherent in the change in the structural role of the patron-client bond. This is associated, in the industrial context, with a lack of agreement between the two groups involved on the definition of the terms of their relationship, whether it is one of diffuse traditional reciprocity, or of clearly limited legal contract. The evidence is that, while the workers are willing to accept the more diffuse relationship where it works to their advantage, they interpret it in essentially contractual terms, and, where the two systems do come into conflict, they see themselves as members of a working class rather than of an all-embracing factory community.

Note on the phonemic transcription of Thai words.

This is based on the Thai-English Student's Dictionary (Haas 1964). Thai proper names and the names of festivals have been spelt according to the most common usage.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>THE FACTORY: FORMAL STRUCTURE</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>THE FACTORY: INFORMAL STRUCTURE</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>CREMATION AND CONFLICT: THE EMERGENCE OF THEMES</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>CONTAINMENT AS POLITICIZATION</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>THE FACTORY AS FORUM OF CONFLICT OR CONCILIATION?</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>THE FACTORY IN THE CONTEXT OF THAILAND'S INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX I. OFFICIAL FACTORY HOLIDAYS
FOR 1976

II. OFFICIAL LETTERS OF JOB OFFER AND EMPLOYMENT

III. COPY OF THE WORKERS' AGREEMENT 1976
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

To introduce industrialization into a peasant society is to effect a radical transformation in the bases of the social relations that operate amongst the different groups making up that society. It is to alter the structures which, up to that point, have determined the mode of human interaction characteristic of an agrarian society.

These characteristics have been spelt out - not without controversy - by a number of different writers (cf. Wolf 1966: 3f, 11, 15, 91; Firth 1970: 24f; Shanin 1971: 24f; Roseberry 1976: 47). Thorner's (1971:203-5) definition of peasant society, while including most of the points covered by these others, makes the useful extension of discussing the concept of peasant economy as an autonomous system of production, distinct from such other historical systems as slavery, capitalism, and socialism. The five characteristics which he suggests as crucial refer not simply to individual household units, but to entire economies.

In his terms, to qualify as a peasant economy

(1) roughly half of the total production must be agricultural:...

(2) more than half of the working population must be engaged in agriculture;...

(3) kinship and clan ties are subsidiary to the existence of a State power and a ruling hierarchy of a particular kind;...

(4) there are a significant number of towns with a definite pattern of urban life, quite different from that of the countryside; ... and
(5) (the most fundamental criterion): the typical and most representative units of production are the peasant family households.

Thorner (p. 206) makes the further - and very important - point that, at whatever point the peasant in a particular society (social formation)⁠¹ is to be found on the scale from serf to free, the peasantry as a group 'is subject and exists to be exploited by others'.

This raises the whole discussion of what is meant by 'exploitation' in peasant societies, an issue which has been exhaustively, if not conclusively, argued in the wake of Dalton's (1974) query: 'How exactly are peasants "exploited"?' Roseberry (1976:45) gives a relatively undogmatic and straightforward response to this question:

Exploitation [refers] to the appropriation by nonproducers of a portion of the total product of direct producers.

Having stated his definition, he then goes on (p. 45f) to make the point that

[since] this appropriation is of course necessary for the operation of many modes of production with which we are familiar..., the crucial aspect of any group (e.g., peasants) for the social scientist is not the fact that they are exploited but rather the manner in which they are exploited.

---

¹ As Poulantzas (1975) points out, in discussing the concept of mode of production, one is examining an abstract-formal object which does not exist in the strong sense of reality... The only thing which really exists is a historically determined social formation, that is, a social whole, in the widest sense, at a given moment in its historical existence... But a social formation, which is a real-concrete object and so always original because always singular, presents a particular combination, a specific overlapping of several 'pure' modes of production (Poulantzas 1973: 15).
This question of the manner of exploitation, as well as its basis, will differ according to whether one is analysing 'pure' peasant societies - that is, those that existed in their relatively stable traditional form - or peasant societies in transition, subject to the forces of modernization. It is the latter aspect which I propose to examine in relation to Thai society.

1. Thailand as a Peasant Society in Transition: Historical Background.

Although there has been a decline since the 1950s in the percentage of the population engaged in agriculture, there can be no doubt that Thailand continues to qualify as a predominantly peasant economy. Indeed, although the proportion of its working population still classified as agricultural has fallen - from 88 per cent in 1954, to 81.5 per cent in 1960, and 79.9 per cent in 1966 (Ingram 1971: 237), and, most recently, to 75 per cent in 1975 (Turton 1978: 106) - in absolute terms this agricultural population has continued to increase (from 11.8 million in 1962, for instance, to fourteen million in 1973 (Turton 1978) ). At the same time, to write of Thailand in these terms implies a continuity with the past which obscures the processes determining the relations that operate amongst its various social groups, by mystifying the bases from which they are derived. Since the Bowring Treaty of 1855, traditional bases, if not their forms, have been transformed by Thailand's entry into the world market - that is, into the capitalist economic system (cf. Roseberry 1976: 47). This incorporation has passed through three main historical phases - 1855-1945, 1945-1965, and 1965-1976.
a) From the Bowring Treaty till the end of World War II, 1855-1945. Despite Thailand's proud claim never to have been colonized, the Bowring Treaty with Britain - like Perry's gunboat diplomacy in Japan of the same period - marks the end of the country's autonomy, and the opening of Siam to the West. It is widely accepted, indeed, that Thailand's 'independence' was the result as much of Britain's desire to keep the kingdom as a buffer state between her own and the French possessions in Asia (Ingram 1971: 2) as of the strength and political shrewdness of the royal heroes of the Chakri dynasty, Kings Mongkut (1851-68) and Chulalongkorn (1968-1910).

The effects of this treaty are summarized in Rong (1973:121), who includes a most pertinent quotation from Sir John Bowring himself:

Great Britain derived all the advantage from the Treaty, as Bowring commented that 'my success involved a total revolution in all the financial machinery of the Government - that it must bring about a total change in the whole system of taxation, that it took a large proportion of the existing sources of revenue, that it uprooted a great number of privileges and monopolies that had not only been long established but were held by the most influential nobles and highest functionaries in the State'. Siam lost judicial and fiscal autonomy.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the results of this coerced contact were clear; not only had Siam concluded similar treaties with all the other insatiable colonial powers - with the United States and France in 1856, Denmark

---

2 This was the official name of the kingdom until it was changed to 'Thailand', 'the land of the free', by Field Marshall Phibul Songkhram in 1949. 'Thailand' (Myap thaj) was in fact the traditional popular name for the country (Rong 1973: 3-5).
5.

and Portugal in 1858, the Netherlands in 1860, Prussia in 1862, and Sweden-Norway, Belgium and Italy in 1868 (Rong 1973: 121) - but some ninety per cent of the total value of Siamese trade was in British hands (Turton 1978: 105).

This domination of Thailand's economy by foreign powers continued up to the coup of 1932, which brought an end to the absolute monarchy and initiated constitutional government. In the burgeoning of nationalism which followed, the government denounced earlier treaties, and negotiated new ones, with the following basic provisions:

The Thai Government was free to impose customs duties on imports and exports as it thought fit. It could make a military requisition and establish monopolies. It had the power to keep those who were born in the country as Thai nationals and to reserve land for Thai citizens, while the Thai courts had jurisdiction over foreigners (Rong 1973: 171).

This recovery of juridical and fiscal autonomy was, however, only superficial, since the economy remained tied to external markets. These treaties were, moreover, suspended during the Japanese occupation of 1942-45, during which Siam bowed to the inevitable and allied herself with the occupying power. This alliance virtually marks the end of the country's tradition of official neutrality, which successive monarchs and governments had so successfully maintained since the days of King Mongkut.

b) Post-war Thailand to the American Occupation, 1945-65.

Although the government made no official alliances in the immediate post-war years, it adopted a decidedly deprecatory stance towards those countries which had won the war. As Rong (1973: 179) rather entertainingly explains it:
Since the assumption of his second premiership [in 1948], Marshal Phibul had apparently been trying his best to right the wrong done to the United States of America and Great Britain by promoting close friendship with them, particularly with the United States, and extending prompt co-operation to the United Nations Organization when fighting broke out in Korea on June 25, 1950. Thailand was among the first which sent troops to join the UN army in the Korean War.

This anxiety to atone for the country's lapse from grace led Phibul to make a fundamental change in the nature of Siam's treaties with the West. Whereas before 1941 these had all been confined mainly to the commercial sphere, the post-war era saw the first political and military agreements. With a military assistance agreement with the United States in 1950, and, even more definitely, with the joining of the SEATO alliance in 1954, Thailand became officially aligned with the Western bloc, an alignment symbolized by the establishment of the SEATO headquarters in the royal capital itself.

The acceleration of American penetration of Thailand under the dictatorship of Field Marshall Sarit Thanarat (1958-64) was a logical extension of this commitment, though it took on an added vigour because of the personality of Sarit himself. His energetic promotion of American involvement at every level continued almost by the force of its own inertia after his death. The fact that his successors, Thanom and Praphat, took up the reins of government at almost the exact time of Lyndon Johnson's escalation of the Vietnam War added a practical intimacy to this alliance which was without precedent in Thailand's history.
c) The American Occupation, 1965-76. The extent of the American presence during these years makes it not inaccurate to give it the title of an occupation. As one commentator graphically phrased it, Washington treated Thailand, and was encouraged to do so, as 'a sort of gigantic immobile aircraft carrier' (Anderson 1977: 15). Figures for the number of U.S. servicemen (Table 1) show a dramatic increase after 1966.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of troops</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>6,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>44,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>47,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>35,00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Military presence officially ended</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: U.S. Military Presence in Thailand, 1966-76 (based on Elliott (1978: 42)).

These servicemen operated from at least eight major bases and from dozens of minor installations. The figures do not, moreover, include troops on R. & R. from Vietnam, who were estimated to number, in the peak years of 1968-69, at least five thousand a month (Elliott 1978: 15, 26).

This vast influence came to an end after the overthrow of Thanom, Praphat, and Narong in October, 1973, only after big anti-American demonstrations in Bangkok. It is arguable, moreover, that, had the United States itself not been in the process of withdrawal from Vietnam, its dominance over its Thai ally, even under the post-1973 democratic government, was such that the withdrawal from Thailand would not have been effected. As it was, the dismay felt by the Thai military at what they regarded as their abandonment by America was
undoubtedly one of the factors contributing to their seizure of power yet again in the October coup of 1976.

The withdrawal of U.S. troops, then, was by no means the end of the Thai-American alliance. Nevertheless, it marks a convenient point from which to view the impact on Siam of its involvement with the West from the time of the Bowing Treaty.


Siam's incorporation into the world capitalist economy has had a twofold effect - the growth of industrialization, and changes in the agricultural sector. These two aspects are closely related, both because of the resultant changes in the labour force and because they have been increasingly influenced by the world market situation.

a) The Growth of Industrialization. By the end of the nineteenth century, the major effects of Siam's exposure to the West had been felt, not surprisingly, in the agricultural sector. Because of a rapid expansion in the cultivation of rice as a response to export demands, local manufactures in what had previously been a 'more diversified and self-sufficient economy' (Turton 1978: 105) had dwindled to insignificance. A modest revival of industry began in the first half of the twentieth century, no longer dictated by indigenous demands, however, but by the needs of the world market. Most of what growth there was before 1950 dates from the revolution of 1932. Data relevant to this early
stage of industrialization are scarce, but figures based on the census of 1937-38 indicate that those engaged in 'industries, craft, and engineering' were still only some 0.02 per cent of the workforce (Thompson 1947:220). The situation at the end of the Second World War is summarized by Thompson (1947: 222):

Most of Siam's industrial development has taken place in Bangkok, except for the tin and rubber industries located in the peninsula and forestry in the north. Until recent years the capital, labor, and management of such industries have been almost wholly foreign. The advent of the nationalistic constitutional regime, along with the world depression, made the project of industrializing Siam to the point of local self-sufficiency rapidly popular. The lack of Siamese capital, skilled labor, technicians, fuel and transportation facilities was not regarded as a sufficient deterrent by the nationalists. In the late 1930s a considerable number of industrial adventures were sponsored by the government, which theretofore had given direct employment almost exclusively to functionaries and laborers for the Public Works Department...

Prior to the outbreak of the Pacific War most of the constructive work in the direction of industrialization had been preparatory.

The position in 1950 was that such manufacturing as existed reflected the rural bias of the nation. The most important industries - rice milling, saw mills, rubber

---

3 It is worth quoting here Ingram's (1971: 5) comment on the availability of statistics:
For those not familiar with the literature on Thailand, we should mention the scarcity of data. The Thai as private persons have not written much [until recently] about the facts and figures of their own economy. As a result available information comes mostly from government or foreign sources, and before 1900 government records are few and far between. The reliance on government records since 1900 is unfortunate but unavoidable. Only the government has collected and published the statistics which must be used in this study.

This comment applies also to all the statistics quoted in this thesis.
factories, and some metal processing factories - were connected with the processing of agricultural commodities and the fabrication of some products for home consumption (Chira 1971: 12). Most of these establishments were small workshops and medium sized plants (p. 29). The proportion of the workforce engaged in manufacturing, though it had risen since 1937-38 (0.02%), was still only a little more than two per cent (p. 9). By 1957, this had increased to 2.7 per cent. Of the 300,000 or so workers which this figure represents, it is to be noted that about thirty per cent was still accounted for by rice milling, saw milling, and flour milling (p. 57f). Over the period 1950 to 1960, the total number of industrial establishments rose from less than 1800 to more than 14,000 (p. 29). Two things about this expansion should be noted. The first is that, in 1960, more than half of all industrial establishments were located in the Bangkok-Thonburi area (p. 60); the second, that industrial plants continued to maintain their character of light manufacturing. In 1957, less than two per cent of the establishments employed more than fifty workers (p. 61).

In general, the decade of the fifties showed two characteristics. The first of these is the active entrepreneurial role played by the post-war government in promoting economic development. The other is the relative slowness, despite the apparently large increase in the number of factories, with which the industrial sector was developed. These two aspects are in part related. Although the Phibul Government wished to shift the structure of the economy and
reduce the country's dependence on agriculture, its concern was deflected by the boom in commodity markets associated with the Korean War. This caused emphasis to be placed on the production of traditional primary products (Ingram 1971: 287). After the War, although attention was turned to industrialization in order to offset the loss of some of the profitable rice market, activity in the field of industrial promotion still achieved only very poor results. Silcock (1967: 16) suggests two reasons:

The reason for the lack of success was the one that was to continue to interfere with Thai industrial progress right up to the present day: the association of the control of industry with political power and the consequent use of industrial undertakings as opportunities for patronage. There was also a market reason: although imports were being drastically restricted there had been heavy overstocking during the Korean War boom, partly as a result of delayed fulfilment of orders from industrial countries.

At the end of 1958, Sarit's seizure of power brought about a sharp change in economic policy. The most important of these changes was the withdrawal of government from an active role in industry, and the promotion of private investment. To this end, a Board of Investment was set up, and an Industries Promotion Act promulgated. The Act was presented as an attempt to attract private investment, both domestic and foreign, but the tenor of its incentives indicates that the government's sights were clearly set on bringing in foreign capital\(^4\). These inducements included -

---

\(^4\) From this time can be said to date the government's preoccupation with maintaining an 'attractive investment climate' which, as we shall see later, has played such an important role in the history of the labour movement.
guarantees against nationalization and competition from state enterprises, right to own land (foreigners are ordinarily not allowed to own land), right to repatriate profits and capital, right to bring in technical and managerial personnel, exemption from import duties and business taxes on imports of capital equipment to be used in a new plant, exemption from income tax for a five-year period, exemption from import duties and business tax on imports of new materials and inputs for a five-year period (full exemption for Group A industries, fifty per cent exemption for Group B industries, and up to 33\(\frac{1}{3}\) per cent exemption for Group C industries). At the discretion of the Board of Investment (or higher authority) a promoted firm might also be assisted by a tariff increase on competing imports or even by a ban on such imports, and it could be exempted from export duty, if any (Ingram 1971: 288f).

In the decade following 1959, 607 promotion certificates were issued and about 350 firms actually began to operate. Although by 1969, Thai registered capital (4,127 million baht) was twice that of foreign capital (2,052 million baht), investors from more than twenty-four foreign countries had taken advantage of the scheme. Of these, the highest investor was Japan (658.3 million baht), followed by the United States (333.1 million baht) and Taiwan (301 million baht) (p. 291).

This promotion scheme, in conjunction with the first Six-Year Plan of Economic Development (1961-66), meant a rapid growth in the industrial sector. A measure of this may be taken by the fact that, by 1969, the percentage of the workforce involved in industry had risen to four per cent (Ingram 1971:285) and, by 1976, to 5.2 per cent (Handbook of Labour Statistics 1976: 5 & 7).

While this expansion in the industrial sector was taking place, in apparent response to domestic, as well as to external
b) Economic Change in the Rural Sector. While the effects of involvement in the world market by industry may have been to some extent muted through being partly directed through domestic channels, almost all the economic innovations in the rural sector have been made in direct response to foreign market forces. This goes back to the Bowring Treaty, the immediate effects of which were felt principally in this sphere. This was largely because foreign demands centred mainly on cheap rice. In 1850, for example, only some five per cent of the rice crop was exported; by 1905-6, this proportion had risen to fifty per cent. As a result, the area of land under rice cultivation had nearly doubled (Turton 1978: 105). By 1950, the increase was seven times as much. Ingram (1971:36f) has summarized the impact of these developments on the overall economy:

In general..., Thailand changed from an almost self-sufficient economy to an economy which specialized in a few products and sold these to buy its requirements of other goods. For the nation as well as for many individuals the specialization went quite far. The nation produced little for export besides rice, tin, teak, and (later) rubber. Large numbers of farmers were almost completely specialized in rice, and it was often their sole money crop.

With the development of an exchange economy, important new economic functions had to be performed - namely the functions of taking the farmer's produce from him, transporting it to the seaports, selling it to foreign buyers, and then buying other goods to take back to the farmers.

My qualification of the extent of response to purely domestic pressures will become clearer when I look in detail at the labour scene in Chapter VII.
The story of the growth in the export of rice up to 1950, and its expansion to include not only the Central Region, but the North and Northeast as well, is detailed by Ingram (1971). What emerges from his account is that it is the Thai themselves (as distinct from the Chinese, who monopolized the entrepreneurial role) who have been responsible for this massive expansion in rice growing, a phenomenon which both underlines and at the same time belies the traditional image of the conservative peasant. On the one hand, the form of the expansion - a simple multiplication of an existing lifestyle - shows no dramatic creativity. On the other hand, the very fact of the expansion indicates that the Thai peasant is indeed remarkably responsive to market stimuli (cf. Chira 1971: 47). This has been borne out by the introduction of new crops in more recent years which, in some cases, have actually supplanted rice. These crops - maize, kenaf and tapioca - are almost wholly commercial crops (Chira 1971). The same commercial factors have operated in the production of tin and rubber, which have always been geared towards foreign markets. These products have, for this reason, always been particularly vulnerable to fluctuations in world prices, such as the slump which followed the Korean War.

Another aspect which becomes clear from Ingram's analysis

---

6 The influence of foreign markets is particularly marked here. The production of tapioca, for instance, has increased enormously in the last few years at the expense of rice because there has been a good world price. This increase reflects the market orientation of peasants, since tapioca leeches the soil, making it impossible for rice to be grown again in the same ground for several years.
is that, although the Thai peasants have embraced the growing rice trade with enthusiasm, they have participated only as growers. This has meant that there has been no change in their status as peasants, while they have served the proliferation of the petty bourgeois class of middlemen. Concomitant with this development has been the problem of the acquisition of large tracts of land by some householders and the reduction of many former peasant proprietors to the condition of tenants or agricultural labourers (Thompson 1947: 220f). Figures related to this problem are notoriously hard to come by. Some idea of the scale of tenancy by 1968-9 is, however, given by Turton (1978: 112) (Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>North</th>
<th>North-east</th>
<th>South</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner-operator</td>
<td>59.34%</td>
<td>81.72%</td>
<td>97.33%</td>
<td>84.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Pure' tenant</td>
<td>24.58</td>
<td>14.16</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>8.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part owner/</td>
<td>16.08</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>7.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>part tenant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Tenancy by Regions, 1968-69.

While these figures are far from telling the whole story (such as the incidence of poverty in the North-east despite the high percentage of owner-operators), it is clear that the problem of landlessness is one to be taken seriously. Moreover, the significantly higher proportion of tenants in the Centre (the main rice-growing area) is borne out, and a substantial increase shown, by a further survey taken of selected provinces (Table 3).

Turton (1978: 111f) attributes the steady increase towards landlessness and tenancy to a number of factors:
In 1958 the Sarit government rescinded the 50 rai nominal limit on landholding. Since then, contrary perhaps to government intention, much domestic capital, including that of the growing urban middle classes, has been invested in land, often as speculation with no improvement. Agricultural land prices have risen dramatically, though they are still highly variable. One rai of land which sold for 3,000 baht in 1953 could fetch 250,000 baht in 1971. Rural land for urban development can reach twice this figure. Agricultural land in Chiangmai province [the North] in 1975 was about 20,000 baht per rai; comparable land in more remote areas might not reach a quarter this price. Road building and other government infrastructure schemes have led to the dispossession of peasants, sometimes without compensation, by officials and their accomplices, and to the accumulation of land by capitalist investors including some of the highest political personages in the land. More frequent causes include indebtedness and the fragmentation of holdings after three or more generations as population increases.

What must be kept in mind is that, while this is only part of the whole economic situation, increasing landlessness and poverty and other associated problems in the rural sector have been the concomitants of the modernization ensuing upon the growth of foreign influence in Thailand. In particular, the large-scale land speculation which followed Sarit's elimination of the 50-rai landholding limit stemmed largely from the boom associated with the American military presence

---

Table 3. Percentages of Tenants and Part-Tenants among all Farmers - Central Thailand
(from Turton 1978: 112)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1968-69</th>
<th>1973-74</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pathum Thani</td>
<td>82.62</td>
<td>83.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayuthaya</td>
<td>62.05</td>
<td>76.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samut Prakhrarn</td>
<td>68.22</td>
<td>71.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakhon Nayok</td>
<td>46.96</td>
<td>67.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chachensao</td>
<td>42.70</td>
<td>63.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saraburi</td>
<td>42.00</td>
<td>53.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ang Thong</td>
<td>39.73</td>
<td>49.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

7 The rai is a measure of area, equal to 1,600 sq. metres or about 0.4 acres (Ingram 1971: 4).
of the sixties (Anderson 1977: 15). It now remains to discuss the social and political transformations associated with, and deriving from, these economic changes.


It is appropriate at this point, I think, to refer back to Roseberry's (1976: 45) definition of exploitation. This, he said, refers to 'the appropriation by nonproducers of a portion of the total product of direct producers'. What he then went on to claim was that what is important in analyzing peasant society is not the fact that peasants are exploited, but the manner in which they are exploited (p. 46).

What we have been looking at in the discussion up to this point is Thailand as a peasant society in transition, but a transition of a very specific form - that is to say, the incorporation of this peasant society, with its precapitalist mode of production, into the capitalist economic system. This incorporation has taken the form of the surplus product produced by the peasants (agricultural commodities) being appropriated by the larger system by being ultimately sold on the world market (p. 47). This has led not only to the co-existence of the precapitalist and capitalist modes of production at the broader level, but to the planned development of a capitalist sector within Thailand itself in the form of industrialization. It has also led to an unplanned development of groups of non-producers who, by each adding their own mite of appropriation, have given rise to a group of landless producers who have nothing to sell but their labour power. This has caused
among different groups of peasants a profound differentiation that did not exist before 1855.

a) The Rural Sector. A distinction between rich and poor peasants in Siamese society is undoubtedly nothing new. What is new is the nature of their opposition. It would be simplistic to see the peasantry as divided clearly into rich and poor; nevertheless, in the 1970s the differences between the two ends of the spectrum are more extreme than they have ever been. At one end, the land boom has spawned a rich capitalist agribusiness, which operates wholly on wage labour. Associated with this is a new class of entrepreneurial, small capitalist farmers whose position has been strengthened not only by the acquisition of larger landholdings, but also by government-sponsored farmers' groups (Turton 1978: 116-18). The interlocking of such projects with American strategic schemes is instanced by programmes such as the Accelerated Rural Development programme (ARD) which was initiated in 1965 with large scale U.S. backing. Turton (1978: 107) outlines the significance of the programme:

The programme concentrated on the North East where armed insurgency started, also in 1965, and to which some 70% of U.S. aid to Thailand has been directed. It also concentrated on other border areas 'to co-ordinate the planning and implementation of a wider range of rural development programmes in security sensitive changwats (provinces)...' and 'to win over, and sometimes win back, our own villagers'. 90% of the ARD budget has been spent on road building with a clear eye on military-political as well as economic priorities.

At the other end of the spectrum are the increasing numbers of poor and landless peasants. Extending into each
end of the spectrum are the 'middle peasantry' who consist of basically self-sufficient, independent smallholders (p. 125). Out of this complex array of economic and social relations arose the Farmers' Federation of Thailand (sahaphan chaaw râj chaaw naa bêaŋ prathêed thaj) of 1973-75. An excellent analysis of this movement and its significance is given by Turton (1978).

Here, only a number of salient points need be noted. The first is the speed with which peasants organized after the October revolution of 1973. Secondly, the first issues on which they began to organize were those of farm rents — rent being a form of exploitation particularly associated with a peasant economy (cf. Roseberry 1976) — and land reform. The third concerns the violence of the reaction against the movement, which ranged from bureaucratic obstruction to bloody suppression. Between February and August of 1975, for instance, this violence reached its peak in the assassinations of at least eighteen Farmer's Federation leaders. Although this kind of violence had not been unknown previously, the scale and range of groups involved were new, and are a measure of the radical nature of the peasants' movement.

This scenario has all the elements of the emergence of true social classes, to wit; that the social groups in this formation are so related to the means of production (rural capitalists as non-producing owners, with their allies, against non-landowning producers who no longer own any part of the means of production) that they have developed class consciousness and

---

8 These involved organized thugs such as the Red Gaurs and members of Nawaphol, both of which will be dealt with later. Their opposition was given respectability, however, by the support of the Village Scouts, a royal-sponsored movement.
solidarity in opposition to one another.

This question of class consciousness is central to the discussion in this thesis of the change in traditional social relationships between the different groups involved in the Factory being studied. It will be demonstrated that, in this situation, class is becoming increasingly the basis for communal action by the workers (cf. Weber 1958: 181ff). To the extent that the class situation in certain instances provides indeed a better basis for individuals to manipulate the prevailing social relations in order to achieve what they see as promising results (p. 183), it behoves us to pause here and reflect on the vexed question of the place of class consciousness in the emergence of groups that can be truly defined as classes.

b) The Question of Class Consciousness. To what extent can a class be a class 'for itself' if it is not consciously so? I would argue that, despite the inalterable relation to the mode of production of the social groups concerned, a social class becomes truly a class 'for itself' only when it becomes self-conscious. Consciousness, as Marx himself proclaimed, is rooted in human praxis, which is in turn social (Giddens 1971: 36). Class consciousness is different in kind, therefore, from a simple awareness of one's exploited position. While the latter has undoubtedly existed in pre-capitalist groups, and has flared up in sporadic attacks on the exploiter group, only class consciousness implies the awareness that the interests of one's own class are realizable through consistent action.
The critical question then is: what constitutes class consciousness? To answer this, a distinction must first be drawn between class instinct and class consciousness.

Class instinct is... those unconscious sets of reactions, products of the class situation, which are found at the base of all spontaneous expressions of class.

Class instinct is subjective and spontaneous (Harnecker 1971: 148f).

In contrast, class consciousness is 'objective and rational'. Parallel with this distinction between instinct and consciousness is that between the two kinds of class interests: immediate, spontaneous interests, which may arise out of instinct, and long-range, strategic interests, that are the fundamental component of consciousness. The former was associated by Lenin with economic conditions and 'trade union consciousness'. He labelled (though did not condemn) it as reformist, and categorized it as merely one aspect, and a rudimentary one at that, in the development of class consciousness (1970: 89, 100ff).

Lenin's criticism did not take into account, however, the structural effect of a class-related organization such as a trade union - or, I would argue, a peasants' federation - as a possible social force - its role as a 'new element'.

[A class as a social force can be said to exist] when the relation to the relations of production, the place in the process of production, is reflected on the other levels by pertinent effects. These 'pertinent effects' can be located in political and ideological class relations. We shall designate by 'pertinent effects' the fact that the reflection of the place in the process of production on the other levels constitutes a new element which cannot be inserted in a typical framework which these levels would present without this element. This element thus transforms the limits of the levels of structures or of class struggle at which it is
reflected by 'pertinent effects'; it cannot be inserted in a simple variation of these limits.

[To take the example of the small-holding peasants in The 18th Brumaire:] They constitute precisely a distinct class to the extent that their place in the process of production is reflected in this concrete conjuncture, at the level of political structures, by the historical phenomenon of Bonapartism which would not have existed without the small peasant farmers (Poulantzas 1973: 78f).

In order to assess an organization such as a trade union, or a peasants' federation, and its effectiveness as a possible measure of class consciousness, therefore, one would need to take into account what 'pertinent effects' it may have at the level of political structures. That is to say, that a trade union or a peasants' federation is not necessarily a manifestation of class consciousness, but that it may be so.

One last aspect relating to class consciousness remains to be mentioned and that is the problem of false consciousness. It must be made clear that, as ideology constitutes part of the social superstructure, which is nevertheless determined, in the capitalist mode of production, by the economic infrastructure,

the prevalent ethos at any given time is one which provides legitimation of the interests of the dominant class. Thus the relations of production, via the mediation of the class system, compose 'the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness' (Giddens 1971: 42).

Insofar as the dominant ideology is able to interpose itself between instinct and consciousness, it may pervert instinct and limit it to those 'reformist' manifestations related solely to the labour struggle which do not call the system into question (cf. Harnecker 1971: 149). In this attempt to
perpetuate its dominance through the cultivation of false consciousness, a ruling class may well be aided by peasants' or industrial workers' experience of alienation (though there may be a difference in kind between the two). At the same time, class consciousness may itself be false consciousness if it does not act to allow the members of a class to manipulate their class solidarity to further their own ends.

To reduce the concept of alienation to its essential elements, one need go no further than Marx's early writings, where he sees the alienation of the worker in the capitalist mode of production as having four dimensions: alienation from the product of his labour; from his act of labour, which is the same as self-estrangement ('activity as passivity, power as impotence, procreation as emasculation, the worker's own physical and mental energy, his personal life,... as an activity directed against himself'); from his species, which is his relation to 'his own body, nature as it exists outside him, his spiritual essence, his human essence'; and from other men (1975: 324-30).

The immediate relevance of this phenomenon of alienation is summed up by Israel (1971: 86):

If there are alienating processes in the social system, they will affect the process of social production in such a way that the individual will learn 'false' needs, which in turn create a state of alienation. If this state of alienation is experienced sufficiently... it will be experienced as 'normal'. Therefore the individual will no longer experience his own alienated state. Instead he will acquire a 'false consciousness' of himself and, in addition and in consequence of this, false beliefs about his social environment.

If workers do indeed hold such 'false beliefs', their acceptance of the dominant ideology is undoubtedly part of this.
The question of class consciousness, therefore, which implies the manipulation of their situation by those involved, is critical to the analysis of the relations between the social groups in a society, and, specifically in this thesis in the Factory, and must be traced in the political and ideological structures. It is this kind of consciousness that was manifest in the Farmers' Federation, and that makes it possible to speak of the formation of classes in the rural sector of Thai society. Such an interpretation is strengthened if one takes into account the 'pertinent effects' which the Federation had at the political level in the formation of new, hostile groups that expressed their opposition with new levels and forms of violence. Unsurprisingly, a parallel movement arising from the same sources is apparent in the towns.

c) The Urban Sector. The relation between the rural and urban sectors is outlined by Anderson (1977: 15f):

The general 'dynamization' of the Thai economy as a result of the factors [mainly of American (and Japanese) investment and spending in the 1960s] served to create or expand at least four social formations that are significant for our purposes here - in the sense that their survival largely depended on the continuation of the boom. In those rural areas where the process of commercialization had spread most rapidly, strategically positioned notables, rice-mill owners, traders, headmen, and so forth, acquired sudden new wealth, a good deal of which was reinvested in land. As rural landlordism rose, so there was a complementary exodus of the young and the dispossessed to the booming urban centres. In the towns, and perhaps especially in Bangkok, the flow of migrants generated two sorts of politically volatile social groups: first, a large mass of unemployed, or underemployed, youthful drifters, with few substantial prospects either in the city or back home in their villages; second, a considerable number who were able to better themselves by finding niches in a broad array of burgeoning service-type occupations.
This petty bourgeois army included barbers, pimps, manicurists, drycleaners, chauffeurs, tailors, masseuses, tour guides, motorcycle repairmen, bartenders, receptionists, tellers, small shop owners and so forth. To a considerable degree this new petty bourgeoisie served and was dependent on the prosperity of a fourth group. This segment, mainly of previous urban origin, was a largely new middle bourgeoisie, in certain respects as closely tied to foreign capital as to the Thai state apparatus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Professional, technical &amp; related workers</td>
<td>49,747</td>
<td>173,960</td>
<td>284,104</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Administrative, executive and managerial</td>
<td></td>
<td>26,191</td>
<td>246,591</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Clerical</td>
<td>17,923</td>
<td>154,303</td>
<td>190,238</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Sales</td>
<td>357,336</td>
<td>705,000</td>
<td>735,457</td>
<td>833,607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Farmers, fishermen, hunters, loggers &amp; related workers</td>
<td>6,049,202</td>
<td>7,628,000</td>
<td>11,332,489</td>
<td>13,217,416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Miners, quarrymen &amp; related workers</td>
<td>15,071</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>26,255</td>
<td>42,605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Transport and communications</td>
<td>58,857</td>
<td>66,000</td>
<td>144,610</td>
<td>225,204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Craftsmen, manufacturing industry &amp; labourers not elsewhere classified</td>
<td>129,954</td>
<td>204,000</td>
<td>806,205</td>
<td>1,109,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Service, sport &amp; recreation</td>
<td>43,000</td>
<td>273,375</td>
<td>471,999</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Unclassifiable</td>
<td>111,000</td>
<td>99,259</td>
<td>30,560</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. New entrants to work force</td>
<td>64,880</td>
<td>197,869</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6,823,556</td>
<td>8,992,000</td>
<td>13,836,984</td>
<td>16,850,136</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Economically Active Thai Population Classified by Occupation

Although the categories of comparison are not complete and some of the earlier figures are obviously inaccurate, the preceding table (Table 4) clearly lends support to Anderson's analysis. Because of the lack of complete categories for all years, the only real comparisons that can be made are between 1960 and 1970, but these are sufficiently instructive. Working on the basis simply of occupational categories, it is possible to form a broad category of upper and middle bourgeoisie by combining groups A & B, and a petty bourgeoisie by performing the same process with groups C, D and I.\(^1\) In 1960, then, it can be estimated that the upper and middle bourgeoisie formed 1.5 per cent of the working population, and the petty bourgeoisie 8.4 per cent. A decade later, the upper and middle bourgeoisie had increased to 3.2 per cent, and the petty bourgeoisie to 8.9 per cent. Plainly, the group to benefit most directly from the boom of the sixties was the upper and middle bourgeoisie. The petty bourgeoisie, however, negligible in the earlier years except for those involved in sales (which interestingly remains fairly constant as a proportion throughout), have become in the latter years the most significant occupational group of all other groups outside agriculture.

The impact of the rise of these bourgeois strata has to be assessed in relation to the growth in the importance of industrial workers during the same period (from 2.5\% in 1947, 

\(^1\) Two things need to be kept in mind here. The first is that, in the absence of any further breakdown in the groups given, the figures combined to produce these categories must be taken as very rough estimates. The second is that, where the term 'class' or the names of social classes are used here, they must be understood in the strictly objective terms of the relations of production. Whether they form true social classes in the terms I have outlined earlier remains to be discussed.
to 5.8% in 1960, and 6.6% in 1970). Both arose in response to the nation's involvement in world affairs. Both were affected by the world economic slump in 1974 that followed on the global oil crisis of 1973, and by the American collapse in Indochina in 1975. And both showed evidence of the kind of consciousness which I have suggested is intrinsic to the formation of true social classes. These developments amongst workers in the industrial sector will be dealt with in Chapter VII. Here I wish simply to indicate some of the signs that urban Thailand, and particularly Bangkok, had become by the 1970s, through its acceptance of a capitalist economy, a class society.

What Anderson (1977: 19) calls the 'panicked anger' of the bourgeoisie culminated in the events of the 1976 coup—a return to military rule not perpetrated by this group, but certainly welcomed by them. Their disenchantment with the 'democratic experiment' of 1973-76 stemmed in part from the economic slump of 1974 and the subsequent withdrawal of the open-handed American troops in 1976, in part from the Communist victories of 1975, and in part from the explosion of trade union activity which occurred from 1973. The most visible expression of the closing of ranks which was effected by these events was the increasing frequency of the invocation of the trioret Nation-Religion-King after 1973. Its most concrete symbol was perhaps the Village Scouts, an organization founded in 1971, but greatly expanded in urban areas after October 1973, which enjoyed royal patronage and formed very active and popular groups (cf. Anderson 1977: 20, for a detailed account).

As Anderson (1977: 23) points out in his very perceptive analysis, prosecutions for lese majeste, which became so much a feature of the following years, were inaugurated only in 1974.
Finally, its most representative political spokesman in the democratic years was - fittingly - the opportunistic ideologue, Samak Sundaravej, who became, among other things, the most vocal union-basher in the governments of the day.

Nor is the new element of violence, already noted in relation to the peasants' movement, missing from the urban scene, and its roots and expression are the same. This will be dealt with later, however, in relation to the labour movement, which was another of its prime targets.


I have given this general account of the main features of Thai society up to 1976 because it is the context of my study. In the following chapters, my concern is not with rural Thailand, but with one small segment of the urban population. Nevertheless, the elements that I have outlined form an important background for this group. What must be remembered throughout the following discussion is that, although I am dealing with an industrial situation, this situation can be understood only as part of a society which is in transition. What this involves in contemporary Thailand is the co-existence of two modes of production, a pre-capitalist and a capitalist, with their concomitant social relations of production. While these have sometimes maintained an uneasy equilibrium, it is an equilibrium which has proved itself unstable and antagonistic. To refer back to the opening statement of this chapter, what we are looking at is the process of transformation of the bases of the social relations which have traditionally operated in Thai society. This transformation is embodied in the lives of individual industrial workers, many of whom are still in a
position of moving back and forth between the two modes. This means that even those who are actively working in industry do not necessarily see it as a life situation, with the associated stable dominance of the capitalist social relations of production. Moreover, the capitalist sector is still only a small, though growing, part of a pre-eminently peasant society. In such a society, industrialization - whether it be capitalist or socialist - most truly performs the function of challenge through novelty. Such novelty, as Piaget points out in a different, but not unrelated context, confronts the individual - and therefore the group - with the need to build the structures which he or she invokes to accommodate experience. Such reconstruction involves 'some degree of invention... In development, the passage from one stage to the next is always characterized by the formation of new structures which did not exist before, either in the external world or in the subject's mind' (Piaget 1970: 77-8). Such structuring activity is not, however, confined to the psychological processes of the individual (although it certainly has a primary place there). It is, in addition, performed by individuals as members of a social group - that is to say, that it is not just an individual activity, but, even more importantly, a generic phenomenon: a universal attribute of mankind in the social milieu. It is, moreover, not merely one amongst a series of equally significant activities. On the contrary, the qualities of being structured and being capable of structuring are of the essence of the human condition; they are at the core of the 'human way of life,
In a wide sense we can say that culture as a generic quality, as a universal attribute of mankind as distinct from all other animal species, is the capacity to impose new structures on the world (Bauman 1973: 51-2).

This relates back to the question of class consciousness, since class and class consciousness are themselves structures that have resulted from human choices.

This process of structuring embraces two aspects, which correspond to the human existential experience: the experience of environment, which is temporally prior and exists in the historically structured and organized human world into which a person enters; and the experience of praxis, the creative activity by which this person both comes to terms with, and manipulates, that environment. In the concrete environment dealt with in this thesis, 'environment' for the workers employed at the Factory is the peasant society from which they have come (with its pre-capitalist relations of production) and the industrial situation that they have entered, with all that is implied by the influence of the capitalist relations of production. 'Praxis' is for them the way they use these factors to bring about improvements in their own situation, and is therefore related to the question of the emergence of class consciousness.

The themes which derive from this duality of environment and praxis are defined in the following discussion: 12

12 Which I quote with regret at the paucity of the English language structure, which makes all references to the totality of humankind in a single gender only.
The continuous and unending structuring activity constitutes the core of human praxis, the human mode of being-in-the-world. To carry on this active existence man is supplied with two essential instruments - manus et lingua, as Aquinas puts it; tools and language, according to the Marxian tradition. With these two implements, man handles - through structuring - the world he lives in and himself. The 'handling' consists in drawing energy and generating information. The two components of the human mode of existence tend to be perceived in different ways. Energy is what man needs; in gratifying this need he is dependent on the forces which are not entirely under his rule. This state of dependence man perceives as being-an-object, as being exposed to a manipulation he cannot avert precisely because he cannot survive unless complying with the conditions his dependence sets for him. Information he experiences as something he wishes; in generating it he subjects hitherto elemental and unbridled forces to his will. This state of creation man perceives as being-the-subject, as exposing the world to his own manipulation. Hence the continuous persistence in human thinking of the world of the multi-named dichotomy of spirit and matter, mind and body; and the invariable tendency [in Western thought, at least,] to associate the first with freedom, the second with servitude (Bauman 1973: 56f).

The set of generative rules [which is historically selected by a group] precipitates into social structures, [and, in this mode,] appears to the individual as transcendental law-like necessity; owing to its inexhaustible organizing capacity it is experienced by the same individual as his creative freedom. That is, however, the basic assumption of [this discussion], that both elements of the basic human experience - his existence and his essence, his objective and his subjective modality - grow ultimately from the same stem; and to it they should, and may, be traced back (1973: 76f).

In other words, the inalterable character of human activity is to be creative - to choose inventively, from a theoretically infinite number of abstract possibilities, those structures which will best impose meaning on the historically determined environment in which a person finds himself. The scope of this choice, however, tends in general to be limited
by the structures already established by his society. That is to say, that a person experiences his or her environment, not only as an individual, but also as a member of a community. His praxis, his being-the-subject, is in community, because of this inalienable quality of sociability. It is the tension between these two modes of his experience that erupts into conflict.

Conflict, then, is inherent in the 'dual nature of the human existential status' (Bauman 1973:110). It is prompted, in its most overt dramatic manifestation, by the introduction into the environment of structural novelty, of which industrialization is here the pertinent form. In these Piagetian terms, conflict may be seen as the gap between novelty and its adaptation by those groups it confronts. In slightly different terms, novelty in the present context consists of the effect of industrialization on a traditional peasant society through change in the economic structure. In other words, the change wrought in the infrastructure causes change in the superstructure, not in a strictly determinative sense, but because the change, as novelty, demands adaptation by the groups affected, and this adaptation takes effect at the level of superstructure.

The person as agent, or subject, then, operates within an environment which he or she experiences through the mode of being-an-object. It is this historically determined external environment which, having nurtured him, confronts him with the structures which offer him, though not inevitably, the limits of his choice.
In this situation, therefore, and in the light of the continuing co-existence of different modes of production, a number of things may be expected.

