

THE IMAGE OF THE BURMESE ENEMY IN THAI PERCEPTIONS AND HISTORICAL WRITINGS

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The image of the Burmese as an archenemy of the Thai gradually emerged in Thai historiography and literary works after the kingdom of Ayudhya fell to the Burmese armies in 1767. Prior to that tragic incident, Thai chroniclers were not anxious to record any historical event concerning the wars between Siam and Burma. The *Luang Prasert Chronicle of Ayudhya* (1680), for instance, does not specifically glorify the most famous victory of King Naresuan in the fight on elephantback with the Burmese crown prince, the Maha Uparacha, in 1592.¹ By contrast, only the royal chronicles compiled and written in the early Bangkok period, almost two centuries after the event, extensively describe and particularly commemorate the 1592-93 campaign of this warlike king.² Nidhi Aeusrivongse, in his *Bangkok History in the Ayudhya Chronicles*, suggests that the stories concerning the Siamese-Burmese wars were additions to what was written in the *Luang Prasert Chronicle of Ayudhya*; that they were, in fact, composed in the early Bangkok period. In other words, the past which Bangkok rulers were interested in reconstructing in order to legitimize their political position concerned the wars with the Burmese from the reign of King Phra Mahachakkraphat (or Chakkraphat, 1548-69) to the reign of King Naresuan (1590-1605).³ The discrepancies between the Thai chronicles written in the two different periods shed light on the fact that Ayudhya chroniclers, unlike Bangkok's, did not seriously consider wars conducted against the Burmese as being more important than other historical events. In actual practice, the Ayudhya rulers were more concerned with military expeditions into the territories of Sukhothai and Chiang Mai in the north, Cambodia in the east, Tavoy, Mergui, and Tenasserim in the west, and Malaya in the south, but not into the heartland of Burma.⁴ It was not until the fall of Ayudhya in 1767 that Siam's political and intellectual leaders started to realize the unbridled violence of the Burmese and the resultant perils to Thailand, and showed more concern for investigating and reconstructing the past circumstances of their hostilities with this neighbor.

Throughout the four hundred years of its existence, the rulers of Ayudhya had successfully shielded its glorious reputation as one of the most powerful kingdoms in mainland Southeast Asia. Ayudhya kings were never tired of incorporating into their tributary orbit the less powerful principalities sharing their borders. After the successful amalgamation of the two independent riverine principalities of the Chao Phraya Valley, Lopburi and Suphanburi, which followed the succession of King Intharacha (1409-24), the Ayudhya rulers started to contend against their independent neighbors. The best known case is the invasion of Angkor in 1431 by King Borommaracha II (1424-1448).⁵ Ayudhya maintained its image as an aggressive military state up until the very end of its existence. In the reign of King Phumintharacha, popularly referred to as King Thai Sa (literally, "end of the lake," 1709-33), Ayudhya waged war against the Vietnamese in Cambodia proper. A major Ayudhya expedition led on sea by the *Phrakhlang* (the Minister of Finance, who controlled foreign trade and foreign relations) and on land by the *Phraya Chakri* (the Minister of Civil Administration and of the Northern and Eastern Provinces), attempted to recapture the Cambodian kingdom and force out the Vietnamese intruders (1720). The Ayudhya king successfully regained his sovereignty over this traditional client state by forcing the new king of Cambodia to resume his regular tributary payment of vassalage to Ayudhya.⁶

In the south, the Ayudhya army also campaigned in the northern Malay peninsula (1709-10), and on this occasion the threat appeared so great that even Perak on the west coast approached the Dutch East India Company for help.