5. Hypotheses.

In the first place, for those groups that have been drawn into the capitalist sphere, industrialization is to be seen as performing the function of challenge through novelty to existing structures, as the levels both of ideas and of behaviour. In response to this, those groups involved - employers and managerial staff on the one hand, and industrial workers on the other - will be forced to create new structures in order to impose order on, and draw meaning out of, this novel situation. Such a response is that of people acting as subjects to their experience of being acted upon as objects (in a factory situation), thereby continuing the cultural process.

The direction of this activity, however, will be inevitably constrained by virtue of the social relations of production arising out of the capitalist mode of production. The social groups that emerge, therefore, will be class groups, and the pursuit of class interest by each of these groups will lead to the emergence of class consciousness. The development of true class consciousness by the workers may be diverted, however, not only by the limitation of interests to the economic sphere, but also by the continuing existence of residual elements from the still dominant peasant system. These elements are most likely to take the form of reciprocal relations, arising out of the traditional relations which have prevailed in the broader
society. Because of the logical incompatibility of such reciprocal relations with the capitalist mode of production, however, their continuing presence is likely to give rise to ambiguities caused by the shift in their structural role.

Further, because of the transitional nature of Thai society, and the continuing dominance of the peasant system of economy, the social relations operating in the industrial situation will appear to have more or less the same characteristic features as that peasant system. The development of class consciousness is likely to be limited to specific actions and areas, largely dictated by class interests. The peasant-based relation of reciprocity is likely to be only marginally challenged. Where it is challenged, however, this will be, not in its own terms, but in terms of emerging class consciousness on the part of the workers, if that consciousness is true rather than false.

Finally, real dominance of the capitalist relations of production in the industrial situation, masked as they may be by the appearance of the forms of organization prevailing in the rural sector, is likely to be manifested by the authority relations invoked in the processes of decision-making which, since they reflect the distribution of political power, also help to demarcate the lines of class interests. If the principle of reciprocity is truly operative, then workers, as well as management, will have the power to make and implement decisions, even in conflict situations. In view of the previous analysis of class relations endemic in the capitalist mode of production, this is unlikely to be so.
The aim of this thesis, therefore, is to use these hypotheses to illuminate the situation in a Bangkok factory as a microstudy of socio-economic change in a developing country. This will be done by an analysis of the social relations prevailing in the Factory over a period of seven months, from September, 1976, to April, 1977, and, on the basis of that analysis, I will indicate the ways in which the structures being developed by the different groups involved are effecting transformations of traditional forms.
CHAPTER II

THE FACTORY: FORMAL STRUCTURE

The Factory on which this study is based is a joint Thai-Japanese venture which produces nylon and polyester filament. It was established on the outskirts of Bangkok on December 4th, 1963, as a non-promoted industry, and began production on 26th January, 1967. In allowing me to come and talk freely with its employees on a continuing basis, the management gave its first indication that its enterprise is not altogether typical of Thai factories in general. I had already, with the official sanction of the National Research Council of Thailand and the Labour Department, made approaches to several of these (including another foreign-owned one) without success. The terms of my access were, however, fairly strictly limited, even by the Company. I was given more or less free entry to the employees' living quarters, and every help in arranging interviews with workers. I was also made welcome at any extra-curricular functions which happened to occur. I was not allowed onto the shop floor, however, as will be explained later, and I had only occasional and very limited opportunities to meet members of the higher management. This was in no way a rejection and was largely due to the fact of people's being very busy, but it was an unfortunate restriction, particularly in the later stages of my fieldwork, since it gave me no chance to cross-check workers' interpretations of management actions against management's own interpretations.

It was within these limits, then, that my research was
carried out into the social relations operating in a Factory which, at the time of my study, employed 806 people (447 men and 359 women), with twelve Japanese working in management.

In describing the formal structure of the Factory, the point I wish to stress is that the workers' involvement in the life of the Factory is an involvement in its total life. That is to say, the Factory is not just a place of work, but, for the majority of workers, their residence as well. Even for those who live outside the Factory - mostly the married workers - there is a place in the dormitory when needed if they do shift work. The Factory can be called a community in a very real sense - its members eat, sleep, work, relax, make merit through the performance of Buddhist ceremonies, and carry out patriotic duties within the confines of the Factory. To some extent, then, the life of people working there is defined at a very important level precisely by their position as being employees, since their involvement there includes not only an economic, but a psychological and spiritual dimension as well. At the same time, employees do not identify with the Company in the manner of their Japanese counterparts. On the contrary, they retain important personal links outside the Factory, and spend greater (for the men) or lesser (for many of the women) periods of their leisure time pursuing their own affairs elsewhere. Nevertheless, their involvement with the Factory is far more comprehensive than that of other factory workers in, for example, Australia, and is of major significance. It is certainly the key to any analysis of the structures existing

---

13 It should be noted that this practice is not peculiar to this Factory, but is widespread in Thailand.
within the Factory, of the relations between workers and management, and of the transformations operating under the pressure of industrialization. Most of my thesis will be directed towards this totality.

This kind of comprehensive organization is not unusual in view of the fact that the Factory belongs to a Japanese parent company, and the Factory, although it shares some characteristics with other Thai establishments, certainly reflects its Japanese origins. At the same time, the Japanese pattern has undoubtedly taken on a definite Thai form, a process which can be better appreciated if one examines the original.


My understanding of these characteristics is based mainly on a reading of Dore (1973). Since I understand from others who are working in the actual field of Japanese industrial relations that his analysis is among the best available in English, I make no apology for restricting myself for the purposes of a brief summary to one work. These characteristics, then, may be listed as follows.

a) Harmony. In discussing one Japanese factory, Dore reproduces a document, 'The Guiding Spirit of Hitachi', which was promulgated by the Company in 1959. This document cites the three principles on which the Company sees itself as founded - sincerity, forward-looking positivism (which include dedicated work and self-reliance, at a national as well as personal level), and harmony (cf. p. 51). Part of the description of the last principle is worth quoting as a sample of the moral
basis which ideally influences policy decisions.

Third comes harmony... That we have been able to accomplish our mission is to be attributed precisely to the fact that each individual opinion is listened to, each individual is given the opportunity to expound his views and principles, but, the decision once taken, all co-operate in a common endeavour to move triumphantly forward to the common goal (p. 51).

In fact, the principle of harmony, although ranked only third by Hitachi, is, of all the principles, the most general and overriding. Although the functional aim is to increase production, the invocation of harmony serves to dignify this goal with a mystical dimension based firmly on the promotion of happy relations between employers and employees. The elements of reciprocity embraced by this concept can be summed up as life-commitment on the part of the employee, and comprehensive welfare by the employer. The environment thus created provides the framework for community, within which both employers and employees see themselves as closely identified with their company and involved in a common enterprise.

b) Lifetime commitment. It is in the nature of this commitment that a worker is recruited by a company at the beginning of his or her working life, and that one then expects to stay with the same company till retirement. The attitudes necessary to foster such stability are twofold.

On the worker's side is the expectation that he will be able to stay with his chosen firm, and the intention to do so, an intention which is conditioned by the fact that staying is the norm of Japanese occupational life and is bolstered by the knowledge that he has a good deal financially to gain by staying on... On the employer's side is an expectation that (provided he offers 'standard' wages and conditions of employment...) the workers will wish to stay.
This expectation is combined with a sense of obligation to provide work for them as long as they do so (p. 35).

The key to maintaining this situation is, then, from the employer's point of view, adequate wages and working conditions. In addition, however, companies see themselves as responsible for the welfare of employees in all the aspects of their lives.

c) Welfare benefits. Some examples only are needed to indicate the extent and diversity of the welfare benefits offered to employees. Hitachi, for example, operates on the principle that it is primarily responsible for providing accommodation for its staff. This involves hostels at the factory site for unmarried men and women, and company estates with rented accommodation for a proportion of the married employees (p. 203). This concern with housing goes further, and includes an employee's family under the company's umbrella. Benefits are offered in the form of educational loans for employees' children, and the provision of a dormitory in Tokyo for children attending universities or cram schools preparing for university entrance. Personal and family events, such as marriage, the birth of a child, or death, are marked by contributions by the firm in the form of money (calculated on length of service, not rank) and gifts (p. 209).

Recreational activities are also promoted. The firm has an auditorium, seating 12,000, which arranges concerts. There is an athletics stadium, one large and one smaller baseball stadium, a gymnasium, a swimming-pool, and tennis and volley-ball courts (p. 205). The Company also takes
account of the moral welfare of its employees, and arranges weekend outings, for example, where 'clean living and high thinking' are put into such practice as 'standing naked under a waterfall intoning uplifting poetry... or visiting the Ise shrine' (p. 209).

The concern of the firm, then, is with the total person, and it is this which leads to the emphasis on the company as a community.

d) The company as community. The pursuit of this goal is very much a function of the lifetime commitment of employees and the comprehensive nature of company welfare. The outstanding characteristic of the community which emerges is its corporate character - a community presided over by a council of elders (the board) (p. 223), in which the relations between employers and employees are determined by their mutual commitment to a common goal - the good of the firm, which is the same as the good of its members.

At the factory level, there are at least two important expressions of this: the formation of workers' committees and the role played by the foreman.

(a) The Foreman's Role. Dore (p. 231) sums this up as follows:

Hitachi's concern with the group, its integration and its collective performance, runs right down to the shop-floor work team. One can ask a Japanese worker 'What team are you in?' and he will answer either 'the erector team' or, if Suzuki is his foreman, 'the Suzuki team'.

The foreman, as this indicates, plays a key role in promoting the spirit of teamship on which the firm operates. His role is diffuse, and involves the very personal functions
of paterfamilias, mentor, confidante, and patron as much as of shopfloor supervisor (pp. 234-38). This, however, is not primarily to serve his own ends, or to build up a circle of personal clients (although this may be to some extent included), but to promote the solidarity of the work group.

(ii) Workers' Committees. These committees, such as recreation committees, have been set up at some factories, in order to give employees some direct say in matters relating to aspects of their lives outside work. These function in different ways, but, in general, the intention is to promote worker participation (Smith 1978). Such management-initiated committees are not involved, however, in policy decisions. The only committee which does have some influence in this area is the trade union - a workers' organization which to some extent may appear to conflict with the principles of harmony and community on which Japanese companies are based. While this is to some extent true, the nature of unionism in Japan means that unions can be to some extent accommodated within the framework of general co-operation.

e) Unionism. The most significant factor which differentiates Japanese unions from those in the western tradition is that trade unions in Japan are enterprise-based. Each establishment has its own union, and these are not federated beyond the individual company's level. In other words, every Hitachi worker belongs to a union for his or her own factory, and the unions of all the factories are integral parts of the Federation of Hitachi Company Unions (Dore 1973: 114). This is again largely a function of the identification of workers with their
company, and leads to the union's taking on a corporate character as well (p. 163). Since employees remain with the same firm, it is in the union's interest as well to promote the interests of the company, rather than of individual sectors within it (such as electricians, or fitters and turners). Even though the union has full-time officials, the officials themselves are Hitachi men, wearing often the same uniform as other employees, and always the same employment badges. Despite the annual 'spring offensive', when wage contracts are renegotiated, and the unions are prepared to use their muscle and strike if necessary (p. 124), the general attitude between unions and management is one of co-operation (p. 163ff). The relationship, while somewhat uneasy, is perhaps best summed up by Dore (p. 171), in a different, but not unrelated, matter:

Contests are best avoided; they are liable to leave too much bitterness behind in a firm where the 'harmony' which appears in the founder's motto is not just a slogan but a regulating principle of social relationships, abandoned at one's peril.


Many of the characteristics typical of the Japanese industrial system are reflected in their Thai enterprises, and the Factory is no exception to this. It will become apparent, indeed, that much of the Japanese pattern fits very easily onto the Thai pattern of social relationships, and in many instances it is difficult to distinguish to what extent a particular practice has its origin in the Japanese or the Thai system. Dormitory accommodation for single employees, for example, is
normal Thai practice, and trade unions are also factory or enterprise based. Moreover, since many Thai industries have, until recently, been relatively small family affairs, they might also be described as communities. However, the maintenance and promotion of harmony between management and workers resulting in a real sense of community in larger establishments is not a notable characteristic of the Thai industrial scene, and the success of the management in achieving it at the Factory is one of the themes of this thesis.

Another central characteristic of the Factory, in which the grafting of a Japanese branch onto a Thai stem has resulted in a blossom of peculiarly Thai fragrance, is in the process whereby the corporate character of management-worker relations has taken on a much more personal aspect. Insofar as loyalty to the Company is experienced by employees, it is felt not in identification with 'The Company', but in some of the personal ties between particular incumbents of positions in the official hierarchy and their workers. This will become clear in the discussion of the effective social relations operating in the Factory. These must first, however, be situated in their context as part of a particular industrial situation. To this end I wish to describe the Factory in terms of the two organizational divisions appropriate to my analysis: firstly, the shop floor, and then the dormitories. The relation of these to each other, and to the general layout of the Factory, is shown in Figure 1.

3. Organization of the Shop Floor.

It must be stated at the outset that I had very little
opportunity to observe what took place on the shop floor. Although the management placed no restrictions on my access to the dormitories, they were very reluctant to allow me into the production area. I asked on a number of different occasions to be allowed into this area, but my requests were each time knocked back. It was explained to me that this was on administrative and safety grounds. Almost at the end of my fieldwork period, I was allowed one half-day visit to each of three sections. My understanding of the technical side of the Factory's life is derived, therefore, from interviews and discussions. In general, I do not think that my appreciation of the workers' situation suffered from this lack of access. There is, however, one point on which my overall impression had to be drastically revised when I finally did see the work environment, and the strength of my reaction needs to be measured by all that had preceded it. Having spent six months talking to employees about the many and varied aspects of their lives, and participated in many of their extra-curricular affairs, my sense of the variety of their activities and the adequacy of the compensation offered by the Company for the routineness and possible unpleasantness of their factory work was fairly marked. The effect of then seeing the actual dreary repetitiveness of an operator's work can only be described as a shock. If my reaction was partly that of a member of a privileged group of those who are free to choose their own life situation from a fairly wide variety of possibilities, it was also, and no less authentically, the result of experiencing the diversified awareness of my informants reduced to the single dimension of that of acolytes to the machine. That the
Figure 1. Main areas of the factory referred to in the text (based on blueprint of 2-10-73)
workers themselves did not perceive it in this light, and indeed preferred it to working in, for example, the paddy-fields, is at least as interesting as the fact that they have chosen this employment in preference to other possible work. The reasons for this choice will be examined later. Here, I wish to look at the actual formal organization of the production area.

The Factory is divided into two major production departments: Nylon and Polyester. Servicing these departments are the Engineering, Personnel and General Affairs Departments. Each of these Departments is subdivided into sections as follows (Figure 2):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NYLON</th>
<th>POLYESTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polymerization</td>
<td>Polymerization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinning</td>
<td>Spinning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After-treatment</td>
<td>After-treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>Technical</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENGINEERING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENERAL AFFAIRS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purchasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADMINISTRATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| PERSONNEL      |

Figure 2. Division of Departments and Sections

There is some inter-sectional mobility, but it is limited, and workers tend to remain in the same sections for the duration of their employment. This means that each section is a significant unit within the broader Factory community, a situation which is reinforced by the interaction, to be
discussed later, between the higher staff of each section and their operators.

The category which I refer to as 'higher staff' is roughly, but not completely, parallel with that of annually salaried staff as opposed to wage earners. The difference is easily seen if the two groups are compared diagrammatically (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. The Positions of 'Salaried' & 'Higher' Staff**

Below the position of Foreman comes that of Operator. This, too, is subdivided into a small hierarchy of positions: Leader, Sub-leader, and, at the bottom of the scale, Operator. These positions are sometimes distinguished from each other, and sometimes not, the position of Sub-leader particularly tending to merge with that of Operator. The difference in position influences wages, however, which are calculated according to official position and length of employment. There is no differentiation in pay according to types of work, such as danger money, for example. Each section, then, has a standard formal hierarchy (Figure 4). The positions of Section Chief and Assistant Section Chief are daytime positions, but each shift team, which is the basic operational team, has its own Foreman, Leader, and Sub-leaders. One aspect of the importance of this
will be seen later, when I look at the practice of naming within the Factory and its implications for the social structure.

Figure 4. The Hierarchy of Section Positions

The production departments, which account for the majority of workers, are divided into three shifts: 08.00-16.30, 16.30-01.00, and 01.00-08.00. Shifts change every six days, and the general policy of the Factory is for three teams to work the three shifts, which gives the members of each team one free day a week. (This is normal Thai practice). However, since this entails each team's working twice a month for an extra half shift (i.e., for twelve hours straight), one of the sections (After-treatment Nylon) has introduced (or re-introduced) a system of having four teams to alternate the three shifts. This means that, in general, each operator now
Figure 2. The production process.
has a free day every fifth day.

As I have already indicated, I was allowed only brief visits - two half days each - to three sections: Nylon Polymerization, Nylon Spinning, and Nylon After-treatment (ATN). It was felt by the Factory management that, if I saw one of the production departments, it would give me an adequate understanding of the working of both, since both departments have basically the same methods of production (cf. Figs. 5 & 6). I chose Nylon, since it is the longer established of the two, and also because it is in the ATN section that the organizational change of four teams working the three shifts has taken place. The following outline of the organization of these three sections, therefore, is indicative of the conditions operating throughout the entire plant.

1. Polymerization Section
   a) Caprolactam, dissolving in water & polymerization: 1 operator (shift)*
   b) Spinning & cutting: 2 operators (shift)
   c) Extraction & vacuum dryer: 5 operators (shift)

2. Spinning Section
   a) Hopper room: 4 operators (shift) + 5 operators (daytime** only)
   b) Melt-spinning: 10 operators (shift) + 4 operators (daytime only)
   c) Winding:

3. After-treatment Section
   a) Undrawn yarn (the creel room): 3 operators (shift)
   b) Drawtwisting: 24 operators (shift)
   c) Inspection & packing: 18 operators (daytime only)

* 'Shift' refers to a daytime shift as well as to evening & night.
** 'Daytime only' means additional operators who work for that period only.

Figure 6. Breakdown of Operator Duties in Relation to the Nylon Production Process illustrated in Figure 5

The Recovery unit is not included here as it is not part of the main production process and is in a different building.
a) **Polymerization.** There are 72 operators in this section, divided into daytime workers and three teams of shift workers. All are male, except for three women who do daytime office work. The section is divided into five units:

(1) The fourth floor, where the actual process of polymerization takes place. There is only one operator here, and his duties consist of checking machines for temperature and pressure.

(2) The cutter unit, which has two operators in attendance. There are twelve cutting machines, and the operators' duties are to check these, to monitor the coating and cleaning machines and to change the spinneret when necessary.

(3) The extraction unit, where the chips are separated from the water. There are two operators, whose duties are to check nine machines.

(4) The vacuum dryer, which has seven machines and three operators to check them. When the chips are dried, they are packed and sent to the spinning section.

(5) The recovery unit, in which waste is reprocessed. This is in a different building. It involves a leader and three operators per shift - two for depolymerization and one for recovery - with a foreman and an extra operator during the day. The work here is heavy, hot, and dirty, although, again, the main responsibility of the operators is machine maintenance.

In each of the units there is quite a lot of spare time involved, as the work is not constant, and, during slack
periods, operators either chat together on their own floor, or go into the relaxation room, which is airconditioned and has magazines and factory publications scattered around.

The actual administration of the section (as for all sections, down to the position of leader) is carried out by the section chief, the assistant section chief, and four foremen - one daytime and one per shift. There are three leaders, one for each shift, but no sub-leaders in this all-male section, the position of sub-leader being reserved for female operators.\footnote{I was unable to ascertain whether it is official policy to reserve the position for female operators, or whether it just happened to be that way. Certainly there are no women in positions higher than that of leader, so the existence of a second position to which they alone have access may have been offered as a sop.}

Every morning at the beginning of the daytime shift there is a meeting between the section chief, assistant section chief, and two of the foremen - the daytime foreman and the one who has just finished the night shift. At this meeting, any matter concerning production is discussed, and the shift foreman reports on anything which has arisen during the night. This often concerns blackouts or reduction in electricity, since, although the Factory has its own generator, it also uses the main (decidedly unreliable) Bangkok electricity supply, and any fluctuation at all causes damage to the product. This meeting usually takes about half an hour, and is followed by a general departmental meeting between all the section chiefs and the departmental manager.

b) Spinning. The administrative arrangements in this section are similar to those in polymerization. There are
altogether 68 operators, including fourteen females, twelve of whom work in the final stages of inspection, and two in the office. There are two units, spinning and winding.

(1) **Spinning.** This comprises two floors: the hopper room, where the chips from the polymerization unit are tipped into the receiver tanks, and the spinning room. There are four operators who are responsible for both floors, although only two are needed for the hopper floor for two hours each morning, when the chips are put in. (This is heavy work.) For the rest of the day the machines need checking only hourly. There is chemical dust on this floor, which is potentially toxic, but any worker sensitive to it is transferred immediately.

On the spinning floor, five daytime operators look after the machines and spare parts. One of the chemicals used for cleaning is dangerous, and the operators wear masks.

(2) **Winding.** This floor is airconditioned but this, as the assistant section chief wryly admitted, is for the sake of the thread, not of the operators. There are seven male and three female shift workers, and two male and two female daytime operators. The men look after the machines and remove the drums when they are full. The girls check the thread from each drum, rejecting any which is unsatisfactory. Again, there are slack periods in each hour, and the operators sit in groups and chat, though this is rather hampered by the noise of the machines, which run at 75 decibels (80 is the legal danger level).

c) **After-treatment.** This section differs from the other
sections in that the majority of its operators are female - 163 out of 192, and in the fact that it precedes the 08.00 shift each morning with five minutes of exercises.

It consists of three units, draw-twisting, inspection, and mono-filament, although the latter is not an integral part of the section. It is in a separate building and involves a separate process. After-treatment proper consists of two floors: the creel room,looked after by three female operators, who perform a maintenance check every two hours on temperature and humidity, and the draw-twisting and inspection areas. The machines for draw-twisting operate at 92 decibels, so the operators (altogether 23 females, with one male operator per shift to do the maintenance) wear ear-plugs. The inspection and packing area consists entirely of female operators, of whom there are eighteen, all daytime workers.

This brief outline of the sections that make up the production unit is necessary in order to give some idea of the kind of work involved and the conditions under which the operators carry out their duties. Of greater anthropological interest, however, is a general description of the dormitories.

---

16 This raises special issues, e.g., maternity leave, which are not peculiar to ATN but are seen there most clearly. It is also the section which has introduced the system of four teams to work the three shifts. Both these matters will be discussed in more detail later.

17 The reason for, and significance of, this practice will be put into its context later. It might be appropriate to mention at this point, however, that this is one instance where a common Japanese practice has not been introduced into the Factory in general - an omission which rather nicely contrasts Thai attitudes to Japanese ones.
4. Organization of the Dormitories.

Approximately half the workers live in dormitories within the Factory compound - about 200 of the male employees and 200 of the women. There are no married quarters, except for salaried staff, so that most of the married workers live outside. However, there are places available for married shift workers to sleep at the Factory for the earlier or later part of the night when they are on evening or night shift.

There are three dormitory buildings:

(i) family quarters for those holding the positions of section chief or higher;
(ii) men's dormitory, which has a separate wing for the foremen;
(iii) women's dormitory. (Cf. Figure 1.)

The allocation in the foremen's wing is usually between one and three persons to a room, and, in the men's and women's dormitories, between six and eight. Each room has one person who acts as head of the room and is responsible for its day-to-day maintenance and order. The men's dormitory is supervised for thirteen hours each day by two phôo bâan.\(^\text{18}\)

\(^{18}\) The terms 'phôo bâan' and 'mêî bâan' may be literally translated as 'father of the house' and 'mother of the house'. They do not have quite the paternalistic/maternalistic overtones, however, that Westerners might expect from the use of similar terms in, e.g., the boarding-school situation. A person in the position of housekeeper in a private home, for instance, is also known as 'mêî bâan', and a cook as 'mêî khrua' - mother of the kitchen. At the same time, the terms are more personal than the English equivalent of 'dormitory supervisor'.


one of whom works from 08.00 till 16.30 each day, and the other from 11.00 till 21.00. These men have other responsibilities also, such as arranging for the sale of rice to workers at a wholesale price. A mẹ báan supervises the girls' dormitory from 08.00 till 16.30. These three supervisors come under the jurisdiction of the Personnel Section. There is also a dormitory committee, whose functions and responsibilities will be described in some detail later.

For all outsiders, including the families of workers, entrance to the dormitory area can be obtained only with the permission of the front office, and the entrance gates have a security guard permanently on duty. Limited facilities for the families or relations of workers to sleep overnight in the dormitories are available with permission, which does not extend beyond two nights, except in exceptional circumstances.

I shall be talking about two only of the dormitories, since the foremen's wing shares all but its sleeping facilities with the men's dormitory. These two can, for all practical purposes therefore, be treated as a single unit. The dormitory for senior staff is included in the dormitory compound, but it functions quite separately from the others because of the presence of families, and I have not included it in my discussion.

Each of the dormitories has a television room and basic cooking and laundry facilities. The women's dormitory also has a sewing-room, with a number of sewing-machines provided by the Company, while the men's dormitory houses the library. In general, people share rooms on the basis of choice, although
this must be submitted to, and approved by, the phọ bảan or the mê bảan. There is also the constraint inherent in the arrangement of shifts. Both dormitories have three floors, which makes a convenient administrative division for the three shifts — a different shift on each floor, with the daytime workers scattered throughout. In the women's dormitory, this situation has been complicated by the introduction of a fourth team for ATN, but no one appears to have been very bothered by the change, or to have complained about loss of sleep.

The downstairs area of the women's dormitory is an area for quite frequent congregating, as it also houses a little shop. This has been set up by the Company to enable employees to buy toiletries, washing powders, and other small items at cost price, and is used by the men as well as by the women. As well, one of the women shift workers has set up, on her own initiative, a supply of edibles (mostly sweets) which she sells in the same area when she is free.\footnote{The profits from this venture into a very typically Thai form of private enterprise go to her, but she lamented that they never amounted to much, since they went into her stomach rather than into her pocket.} A further focus for such inconsequential social gathering is provided by the mê bảan, who spends most of her day here — in the office, reading or sewing, or sitting outside the office, chatting to the woman in charge of the shop (also a Factory employee), and to anyone else who happens to be around. This is the only area of the women's dormitory to which the men have access without permission, just as women are not allowed access to the men's dormitory other than
The dormitories, then, occupy a significant place for the Factory employees, if only in terms of the amount of time they spend there. They are not simply places for sleeping, but fulfil the much more complex functions of home base, relaxation, the pursuit of personal interests, and socialising. They have a life of their own, to some extent independent of, but still very much within the orbit of, the work organization. Their significance for the Factory community in fact extends beyond these inescapable practicalities, as we shall see later when I look at the role of the Dormitory Committee vis-à-vis the authority and responsibilities of the phó bàn and the mê bàn, and in terms of its place in the broader structure of the factory.

In describing the dormitories and the organization of the production departments I have been looking only at the formal shell of Factory life. In the next chapter, I wish to look at some of the relationships which operate within the boundaries set up by this external structure. Again I would stress that these relationships can only be appreciated if they are seen as part of a total structure, in which the connection between the shop floor and the dormitories is an organic one.

The relations between the sexes, like so much else, tend to be defined by their position as workmates within the Factory. Any special relationship, such as that of having a 'friend' (feên boyfriend or girlfriend) in the other dormitory is the subject of much teasing, and, although there have been some marriages, the number is smaller than one might have expected from the comprehensiveness of the contact.
CHAPTER III

THE FACTORY: INFORMAL STRUCTURE

The two main concepts with which I wish to deal in this chapter form the basis of all my further discussion, and are fundamental, I believe, for understanding contemporary developments among the Factory community. The first concept is of the Factory as a patron-client system in the mainstream of traditional Thai relationships. In order to situate it within this tradition, I will look at the literature relating to the patron-client relationship and then attempt to interpret the system in operation at the Factory in these terms.

The second concept which I wish to discuss is not unrelated to the first, but refers to a mechanism used more broadly by Thais to incorporate social relationships and associated behaviours within a kinship framework. It is the convention of classifying certain other people as older or younger siblings, by giving them the title of ภิกษุ (older sibling) or น้อง (younger sibling), instead of using the proper name prefixed by the more formal title of คุณ. Again I will examine some of the literature to show this as one of the basic ways of ordering social relationships. This will be reinforced by looking at the tradition as interpreted by informants in relation to their own experiences. Then I wish to analyse the naming system in the Factory itself, as indicated by informants, and some of the behaviours associated with such naming.

Before examining these concepts in detail, however, it
will be useful to look at the composition of the employees among whom these relationships operate.

1. **Background.**

To get some background statistics, I submitted a brief questionnaire to the Personnel Section for distribution among the employees.\(^{21}\) Of two hundred questionnaires, I received ninety-seven responses. The following figures are based on this sample of ninety-seven, and are presented in tabular form for clarity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>62 (14% of total number of male employees)</td>
<td>35 (10% of total number of female employees)</td>
<td>97 (12% of total number of employees)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. **Number of Respondants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Overall Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24.4 years</td>
<td>26.4 years</td>
<td>25.1 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. **Average Age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Overall Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.6 years</td>
<td>6.2 years</td>
<td>4.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. **Average length of employment at the Factory**

What leaps to the eye in Tables 6 and 7 is the comparative youth of the employees and the relative stability of employment.

\(^{21}\) I asked for a random sample on the basis of a centralized list of employees' names. However, I was told that no such list exists, so that the questionnaires were given to the various section chiefs who distributed them throughout their sections as the spirit moved them. The sample is, then, not strictly statistically representative, but it is probably not far removed therefrom.
Both these facts will be seen to be significant in the context of relations between operators and foremen, and of the benefits offered to employees by the Company in its role of patron. This role becomes clearer if one takes account of the average daily wage, which, at a time when the legal minimum wage was 25 baht (about a dollar) a day, was 61.4 baht.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Overall Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>฿52.1</td>
<td>฿77.7</td>
<td>฿61.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8. Average daily wage

It is interesting that the female daily wage is higher than the male. This is probably a function of the greater average length of employment, since one of the benefits offered by the Company is a yearly increment calculated on the basis of the number of years spent at the Factory.

The marital status of employees is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Unmarried</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9. Marital Status

What is not so readily apparent is the reason for the greater stability of female employment (6.2 years) as opposed to male (3.6 years). One might suggest a number of reasons for this, such as the fact that disciplinary cases are caused almost solely by men, who are therefore more likely to dismissed, and the regulation that retiring age for women at the Factory is only 40 years, as opposed to the male retiring age of 55.
Residential accommodation is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Factory dorm.</th>
<th>Flat</th>
<th>At home</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>63.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10. Accommodation

In terms of the actual numbers of employees living in the dormitories, these figures (with only 37.5% using factory accommodation) are obviously skewed. The reason for this is the high proportion (42.7%) of married employees in the sample. A more accurate picture is given if the figures are broken down according to marital status.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Factory dorm.</th>
<th>Flat</th>
<th>At home</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>68.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59.3%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11. Accommodation - unmarried

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Factory dorm.</th>
<th>Flat</th>
<th>At home (own)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12. Accommodation - married

These figures will serve as a basis for later discussion of the material advantages offered by the Company in providing...
rent-free accommodation. A final set of figures concerns the origins of those working at the Factory. This is relevant because I will be looking at traditional relations which continue to affect rural rather than urban areas. The figures indicate those who come from Bangkok as distinct from those who come from upcountry. 23

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bangkok</th>
<th>Upcountry</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13. Place of origin of employees 24

While the percentage of employees coming from upcountry is certainly higher than the number of those from Bangkok, the difference is not great enough to be of particular significance. This difference is increased, however, if one adds to the upcountry figures those who were born upcountry, and moved later to the city.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bangkok</th>
<th>Upcountry</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>64.1%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14. Place of birth of employees

Although there was no indication from the questionnaire as to when this group moved to Bangkok, the implication is

23 Having made the distinction between rural and urban areas, I should qualify it by pointing out that the only truly urban centre in Thailand is Bangkok itself.

24 The upcountry figures may be broken down by region, which is interesting, but not particularly significant for my purposes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>North</th>
<th>North-East</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>56.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13a. (Percentages are based on the total number of 89 respondents)
clearly that their parents, at least, came from a rural background. This table may be compared with figures taken from the 1970 census. The following table gives the same information for the 20-39 years age group in the Bangkok metropolis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Born Bangkok</th>
<th>Born Upcountry</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15. **Place of birth of people living in the Bangkok metropolitan area: 20-39 years**

The number born upcountry working at the Factory (64.2%) is, then, considerably higher than those born upcountry in the comparable age group in the general Bangkok population (45.5%). With a majority such as this of non-urban origins, one can assume that certain rural traditions have remained relevant to the Factory workers. In other words, in discussing the Factory population, it is reasonable, on these figures, to apply concepts and principles which pertain to rural Thailand, and which may therefore be expected to have retained their significance even within an urban and industrialized environment. The first - and most important - of these principles that I wish to look at is that described in terms of 'patron' and 'client'.

2. **Traditional Patron-Client Relationships as Interpreted in the Literature.**

Patron-client relationships operate as a major structural...
factor in the social organization of Thailand, as well as of other rural communities. Prudisan (1973: 2) defines the relationship as follows:

Patron-client relationship may be defined as a more or less personalized and reciprocal relationship between actors or sets of actors, commanding unequal resources, and involving mutually beneficial transactions that have ramifications beyond the immediate sphere of dyadic relationships.

In the absence of either 'formal kin groups, or traditional formal groups of any kind' (Wijewardene 1967: 83), patron-client ties have indeed been claimed to be 'the institutional base of Thai life in the lowlands' (van Roy 1971: 114). Other assessments are more modest, while still recognizing the importance of these bonds:

[Patron-client relationships are still widespread.] In rural areas the clustering of clients around a patron does not perhaps create a large or formally organized association, but it has to be considered an organization of a type, and is, moreover, essential to the social system as a whole. In the South Village area important contacts with the administration appear to be largely channelled through 'patrons' of one...
sort or another. These patrons could be government servants, landowners, traders, or merely wealthy kinsmen. Such relationships seem to be particularly important when illicit activities are involved (Wijewardene 1967: 83).

It is agreed, then, that patron-client ties are a significant element in Thai social life, even if the extent to which they are invoked is open to question. Various factors have been suggested as the basis for their importance. Hanks (1975) sees them as arising out of religious belief, van Roy (1971) as amalgamating economic, social, and political elements.

Hanks (1975: 198f) discusses the hierarchical nature of Thai society as arising from the Buddhist doctrine of 'merit' (bun), in which a person's position in this life is determined by the amount of merit he or she accrued in a previous existence. In this model, the onus is on the superior to aid those below him in the hierarchy in order to increase his own merit. In so doing, he becomes a patron, utilizing his greater resources in favour of his inferior, who reciprocates out of gratitude with such services as are at his disposal.

Van Roy (1971: 115) sees the relationship between patron and clients as rooted in, but at the same time transcending, the economic dimension. Because of unequal access to resources, clients are drawn to a patron-client relation not only by the economic security offered by a wealthy patron but by the political and social advantages accruing from intimate connections with those superior in the hierarchy. Patrons are attracted to clients by the latters' usefulness as suppliers of goods and services as well as by their political and social contributions in improving the patron's community standing.
In other words, he sees the economic dimension as simply one aspect of a more complex interaction, with 'economic benefits rarely resulting as direct reimbursements for economic contributions' (p. 121).

In both these analyses, the patron-client relationship is presented as applicable in an undifferentiated way at whatever level of the social scale the relationship is operating. But Calavan (1974) indicates that this is not necessarily so, and that, in an area (northern Thailand) where an aristocracy continues to be recognized, the bonds between client and patron, where the latter is a local aristocrat, have markedly different characteristics from those where the patron is another commoner.

The ties between the aristocrat and his clients have more of the characteristics of a total relationship than do those of commoners. The mutual commitment of patron and clients is substantial, long-term, and involves multiple ties for the entire families.

The aristocrats often provided the following benefits to their client families: advice, a place to live, land to cultivate, employment for one or more members, occasional loans or credit, support in disciplining their children, support in disputes, occasionally generous gifts in return for loyal service, occasionally help in arranging marriages, occasionally quasi-kin confidante employment, and occasionally opportunities to marry aristocratic kinsmen. In return the aristocratic family expected the following from the client family: close proximity of residence, loyalty, support, regular provision of service by some members of the client household, and the right for wide-ranging control of and interference in the daily lives of the client family (Calavan 1974: 289.90).

Further, the client family is not free to terminate the relationship without 'hard feelings and possible repercussions' (p. 290). The aristocrat has more freedom to do so, but is expected
not to exercise it.

On the other hand, a patron-client relationship between commoners in the same villages is much more clearly defined. Mutual expectations are limited by what Calavan (p. 291) calls 'fairly specific terms of contract (e.g., landlord and tenant, employer and employee, creditor and debtor, etc.).' Moreover, the relationship is confined to a specific patron and a specific client, without involving their families. This type of tie is, further, voluntary; there is freedom on either side to redefine or terminate it. The strictly contractual nature of this bond between commoners, even when they do stand in the relationship of patron and client, seems to conform to 'the pragmatic character of Thai rural social structure as a whole' (Wijeyewardene 1967: 67). better than does a model based on more grandiose claims of all-embracing reciprocity. Some researchers would narrow the application of the bond even further, and say that, in general, patron-client ties do not operate within the village, but only outside it, either between the village and the outside world, or for individuals who leave the village and have to cope with a new environment. 28

Nevertheless, the situation described by Calavan (1974) as existing between aristocrats and commoners perhaps reflects more closely the traditional form of patron-client relations, which have their historical roots in an official ranking

28 R. Davis, personal communication.
system, the sakdi-na (sagdinaa). This system allotted
certain amounts of land to each citizen, thus determining
his rank, which meant that 'the status of all free Thai
citizens was characterized by a number which was primarily
an entitlement to land' (Wijeyewardene 1969: 12).

The form that this system took from the mid-fifteenth
century undoubtedly forms the basis of patron-client ties
such as those described by Calavan.

In the fifteenth century... certain modifications
were made to this system... The sakti na grades
were retained but the territorial organization was
fundamentally changed. The nobles became officials
in departments responsible for a certain number of
commoners in accordance with their rank. They could
still use these clients to cultivate their private
estates, but ceased to have jurisdiction over
specific territories. All commoners were incorporated
into these departments with specific officials as
patrons - but commoners had some choice as to their
patron. Thus in any specific local community the
peasants could have a large number of different
patrons, determined partly by choice, partly by their
specific skills, and partly by inheritance (Wijeyewardene
1969: 12).

Two points need to be made about this system as described
here - firstly, that the title of patron (naaj in this case)
referred to a position as much as to a person; secondly, that

---

29 Literally, 'field strength'. This was the official ranking
system, abolished in 1932, which allocated a certain amount
of land to every male in the kingdom, including slaves, thus
defining their position. The system is described by Rong
(1973: 38) as follows:

It specified the different classes of people and
amounts of land to be assigned to each. For example,
a prince of high rank could have 20,000 rais or 8,000
acres (2½ rais being equal to 1 acre). A Chao Phya
was entitled to 4,000 acres, while a commoner held only
10 acres. For the sake of clarification, one would say
that the Sakdi Na system placed a value on every man
in the Kingdom. If he did something wrong and was
fined, the amount of the fine was determined by his
Sakdi Na grade; so too was the compensation to be paid
for any injury done to him or for his death.
the client (whose official title was phrâj) had some element of choice, not in the matter of his attachment, but in the person of his naaj. This suggests that, insofar as the system allowed for any personal considerations, they applied more in the case of clients than of patrons. Nevertheless, the fact that clients were to some extent free to change their patrons undoubtedly exercised a restraining influence on the behaviour of naaj, and made the relationship more directly, though still unequally, reciprocal than is suggested by Wijewardene's description. Akin (1969), for example, sees the exchange in terms of specified duties, such as corvée labour and contributions of goods, by the phrâj to their naaj, in return for which the naaj provided protection and assistance to their phrâj, and sometimes settled disputes among them. By the Early Bangkok period (1782-1873), however, the formal aspects of the relationship were predominant, and

[phrâj] surplus went to support the religious establishment and their [naaj], the majority of whom resided in towns or in the capital (Akin 1969:105).

Stated in these terms, the naaj-phrâj, or patron-client, relationship appears as the classic one of exploitation of producers by a non-productive elite, and raises the question of whether social classes can be said to have existed in pre-capitalist Thai society. A number of commentators have addressed themselves to this question, but none in any comprehensive fashion. Two who have raised the matter are Turton (1976) and Wilson (1959). Turton contends that there were classes in traditional society: the ruling classes (càwnaaaj), the free peasantry (phrâj), and dependant labour
and peoples normally categorized as slaves (khâa). He argues persuasively that these classes can be objectively identified in terms of the relations of production prevailing in nineteenth century Northern Thailand. He does not, however, deal with the question of class consciousness, and this, as I have suggested, is a crucial point in determining the development of social classes.

Wilson (1959: 62f), on the contrary, addresses himself to precisely this point, and rejects the proposition that traditional Thai society was a class society:

Any analysis of Thai society in terms of class structure is most problematical. On the one hand, social status was and still is graded to an extraordinary degree; while on the other, it is difficult to see any rigid lines of class division.

There is a vital difference between grades of status and class. Insofar as these institutions, made up of legal and nonhereditary relationships of right and obligation and virtically organized social groups, had a genuine vitality, they worked against the development of class consciousness. It would be easy to overestimate the vitality of traditional institutions, of course, but, on the other hand, it would be a facile projection to read the Western Marxist dogma of class structure into traditional Thai society.

In another point in his discussion, Wilson (p. 63) attributes the absence of class consciousness to the traditional Thai attitude towards merit, mentioned earlier.

Status among the Thai was, and as a matter of fact continues to be, conceived as a personal attribute. A man's social position is a consequence of his merit, either in the Buddhist or civil service sense of the word. As merit of men is capable of delicate gradation, so is social status. As merit is a result of volition rather than accident of birth, so is social status.

In making this point, Wilson is not saying anything different from what has already been noted in Hanks (1975). What he
does do, however, is to make the analysis of this attitude integral to the discussion of class consciousness. Further, if one accepts the presence of class consciousness as a pre-condition for the existence of classes, then there is no indication that the patron-client relationships 'which integrated Thai society in terms of right, obligation, and justice' (Wilson 1959: 62) can simply be translated directly into class relationships.

This is not to deny that patron-client relationships as they existed within the formal structure of the sakdina system were exploitative, nor that the associated ideology was not 'an essential element in the extraction by the ruling class of surplus labour from the free peasantry' (Turton 1976: 273). In fact, the informal patron-client relationships that were established often cut directly across the lines of the formal structure in an attempt to escape subjection to exploitation (Akin 1969: 113ff). However, the relation between patron-client ties and a class structure is certainly more complex than one of simple equivalence.

In the contemporary situation, indeed, it is doubtful whether the kind of patron-client relationships operating informally at the village level could even be called a system. If the formal hierarchy of the sakdina system had survived, then it may have been possible to talk about a patron-client system. However, the closest approximation to a sakdina system still operating would seem to be the type described by Calavan (1974) between aristocrats and commoners, where some element of constraint is still experienced. This type has
also provided the basis for those commentators who have sought to comprehend the whole of the Thai social structure within a patron-client framework, and the model that they have set up is one which has perhaps been adopted by some of those within Thai society who are still in a position to play the role of patron.

In general, however, it appears from the literature that the informal and voluntary nature of the patron-client tie has become paramount, and that the bond is a functional rather than an all-embracing one. In view of this, a fresh analysis of the patron-client relationship needs to be made in structural terms. Turton (1976) makes some attempt to do so. Another comes from Wijeyewardene (1972) in a review of van Roy's (1971) book. In this book, van Roy discusses patron-client ties (as expanded into the entourage) as the major institutional factor in the Thai peasant's access to economic security, but with the emphasis on the traditionality of the relationship and the multiplicity of mutual benefits. In reply, Wijeyewardene inverts the interpretation, and suggests that patron-client behaviour is in fact a response to an economic situation arising from shortage of capital and chronic underemployment - what he describes as a 'rational form of insurance' (p. 428). The article is too short to build an argument upon, but it indicates the need to place patron-client bonds in the context of a response to market forces. The paucity of material relating to this aspect means that the question of the relationship between patron-clientship and class structure remains wide open. What is lacking is any substantial analysis of the phenomenon in terms of the relations of production. The
indications from the literature are that there is sufficient evidence that, while the relationship between patrons and clients was not, traditionally, a class relationship, it has economic components which warrant such an interpretation in general terms. For the purposes of this thesis, then, I shall treat the patron-client relationship as a unit of analysis comparable to that of class relations in the urban and industrial situation.


Certain aspects of Factory life can be readily interpreted in terms of patron-client ties. Integral to the understanding of the Thai patron-client relationship as it is discussed in the literature are two associated concepts - those of katanjuu-kataweethii (keeping in mind a favour received, and doing something in return) and of bunkhun (the favour bestowed on one, which demands reciprocity) (Akin 1969: 110-111). Both concepts underline the principle of reciprocity, with emphasis on gratitude for favours offered as a motivating force for action. In the context of clientship, a person becomes bound to his or her patron by gratitude and loyalty in response to benefits received from the patron. It behoves anyone wishing to establish himself in the role of patron to offer benefits of a quality sufficient to inspire this kind of response. The standard of the welfare benefits offered by the Factory to its employees certainly seems to bear this character.

In outlining the welfare provisions of the Factory, I cannot give details of the ways in which they differ from other companies, as I did not have access (beyond two brief visits) to
other factories. However, in the eyes of both staff and employees, as well as of those of a number of outsiders acquainted with the situation, the Factory is regarded as atypical on the Thai industrial scene, and employment there is regarded with some envy by other workers. Indeed, at a time of considerable industrial unrest throughout the country, the Factory had never been troubled by a major dispute or a strike.

Welfare provisions cover three main areas: provisions related directly to working conditions; benefits associated with the broader Factory life; and what might be designated extra-curricular activities.

a) Provisions related to working conditions. The most significant benefits in this area are obviously those relating to wages. While the legal minimum wage for Bangkok is set at 25 baht a day, the lowest starting wage at the Factory is 36 baht. Employees with qualifications of any kind receive more. In addition, every employee is eligible for a monthly bonus, offered on the basis of full attendance, and for an annual increment. An extra inducement to keep absenteeism at a minimum is an annual bonus which increases with each consecutive year of full attendance. A further component of each

---

30 The general situation of industry in Thailand will be covered in Chapter VII.

31 At the Factory's tenth birthday in 1976, the numbers of employees receiving the bonus, and the amount they received, were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of consecutive years of full attendance</th>
<th>Amount of bonus (in baht)</th>
<th>No. receiving bonus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2100</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2400</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2700</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
employee's pay is a monthly food allowance of 250 baht. As well, anyone who wants to can borrow up to 80 baht a week for any reason; this is deducted at the end of the month from his or her pay.

Taking all these components into account, I found from the questionnaire that the average daily wage of the respondents, as already set out in Table 4, is in fact 61.4 baht - almost two and a half times the legal minimum wage. The generosity of this has an extra dimension when one takes into account that, as we have already seen, free accommodation is provided for approximately half the workers. The effect of this can be measured when it is noted (again from the questionnaire) that the average rent per month for those respondents in a house is 521.4 baht, and, for those in a flat, 300.5 baht. Some of the inconvenience of living away from the Factory is reduced, however, by the provision of a Company bus which collects workers and takes them home again. This is not so much a saving in expense, since public transport in Bangkok is very cheap anyway, as it is a matter of convenience and safety.

There is severence pay, calculated on the length of employment, for employees who leave the Factory before reaching retirement, and, at retirement, a retirement fund built up by

---

32 Up until September, 1976, this allowance was in the form of coupons, but it was changed to cash, for reasons and by a process which I will discuss in some detail in Chapter V.

33 The only comparable figure in terms of average wage is from the Labour Department's Handbook of Labour Statistics for 1976, in which the average daily wage for all employees (not just those in industry) in the Bangkok Metropolis is 29.54 baht. This still makes the Factory average more than twice as much.

34 This is sometimes in fact one of the causes for conflict between employees and the Company depending on the circumstances of the termination. This will be discussed more fully in a later chapter.
the Company from the fourth year of employment. The basis of this fund, which is received in a lump sum, is one and a half months' current salary, deposited in a bank in the name of the employee after three years' of service, and, after four, another half month's salary in addition (i.e., altogether two months' salary).

Leave provisions are determined partly by the Company and partly by law. Annual leave increases with length of employment - six days a year in the first three years, eight days each in the fourth and fifth years, and nine days from the sixth year. Sick leave is on full pay for up to thirty-one days a year with a doctor's certificate. Workers' compensation and maternity leave are covered by law. Compensation is paid until an employee is able to return to work. Pregnant employees who are shift workers are changed to daytime work at the sixth month of pregnancy. When the baby is born, the mother is given one month's leave on full pay, and she may then take a second month's unpaid leave if she wants to. If she is unwell, she may be allowed more time off at the discretion of the Personnel Section.

b) Benefits associated with broader Factory life. These benefits are the ones that figure in the Company brochure, and of which the management is most proud. They also reflect its Japanese origins. A canteen is provided, with food costs maintained well below normal Bangkok prices. While a similar facility is common to most factories, this one boasts air-conditioning and piped-in music, as well as a television set.

35 These provisions were increased just before I left the Factory.
A free health service is provided, with full-time nurses, and doctors available in the evenings. Vaccinations such as cholera, small-pox, and tetanus, and an annual compulsory X-ray are included.

In the educational field, the Company sends a number of employees each year - normally between two and four, though it has been as high as ten - for extra training in Japan. To date, these have all been at the foreman level and above, and therefore include no women. However, anyone who wishes to do further study at evening courses is eligible (and encouraged) to sit for the Company exam. If they pass, the Company pays their fees and gives them the necessary time off. If they fail the exam, they are still allowed the time off for study, but the Company does not finance their courses. At graduation, salaries are adjusted to take into account the extra educational qualifications.

In the field of recreation, sports facilities are provided in the form of a football field, swimming-pool, volleyball and basketball courts, and a practice area for golf. Matches are arranged between departments, and also with other factories and organizations. For the less energetic, there are indoor sports, and a library which is funded by the Company but staffed by members of the Dormitory Committee.

As was mentioned earlier, there is a shop in the women's dormitory which sells basic items at cost, and someone is employed to look after this on a full-time basis. Even more importantly, rice is sold at wholesale prices, each employee

36 In 1976, there were 16 employees being funded.
being entitled to a fixed amount each month, on the basis of whether he or she is single or married, and, if the latter, how many children there are.

Finally, there is a credit union that is substantially funded by the Company, through which loans for purposes such as housing are available.

c) Extra-curricular benefits. These provisions are all concerned with improving the quality of living experienced by employees at the Factory and are designed to promote a sense of community. In general, they involve special events, such as holidays or particular festivals, and their ordinary basis is the annual budget allocated by the Company to the various workers' committees. The committees mainly concerned with this area are the Culture, Dormitory, and Sports Committees.

The budget for the Culture Committee is in two parts: 20,000 for the production of a quarterly magazine covering various aspects of Factory life, and 10,000 for normal expenses. Out of the latter, the committee arranges at least one regular evening a month for either a dance or a movie. Its other main responsibility, in conjunction usually with the Dormitory Committee (which is also provided with an annual budget of 10,000) is to organize appropriate festivities to mark important events each year. This included, during the time of my fieldwork, a party and a dinner for the major Thai festivals of Loy Krathong and Songkran, both of which were held

---

37 These will be described in detail in Chapter V.
38 This magazine was very popular with employees, and its issue regarded as an event.
around the swimming pool and involved dancing (to the music of a hired band) and a beauty competition, in which the contestants represented each section of the Factory. Extra funding was given by the Company to cater for a very lavish party to celebrate the 1977 New Year, which was made to coincide with the Factory's tenth birthday. For this occasion indeed, a teacher was especially hired to teach Western dancing - of the fox-trot and tango variety - to any of the employees who were interested. Another festivity directly funded by the Company was a dinner for the workers - known delightfully as 'khoob khun réééppaan' ('thank you, labour') - in honour of May Day.

Holidays are in general the national public holidays, but there is one special one provided each year that involves an outing for all the employees - a kind of Labour Day picnic, but again with the Company footing the bill. The expense, in fact, is not always inconsiderable, as it often involves transport to havens outside Bangkok, such as a train trip to Kanchanaburi (on the River Kwae).

All these activities, magnanimous as they may be, may also be seen as part of the normal functioning of the Factory. However, there is yet another benefit offered by the Company which moves directly into the personal dimension, and, while it may again derive from Japanese practice, it can also be interpreted in the ideal tradition of patronage - that is the question of help in cremations. This is not an automatic

39 For people in Thailand, significant birthdays mark a twelve-year cycle. However, I was assured by informants that ten years was important in the case of the Factory.
provision, but, in the event of the death of a member of the immediate family of an employee, a fund is set up to which a small contribution - usually five baht - is made by each of the other employees, and a fairly substantial one by the Company, depending on the financial situation of the family. This money then goes towards the expenses of the cremation ceremonies. In the event of the death of an employee (not necessarily the result of an industrial accident), the Company may bear the whole cost. This in fact happened during the period of my fieldwork, and the event and its remissions are described in the following chapter.

If all this largesse seems to be a fairly impersonal distribution, in the Japanese corporate tradition, by an anonymous 'Company', a specifically Thai flavour is added by the fact that the Company Vice-President, Khun Visan, in fact embodies 'the Company' in a very immediate way for the majority of the employees. The importance of his role will be examined more fully later (in Chapter VI), but, by way of introduction, it can be said here that he is the most senior Thai in the Company and shares full and final power with the Factory manager (a Japanese) in all matters concerning the Factory. While he does not work at the Factory itself, but has an office in the administrative branch of the Company in the city (he is also on the board of a couple of other Japanese companies in Thailand), he visits the Factory frequently, and makes a point of establishing contact with the workers as well as with the higher staff. He is regarded with great warmth and affection by the employees, who see him as a key figure in their relations with management. A measure of the very personal light in which he is seen is the
fact that he is known universally by the workers, at his own request, by the familial title of phīi (older brother).

In order to assess the significance of the use of this title, and to establish the personal dimension essential to an understanding of the Factory, I wish to look briefly at the traditions concerning the relationship of phīi-nōoQ (older and younger sibling) in Thailand, and to see how this relationship operates in the Factory.

4. The Traditional Phīi-NōoQ Relationship.

As indicated earlier, there is a notable absence of formal kin groups in Thailand (Wijeyewardene 1967: 83). Most social relationships are perceived as asymmetrical, a fact generated in part through an extension of adult-child and sibling relationships (R. Davis, personal communication). Moreover, kinship ties have a voluntary character, which allows one to distinguish active from dormant kindred (Piker 1969:64), on the basis of genealogical ties that are actually invoked by ego for any purpose at any time.

One of the main principles on which kinship ties operate in practice is the principle of hierarchy. In his study of a village in north-eastern Thailand, Tambiah (1970: 16f) makes the point that

In terms of village usage and categorization the important point is that certain kinship terms for consanguineal kin over three generations are applied right through the village, thus dividing the population into generational categories...

The conspicuous feature of kinship relations in Baan Phraan Muan is the phrasing of obligations and relationships in the idiom of four terms: grandparent, parent, sibling, and grandchild. There is no particular complex of behaviour attributes associated with, say, mother's brother as distinct from father's brother, father's sister as distinct from mother's sister. Close kin are...
naturally more important than distant kin, but which of the close kin (outside ego's families of procreation and orientation) depends on situational circumstances and not on jural norms.

This emphasis on 'the asymmetrical relationships between the superordinate senior and subordinate junior generations into which the total community is divided' (p. 23) pervades the whole of Thai social relations, and is tied up with strongly traditional relationships of respect characterized in the generational sense by the opposition between phûu jàj and dèg (adult and child) and, in the social dimension, between phûu jàj and phûu nòj (superior and inferior, literally, "big person" and "little person"). Appropriate behaviour is a very important element between people of different ages. Age difference, indeed, is accorded an importance parallel to that of generation differences.

The terms phîï and nòj, then, apply in their primary sense to older and younger siblings. In general usage, they are extended to cover other males and females of ego's own generation. Used as a collective term - phîï-nòj - they refer to 'kinsmen'. In everyday practice, the terms are used as a convention which robs them of much of their content, but the implication of closeness and, with it, of affection - or at least of behaviour appropriate to affection - remains.

The above discussion provides a background against which to describe kinship as it is experienced by individual employees in their own families.

5. **Examples of Kinship Relations as Experienced by Employees.**

These examples are given merely as a comment on some of the points already made.
In general, the experience of employees seems to involve the incorporation into the kindred of ties with the families of close friends or neighbours, as much as with one's own relatives. One of my informants, Daeng, for example, is the daughter of an army captain, and the family has moved several times since she was born. While the family lived in Bangkok, they shared a compound with mother's older brother (luq) and his family, and operated as an extended family. When Daeng's family was moved to the south, these active ties became dormant, and now, although Daeng is back in Bangkok, she sees little of this family. On the other hand, when she lived in Korat, she worked in a beauty salon for another girl, Lek, who became a very close friend. She and Lek each call each other's parents by the titles khun phoo and khun mēe (father and mother), and these ties have remained active, even though Lek has since married, and both girls have moved to Bangkok.

Even within Daeng's family of orientation, there is variation in the degree to which ties are actively invoked. Daeng's father, for example, financially supports her youngest sister, who is still at school, but Daeng, who is fifth in the family, with three older sisters and an older unmarried brother, provides the money for her younger brother to study at the university. Their relationship is a close one, and when the younger brother needed money to go for a trip (paj thîaw) to Chiang Mai with some friends, it was to Daeng, not to his father, that he applied. Other employees also send money home to help their families, but in most cases it goes directly to the father.
There are other ways in which kinship bonds are invoked. Nine of the married respondents to the questionnaire, for example, are living in extended family situations (where the average number of people is 5.25), and three others have their children living with the parents of one of the partners.

While Daeng's experience would appear to confirm the voluntaristic nature of kinship relations, a more complex situation exists for Mali, the mē baan. Her father has three wives, of whom Mali's mother was the first, and Mali has an older brother and sister and a younger sister. Mali's father then left wife one and went to live with wife two, by whom he had three more daughters. At the same time, Mali and her brother went to live with the second family. Wife three was the older sister of wife two, and the father still lives with her, but they have no children. The active extended family for Mali, then, consisted of father, wife two, three sisters, and her brother. In fact, Mali 'hates' wife two and her daughters, feels that she was badly treated by them, and maintains no ties with them that she regards as satisfying. However, whenever wives two or three come to Bangkok, or are brought there by her father, they stay with Mali, and she accords them appropriate respect as phuu jàj. She also sends them gifts at New Year, as she does to her own mother, with whom she maintains no more active ties than she does with her father's other wives, although her feelings are much warmer. Of her siblings, the only one she

---

40 In rural areas, the tendency for newly married couples is to live uxorilocally for the first years (Tambiah 1970), but in Bangkok it seems to be simply a matter of convenience. This seems to be the principle also on which children go to live with grandparents - whether father's or mother's parents doesn't seem to matter.
keeps in touch with is her brother, and she refuses to go back to Chiang Rai even for a visit, because of the presence there of her mothers and sisters.

For all families, one finds the behaviour of respect appropriate between phûu jàj and dèq (adults and children), even for Mali. This, however, does not seem to involve deference to the wishes of phûu jàj when it comes to the matter of making personal decisions. Daeng left school at the age of fifteen against the wishes of her parents and refused to return there. Her manner of doing so was perfectly polite - she just played truant so consistently that her parents finally conceded the uselessness of forcing her. When she applied for a position in Bangkok, there was no consultation with her parents, nor did she see that there was any reason for it. Her response to the question was one given by a number of others - 'too leew' (I'm grown up now'). Another informant, from a poor rice-farming background, came to the Factory in direct opposition to the wishes of her parents and just waited it out till they finally accepted her decision.

With regard to the application of kinship terms, usage appears to vary. However, one principle that does seem to emerge is that phîi and nôo are used as terms of address (but not of reference) to cousins or others of ego's own generation more than for the family of orientation. A second principle is that phîi is more commonly used than nôo (which is never used to address an adult male).

In Daeng's case, for example, she and her brothers and sisters called each other in general by their given names.
When they were living next to her mother's brother, however, she called her mother's brother's oldest daughter phîi, but the two younger daughters by name. In Korat, her friend Lek's parents she called khun phôp and khun mîe, as already mentioned, and Lek's older sisters she called phîi and her younger sisters nôqô.

In Mali's instance, she called both her older sister and brother phîi, but her younger sisters (including those of wife two) by name. They in turn called her phîi. In a third informant's family, phîi and nôqô are not used at all among the brothers and sisters.

This material would seem to indicate that, while the terms phîi and nôqô are familial terms, they tend to be used in an inclusive sense, that is, to establish, or make closer, family-like ties with people of one's own generation outside the family of orientation. While this is true of both terms, it applies more to the use of phîi than to that of nôqô. At the same time, I would add that the terms do not necessarily imply close and active bonds, but rather an intention to establish ties of a kin-like nature, which, like patron-client bonds, may be invoked if the occasion arises. With this in mind, I wish now to look at the naming system in the Factory.

6. The Factory as Phîi-Nôqô Network.

While there are obviously variations as to who calls whom what in the factory, certain common factors do emerge.

---

41 My impression was that nôqô was used for people very much younger - mainly for children or babies - rather than for someone younger but relatively close in age.
The first of these is, as already mentioned, the use of phi by all employees to refer to the Company Vice-President. While there is a term luugphi (literally "cousin") used to refer informally to 'employer' or 'boss', informants were quite clear that the term as applied to Phi Visan is the kin term and its use carries the implications of bonds of mutual affection. Phi Visan has established himself in this role (as well as in the role of patron) in a number of quite significant ways which shall be discussed later. But he also makes himself very much a part of what I have called the broader life of the Factory, attending celebrations like those for New Year and a number of others through the year (though not all). Most especially, he comes in the evening each year on his birthday, and there is a big party for him.

The Japanese members of staff also attend some of the bigger festivities, but they are not accepted by workers as anything other than senior members of staff, and have little contact with them. They are called the Thai version of the Japanese title 'san', 'sañ', and are treated with formality. In effect, they are not an integral part of the Factory community. For the rest of the staff, phi is used by most of the workers to refer to their own section chief, assistant section chief, and foreman, even when the latter is the same age or even younger, and to the mèt bán. Higher staff, such as heads of departments, are referred to by the formal title of khun, though, for the deputy factory manager (a Thai), this is, according to several female informants, because he is unmarried and women are reluctant to imply the amorous intentions that phi as a term of address might be construed to convey. However, in view of the fact that the section chief of ATN, the section with
the largest number of women operators in the Factory, was known to all his workers as phîi at a time when he, too, was unmarried, this explanation is hardly adequate. The assistant manager in administration is Phîi Visan's brother, and has worked at the Factory since he retired from the army. He is also called khun, although he is often given his military title of phûukaan (informal for "colonel"). In the Personnel Section, the assistant personnel officer, who is much the same age as the majority of the workers, is also called phîi, but the personnel officer is khun, since he has only been at the Factory for a short time. Amongst the operators themselves, people of the same sex tend to call each other by their given names, although phîi is used quite a lot by younger, or newer, employees towards older ones. The reverse is not true, and no one is ever called nûn, except perhaps in the situation of older males teasing or flirting with younger females.

On a general level, a standard response of employers in describing the Factory is that 'we are all phîi-nûn'. While, as we shall see, there are a few cracks in this facade, the behaviours appropriate to phîi-nûn relationships retain enough substance for the reference to be more than a polite convention. Foremen, for example, have a very personal relationship with their own teams, which extends beyond the shop floor to other aspects of living. When the Dormitory Committee was to be elected, it was her foreman who suggested to Daeng that she be a candidate. He has also encouraged her to go ahead with adult education classes. It is to the foreman, in fact, that employees tend to go to discuss matters such as
undertaking courses, or family problems that might require taking leave or adjustment of shifts. The section chief is also regarded in a very personal light by most operators, and examples of this will be looked at later, when status and role are discussed (Chapter VI).

The use of the title phi, then, does not necessarily imply closeness, but it does add a personal dimension to what might otherwise be simply a formal work relationship. That the term is not merely a convention is indicated by situations where its use is deliberately omitted. Daeng, for example, does not like either her leader or her assistant section chief. She therefore does not call either of them phi, but simply their given names, and the omission is quite intentional.

The Factory, then, may be looked at both as an example of patron-client relationships, and as a network of personal, kinship-like bonds embodied in the use of the term phi. Both views are closely related through the principles of hierarchy and reciprocity. The way in which these principles operate in practice will be expanded in Chapter VI.
CHAPTER IV.

CREMATION AND CONFLICT:

THE EMERGENCE OF THEMES

About a month after my fieldwork at the Factory had begun, an event took place which crystallizes the basic elements at work in the Factory's present stage of development. The following account is based partly on my own observation as a participant, but principally on reports from and comments by informants. Taking this latter point into account, it is important to note that what is significant is the workers' perceptions of what occurred, even where this may not be strictly in accord with what in fact happened, and I tell it as it was related to me.

Chuusak, a worker in ATN, was knocked from his motorbike by a car late one night and killed. He was only eighteen years old, and had worked at the Factory for just over a year. His body was taken to a hospital morgue but, as he was not carrying his I.D. card, it took the police some time to identify him, and for a week no one at the Factory knew about his death. When the administration were finally informed, they immediately took responsibility for arrangements, since Chuusak's father lived upcountry and his mother was already dead. The family were relatively poor, and Chuusak's older brother was also a Company employee, having worked there for about three years. The Factory, therefore, assumed the cost of the cremation, and the employees also contributed with a donation of five baht per person.

Such a contribution by friends and workmates on the
occasion of a cremation ceremony is quite normal Thai practice, although the amount and the manner of making the donation have altered somewhat in the city. The significance of this change, and of other aspects of Chuusak's cremation, will be better appreciated in the light of a general account of the ritual of a cremation ceremony, particularly as it happens in Bangkok.


The rites surrounding death and cremation are, on the whole, simpler and more standardized in modern Bangkok than in rural areas. The most immediately obvious difference is that, whereas traditionally the body of a dead person was kept at home from the time of death until cremation, in Bangkok this is becoming less and less the case. This is a recent development, largely a consequence of confined space; the result is that many of the city temples now make provision for storing the body, and have built their own crematoria. One of the effects of this practice is to gloss over what was once - and is often still, in rural areas - the dramatic difference in the treatment accorded to the corpse of a person who has died in the fullness of time, of natural causes, and that meted out to the victim of an accident or other violent or sudden death. Since this was the manner of Chuusak's death, the fact that his cremation rites differed so little from the norm is an indication of the levelling effect of urban living (and dying).

42 Crematoria attached to temples are now becoming common upcountry as well.
Briefly, the victim of sudden or violent death is traditionally buried with great haste, and often with little ceremony, the religious rites being performed only after burial (not necessarily cremation) has taken place. (Cf. Tambiah 1968: 98; Kingshill 1960: 164-5; Kaufman 1960: 157). The body, moreover, is not kept at home, even for the short time before burial, since it is believed that the spirit of the dead person may become a malevolent ghost (phiil), and haunt or harm the living. According to Tambiah, this fear arises from the belief that such spirits hover on earth because of an attachment to worldly interests, from which they have been untimely snatched. This also partly explains the element of haste; although another aspect to this is that, by releasing the spirit of the deceased without delay, it may be reborn as quickly as possible, thus allowing it the opportunity to compensate for the time so rudely denied it in this life.

Leaving aside for the moment the manner of death, which, in the case of Chuusak, appeared to have little bearing on the actual performance of rites, it is fair to say that, although mortuary rituals are still amongst the most elaborate of the Buddhist ceremonies (cf. Tambiah 1968: 88), their celebration in Bangkok has inevitably led to simplification, and much less active participation by the family and friends of the dead person than in rural areas. The urban situation also requires a greater formality than is found in the village. The matter of notifying relatives and friends of a death, for example, is by word of mouth in the village, and such notification is adequate invitation to attend the ceremonies. In the city, the bereaved family sends out formal invitations.
This bears also on the custom of making donations to the cost of the rites. With the invitation goes an envelope, into which those who attend the ceremonies put their contribution. There is no standard amount for this - it is calculated not only on what the individual can afford, but also on one's closeness to the deceased, and one's social standing in relation to the deceased's family.

The amount of money given at any one time... reflects the relative statuses of donor and recipient. An individual tends to make very small contributions, or no contribution at all, to ngan ceremonies sponsored by his superiors, although he may feel obliged to attend the ceremony... On the other hand a householder of high rank should give generously to his subordinates and dependants although he need not attend the ngan in person; appropriately enough, reciprocal exchanges of equivalent amounts of money usually take place between individuals who are of the same social status (Bunnag 1973: 164).

In every case, a list is kept by the family of the names of those who made a contribution, together with the amount. This record is used to ensure strict reciprocity when the situations of those involved are reversed.43

These contributions are more than a mere gesture of sympathy or support. They do help, quite significantly, to defray the cost of what is a relatively expensive exercise, involving several nights of chanting (sùad sòb) before the actual burning of the body. The sequence of events after death tends to be fairly standard. In the circumstance of the body's being kept in the temple, the monks themselves - not the family - prepare the body and arrange and decorate

43 This is the practice for weddings and ordinations also. Now, however, particularly in larger places of work, the amount donated seems to have become a standard five baht (about twenty-five cents).
an altar in the sáalaa (pavilion) where the ceremonies are to be held. There is a charge for this service. The burning itself is preceded by a number of nights of chanting. This can be as few as one, though even poor families try to have at least three, while the wealthy normally have at least seven. On these nights, the monks sit on the raised dais in the sáalaa, and chant appropriate Buddhist texts for at least an hour. Each night, moreover, has its own host (càw phàab). This may be a member of the deceased's family, or it may be a friend. The role is seen as an important one - in the case of the rich, as much for the prestige attached as for the merit which may be acquired. It is, however, a rich source of merit. The host is responsible for providing food and drink for the guests, as well as for giving money and gifts to the monks.

These nights of chanting are seen as convivial social occasions. In the villages, relatives and friends stay with the bereaved family all night for every night of the chanting. The women who stay help to prepare food, while the men gamble and get drunk. In the city, when the body is at the temple, people tend to stay on after the actual chanting ritual is finished, talking and drinking (though not gambling).

On the day of the cremation itself, there is an alms-giving ceremony (kaan líaq phrá), for the monks in the morning, organized by the family, and attended just by them. Friends and

---

44 The chanting is always for an odd number of nights since even numbers are regarded as unlucky.

45 This is one occasion when the police treat gambling, which is normally illegal, as permissible.
others come to 'the burn' (phāw) in the afternoon or evening, which in fact is usually a mock burning. Because the smell associated with cremation has come to be regarded as unpleasant, friends are spared this, and the actual burning of the body takes place late at night. In Bangkok, the mock burning - which, to all intents and purposes, is the cremation - is a much more solemn occasion than the nights of chanting, and attendance is regarded very much as an occasion on which to make personal merit. There is another aspect as well - that is, that one takes the opportunity to ask forgiveness of the person injured (cāw kam naaj ween) or to grant it for any wrong or misunderstanding that was unresolved at the time of death; a kind of setting straight of one's accounts with the dead.

The rites begin with more chanting by the monks and sometimes with a sermon. Often, people then view the body, both as a farewell and as an incentive to contemplate their own last end. The fire is then lit, usually in the temple, by an expert, a Master of Ceremonies, who is a paid temple official. This is done with a flint, in an oven, the front of which is open, behind the altar at the end of the sāalaa. All those present - with the monks and then the family taking precedence - then file past to add their own incense-stick, candle, and flower offering to the flames. Sometimes coins are thrown in as well, a gesture which has a twofold significance. At one level, it is offered in order to enable

---

46 Upcountry, this post is usually filled on a voluntary basis by someone who, over the years, has become an expert, and who provides this service free of charge for all families, as a merit-making activity.
the deceased to buy land and a house in heaven (cf. Tambiah 1968: 89). At another, though in practice possibly not very different, level, the act is performed to gain merit, not for oneself, but for the dead person. The money is used for the temple, after being collected when the ashes are cleaned out.

The sequel to a cremation is for the family to go next day to the temple to collect the bones, which are then kept in a small chedi (ceedii) (the Thai equivalent of the stupa) at home, on the same shelf as, and next to, the Buddha image. Keeping this general account in mind, we may now assess the significance of the rites attached to Chuusak's cremation.

2. The Cremation Ritual - Chuusak.

It was arranged that Chuusak's body be taken to the monastery close to the Factory, about a fortnight after the death, and, that same night there was the first of three nights of chanting (sùad sòb). The hosts for the first night were the Factory administration. They were represented by Khun Vira, assistant manager of the administration department (and

---

47 In fact, there is some confusion here, one belief being that the land is bought in heaven, where the spirit hopefully lives till the time of rebirth; another being that the money can be used to make this purchase when the person is actually reborn.

48 This monastery plays an important part vis-à-vis the Factory, carrying out the functions of a local or village wat for any religious occasion which involves the Factory as an entity.

49 In the case of Chuusak, the relative closeness of the cremation to death may have been due to any one of a number of factors, if not to all of them. In the first place, there was the fact of the violence of his death. Secondly, his family was poor, and could not have afforded to keep his body for a long period. Moreover, it is becoming common not to keep the body anyway. What the motivation of the family actually was in this case was not a question I felt free to ask.
Khun Visan's brother), the Japanese and Thai heads of the Personnel Section, and some of the section chiefs. On the second night, the hosts were the Trade Union, the Employees' Committee, and the employees in general. Chuusak's own section (ATN) acted as hosts for the third evening, and senior staff present included the section chief of ATN, the Japanese and Thai heads of the Nylon department, and some of the other section chiefs.

On the morning of the actual cremation, there was further chanting, and an almsgiving ceremony (kaan liaq phra) for the monks, just for the family and close friends. The cremation ceremony itself was attended by several hundred of the workers and a large number of the senior staff, both Japanese and Thai, including Mr. Yamamoto, the Factory manager, and Khun Vira, who acted as Master of Ceremonies. The viewing of the body was omitted, as decomposition had apparently begun. However, once the fire was lit, all those present filed past to add their incense-stick, candle, and flower offering to the flames, and some threw in coins as well. Apart from the fact that the family went first, there was no rigid order of precedence in this part of the ceremony, though the phuu jaj (management staff) tended to be towards the fore. Moreover, they sat in the covered sáalaa with the family and monks, while all the other guests sat in the open.

There is no doubt that, in this whole matter, the Factory clearly performed the role of patron in its most traditional sense. All the elements of patronage are present—the relative poverty of the family, and the position of two of its members as employees, are the factors bringing into operation the superior resources of the Factory. The Company
then fulfils its patronage obligations, not only by providing the money for the cremation, but by actively participating, both in the arrangements for the ceremonies and by attendance at the ceremonies themselves. The fact that different representatives were present on the different occasions does not necessarily depersonalize this role, although it is to be noted that Khun Visan did not himself attend. In view of Bunnag's (1973) comments about the role of a person of high rank in contributing generously to ceremonies of his subordinates, while not being bound to actually attend, this absence may in fact be seen to emphasize his position rather than to diminish it. Indeed, the personal character of the Factory's involvement is highlighted, and, when the significance of the three nights of chanting is appreciated, takes on the specifically family-like aspect discussed in the previous chapter. The Factory's sponsorship of three days specifically took the place of family sponsorship.50

A second element which the cremation illustrates is the involvement of employees in the total life of the Factory, or, to phrase it differently, the comprehensiveness of the Factory as a community for those whom it adopts as employees. This is patently so in the case of Chuusak himself. It is also true, however, for all the other employees, whose attendance at the obsequies of their workmate has both a personal and a communal aspect. At the personal level, their presence expressed not only friendship, but also the intention of forgiving and seeking forgiveness of the dead (càw kam  naaj ween), as well as making

50 As far as I know, the family themselves provided the little momento handed out to each of the guests at the actual cremation - in this case, a Vicks inhaler.
merit. In addition, the group aspect must also be acknowledged. At one level, there is the financial contribution made by each one towards the expense of the ceremonies. The manner of this contribution, however, needs to be specified, since it is yet another indication of the formalization of a traditional practice. The five baht donated by each employee was actually automatically deducted by the office from each person's monthly pay. No one to whom I spoke about this was in any way resentful of the practice. It was seen, indeed, as an efficient way of helping the family, which other employees would have wanted to do anyway. Nevertheless, it is a significant departure, and one arranged and carried out by the management, from the custom of personal contributions being made by an individual on the basis of his relationship with the dead person or the bereaved family, and recorded by the family for the purpose of personal reciprocity.

Another level of involvement in Factory life by employees is the act of sponsorship of the second night's chanting by the two most representative employees' groups - the Trade Union and the Employees' Committee. This assumption of the kinship role by the Factory personnel, in so momentous a rite of passage as death, can be seen both as expressing a reality which already exists, and as acting to intensify it.

These aspects of the Factory have already been discussed in the previous chapter - that is, the operation of the patron-client relationship as a hallmark of the extra-contractual nature of employment, acting to bind employees to the Company.

---

51 These will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.
through gratitude and loyalty on the basis of the principles of bunkhun and katanyuu-kataweethii, and the family or kinship-like character of the bonds operating both between the Company and its employees, and amongst the employees themselves.

In the events of the cremation and those arising from it, however, certain other elements also became clear, which will form the basis of subsequent chapters. The first of these is implied in the events already related. This is the attempt by the Company to contain, within its own framework, and hence to control, alternative structures such as the Trade Union. This will become clearer when we look at the development of the Union, and its place in the life of the Factory. What is already apparent is the willingness of the Union to be incorporated actively into the Factory as a community, specifically in co-operation with what one may be tempted to call its rival organization, the Employees' Committee.

Further, the death of Chuusak and his cremation had a sequel which brought to the surface a number of the elements operating at a deeper structural level in the Factory, in the process of the transformation of these traditional relationships in the industrial context. These events demonstrate a number of things. On the one hand, there are the ambivalences arising out of the systematization of the patron-client relationship which is taking place in the Factory. On the other, there is the potential for conflict arising, as part of the process, from a lack of agreement, or mutual understanding, on the definition of the terms of the 'contract' between a patron and his client, or what constitutes reciprocal rights and obligations.
3. The Ramifications of Chuusak's Cremation.

The relevant events are as follows. On the second night of chanting, when the Trade Union and Employees' Committee were acting as hosts, the secretary of the Union - Monchai - availed himself of the offered hospitality, not wisely but too well. He was discussing with his friends the fact that the driver of the car which killed Chuusak was a 'Doctor' (dokta - an academic, not medical, title), and a friend of one of the senior staff members who worked in the head office. Rumour had it that he had made use of his contact, and that there would be no prosecution. Under the influence of the ubiquitous Mekhong whisky, Monchai made a statement to the effect that the Company was on the side of the Doctor, and not on the side of the workers. This ill-fated statement was overheard by Khun Patana, the deputy Personnel manager, who subsequently reported it to Khun Visan.

By all reports, Khun Visan was extremely angry, and called a meeting of the Trade Union, Employees' Committee, and section chiefs. Not everyone came, since the invitation was at short notice, and the reason for it not known. The president of the Employees' Committee was among those not present. At this meeting, Khun Visan did all the talking - in the face of his obvious anger, no one else 'dared' (klâa) to

52 According to one lot of informants, there was a meeting prior to this one, asked for by the Trade Union, which Khun Visan did not attend, and at which Monchai repeated his accusation that the Company had helped the Doctor rather than Chuusak. However, I could get no confirmation of this meeting (which was based on hearsay for the informants anyway), and, in view of other conversations with informants more actively concerned, I would conclude that only one meeting took place.
speak. Taking on himself the total decision and responsibility, he gave Monchai the sack on the spot.

The arbitrariness of this action is not unprecedented. On at least one other occasion, Khun Visan had himself, on the final ground of insolence, dismissed an operator with a very bad record of disciplinary breaches - an incident not unlike the sacking of Monchai in its implications. Such behaviour is, however, unusual, since the normal procedure for infringements of any kind is for the offender to come before the Discipline Committee, which has representatives from Management, the Trade Union, and the Employees' Committee; for the case to be heard, with the offender having the right of reply; and for penalties, such as fines, to be in proportion to the offence. Khun Visan rarely takes part in these proceedings, the penalty generally being imposed under the authority of Mr. Yamamoto, the Factory manager. Obviously the character of Monchai's offence was quite different from the routine infringements dealt with by the Discipline Committee. I would suggest that the magnitude of the reaction to it can only be understood if it is interpreted as a breach, not of the employer-employee contract, but of the patron-client tie. The ramifications of this breach, however, took place in the contractual sphere of employer-employee, and it is this confusion between the two spheres which needs to be explored. In this instance, the two areas are seen to be in conflict, and this conflict springs directly from the co-existence of two systems within the Factory - the patron-client system, and a developing class system, manifested in the existence of the Trade Union.

A further dimension to the dispute was added when the
Labour Department was included. After Monchai was sacked, with no other recompense than wages already owing to him to the date of his dismissal, the Trade Union went to the Committee of Labour Relations - a section within the Labour Department - with a request for intervention. This extension of the conflict to include the Labour Department as arbitrator is an apparent denial of the relevance of patronage on the contemporary industrial scene, and to some extent marks the depersonalizing of relationships within the Factory. To assess its importance, however, it is necessary to look at the role of the Committee of Labour Relations in general, and its function in relation to other industrial disputes.  

In the case of Monchai, it took several months before the Committee gave its decision. During that time, its task was to interview all the parties to the dispute, and then to consider the findings. In the event, the decision was that Monchai had not really breached any regulation, and the Company was ordered to pay him three months' wages as severance pay. It is significant, however, that they did not order his reinstatement.

The issues raised by Chuusak's death and cremation, then, are fundamental to the process of transformation of traditional relationships within the industrial context of the Factory. In the following chapters, I wish to explore the implications of these issues, and some of the factors operating to bring about change.

---

53 Cf. Chapter VII.

54 At the time I left the field, the matter was not altogether closed, as Monchai was refusing to take the money on the grounds that it was not enough.
Chapter V will examine the attempts by the Company to contain, and hence to control, alternative structures such as the Trade Union. Chapter VI will look at the element of conflict arising out of the systematization of the patron-client relationship in the Factory, and the ambiguities associated with lack of agreement on the definition of, firstly, the terms of the contract between a patron and his client, or, secondly, the rights and duties involved in the status relationship between employer and employee, or patron and client. This should help to make clear the basic conflict between the patron-client system and an emerging class system, and the confusion resulting from the simultaneous presence in the Factory of the two. Finally, Chapter VII will cover the role of the Labour Department, against a background of other labour disputes in the country. It should then be possible to make some assessment of the place of traditional relationships in an industrialized Thailand, and perhaps to suggest the direction in which change is inevitably going.
In talking about the attempt of the Company to contain, and hence to control, alternative structures within the Factory, it is essential to point out that one is entering the realm of those activities which constitute the core of human praxis, the human mode of being-in-the-world. Indeed, as we saw in Chapter I, 'being structured and being capable of structuring seem to be the twin kernels of the human way of life, known as culture' (Bauman 1973: 51f). Through their experience of structures already existing in their society - in this case, an industrial company in latter twentieth-century Thailand - the Factory personnel, both management and workers, operate at the levels both of being-the-object and of being-the-subject. That is to say, that they are acted on, as well as acting, and that the latter is to some extent brought about by the former. Man acts as being-the-subject both in response to, and in defiance of, being-an-object.

This activity all takes place within a specifically industrialized environment, where the work is done by machine and where the workers no longer relate directly to the product of their work. In the classic Marxist sense, the machine, and not the product, has become the object of their care, and they are assailed by the experience of alienation. To put it slightly differently, the concept of Quality is lost (Pirsig 1976) and technology becomes the user rather than the used. However, while certain aspects of alienation such as an
increasing identification of the "self" with the work self (Berger 1973: 35) may certainly be experienced, at the Factory its effects - at the psychological level, at least - are minimal. What has assumed importance is not the product of the workers' labour, but the relations with other employees, including management, and the enjoyment of the considerable fringe benefits offered by the Company. The creativity which is of the essence of the human condition is here channelled into aspects of employment outside the sphere of actual production. It develops into the building of a meaningful work environment - in this case, a community. In other words, community itself is a positive idea - one doesn't 'have' community; one creates it. Community itself is a structure, and has, as one of its attributes, the process of further structuring. Community in this sense, and specifically at the Factory, may be seen as the 'medium and bearer of praxis' (Bauman 1973: 118).

The question then becomes one of identifying the levels at which community is significant, and at which it can be said to be actively structured. From the management point of view, this structuring embraces two levels - that of the Factory as a whole, and that of specific groups within the whole, consciously set up to serve and promote the interests of that whole. For the workers, it consists of the quest for groups appropriate to their new situation as urban industrial employees. Put in the terms already defined as significant in the Factory context, it can be said that, insofar as the people at the Factory relate as patrons and clients, the patrons are
concerned immediately with the creation of a close-knit and inward-looking community, and, to this end, their active structuring attempts to impose their meaning on the experience of industrialization. Their method is one of forestalling, and hence of controlling, the emergence of an alternative meaning on the part of the workers where the workers' structures differ from those being set up by management. This control is seen by the management as being in the best interest of the workers, as well as of themselves as employers/managers. This approach is demonstrated in three main ways:

1) containment of traditional practices - an attempt to make as the basis of community the whole (and therefore classless) Factory personnel;

2) containment of politicization through the formation of committees; and

3) containment of the development of class consciousness, through,
   a) the setting up of the Employees' Committee, and
   b) the wooing of the Trade Union.

At the same time, insofar as the workers, both as individuals and as a group, are in a situation of rapid social change, and are called upon to respond to this novelty by creating their own structures, in order to impose order on, and draw meaning out of, this experience, the patron-client relationship acts to deny them this right. In terms of the cultural process, it attempts to limit one of their basic freedoms to cope constructively with their novel situation. Seen in this way, patronage denies them their right to be creative, and, to that extent, makes its proponents little
different from members of the exploiter class which, in a Marxist analysis, they must inevitably be.

In defiance of this attempted containment, however, the workers' quest for an appropriate community basis has continued, even been promoted, to some extent, by the very attempt to forestall it. Insofar as this quest has led to specific decisions being taken outside the framework established by the Company, it has acquired the complexion of politicization. This is, so far, quite slight, but is indicated by a number of things:

1) the formation of a Trade Union;
2) the collapse of the Employees' Committee; and
3) the response to the sacking of Monchai, the Union secretary.