On the east coast the Thai armies actually advanced into Terengganu itself. The purpose of this latter campaign, however, was not the subjection of Terengganu or its acquisition as a vassal state. The declared Thai aim was the elimination of pirate bases along the Terengganu coast;

the move into Terengganu also appears to have been part of a projected assault on Johor, with which relations had deteriorated. Although the attack on Johor did not eventuate, and although Thai forces withdrew from the east coast, Borommakot (1709-1733) did make some effort to restore Ayutthaya's tarnished reputation in the Malay states. Pattani was brought to heel in 1712, but Kedah maintained only the most nominal recognition of Thai suzerainty.⁷

Prior to the fall of Ayudhya in 1767, the kingdom, regardless of having been defeated by Bayinnaung in 1564 and 1569, had never been utterly destroyed. The wars with the Burmese in the reign of Chakkraphat, especially those of the year 1569, on the contrary served to strengthen the Ayudhya kingdom internally. First, they helped the new successor, Mahathammaracha (1569-1590), eliminate his political enemies such as Phra Mahin, Chakkraphat's younger son, who once secretly convinced King Setthathirat of Vientiane to attack his base at Phitsanulok (1567). According to the Ayudhya chronicles, Phra Mahin was taken away captive to Burma and he died of fever en route before reaching Pegu.⁸ The Burmese chronicles, however, make no mention of the fate of Phra Mahin; Sir Arthur Phayre suggested that either this young king was put to death or he committed suicide.⁹ Second, the wars with the Burmese in the reign of Chakkraphat also allowed Mahathammaracha to establish his power in Ayudhya proper without being challenged by any ranking state officials or ministers (*khunnang*) who since the rise of the Suphanburi house (1409) had played a very decisive role in Ayudhya succession politics. Shortly after assuming the throne, Mahathammaracha appointed his loyal supporters to the controlling positions in the center and periphery of the kingdom.¹⁰ The stability of Mahathammaracha's government had been put to the test in defending against a series of Cambodian attacks in 1570, 1575, 1578, 1582 twice, and 1587. Obviously, the rise of the young Naresuan and his early accomplishments in fighting against the Burmese and enlarging Ayudhya's orbit of vassalages, were a result of what had been established in the reign of Mahathammaracha.¹¹

The Burmese sack of Ayudhya in the second half of the eighteenth century was dramatically different from the attack in 1569. Prince Damrong in his *Our Wars with the Burmese* states that "the expedition led by the king of Hamsavati (Bayinnaung) and the one carried out by the king of Ava (Hsinbyushin) are not the same...the primary purpose of the former in attacking Ayudhya was to reduce the Thai to vassalage and to expand his kingdom in the manner of a king of kings (*Rachathirat* or *Rajadhiraja*), while the major aim of the latter was just to loot the city and take away war prisoners. Thus, in the last attack, the Burmese, with no intention of retaining Ayudhya as their client state, burnt all big and small cities they captured, including the capital, down to ashes. The defeat on this occasion thus brought a great deal of damage to the kingdom of Ayudhya, unlike when it was seized

by the king of Hamsavati."¹² The *Konbaungzet mahayazawin dawgyi* agrees with the Thai sources. The Burmese commanders-in-chief, Mahanawrahta and Thihapate, as depicted in the chronicle, showed no interest in accepting the total surrender proposed by the king of Ayudhya, Ekkathat (1758-67), before the capital was sacked and burnt.¹³ The Burmese commanders realized that they lacked the capability to keep Ayudhya under their control, unlike the great Bayinnaung in the past. G.E. Harvey came up with an explanation as to why the Burmese could not manage to leave their troops in Ayudhya for several seasons. "If Ayudhya had not fallen when it did, the siege would have had to be abandoned, as royal despatches now came urgently recalling the armies to take their place in the line against the Chinese whose attacks on Ava looked like breaking through; for the year 1765-69 saw a series of murderous Chinese invasions."¹⁴ The pressure derived from the Chinese invasion undoubtedly forced the Burmese to demolish Ayudhya and hurriedly withdraw their armies to Ava.