Further, to the extent that the establishment of a Union has brought about links with other unions outside the Factory, and, indeed, outside Thailand, it can be seen that the process of structuring undertaken by the workers acts to broaden the basis of the inward-looking community, and to force it into relation with the wider society. In this identification, tentative as it may yet be, of the Factory workers as part of a wider community based on their position in a capitalist industrial economy, may be seen incipient class consciousness.

I use this term with some reluctance, for two reasons. In the first place, it may imply an active political consciousness on the part of the workers which really does not yet exist. Secondly, as a word, it is ugly. However, I bow to its inclusion in the English language because of its usefulness. For my purposes, it refers to the development of elements related to class consciousness which will ultimately be realized, at the level of superstructure, in the political sphere.

a) Traditional practices. There are several ways in which traditional Thai practices are actively incorporated into the life of the Factory, and they affect all personnel. At the first, and most obvious, level, there is the conformity to national customs, even when this is not demanded by law. On all major religious days, for example, there is a holiday; daytime staff do not work, and shift workers are paid overtime. A list of the holidays for one year may be seen in Appendix I.

Part of the same expression of public national solidarity are the rituals which signify the activity of the Factory as an identifiable community within the national community. These rituals celebrate the institution of monarchy, which, along with religion and the state, officially constitute the three foundations of the nation. The Factory's participation is not of special significance, since it is shared by all other factories and workplaces, but it serves the purpose of all such public gestures, in emphasizing a sense of belonging for all its personnel. The rituals to which I refer are those such as the decoration of the main gates for the King's birthday. This is done with painting and lights, which remain for several days. The effect is very gay. These decorations, however, do not entail very much work, as they are kept from year to year. However, considerable preparation is sometimes required, as, for example, the making of a wreath for King Chulalongkorn day.

The celebration of this holiday - one of only three compulsory holidays - is really a celebration of the Chakri dynasty, of which the present King is the ninth, and
Chulalongkorn was the fifth and acknowledged greatest representative. For the occasion, wreaths are made by all institutions - educational, service, and working - and displayed round the statue of the King which stands in the square outside the Throne Hall and the old parliament. The preparation of these wreaths is detailed and painstaking.

At the Factory, their making was undertaken by the Culture Committee, and took several weeks from the time of the initial design, though the actual making was about a week. It must be noted that, although anyone was welcome to come and help, and a few did, most of the work was done by the Culture Committee members, and it was they who took the finished product - a copy of the mounted figure of Chulalongkorn, done in coins and outlined in flowers - to mount it in the early morning of the holiday. Although all the workers know of the activities of the Culture Committee, most are not directly involved.

An activity which was used to involve them more was one associated with the King's birthday. The government had asked that this be made a special occasion to clean up the country and make it beautiful. The Factory manager responded to this by having a special cleaning-up day at the Factory itself, but the Trade Union broadened the scope of activities to the outside community. It took as its project the cleaning of the grounds of the neighbouring monastery, and embellished its work by planting trees there as well.

Just as such public rituals do not necessarily involve

56 This is not the only occasion during the year when such a ceremony takes place - other Chakri kings also receive their homage, though not on such a large scale - but it was the only one I witnessed at the Factory.
all the workers, so, too, there are religious rituals which take place routinely and without necessarily direct participation of more than a few. The blessing of the dormitories at New Year, and the ceremony of almsgiving for the monks (kaan liaŋ phrá) to mark the Factory's tenth birthday are examples of this. The Factory's participation in the Robe-giving festival, Kathin, is also largely symbolic. This is held at the neighbouring monastery, and a number of the workers joined in the festivities with other people from the surrounding district. At the actual ceremonies, however, the official representatives were Mr. Yamamoto, the Factory manager, and Khun Vira, head of administration. They presented, on behalf of the Company and its workers, a gift of ten thousand baht, which was to go towards the building of a new sāalaa, and Mr. Yamamoto performed the act of almsgiving. This meant, since he performed the act in his official capacity, that merit accrued to all.

Such routine acts need not be seen as especially significant in terms of actively structuring a community. However, the process goes beyond these to incorporate religious rituals into the life of the Factory in a much more personalized way. I shall mention two examples of this - an almsgiving ceremony held to mark the change in ATN section from three teams of shiftworkers to four, and a special thɔɔd phàa pàa (monastery benefit), held at the request

57 Literally, thɔɔd phàa pàa is 'the laying down of wilderness robes' (cf. Bunnag 1973: 117). The ceremony consists of offering gifts and money to the monks of a particular monastery, and there is no fixed occasion for this. The gifts - which may include robes for the monks,
but often not - are attached to a small tree (not unlike a small Christmas tree, but without foliage). This is decorated, and taken in procession to the monastery on the day of the thâod phâa pâa. In the case described here, the monastery next to the school was having a thâod phâa pâa, and the school used this occasion to accept the money being donated by the Factory. The phâa pâa tree prepared by the Factory employees was presented to the monks, not at the monastery, but in a special ritual held in the school itself. Afterwards, any further donations to the school fund were noted down in a book and kept as a record.

of one of the workers (a foreman) to help his father's school.

For the almsgiving ceremony, tables were set up outside ATN section at the time when the system of shift work was to change. The ceremony was a kind of dedication of the new system, and food to be offered was brought by the members of the section. Nine monks came from the monastery - nine being an odd number and suitably lucky - and about thirty of the workers, including Khun Supachai, the section chief, offered the food (sâj bâad). Most of the workers present were those involved in the morning shift change, since the ceremony took place at seven o'clock, but one of the children of the mêè bân was there also, with rice which her mother had sent.

The thâod phâa pâa was a more complex affair, and raises other matters such as the role of Khun Visan, the Company vice-president, as patron. For this reason, it will be dealt with in more detail in the next chapter. Its relevance here is the total support by the Factory for a ceremony at a tiny outlying village, not even yet accessible by road, at the request of an employee. Two Company buses were provided on the Saturday evening to transport workers to the landing stage for the long-tailed boats which covered the last lap of the journey - not so very far from the Factory in actual distance;
probably altogether an hour's trip. As no Thai will ever miss a chance to paj thiaw (roughly, but inaccurately, translatable as 'have a good time'), the buses were full, and the Saturday evening festivities, accompanied by the Factory band, lasted most of the night. The numbers dwindled somewhat for the actual religious ceremony of the following morning, but were still substantial, and the occasion was graced by the personal presence of Khun Visan. Khun Vira, his brother, was also present. The ceremony was followed by refreshments, and more music and dancing, and the buses were made available again to transport people back to the Factory.

In a category similar to the festivities of the thôad phâa pâa, although not so unusual, are other celebrations, arranged for traditional holidays. The most important of these are Loy Krathong, the Festival of Lights and Water, and Songkran, the Thai New Year. The preparation for Loy Krathong, in particular, is on the grand scale, which is appropriate for one of the country's most cherished, and most beautiful, festivals. The krathong is a small float, traditionally made of banana leaves, although now any material is used. It contains a candle, and often money as well, and has a symbolism which is differently interpreted. One of the most commonly held is that it is a gesture offered to the waters - klongs, streams, and rivers - so central to the traditional Thai lifestyle, asking forgiveness for all the acts of pollution with which each person inevitably fouls them during the year. At the same time, the krathong carries all the sins of the individual out to sea, where they are lost, so that the person is left cleansed. The latter meaning is somewhat obscured when the ceremony is held
on an enclosed piece of water, but, in Bangkok, this is not now uncommon.

At the Factory, at the time when I was there, the ceremony was held round the swimming-pool. The arrangements were made by the Dormitory and Culture Committees, and approved by the phùu jàj. A band was hired for the occasion, and food and drinks (including beer and Mekhong whisky) provided by the Company. Each section had prepared its own krathong - which were meticulous and elaborate - and these were entered for judging, with a prize for the best. There were twenty or thirty of them, from a peacock, with a spray of candles for its tail, and a tiered platform with a copy of the Emerald Buddha enthroned, to a model of the Democracy Monument.

As well as the competition for the krathongs, there was also a beauty contest, the emphasis being not so much on the individual girls as on their traditional Thai-style dress. Six girls, representing different sections, entered the competition, and the judging for the prizes (five hundred baht for first prize, three hundred for second, and a hundred for third), was done, as for the krathongs, by the phùu jàj. The phùu jàj present included the Factory manager and most of the other Japanese with their wives (in kimono) and children, as well as the Japanese vice-president of the Company who works

---

58 I suspected some deliberate and quite daring irony in this, since Loy Krathong took place just a month after the coup of October 6th. The lights in this krathong were very dim, whether intentionally or not I don't know, but later in the evening, after the krathongs had been floated and this one was in danger of catching alight, there was joking amongst some of the male workers about another coup, and democracy going up in flames.
at the head office.

Normally, the partying goes on till the early hours of the morning, but on this occasion the band had to finish at eleven o'clock because of the midnight curfew. In the time allowed, however, the occasion was well celebrated. Not only the six beauty contestants, but most of the other women workers as well, had dressed up, many of them in a simple version of Thai-style dress. Most people, too, floated their own krathongs, once the judging for the section ones was over.

There was, then, an inclusion of employees at two levels - the individual level of participation in a national tradition, and identification of each person with a particular unit within the Factory, in this case the section. This identification was two-fold - through the preparation and launching of each section's krathong, and through their section representation in the beauty contest (also a very Thai event). Moreover, the participation was comprehensive - every member, from the Factory manager and other Japanese staff down to the operators, was involved, and the quality of involvement was the same for all.

The same was true for Songkran, though this was a much simpler affair. Some of the employees, under the direction of the mãe bàn, prepared a Khan Toke dinner - a traditional northern Thai meal with a deceptively potent rice wine accompanying it. Again, the setting was the swimming-pool; again, there was a hired band and a beauty contest, with girls from different sections representing various styles of traditional dress.

The importance of occasions such as these in achieving the goal of a total community should not be underestimated.
They enhance the sense of fellowship among employees which is already strong, at least at the level of appreciating the benefits which the Company has to offer.

There is one final area of traditional custom which also comes within the ambit of the Factory, and that is the practice of Thai men entering the monkhood for a short period. Ideally, all men go for a period of at least one to three months from the time they are twenty-one. The main purpose, as far as my informants were concerned, is to make merit for one's parents, rather than for oneself; to enter while they are still alive, therefore, is preferable to waiting until one is older, when they may have died. In practice, many men do wait, and many do not finally observe the custom at all.

From my discussions with informants, I gained the strong impression that this custom is still regarded as very important, even amongst these urbanized workers, and this impression is supported by figures gained from my questionnaire. Of the sixty-two males in my sample, twenty-two (36.7%) had already done their period in the monkhood (bùad pen phrá màj) and the average number of months that they spent in the monastery was 12.2. Moreover, eight of these came from Bangkok (i.e., their parents also lived in Bangkok, making them second-generation urban dwellers), and a further nine from towns or villages within a hundred kilometre radius of the capital. In other words, at least 77 per cent (three of the sample did not give their province) of those who had entered were at least one

---

59 It should be noted that, although the time in the monastery was obviously longer for some men than for others, this rather high average was not skewed by just one or two people, but is in fact fairly representative.
generation old city-dwellers, or close enough to have felt its influence. Of the remaining forty who had not yet entered, a further thirty (79%) said that they did intend to do so. The total of those, then, who had either already observed the custom, or intended so to do, was 86.7% of the whole sample.

Whether or not those who expressed their intention to enter the monkhood ever actually do so or not, this figure indicates the importance with which this custom is still regarded by the men in the Factory. This attitude is respected by the Company, and provision for observance of the tradition is laid down. For those who have worked at the Factory for one to three years, one month's leave is granted. Those who have worked there for three to five years are allowed three months. The first group, who enter the monastery for a month, receive no wages, but those who go for three months receive forty-five days' pay - a gesture which moves the Company's acknowledgement of the custom from one of tolerance to one of encouragement.

To summarize, then, the Company's participation in traditional practices is active and positive. These practices are made a vehicle for achieving a sense of belonging by its employees, both as individuals, through the acceptance of personal obligations such as entering the monkhood, and as members of a definable group, through section involvement in such activities as the preparation of krathongs. Traditional holidays are used to concentrate an important aspect of

---

60 This is done elsewhere as well. The government service, for example, also makes provision for men to have time off to fulfil this duty.
social life on the Factory itself, and this is done in a way which encourages the fraternizing of all members, whatever their position in the official hierarchy. To the extent that the Company is successful in its aim, the basis of the community which it hopes to achieve is, at this level, the whole - and therefore classless - Factory personnel.

b) The Committee system. The rationale behind the institution of workers' committees in the Factory was stated quite explicitly by one of the phó sư jàj, an assistant Factory manager: 'We knew that a trade union would have to come, so we wanted to educate the workers gradually. That is why we set up the Dormitory Committee, Sports Committee and other committees'.

As this statement indicates, the intention of the Company was in no way sinister. Nevertheless, the committees are seen as a deliberate attempt to anticipate the emergence of a worker organization that, by definition, stands outside the Factory structure; and, in so doing, to direct and remain in control of its development.

Leaving aside for the moment the Employees' Committee, there are four such committees initiated by the Company. They are composed of workers, and operate autonomously on at least one level. All of them are, however, ultimately subject to management, and their decisions can be taken only within the framework laid down by the Company. At the same time, they do allow for worker participation in those activities specifically designed to humanize the Factory and make it into a community.

The committees are as follows:
(i) sports committee;
(ii) culture committee;
(iii) dormitory committee, and
(iv) fact-finding (discipline committee).\footnote{There is also a safety committee, but this is more intrinsically related than its fellows to the general structure and goals of the Factory as an industrial plant rather than as a community, and I do not therefore include it.}

(i) The Sports Committee and Culture Committee.

Both these committees have been in operation for four years. Both were set up in 1973 (though prior to the revolution of October 14th, and not, therefore, simply in response to the subsequent stirrings of democracy). Their members - sixteen for the Sports and fifteen for the Culture Committee - are appointed, though workers may indicate to their section chief their interest in being chosen, and the term of membership is one year.

The Sports Committee meets about twice a month, and arranges all sporting events, including competitions with outside teams, and an annual sports day. Decisions made by the committee have to be referred to the administration, but approval is virtually automatic, and no special meeting is called for. This includes normal expenditure, since a budget is allocated each year to the committee, which must account for its expenditure, but may decide how the money is to be used.

A budget is also allocated to the Culture Committee - a monthly amount for music and films, and an extra ten thousand baht for such special occasions as Songkran. Another twenty thousand baht is allocated for the production of a quarterly
This committee meets once a month, and has two major functions: to mark appropriately the celebration of major national and religious events such as those already described, and to arrange a film or a dance in the months when there is no other cultural event. Again, decisions made by the committee have to be submitted to the phóu jàj, and the budget has to be accounted for, but, again, there is no special meeting called, and approval is more or less automatic. There have been occasions when approval has been delayed because the management wished to alter the suggested venue, but this, according to the president of the committee, is usually for reasons of safety.

Two major events in the year for which the committee is not responsible are New Year (although it does arrange for the monks' blessing ceremony (kaan liang phra) on about December 28th) and the yearly outing, when a bus (or boat) takes all the employees to a place of recreation, such as Bang Saen or Khao Yay, for a day's extra holiday. For these, the administration is directly responsible, although a special committee of five is set up to take suggestions, and make final arrangements, for the latter.

(ii) The Fact-finding (Discipline) Committee.

This committee is an offshoot of the Union and Employees' Committees, and is made up of two representatives from each of them, together with two representatives from Personnel. Its purpose is to establish the facts in cases of breaches of discipline by workers, and to propose what course of action - such as a fine, or suspension for a specific period - should be

---

62 This is the European New Year, which has become as important, in some ways, as Songkran, in Bangkok at least.
taken. It does not, however, normally have jurisdiction over infringements of discipline in the dormitory area - a not infrequent occurrence in the men's dormitory - since these are the responsibility of the phòb bánh and mê bánh, and the Dormitory Committee. It only meets when convened for a particular case, and not on a regular basis. Its proposals for disciplinary action are submitted to the Factory manager, who makes the final decision, and publishes it in an official notice under his own name. After the coup d'état of October 6th, 1976, more cases were dealt with directly by the phù jàj, although the committee was not actually suspended.

(iii) The Dormitory Committee.

This Committee also was set up by the management and has been in operation for several years. However, until mid-1976, it operated on a fairly casual basis, with little real responsibility, and was regarded with scant respect, if not positive dislike, by the rest of the workers. However, in July 1976, after the move to new dormitories was completed, members of the committee were, for the first time, elected rather than appointed, and were given a much more specific brief for the major responsibility for dormitory affairs. An analysis of its functions - which it takes very seriously - throws a good deal of light on the structure of the relations between management and workers, in terms of the type of responsibility which the management is prepared to entrust to the workers, the amount of autonomy allowed or encouraged, and the extent to which participation is channelled.

As reconstituted, the Committee consists of eighteen
members, nine from the women's dormitory, and nine from the men's. It meets every month, at least once, and sometimes more often. It also meets regularly once a month with the phùu jàj. These are usually Mr. Yamamoto and another Japanese, the deputy Personnel manager, and two other representatives from Personnel. At these meetings, all proposals by the Dormitory Committee are brought up for further discussion, and approval sought. In this instance, approval is far from automatic, as we shall see.

The Dormitory Committee, like the other committees, is allocated an annual budget, which is used for such matters as providing extra conviviality for workers on appropriate occasions, and offering a prize at New Year for the best kept room in each dormitory. While there is some freedom in the way in which this money can be used - for example, the amounts actually decided on for each occasion - expenditure has to be accounted for.

The importance placed by the management on the role of the Dormitory Committee is indicated both by the amount of time which they are willing to devote to it in meetings, and also by their meticulous care for the formalities in setting it up. It is the only committee, other than the Union, for example, which has a written constitution. This is no mere token outline, but a fifteen-page document, largely translated (quite badly) into Thai from a Japanese original, drawn up by the parent company for its Japanese employees. It was management which indicated the necessity of having a constitution, and which offered the Japanese constitution as a basis for the Factory's committee. It was left to the Dormitory Committee
to work on this document, and revise it as the members saw fit. At the time when I left the field, the Committee had worked through the document, and made what changes they thought necessary, but they were still waiting for a discussion with the phûu jâj, and the constitution was not, therefore, at that stage, officially adopted.

In terms of assessing the role which the Committee envisages for itself, this document is quite significant. In general, the members accepted the constitution much as it stood (bad Thai and all). Although they worked through the constitution over several meetings (that is, over several months), and it was open to any of them to come up with ideas and suggestions, such changes as were finally made were, in fact, quite minor, and consisted mainly of adapting the constitution to the Thai situation; for example, by omitting one large section dealing with the structure of the Committee and its sub-committees which was based on Japanese factory organization different from that in the Factory.

A brief description of the document indicates the areas which come under the Committee's jurisdiction. Its sections are as follows:

(1) General conditions pertaining to dormitory living.
(2) Administration of the Committee.
(3) Conditions of taking up residence and leaving.
(4) Dormitory hours, and care of younger workers (15-18 years).
(5) Miscellaneous.
(6) Food.
(7) Safety and hygiene.
The most clearly spelled out is the section on the purpose and responsibilities of the Committee. The goal of the Committee, as stated, is twofold: to create a happy atmosphere, and to promote courteous relations and good living conditions. For this purpose, the document states that the Committee shall be divided into six sub-committees:

(i) co-ordination and administration;
(ii) care of services and living conditions;
(iii) care of etiquette, budget, games, and the library;
(iv) sports;
(v) welfare, and
(vi) public relations.

The constitution then lays down the duties covered by each of these sub-committees:

(i) the work of administration, to collect documents for meetings, etc., and all other administration;
(ii) the service section shall take care of
1. safety, theft, and fire;
2. consideration of workers who do wrong, and
3. care and living conditions of the workers;
(iii) the culture section shall look after traditional
customs and the magazine;
(iv) for the different types of sport, a schedule
shall be fixed for the year;
(v) the welfare section shall prevent epidemics and
ensure the cleanliness of food and rooms; and
(vi) public relations shall provide information for all.

It is clear that, not only are sections (iii) and (iv)
largely irrelevant, since they duplicate the areas covered by
the Culture and Sports Committees, but also that the delineation
of duties, obviously intended to specify the functions of the
Committee, is in fact very vague. Vagueness is not altogether
the hallmark of the constitution; the sections on elections and
on discipline are both, indeed, very detailed. But it is the
very detail of the section on discipline which is most
illuminating in assessing the actual role of the Dormitory
Committee in the overall Factory structure.

This section offers an ideal image of that role. It
begins on a very positive note, with a description (duly set
out as point (2), sub-points (1) to (5) of the Good Denizen):

2. A person who acts as follows is praiseworthy:
(1) someone who understands the regulations and
helps others to understand them;
(2) someone who helps prevent accidents, e.g.,
fire or theft;
(3) someone who does good to society and enhances the good name of the dormitory;
(4) someone who does his or her best to make the Committee run smoothly; and
(5) anything else which is considered to be a Good Thing.

Having got that off its chest, the constitution then proceeds to describe the converse of this ideal type, and to lay down, in great detail, what shall be done to the wrongdoer. This item was discussed at quite some length at a Dormitory Committee meeting, but, in the end, it was accepted virtually unchanged.

The wrongdoer, then, is categorized also:

(1) anyone who breaks dormitory regulations;
(2) anyone who steals or has the intention to do so;
(3) anyone who causes a fire accident;
(4) anyone who threatens another person by action or word;
(5) anyone who damages the dormitory equipment or utensils;
(6) anyone who acts in a way which lowers the status of the Committee and brings shame upon it;
(7) anyone who spoils the good atmosphere;
(8) anyone who hopes to make profit by bringing things to set up a shop in the dormitory without first receiving permission;
(9) etc.

The procedures for dealing with such a person are elaborate, and range from the setting up of a committee of inquiry and the gathering of evidence, to the right of the accused to call
witnesses and to have a lawyer to help in his or her defence.

In actuality, this enumeration of procedures appears to be sufficient to satisfy honour, as all but minor disciplinary cases are dealt with outside the Dormitory Committee, as we shall see, and such cases as had been brought to its attention to the time of my leaving the Factory had been not to the full Committee, but solely to its president.

The area of discipline is, indeed, the best way of assessing the extent to which the Factory defines the totality of its community, and the comprehensiveness of its jurisdiction, as well as the effectiveness or otherwise of the Dormitory Committee as a vehicle for worker responsibility within the Factory decision-making process. The way in which this can be seen most clearly is by examining how it operates in practice vis-à-vis the phọ bản and mê bản, who are the official representatives of management in the dormitories.

The mê bản summed up her attitude to the Committee very succinctly. 'It's good to have the Dormitory Committee', she told me 'because now they take responsibility if anything happens, and I can just be a friend to the workers. We can relax and chat. Before, I had too much to do, including looking after the shop. But now, sabaaj (fine)'.

Again, the ideal image is in operation. Certainly, the relationship between the phọ bản and mê bản and the Dormitory Committee is very good, although the indications are that the mê bản takes it more seriously than do the phọ bản. This may be due to the fact that the meetings - to which the phọ bản and mê bản do not have access by right, but are sometimes invited - are held in the women's dormitory, and that
much of the business is indeed more directly concerned with conditions in the women's dormitory than in the men's. Certainly there is co-operation between them in matters related to improvement of the material conditions of living, such as the construction of a new bike shelter, or the extension of cooking facilities for the men's quarters. In matters of discipline, however, the phó бан and mê bàn tend to act specifically in their official role of supervisor, and to liaise directly with their superiors in the Personnel section. Consultation with the Dormitory Committee, if it takes place at all, is secondary, and token rather than real. The following cases illustrate this very clearly.

(a) Quarrels in the men's dormitory.

These happen quite frequently, and are in fact a major cause of disciplinary problems. Two examples will suffice. The first was a matter of some seriousness and took place about one o'clock in the morning, when the phóバン were in fact not on duty. Two of the men who shared a room, and who also worked in the same section, had a violent quarrel arising out of their work, which ended with one of them hitting the other over the head with a piece of iron pipe. Other workers in the dormitory finally separated them, and called the section head who was on duty that night. He called the police, but no one was arrested, since apparently 'the dormitory is like home, and the police cannot make an arrest'. The upshot of the quarrel was that

---

63 This, it was explained by women informants, was because the women spend more time in their dormitory, and regard it more as home. The men paj thiaw all the time, and don't really care.

64 This remark was made by one of my informants. I took it to mean that the police regarded the incident in the same light as a domestic quarrel, thus emphasizing the image of the Factory as 'home'.
the injured man was taken to hospital, and the one who hit him, with a notable absence of Dormitory Committee meeting, calling of witnesses, or presence of lawyers, got the sack.

The second incident - more revealing, because less serious - took place after the Loy Krathong party. One of the men workers had invited a friend, and they both stayed drinking till after midnight. Because of the curfew, it was then too late for the friend to go home. The worker decided to take him back to the dormitory to sleep, without asking permission. When he passed the security guard, he told the latter that the friend was a new employee, and they had no trouble. The ph hô bân was, however, still on duty, saw a stranger going into the dormitory, and notified Khun Patana, the head of Personnel (and the ph hô bân's immediate superior). Khun Patana called the security guards, and a game of hide and seek followed, with the two miscreants moving from room to room, and the ph hô bân and guards in pursuit. With their tempers frayed by the time they succeeded, a scuffle broke out, and some blows were thrown around by the guards. At this point, the policeman who had been on duty for the party (in the immediate post-coup months, police were detailed to superintend any large gathering) came on the scene, and hauled everyone involved off to the local police station. With great presence of mind, and an unwitting, but very nice, sense of irony, the erring employee leapt out of the car before anyone else had the chance to get out, and reported to the police that he and his friend had been assaulted by the security guards. The result was that the ph hô bân and two guards each got fined fifty baht.
The victory was, however, short-lived (though undoubtedly sweet). The Company paid the fines, and the Factory manager suspended the employee for the rest of the week and fined him ten percent of a month's salary for causing a disturbance.

Both these incidents were, in fact, raised at a normal Dormitory Committee meeting, but they were merely noted. There was no suggestion that the Committee should be consulted to help decide the outcomes. If any worker participation were called for, it was seen to be appropriate for the Fact-finding Committee.

(b) Disciplinary matters in the women's dormitory.

The other cases all concern matters in the women's dormitory, two of them to do with the allocation of sleeping-places, which is primarily the responsibility of the mêe bân but in conjunction, where necessary, with the Committee. Both these instances might certainly be seen as falling within the category of 'spoiling the good atmosphere' of the dormitory.

The first concerned a lesbian relationship which had been established between two of the workers for several years. In the old dormitory, the two had shared a room, but apparently quarrelled a lot, and loudly. When the move to the new dormitory took place, no one else was prepared to share with them. The mêe bân forbade them, therefore, to sleep in the same room, an order which was reinforced in practice by the respective heads of the two rooms. When the new Dormitory Committee was set up, the mêe bân did raise this matter at a meeting, and it was agreed that, if the relationship continued to be a source of annoyance to other employees, the women should be asked to
leave the dormitory and get accommodation outside. The Committee was, therefore, seen as having a role to play, although the next example I wish to describe would seem to indicate that this was more of a courtesy on the part of the mēē bāan, in the calm of a post facto situation, than an actual recognition of the Committee's jurisdiction in her domain.

The second case concerned the allocation of a new employee to a room. Although the rooms are built to house eight people, there are mostly only six or seven in each. This is seen as a very desirable situation, since the room's inhabitants get extra cupboard space, of which they take full advantage. On this occasion, which was apparently quite typical, the mēē bāan suggested that the new employee go into the room of Lek, the girl who runs the food stall. Lek, however, being present, was able to put in her objection, and it was settled that the new girl should go into Daeng's room. Daeng, be it noted, is not only the head of her room, and a close friend of the mēē bāan, but also a member of the Dormitory Committee. When she, and some of her room mates, heard that they were getting an extra member, they were furious, and a very heated argument with the mēē bāan ensued. With everyone very angry, the mēē bāan immediately contacted Khun Patana in Personnel, to report the situation, and to ask for keys so that all the extra cupboards could be kept locked, and be no longer, therefore, a source of contention. There was no question at any

---

It should be noted that the only aspect of this situation seen as relevant was the noisy, and therefore disturbing, quarrelling. No moral judgement was entailed.
stage - even when tempers had cooled - of the Dormitory Committee's being consulted, or of their questioning the action of the mê bân.

The final example which I wish to cite is a very minor one, but it is significant insofar as it concerns an area which would seem to come clearly under the care of the Committee. It concerned behaviour in the television room, and the use of the furniture there. A notice was put up by the mê bân, saying that people were not to sleep on the sofa during the day. The notice further stated that, if the chairs continued to be used carelessly, they would not last very long. The reason for the ban on daytime sleeping on the sofa was that it didn't look nice, a reason which patently had more to do with the mê bân's notions of propriety than with the comfort or harmony of the inhabitants of the dormitory. Just as clearly, everyone accepted that the mê bân had the authority to put such a ban, and sleeping on the sofa was abandoned forthwith. 66

Taken all together, these five cases make a very significant point about the role of the Dormitory Committee in the actual decision-making process. This is, that it has no real power or authority at all. Despite the elaborate specifications of the proposed constitution, it is by-passed by the official hierarchy of the Factory in matters of discipline both trivial and serious. The best that can be said is that it is sometimes seen as a useful ally by the mê bân in solving difficult personal situations.

66 Though not indefinitely. After a couple of months, the practice started to creep back, despite a notice remaining in the T.V. room itself.
If it has no power, then the question has to be asked as to whether it has any real role to play at all. The answer is, on the evidence, positive, although the boundaries of this role are quite definitely limited.

Apart from providing some social occasions, either on its own initiative or, as in the case of Loy Krathong and Songkran, in conjunction with the Culture Committee, the Dormitory Committee has, since its election, taken over the supervision of the Factory library. They had received the agreement of the administration to certain improvements in the dormitories, from such relatively small matters as having bushes planted outside the men's dormitory and improving the sports area, to more expensive improvements such as extensions to the cooking facilities for the men, a bicycle shelter and a ramp over the kerb for cars to go under shelter to park, and screening of the windows. The Company had also agreed to improve the swimming-pool area with chairs, umbrellas, and trees, and to plant flowers in front to spell out WELCOME. The Committee had been knocked back on a request to put lino in the women's rooms, mainly because of expense. This, in fact, was not a unanimous request anyway, since some of the men Committee members themselves demurred, their objection being that the lino could only be acquired at the cost of a lower bonus at the end of the year. However, the Committee's most spectacular success (which was not finalized when I returned to Australia, but has since been so) was the building of a coffee shop in the dormitory grounds, between the women's dormitory and the swimming-pool. This, like the canteen, would be let to outsiders, but would offer the full range of food and drinks (including alcohol) normally available
To summarize, then, the Dormitory Committee (and this applies also, to a lesser extent, to the other committees) was set up by the Company to allow the workers an active say in their own affairs. This scope for participation was seen, not only as a way of involving them in decisions which affect the quality of their lives at the Factory, but as a method of educating them in sharing responsibility for matters not directly affecting production. By this means, the Company hoped to maintain and promote the good relations it sees itself as having with its workers, and to give them the chance to feel involved in the life of the Factory, specifically within the framework set up by the Company. The goal, basically, is to promote harmony and develop a sense of obligation to the Company, and hence to prevent industrial trouble. To this end, the workers can purge any democratic hankerings by electing the members of their own Dormitory Committee, which has been given legitimacy at a very formal level by the drawing up of a constitution, and by regular official meetings, both of itself, and with the phûu jàj. The fact that the Committee has no real power has obviously escaped the attention of those concerned. The role that it does play, of caring for the physical environment of the dormitories, is an important one, but it is not recognized that it is its only one. Instead, more grandiose goals are set, and the meetings self-consciously follow all the correct meeting procedures. It appears that the Thai passion for bureaucracy is, in this instance, working to obfuscate and dissipate the development of worker initiative. To that extent, the Company has been most successful in its undeclared (and
mostly unconscious) policy of containment.

c) Containment of the development of class consciousness.

The Company's goal of containment of the politicization of its workers, which is really its attempt to anticipate and thereby forestall the development of class consciousness, has failed in at least one respect. A Trade Union, which it foresaw but finds unacceptable, was in fact set up by the workers themselves, as we shall see (cf. section 2). When the phuu jaj were informed - only after the event - that a registered union was already established in their midst, their response exactly fitted the pattern of containment already described. They countered the workers' initiative by another committee - the Employees' Committee (kammakaan lûug câaŋ) - with an aim to 'balance' the Union.

(i) The establishment of an Employees' Committee. The chronology of events alone indicates the accuracy of this interpretation. The administration were informed of the establishment of the Union only after registration had already been granted by the Labour Department. This took effect from 28th January, 1976, and management were notified mainly so that arrangements could be made for elections. By law, an election cannot be held for three months after registration. The phuu jaj turned this regulation to their own purposes. They announced that an Employees' Committee would be set up, and nominations were called for an election to be held on February 14th, thereby pre-empting some of the impact of the Union. The idea was not altogether foisted on the workers. Members of the administration did have some discussion with employees before launching the idea, but these discussions were -
significantly - at the level of foremen. Moreover, they were able to present the Employees' Committee as an interim organization, to give workers practice in negotiating while the Union was getting on its feet. This they could do under the auspices of the Labour law, which makes provision for such a committee to operate until such time as more than half the workers in any one organization are members of the Union. Until that time, indeed, the Union is not legally regarded as representing the workers, and has very few rights, beyond the right to actually exist. At the Factory, the charter for the Employees' Committee was that it should operate for three years. If, at the end of that time, membership of the Union has risen to the required number, it may be terminated, though this is to be subject to consultation with the employees. If the latter see it as continuing to serve a purpose, then further elections are to be held.

The main strength of the Company's argument in setting up the Employees' Committee was that, while for the Union no one above the level of assistant section chief is eligible to be a member, the Employees' Organization is open to all personnel, of whatever rank. Further, while people have to actually make an effort to become members of the Union, and pay monthly dues for the privilege of belonging, they are automatically members of the Employees' Organization.

The Committee consists of fifteen members, and its composition indicates the pervasiveness of management influence. There are three operators (the lowest position in the official hierarchy) and a bus driver; the other members all hold some higher position in the Factory. One belongs to the leader class, two actually hold the position of leader, five are
foremen, and one (the vice-president) is a section chief. (The other two positions were, at the time of this count, vacant). In other words, election to the Committee is open to all, but the proportion of worker representation, in terms of those who qualify most truly for this classification, is only one-fifth. It would appear that worker identification with the Committee is minimal, especially since, although those serving on the Committee are there as the result of a free election, they were, in fact, chosen from a very limited field of candidates. (I was unable to ascertain the exact number, but it appears to have been not more than twenty). In other words, those who offered themselves for election were already more representative of the higher levels of employees. This bias is not helped by the fact that, while the Committee is expected to have a regular monthly meeting, there is no special provision for an annual general meeting; that is, no time when all the Factory employees meet as a body identifiable specifically as the Employees' Organization.

There are two events, however, which attempted to mark publicly the establishment of the Committee as an important worker organization. The first of these was the election itself, which was given full publicity by the administration to ensure that everyone was aware of the event. Their build-up proved very successful, in that about two-thirds of the total number of employees turned up to vote, and a festive atmosphere prevailed.

The second was a more deliberate attempt to accord legitimacy. For the opening of the Committee's office, Mr. Yamamoto (who interestingly had been quite closely involved with the union movement in Japan) personally donated a thousand baht
for the event to be appropriately marked, thus setting the seal of authority on the occasion. This was used by the Committee for an almsgiving ceremony for the monks (kaan liān phrá), an invocation of religious sanction, and for a modest party.

Since its inception, there has been no attempt, either by management, or by the members of the Committee, to set themselves up in opposition to the Union. The two executives, indeed, have worked in close co-operation, and do not see themselves as antagonistic. One person is in fact a member of both. They have co-operated on all the proposals which have been approved by the phûu jàj, and informants - including members of both executives, saw them always as linked in the process of negotiating for improvements. They meet together once a month with the administration for this process to take place, and harmony is the order of the day. The area which really illustrates the actual roles of the two organizations, however, is, as with the Dormitory Committee, that of discipline.

As already indicated, both the Employees' Committee and the Union are represented on the Fact-finding Committee. They each have two representatives, and there are two other representatives from management. I was not allowed to attend any of these meetings, but the general consensus of opinion of those involved was that the Union was always on the side of the miscreant ('too much for the person who has done wrong', according to one of the Employees' Committee representatives). The policy of the Union is not to eliminate punishment, but to reduce it, as far as possible, to fines rather than suspension, or to short-term suspension rather than to sacking. The
Employees' Committee, on the other hand, tends to a more severe policy, along the lines that acts which are disruptive to work, or to the community life of the Factory, are unacceptable, and that serious or repeated offences merit serious punishment. In the last instance, as we have seen, both roles are basically advisory only, since the phùu jàj can dispense with the forms, as in the case of Monchai, and assume the authority that is indisputably theirs, by dismissing an employee out of hand. Such a case clearly illustrates the limitations of the Employees' Committee, and its existence as a gesture to the workers. While the Union has access to authority outside the Factory, in the person of the Labour Department, the Employees' Committee, when its legitimacy is denied by the very authority which established it, has no further resort. This dependence of the Committee on the will of the phùu jàj is even more glaringly illustrated by its fate, to be discussed later, after the October 6th coup.

(ii) The wooing of the Trade Union. Despite its initial hostility - expressed in the setting up of the Employees' Committee - the Company has adopted a conciliatory approach to the existence of the Union, which accords very much better with its overall policy of trying to control worker initiative and channel it in directions of its own choosing. This volte face was rationalized by two of the section chiefs in terms particularly appropriate to a tradition where age distinctions are the key to behaviour, and where the status of phùu jàj is as often opposed to đèg (children) as to phùu nốj (inferior). 'At the beginning', said one, 'the Union committee were rebellious,
like teenagers. But now they have settled down and are quite alright'. 'At the beginning', said the other, 'our section had troubles with the Union whose first president worked in that area. The members were all very young and new, and wanted to exercise their rights too much. They thought I [the Section Chief] was too strict. I knew about it, because many of the workers are my friends (rag khaw). So I invited the president to come and talk things over, and there have been no problems since'.

The attitude of this phûu jâj is typical of that of the management as a whole. Discussion with the workers and positive incorporation into Factory life works to bind the Union to the Company. Moreover, accession to their demands wherever possible invokes the principle of katanjuu-kataweethii (cf. Chapter VI, (1)), and endeavours to direct the loyalty of the Union back to the Company. To this end, the inevitable monthly meeting is held between the Union and the administration, with the Employees' Committee also involved. The added importance placed by the Company on this meeting, however, is indicated by the fact that Khun Visan himself attends. In fact, unless he is free to do so, the meeting does not take place.

There is a further attitude of general co-operation by the Company, which is shown in its willingness to facilitate access to the workers by the Labour Department. During the time of my fieldwork, for example, there were at least five such courses, two of which were directly concerned with labour. These were a three-week seminar, held at the Factory and attended each evening by about thirty workers, on the Labour law and
labour relations, and another fortnight's course, also held at the Factory, specifically on trade unions. Other Department courses were a week's course on safety, and a fortnight on credit unions for which Departmental representatives were invited by the Union. Two Factory representatives were also funded to go away for a weekend to a course on family planning, organized annually by the Labour Department under the auspices of the I.L.O.

This kind of official sanction by the Company of involvement with Labour Department activities also has a more personal aspect. Khun Visan suggested, for example - and the fact that the suggestion came from him is of itself significant - that the Union invite the teachers from the seminars to the celebrations for the Factory's tenth birthday. Management also suggested that the Union and Employees' Committee act as hosts for this occasion, although in the event this did not happen. For the 'Thank you, Labour' dinner, however, the two executives did make all the arrangements, with funds allocated by the Company especially for the occasion.

The general attitude of co-operation by the Company has a more specific aspect, illustrated by the improvements actually achieved by the Union. These fall into two categories: individual improvements, brought about at different times through the year, and general conditions of service, which are negotiated annually, and recorded in the Workers' Agreement.

In the first year of its existence, the Union achieved

67 In this section, and here only, whenever I mention the Union, it is to be understood that the Employees' Committee is also included.
through negotiation a number of specific improvements in material conditions. Three examples will suffice. The first of these was an increase in the monthly food allowance from ฿160 to ฿250.

The second was a change from the use of food coupons to cash. The system of coupons had been in use since the canteen was begun. It operated in this way. Of each worker's total monthly wage, ฿300 was deducted and converted into one-baht coupons which could be presented at the canteen at the value of one baht per plate. This system was not very popular with workers, as it presented the same sort of bind as catered hostel living anywhere - it meant that one had to eat at the canteen in order not to waste the allowance. This was changed at the instigation of the Union when the management agreed to do away with the coupons and convert them to cash, which allows people a choice as to where they eat.

The third example illustrates yet again the Company's concern to invest as much of the Factory's life as possible with personal meaning, and to enhance its function of patronage. This was the establishment of a credit union. The Union suggested it, and the phûu jàj agreed. The Factory then donated ฿200,000 to set it up, and gave it official recognition on the auspicious date of January 26th, the Factory's tenth birthday. It started with more than half the employees as members, and provides borrowing facilities with interest at ten per cent.

The second area in which the Union has made a measurable impact on the Factory is in the drawing-up of a Workers' Agreement. This was initially yet another aspect of Company
strategy. The Agreement was suggested by management, prompted by the establishment of the Union. Since the Union received registration only in January, and the first Agreement was drawn up in April, its impact was obviously immediate. Prior to the signing of this Agreement, the contract between workers and the Company was a bald statement of basic conditions, with an undertaking by the employee to follow work regulations (cf. Appendix II). The detailed terms of the new Agreement (cf. Appendix III) are a far cry from this. The Union itself, however, had no actual right of representation in the drawing up of the original document, since its members at that stage numbered less than half of the total number of employees eligible to join. It was the Employees' Committee which acted as the official worker representatives, although members of the Union executive were in fact invited. For the first revision of the Agreement a year later, the position was reversed, and the Employees' Committee was present only as a courtesy on the part of the Union.

Before the meeting - which took place over three days - to renegotiate the terms of the Agreement, the Union canvassed its members to see what support there was for its proposals. This included a questionnaire to all workers to find out the general attitude towards the change to four teams working three shifts. About seventy per cent of the respondents agreed to the change, provided it were similar to the Japanese system rather than to that operating in ATN section.\(^68\)

\(^68\) This will be discussed in the next chapter.
The Union then met with the Employees' Committee to draw up a joint list of proposals\(^6^9\) to present to the management. These proposals were as follows:

1. The base salary to rise by seven baht per month. Rises for those on higher salaries to be at the discretion of the Company.

2. For employees who have worked for the Company for four years or longer, if they work twenty-four days a month or more, to receive thirty days' wages. (This means being paid for their days off, which previously were not counted as work days).

3. For there to be a special allowance for shift workers for extra food - five baht a day for the evening shift, and eight to ten baht a day for the night shift.

4. Concerning the change to four teams for three shifts:
   
   (i) for wages received to be not less than for three teams working three shifts;
   
   (ii) for the Japanese system to be adopted;
   
   (iii) for all sections to try this system for one year;
   
   (iv) for foremen and leaders (who usually get more overtime) to get the same overtime as before.

5. For the Company to make an announcement making clear the basis on which the yearly increment is decided.

6. Concerning the monthly bonus: for workers who have infringed regulations to be told by what method their bonus is cut.

\(^6^9\) In the atmosphere generated by co-operation at the Factory, 'proposal' is certainly a more appropriate word than 'demand'.

(7) For the food allowance to be increased to £350 a month.

(8) For a clause to be introduced giving the Union the official right to act as representatives of the workers when deciding conditions of work.

(9) For Saturdays to be a half day only of work.

(10) For annual leave to be increased as follows:

(i) for those employed one to three years, the number of days to be increased from six to seven;

(ii) for those employed from three to five years, to be increased from eight to ten days; and

(iii) for those employed for more than five years, to be increased from nine to twelve days.

(11) Concerning the case of the death of a member of the family: for five days' leave to be granted.

(12) Concerning the retirement scheme: for the Company to make its deposit on the basis of wages after they have been already raised.

(13) For the Company to extend its annual X-ray provision to include an annual blood test and general check-up.

I was not allowed to attend the meetings at which these negotiations took place, but a report on what happened was given to me by the Union vice-president. The phóu jàj present were Khun Visan, Mr. Yamamoto, Khun Patana (head of Personnel), and another member of Personnel who acts as interpreter for the Factory manager. The section chiefs were also present, but as observers only. The atmosphere was one of harmony and mutual co-operation, and the following terms were agreed to.
Points (6), (7), (10), (12) and (13) were agreed to without change. Points (1) - (3) were accepted, with the following qualifications:

(1) The rise in wages would not be immediate, but when it did take place, it would be retrospective to the date of the Agreement. (The Factory manager suggested the wait).

(2) Wages paid for days off would apply only to leaders. (Those above leaders, that is, foremen and above, are already on a monthly salary).

(3) Extra food money would be granted to workers on the night, but not the evening, shift.

Points (4), (5), (8) and (9) were rejected, point (5) 'because Phű Visan did not really understand it' and point (4), because the Factory manager held that to make the change to four teams under these conditions would reduce working time too much. He suggested that the matter be explained further to the workers, and another vote then taken. Point (9) was seen as dependent on the outcome of this vote, since, if the change to four teams were made, it would not be necessary to give an extra half day's holiday on Saturdays. The rejection of point (8), although it may appear to deny the Union executive official recognition as worker representatives, is probably not as sinister as it may appear. It was undoubtedly seen by the Company as unnecessary, since provision was made in the Labour Relations Act of 1975 for unions which have more than twenty per cent of employees as members to be recognized as representative (cf. Chapter VII). Nevertheless, this was not made clear at the meeting, with the result that a false impression was given to those present of unwillingness by the
phûu jâj to acknowledge the autonomy of the Union as a body with legitimacy drawn from outside its own structure. At the same time, the rejection of point (5) is probably more significant than it appears. The fact that it was not accepted simply on the grounds that it was not understood by Khun Visan emphasizes the importance of his personal role in the decision-making process.

In the event, the phûu jâj had their own gesture of magnanimity to make. Their major proposal - which was, of course, accepted - concerned health benefits for their employees. In future, when an employee is ill, he or she may choose any doctor, not necessarily one provided by the Company, and still receive two thousand baht towards his or her expenses. In the case of serious illness, the employee may go to any hospital specified by the Labour Department, and receive ten thousand baht, with the further understanding that, if expenses are very heavy, the Company may be prepared to increase this amount.

Other than this proposal, the suggestions made by the phûu jâj - with the notable exception of Khun Visan - were legalistic and nîd nîd nôj nôj - a phrase that can be virtually transliterated as nit-picking - and were rejected not only by the Union but by Khun Visan also. The members of the Employees' Committee, though they had been given the right to speak, in fact made very little contribution to the discussions.

Taking as a whole the Company's comprehensive efforts to weld their employees into a strong and loyal community, one must conclude that their policy has been, in general, remarkably successful. Through the celebration of traditional events and the activities of the various committees, the workers continue
to feel very much a part of the mainstream of traditional Thai society, rather than isolated from it by their move to an urban and industrial environment. This sense of well-being is reflected in their attitude towards management, which is, at best, loyalty (as we shall see) and, at the least, co-operation. In general, then, it is fair to say that the meaning created by the Company out of this novel situation has been accepted by the workers.

Nevertheless, there are some stirrings of dissent which, slight though they may be, indicate that the workers see themselves as having an active role to play in determining the significance of their new environment. The Union is the key to this emerging consciousness.

2. The Development of Worker Consciousness.

The formation of the Union marks the first concrete response of the workers as a group to the novelty of their situation as industrial operators, and indicates their intention, tentative though it may yet be, to influence the structuring of the Factory community and invest it with meaning on their own terms. The extent of this development of consciousness, its strength and resilience, can be determined by looking at the parallel histories of the two workers' groups, the Union and the Employees' Committee.

(a) Formation and behaviour of the Union. The history of the Union from the time of its inception splits easily into three sections:

(i) its formation,

(ii) its outside links, and

(iii) its second election and post-coup behaviour.
(i) Formation of the Union.

The founding of the Union was the work of about fifteen employees who talked about it together over the period of a year or so. This period was, as we shall see in Chapter VII, a time of considerable public union activity in the country as a whole, and this was undoubtedly the cause of the group's interest. They finally decided to take definite action, and, without any consultation with the Company, approached the Labour Department for registration. This was granted at the end of January, 1976, and the Union became an official body, outside the jurisdiction of the Company. It was only when this took place that members of the group approached the administration to inform them of the event. Their main reason for doing this was to facilitate the arrangements for elections, which took place three months later.

The declared aim of the Union is to help the workers, and there was never any intention on the part of the executive that it engage in political activity. The fact that its founding - independently of the Company - did in fact have a political dimension is indicated by one small event. When I first began visiting the Factory, I interviewed a large cross-section of employees. Amongst them was one who not only happily volunteered his full name, but wrote it down for me to ensure that I got the spelling correct. He talked very freely about his background and the Factory, until I asked him about the Union. At that point he became suddenly wary, asked why I wanted his name, and very thoroughly crossed out his surname. The incident was tiny, and an isolated one, but the fact that it took place, and took place, moreover, while a democratic government was still
in operation in the country, is not, I think, insignificant. In general, informants were willing to discuss the Union with me, but my raising the issue always noticeably altered the tone of a discussion, a change probably best (and not inaccurately) described as a lowering of voices and an obvious check, if there were a group, to see who else was present.

Some of the teething troubles of the Union have already been discussed. There were others. In September, only five months after their election, the Committee surprised everyone by resigning. The reason, as they explained it, was that they felt that there were problems with their relationship with the rank and file members, and they wanted to give the latter the opportunity to choose again, after having had some experience as trade union members. An election committee of five was set up, and a new election scheduled. The date for this event was to have been October 14th, a choice illustrating the Union's concern to establish links, psychological as well as real, with events in the nation rather than simply within the Factory. While the Company chose to invest the date of the Factory's birthday with significance, the Union looked to the wider community, and chose the anniversary of the 1973 uprising which had ushered in the period of democratic government. It is ironic that their attempt to invest their election with symbolic meaning was foiled by the intervention of a coup d'état, which also had a significant effect on the Union, though for different reasons, as we shall see.

This attempt by the Union to link its activities with those of outside groups is one of its most important effects within the life of the Factory, because it breaks the direction
in which consciousness is being channelled by the Company. Rather than accepting the inward-looking orientation of the phūjāj, the Union has tried to extend the dimensions of community, and to alter its basis. Insofar as it has succeeded in directing awareness by the workers out of the Factory, it has begun to build, as well as being itself an expression of, class consciousness. This sense of solidarity with other workers is not yet strong, but it has a number of concrete indications.

(ii) Links with outside bodies.

The setting up of relations with other worker organizations is at two levels, formal and informal. At the formal level, the question of membership of a national federation had been raised before the coup occurred. This question was not so much whether the Union should be affiliated, as to which of two national bodies it should in fact join.\(^70\) The Union itself had approached the larger national federation, the National Labour Council (khānā kammakaan sahāphāab reēggaaan hēēn chāad), and attended a couple of its meetings. At the same time, it was considering overtures which had been made to it by a smaller federation of textile unions (saphaa ōnkaan reēggaaan), whose secretary (and in fact founder) was the I.L.O. and BATU representative in Thailand. No decision had been made before both federations were dissolved by the new military government.

The interest of the Union is not, however, only national. From October 10th-25th, 1976 - dates of significance, since the coup d'état took place in Bangkok only four days previously - Apichai, one of the members of the executive (who subsequently

\(^70\) These will be described in Chapter VII.
was elected as vice-president) was sent to Manila to attend a seminar of the World Council of Labour (WCL), a Third World organization, and of BATU (the Brotherhood of Asian Trade Unions). The affiliated body of BATU in Thailand is the textile federation, since BATU is based on textile unions. They wanted six representatives from each of the member countries—Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Taiwan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. (India and Japan were previously members of BATU, but have withdrawn.) Since there were not enough representatives available amongst the official textile unions, the federation secretary contacted Apichai and asked if he could go. Permission for him to be released from work for the fortnight was then asked both by Apichai himself, and on his behalf by the Labour Department, and was granted.

This establishment of links at a formal level is reflected more informally by contact between the Factory Union and other unions. For both committee elections, for example, representatives from other unions were invited to come as observers. For the second election, for example, a member of the Railway Union was there, as official representative of the Committee of Labour Relations (part of the Labour Department). As well, representatives came from two textile unions, and two others. More had been invited, but were unable to come.

Although the Union does operate in this way, however, it needs to be pointed out that the level of contact, informal though it may be, is between organizations rather than between individuals. In other words, the people who express their solidarity with other workers in this way do so as members of the Union and through this channel. There is no spontaneous
expression of active fellowship by individuals or groups outside the Union, a situation emphasized by the proximity of another factory (cf. Fig. 1, p. 46). This second factory is, in fact, right next door, and there is a common boundary on one side between the two establishments. The factory is small, with only about four hundred workers, and is wholly Thai owned. It is also a nylon factory, but produces manufactured nylon articles, not just the thread. The living conditions of the workers, while not below the normal standard of other establishments throughout the country, in no way compare with those at the Factory. Further, there is no trade union.

Personnel from both factories make use of the coffee shop just outside their entrances, and a few of the workers from the second factory do the same evening courses in adult education as do workers from the Factory. Nevertheless, there is relatively little contact between the employees of the two establishments. A few have friends there, but, in terms of more than casual social contact, the smaller factory might as well not exist. The fact that it does simply emphasizes the inward-looking character of the Factory, which, in this instance, embraces workers as well as management. At the same time, the indifference of the Factory employees to establishing links with neighbouring workers indicates that their self-awareness is still multi-dimensional and not yet reduced to the single level of identification of the 'self' with the work self which Berger (1973: 35) sees as the essence of alienation. Nevertheless, the question of class consciousness is not to be abandoned, since ties with workers from other factories do exist, as we have seen, through the Union. Links of this kind, moreover, though
infrequent, are reciprocal. When one of the other textile unions had their general meeting, they invited the Factory Union president to attend. Further, when the election was finally held, the Union made a point, despite the dissolution of the national federations, of contacting all other unions throughout the country, of which there were about one hundred and ninety, to inform them of the change in the committee. Again, the fact that this action took place after the coup is significant.

The coup, indeed, provided an important catalyst for the development of class consciousness among the Factory workers, and brought about a situation that allowed the strength of the forces which were already emerging to be tested.

(iii) The election and post-coup situation.

As already mentioned, the Union's situation at the time of the coup on October 6th was that the old executive was acting as a caretaker committee, an election committee had been set up, and preparations were in train for the election of a new executive.

The first associated action took place on the day after the coup, and illustrates yet again the Union's outward orientation. The president and secretary of the election committee went to the Labour Department to clarify the situation concerning the proposed election, for which there were at that stage twenty candidates for the fifteen positions. They were told that the election should be postponed. Moreover, although routine business could be attended to, the new government had forbidden meetings for the present. The effect of this was a suspension
of Union activities, and the virtual closing of the office. This, although never officially opened, had always been a centre of activity in the evenings.

This dampening of the Union, however, was not very long-lived. At the beginning of November, the election committee met again, and decided that, if permission were granted, the election would be held on the nineteenth of that month. The Labour Department gave approval, and the Union got permission from the local police. Only after these arrangements had been made did the election committee inform the phŭu jàj. New nominations were then called, and seventeen of the original twenty candidates re-nominated, a shining mark, under the circumstances, of confidence in the future of the Union.

Even more importantly, 307 of the 531 Union members voted, a turn-out of 57.8%. This proportion was higher than that which had voted under the more auspicious conditions of the first election, when fewer than half of the then four hundred members had turned out.

Of the new executive, four belonged to the original group which had approached the Labour Department for registration (the Founding Fathers, so to speak), eight had been on the previous committee, and one was also a member of the Employees' Committee. This meant that six of the new members had not been involved with the executive before the coup; their choice to stand for election was taken as a new venture at a time of national uncertainty, an act of faith which was true also of the two unsuccessful candidates.

91 There were also four foremen amongst those elected.
The Union, then, by going ahead with its election and continuing its work, showed that it was not prepared to give up, even under pressure. This was further illustrated by the fact that, once the government ban on meetings was lifted, it immediately resumed its regular meetings. Moreover, it did not confine its activities simply to Factory affairs. The training session already referred to, which was run by the Labour Department on the Labour law and labour relations, was held at the request of the new committee.

This resilience of the Union indicates the extent to which it truly expresses the consciousness of the workers of themselves as a group, with all that that implies for the emergence of class. The pressure on it to suspend its activities, moreover, came not only from the dramatic change in government attitude towards the union movement, but from the Factory administration as well. In the months immediately following the coup, the phóu jàj were understandably ill at ease over any situation which might lead to trouble and for which they could be held responsible. The new Union president acknowledged this concern, and sympathized with it. Nevertheless, the committee made no attempt to diminish their own autonomy within the Factory. Even after Khun Patana, the head of Personnel, pointed out to them that, if the procedures for informing the police of all meetings were not followed, the Company could take no responsibility if arrests were made, the Union made no move to reassure him before meetings were held, or to keep him informed of their activities. 72

72 This was a source of considerable worry to him, a state of affairs illustrated by the advice he gave to me not to attend Union meetings. He expressed his fears that police permission was not being sought, and that I would have to take the consequences if I were present when a meeting was raided.
In fact, they did always inform the police of meetings, and cleared their business where necessary with the Labour Department. This course of action emphasizes the significance of their not closing down, since it indicates a defined conceptual separation from the management. In other words, it is clear that the Union, while carrying out all the correct procedures, but simply not informing Personnel, perceived itself as autonomous.

The tenacity of the Union contrasts with the fate of the Employees' Committee during the same immediate post-coup period.

(b) The Employees' Committee. I have not yet discussed the attitude of workers in general to the Employees' Committee. In view of what transpired, this is an appropriate point at which to do so. Without exception, all the workers whom I asked about the Committee, including members themselves, used the same phrase: 'It's on the side of management (fàaj bɔɔrihāan)'. No one that I spoke to was very upset at what amounted to its demise.

The Committee did not altogether lie down and die after the coup. At the end of October, the president proposed a meeting. Khun Patana, however, had to be consulted, and he refused permission. Thereafter, up until the time I left the field, despite the fact that the Committee still regarded itself as continuing to exist, the only occasions on which the members met were for joint meetings with the Union, convened by Khun Visan, and for one session prior to the negotiations for revision of the Workers' Agreement. The ineffectiveness of the Committee, despite its being on the management's side, was made even clearer
when Monchai was dismissed. This event evoked responses from the two executives involved - the Employees' Committee and the Union - which nicely illustrate their totally different roles.

(c) **Responses to the sacking of Monchai.** The sequence of events surrounding the dismissal of Monchai has already been described (cf. Chapter IV). These events can now be placed in context, as having occurred only a couple of weeks after the coup, a fact which profoundly influenced the consequences. Basically, the effect of the coup was to mute the reaction to Khun Visan's cavalier act. According to informants, the workers in general disagreed with what had happened, but no one 'dared' to say anything. This intimidation extended also to the Employees' Committee, who raised no protest at all. The president expressed to me his desire to talk the matter over with Khun Visan, but did not ever do so. There was not even any attempt to take action at any stage.

The Union, on the other hand, exercised its right to go outside the Factory for solutions, and, as we have seen, took the matter to the Committee for Labour Relations. This intrusion of the Labour Department into the Factory's affairs can be seen as an assertion of the Union's position that the Factory is not a self-defined community, but part of a broader community that embraces the whole industrial scene. It was also a declaration of independence which, in view of the circumstances under which it was made, is particularly significant.

3. **Conclusion.**

What I have examined in this chapter is a dual process of dealing with a new environment by the two important groups - employers/managers and workers - within that environment. Both
groups are endeavouring to assimilate the novelty of an industrial situation by creating structures which can order their environment, and reduce it to manageable terms.\textsuperscript{73} The Company is attempting to do this by transforming the workplace into a community; one in which they remain in control at every level, not only through their official position as management, but also through their status as phùu jàj in a Thai tradition, enhanced by the role of patron. To a large extent, they have been successful, through their active incorporation into the life of the Factory of many important elements of Thai life. They have also recognized the inevitability of the development of worker consciousness, and made provision for it in such a way as to help it serve the Company's purposes.

At the same time, the workers themselves have been struggling to create their own structures which will invest the new order with meaning on their own terms. This has also led to a focussing on community, but, in this instance, has taken the effect of finding which community to be appropriate. In other words, there is evidence of rejection at some levels of the Company's definition of community as being co-terminous with Factory personnel. In these terms, the Employees' Committee can be seen to have failed because it was not appropriate to the kind of consciousness that is developing. The Union, on the other hand, with muted implications of political action, is seen to express this consciousness, and to embody the workers' sense of identity of themselves as a group, different from management and related to other workers.

\textsuperscript{73} This is true, despite previous experience of the situation by the Japanese personnel, since Thai law subordinates them to Thai personnel in the ultimate making of decisions.
Stated like this, the two processes appear to be in total opposition. In the life of the Factory, however, this is not so. In general, relations between the Company and its employees are harmonious. Nevertheless, the processes do stem from the simultaneous presence in the Factory of the two systems which underlie so much of what happens - the patron-client system and a developing class system. Where the two do not conflict, co-operation is regarded as normal, and desirable, by both groups. When there are opposing interests or goals, however, the disjunction between the two leads to misunderstandings and conflict, in which the terms of behaviour appropriate to ensure the continued functioning of the Factory as a social organism, rather than merely as a production-oriented machine, are unclear for everyone. The parameters of this disjunction are examined in the following chapter.
Although up to this point I have discussed patron-client relationships in the Factory as though these were the basis on which all those concerned operate, an examination of further material indicates that this is far from so. Indeed, it is precisely in this area that the potential for conflict exists, because it is here that there are differing mutual expectations between the two groups involved - employer/managers and workers. Just as both these groups hold differing definitions of what constitutes the boundaries of their community, so, too, they have different understandings of the bases which determine their interaction. Furthermore, the sources of confusion for each group are different. For management, confusion stems from their own ambivalence as to the nature of their role in an industrial environment, and whether patronage is compatible with legal contractual ties. This ambiguity belongs largely to the Thai side of management, and stems from their attempt to personalize the role of patron within the corporate nature of the Japanese system. In general, this doesn't matter; in the normal everyday situation at the Factory, it adds, indeed, to the general atmosphere of mutual respect and good fellowship which is so much a mark of management-employee relations. It bears within it, however, the seeds of conflict when a situation arises which challenges one or other of its bases.

For the workers, a similar ambivalence exists. At one
level, they hold the traditional attitudes of respect and obedience, based on the status of management as phùu jàj, a status supposedly related by many writers in some ways to the very important concept of merit (bun). Within the same tradition is the process of personalizing the work environment through the manipulation of work relations to invoke kin ties. For the workers also, however, such a modus operandi is contradicted by their position as industrial employees which places them, as well as management, in a legal contractual relation. This situation has led, as we have seen, to the beginnings of class consciousness, a tentative identification with other workers outside the Factory which is incompatible with the maintenance of traditional approaches. Again, this basic contradiction is submerged in normal circumstances, and has little effect in changing worker attitudes towards management, or in influencing their relevant behaviour.

In this chapter, then, I wish to examine the 'systems' that determine the mutual expectations of management and workers, the bases of these expectations, and the behaviour stemming from, and appropriate to, them. To this end, I will look at the following areas:

(1) the implications of patronage for reciprocal behaviour;
(2) behaviour stemming from a view of the Factory as a kinship network;
(3) attitudes towards status and merit;
(4) aspects of relationship based on legal contractual ties; and
(5) Monchai's sacking as a demonstration of the inconsistencies in the systems extant at the Factory.

1. Patronage and Reciprocal Behaviour.

The essence of the patron-client relationship is reciprocity which, because of the nature of the differing positions of the two parties, is unequal. That is to say, the relationship implies need or dependence on the part of the client, which is met by the patron with the bestowal of goods or aid. This bestowal then binds the client to his or her patron through gratitude and the expectation of some return for the help given. At the same time, the patron's generosity is not entirely gratuitous, as he is in turn dependent on the client for the provision of certain services. In the Thai tradition, this relation of interdependence is often expressed in the words bunkhun and katanyuu-kataweethii.

To be katanyu is to be constantly aware of (remembering) the benefit or favour which another person has bestowed on him. Katawethi is to do something in return for the favour or benefit, which has been bestowed. Bunkhun is the favour or benefit, which has been bestowed on one, and for which one is obligated to do something in return (Akin 1977: 18).

These concepts were readily recognizable by my informants, and a number of questions based on them brought forth a categorization of behaviour which will be given later. It is interesting, however, that these terms were volunteered in part by only one informant, who used the term bunkhun. Otherwise, the responses given before I actually introduced the terms are perhaps more indicative of the general attitude towards relations with management.

When I was trying to elicit the words, katanyuu-kataweethii,
the word I got instead was syysâd, or syysâdsudcarid, which, while it carries the connotation of 'faithful' or 'true', can also simply mean 'honest'. This was described as a feeling about work, not about a person. It was summed up in this way: 'Syysâd is a feeling. You feel you want to work well, not to shirk work or waste time'. The basis of this feeling is not personal, either - it stems from a worker's contractual relations with the Company as employer. When pressed for some indication as to how they felt personally towards various phûu jàj, the standard response was 'chêaj chêaj', a very common expression meaning 'so-so', 'nothing in particular', 'nothing special'. The informant who volunteered the word 'bunkhun' related it to the Factory's being good to its employees, and illustrated the concept with an example from the family.

'Suppose I look after my sister and give her her education. This means that I have bunkhun over my sister and she owes me bunkhun. In the future, if I need any help, my sister should return that help.'

This emphasis on reciprocity was apparent with other informants also, but only after I had introduced the terms katanyuu-kataweethii, and then always in a personal context, of one person helping another, with money or other aid, in times of difficulty. When the term 'bunkhun' was volunteered, this informant then went on, in fact, to say that he did not think he owed the Company bunkhun, because he works for them and is paid in return. 'I exchange my labour for money.'

The only concrete examples I could find of actions by workers that fitted this concept of unequal reciprocity were
ones related to some personal intervention by Khun Visan, and, while they are not unrepresentative of a general attitude towards the Company Vice-president, they can neither be regarded as typical behaviour.

The first incident concerns thàod phâa pàa (monastery benefit) already mentioned (p.114f). The employee involved - Kawee - is a foreman with a very traditional background. At the age of seven, he became a temple boy (dèg wâd), and spent twelve years, while he went to school, at Wat Mahathaat, and then at another monastery, under the protection of one of the monks who was a family friend. Both his parents (and a number of his brothers and sisters as well) are teachers, and his father is the principal of a primary school of about three hundred pupils in Pathum Thani province. The school is not very well equipped, and, when they wanted to add a library, Kawee approached the Company to ask for help, on the basis of their professed interest in promoting education. His actual approach was to Mr. Yamamoto, the Factory manager, who passed his request on to Khun Visan. The latter then interviewed Kawee, and the result was that ฿40,000 was donated, ฿20,000 by the Factory, and ฿20,000 by Khun Visan himself, who personally attended the ceremony and celebration which marked the gift, in co-operation with the local monastery. This act

74 It is interesting that, during this time, he came into contact with some very famous political figures - Phra Pimolatham, the abbot of Wat Mahathaat, who was jailed under Prime Minister Sarit, and Phra Kittiwutho, one of the founders of the strongly right-wing (and very nasty) Nawaphol group. The latter's position is nicely summed up in his now famous (decidedly unBuddhist) declaration that 'to kill a Communist is to kill an animal.'
of personal patronage both made merit (tham bun) for Khun Visan, and bestowed bunkhun on Kawee and his family. In return, Kawee recognized, and acted on, his obligation to show gratitude. One of the ways in which he expressed this was by trying to bring the Union more into the direct ambit of the Company.

The resignation of the original Union executive took place in September, at the same time as the arrangements were being made for the th hod phaa paa. Kawee, already a member of the Employees’ Committee, decided to stand as a candidate for the Union also. This, he said, was one way of showing his gratitude to the Company. Of all the candidates, he was the only one with a plan specific enough to be called a platform. This consisted of a grand proposal to integrate all the existing committees, including an ongoing Employees’ Committee, into a coherent organization under the auspices of the Union. The basic outline of this planned re-organization was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade Union</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employees’ Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Committees of public interest: Ombudsmen (one for each section) Fact-finding Committee Public relations Committee

Since Kawee was one of the candidates who withdrew their candidacy after the coup, the details of this master plan were never worked out in practice, but the intention is clear. By being made responsible for the activities of all the other committees, the Union would be brought more directly into the
total life of the Factory. As Kawee himself expressed it, 'The Union now can see only details, not broadly. They act wrongly'. His aim was to try to broaden that view, by putting their concern for the workers into a more 'balanced' context.

This aim in fact pre-dated his decision to run for election to the Union executive. Before Monchai was dismissed, Kawee was 'very close to him and always advised him to do the right thing as far as the Union was concerned'. Such was Kawee's attitude towards the matter, indeed, that Monchai and others were convinced that Kawee played some role in his dismissal. Although Kawee denied this, he did think that Monchai deserved his punishment, and declared his unconcern that many of the other employees viewed him with hostility over the matter. However, he said, 'At the moment I have to be very careful not to go out at night by myself. I don't want to be beaten up'.

Kawee is a clear example of the operation of katanyuu-kataweethii at a personal level in the Factory - a response of gratitude towards the Vice-president who bestowed bunkhun in his role of patron. Khun Visan's assumption of his role and his identification in the eyes of the workers with it, have operated to bring about a personal response from others as well, even when the bunkhun was of a general nature only. When his wife, who subsequently died of cancer, was ill and needed a transfusion, some of the workers went to donate blood for her 'because Phii Visan has always been very kind and very helpful to the workers'. It would be difficult to find a more personal response than the gift, in gratitude, of one's blood.
There are other examples, however, when workers have expressed an attitude akin to *katanyuu* which is directed towards 'the Company' rather than towards the person of Khun Visan. This would seem to imply a response of loyalty to a corporate patron, which fits a Japanese model, rather than a Thai concept of the personal nature of patronage. On examination, however, it can be seen that factors other than the principle of *katanyuu* are at work, and are, indeed, determinative. The best example of this arose out of the oil price rise in 1974. The Factory had only just begun processing its own chips, which it had previously bought from Japan and Singapore. With the rise in the price of oil, the price of chemicals necessary for production also rose, and the Company ran into temporary difficulties. The management asked shift workers, therefore, to volunteer to go on leave for a month at reduced wages (seventy per cent of their normal pay). Most people did so, and full shifts were resumed after three months. Informants expressed this response by saying that they owed it to the Company to help it when it was in difficulties, since the Company helped them. They also laughed, however, and said it was a good chance for a holiday (*phāg phɔ̀n*), and many of them went home. As one of them pointed out, they are all young, only unmarried workers were involved, and they still received seventy per cent of their wages. For many, it was not a duty, but a golden opportunity to *paj thiaw* (go away and have a good time). A few others got a second job, and so received a double income for the month. Furthermore, everyone agreed that, with the problem of unemployment, they valued their jobs, and were glad to receive less money for a month rather than be laid off.
To accept the incident at face value, then, as an example of reciprocity, would be to accord it a false significance.

There is one other aspect of the incident, however, which is indicative, not of the operation of patron-client relations in this situation, but of the way in which a personal approach to formal relations is used wherever possible. This was the allocation to each foreman of the task of putting to his own shift the Company's proposal concerning leave on reduced wages, and brings us back to a view of the Factory as a network of kinship-like relations.

2. The Factory Personnel as Kinship Group.
   a) The role of foremen. In asking the foremen to present the Company's position to their shifts, rather than, for example, calling a general meeting, the management were simply invoking the fairly close relationship that exists between each foreman and his workers. As we have already seen (cf. p. 89), foremen are normally called phi (older brother or sister) by their workers, both men and women, even when they are much the same age, or, in some cases, a year or two younger. In their case, the use of this term is clearly prompted by their position, since it is not used by ordinary workers amongst themselves when there is no age difference. When it is obviously inappropriate, as in the case of one workman who is several years older than his foreman, a need is still felt for some term of address, and the Japanese title for the position, han-chō, is used.

   Although, in the case of foremen, the term phi is related more to position than to age, the fact that this group is the same age as their workers places them in a slightly invidious position, and highlights the ambivalence inherent in
Apichai, a foreman aged twenty-seven, expressed the role as he sees it like this:

'In the Factory, my responsibility is to direct the workers under me to work properly so that we produce material of the amount and quality that we should. I have to oversee, and examine any mistakes that happen. I have to try to improve production and control the working time of my shift. I always think of doing what is best for the Factory, rather than about individuals. My work is all for the benefit of the Company.'

This apparent identification of foremen with the interests of the Company rather than with the workers - an identification inherent in the nature of this position - stems from the fact that, in each shift, he is the person most immediately responsible. He deals with problems as they arise, including, for example, workers arriving drunk, or late. Only if the problem recurs several times does he need to refer it to the section chief. He can change workers from one job to another as he sees fit, and has the power to recommend operators for promotion to sub-leader or leader class. This means that a worker does not yet actually hold the position of sub-leader or leader, but is eligible when a position becomes vacant. In the meantime (which can be a matter of several years), he or she receives the salary appropriate to that position, and is regarded as having special responsibility. Someone in the leader class, for example, would receive his or her orders directly from the foreman, rather than from the shift leader. Movement from the class to the actual position takes place at any time, as the need arises. However, promotions to classes take place once

---

75 The Stakhanovite nature of this statement is belied by the fact that this foreman is also vice-president of the Union and the one who went to Manila to the W.C.L. and BATU meeting.
a year, around March. Those recommended for promotion are
not told, so that if they are not successful, there is no
disappointment. For the operators, then, the foreman is the
key person, since he makes the original recommendations for
promotion to the section chief. Good relations between the
workers and their foreman are crucial, indeed, to the smooth
running of a section, since each shift forms a basic unit of
which the foreman is the head. Where there are problems in
this area, the whole section can be affected. This is some-
times the case in ATN, which sees itself as having a special
problem because of the large proportion of married women
workers. According to one foreman in the section, there are
usually about ten pregnant workers at any one time. As women
change from shift work to daytime at the sixth month of
pregnancy, there is sometimes not the full complement of
workers for a shift, and other workers may have to change
shifts. Most of the foremen in the section are unmarried, and
they are often, according to this same informant, not very
understanding of the situation, and this can lead to problems.

In general, however, relations are good. If an operator
has any problem about work, he or she would go first to the
foreman to discuss it. The foreman is also the person to be
approached if time off is wanted for family visits or business,
and he has the authority to grant this, as well as to organize
the roster of lunch hours during his shift to ensure that
production is not interrupted. His relations with his own
operators to some extent spill over into areas outside the shop
floor as well. It was her foreman who advised Daeng to stand
for election to the Dormitory Committee, as we have seen (p. 90),
and who encouraged her to further her education by going to evening classes. Certain behaviour appropriate to phùu jâj is also accepted from one's own foreman, as we shall see in Section 3. Although few workers would go out with their foreman to relax (paj thîaw), it is not unusual for them to go out together on business. Foremen from other shifts are treated in much the same way, although not completely, as other operators.

Despite the similarity in age, then, a certain distance is maintained between a foreman and his workers, whereby a foreman is accorded some status as a phùu jâj, and consequently aligned with management. An appropriate symbol for this is the wearing of the regulation cap outside the shop floor. It is a rule of the Factory that everyone wears a cap when working, partly to stop hair being caught in the machines, sometimes to protect the eyes from glare when working with material that is very hot, but mostly, according to the workers, because it looks neat (riabrôj). I was assured by informants that wearing the cap had no meaning at all. Nevertheless, it was interesting that, except when operators were coming directly from a shift, the only people I ever saw wearing a cap outside the shop floor (except when coming directly from a shift) were foremen and other men in higher positions. It is this very distance, indeed, which is marked by the use of the term phîi by operators, allowing them then to manipulate the relationship in terms of kinship when the need arises. This is also true in the case of section chiefs, where the hierarchical distance is reinforced by age difference, giving more substance to the use of the title phîi as an expression of expectations by the workers in a section. The
kinds of relationships evoked by the term can be illustrated by looking at one section.

b) The role of the section chief. The section I wish to look at as an example is After-treatment Nylon (ATN), for two reasons. In the first place, it was this section which initiated the change in system to four teams for three shifts, a change very much at the instigation of the section chief, Khun Supachai. Secondly, Khun Supachai got married during the time of my fieldwork, and the occasion was an excellent example of the way in which relationships based on the shop floor have ramifications outside as well. It is interesting to note, also, that ATN is the only section in the Factory which has five minutes' exercises each morning, a practice again organized by Khun Supachai.

It should be noted at once that this section chief is very popular with his workers, the majority of whom (163 out of 192) are women - another fact which sets ATN apart from all the other sections except its counterpart in the polyester department. It has already been noted that Khun Supachai is known by all his workers as phi, a title of slightly more significance in his case precisely because most of his workers are women, and he was, until recently, unmarried. It was this popularity which I believe was responsible for the acceptance of the change in system by ATN workers. This is indicated when the implications of the change are understood.

76 This is in contrast to Khun Chaiwat, the deputy Factory manager, who was in a position to be called phi, but was also unmarried. He was given the title of khun by many of the women. There may have been other factors involved in this differentiation, but the contrast with Khun Supachai is there nonetheless.
Under the old system (which is still in operation in the rest of the Factory) workers change shifts every five days and have one day off a week. Twice a month, because of the change, workers are on duty for twelve hours straight. For this, they get paid four hours' overtime. The new system cuts out this extended working time, and gives one day off alternatively every fifth and then sixth day. In other words, each shift works four days, has a day off, works five days, has a day off, then works four days again, and so on. There is more work involved, since the new teams are smaller than the old - twenty-seven people instead of thirty-two - but there is less overtime, and more time off. It was to give workers more time off - a matter of considerable significance in view of the attitude of workers that 'it is more important to have time to oneself than to have interesting work' - that Khun Supachai wanted to reintroduce this system, which had been in operation in the Factory in general before the opening of the polyester department.

Once Khun Supachai had convinced the management that the system should be tried again on an experimental basis, he discussed the matter with the section foremen, and it was once again each foreman who proposed the matter to his own shift. There was then a meeting of each shift with the section chief, and finally a circular was put out to all staff, asking them to indicate agreement or disagreement to the proposed change. Agreement was virtually unanimous. Only then did the change go ahead. At the same time as all this was happening, the head of the polyester department, who also advocates the change, was promoting the idea there as well, but it was rejected by the
As we have seen, the question of extending the change to other sections was still unresolved by the time of the revision of the Workers' Agreement. Opposition came from some of the management, who felt that profits would be less. A great deal of opposition came also, however, from the workers themselves, and this seems to have been due to a number of reasons. In the first place, the new system meant a drastic reduction in the number of hours of paid overtime, which, under the current system, averages about twenty hours a month for many workers. The current system also has flexibility if a worker needs to change his or her day off, for business or personal reasons. Under the new system, the only way to accommodate this kind of problem is to use a day of one's leave. The other major cause of resistance to the change is a feeling among the workers that they are being short-changed; if the system is to be adopted, it should operate as it does in Japan, without alteration. The Japanese system allows for two lots of two days off a month, which is seen as very desirable. That is to say, that each shift works four days, has two days off, works four days, has one day off, works four days, has one day off, and works four days with two days off. From the Union questionnaire, circulated before the meetings to revise the Workers' Agreement, it appeared that the adoption of an unchanged Japanese model outweighs the disadvantages of lost overtime and lack of flexibility in taking days off. According to their figures, about seventy per cent agreed to the change if it conformed to the Japanese system. If not, only about two percent wanted it.
In view of these negative attitudes towards the change in system, it is even more remarkable that the ATN workers were so willing to adopt it. Part of the reason is undoubtedly the high proportion of women workers, who tend to get less paid overtime than the men, and therefore did not stand to lose so much money by having overtime reduced or cut out altogether. By the same token, however, the women workers in the Polyester After-treatment section were as reluctant to make the change as the men, which would seem to indicate that sex is not the important variable in this situation. That leaves the personality of the section chief as the main deciding factor, and the impression I got from workers in this section of the warmth of their feelings towards their section chief confirms this.

This warmth was expressed in a very personal way on the occasion of his marriage, which took place not long before I left the Factory. A Thai wedding is not a religious ceremony, although there can be a religious component. It consists basically of a gathering of friends to mark the occasion of the couple's union, which may or may not then be legally registered at the local amphoe (provincial government office). In Bangkok, indeed, the ritual itself for this group is tending to become standardized, so that one may speak of a wedding ceremony which is a quite formal affair, and generally takes place in one of the hotels or in the bride's home. In the case of Khun Supachai, it took place in the bride's home.

In the morning, there was a kaan lîaŋ phrá, attended just by members of the family. This is a fairly lengthy affair, involving chanting by the monks as a blessing for the couple, and
everyone involved makes merit. About mid-morning, the guests began to arrive. There were chairs set out on the front lawn, and refreshments were offered. I came with a group of phuu jai from the Factory, who unfortunately were late, so I don't know exactly what happened in the early part of the ceremony. In most weddings of this kind, however, the union of the couple is marked by a white string being looped around the hands of the bride and groom by some senior person. There is no set verbal formula for this, or, indeed, for any part of the ritual other than the chanting. This looping of the white string takes place in the front room of the house where, in this case, an altar had been decorated, and two prie-dieux set up for the couple to kneel on. The guests then take it in turns, beginning with the phuu jai, to pour lustral water over the hands of usually first the bride and then the groom. While all this is going on in the house, there is quite a lot of coming and going by the family, and the guests sit in the garden and chat. Once the ceremonial is over, people offer their congratulations to the couple, and everyone relaxes and enjoys the party, which can go on all day.

For this part of the wedding, only phuu jai from the Factory, with whom Khun Supachai actually worked, were invited — these included the other Nylon section chiefs and head of the Nylon department, a couple of the Japanese, and his own assistant section chief, who acted as Master of Ceremonies. Apart from the latter, these all left to go back to work soon after the pouring of the lustral water, and did not stay for the party afterwards.

Several days after this ceremony, Khun Supachai and his wife put on a special party especially for the Factory personnel.
This was held at an hotel, and several hundred workers attended, including almost all the staff of ATN. This was the time when individuals had the chance to express their own feelings, and many did so by giving a personal gift in addition to the group offerings. This kind of party, given by a senior person for the people from his workplace on an occasion such as his wedding, is not unusual. It was viewed by the ATN workers, however, as a special event, and one which expressed the nature of their relationship with Khun Supachai in a peculiarly appropriate way.

Khun Supachai as section chief, then, provides a very good example of the nature of the relations which ideally operate in each section between the section chief and his workers. In some ways, his case is atypical, as indicated by the ways in which he has made ATN different from the other sections. In a sense, though, he merely illustrates more clearly the basic relations which exist in all the other sections as well - the section as phi/nôo Q writ large.

At the same time, there is some feeling among the workers in general that a change is coming about in the Factory. This was expressed in terms of workers becoming like lûugcâan - 'employees' in a strictly contractual sense of the word. 'Before, we were like phi/nôo. Now we are like phûu jàj/ dêg (adults and children).' The implications of this become clearer if we look at the workers' attitudes towards the phûu jàj in general, and the extent to which they see a causal relationship between status and merit.
3. Status and Merit.
   a) Bun and bàab. By a mutation similar to that in the Western tradition, whereby Christian belief became translated into the Protestant ethic, and the reward for virtue became material and this-worldly as much as spiritual and other-worldly, Thai Buddhist belief also judges a person's spiritual state by his or her material position. In the latter case, however, this position stems not from the deeds of this life, but from those of past lives, and one's present status is determined by the amount of merit (bun) accumulated in previous existences. This neatly quantitative method of assessing how far along the road of spiritual perfection a person has come is reflected in the attitudes that people hold towards people of higher status, and in their behaviour towards phûu jàj.

   There are a number of different concepts involved here; taken together, they do not really fit into any neat pattern. On the one hand, there are the concepts of bun, or merit, and its opposite, bàab, which is not so much sin, as demerit. On the other hand, there are the related concepts of phûu jàj and phûu nòj, and phûu jàj and dèg, with the question of appropriate associated behaviour.

   Bun is 'any act done in accordance with the teachings (alleged and real) of the Buddha' (Kaufman 1960: 183). Bàab has to do with infringements of the five rules (which are, in fact, broader in their application than in their statement) applying to Buddhist laypeople:

   1. not to kill;
   2. not to tell lies;
   3. not to drink alcohol;
4. not to commit adultery, and
5. not to steal.

Bàab is therefore a positive concept, in the sense that one has actually to commit bàab - it is not simply the omission of bun. According to workers at the Factory, bun in the phrase tham bun (to make merit) is accumulated through specifically religious acts - going to the monastery, giving alms to the monks, attending religious ceremonies. This is distinct from good works, such as giving alms to beggars, or helping someone in trouble, which is tham thaan, and also meritorious, but not, apparently, as useful for the final tally sheet. Moreover, not all good acts come under the umbrella of merit. Obedience to one's parents, for example, is desirable, but ranks as neither bun nor thaan, but simply as duty.

The importance of bun and bàab in Thai belief has received much attention. The following is a fairly representative view:

Central to Buddhism is the pragmatic idea that a certain kind of action generates a certain kind of consequence... This is taken together with the belief in reincarnation. Rebirth occurs because of kam (karma) which is the consequence of actions, the bun and the bap.

One consequence of this belief is the notion that one's status and circumstances in this life depend upon the amount of bun or bap which one has accumulated in previous lives... Status differentiation was the accepted order of things in Thai society. Being born into a noble family of wealth or being given a position of high rank was the consequence of bun which the individual had accumulated (Akin 1969: 11f).

Two things should follow from the logic of this. One is that individuals assess their own position as being the consequence of bun and bàab accumulated in previous existences, and try to perform acts of bun and avoid acts of bàab in this life, in order to ensure a better existence in the next life.
In the second place, deference should be accorded to those of wealth and high status, on the grounds of recognition of their higher (and rewarded) virtue - an attitude which nicely reinforces any current distribution of power and wealth. However, the vagaries of human logic being what they are, none of these things follow at all.

Certainly, informants were very conscious - as is any Thai - of the notion of bun. Mali, the เม่บ้าน, who was one of the most traditional of my informants, explained it in almost text-book fashion:

'Tham bun mainly means our religious actions. We normally tham bun at the temple by giving food to the monks, or helping to build or repair the monastery by giving money or any other kind of help... As we believe there is a next life, so the good we do in this life, especially concerning religion, will be rewarded in our next life.

Tham thaan is concerned with people and animals. It means giving help to others without receiving any return. It's the feeling towards others of wanting to see them happy. Most of this feeling comes from pity.