The annihilation of Ayudhya in 1767 brought the Thai a great deal of damage, both physically and spiritually. That dreadful moment never faded from the memories of the people who witnessed it. Somdet Phra Phonnarat of King Rama I's reign, the author of the *Sangkhitiyawong* (The Chronicle of Buddhist Councils, 1789), compared the situation after the fall of Ayudhya in 1767 with the Buddhist dark age (*kaliyuga*):

The fall of Ayudhya in 1767 threw the Thai state into chaos, disrupting normal social life, causing economic and material deprivations, and dividing the population into factions which contended with each other for scarce resources. The harsh conditions broke up families, and food was in short supply. Many Buddhist monks, finding that they could not survive in the ordained state, disrobed and went off into lay life to seek their own livelihoods. Buddhism suffered in other ways as well, as disrespectful people committed violence against Buddhist images and scavenged libraries for the cloth and cords that bound the Pali scripts, thus leaving them prey to insects.¹⁵

Krom Phrarachawangboworn Mahasurasrihanat (Prince of the Front Palace in the reign of King Rama I), in an episode of his literary work on the war with the Burmese in 1793, illustrated the state of calamity after the fall of Ayudhya (1767) thus: "...the sinful Burmese ravaged our villages and cities. A great number of our citizens and many temples were killed and ruined. Our peaceful kingdom was abandoned and turned into forest. The Burmese showed no mercy to the Thai and felt no shame for all sins they had committed."¹⁶

The situation in which Ayudhya was destroyed shortly after the Burmese breached the walls and took control of the city is also pictured in detail in foreign records. M. Turpin in his *History of the Kingdom of Siam*, compiled from missionaries' manuscripts of late Ayudhya period, reconstructed the pathetic occurrence as follows:

On the 28th April 1767 the town was captured by assault. The treasures of the palace and the temples were nothing but heaps of ruins and ashes. The images of the gods were melted down and rage deprived the barbarian conquerors of the spoils that had aroused their greed. To avenge this loss, the Burmese visited their heavy displeasure upon the townsfolk. They burnt the soles of their feet in order to make them reveal where they had concealed their wealth, and raped their weeping daughters before their very eyes.

The priests suspected of having concealed much wealth were pierced through and through with arrows and spears and several were beaten to death with heavy clubs.

The country side as well as the temples were strewn with corpses, and the river was choked with the bodies of the dead, the stench of which attracted swarms of flies causing much annoyance to the retreating army. The chief officers of state and the royal favourites were in the galleys. The King, witness of the unhappy fate of his court endeavoured to escape, but he was recognized and slain at the gates of the palace.¹⁷

Thai Burmese sack of Ayudhya, then the center of the Thai political, economic and spiritual world, implanted hatred and fear in the minds of the ruling class and intellectuals who were directly affected. After the war, the Thai rulers totally changed their political attitude toward the Burmese. The Burmese, who, since the death of King Naresuan in 1605, had never been perceived as a dangerous and implacable enemy, were now regarded as Siam's most threatening hostile neighbor. The kings of Thonburi and early Bangkok, for example, took as their major concern the task of improving military tactics and strategy of the army to counteract Burmese incursions. David Wyatt describes an integral part of the whole strategic defence of this period thus :

The Burmese campaigns against Siam in the 1760's and 1770's were based in part upon Burman political and military presence virtually encircling Ayudhya on all sides, including a large section of the Malay Peninsula, Lan Na and the Shan states, and Lan Sang in Laos. To break this encirclement, Taksin had to work to expel the Burmans and their allies from these regions, and narrow the zone in which subsequent campaigns would be fought.... In Lan Na, Vientiane, and Champassak, Taksin placed clearly-subordinate vassal rulers upon the throne, whose powers in all three cases were subsequently to be steadily absorbed by the Siamese capital.¹⁸

The early Bangkok rulers also expressed great interest in learning more about the essence of Burmese's military operations. In 1789, a Burmese war manual was translated

into Thai at the command of King Rama I.¹⁹ Among the works concerning the art of war translated during this reign (1782-1809), the most important in the long run was to be the *Rachathirat*, or *Rajadirit Ayedawpon*. This book not only provides the chronology of the Mon kings of Pegu before the annexation by the Toungoo kings in the mid-sixteenth century but also illustrates numerous tactics and strategies of war employed by ancient Mon-Burmese warrior kings.²⁰ It was, however, the Prince of the Front Palace, the commander-in-chief of the Bangkok army at that time, who initiated the translation of this military manuscript before it was brought to the king's attention.²¹ Motivated by the idea of military retaliation, King Rama I once ordered three high-ranking officers, Chao Phraya Mahayotha, Amat Saisamon, and Phraya Saiyok (the governor of *muang* Saiyok, one of the most important western fortified cities situated on a Burmese war route) to collect all important data concerning war routes on the Three Pagodas Pass and in the Rahaeng (Tak) province to the Martaban Pass, expecting to use this intelligence in leading an expedition to Pegu.²² King Rama II (1809-24) also ordered his military staff to compile all necessary information concerning war routes lying between Siam and Burma, but this time the primary purpose was to intercept the Burmese army understood to be coming to attack Bangkok in 1820.²³

The collapse of Ayudhya in 1767 not only impelled the Thonburi and early Bangkok rulers to reinvestigate and improve their military arts, but also forced them to reconsider and change their leadership role and political policy. The role of defender of the kingdom, people, and Buddhism, to keep them from being destroyed by external intruders, never in the past seriously observed by Ayudhya kings, was taken very seriously by the Thonburi and early Bangkok rulers.

Unlike their predecessors, whose primary interest was in leading expeditions into the territory of weaker states, Taksin's and Rama I's chief concern was to protect their peaceful kingdom from the threat of their Burmese neighbor. According to the *Phraratchaphongsawadan Krung Sayam*, King Taksin, before fighting his way through the Burmese cordon around Ayudhya (1767) and establishing his military base in a southeastern province of the kingdom, expressed his strong determination to march back to rescue the falling kingdom, and to save Buddhism from the Burmese.²⁴ In a battle with the Burmese at Bang Khao province (1774), Taksin again clearly revealed his motivation: "The reason I have spent my life on battlefields up to the present is not because I am concerned about my own fortune and advantage. I choose to live harshly because I want to uphold Buddhism, priests, Brahmins, and the people in my kingdom."²⁵ In the same manner, but in a different period and on a different occasion, King Rama I, in one of his royal orders, showed a very strong concern for all military campaigns led by his rival states, particularly the Burmese, into the political domain of Bangkok. The order distinctly stresses that "in the situation in which his majesty's army is at war with foreign principalities (outside the kingdom proper), recruits who experience any difficulty in joining the army have the right to hire a man to fight on his behalf. Nevertheless, the same permission is restricted when

His Majesty's kingdom is under attack and the religion of the Lord Buddha is in danger. Any soldier who violates this order will be sentenced to death."²⁶ In one of his literary works, *Nirat rop Phama thi Tha Dindaeng* (Poem on the fight with the Burmese at Tha Dindaeng district, 1786), Rama I revealed the same determination :

[It is my intention to] support and pay honor to Buddhism, to protect the kingdom, and to shield my people and subjects [from external danger].²⁷

Such political aspirations of Rama I were also acknowledged in the last chapter of Somdet Phra Phannarat's *Sangkhitiya-wong*. The author of this 1789 chronicle explicitly portrayed the king and his brother (Prince of the Front Palace) as *bodhisattva*; his reign was depicted as the beginning of a new era and he himself was referred to as a savior-king whose meritorious action created happiness for all subjects and stability for the kingdom.²⁸