Both tham bun and tham thaan are part of our religious teaching, and we believe that the good we do will be rewarded in our next life. We've been taught to make merit, always tham bun and tham thaan and in general be good, and as a result we will be reborn happily with all the good things we did before. Or if we're not reborn, our spirit will be rewarded and benefit from all the goodness.'

Despite this affirmation of traditional religious belief, however, there was little evidence amongst the workers that this was the way in which they actually operated. The evidence, indeed, was quite to the contrary. The actions associated with bun - the whole range of religious actions, from putting gold leaf on a statue of the Buddha to men entering the monkhood - are
all performed in the normal erratic way. The rationale for this, however, had nothing to do with either previous or future existences. The two reasons most commonly mentioned for performing acts of bun were to make one feel happy and at peace (hâj sabaajcaj), and to give merit to one's dead family and relatives. Most people acknowledged that there should be a connection between bun and a future life, but this bore no real relation to their actions. As one person put it, 'I don't think about a previous life, and the next life isn't important, because I'm not sure whether I'm going to be born again or not. So I don't think about it.' This same woman went on to say:

'Making merit gives happiness. Sometimes if I'm not happy (sabaajcaj), I make merit, and that makes me sabaajcaj - because it's a belief. I don't know why I don't think about a future life. But because making merit makes me happy, I want to do it. It always works like this, every time - if I'm not sabaajcaj and make merit, it makes me sabaajcaj.'

At the same time, the merit actually gained is

'for people who have died already... If you want to make merit for yourself, you can do so. But usually you give it to the people who have died already.'

Entering the monkhood is specifically to gain merit not for oneself, but for one's parents, if possible while they are still alive. All these sentiments were virtually unanimous.

The traditional concept of bàab fares much worse. In fact, although people acknowledged it, and made the distinction that, whereas for bun to be effective, the intention must be pure, bàab could be committed quite accidentally. Most people dismissed it in a sentence or two. Certainly, if drinking

77 To run over a snake and kill it is bàab, was one example that was given to me.
alcohol is any indication of people's lack of concern as to whether they are accumulating bàab or not, one can conclude that the concept has very little relevance in the workers' lives.

In view of this lack of conviction of the effectiveness of bun and bàab as determinative in the cycle of rebirth, a relation between merit and one's present status obviously becomes very shaky. This indeed proved to be so. No one whom I spoke to was prepared to admit any definite relation between their own present situation and any acts belonging to a past life, though they did not deny the principle. The only exception to this was Mali, who, although she, too, admitted that her merit-making was not directed towards a future life, did indicate that her present life had been at least partly determined by previous bàab. 'When I was young, my parents separated and I had to stay with one at a time. I think this is the result of something I must have done before being born - I must have separated baby birds from their nest.' In general, however, the common attitude was summed up by one of the men, who himself fully intended to enter the monkhood the following year: 'People believe that because you did good deeds in your last life, you are well off in this life. But I think things have changed for the new generation. Only the old people think that way, not the young ones.'

To some extent, recognition of the possible influence of a past life has slightly more currency than belief in a future life. One of the strongest statements concerning the latter came, interestingly enough, from Mali: 'Personally, I think when a person dies, he will become earth. I don't believe in the next
'In the Factory, an example of someone important would be Phii Visan. I do think he made a lot of merit in his previous life. But I've only just thought about it. But Phii Visan makes merit often, he helps all over the place - gives to the wat, to hospitals. In this life, he makes a lot. So about his former life, I think the same. At the Factory, Phii Visan is the only person that I think about like this.'

At the risk of being personal, a more revealing comment was made comparing Daeng's life with mine.

'I haven't ever compared my life with that of Phii Visan - I am still dêg (young person), Phii Visan is a very big person (phûu jàj mâag). There's no comparison. But comparing it with Mary's life - I do think about that. I want to have a good life like yours. It's like a new idea - you come here, and you're a friend. I can see your life, that it is sabaaï, with a family, a husband who's good, a child who's nàarâg (lovable). When you want to go anywhere you can go. I would love to have a life like yours. I have thought that you made merit in a past life - because we're both women. I think you made more merit than I did - I really do think that. But I don't really think that about Phii Visan or other people in the factory.'

This statement was particularly interesting, in view of the fact that Daeng was my most faithful informant, and that, for no apparent reason that I could really put my finger on. There were the obvious ones of being seen as the 'friend' of this foreign researcher, with the attendant kudos and possible material advantages, but her persistence and helpfulness went beyond this. Perhaps this statement explains her position. I might add that my 'good' husband suggests that this statement was pàag wàan (sweet mouth).
In the case of Khun Visan, then, a possible connection is seen between his wealth and past *bun*, but it is rather vague, and seen as bearing no relation to Daeng's own life, an attitude which is fairly common. Equally common, however, is the belief that his wealth is the result of his own hard work and ability, and that the same opportunity is open to others. 'To make yourself rich depends on hard work and good timing, and has nothing to do with *bun*'. An example of this suggested by one person was Dr. Krasae, at that time the leader of a new political party which was offering the first real single threat to the long-established Democrats, who up till then had been the main political force in the country. 'Dr. Krasae's parents were not rich, but he worked really hard and had the right person to push him. His timing was good, and so he became a popular person'. The element of luck enters in being born rich - 'Phíi Visan's children are lucky because their father is rich' - or in some chance event such as winning the lottery.

Moreover, people specifically denied any relation between merit and position (*tamnèn*). Insofar as any relation does exist between present and past lives, it is assessed only in terms of wealth and well-being. 'Happiness and being comfortable in life are the result of *tham bun* from a previous life. A rich person doesn't need high position, and a person with a high position is not always rich or happy'. In general, then, the evidence indicates that the workers do not make the connection between merit and status; they do not, in other words, subscribe to the religious rationalization for the differentiation of people in their society, or, specifically, within the Factory community. This does not, of course, mean that they do not defer to its hierarchical structure, but the
basis of their behaviour is to be found elsewhere. Partly it lies in traditional attitudes towards phûu jâj, which have already been mentioned.

b) Phûu jâj/dêg and phûu jâj/phûu nôøj. The phûu jâj/dêg distinction is an age one, and refers simply to 'adults' and 'young people' or 'children'. As we have seen, however, age is one of the basic factors determining behaviour in Thai society, and certain forms of behaviour are called for by that distinction. Such behaviour can only be understood in the light of the Thai belief in an opposition between high and low, in the light of which the body is divided into higher and lower parts, which correspond with a sacred-profane spectrum. The head is the highest, and therefore most sacred part of the body, while the feet are decidedly profane. It is extremely insulting, therefore, ever to point one's feet towards another person; one sits in the temple with one's feet directed away from the Buddha image; and feet are never used for functions, such as picking up something, which belong to the hands. By the same token, one does not touch another's head, even to giving children a friendly pat (although this rule is honoured as much in the breach as in the observance). Nor does one stand higher than an older person, since this means that the head of the younger is higher. Deference is indicated by the use of the traditional wâj in greeting, which is the placing of both hands together and bowing, the position of the hands between the chest and head depending on the relative ages or statuses.

79 Feet are sometimes jokingly referred to as 'foreigners' hands' (mûy faraŋ), because we do sometimes use them in this way - 'like monkeys', as one person put it.
of the people involved. Moreover, the wâj is initiated by the younger person. An associated action is khâwrób, which is a bow — sometimes, in the case of women, a kind of half-curtsey — when passing an older person. All these actions traditionally indicate respect (nábthûy), which, along with obedience (chûa faŋ), is seen as the basic attitude of younger towards older people.

Most of this behaviour is transferred directly into the phûu jàj/phûu nôoj (superior/subordinate) relationship as well.

This distinction was very comprehensively explained by a couple of the workers:

'We only use this distinction in relation — that is, an army officer can't be compared with a man in the street as jàj and nôoj. For example, the Prime Minister or Ministers are jàj in relation to their own ministry or assistant ministers; or the head of a party to its members — but not ministers to other M.P.s, or M.P.s to the common people. The president of the Union is not jàj, but would be jàj with the workers in his own section if he held an official Company position.

Jàj and nôoj come from the sakdina (ranking) system. It still survives in classification, that is, in positions in the civil service. Here, for example, if the section chiefs meet, we say 'Phûu jàj prachum' (the phûu jàj are having a meeting). But it's really more to do with the civil service and armed services. Companies have it, but not so much. In small businesses, they don't have it — that's like a family (bëb khrâbkhrua). There they have phûu jàj and dég. Here, at work it's like phûu jàj and phûu nôoj, but in the dormitory it's like a family.

But really, phûu jàj and phûu nôoj is about position, and phûu jàj and dég is about age — but phûu nôoj and dég act much the same. At work, phûu jàj give orders to phûu nôoj, about duties, and what to do. At home, phûu jàj give orders to dég. Phûu nôoj have to do as they're told — they can't answer back. Dég,' — and this difference should be noted — 'sometimes can.'
The comment about the phûu jàj/phûu nòoj distinction being only partly applicable to the Factory is borne out by the evidence. Daeng, as we have seen, sees herself in relation to Khun Visan not as phûu nòoj but as dèg. This is true of other workers also, and accords with the aspect of the Factory which encourages kinship-like relations amongst all its personnel, clearly illustrated in the warm personal attitude of his workers towards Khun Supachai, for example. At the same time, formal work relations also influence behaviour, and cannot be discounted.

In order to make some assessment of which attitude plays the most part in determining the behaviour of workers towards phûu jàj in the Factory, I set up a table relating traditional behaviours to those in the Factory who were universally recognized as phûu jàj. I administered this to my three major informants, Daeng, Apichai, and Mali, only, since I felt that I knew them well enough for their responses to be put in context. The results were as follows, with a brief résumé of the background of each person as well.

(i) Daeng is twenty-seven years old and unmarried. Her father is a captain in the army, so that the family has moved house a number of times. Daeng was born in Bangkok, and lived there till she was seventeen. The family then moved to Nakhon Si Thammarat in the South for three years, before moving to Korat in the North-east. In Korat, she worked in a hair-dressing salon, and did some dressmaking, before she heard Labour Department advertisements on the radio advertising for workers for the Factory. She has been at the Factory for four years,
and is now in the sub-leader class. She is also doing evening classes in order to get her matriculation.

(ii) Apichai is also twenty-seven, and comes from Chiang Mai, where his father is a fruit-farmer, working his own land. He came to Bangkok after leaving school, to study for a diploma in engineering at one of the vocational colleges, and is a foreman at the Factory. He is also vice-president of the Union (although not one of the original group which established it), and represented the textile unions at the W.C.L. and BATU meeting in Manila.

(iii) Mali is the mec bân, and the wife of one of the section chiefs. She comes from Chiang Mai (and Chiang Rai), and was an infant-school teacher before she married. She is now thirty-four, and has two children, a boy and a girl of about ten and eight. She came to the Factory eight years ago when her husband got his position there, and was offered the job of mec bân, which she has held ever since.

The appropriate behaviours which I asked these three to indicate were based on discussions I had already had with them, and with other workers, as to their significance. They related mainly to the fact that the performance of certain actions, which were in general inappropriate, could be allowed in certain situations, depending on the relative distance, or intimacy, of the people involved. In other words, actions such as touching one on the head or shoulder indicate either the superiority of the person who performs the act, or, conversely, his or her closeness. On the other hand, one indicates one's own status relative to another person by acting as a phûu jaj, an equal, or a phûu nôoj or dêg, or by accepting actions of this kind in
the appropriate situations, as, for example, whether one may stand higher than another person or not, or whether one apologizes for being higher than another when going up or coming down stairs. The results of this enquiry are given in Table 16.

The distinctions made here quite clearly are more interesting where they differ from the principle than in what they merely confirm. This is largely in the cut-off point of unacceptable behaviour for each of the three people. For Daeng, who is an ordinary worker, the cut-off point is obviously lower than for Apichai or Mali. In general, her deferential behaviour is accorded to everyone of the rank of foreman and above (although in fact her attitude towards foremen other than her own, where they were the same age as or younger than herself, was generally fairly relaxed and casual). The exception to this is her assistant section chief, whom she does not like, so that she acts in a neutral way towards him. For Apichai, the cut-off point is obviously much higher, and indicates a basically businesslike approach to the whole matter. Mali, on the other hand, who stands outside the shop floor structure, but holds a position of authority in the dormitory and is the wife of a phûu jàj, is more formal in her approach. She uses khun, for example, as a term of address for other section chiefs, a mode of behaviour not demonstrated in the Table.

The ranking of phûu jàj by giving a numerical value to the type of behaviour seen as appropriate to each one merely confirms that the informal hierarchy of the Factory follows almost exactly

---

80 This was quite pertinent in the case of the mēk bân, who often sits at the foot of the staircase in the women's dormitory.
Table 16. Traditional behaviours by three informants towards phuu jaj.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviour</th>
<th>Own Leader</th>
<th>Own Section Chief</th>
<th>Own Section Chief</th>
<th>Own Assistant Section Chief</th>
<th>Other Assistant Section Chiefs</th>
<th>Own Foreman</th>
<th>Other Foremen</th>
<th>Other Loaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bowing when entering the room</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>げるken (bow before door)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paying respect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should not stand higher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I should bow (k6m)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes give</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or apologize if gifts (e.g. New Year)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 3 2 3 8 6 1 6

This total appears inaccurate because, for one response, the informant is her own section chief, so that the response is recorded twice.
the formal hierarchy of positions. The notable exceptions to this are the positions of one's own assistant section chief, and one's own foreman. The first of these results is biased, however, by the fact that Daeng, as already mentioned, does not like her assistant section chief, an illustration of the importance of personal feelings in deciding whether or not a traditional custom be followed. The relatively high score of one's own foreman emphasizes in reverse the same point, and underlines the warmth of Daeng's feelings in this instance.

The individual totals for each of the three informants as regards each custom also hold few surprises. Nevertheless, it nicely points up the contrast between Daeng's position as an ordinary worker with the situations of Apichai and Mali, both of whom hold higher positions in the formal Factory structure. One further point of interest that is shown is the fact that, while gift-giving within the Factory is expressive of respect or reciprocity on the part of both Daeng and Mali, it is totally omitted by Apichai. This may be seen as a concrete expression of his declared instrumental attitude towards the Company - that it is a contractual tie, with no traditional strings attached.

In general, however, the only correlation relevant to the question as to whether any of the three sees him or herself as phūu nŏoj or đège in relation to the phūu jâj is that between whether a person is addressed as phiī, and whether or not he is permitted to touch one's head. That is to say, that the latter is an act appropriate for a phūu jâj in relation to either đège or phūu nŏoj, where the use of phiī is more appropriate to a person as đège (with the more personal dimension that this implies),
For Daeng, this more personal aspect is part of her relationship with Khun Visan, her section chief (Khun Supachai), her foreman, and the mâ€ bân. For both Apichai and Mali, it applies only to Khun Visan.

It would appear, then, that, for these three at least, the formal relationship of phûu jàj to phûu nôoj holds precedence at the Factory over kinship-like relations, although the latter do exist. In other words, although some of the behaviours tabled apply both to kin and to phûu jàj, the emphasis as shown in the table, particularly in the case of Apichai, is on the fulfilment of formal expectations. Without making any claim that such a small number of responses proves anything at all, I would affirm that the table is entirely in accord with what I would expect the attitudes of the majority of other workers to be.

This prominence of formal relations between the phûu jàj and the workers is borne out by looking at another area - that of the workers' understanding of their rights and duties in the Factory situation. In other words, although much of the everyday behaviour at the Factory is determined by the kinds of relationships which exist at a personal level, there are also legal contractual ties which are binding on both management and employees. These give rise to mutual expectations of behaviour, the carrying out of which is as basic to the continuance of good understanding as those deriving from the playing of more traditional roles. They also provide the framework within which these traditional roles operate.

Two documents form the basis of the contract between employers and workers - the Labour Law, and the Workers' Agreement. The law in force during the time of my fieldwork was an Act promulgated in February 1975 under the interim government of Prime Minister Sanya Thammasakdi, who was appointed by the King to hold office from the time of the student uprising in October 1973 until elections were held at the beginning of 1975. It belongs, therefore, to those three years, from October 1973 to October 1976, when the 'democratic experiment' was being tried, and when there was a great upsurge in overt union activity. It remained in force after the coup in 1976, with the exception that the new military government (the National Advisory Reform Council, or NARC) withdrew the right to strike, and put a temporary ban on meetings.

The aim of the Act was basically to lay down guidelines for the setting up and operation of trade unions, which had only been made legal since 1972. This is apparent in the matters with which the Act is preoccupied, indicated by the Section headings:

1. Agreement on conditions of employment
2. Methods of solving disputes
3. The matter of lock-outs and strikes
4. The Committee of Labour Relations
5. Employees' Committees
6. Employers' Organizations
7. Trade Unions
8. Employers' and Labour Federations
9. Actions regarded as unjust

This section too is directed towards employer actions in dealing with unionization of their workers.
10. Fixed penalties

11. Temporary laws (Applicable till the setting up of a Labour Court).

Most of the Act is concerned, then, with relations between employers and employee organizations, particularly trade unions. The articles relevant to the employer's relations with individual workers are to be found mainly in Section 1. Even this section, however, is more concerned with general guidelines than with specific regulations, and provides for places of business with more than twenty employees to draw up an agreement which must cover the following areas:

(i) the basic conditions of employment and work;
(ii) the fixed days and times of work;
(iii) wages;
(iv) welfare;
(v) severance pay;
(vi) submission of employees' complaints; and
(vii) provision for the correction or extension of the workers' agreement.

None of this actually lays down details of what is to be included in the agreement, although separate laws were enacted regulating such matters as the minimum wage, mandatory holidays, workers' compensation, and maternity leave.

The basis of employer-employee relations at the Factory, therefore, is actually the Workers' Agreement (cf. Appendix III), which, as we have seen, was negotiated for the first time in 1976. Prior to that, the contract signed by each worker was simply the Letter of Employment (cf. Appendix II), which, other than fixing the wage, left the question of conditions of work wide open. The Workers' Agreement, on the other hand,
covers in detail all the areas indicated by the Labour Law, as well as including other matters, such as extra holidays and overtime. It is to be noted, too, that, in the preamble to the Agreement, the management specifically pledges not to use a lock-out in the event of a labour dispute, in return for employees agreeing to forego the right to strike.

In talking about the rights and duties of both employers and employees, therefore, we are referring to a legal document determining very specifically the conditions of work. We are also discussing workers' understanding of what constitutes these matters, however, and this is certainly not the same thing. This understanding is as much influenced by the informal relationships operating in the Factory as by the points of the stated contract, and involves an interpretation of the concepts of right and duty which have more to do with what Goodenough (1960) calls 'identity relationships' than with legal bonds.

Since I did not have continuous access to the shop floor, and was not, therefore, in a position to analyse the interaction of workers with the various phûu jàj over an extended period, I had to rely on informants' own understanding of these concepts in order to make some judgement on how people relate to each other in their various roles. This I did by again setting up a table which I administered to my three informants. This also gave me the chance to distinguish those actions they saw as coming specifically under the label of katanyuu, which, in this instance, can be translated as loyalty to the Company. Their responses are given in Tables 17 and 18.
Duty/right

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td>A.</td>
<td>M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Beginning salary at the factory is higher than the legal minimum wage.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Dormitory conditions are above average.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Contributions to hospital/medical costs of employees.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Buses provided to take employees to and from work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Loans available up to the amount of one's monthly salary (over a period of 4 months).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Provision of sports facilities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Provision for yearly increment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Payment of monthly bonus (bia khayan) for regular attendance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Payment of annual bonus.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Sale of rice at wholesale price.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Sale of Company shares to employees.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Setting up of workers' communities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Contributions to a retirement fund.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17: Duties of the Company (= Rights of the Workers).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Duty/Right</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>To work well and take responsibility for one's work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>To help the Company when it's in difficulties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>To show respect (napthiy) for higher staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>On the marriage of a section chief, to give a gift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>if own section chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b)</td>
<td>if other section chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>If phu hj were ill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>to send flowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b)</td>
<td>to visit (if not liked)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c)</td>
<td>to help family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d)</td>
<td>to donate blood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>If there is an emergency, e.g. fire or accident, to help if free.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>To help save water and electricity in the dormitory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>When there is a party, to help prepare food etc. to save money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>To support the committees set up by the Company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>dormitory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b)</td>
<td>culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c)</td>
<td>sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d)</td>
<td>employees' committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>To observe the regulations of the Factory and Dormitory, e.g.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>to wear the hat all the time when working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b)</td>
<td>to observe safety regulations, e.g. walking inside the white lines around the Factory area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c)</td>
<td>to care for things provided by the Company, e.g., sewing machines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d)</td>
<td>not to take food into the dormitory room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e)</td>
<td>not to sleep in the T.V. room during the day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f)</td>
<td>to move goods from spare cupboards without complaint when a new worker comes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g)</td>
<td>To do the exercises and do them well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>If a shareholder, to show support (sadrih niancaj) whether yearly interest is high or low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18. Duties of Employees (= Rights of the Company).
The clearest thing to emerge from these tables is that there is very little consistency to the three sets of responses. In other words, what are seen as rights or duties bear little relation to these matters as set out in the Workers' Agreement - and this, despite the fact that 'once the conditions of work are agreed, they become rights', as one informant commented. The other aspect which is very marked is that, although certain actions of the workers are seen as based on katanyuu, nothing that the Company offers is actually defined as bunkhun. This would seem to indicate that the Company is not seen as performing acts precisely in order to solicit gratitude from its employees, but rather as maintaining a general attitude of helpfulness and goodwill towards its employees, to which employees voluntarily respond with acts of katanyuu. It seems that, in the eyes of the employees, the patron-client relationship is voluntary on both sides, and has little of the element of obligation.

In view of all these findings, then, I think we are finally in a position to assess the implications of Monchai's dismissal in what it reveals about the relationships operating at the Factory.

5. Monchai's Dismissal.

It is by now clear, I think, that the importance of the sacking of the Union secretary lies not so much in the event itself, as in the extent to which it demonstrates the inconsistencies in the various systems extant in the Factory. These are confirmed when one queries by what criterion the seriousness of his offence was measured - whether in terms of
contract in the formal legal structure of the Factory, of
duty in the status-role hierarchy, or of reciprocal obligation
(loyalty) in the patron-client system.

In terms of legal contract, there is nothing in either
the Labour Law or the Workers' Agreement which makes instant
dismissal the penalty for a hostile statement by an employee.
Section 8 of the Workers' Agreement - on discipline and
disciplinary action - on the contrary states that,

The aim of disciplinary action is to improve
the employee's behaviour, and to stop his
wrongdoings. To develop the behaviour of a
person is the important aim. The employer
has no intention of punishing him in the
manner of destroying him because of the
employer's personal anger.

Moreover, in the categories set up in the Agreement, of

1. light offence;
2. moderate offence;
3. rather serious offence, and
4. serious offence,

only the last one warrants 'termination of employment without
notice'. In terms of the penalty meted out to Monchai, his
offence must be placed within the category of 'serious'. There
is one offence in this category which could possibly be
stretched to fit Monchai's case, and that is 'intentionally
causing damage to the employer's good name'. Since this is in
the context, however, of revealing industrial secrets, and
causing serious damage to the employer's property, the fit is
awkward, to say the least.

If we look at the case in terms of an infringement of
duty in the status-role hierarchy, we are moving into the area of attitudes and behaviour towards phûu jàj. Certainly, Monchai's statement was inappropriate in this context, whether he spoke as a phûu nôj or as a dèg. Nevertheless, his remark was not directly disrespectful, as it was addressed only to his own circle of friends. Nor did it mention any individual phûu jàj by name, but referred generally to 'the Company'. In that sense, his breach was not really of any of the obligations inherent in either a kinship or a superordinate-subordinate relation.

It is only if one looks at his statement in the context of reciprocal obligation in the patron-client system that the severity of Khun Visan's reaction can be understood. Even if the workers themselves do not view the Company in general in the role of patron, it is clear that management itself, and Khun Visan in particular, have expectations of loyalty from their employees, based on the provision of better than average working conditions, and a general attitude of concern for welfare expressed in many different ways. By rejecting the Company's image of itself, Monchai put himself outside the pale of that concern. He had to be removed before he damaged that image in the eyes of other workers, an eventuality which could shatter the whole basis on which the Company maintains its good relations with its workers, and thus maintains production levels. In this sense, it is in the disjunction between the role of patronage, and the legal contractual ties out of which class consciousness is developing, that the seeds of future conflict may lie. Whether they grow or not will depend on how the people in the Factory can resolve this disjunction, and which system becomes predominant.
CHAPTER VII

THE FACTORY IN THE CONTEXT OF THAILAND'S INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM

An understanding of the dynamics of the Factory would be incomplete without situating it in the context of Thailand's general industrial scene. A look at this broader picture will give some indication of the extent to which the relationships operating in the Factory are typical of management/worker relations, and in what respects they are out of the mainstream. I will look, first, at the history of the labour movement in Thailand, and then at a number of aspects of the contemporary scene which throw light on the Factory situation. My sources for this material were all in English. Although there is a growing body of Thai material related to the field of labour relations, some of it is very recent and not always easy to come by. Some is already translated. The English language coverage, moreover, is far more comprehensive, and includes analyses by Thai scholars. 82

1. History of the Labour Movement.
   a) Before 1972.
   The Tramway Workers' Association, organized in 1897, is often referred to as the first trade union in Thailand. This title is appropriate, however, only if its embryonic

82 A centre has been set up at Chulalongkorn University, known as the Thailand Information Centre, which is attempting to gather together published material related to Thailand. Its card index is in English and Thai, and gives a summary in English of untranslated Thai work. I relied heavily on this in gathering my material, since my competence in reading Thai is not sufficient for understanding without help.
nature is recognized. Like other associations formed before 1932, the Tramway Workers' Association was mainly a welfare organization. Its purpose, as declared to the government, may well stand for other organizations of the time as well. It was 'to promote thrift, provide welfare to the aged as well as the disabled, and to foster unity' (Thanet 1978: 16).

This concern is associated with, and to some extent based on, another characteristic of the labour force prior to World War II, and that was its predominantly Chinese composition (Thompson 1947: 221-26; 230). Up to that time, the majority of Thais were employed - as they still are - in agricultural production - so that the industrial and commercial sector was manned by immigrant labour, notably Chinese. The union movement has its roots, then, in the mutual benefit societies characteristic of the Chinese. Many of its early leaders were also Chinese (Thanet 1978: 2f; Mabry 1977: 932), a fact which provided a handy excuse for the first active suppression of the unions in 1949.

The real initial attempts to organize labour, however, can be dated from 1932, the year in which a revolution brought about a change in government from an absolute to a constitutional monarchy, and ushered in the first democratic period. To some extent, the development of the labour movement parallels the fate of Thai essays into political democracy, none of which has ever been very long-lived. The movement can, indeed, be divided into three active periods, at least partly on this basis - 1932-49, 1956-58, and 1972-76.
(i) 1932-49. The first constitution, drawn up after the 1932 revolution, gave legal recognition to freedom of association, and issued two Acts - the Employment Act and the Local Employment Act (Phichit 1978: 22). These grew largely out of experience of the Depression which, although it only marginally affected the agricultural-based Thai economy, nevertheless had, for the first time in Thailand's history, raised the spectre of unemployment. Moreover, this period saw the expansion of industrialization. Although the number of industrial workers was small before the Second World War, it was growing - from 1.6 per cent of the work force in 1929 to 2.2 per cent in 1940 (Phichit 1978: 23). (These figures differ slightly from those quoted in Chapter I, an indication of the difficulty already mentioned of getting accuracy in statistics).

The legislation of 1932 marks the beginning of active government involvement in the labour scene. This also was related to the growth of the industrial sector, and with concern for creating an attractive investment climate - another theme which recurs throughout the erratic development of the labour movement. It is interesting that this first official venture into the field of labour relations already shows signs of the economic nationalism which was to mark the next decades so strongly. It contained the following statement:

'As a next step, the government will establish the pre-condition that in any concession a number of Siamese labourers must be employed. The government will also try to hire as many Siamese labourers as possible' (Thanet 1978: 13).

More importantly for the present discussion, the
government's involvement was as an employer. A major source of wage employment before World War II was, in addition to the civil service and armed forces, the public utilities, such as the railways and power supplies. The first - and still strongest - unions were organized after the war in the public utilities sector and state enterprises (Supachai 1976: 5).

Other unions also began organizing after the war, and, by the end of 1946, several were established - the Printers' Union, the Samlor (trishaw) Drivers' Union, and the Transport Workers' Union, to name some examples (Supachai 1976: 6). There was also the important Central Union of Labour, formed in 1944 and officially recognized by the government in 1947, which claimed membership at one period of 75,000. In general, however, the unions were small, poorly financed, and inefficiently administered (Supachai 1976: 6). Their membership, and leadership, were also, particularly in the case of the Central Union of Labour, still predominantly Chinese.

The lapse in time between the recognition of the right of association of workers in 1932 and the organization of viable unions in the immediate post-war period, is seen also in the lack of labour legislation in the same period. From 1932 to 1945, not a single labour-related act was passed, although a number of bills were proposed (Phichit 1978: 24). During the same period, there were a number of sporadic strikes - rice mill workers, taxi drivers in Bangkok, and railway workers in 1934, bus drivers in Chiang Rai and Lampang in 1935, and mine workers in Yala in 1936, to cite a few. On the whole, the cases were isolated, and there was no evidence of unity
or the use of bargaining power (Thanat 1978: 16). The Second World War again provides a line of demarcation in this field also. It is estimated that, during 1945-46, there were more than 170 strikes (Phichit 1978: 27). Some of the strikes involved as many as two thousand to four thousand workers.

This mushrooming in the number of strikes, and the growth in numbers of unions, were brought to an abrupt end in 1949. Two years earlier, a coup d'état had brought an end to the first democratic period, and installed Field Marshall Phibul Songkram in power. With the change in government in China in 1949, the unions, for the first, but by no means last, time, were seen as tainted by Communism because of their strong Chinese influence, and were banned. Although Phibul tried to maintain mass popular support by sponsoring new labour organizations, and established the Thai National Trade Union Congress, this organization did not in fact represent workers, and functioned mainly as yet another organ in the campaign against Communism (Phichit 1978: 30). From 1949 to 1956, in fact, there was virtually no movement on the labour scene, despite the facade of unionism maintained by such gestures as affiliation with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in 1950. This suppression lasted till 1956.

(ii) 1956-58. The year 1956 can hardly be called a second attempt at democratic government. Nevertheless, after

---

83 On the other hand, as Thompson (1947: 241) points out, the stirrings of the nascent labour movement made themselves felt even on the political scene. As she relates:

In the elections for the National Assembly held in 1937 thirteen labor candidates presented themselves. One group, composed chiefly of taxi-drivers, formed themselves into the Winged Wheel party and raised enough money to sponsor a candidate.
a trip to the United States, Phibul's policies in general became more liberal, and the founding of political parties was once again permitted. As part of the general liberalization, and owing partly to international pressure, new labour legislation was drawn up. This was in fact the first attempt at a comprehensive labour law, and was promulgated in 1957. The new law dealt with three main areas:

1. Labour protection - the regulation of working hours and conditions, overtime payment, holidays, child and female labour, safety measures, compensation, and the limit of forty-eight working-hours per week.

2. Labour organization - the recognition of the right of workers to unionize, to strike, and to bargain collectively.


This Labour Code led to a revitalization of the labour movement, and, in the twenty-two months in which it remained in force, a total of one hundred and fifty-four unions were registered. This growth in the number of formal organizations was accompanied by an increase in the number of strikes comparable to that which had occurred in the immediate post-war period. From twelve strikes in 1956, involving sixty-six workers with 3,673 man-days lost, the number rose to twenty-one in 1957, with 203 workers involved and the loss of 12,947 man-days (Yearbook of Labour Statistics 1975: 57).

However, unions in this period became caught up in politics. Many of the unions were in fact organized under the patronage
of opposing politicians, often with leadership and financial support from outside. It has been claimed that many strikes were politically motivated, and strikers with the support of influential patrons were alleged to have received money and food, paid out of the national budget via the Department of Public Welfare (Supachai 1976: 7). This political patronage of the unions, leading them into disarray, as well as their more militant activity, made them primary targets for suppression when Field Marshall Sarit Thanarat seized power in yet another coup in 1958. Decree number 19 of the new government abrogated the Labour Law and abolished trade unions. Union leaders who supported political factions opposed to the new government were thrown into gaol without trial. The reasons given were, firstly, that trade unions had caused disunity and bad feeling between workers and employers; secondly - and these next two reasons repeat the themes that are so characteristic of Thai government attitudes towards trade unions throughout the whole of their short history - that they were a major obstacle to economic development (presumably because they sullied the investment climate); and, thirdly, that they were a gateway for Communism (Supachai 1976: 10).

The next fourteen years (1958-72) was a period of rapid industrialization, as we have seen in Chapter I. The number of workers employed in manufacturing rose from 2.2 per cent of the total work force in 1947 to 4.7 per cent in 1969. The encouragement of foreign investment was a major aim of the government, and this increased from 3,280 million baht in 1958 to 10,380 million in 1966 (Phichit 1978: 34-36). In order to promote private investment, and maintain an attractive investment
climate, the rights of workers, both to adequate working conditions and to legal redress against their employers, were denied. Although the facade of worker protection was again maintained, with membership of the ILO continued, cheap, unorganized labour was seen as most desirable, and the government saw to it that there was virtually no legal or administrative interference in its exploitation (Supachai 1976: 10). The Anti-Communist Act was used indiscriminately to suppress any stirrings of militancy.

The success of the Sarit and subsequent governments in achieving their economic aims is reflected in the drop in the number of strikes during these years (cf. Table 19). These figures, however, also reveal a gradual increase dating from 1965, particularly if one looks at the number of workers involved and the man-days lost through strikes. This upturn was probably due, in part at least, to the death of Sarit himself in 1963, but also undoubtedly reflects increasing worker dissatisfaction with conditions as the numbers of workers increased with the rapid expansion of industrialization. It was this situation, together with the pressure of international censure, particularly from the United States and the ILO, which led the Thanom government to legalize workers' associations once again in 1972.

(b) 1972-76.

The National Executive Council Decree No. 103 of 1972 is a substantial document, regulating such wide-ranging matters as the number of working hours per week (forty-eight in industry and fifty-four in commercial employment), rest periods, holidays, annual leave, sick leave, overtime payments, the use of female and child labour, welfare provisions relating to health and safety,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of strikes</th>
<th>Workers involved</th>
<th>Man-days lost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>3,673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>12,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>3,202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>8,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3,753</td>
<td>6,566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5,413</td>
<td>18,764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1,867</td>
<td>3,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5,345</td>
<td>23,593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2,888</td>
<td>6,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5,153</td>
<td>12,646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7,803</td>
<td>19,903</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


and including a new provision relating to a minimum wage.
Although workers' associations were permitted,\(^{84}\) it was on fairly circumscribed terms. Associations were to be establishment based, and were not permitted to cross provincial boundaries. They were barred from taking part in political activities, and were kept under close surveillance by the government. This ensured that such organizations as were established were kept weak, with their role limited to processing the grievances of members, administering those benefits available to employees, and assisting in labour law enforcement (Mabry 1977: 934). Moreover, the law was concerned only with the protection of individual employees, with no implications for collective rights (Supachai 1976: 15). The apathetic response of workers is easily explained.

It was in this context, then, that worker associations again became legal. The existence of martial law and the long suppression of

\(^{84}\) The terms 'trade unions' or 'labour unions' are not used.
labour associations combined to make those informal organizations that had functioned as worker associations on a de facto basis reluctant to seek registration, openly. Similarly, the Government moved cautiously in processing applications for worker associations. The Criminal Investigation Division checked the leaders' records as well as membership rosters to assure their Thai nationality, loyalty, and good citizenship. During the first year, only fifteen labour associations were formed (Mabry 1977: 935).

This situation changed dramatically with the student uprising of October 14th, 1973, and the banishment of the 'three tyrants', Thanom, Prapass, and Narong. Once again, a resurgence of the labour movement accompanied the reinstatement of constitutional parliamentary government. The situation erupted in the months immediately following the October revolution in a mass of protest and wildcat strikes. In the first nine months of 1973, there had already been some two hundred strikes. Between October 14th and the end of the year, another three hundred occurred. Labour Department figures are instructive in indicating the extent to which discontent and unrest among the workers had been seething just below the surface through those

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of strikes</th>
<th>Workers involved</th>
<th>Man-days lost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5,153</td>
<td>12,646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7,803</td>
<td>19,903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>177,887</td>
<td>296,887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>105,883</td>
<td>507,607.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>94,747</td>
<td>722,946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976 (Jan.-Sept.)</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>65,287</td>
<td>495,564.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


'golden' years of economic development.

It is to be noted that, although the actual number of
strikes dropped after 1973, the number of man-days lost through strikes in fact increased quite substantially. Early successes by workers, as employers, who had been on very weak ground, gave in to demands, were followed by more long drawn-out confrontations. This was at least partly because employers, who had by this time corrected the more obvious inequities, became more willing to dig their heels in.

Surprisingly, the new government was slow in drawing up new legislation to deal with the obviously burning question of labour relations. It took a week's successful general strike in June 1974 - led by the textile workers' unions who were assisted closely by radical elements in the students' movement - to jolt it into the task of seriously reforming the labour law (Supachai 1977: 7). The Labour Relations Act was drawn up and promulgated on March 29th, 1975.

c) Labour legislation from 1972.

In a paper dealing with the problems of conflicting interest between economic development and the regulation of labour conditions by law, Schregle (1975: 6f) outlines the following functions for labour law:

Labour law has basically two roles: firstly, it has a protective function aiming at protecting workers and their families from exploitation and health hazards, and affording them a minimum level of working conditions, including wages, and minimum standards, which would not be ensured if the fixing of such conditions were left entirely to the free interplay of the market forces...

The second function of labour law is to regulate labour relations, i.e., relations between employers, trade unions and governments, by establishing rules for the conduct of collective bargaining, the settlement of labour disputes and other forms of joint dealings. In fact, in regulating labour relations, labour

\(^{85}\) 'General' is here used in a qualified sense.
law helps to transform the role of the workers from that of an object to that of a partner in the production process. To put it differently, labour law is important in bringing about popular participation in the production process.

Looked at from this point of view, labour legislation in Thailand does attempt to fulfil both functions - the first is covered mainly in the 1972 Act, which remains largely in force, and the second is dealt with by the new act of 1975.

The general provisions of the 1972 Act have already been mentioned. They included as well provision for the establishment of a workers' compensation fund, based on contributions by employers, and administered by an office of the Labour Department. The main provisions of the Labour Relations Act of 1975 are outlined by Supachai (1976: 18-21).

1. The right to organize and bargain collectively. This allows for registration of plant and industrial unions, but does not permit craft or general unions. The provision that membership must be drawn from workers employed in the same industry is maintained, though federations and the organization of a national trade union congress is allowed. In practice, this meant that unions remained establishment based.

2. Union recognition.

This provision encourages collective bargaining, via trade unions, since management must recognize the representativeness of a union having more than twenty per cent of its employees as members. Non-unionized workers who want to

86 The Factory management's dismissal of the Union's proposal no. 8 in the Workers' Agreement - 'for a phrase to be
introduced giving the Union official right to act as representatives for the workers when deciding conditions of work' must be interpreted in the light of this stipulation. As indicated in Chapter V, they probably felt it was unnecessary, since the provision is already laid down in the law, and the proposal indicates ignorance of the law by the Union rather than by management.

bargain for improvements in the terms of their employment must back up their demands with a list of names and signatures of at least fifteen per cent of the employees. The scope for retaliations and victimization by a hostile management on this basis is obvious.

3. Immunity from tort and criminal liability.

This protection is given only when unions are engaged in activities related to labour disputes, and 'trade unions' strictly means those which have been registered with the Labour Registrar.

4. Settlement of disputes by conciliation and arbitration.

Apart from collective bargaining, the law provides for compulsory conciliation by Department of Labour conciliators. The conciliator's role, however - and this is most important in view of the possibility or otherwise of enforcing sanctions - is only advisory, and has no binding affect on the parties. If conciliatory attempts fail, the parties may jointly nominate an arbitrator or an arbitration committee. The award of the arbitrator, upon registration with the Director General of the Labour Department, becomes legally binding and to remain valid for one year.

5. Enforceability of collective agreement.

Article 18 of the Act rules that the management must register any collective agreement with the Director-General of
6. Unfair labour practices.

Articles 121-123 prohibit certain actions which are considered unfair labour practices. These include victimization, suspension, and termination of contract for workers involved in activities related to a labour dispute. These provisions are again a significant encouragement to workers to unionize.

7. The Committee of Labour Relations.

The Act empowers the Minister of the Interior to appoint a Labour Relations Committee. This is to be composed of not more than fifteen persons, of whom three must represent employers', and a further three, employees', organizations. The remainder are government nominees who are knowledgeable in the field of law, industrial relations, and civil administration.

The primary duties of the Committee are to settle disputes within essential public utilities and to arbitrate on complaints regarding unfair labour practices. For the latter, the Committee may order reinstatement or financial compensation as it sees fit.

Unfortunately, despite the comprehensive nature of this legislation, its enforcement has been less than effective. Supachai (1976:22) goes on to list the following reasons for this failure:
1. The Labour Department does not have enough qualified inspectors to ensure that labour protection measures are complied with.

2. Management still attempts to evade the law, for instance paying lower rate than the minimum wages, not paying severance pay, not arranging health and safety measures, employing workers for long hours and not providing rest periods or holiday. Penalty is very light.

3. Workers are not well informed of their lawful rights.

4. Economic conditions of high unemployment work against the workers' bargaining power.

5. The trade unions are still too weak and are incapable of protecting their members' interests.

6. The law is yet to be amended. There is at present no compulsory disclosure of information, no advanced notice of dismissal required.

7. The Labour Relations [Committee] is always dominated by Government nominees most of whom are retired senior Government officials with a very conservative attitude.

The Bangkok Post summed up the situation in mid-1976 more graphically.

---

87 I have used the Bangkok Post extensively throughout this chapter, so that some account of its reliability is called for. The Post is a foreign-owned daily, one of the group published by Thomson of Fleet Street. Its main English-language rival is the Thai Nation, which boasts Thai ownership. The Post, however, while it has a number of English-speaking journalists, and is edited by a joint English-Thai group, has much of its reporting done by Thais. Its accuracy when quoting statistics is sometimes open to question, but it publishes an economic review twice a year which is the most comprehensive coverage of the Thai scene available. It also follows a tradition of reporting events on the labour scene which is not reproduced in the Thai language press. This became evident when I was working with two Thai students, whom I had asked to keep any related cuttings for me from the Thai newspapers. For a period of about two months, during which time I had collected half a box-file full from the Bangkok Post, they had found no more than ten references.
It appears that while the law is weighted slightly in favour of the workers in some of its clauses, in others it lacks so seriously as to render the whole legislative exercise useless. The law lacks any sanction against employers who refuse to negotiate, or who sack workers' spokesmen or who fail to comply with the rulings of legally appointed arbitration committees. As management may not be coerced to adhere to the law by legal means, the only avenue left open to the workers is coercion of an illegal nature. Thus is set up a vicious circle of illegality in which insult is heaped upon insult and injury upon injury, each side trying to break the other, while the authorities look on, making distressed noises but powerless to act (Midyear Economic Review Supplement, June 1976: 11).

It is against this background that the labour situation in general during the period 1975 to 1977 must be assessed.

2. The Labour Scene, 1975-77.

a) Economic dimensions.