The idea of defending the welfare of Buddhism and the happiness of the people from external penetration and destruction became a legacy of thought passed down to rulers in subsequent eras. King Rama II's royal order of the year 1810 refers to the custom by which kings were required to wage war against their enemies in order to protect the welfare of Buddhism.²⁹ Not only does this ideology survive throughout the period when the authority of the Bangkok state was threatened by Western imperialism and when the traditional conception of the state and the old patterns of statecraft and administration were reformed by King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910), but it also becomes one of the most important ideologies modern rulers use to integrate the society and the people and to build up national consciousness or a sense of nationality. Prince Vajiranana, the Supreme Patriarch in the reign of King Rama VI (1910-1925), in his special allocution on "The Buddhist Attitude towards National Defence and Administration," pointed out that the primary duty of the kings was to protect the welfare of the Buddhist religion, of the kingdom and of the people from external intrusion. "The defence against external foes is one of the policies of governance, and is one that cannot be neglected."³⁰ Military governments after the 1932 reforms also adopted this as a national ideology and used it as a weapon in fighting against their political opponents, particularly the Communist party, especially during the Sarit regime. Up to this point, the Burmese were no longer an enemy of Buddhism and the Cakri rulers; they were characterized and understood as an enemy of the Thai nation.

The Image of the Burmese Enemy in Traditional Thai Historical Writing

As I have already mentioned, it was not until Ayudhya was totally defeated and destroyed in 1767 that Siamese political and intellectual leaders came to realize the hazards of the Burmese and to show concern for rewriting the past with respect to their relations with Burma. Chronicles written and

revised after 1767, unlike preceding chronicles, depicted and specially illustrated the wars between Ayudhya and the Burmese conducted mainly in the second half of the sixteenth century. The victories of King Naresuan over the Burmese, for example, were particularly highlighted and glorified, since this king was the one and only king who successfully crushed the Burmese army on several occasions and led two expeditions into the Burmese heartland.³¹

Chroniclers of Thonburi and early Bangkok not only modified and colorfully painted the history of Siamese-Burmese wars apart from what was originally written in the Ayudhya chronicles but also explicitly expressed their antagonism towards the Burmese, describing them as an unethical rival. It should be understood that before the fall of Ayudhya in 1767 there is no concrete evidence showing that court chroniclers expressed strong negative feelings regarding the immorality of the Burmese in their works. The *Luang Prasert* chronicle, for example, is silent about the maleficent behavior of some Burmese rulers such as King Nandabayin (1581-1599) and his crown prince. By contrast, most of the Ayudhya chronicles revised by the Bangkok rulers refer to King Nandabayin as a ruler who neglected the *Thotsapit Rachadhamma* (the Ten Righteous Duties of Sovereignty). The chroniclers claimed that this king plotted to murder King Naresuan (who at that time had assumed the status of the governor of Phitsanulok) after the young prince had proven his superiority in military operations over the Burmese crown prince in an expedition against a Shan state (1582). This immoral act, as early Bangkok chroniclers put it, violated the traditional norm of righteous kings and caused Naresuan to renounce Ayudhya's alliance to Burma. The chroniclers put their words in the young prince's mouth as follows :

Since the king of Pegu does not observe the traditional norm of interstate alliance, violates the law of unity, and behaves dishonestly by planning to assassinate me (regardless of my innocence), I, therefore, declare that from now on the kingdoms of Ayudhya and Pegu no longer share the same golden land, and our alliance comes to an end and will never be reinstated.³²

Early Bangkok chroniclers also depicted the Uparacha, the Crown Prince of Burma, as a jealous person whose courage and spiritual power (*barami*) were not comparable to those of Prince Naresuan.³³ The historical episode regarding the crown prince being slain on his elephant in single combat with Naresuan in 1593 was specifically highlighted by the chroniclers in order to justify the above claim.

It was also in the early Bangkok period that intellectual leaders such as learned monks elaborately pictured the Burmese as a dangerous enemy of Buddhism. The revisers of the *Phraratchaphongsawadan Krung Sayam* (1795), for example, compared the Uparacha to the chief *Mara*, Phraya Watsawadi Man, and depicted Naresuan as the Lord Buddha who, after defeating *Mara*, successfully attained *nirvana*—an extraordinary achievement in itself.³⁴ Krom Phra Pramanuchit Chinorot, in his classical poem on the "Defeat of the Mons"

(*Lilit Talaeng phai*, 1832) written in order to commemorate the victory of King Naresuan in 1593, also equated the Uparacha with *Mara* and depicted Naresuan as Indra, a guardian of the *dharma* and Buddhism.³⁵

The image of the Burmese as an arch enemy of Buddhism was portrayed in the 1789 chronicle *Sangkhitiyawong*. The chronicle clearly explains how the city of Ayudhya and Buddhism were attacked by the Burmese in the 1767 war: the Burmese

captured the people such as members of the royal family, collected all types of properties, burnt down the city, the palace and the temples, and destroyed the city wall. They also caused canonical texts, the *Tri-pitaka*, to be damaged. Then, they returned to their kingdom and presented all the seized treasures and captured weapons to their commanding officers.³⁶

The same image was also emphasized in a literary work of the Prince of the Front Palace of King Rama I's reign.³⁷

The situation in which the Burmese were "dehumanized" and reduced to the level of devil, demon, or agent of dark forces, in my opinion has a direct connection with the politics of war after the year 1767. It should be clearly understood that the wars between Siam and Burma did not come to an end after the fall of Ayudhya. The Burmese, after destroying the city, still considered the new centers of the Thai state, Thonburi and Bangkok, as their targets of attack. King Bodawpaya (1782-1819), in a great assembly of the officers of his court, declared it to be his intention "first to take and destroy the chief city of the Siamese, then to turn his victorious arms against the Emperor of China, and to make him his tributary; thence he would bend his course towards the west, possess himself of the British colonies, attack the Great Mogul in his empire, and, in fine, make himself undisputed master of the whole of the southern island, *Zabudiba [Jambudwipa]*."³⁸ In practice, from the year 1767 the Burmese kept on sending expedition after expedition into the kingdom of Siam. The heaviest fighting first occurred in the reign of King Taksin in 1775-76 in the north, when the Burmese under the command of Mahathihathura, the hero of the Chinese war, attempted to draw the Thonburi army out of their base at Phitsanulok. However, he was ordered to withdraw from the city by the new king, Siggu (1776-82), after the death of King Hsinbyushin (1763-76).³⁹ In the reign of King Rama I (1782-1809), the Bangkok kingdom face two other massive invasions in 1785 and 1786. The attacks were personally led by King Bodawpaya, but neither of them succeeded.⁴⁰ In 1822, two years before the outbreak of the first Anglo-Burmese war (1824-26), the king of Ava, Bagyidaw (1819-1838), sent an embassy to Emperor Minh Mang of Cochinchina asking him to renounce his alliance with the Siamese king and help the Burmese campaign against Bangkok.⁴¹

A series of military invasions and threats after the destruction of Ayudhya in 1767 forced the restored Siamese rulers to employ both psychological and physical methods to fight against the Burmese. In such ways were wars between

the two principalities by no means waged only on the historical field of battle. As Sam Keen rightly points out, "What we will find is that wars come and go but—strangely, amid changing circumstances—the hostile imagination has a certain standard repertoire of images it uses to dehumanize the enemy."⁴²

The Thonburi and, especially, Bangkok rulers, before and probably after entering the battlefield, created dehumanizing stereotypes of the Burmese. This, to some extent, allowed them to go to war and kill their enemy without guilt. For them, war was a religious mission; it was a fight between good and evil or between an enemy of Buddhism and the representatives of *dharma*. The situation is not far from what Leonard E. Doob describes in his *Panorama of Evil*:

Except perhaps among mercenaries, soldiers may not be able to fight effectively unless they believe their cause is just and that of the enemy unjust. The morale of American combat crews in World War II, for example, tended to be high when they were acquainted with and sympathetic toward U.S. aims. Both sides in America's Civil War believed they were defending noble objectives: the South, its labor system and its 'entire way of life'; the North, saving the Union and democracy.⁴³