(i) The workforce and unemployment. Despite the period of recession from 1971 to 1974, industry in Thailand continued to expand in the first half of this decade, though at a rate slower than it had experienced in the 1960s. In 1975, for example, industry's share in total export earnings rose from 22.6 to 34.2 per cent (Bangkok Post Economic Review 1976: 9). In 1976, the number of industrial establishments employing more than five people was 32,431, of which 19,612 were in Bangkok and the surrounding Central Region provinces. The number of workers employed was over one million, or 5.2 per cent of the total workforce of nineteen and a half million (Handbook of Labour Statistics 1976: 5-7). At the same time, by May, 1976, the number of unemployed (as opposed to underemployed) in the country passed the million mark for the first time. This represented a five per cent unemployment rate for the whole
kingdom, with the rate in Bangkok being considerably higher, at 9.7 per cent (Bangkok Post Economic Review '76: 9). The pressure that this situation exerted on the enforcement of labour legislation has already been noted.

(ii) Investment climate and foreign-owned companies.
The question of investment climate is, as we have seen, one which has preoccupied successive governments since World War II. The general labour unrest after October 1973 seriously damaged that atmosphere, and was seen to be a critical issue in the general elections of January, 1975, and April, 1976. And although, as we have seen, the number of strikes decreased after 1973, what was seen as the economic instability created by unbridled labour militancy was undoubtedly one of the major causes of the coup in October, 1976.

In fact, much of the talk about Thailand's bad investment climate during the three years of the 'democratic experiment' was alarmist, and investment figures belie the gloom. During the first eight months of 1976, for example, the number of applications for promotional privileges submitted to the Board of Investment rose to seventy-seven, from sixty-nine for the same period in 1975. The total investment for these projects, by both Thai and foreign investors, was 3,573 million baht (Bangkok Post, 4/10/76: 26). 

Correlation of these figures is difficult, since different figures are provided by various sources, and one of them is totally unreliable. As a picture of the general situation, however, those given here are not misleading.

The lack of a figure for 1976 comparable to the monetary investment of 1975 is one of those lapses which makes the Bangkok Post less than perfect as a source for analysis.
Foreign investors, indeed, who looked at the situation in foreign-owned companies for this period, might well have banished their fears. In a study of such joint companies carried out by the Chulalongkorn University Trade Union Education Programme at the end of 1976, the following information was gathered. Of the 501 strikes which occurred in 1973, only twenty-two took place in foreign-owned firms. For the whole period from 1972 to September 1976, out of a total of 1,265 strikes and 2,042,908 man-days lost, only fifty-six cases of work stoppages (4.4 per cent) were reported in foreign-managed companies, involving 26,304 man-days lost (1.3 per cent of the total). As the report expressed it,

The denunciation of economic imperialism does not truly reflect [the workers'] real feelings towards foreign management which, in spite of some qualifications, is in general favourable (Supachai 1977: 7, 17). This favourable attitude is borne out by the situation that we have looked at in the Factory.

(iii) The textile industry. Since the Factory belongs in this category also, some related figures will be useful. The textile industry is a key one in Thailand, but it suffered a serious slump over the three years of world recession (1971-74). By mid-1976, however, it was showing signs of recovery. The number of workers employed in the industry was 13,266 (Handbook of Labour Statistics 1976: 9). Export earnings in synthetic yarn from January to June 1976 were 153.7 million baht, a 580 per cent increase over the same six-month period in 1975 (Bangkok Post Economic Review '76: 63). At the same time, this industry has been one of the most troubled, as seen in Table 21.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Labour disputes</th>
<th>Strikes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 1975, the only year for which I have comparative figures, the number of strikes was twice as high as those in any other industry. The next highest number was in the category of chemicals and chemical petroleum, coal, rubber, and plastic products, which numbered twenty-five strikes. In the number of man-days lost through stoppages, the comparison is even more dramatic, with man-days lost in the textile industry being over seventy-six per cent of the total loss in manufacturing. A further dimension, not given by these statistics, is the element of violence in strikes, certainly not confined to the textile industry, but of which it has provided several glaring examples. Although violence on the industrial front is not new in Thai history, there has been, since 1973, an upsurge which has already been noted in relation to the peasants' movement. As we saw in Chapter I, this is not merely an intensification of traditional hostilities, but a notification of the emergence of new elements. One manifestation of this is the involvement of right-wing groups such as the Red Gaurs (Krathing Daeng) and Nawaphol whose concern is political, and who interpret events on the industrial scene - as well as in rural areas - as promoting or hindering their own political ends. The confrontation endemic in the
contemporary scene is symptomatic of the growth of the process of politicization. A short account of three cases should be sufficient illustration of this phenomenon.

(b) **Examples of strikes, 1975-76.**

(i) **The Hara jeans strike.** In October, 1975, a deadlock in negotiations between the workers and management at the Hara Jeans Company led to a takeover of the factory by the workers, who had been on strike over wages and welfare since the previous February. For the next five months, the workers ran the Factory, making and selling products by themselves. In March, 1976, the newspapers carried a report that the Deputy Interior Minister had given permission to the police to arrest these workers, and those at the Colgate-Palmolive Company factory as well, where a similar situation had occurred.

Angered by the report, about forty of the workers - all female - marched to the Prime Minister's house, accompanied by members of the National Student Centre of Thailand (NSCT), to demand an explanation. When they were refused admittance, they staged a sit-in, preventing the Prime Minister from leaving for a religious ceremony. At that stage, the police moved in, and thirty-two of the Hara workers were arrested, together with nine students. Police then moved to the factory to evict the remaining workers, and riot police were posted outside the factory to prevent their return. Eighteen of those arrested had to be moved to a remand home since they were under eighteen years old. They were all finally released five days after the incident, on bail raised by the NSCT (Bangkok Post, March 14-18,
(ii) The Thai Blanket Industry factory strike. In March, 1976, workers at this factory - also mainly women - went on strike in support of demands for higher wages, better welfare, and a ten baht daily allowance. The factory management then hired members of the Red Gaurs - a militant right-wing organization, associated with the army's intelligence centre for anti-Communist operations, ISOC (Internal Security Operations Command) - to guard the factory. For almost every night of the two-week-long strike, incidents of bombings and shootings were reported, allegedly to scare off the strikers. No one was wounded. On the night that agreement between workers and management was reached, two of the security guards tried to put an end to a celebratory ramwon (dance) being held by the victorious strikers with a group of youths who had provided protection for them during the strike. As they left, the youths threw a hand grenade at the Guards' booth, damaging the booth, but not injuring the guards, who had judiciously gone into hiding. On hearing the explosion, a number of the Red Gaurs arrived, and several more plastic bombs were thrown by both sides. Again, there was a lot of noise, but no reported injuries (Bangkok Post, April 8-9, 1976).

(iii) The Luckytex strike. In May, 1976, Luckytex workers went on strike over management refusal to grant a number of demands - for a three hundred baht a month salary
increase, and for better welfare, residential quarters, medical facilities, and food. The management claimed that the strike was illegal, since the workers had not waited the full nine days required by law before going on strike, and dismissed seven of the union leaders. It also rejected the striking union's proposal that the deadlock be resolved by an arbitrator. After several weeks, the Company announced that it would reopen the factory, claiming that almost half of the four and a half thousand workers wanted to resume work. Over four hundred riot police, armed with M16 rifles and tear gas canisters, moved in to guard the factory, and to escort any of the workers who wanted to return to work. The union agreed to a two-day 'trial', to see whether the majority of workers were backing the strike or not. The reopening of the factory took place while the dispute was under consideration by the Committee of Labour Relations. In the event, only about five hundred workers braved the picket, while the seven workers' representatives dismissed by the management were summoned to testify before the Labour Relations Committee.

In a surprise capitulation, after the failure of its attempt to reopen the factory, the management agreed to a meeting with workers, and agreed to all their demands except the wage increase. They promised that this would be given further consideration, however, and an agreement to end the strike was signed by both sides.

The matter did not end there, however. Within a week, the
workers were staging a 'go-slow' in order to pressure the management to accept the wage increase demand. The Company's lawyer claimed that, under the labour laws, the workers could not submit 'new' demands within one year after the agreement was signed. Further, after three months' consideration of the dispute, the Committee of Labour Relations upheld the Company's dismissal of the seven worker representatives, and refused their demand that they be awarded severance pay by the Company (Bangkok Post, 21 May-15 Sept., 1976).

A number of the elements already mentioned are demonstrated in these three strikes. In the first place, there is the obvious lack of sophistication in negotiating skills by both management and workers, leading to confrontation long before the possibilities for compromise have been exhausted. There is ignorance or attempted manipulation of the law, again by both sides. There is the use by employers of police or hired thugs to enforce a lock-out, with the associated atmosphere of acts of irresponsible violence and intimidation of workers. There is the specific use of a para-political group - the Red Gaurs - to uphold authority. There is the ineffectiveness of the labour law, which can only be enforced if both management and workers agree to recognize its jurisdiction. Finally, there is the lack of muscle of the trade unions, who do not function effectively as the legitimate voice of the workers, and whose leaders can be penalized without real fear of sanctions.

In view of the history of unions in Thailand, this last situation is not surprising. It is even less so if one looks
at the general atmosphere in which unions were operating, even in their hey-day after the 1973 revolution.

c) General environment of union activity.

I wish to look at this aspect simply because of the insight it provides into the atmosphere in which the Union at the Factory was organized. Briefly, even after their official recognition in the Labour Relations Act of 1975, the unions have never managed to rid themselves of their identification with subversive elements, specifically of the charge of Communism. In the eyes of the politically conservative general population, and despite the efforts of the National Labour Council to dissociate itself from political activity, the unions are suspect. Nowhere is this more clearly seen than in Omnoy, an industrial area in Nakhon Pathom province, just west of Bangkok, and in neighbouring areas in Samut Sakhon. In this region, although some unions have been established, workers known to be involved in union activities have been constantly harassed by members of extreme right wing organizations — notably Nawaphol, an organization one of whose founders was the monk, Kittiwutho already mentioned (cf. note 74), and the Red Gaurs. At times, this harassment became so extreme as to amount to a campaign of terror.  

It was in this situation that the police made nine arrests in March, 1976, of four students and five workers, whom they charged with being

---

90 Private conversation with some of the workers from Omnoy, who claimed that, far from being subversive, the unions in some factories were still fighting for such basic rights as proper toilet facilities.

91 Two were actually graduates.
Communists, undermining national security, and the illegal possession of firearms. Although there were protests at the arrest by the NSCT and the Confederation of Labour Unions of Thailand (CLUT), a more representative response of the population at large was that given by a group of about one hundred villagers from the district who, led by their headman, presented flowers to the Police Chief. This gesture was to congratulate him on the arrest of the nine suspects.\(^\text{92}\) (Bangkok Post, 31 March - 28 Aug., 1976).

While the situation in Omnoy was certainly extreme, in many ways it simply magnified a number of elements operating in the country at large. Nevertheless, by 1976, the unions had established themselves sufficiently firmly to survive - albeit somewhat battered - the coup of October 6th. Despite its first repressive actions - such as raids on union offices, and the arrest of a number of labour militants, the new National Advisory Reform Council (NARC) resisted the temptation to bring its mailed fist down heavily on labour. Although strikes and lock-outs were immediately banned under martial law - the new government's first step towards improving that mercurial ideal, the investment climate - subsequent gestures were conciliatory rather than hostile. The NARC quickly, and wisely, made clear that all laws concerning labour,

\(^{\text{92}}\) It is to be noted that the arrested students and labourers had not at this stage even been brought to trial, let alone convicted. So flimsy was the evidence against them, indeed, that the Public Prosecutor had to keep deferring the trial. In the end, the fate of the group had not been determined by the time of the coup in October, and I was never able to find out what finally happened to them.
with the exception of those relating to strikes, were to remain in force, and that registered unions would still be recognised. Moreover, despite the abolition of the National Labour Council (the main federation of unions which had in fact never had legal status), the NARC invited Paisal Thavatchainant, its popular and very competent president, to talks, in order to reassure him of its support for workers' welfare (Nations 1976: 67).

At the same time, this attitude of conciliation by the NARC was overshadowed in the minds of the general public by other decisions emanating from the government in its early days. Principal among these was the categorization of persons subject to arrest as being 'potential dangers to society'. This miscellaneous crew was as follows:

1. Persons who oppress others;
2. persons without fixed domiciles or without legal employment;
3. persons with occupations that offend good morals;
4. persons with illegal stocks of weapons, ammunition and explosives, held either for profit or for criminal purposes;
5. persons who stir up trouble;
6. persons who by one means or another urge the people to support any regime other than democratic rule with His Majesty the King as head of state;
7. owners of illegal gaming houses and brothels and backers of the illegal lottery;
8. traders who hoard merchandise in order to raise prices illegally;
9. persons responsible for illegal strikes
(Bangkok Post, 14/10/76).

Persons detained on charges related to any of these categories were subject to detention in special centres set up for the 're-education and vocational training' of such recalcitrants.

Under the auspices of this decree, many an old score was paid off, and it took the police and concerned groups months to sort out the flower sellers and street vendors from the thousands who were arrested. It is against this background that the tenacity of the Factory Union in maintaining its activities after the coup must be assessed.  

Finally, to complete this picture of the labour situation in Thailand from 1972 to 1977, a résumé of the development of the unions themselves is necessary in order to understand the extent of their influence on the industrial and political scene, and the reasons why the latest in Thailand's succession of military governments felt that they had to be treated with some caution, rather than yet again suppressed out of hand.

\[93\]

It would be a mistake to minimize the very immediate impact of these events on ordinary people. At the Factory, for example, a box was placed in each of the dormitories the day after the coup, and labelled 'Receptacle for Communist literature'. The box in the women's dormitory remained empty, but that in the men's scored a large pile of copies of Prachachart, one of two liberal newspapers - both suppressed after the coup - which had been very popular with students and other informed groups. These 'subversive' materials were brought down in the middle of the night by those who felt they could be compromised by keeping them. They were subsequently taken away by the management and burnt.
d) Development of the unions from 1972.

The different numbers of unions registered in 1976 given by varying sources\(^\text{94}\) gives some indication of the often haphazard nature of the whole enterprise. Nevertheless, the number was certainly over one hundred and fifty, which, from fifteen in June, 1973, and about eighty in late 1974, was a considerable increase, and indicates an undoubtedly strong desire by workers to establish organizations capable of representing their interest. A comprehensive outline of the development and functions of these labour organizations is given by Mabry (1977), and much of my information is drawn from his work.

Ninety-five of the 153 unions counted by him were found in Bangkok-Thonburi, primarily because most large establishments are established in that area. Another forty-three were registered in provinces (such as Samut Sakhon and Nakhon Pathom) adjoining Bangkok-Thonburi, or in cities within a fifty-mile radius of Bangkok, which are rapidly attracting industry that cannot be accommodated in the capital. Hence, almost ninety per cent of the labour organizations were found in establishments in Greater Bangkok.

Most unions were located in manufacturing, and in medium to large enterprises, although some of the largest and strongest were found among state enterprises in transportation and utilities, as we have already seen, and some of the more militant in the service industries (cf. Table 22). For various

\(^{94}\) 185 according to the Bangkok Post (Economic Supplement '76: 35); 163 according to Paisal, the President of the NLC (talk to the Foreign Correspondent's Club, Sept., 1976); and 153 (Mabry 1977: 935).
reasons, union membership is difficult to assess, but actual membership in 1976 has been estimated at between eighty and ninety-five thousand, with union support being at least twice this number (cf. Table 23). About twenty-five unions existed in foreign-owned firms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural processing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Industrial</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles and clothing</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer, Whisky, Soft Drinks</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petroleum</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Enterprises</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubber products</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railways</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, Truck</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade and Finance</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Government</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel &amp; Restaurant</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers, private</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassified</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 22. Distribution of Unions by Industries, June, 1976 (Mabry 1977: 938).

Leadership of the contemporary union movement, as a result of the purge of old-style leaders under Sarit and his successors, is young. Among some twenty founders of the National Labour Council (NLC), fifteen were under forty, two
others were in their early forties, and only one was over fifty. This leadership has in general, with the exception of a handful of political radicals, been essentially conservative, and concerned with bread-and-butter issues. As one diplomatic observer put it,

The average Thai worker was then, and continues now to be, politically conservative, unwilling to risk his job for the furtherance of some lofty political ideal... It is true that there was a degree of co-operation with the more militant and radical student activists on certain issues, but this was at the instigation of the students themselves. Strikers were often provided with practical assistance by students in the form of food, transportation, and other amenities, but this did not imply, as many critics suggested, an ideological meeting of the minds. (Personal communication.)

This disaffiliation from activist student groups by the NLC after 1975 was quite deliberate, and undoubtedly contributed

There were exceptions to this. On a visit to the Thammasat Students' Union at any time before the 1976 coup, one was likely to meet numbers of unionists or other workers who had come to talk, get access to literature, or just find moral support. Groups from Omnoy, in particular, were glad of a sympathetic ear.
to their continued toleration by the NARC after October, 1976. It no less undoubtedly reflected their desire to keep the labour movement in the mainstream of legitimate Thai institutions. The wisdom of this policy was demonstrated even before the coup, when,

by 1976, organized labour had usurped the student movement as the most credible spokesman for the urban masses, primarily because of the sensitivity of its leaders to the issues to which the working public are most attuned (Mabry 1977: 948).

'Organized labour' in this context refers specifically to the NLC, the largest and most influential of a number of federations formed in the 1973-76 period. Although there were several other affiliated groups - most actively the twelve or

---

96 I encountered the NLC's anxiety not to be involved with the student movement on my first visit to their office, which I made in the company of a Thammasat student. I was made to feel quite as unwelcome as I was later, when I visited my first factory - not the one which has been the subject of this study - with the same student and another of her friends. On the latter occasion, my status as a persona non grata was indicated only on our leaving the factory, when the boot of my car was searched by a security guard. This discourtesy was not prevented even by the fact that I had come with the blessing of the Labour Department, and accompanied by one of its officials. Nor was I allowed back into the factory - fitting retribution for my naivete in thinking that I should put all my cards (which included the two students as research assistants) on the table. Fortunately, in the case of the NLC, I was able to retrieve my position, since not all its members proved to be as hostile as the deputy president whom I had at first encountered.

97 Also known as the Confederation of Labour Unions of Thailand (CLUT) or the Federation of same (FLUT), from which it in fact evolved. The NLC as such was organized only in May, 1976, after it had drawn up a constitution, but, for the sake of simplicity, I shall refer to it by this name even for the earlier period of its activities.
so textile unions of the National Council of Thai labour (saphaa onkaan ree pQaan) under Sanan Wongsuthee - the NLC was undoubtedly the most legitimate 'voice' of the five million strong Thai workforce. Of the one hundred and fifty or more unions registered in 1976, one hundred and thirty-two claimed membership of the NLC (Paisal 1976). The federation grew out of informal talks held fortnightly by union leaders in 1974. Although it was unregistered as a federation, and had no legal status as such, it had unofficial acceptance by the Labour Department, which came to use its leaders (who continued as members of the workforce and not as full-time union officials) to conciliate in labour disputes which could not be resolved by government mediation. The credibility of the NLC as a responsible body, and its growing influence, is illustrated by a number of its different activities.

(i) At the beginning of January, 1976, the NLC called for a general strike in protest against a proposed rise in rice and sugar prices. Although only partially successful, the one-day strike was followed by a mass rally three days later which was attended by some ten thousand protesters. As a result, the government agreed to a compromise, despite the fact that it

---

98 It is to be remembered that the Factory Union had not made up its mind whether to join the NLC or Sanan's group, though it had attended meetings of the former, and had been approached by the latter.

99 This was able to withstand even such aberrations as the threat by one of its major member unions - the Transport Workers' Union - that they intended to send out vigilante squads to wreck cars that ignored tough new traffic rules, drawn up by the union itself after a visit by three of its leaders to Singapore (Bangkok Post, 9/12/75).
meant heavy government subsidies to maintain its guaranteed price to the farmers, and the prices of the two commodities was maintained at their existing levels. This protest, in which the NSCT (National Student Centre of Thailand) had co-operated with the NLC, contributed to Prime Minister Kukrit's subsequent decision to dissolve parliament and call new elections.

(ii) In February, 1976, the NLC felt that it had sufficient political muscle to call on its members to boycott certain parties in the forthcoming election. The two main government coalition parties - the Social Action and Chart Thai parties - were to be boycotted, because of their alleged failure to carry out all the provisions of the rice price agreement. A boycott was also urged against the Democrats, because of remarks made by one of its candidates - NLC arch-enemy, Samak Sundaravej - on a television programme, accusing the unions of hooliganism and of being Communist-inspired in their demonstrations against the proposed rice price increase. The Democrat leader (and subsequent Prime Minister), Seni Pramoj, took the threat so seriously that he announced a specific policy on the improvement of welfare for labourers in an attempt at appeasement, and personally offered an apology to the NLC on behalf of the party\(^{100}\) (Bangkok Post, Feb. 10-24, 1976).

\(^{100}\) Although the results of the election were due to many factors other than labour problems, they are interesting in the light of this move by the NLC. Seni in fact became Prime Minister of a new coalition government, which did not include the Social Action Party. Samak, standing in a military-dominated constituency, won a seat - one of those in the constituency, in fact, which was lost by the former Prime Minister, Seni's brother, Kukrit Pramoj.
(iii) In the chaotic events of September and October, 1976, surrounding the return to Thailand of one of the three 'tyrants' – former Prime Minister Thanom Kittikachorn – affiliates of the NLC again called for a general strike in order to put pressure on the government to expel him from the country. It was ironic that the report of the vote made the front page of the Bangkok Post on the morning of the coup. Although the strike never eventuated, the issue was seen to be of sufficient importance for the NLC to reverse its policy of political neutrality and to throw its weight behind student attempts to get rid of Thanom. It is very likely that, had the Thammasat massacre and coup not taken place, they would have been successful.

(iv) In the post-coup period, as we have seen, unions retained their legal status, although the NLC was disbanded. Despite this official demise, however, it was Paisal and other leaders of the NLC that the NARC summoned to a meeting just a week after the coup, in order to enlist their active support. This was pledged by Paisal in a three-point agreement – an excellent example of the pragmatic approach of the NLC, which was prepared to forego some of its rights in the interests of survival.

Moreover, an early Secretary-General of the NARC, General Kriangsak Chamanand, began an immediate policy of wooing labour leaders. This was an attempt both to promote good labour relations with a view to stabilizing the labour situation (for the sake of that utopian investment climate), and to extend his own rather narrow power base. As part of this policy, Kriangsak fostered the Thai Workers' Foundation
in June, 1977. Established with initial working capital of one million baht provided by a number of businessmen, the organization aims to improve education in the field of industrial relations, and to provide welfare assistance to needy workers and their families. The success of his strategy - and the extent of labour power on which it was based - can be gauged by the fact that he is now Thailand's Prime Minister.


The most telling aspect for the present discussion to emerge from this outline of the labour scene is the extent to which the Factory is atypical of the industrial situation in general (though not so much of the situation in foreign-owned companies). This is so, not only in the fact of the total non-occurrence of strikes, but also in the absence of an environment of hostility and intransigence of the type which produced the confrontation and violence so common in other factories, particularly in the textile industry, after October, 1973. Not only is management at the Factory conversant with the Labour Law, and prepared to make every effort to maintain good relations with its workers above and beyond what is strictly required, but they have succeeded to the extent that the workers were prepared, even in the first Workers' Agreement of 1975, voluntarily to forego their legal right to strike.

The Factory Union, however, is not altogether out of the mainstream of the labour movement. Its establishment
was part of the large increase in the number of unions registered with the Labour Department in 1974-76, and is obviously linked with the feeling of need among workers in general for organizations to represent their interest. The initial reluctance of management to accept them, moreover, was similar to that experienced in other foreign-owned firms. According to the Chulalongkorn study, one of the more frequent complaints of workers in joint companies was precisely on this point - that management opposes the organizing efforts of unions, and that it normally takes at least a year after the establishment of a union in the plant before the management softens its stand and co-operates with the union (Supachai 1977: 16).

At the same time, the Union's main concern is with the situation of its own workers. Although it was toying with the idea of joining either the NLC or the National Union of Thai Labour, there was no question of joining in the general strike to protest the increase in rice and sugar prices. (Though this may well have been largely because of the Company's practice of selling rice to its employees at the wholesale price anyway). Further, its goals are entirely reformist, as were the goals of the NLC, an orientation with implications for the question of class consciousness which will be explored in the Conclusions. Nevertheless, despite its distance from the anarchic state of labour relations apparent in so many other factories, the Union was unable to escape the taint of subversion and communist inspiration which resurfaced after the coup, and its tenacity in continuing its activities in the atmosphere of nervousness
which accompanied the re-establishment of military rule and martial law is clear evidence of the strength of the need among the workers which it fulfilled.

In the light of this résumé, it is now possible to assess the situation at the Factory in the context of the wider industrial scene. As we have seen, the Factory, because of its management's policy of paying higher wages and providing better-than-average working and living conditions, is outside the mainstream of industrial unrest. Those conditions which its employees have in common with other industrial workers, such as the very fact of working in capitalist industry with all that this has been seen to entail have been blunted in their impact by the relative attractiveness of the Factory environment. To this extent, the Factory is atypical. Nevertheless, in the naissance of class consciousness embodied principally in the foundation of the Union, it has demonstrated shared characteristics with the labour movement which may in fact outweigh its differences.
CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS

In drawing together the elements that have been dealt with in this study, we can look at the process of creating new structures of meaning appropriate to the formation of either community or of classes, developed in the Factory, on the one hand, by management and, on the other, by the workers.

1. Structures Aimed at Creating a Community.

   a) By management.

      The main form of structuring by management with the aim of transforming the Factory into a community is, as we have seen, the form of patronage. For them, the principle of reciprocity is one aspect of the realization of the ideological superstructure. This process of structuring has taken the form of containment in three general areas - the area of welfare, of traditional practices, and of the formation of workers' committees. In addition to what has already been discussed in this area, only two things remain to be said - both of which arise from the fact that this manifestation of patronage by management wears its corporate, or impersonal, image. In the first place, the good welfare conditions provided by the Company may be open to interpretation as exploitation in disguise - in other words, exploitation appearing in the guise of 'exchange' (cf. Terray 1972: 169). This interpretation would, however, be inadequate, in view of
the fact that the wages at the Factory are good enough to allow workers to build up their own surplus, and therefore to move away, and hence free themselves from exploitation, if they want to. Being an industrial worker is to some extent still a free choice and is not yet necessarily a life situation for the Factory employees (though the growing rate of unemployment cannot be ignored here). Most workers at the Factory see the possibility of a future outside industry - either by returning to their family's farm, or in setting up their own small businesses. From this point of view, good welfare conditions become an effort made by the Company to raise the sense of well-being of their employees, and hence their continuing commitment to the Company.

The second comment is related to the incorporation of traditional rituals. In one sense, this robs them of their intricately wrought social relationships and reduces them to a single dimension. They become, then, cultural items, divorced from the mainstream of traditional life. Moreover, the more all-absorbing the Company, the less room there is for private life, and the more all-embracing will be the identification of the 'self' with the work self, which may be, though not in the Marxist sense, the essence of alienation (Berger 1973: 35). While this is not yet strongly evident among the workers at the Factory, there is certainly the possibility of the dissolution of links with the village and all that that means in terms of removing the workers from their traditional roots.

This corporate face of patronage is present on one side. On the other is the personal aspect. The implications of
this for an event such as Chuusak's cremation have already been examined. In conjunction with this is what I would see as the specifically Thai aspect of the patron-client system in the Factory, embodied in the person of Khun Visan. The indications are all there that Khun Visan projects his role as that of patron, and this makes him the pivot, in a very real sense, of any residual moral dimension of the principle of reciprocity. Before exploring this further, I wish to recapitulate those structures contributing to community which may be said to emanate from the other social group in this situation - the workers.

b) By workers.

The structures derived by the workers from their traditional past, and applied without significant change to the industrial context, have two principal manifestations. These are their use of the kinship naming system and associated behaviours, and their personal gestures of reciprocity towards those whom they see as having a claim on them through bunkhun. The importance of both these expressions lies not only in the fact that they indicate a willingness by the workers to operate within the framework set up by the management, but also in the indication they give of a rejection of the moral dimension of reciprocity. All the examples given - of giving blood to Khun Visan's wife, for example, or of wedding gifts to Khun Supachai - as well as the tables based on informants' own views of their obligations to the Company, indicate that, for the workers, the principle of reciprocity operates only at the voluntary and personal level, without
associated overtones of duty. This would seem to imply a significant rejection by the workers of the ideological structure of the Company which is part of their transformation into a class.

2. Structures Related to the Emergence of Class.

a) By workers.

Although there are some other small signs of workers identifying themselves as a class in opposition to management - as, for example, their attitude to the Employees' Committee, and their feeling that the Factory is changing from a phi-i-noɔ network to that of 'employer-employee' (the latter, lûugcâº) - the principal manifestation of this is undoubtedly the Trade Union. Although there is some support from the evidence that the Union is merely reformist, and therefore operates at the level of class instinct rather than of class consciousness, it at least represents a beginning of the organization of class interests, which is a prerequisite to class consciousness. More importantly, it can clearly be described as a 'new element' in the structure of the Factory, which is reflected at the level of political structure by 'pertinent effects' (cf. Poulantzas 1973: 78f). As we have seen, the formation of the Union led directly to the setting up of the Employees' Committee by the management, a committee which is different in kind from all the other management-initiated committees, and which, it appears, is unlikely to have been set up unless the Union had come into existence.\footnote{Since a provision for Employees' Committees is part of the Labour Law, it is possible that the management may have envisaged setting up such a committee at some future date. The timing of its establishment, however, and the manner in which it was done, made workers interpret it as I have indicated.}
That is to say, that the Union caused an alteration in precisely the political structure of the Factory, as well as in the symbolic view of the Factory as community. To this extent, it is a realization of class, and a direct contribution to the development of class consciousness (which is a process, not a result). Moreover, because within a social formation - in this instance, present-day Bangkok - the economic struggle associated with the emergence of class consciousness must be realized in the political (and ideological) superstructure, the establishment of the Union, as the economic voice of the workers, also, and inevitably, represents their politicization.

b) By management.

The establishment of the Employees' Committee by management must be seen as an expression of class instinct (if not class consciousness) on their part. In the material which has been presented, the other obvious example which fits into this category is the sacking of Monchai. This has two further aspects in addition to those already mentioned. In the first place, it highlights the problem of the co-existence of the two sets of relations of production at the Factory. Since the offence was at the level of patron-client relationships, the resulting discipline, to be appropriate, should have been confined to the same level (for example, banning from some extra-curricular activities). When the punishment for such an offence moves out of this level, and into the area of contractual relationships - as it did in this case through dismissal - the resulting conflict leads to injury, not just to the individuals involved, but to the ideology of the patron-client relationship itself. To this extent, the class
division gains strength.

Secondly, the incident demonstrates the ambiguity of a position such as that filled by Khun Visan in a period of transition. Because of his activities as patron, he maintains the existence of a traditional relationship of reciprocity in a post-traditional situation. At the same time, he also represents the class system, because he is a non-producing employer. In him, therefore, the two sets of relations of production meet, which makes his actions, and his relationship with his employees, a crucial area of analysis. The fact that the response of the workers to him has shed the dimension of moral obligation would seem to indicate that his position as a representative of the employer class is beginning to gain ground over his role as patron.

The dimension of conflict arising out of the overlapping of the two modes of production is not, however, confined to the person of Khun Visan. Its incidence is much wider, and needs to be summarized.

3. The Dimensions of Conflict.

While the seeds of this conflict are to be found in the co-existence of differing systems in the Factory, the structures developed by management to promote the aspect of community are not at all necessarily unacceptable to the employees. The predominant note of the Factory is, as has been presented, one of harmony. Where areas of conflict have become apparent is principally at two levels - where management structures have been inappropriate for workers, and where the real distribution of power has been manifested through the exercise of authority relations.
Since the process of structuring is an attempt to impose order on, and draw meaning out of, the potential chaos of a radically new situation, it is not surprising that the efforts of opposing classes should throw up some areas of conflict. In the case of the Factory, it is the very comprehensiveness of the management attempt which is the problem. In the first place, their projection of the ideology of reciprocity may well be seen as a promotion of false consciousness on the part of the workers. It is not good welfare conditions that are in question, but any added implication of reciprocal obligation. More importantly, the imposition of management structures to interpret the meaning of the industrial situation for workers is an attempt - unconscious though it may be - to limit one of their basic freedoms, which is the right to cope constructively with their new situation. This is so even though, at the practical level, the workers accept the package that is offered, and stress the advantages of clientship. To put it another way, the maintenance of patronage denies the workers their right to be creative. The direction of this limitation is to impoverish the very notion of community which the Company is trying to build. It has invested its energy in making the Factory an island community - or, to use an even more apt metaphor, a fortress community. Insofar as it is successful, its community stands to be destroyed by the establishment of any links with the broader industrial scene. To this extent, its goal of community is tenuous, and its achievements in that direction self-defeating. As long as it insists on directing its vision inward, it can only see external intrusion
as destructive. Hence its initial hostility to the establishment of the Union, since it is precisely in terms of a broader base that the workers have expressed their own search for meaning.

The image of the Factory as community, moreover, has tended to mask the real distribution of power, even in areas where management has ostensibly handed control to the workers. It is here that the relations of production show themselves most directly as authority relations, and as one aspect of the realization of the political superstructure. This has been demonstrated most clearly in the case of the Dormitory Committee, where the real authority relations were made apparent in the making of decisions, particularly where there was trouble. The examples discussed illustrate the decision-making process of the committee system as demarcating, in conflict situations, the lines of class interest. This is not to deny the positive function of the Dormitory, and other, Committees, but it is quite clearly to place them within the definite limitations of their subordinate role.

If management attempts to impose their meaning on the Factory situation have been only partially successful, the reason is to be found in the workers' reaction to structures which they have found inappropriate. There are three observations to be added here.

Firstly, the workers' attempts to force a broader base for their identification (which is related to the question of class and class consciousness) are indicated by their links with other unions, and with the Labour Department. The strength of this emerging consciousness was indicated by the Union's
post-coup resilience. At the same time, any identification on a class basis is as yet incipient and confined to official forays by the executive. The Union did not support the National Labour Council's call for a general strike over the increase in rice and sugar prices. Even more significantly, there is little evidence of worker solidarity with the next door factory.

At the same time, there is some indication of a non-acceptance of the dominant ideology which may be associated with class consciousness. The rejection of a moral dimension to reciprocity has been noted. There is also, however, the dismissal of any causal relation between status, and the doctrines of bun and bàab (merit and demerit). Insofar as the personal status of individuals is one aspect of the realization of the political superstructure, with the added ideological element of religious rationalization for the distribution of power, this rejection is, I think, particularly significant.

Finally, the utilitarian attitude of the workers towards the patron-client tie seems to express a consciousness that is 'truer' than that of the management. In other words, for the latter, the pre-capitalist relations of production - which cannot solve the problems raised by capitalist industrialization - are still dominant, while the workers are, even though only in limited areas, moving away from this false consciousness. For them, the principle of unequal reciprocity is seen by them now as peripheral to their situation.

4. Conclusion: The Short-term Prospect.

Although the theoretical model I have used would allow
for a projection of the long-term prospects of the Factory as part of the broader economic scene, the parameters of my study make it more profitable, I think, to look only at the shorter term. This can be posed as a simple question (though one with an answer, the complexities of which have formed the matter of my analysis). What is the solution for the Factory?

It has not been proved by historical developments that the only solution to the problem of capitalist exploitation of workers is revolution and the overthrow of the capitalist state. On the contrary, in a developing country, such as Thailand, for example, there are cogent reasons for workers in fact preferring to work in a capitalist factory than in the paddy fields, or in growing tapioca or rubber. These reasons lie in the extra money available, the work that is less arduous, even though noisy, repetitive, and boring, and the opportunity of free time. Industrialization, in fact, even though in the capitalist mode of production, has had the effect at the personal level for many of the workers of liberating them from 'rural idiocy' (Marx 1967: 84). It also provides stability and security, in freeing workers from dependence on the cycle of the seasons and the vagaries of weather, with their resulting uncertainties for production. Moreover, in what is essentially a money economy, even though still preponderantly agricultural, a place such as the Factory helps to bring about a redistribution of wealth for at least one section of the population.

In practical terms, at least two avenues are open to the management to maximize the benefits already so apparent. One is to recognize that, although the personal and voluntary
aspect of reciprocity in the patron-client relationship may still have a place in promoting good relations between the people involved, it can no longer have a moral dimension. Reciprocity by workers must be accepted as free, and not as something owed. This is particularly important in relation to Khun Visan, who undoubtedly infuses an added personal element to industrial relations, but who cannot demand any personal return as of right without disrupting the very harmony which it is his aim to promote.

Secondly, if the goal of maintaining a community is to be realized, even in the face of the development of class consciousness, more real sharing in the decision-making process must be handed over to the workers. This can be achieved through such practices as a declaration of profits, so that the annual bonus is seen to be a sharing, rather than a 'gift'. Even more importantly, real power should be handed over to the committees already in existence, specifically the Dormitory Committee and the Union. For the Dormitory Committee, the only possible avenue is that they be given full control over the dormitory area which is, after all, not part of the industrial scene. As regards the Union, the recognition by management of its role as the sole voice of the workers would imply immediate abolition of the Employees' Committee, and undivided support for the Union. Such a gesture would indicate respect by the management for the structuring activity of the workers which, whatever its expressions, is an authentic and necessary process.

The conflict endemic in the present situation of dual
relations of production being in operation in the Factory will obviously not be resolved by any series of simple changes. As long as Thailand remains an economy in transition, the problems associated with cross-dominance will remain. Nevertheless, the record of good industrial relations held by the Factory indicates that, where there is mutual goodwill, and a genuine preparedness to accommodate the needs of the workers, it is possible to achieve a balance in relations that minimizes exploitation and allows traditional relations to continue to humanize a situation in which the economic structure has become dominant. At the same time, the processes which have been examined need to be placed in their broader historical perspective.

5. Conclusion: The Broader View.

In drawing together the themes which have been dealt with in this study, there is one over-riding point to be emphasized. That is that, whatever the extent to which the Factory is typical or atypical, it can still be seen as a microcosm of the broader Thai industrial scene. It represents one example of a particular social formation - in this case of a society in transition - where an overlapping of two modes of production has led to the co-existence of two apparently incompatible expressions of the social relations of production. These relations are those based on the capitalist mode of production, which has been introduced into a society which is still a predominantly peasant economy with its corresponding pre-capitalist relations of production. Nevertheless, despite the capitalist nature of the Factory itself, the ideological
structure associated with a peasant economy still assumes dominance in certain instances. This 'cross-dominance' (Terray 1972: 161) takes the form of a disjunction between peasant relations and the emergence of class relations, and manifests itself as an opposition between the alternative forms of identity - the Factory as a community, and the Factory as part of a wider class society.

We have, then, two systems in operation in the Factory. On the one hand, there are the forms corresponding to a peasant economy, in the context of which the Factory can be seen as a community. This organization has two major aspects - a relationship of unequal reciprocity between the two principal groups concerned, employer/managers and workers, modelled on patron-client ties; and an invocation of personal reciprocity through the use of kinship terms. On the other hand, the dominance of the economic structure in the capitalist mode of production to which the Factory belongs manifests itself in the development of these same groups into social classes. In this context, the two classes involved have opposing class interests, with the employer/manager class committed to the realization of profit, and the workers aiming at the increase of wages. To this extent, the forms of class and community are incompatible.

Moreover, although the forms of patron-client relationships and kinship ties continue to operate in the Factory, it is not so much their continuing existence which is significant as their place and relative importance in a context of transition. In other words, although they belong in a peasant economy, do they continue to perform the same function when transposed
into a capitalist mode? The answer to this lies in the realization that the relations among people are always mediated by their relation to the means of production. Therefore, once the relations deriving from a peasant economy are transferred into the capitalist mode, as at the Factory, they are transformed into capitalist relations of production, even though their expression may remain different. The important point is that, in the Factory, relations between the groups are now defined by a relation with objects, and any continuing patron-client relationship can only exist, it appears, within this framework. That is to say that the patron, by the ineluctable laws of the capitalist system, must perform the function of exploitation of the workers, whatever his benevolent intentions to the contrary.

Having stated the inevitability of this outcome, however, I must now qualify it, since the situation at the Factory, as it has been shown to exist, appears to belie the starkness of this conclusion. Perhaps this is so because the inflexibility of the theory of historical materialism reduces social relations to a single dimension. It sees man ultimately as passive, and, in the terms used earlier, only as being-an-object. But there are still determinative choices to be made by man-as-subject, which can be summed up if the foregoing discussion is expressed in a different way. That is to say, that capitalist industrialization creates not a working class, but workers. Whatever the effect of this on the political and ideological structures, a labour movement has its roots not in politics but in work. It grows out of the nature of that work, the economic and social position of that worker, and his response to that position...
[This means that] organization and group consciousness among workers are created by the workers themselves... If [the workers] come to feel solidarity among themselves, become conscious of forming a group with special common interests, and organize to advance these interests, then the workers are the agents in this process, creating their own group consciousness and organization in response to their common status... The working class makes itself as much as it is made (Iliffe 1975: 49f).

In other words, the development of class and class consciousness is, as much as the formation of community, the process of creating new structures of meaning by man as being-the-subject in the face of novelty. In the case of the Factory, this structuring activity is demanded of both the employer/manager group and the workers. Because of the ideological preconceptions deriving from the peasant economy which is the background for both groups, this structuring has, on the whole, been in the mould of a peasant economy, and has contributed to the foundation of a community. The intrusion of a Japanese dimension has altered one aspect of this, however, and that is that it has not so much depersonalized the patron-client tie, as it has given it a corporate rather than an individual form.

Although I would hesitate to generalize from one factory to Thai society as a whole, many of the processes that have been seen in operation in the Factory are present also in other sectors and indeed can only be fully understood when seen in relation to them. As we saw in Chapter I, the incorporation of the Thai economy, agricultural as well as urban, into the world capitalist system has given rise to precisely the same division along class lines in the general population as is evident in the Factory. The return to military rule in October
1976 once again suppressed many of the manifestations of this division. Recent indications are, however, that the government has learnt of the dangers of long repression. Its commitment to renewed democratic elections later this year (1979) will by no means solve the problems that are so deep-rooted in the country's historical development. Nevertheless, there may be those who, having recognized the signs, will at least make the attempt.
APPENDIX I

OFFICIAL FACTORY HOLIDAYS FOR 1976

Jan. 1  New Year
Jan. 8  Children's Day
Feb. 3  Chinese New Year
March 4  Markha Bucha Day
March 28  Factory Summer Holiday
April 6  Chakri Day
April 13  Songkran
May 2  National Labour Day*
May 5  Coronation Day
June 1  Visakha Bucha Day
Aug. 1  Buddhist Lent Day*
Aug. 12  Queen's Birthday
Oct. 24  Chulalongkorn Day*
Oct. 27  End of Buddhist Lent Day
Dec. 5  King's Birthday
Dec. 10  Constitution Day
Dec. 31  New Year's Eve

*These days are compulsory holidays by law.
APPENDIX II

OFFICIAL LETTERS OF JOB OFFER AND EMPLOYMENT

1. Letter of Job Offer.

The Factory Co. Ltd.

Date......Month.......B.E........

Dear Khun.............

We are pleased to inform you that you have successfully passed the Company's entrance requirements, and the Company offers you a job as an employee.

So we would like you to come and get in touch with us on: Date.......Month.......B.E........

Time........

Respectfully....
2. Letter of Employment.