In fact, a special form of sanction to prevent or discourage the appearance of the "evildoing Burmese" also involved punishing those who failed to punish the enemy or evildoers. In Thonburi and early Bangkok society, as in some places where war is regarded as the most important obligation of all social members, prestige was lost, punishment was imposed, and the individual was probably branded a coward or a weakling who shrank from his duty when he could not return from battle with the evildoer's head or other parts of his body, literally or symbolically, or when he failed to complete his military mission.⁴⁴ The condition in which the Burmese were dehumanized by the Siamese rulers lays a better foundation for understanding the history of historical writing on Siamese-Burmese warfare in subsequent eras.

Even though the Burmese, after the death of King Bodawpaya (1819) and the First Anglo-Burmese War, could not possibly lead any great expedition into the territory of Siam,⁴⁵ the early modern Bangkok rulers still considered the Burmese as their evil enemy. The image of the Burmese created by their predecessors after the fall of Ayudhya was firmly ingrained in their minds and memory. In the reign of King Mongkut (1851-68), when King Kavilorot (1856-70) of Chiang Mai presented to the Bangkok court a royal necklace on King Mindon's behalf (1856-78), Mongkut refused to accept the gift, saying that it was a prohibition from his ancestors (*pu ya ta yai*) to be allied with the Burmese. King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910), in his commentary on the memoirs of Princess Narinthewi, also mentioned that his ancestors had put a curse on any of his children and grandchildren who wished to form an alliance with the Burmese.⁴⁶

No such attempt to ingrain into the people an aversion towards the Burmese ever occurred in the Ayudhya

period. It is evident in both the Ayudhya and the Burmese chronicles that King Borommakot (1733-58) offered political shelter to the Burmese governors of Martaban and Tavoy who fled from a Mon uprising instead of helping the Mons overthrow the weak restored Toungoo throne of Mahadamma-yaza-Dipati (1733-52). Hearing of this, the king of Ava sent grateful acknowledgments to the Ayudhya court (1744) by envoys bearing a number of rich and expensive presents. King Borommakot, in return, "sent envoys to Ava with gilded lacquer goblets, dishes and betel-boxes, velvets and silks of dragon pattern, a royal barge, and a letter on gold leaf; the letter was enclosed in caskets of ivory and crystal studded with rubies, wrapped in velvet and tied with gold cord, and it was borne on the back of an elephant."⁴⁷

The image of the Burmese as an evil enemy never faded away from the memory of the Siamese ruling class after the fall of Ayudhya. What has been changed is primarily the ways in which the image is portrayed and made understood in each political and social climate. The transformation of the face of the Burmese enemy in Thai historical writing and consciousness, is, in the same manner, subject to political conditions inside and outside mainland Southeast Asia. The following part of this paper will deal fully with the relations of historical writings, as regards the wars between the two rival states, to the political forces that conditioned the nature and evolution of Thai historical consciousness towards the Burmese. I will emphasize how the conception of nation-state, borrowed from the West, provides an avenue for the emergence of a new conception of traditional Siamese-Burmese warfare and brings new light to the image of the Burmese as a crucial enemy of the "Thai nation."

The Image of the Burmese Enemy in Modern Thai Historical Writing

Not later than the last half of the nineteenth century did the Bangkok rulers come to feel the political influence of the West in mainland Southeast Asia. The Bangkok government began to feel the presence of Great Britain from the 1820s, when British power thwarted her southern and western territorial expansion and easily gained victory over the Burmese in the First Anglo-Burmese War in 1826.⁴⁸ The outcome of this war made the Thai more accommodating towards the British: the government agreed to sign the Anglo-Siamese Treaty of 1826 opening the country to increased trade.⁴⁹ On his deathbed in 1851, King Rama III is reported to have remarked to Phraya Si Suriyawong (Chuang) that "there will be no more wars with Vietnam and Burma. We will have them only with the West. Take care, and do not lose any opportunities to them. Anything that they propose should be held up to close scrutiny before accepting it; do not blindly trust them."⁵⁰ At the end of King Mongkut's reign in the 1860s, the British declared their sovereignty over the Malay states and warned against anyone interfering in the internal affairs of their sphere of influence.⁵¹ In the early years of King Chulalongkorn's reign, the British established their perma-