Date........Month........B.E........

To Khun........

The Company is pleased to offer you a job as an employee (please specify whether a daily, monthly, or temporary employee) in position........attached to........Section.......Department.......under the following conditions:

1. (In case of temporary employee) you will have a fixed period in working with the Company for........years ......months.......days, counting from date........month.......B.E........to date.......month.......B.E........

2. You must be on probation for.......days (months) and during the probationary period, the Company may stop employing you any time, without paying compensation and without informing you in advance.

3. You will receive wages at....baht/day......./month.

4. You have to follow work regulations and certify by signing your name at the end of this letter.

The Factory Co. Ltd.

I, Mr./Mrs./Miss.......acknowledge the aforementioned conditions and am pleased to act according to the regulations concerning the performance of work assigned by the Company.

Signature: ......................
Contents

Points of agreement concerning employment conditions:

1. The employer and the employee and the working place.
2. The objective of the agreement.
3. The acceptance of right of administration by the "employer".

I. The points of agreement concerning employment conditions.
   Section 1. Types of employee.
   Section 2. Selection and appointment to vacant positions.
   Section 3. Normal working time and days, rest period, and work regulations.
   Section 4. Holidays, leave of absence, and regulations for requesting leave of absence.
   Section 5. Wages, principle of raising wages, and payment of wages.
   Section 6. Working on holidays and overtime.
   Section 7. Welfare.
   Section 8. Discipline and disciplinary action.
   Section 9. Regulations concerning cessation of employment, payment of compensation and/or bonus.
   Section 10. Methods of complaint.

II. The action to be taken according to points of agreement concerning employment conditions.
   1. Period of time enforced.
   2. Revision of points of agreement.
3. Announcement of putting into effect, registration, and interpretation of points of agreement.
4. Disciplinary action.
5. Acceptance of points of agreement concerning employment conditions.
6. Employer and employee signatures.

Revision. Section 7. Welfare, page 12, point 41, is changed thus:

41. "The employer will pay for food to every employee at the rate of 250 baht monthly at the time of paying salary".

POINTS OF AGREEMENT CONCERNING EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

The Employer and Employee and Working Place According to the Points of Agreement

1. Points of agreement concerning employment conditions are made between the Factory Company Limited, the Head Office of which is at................................. and its factory is situated at................................., Bangkok metropolis, which from now on will be called "Employer" and every worker of the Company will be from now on called "Employee".

Let points of agreement be applied both at the Head Office and the Company factory.

2. The objective of points of agreement.

The objective of points of agreement concerning employment conditions of both parties is to promote good understanding between employer and employee, and also to find the way to prevent problems of labour disagreement. It aims to build up peace and happiness in the work place,
and make everybody feel like being close friends and even relatives of each other.

Both the employer and employee accept to follow all points of agreement. In the case that any problem may arise unavoidably, both parties will always be pleased to co-operate in solving the problem by using peaceful methods.

3. The Acceptance of the right of administration by the employer.

The employee accepts the right of business administration by the employer including responsibility concerning initiative and changes, labour administration, equipment, man-power administration, finance, production, processing and the system of working for the progress, security, and efficiency of the employer's administration, but this must not infringe on points of agreement concerning employment conditions.

(I) The points of agreement concerning employment conditions can cover only the matters specified in these points of agreement. In other matters besides these, the employer and employee will follow strictly the labour law declared by the State.

For the time during which the points of agreement concerning employment conditions are effective, both employer and employee pledge that they will sincerely respect the points of agreement concerning employment conditions and will not violate any of them. Besides this, the employer pledges not to use the lock out method against the employee, or refuse to permit the employee to work temporarily because of labour disagreement, and the employees also pledge that they will not invoke the method of
a strike or join in a strike temporarily, owing to labour disagreement.

The employer and employee accept to act according to the points of agreement concerning employment conditions from April 20, 2519, and be willing to cancel former announcements, rules or regulations or other announcements rules and regulations which infringe on the labour law immediately, from the day the points of agreement concerning employment conditions are put into effect.

SECTION 1

Types of Employee

1.1. Regular daily employee - is the employee hired by the employer to work regularly, after a trial period of 120 days. He or she gets paid according to the number of days he or she has worked.

1.2. Regular monthly employee - is the employee who is employed by the employer to work regularly after a trial period of 120 days. He or she gets paid monthly.

1.3. Probationary employee - is the employee who is employed by the employer to work for a trial period not exceeding 120 days consecutively including holidays, but not yet appointed as a regular employee. If the employer is not satisfied with the trial worker's job, or the worker on trial himself is not willing to continue his work, then each party has the right to cancel the contract and the employer does not have to pay any compensation to the worker on trial.

SECTION 2

Selection and Appointment

2. Employer policy is to select and appoint the employee
who has the proper qualifications and ability according to the requirements of each section.

3. The steps for selection and appointment are as follows:

3.1. Any section that needs more man-power sends a request for approval to the President of the Company, the factory manager, or any person entrusted by them.

3.2. The request is sent to the administration in order to have them provide and select proper persons as many as may fulfill the qualification requirements.

3.3. The administration will send qualified persons to the section concerned for selection. The section concerned will then propose the list of persons selected to go the President of the Company or to the factory manager for approval.

3.4. The persons selected and ready to work must be X-rayed and examined by a doctor nominated by the employer. If they are declared medically fit then they will be accepted for work.

4. General qualifications of the applicants.

4.1. Female applicants must be at least 18 years old, single when starting work. Some special cases will be considered.

4.2. Male applicants must be at least 18 years old. However, those who are subject to military service within one year will not be considered.

4.3. They must be in good health.

4.4. They must not be colour blind.

4.5. They must not be undesirable to society.

4.6. They must have good and polite manners.

4.7. They must be properly qualified according to the employer's requirements.
5. Letter of employment.

The employer will give a letter of employment to the workers after the selection and medical examination, informing them about probationary period, duties, responsibilities, rate of wages, and acknowledging points of agreement concerning employment conditions.

SECTION 3

Normal work hours and days, rest periods, and work regulations

6. Head Office - normal working days - Monday-Friday.
   normal work hours - 8.30 - 17.30
   rest period - 12.00-13.00

7. Factory daytime work -
   normal work hours - 08.00-16.30
   rest period - 12.00-13.00

8. Shift work in the factory is divided into 3 shifts as follows:
   8.1. Morning shift - 08.00-16.30 (rest period 1 hour for each person).
   8.2. Afternoon shift - 16.30-01.00 (rest period 1 hour for each person).
   8.3. Late night shift - 01.00-08.00 (rest period 1 hour for each person).

   The section head or foreman will fix the rest period without sacrifice to the work.

   Shift change - any employee is forbidden to leave his work before another employee comes and takes over the shift, except when he receives permission from the section head or the foreman.
The employer reserves the right to change working days and time and rest periods as suitable, but the employer has to let the employee know at least 3 days in advance.

9. Special work: in case the employer has necessary work of a special nature, the employer may make an agreement with a specific employee to work according to the time specially fixed.

10. Work regulation.

10.1. Each employee has to write down the hour he starts his work, or stand in line checking the name by himself.

10.2. The employee is forbidden to sign another's name or work for another without receiving permission from the section head or foreman.

10.3. Any employee who comes to work late or leaves before time will be counted as having his normal work hours reduced according to the number of hours and minutes of tardiness. Parts of a minute will be rounded off to the nearest minute.

10.4. The employer reserves the right not to allow an employee who comes to work 30 minutes late without good reason to work on that day.

11. The employer reserves the right to consider and transfer any employee to work in any section that he thinks appropriate, and may transfer an employee to any shift by always letting him know in advance, except in urgent and special cases.

SECTION 4

Holidays, Leave of Absence, and the Principle of Taking Leave

12. Head office - weekly holidays are Saturday and Sunday.

13. Weekly holidays of the factory - In general, the employer has fixed Sunday as a weekly holiday, but as the work in some
sections has to be done consecutively, the employer has to fix another day as a weekly holiday for that section. He shall inform the employee in advance.

14. Traditional holidays - In each year, the employee will fix traditional holidays on at least 17 days as follows:

- New Year Day
- Markha Bhucha Day
- Chakri Day
- Songkran Day
- Visakha Bhucha Day
- Labour Day
- Coronation Day
- Buddhist Lent Day
- Queen's Birthday
- King's Birthday
- Chulalongkorn Day
- Constitution Day
- New Year's Eve (literally, "The bid farewell day of the old year")

If a traditional holiday falls on weekly holiday then the employee may take a normal working day as compensation.

If there is any change of the traditional holidays in the next year, the employer will inform the employee before the end of the present year. As for the other 4 holidays, the employer will announce in advance later.

15. Yearly vacation.

15.1. The employee who has worked consecutively for 1-3 years has the right to take 6 days for vacation and receives normal wages fully paid.
The employee who has worked for 3-5 years and has taken sick leave, business leave, absence without permission of altogether not more than 30 days, has the right to take 8 days for vacation.

The employee who has worked for five years or more, and has taken sick leave, business leave, absence without permission of altogether not more than 30 days, will have the right to take 9 days for vacation.

15.2. As for the vacation, let employees take turns to leave for vacation, without disturbing the production and service to other units. To avoid this, the employee has to request for leave of absence from the head of section 3 days in advance (except in urgent cases) and he can take leave after receiving permission.

15.3. The employee who has a yearly vacation may carry over no more than two years' vacation, counted from the day he has the right to leave for vacation.

When an employee requests leave for his yearly vacation, he has to leave at least half a day each time.

16. The employer fixes regulations on sick leave as follows:

16.1. The employee has the right to take no more than 30 working days for sick leave, but he may not bring the days of his sick leave left over in the present year to add to those of the next year, and he cannot exchange them for cash.

16.2. The employee who is sick, should inform the personnel section immediately by telephone, telegram or letter, or have someone inform instead. He has to submit an application for sick leave to the personnel section every time when he comes back to work.
Moreover, the employee who has been sick for 3 days or more consecutively has to submit an application for sick leave together with the factory doctor's certificate, or a certificate from the doctor of a government hospital, or from a first-grade modern doctor.

16.3. If any employee asks for leave of absence too frequently it shows that the employee has very bad health. The employer may send him to the factory doctor or to another experienced one, to have him examined thoroughly in order to know the cause of his sickness. The employer will be responsible for the treatment fee within the sum of money fixed in welfare matters. If the doctor, after a thorough examination, finds that the employee is not as sick as he said, but is using his right to request sick leave by faking sickness, the employer will consider taking disciplinary action against him.

17. Application for leave of absence - The employer may allow the employee to take leave of absence as it is really necessary, and the employee has to inform the personnel section in writing at least 1 day in advance. After receiving permission from the personnel section, the application for leave of absence will be considered a correct one.

18. The employer may permit the employee to apply for leave of absence and receive normal wages in the following cases:

18.1. Wedding ceremony of the employee himself 5 days
18.2. The employee's wife delivers a baby 2 days
18.3. The employee's father, mother, wife (or husband), daughter, or son, dies, and the cremation of those persons 3 days
18.4. The employee is ordered to move his living place 1 day
18.5. Receiving injury while at work, the employee may take sick leave as long as mentioned in the doctor's certificate.

18.6. Using the right of being a citizen in voting for an election or other necessary cases. The employer will consider this as he thinks appropriate.

18.7. Being a witness according to an official summons.

18.8. The employee who has to be in a confined area because of contagious disease may take leave of absence according to the number of the days fixed by the Government.

19. Application of no. 18 will not affect wages calculation, consideration of raising salary, and yearly bonus.

20. In application for leave of absence for recruit drafting or military training, the employee has to follow the following principle:

20.1. When the employee receives the summons for recruit drafting he has to send a copy of the summons together with an application for leave of absence to the personnel section. The employer will fix the time of his absence by consideration of short or long distance, but not over 5 days. He will be paid at the normal rate. But he can take leave of absence only when receiving permission.

20.2. In case the employee is summoned for military training he will be permitted to take not over 15 days' leave, and will receive normal wages, but he has to send a copy of the military summons together with an application for leave of absence, to the personnel section, and he may take leave after receiving permission.

21. Application for leave of absence to serve military service: the employee has to hold the following principle: -

When receiving the summons for military service, the
employee must immediately propose a copy of the summons, together with an application for leave of absence, to the personnel section, and the application must specify the period and the reason for his absence - "Leave for serving military service". After receiving permission, all the rights he has as an employee will be ended from the day he receives permission.

22. In requesting to come back to work with the employer after demobilization, the employee has to following this principle:

22.1. Bring a copy of the demobilization certificate to the employer within 30 days, counted from the day of demobilization, for consideration and re-acceptance of work. The employer will consider his experience, ability, and characteristics. Then the employer will fix wages and working place for him, and the day of starting work will be fixed later. After approval, he will have his rights as an employer from the first day of his last time at work.

22.2. The employer reserves the right not to consider a person who brings a copy of demobilization to him after 30 days, counted from the day of demobilization.

22.3. Calculating years of working service of the employee. The principle of calculating years of working service of the employee for fixing the rate of raising salary, bonus on resignation, yearly vacation, and appointment to other positions, is as follows:

Years of working service = years of working service from the first day starting his work to the day leaving for serving military service + years of working service after demobilization.
23. Application for leave of absence to enter monkhood.

23.1. The employee who has worked with the employer for over 1 year but not more than 5 years, has the right to take no more than 30 days' leave to enter the monkhood without receiving wages; and application for leave of absence must be submitted to the personnel section at least 30 days in advance, and the employee may take leave after receiving permission from the employer.

23.2. Let the employee who has worked with the employer for over 5 years have the right to request leave of absence to enter the monkhood according to 23.1, and, if taking leave over 30 days, the employer may give a special right thus:

In each year, the employer will permit the employee who has worked for over 5 years to take leave to enter the monkhood during Buddhist Lent but no more than 105 days, including holidays. Only 5 persons are permitted at a time, and they will receive standard wages for 45 days. The employee who has more years of work service and seniority will be considered first. An application for leave of absence to enter the monkhood must be submitted to the section head at least 30 days in advance, and the employee may leave after receiving permission from the employer.

23.3. The employer will not count the days of absence according to 23.1 or 23.2 in consideration of increasing yearly wages.

23.4. The employee has the right to apply for leave of absence for entering the monkhood only once while working with the employer.

23.5. On the day the employee comes back to work, he has to bring with him a certificate from the Abbot of the wat in which
he enters the monkhood to the employer as evidence.

23.6. In case the employee wants to request leave for entering the monkhood, and it is necessary for him to find an auspicious day for leaving the monkhood, the employer may give him permission to extend his leave but for no more than 15 days.

24. Application for leave of absence to deliver a baby.

A female employee has the right to take 60 days' leave for delivering a baby, including holidays, without receiving wages. In case the female employee has worked not less than 180 days consecutively, she will receive wages for 30 days at the normal rate. In case the female employee is unable to come back to work after 60 days according to the doctor's advice, that female employee has the right to extend her leave for 30 days more, without receiving wages.

SECTION 5

Wages, Principle of Increasing Wages, and Payment Wages

25. "Wages" means money or things which the employer gives to the employee as an exchange for his work.

26. The employer's policy is to fix the rate of wages by thinking of the kinds of work, position, and the ability of the employee, cost of living of the employee, and rate of wages in the market of the same kind of industry, as the basic principle for fixing wages.

27. The employer reserves the right to revise the wages of an employee as he thinks fit.

28. From all income that the employee receives, the employer may deduct income tax at a rate set by the law.

29. All wages will be paid in cash by the 25th of every month
at the head office or the factory.

30. Deduction of wages from the daily employee will follow the following principle:

30.1. Absence without permission - Wages will be deducted according to the number of days and hours absent.

30.2. Application for business leave - Wages will be deducted according to the number of days and hours of business leave.

30.3. Sick leave - Wages will be deducted according to 16.1 and 36.5.

30.4. Application for leave for serving the military service - Wages will be deducted according to 20.

30.5. Leave for entering the monkhood - Wages will be deducted according to 23.1 and 23.2.

30.6. Leave for delivering a baby - Wages will be deducted according to 24.

31. Deduction of wages from the monthly employee will be according to the following principle:

31.1. Sick leave - Wages will be deducted according to 16.1 and 36.5.

31.2. Leave for serving military service - Wages will be deducted according to 20.

31.3 Leave for entering the monkhood - Wages will be deducted according to 23.1 and 23.2.

31.4. Leave for delivering a baby - Wages will be deducted according to 24.

SECTION 6

Working on Holidays and Working Overtime

Regulation of payment of wages for working on holidays and overtime.

32. In case the work needs to be done consecutively to prevent
damage, or in case of emergency work, the employer may have the employee work overtime or work on holidays as necessary.

Working overtime replaces 4 hours shift and working on traditional holidays. The employee has to do this consecutively to prevent damage to the business.

33. The employee has the right to receive wages for working on holidays, or working overtime, if he receives the order to come to work on holidays and/or outside normal working time.

34. Regulation of payment of wages for working on holidays:
34.1. Working on weekly holidays, the monthly employee will receive increased wages at the rate of one time his normal wages according to the working hours.
34.2. Working on weekly holidays, the daily employee, who does not receive wages for working on holidays, will receive double time his normal wages according to his work hours.
34.3. Working on traditional holidays, both the monthly and daily employee will receive increased wages at the rate of one time his regular wages according to his work hours.

35. Regulation of paying overtime wages.
35.1. On normal working days if a monthly or daily employee receives the order to work overtime, he will receive 1½ time his normal wages according to his work hours.
35.2. If employees both daily and monthly receive the order to work on weekly holidays and/or traditional holidays, outside the normal working time, they will receive 3 times their normal wages according to work hours.

SECTION 7

Welfare

36. The employee who falls sick, not because of working for
the employer, will receive help with doctor's treatment as follows:

36.1. If the sick employee has an ordinary condition, the employer will have a first grade modern doctor and nurse at the factory to take care of him.

36.2. The employee who has worked with the employer for at least 120 days has the right to receive treatment from a private clinic which the employer has contacted, or from any government hospital. The employer will be pleased to pay for the treatment fee as written in the bill of the clinic or the hospital, but not over 2000.00 baht per person per year.

As for a serious case, where the treatment costs over 2000.00 baht, the employer will pay for the employee, as it is a special case.

36.3. The employer will not pay doctor's treatment in the following cases:

- Pregnancy examination fee
- Expenses in delivering a baby
- Cost of venereal disease treatment
- Cost of putting in false teeth
- Cost of covering up a tooth with metal
- Cost of making optical glasses

The employee will not receive wages during the monkhood and military training or serving military service.

36.4. In case of minor sickness, the factory clinic will be pleased to give free examination and free medicine to the employee's father, mother, children, husband or wife.

36.5. Besides the aforementioned assistance, the employer has a special sum of money to pay for doctor's treatment to the
employee who has to stop working for over one month because of his illness. But an employee (both daily and monthly) must submit the certificate from a first grade modern doctor to the personnel section and the manager respectively for approval first.

Then the employee will receive special supporting money according to the following regulation:

A. From the second month of receiving doctor's treatment the employer will pay 50% of the employee's standard salary on pay day (not including cost of food and other kinds of income). As for period of payment, the employer will consider the years of work of each person thus:

1. Working at least 120 days, but not over 1 year may receive 3 months' pay;
2. Working for 1 year, but not over 2 years, may receive 6 months' pay;
3. Working for 2 years but not over 4 years, may receive 9 months' pay;
4. Working for 4 years or more may receive 12 months' pay.

B. The employer will stop paying this kind of money when the period of paying this special money is finished.

36.6. The female employee, who takes leave for delivering a baby, or the male employee, who falls sick during leave of absence, leave for entering the monkhood or serving military service, and a probationary worker and temporary employee, will not receive any help according to this regulation.

37. The employee, who has an accident or sickness because of working for the employer (accident while he is working) will receive
treatment as follows:

37.1. The employee who has an accident or sickness will receive treatment until he is completely recovered according to the doctor's opinion, but not over the total sum of 20,000 baht for expenses.

37.2. The employee who has an accident or sickness while working, will receive wages at the normal rate all through the period of his sickness, but not over one year.

37.3. The employee who has an accident or sickness and is unable to work for over 7 days consecutively will receive compensation according to the regulations fixed by the labour protection law.

37.4. The employee who has an accident and loses some parts of his physical organs or is killed in the accident, will receive compensation according to the regulations fixed by the labour protection law.

38. Yearly reward or bonus - The employer's policy is to do in return to the employee who tries his best in doing his duty. At the end of every year, if it is possible, the employer will pay a yearly reward or bonus to the aforementioned employee, much or little depending on the business and the profit of the employer.

For another thing, the employer will consider whether he can pay or not, how much he can pay, or what regulation he may use in paying (reward or bonus), and the employer's consideration will be understood as the last decision.

39. The employer will distribute cloth and other necessary uniforms as in the following list:
The male employee (cloth for making shirt, 2 metres each piece):

New employee  -  two pieces of cloth, with 80 baht for cost of having it made, one hat;
one year "  -  1 piece of cloth, with 40 baht for cost of having it made, and one hat;
at least two years employee - 2 pieces of cloth, 40 baht for having it made and one hat.

The female employee:

New employee  -  1 suit or cloth, 100 baht for cost of having it made, 1 hat, and a pair of shoes;
1 year "  -  1 suit of cloth, 100 baht for having it made, 1 hat, and a pair of shoes;
at least 2 years employee - 2 suits of cloth, 100 baht for having it made, 1 hat, and one pair of shoes.

(1 suit of cloth = 1.50 metre for dress and 1.10 metre for trousers).

40. The employer's policy is to do in return to the employee who comes to work industriously all through the year without any leave of absence, as follows:

1 year - no leave of absence  
2 years consecutively, no leave of absence    " 600 " 
3 years " , " " " " " 900 " 
4 years " , " " " " " 1200 " 
5 years " , " " " " " 1500 " 
6 years " , " " " " " 1800 " 
7 years " , " " " " " 2100 " 
At least 8 years consecutively, no leave of absence  " 2400 " 
This kind of bonus will be given to the employee on the birth-day of the factory each year.

41. The employer will pay towards the cost of food to every employee, 160 baht each monthly, on the same day as the payment of salary.

42. The employer's policy is to promote better welfare of the employee by paying a pension (provident fund) to both daily and monthly employees according to the following regulations:

42.1. Termination payment.

In case the employee works for 3 years, the employer will pay him a pension by multiplying his standard salary by 1½, and each year at the end of the month on which he started his work, the employer will increase its pension according to the coefficient rate specified below. The word "standard salary" here, in case of monthly employee, means 1 month's salary. For the daily employee it means daily wages x 25 days.

42.2. Method of calculating termination payment:

A. For the employee who works for over 3 years up to 20 years, the employer will donate ½ of his standard salary per full year.

B. The employee who works for 21 years or more, the employer will donate one time of the employee's standard salary per each full year (from the 21st year).

42.3. An account of termination payment.

The employer makes account in detail concerning the provident fund, which he will be ready to reveal on request.

42.2. Calculating the interest of the pension.

The employer will figure out the pension interest once a year, by using the method of finance compound interest.
42.5. Forbidden points.

This kind of personal pension or bonus will not be allowed to lend, to withdraw in advance, or to use as a guarantee.

42.6. Payment of pension or bonus.

The employee who works for over 3 years and resigns, giving good reason, and submits his resignation according to the regulation, the employer may pay the termination payment directly to the employee within 30 days, counted from the day of his resignation (for another thing, the employer may pay the payment through the account of any bank which the employer has fixed, or to the person who has a letter of authority from the employee who resigns).

42.7. In case the employee is dead.

In case employment is finished because the employee is dead, the employer will pay the termination payment to the legal inheritor(s).

42.8. Calculating working period.

In calculating the working period, let it be understood that 1 year is equal to 1 unit, the fraction over one year if more than 6 months will be raised to 1 year.

42.9. Conditions of paying termination payment.

The employer will cancel paying the termination payment to an employee who is dismissed according to point 56.

42.10. The right of debt deduction of the employer.

In case the employee is indebted to the employer, the employer reserves the right to deduct the debt from the termination payment and interest of the employee before other creditors.
42.11. Income tax of termination payment.

Each employee is responsible for paying income tax on his termination payment.

42.12. The payment of a termination payment is effective from July 1st, 2515.

43. In case an employee dies, the employer will sponsor the chanting ceremony for at least one night and pay 3,000 baht for the cremation.

44. In case the father, mother, wife or husband, daughter or son of the employee dies, the employer will pay 500 baht in each case for cremation, but the employee has to bring a copy of the death certificate to the personnel section and request auxiliary money for the cremation.

45. Loans from the employer.

An employee who works with the employer for over 6 months and has financial trouble, has the right to take out a loan from the employer for the same amount as his standard salary. The employer will fix the terms for lending. Regulations for taking a loan are as follows:

45.1. Reason for taking a loan:

A. Medical treatment for the employee himself or herself, wife or husband, children, wedding ceremony, children's school fee, cremation of father, mother, his or her own children.

B. Medical treatment for father, mother, relatives of the employee himself or herself.

C. Entering the monkhood ceremony, cremating his or her own relatives.

D. Other reasons.
45.2. Method of taking a loan.

The borrower has to fill out the reasons for taking a loan and the details of returning the money in the loan agreement, having 2 persons as guarantors, and 1 witness. (In case the two persons who guarantee quit their job, the employee has to find other persons to replace them within 2 weeks after the day the former guarantor leaves). The loan agreement is then sent to the personnel section for consideration and certification signature. (In case the personnel manager himself lends the money, the manager of the department will sign). The employee has to send the application for the loan to the personnel section before the 9th of the month in which he needs the loan. Different sections must collect all the loan forms and send them back to the manager of administration through the personnel section before the 10th of every month.

45.3. The committee for consideration of loans.

The Factory manager will appoint the section heads as committee members to consider loans for an employee. The administration manager is the president of the committee. Personnel section will check the details in the loan agreement, then the loan agreement will be sent to the committee for consideration. After the committee's consideration, the loan will be paid to the employee who needs to take out the loan before the 15th of every month. In an urgent case, the administration manager may consider and give some of the money to the employee who takes out a loan before the fixed period. But if there are too many persons who want a loan in the same month, the committee may reduce the number of approved persons, or may postpone to the next month, according to each person's need.
45.4. The method of returning the money.

The employee must return the money he borrows within 4 months consecutively. The employer will deduct 25% of the money he borrows from his salary every month according to the loan agreement without charging interest.

45.5. Qualifications of guarantor.

A. He must have worked with the employer over 6 months.
B. He must have a salary equal to or higher than the borrower.
C. He has the right to guarantee not more than 2 persons.
D. He himself must not have a loan account of the employer still unpaid.

45.6. The responsibility of the guarantor.

If the borrower resigns or is given notice of termination of employment, or is unable to return the money for whatever reason, both guarantors must be responsible for the loan, half for each, and they have to pay off the debt by instalments according to a period of time fixed in the loan agreement.

46. The employer will arrange a sum of money for a trip and social meeting once a year in order to let employees take a rest and to promote unity in the group of employees.

47. The employer will arrange transportation for the employee from Pramane Ground - Victory Monument - Kilometre 8 - Saphan Mai, every day including Sunday except traditional holidays. (On Sunday may cut off some distance).

48. The employer will arrange a doctor to give examination, X-ray, injection preventing tetanus, vaccination, small-pox vaccination, to the employee regularly.

49. The employer will distribute coupons to the employee in advance, which cost not over 300 baht monthly.
50. In every month, the employee has the right to receive a reward called "industrious fee", 120 baht/month, when he behaves correctly according to the following regulations:

50.1. Method of calculating industrious fee for payment to the employee each month is counted from the 16th of the month to the 15th of the next month.

50.2. The employee who does his work according to the following details will receive the industrious fee in return every month:

A. No application for leave of absence.
B. Never missing work.
C. Never receiving disciplinary action.
D. Not more than twice in a month coming late and returning home before the work is over.

51. The employer's policy is to encourage the employee to have higher education; therefore regulations concerning an education fund for school fees and books is fixed as follows:

51.1. A person who has the right;

a person who will have the right, must have worked for the employer at least 1 year, and be very enthusiastic in increasing his knowledge, and giving a good account of doing his work, and have:

A. Finished Prathom 4 and wants to continue his schooling until finishing Prathom 7.
B. Finished Prathom 7 and wants to continue his schooling until finished M.S. 3.

51.2. A request for school fund.

Let the employee who wants to request a school fund
inform his intention to the personnel section first, and after the personnel section sees that his qualifications are correct according to the regulation fixed in 51.1, it will then propose the name of the employee who asks for school fund, to the department manager and then to the factory manager respectively.

51.3. Selection.

The factory manager will set up a committee to consider and select the employee who deserves the school fund. After that he will be sent to sit for the entrance examination of any school. If an employee passes the entrance examination, he will receive the education fund until he finishes his course.

51.4. Adjusting rate of wages.

The employer will consider adjusting rate of wages for any employee who is able to pass the promotion examination (it does not matter if he receives the school fund or not). But the competence must agree with type of his work, and also there must be a vacancy for that position.

However, an employee who passes Prathom 7 and M.S.5 will receive an adjustment rate to wages as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily employee</th>
<th>Monthly employee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prathom 4 Pass Prathom 7</td>
<td>1 baht/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prathom 7 Pass M.S.3</td>
<td>2 baht/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S.3 Pass M.S.5</td>
<td>2 baht/day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SECTION 8

Discipline and Disciplinary Action

The fact that a big number of people work together in the same place means, naturally, that the employer needs to
fix fair regulations, so that the atmosphere for working will be peaceful and achieve the target. Thus it is necessary for the employer to fix discipline in working for the employee to follow and avoid forbidden points. At the same time, disciplinary action is also clearly fixed. If any employee breaks any point of the discipline, he will know instantly what disciplinary action he should receive.

In case the employee violates discipline he will receive disciplinary action fixed clearly in the regulations.

Disciplinary procedure - the aim of disciplinary action is to improve the employee's behaviour, and to stop his wrongdoing. To develop the behaviour of a person is the important aim. The employer has no intention of punishing him in the manner of destroying him because of the employer's personal anger. But if any employee does not try to improve himself, and still violates discipline, the employer has to use decisive measures in order to maintain good order in working.

The steps of disciplinary action are as follows:

1. Oral warning.
2. Written warning by letter.
3. Cut in wages.
4. Termination of employment with notice.

Four characteristics of disciplinary action:

1. Light offence.
2. Moderate offence.
3. Rather serious offence.
4. Serious offence.

If any employee violates disciplinary forbidden points, specified below, he will receive the disciplinary action accorded
to a light offence. If he does it for the first time he will be orally warned by the section head or the departmental manager. If he commits the same violation again, he will be warned in writing by letter. And if he does it again for the third time, he will be warned in writing by letter, and his month's wages will be cut by 5%.

The characteristics of a light offence are thus:

52.1. At the time of working, the employee does not wear a uniform properly according to the conditions of his work.
52.2. Teasing each other during working period, or working in leisurely fashion, with the result that his work does not come out according to standard level. But he does not reach the point of retarding the work or intentionally causing damage to the employer.
52.3. Entering a working area where he has no duty involved.
52.4. Working carelessly, causing injury to a co-worker or damage to the equipment, machines, production, and products of the employer.
52.5. Not being in possession of his employee's identity card all the time during his work hours.
52.6. Not maintaining cleanliness standards in the factory area and dormitory.
52.7. Lending money to another employee at high interest.
52.8. Making unwarranted noise in the working place, in the dormitory area or nearby, causing disturbance to other workers.

53. If any employee violates disciplinary forbidden points specified below for the first time, he will be warned in writing by a letter. If he commits them for the second time, he will be warned in writing again, and at the same time his month's
wages will be cut by 5%, and if he commits the same thing again for the third time, he will be warned in writing and his month's wages will be cut by 10%.

Characteristics of moderate offence:
53.1. Absence without permission (not sick leave or business leave).
53.2. Refusing to allow the guard or any other person entrusted by the employer to check a case, bag, parcel or hand-bag which the employee brings into or takes out of the Factory compound.
53.3. Bringing alcohol into the factory compound or to the head office, except in the case where the employer gives permission on the occasion of festivals or for the employer's social affairs.
53.4. Aggressiveness, using coarse language, cursing other workers within the Factory compound or the head office or shaming employees in the presence of their associates.
53.5. Being drowsy while working because drinking alcohol before coming to work.
53.6. Being indifferent to orders given or work regulations, especially to the right order of the employer or the chief.
53.7. Working carelessly, causing damage to the property, machines, tools, equipment, and products of the employer.
53.8. Frequent sick leave, or informing false causes in the application for sick leave.
53.9. Not entering work according to the fixed time, or not taking over and leaving shifts at correct time, or being frequently late.
53.10. Working in a manner against the principle of safety, which is already fixed and announced by the employer.

53.11. Making an appointment with the chief that he will come to work overtime or work on holidays, and not coming and unable to give reasons.

54. Rather serious disciplinary action.

If the employee commits an offence by violating forbidden points specified below, for the first time, his month's wages will be cut by 10%. If he repeats for the second time, his two months' salary will be cut by 10%. And if he still commits it again for the third time, then his employment will be ceased instantly, and he may not receive any compensation for employment termination, but he may receive a bonus.

Characteristics of rather serious disciplinary action:

54.1. Committing the same offence mentioned in 53, but for the fourth time.

54.2. Leaving duty during work hours.

54.3. Signing for each other in noting the time starting and leaving work. Disciplinary action will be taken against both.

54.4. Working while being drunk, lacking commonsense or consciousness because of drinking alcohol before coming to work.

In this case, the employer must send the employee out of the work place, and propose cutting his wages for that day; this covers both daily and monthly workers, depending on the case; and that day will be considered as a day of absence without permission.

54.5. Playing any kind of gambling in the factory compound, work place, or dormitory.

54.6. Working carelessly until causing injury to the employee.
himself or to other employees.

54.7. Pasting a poster, document, or writing any kind of statement on the employer's announcement board, or any place within the factory compound, or in the employer's office.

54.8. Distributing documents, publishing things, or gathering together, which may cause confusion or unpeacefulness within the factory compound or in the employer's office.

54.9. Removing, moving, crossing out, or adding words to an announcement or order of the employer without being entrusted by the employer.

54.10. Threatening, hitting, slapping, or hurting his associates or any other person within the factory compound or in the employer's office, but not reaching the point of injury.

54.11. Avoiding or refusing to allow the guard or any person entrusted by the employer to check him before going in or coming out of the Factory compound or dormitory.

54.13. Being insubordinate or aggressive to the boss because of his advice or warning concerning work.

54.14. Showing rude manners and using coarse language insulting the boss while listening to orders, advice, or warning concerning work.

54.15. Being indifferent to the orders given or work regulations to the point of causing damage to the work, property, products and the employer's name.

54.16. Being deeply indebted to the point of having no spirit to work, which causes trouble to his group.

54.17. Smoking or bringing any kind of fuel into a forbidden area.

54.18. Taking photographs within the Factory compound or
dormitories without permission.

The area where photographs can be taken is:

A. Workers' dormitories, the section head's house.
B. Within the canteen.
C. In front of the Factory office.

55. If an employee violates forbidden points of heavy disciplinary action, his employment will be ceased instantly, without receiving compensation, or neither compensation nor bonus, according to the case.

Characteristics of heavy disciplinary offences are as follows:

55.1. Intentionally disobeying the employer or the boss's orders, and violating regulations which may cause serious damage.
55.2. Correcting the record or report of the time starting-leaving work, dishonestly evaluating or presenting false data to the employer.
55.3. Being dishonest about duty, or using work position or authority for personal interest or for that of others.
55.4. Causing damage to the employer's production system, machines, products, or property on purpose.
55.5. Leaving duty 3 days consecutively without good reason.
55.6. Working carelessly, causing serious damage to the employer.
55.7. Violating the law and being imprisoned by the verdict of the judge.
55.8. Stealing the employer's or other employees' property.
55.9. Doing harm to his associates or any other person within the factory compound or in the employer's office.
55.10. Bringing a dangerous weapon or explosive object into the
Factory compound or the employer's office.

55.11. Committing an immoral action to a female employee's body within the Factory compound or the employer's office.

55.12. Using a false personal history or any dishonest way in getting a job.

55.13. Bringing narcotics or drugs into the Factory compound or the employer's office.

55.14. Revealing the employer's secret or intentionally causing damage to the employer's good name or seriously destroying the employer's property.

SECTION 9

Regulations Concerning Employment Termination, and Paying Compensation or Bonus After Employment Termination

56. The employer has the right to consider ceasing employment in different cases as follows:

56.1. Terminating employment in case an employee commits an offence. If the employee violates the discipline specified in 54 and 55, his employment will be ceased without receiving compensation, but he may receive a bonus, or receive neither compensation nor bonus depending on the case.

56.2. Ceasing employment in case the employee always works without efficiency, for example: Frequent absence without permission, even though disciplinary action is taken by cutting his wages, or the employee uses the right to apply for sick leave too frequently, and the doctor's report is not the same as he writes in his sick leave application, or, in the case the employee works inactively and carelessly, and is indifferent to the orders given according to 53.6, 53.7, 53.8, and does not try to improve himself after receiving disciplinary action. In
this case, the employer has the right to cease employment by paying compensation together with bonus.

56.3. Ceasing employment in case the employee has bad health not suitable for work conditions, that is: in case the employee has bad health, and after receiving treatment from the Factory doctor until a fixed sum of welfare money is all used up according to Section 7, point 36.5, but his health is still in a condition not suitable for work conditions, and if he insists on doing his work so that it will be dangerous to his health, and it may take too long to be completely cured, it is necessary for the employer to cease employment by paying compensation according to the labour law together with a bonus.

Employment termination - the employer has the right to announce cessation of employment to an employee who has bad health when:

A. The employee has work service over 120 days, but not over 1 year, and after 4 months sick leave for treatment according to point 36.5A (1.).

B. The employee has work service over 1 year, but not over 2 years, and after 7 months sick leave for treatment according to point 36.5A.(2.).

C. The employee has work service over 2 years, but not over 4 years, and after 10 months sick leave for treatment according to point 36.5A.(3).

D. The employee has work service over 4 years, and after 13 months sick leave for receiving treatment, according to point 36.5a(4).

56.4. Ceasing employment when the employee has an accident and is incapacitated.
In case an employee has an accident while out or at work, and is physically handicapped and unable to continue his work, then it is necessary for the employer to cease employment, by paying compensation according to the law.

An employee who has an accident while doing his work and has his employment terminated, has the right to receive compensation from the compensation fund according to the law, together with a bonus from the employer.

56.5. Ceasing employment during probationary period.

In the case that an employee is in his probationary period, and the result of his work does not satisfy the employer, the employer has the right to cease employment any time before the probationary period is finished, without paying compensation.

56.6. Ceasing employment because of retirement.

The employer fixes the retiring age of male employees at 57, and of female employees at 40, by taking the last day of the employee's birth month as the last day of work. However, the employer may employ the retired employee to continue his work, if the employee is still of use to him. The mentioned employment may be in the form of period contract depending on the case. In ceasing employment because of retirement, the employer has to pay compensation to the retired employee according to the law together with a bonus, within 30 days after the day of retirement.

56.7. Ceasing employment because of an overload of workers, or the dissolution of a work unit, or limiting production owing to marketing conditions, which may not be temporary.
In such a case, it is necessary for the employer to reduce the number of workers. An employee who has his employment ceased because of this, will receive compensation according to the law, together with a bonus. There will be a discussion between the employee's representative and the administration before taking the action.

57. Compensation for ceasing employment.

The employee will receive compensation according to the rate fixed by the labour law as follows:

57.1. The employee who works for 120 days, but not yet 1 year, will receive compensation 1 month or 30 days at the last rate of his wages.

57.2. The employee who works 1 year, but not yet 3 years, will receive compensation 6 months or 180 days at the last rate of his wages.

57.3. The employee who works over 3 years will receive compensation 6 months or 180 days at the last rate of his wages.

58. In the case of ceasing employment because of an employee's resignation, the employee has no right to receive compensation according to the labour law, but he still has the right to receive a bonus.

SECTION 10

Methods of Complaint.

59. In case an employee has problems owing to work conditions, or is in doubt concerning work or regulations according to the contract or points of agreement, he has the right to make a complaint according to the following steps:

Step 1. Let the employee write 2 letters of complaint, and submit 1 letter to his own section head, and the other one to the employee representative. The section head and the
employee representative then will hold a discussion in order to solve the problem, and immediately inform the result of the consideration to the employee in writing within 3 days, counted from the day of receiving the complaint.

If the employee is not satisfied with the consideration or the complaint is beyond the authority or ability of the section head and the employee representative, then let the employee submit the complaint for step 2 consideration.

Step 2. Let the factory manager, departmental manager and the president of the employees' committee join in consideration of the complaint or problem received from step 1, then inform the result of consideration to the employee within 5 days, counted from the day of receiving the complaint.

If the employee who complains is not satisfied with the consideration or the problem is beyond the authority or ability of those persons in step 2, let the employee propose the complaint for further consideration in step 3.

Step 3. Let the vice-president of the employer's administration committee be a judge deciding the complaint within 2 days, and the decision must be considered as the final decision. The decision will be informed to the employee orally or in writing depending on the case.

60. Regulation of complaint.

60.1. The employee must make a complaint only for his own problem not for another's.

60.2. The complaint must be in writing and the signature must be the true name of the employee who makes a complaint. A complaint in a form of anonymous letter will not receive consideration.
60.3. Let the ones who consider the complaint use facts and reasons in considering the problem with best justice.

60.4. Let the section head and the factory manager follow and collect the final result of the consideration and put it away in administration or personnel section depending on a case.

61. Let the employee who works in the head office use the same method of making a complaint. But in case the employee has not yet become a member of a labour union, let him complain through his section head, the head of administration, and the president of the company respectively.

(II)
Action to be taken according to points of agreement concerning employment condition.

1. **The period of being put into effect.**

   Points of agreement concerning employment conditions are effective for 1 year, from April 20, B.E. 2519, to April 19, 2520.

   In the case that the fixed period of points of agreement concerning employment conditions is finished, and if there is no new negotiation or agreement, let it be understood that this copy of points of agreement concerning employment conditions is put into effect for 1 more year each time.

2. **Revision of points of agreement.**

   A revision of the points of agreement can occur after the ending of the fixed period: and there must be negotiation for preparing revision 30 days in advance, before the termination of the fixed period, according to the points of agreement, by having the employer or the employee representative request the revision in writing before the negotiation is arranged. The
procedure must follow the steps according to the labour law B.E. 2518.

3. **Announcement of putting into effect, registration, and interpretation of points of agreement concerning employment conditions.**

   The employer will make announcement of the agreement in writing, and have it registered at the labour department. In case the employee is in doubt over the text or method of acting according to points of agreement, the arbitrators or the labour relations committee of the Government will interpret the meaning of that text or statement.

4. **Disciplinary action.**

   Employer and employee accept to act according to the points of agreement concerning employment conditions, and if any party violates the points of agreement, that party is willing to be penalized according to the labour relation law B.E. 2518.

5. **Acceptance of points of agreement concerning employment conditions.**

   The employer and the employee accept that the points of agreement concerning employment conditions are obligatory for every employer and employee. Other rules and regulations of the Company which were used before will not be put into effect any more.

6. **Employer and employee signature.**

   After having read and understood all points of agreement then the representatives of both sides will sign as witnesses
as appears below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Representatives of Employer:</th>
<th>Representatives of Employees:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Vice Administration President)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Factory Manager and Administrative Committee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Deputy Factory Manager)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witnesses:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Assistant Manager, Administration)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consultants:
REFERENCES


LABOUR RELATIONS ACT, 26 February, 1975.