nent administration, which was later known as the "Residential System," in the mainland Malay states of Pahang, Perak, Negri Sembilan, and Selangor. This political movement was a result of their intention to ensure that their economic investments would no longer be impeded by the chronic political instability of the Malay states. In the north, the British also intervened in the tributary states whose rulers had been subjected to the courts of Burma and Siam.⁵² In the east, shortly before the establishment of the British colony in the Malay peninsula, the French had successfully taken over Saigon (1859), and annexed Southern Vietnam between 1859 and 1867.⁵³ From the year 1867 onward, they slowly expanded their circle of annexation to the east of Siam where there were Bangkok's tributary states of Cambodia, Champassak and Luang Prabang. In short, by the early twentieth century, many of the neighboring kingdoms had fallen under the control of the power of the European nations—the Shans under the British in Burma and the Lao and upland Tai under the French in Indochina.⁵⁴ The political climate from the middle of the nineteenth century, especially during the reigns of King Mongkut and King Chulalongkorn, thus encouraged the creation of political unity in the Bangkok kingdom.

Dhida Saraya proposes that the irresistible pressure of Western imperialism was an important factor that forced King Mongkut to introduce the conception of the "unified state" in order to counteract the threat of the imperialist powers.

In the face of this menacing political situation, a sense of unity was created by King Mongkut. The idea of *Syam Prathet*, meaning the country of the *Syam* people, was emphasized. He proclaimed himself to be the king of *Syam Rath* or *Syam Prathet*, and the suzerain of many vassal states in Cambodia, Laos and northern Siam. This is the beginning of the idea of the unified country with the king at the center as the symbol of unity.⁵⁵

However, it was Chulalongkorn, Mongkut's successor, who fundamentally changed the administrative structure of the kingdom and established the idea of Thailand being a nation state belonging to the Thai people with Bangkok as its center.⁵⁶ Sombun Suksamran observes that the primary aim of Chulalongkorn's nationalism was to instill in the minds of the people a sense of national consciousness and devotion. For the government, this was a stepping-stone towards creating social unity and national stability in the country, which had a king as the symbol of unity and leadership.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, the real era of Thai nationalism emerged in the reign of King Vajiravudh (1910-1925), Chulalongkorn's son. David K. Wyatt suggests that "If King Chulalongkorn may be said to have constructed the modern Kingdom of Siam, then his two sons who followed him on the throne may be said to have made it into a nation."⁵⁸ It was King Vajiravudh who introduced the most popular basic triad of Thai national ingredients to the public, "nation-religion-monarch" (*chat-satsana-phramahakasat*). As the king himself explained,⁵⁹

The aim of this national institution is to instil in the minds of the people of our own race love and loyalty towards the High Authority that controls and maintains with justice and equity the political independence of the nation, devotion to Fatherland, Nation and our Holy Religion, and, not the least of all, the preservation of national unity, and the cultivation of mutual friendship.

Unlike Chulalongkorn, Vajiravudh emphasized the significance of the three elements, nation-religion-monarch, considering them as the most central to the identity of the Thai, and stressed the survival of the monarchic system. For Vajiravudh, all three elements were inextricably bound together. "Allegiance to any one of the three meant loyalty to all three; disloyalty or disobedience or disrespect toward one meant disrespect toward all."⁶⁰ Nationalism still played a very decisive role in Thai politics after the 1932 coup. Luang Phibunsongkhram's first government, which ran from the end of 1938 to mid 1944, for example, took as its primary concern the task of building, "not a new country, but a new nation (*sang chat*). The most immediately visible aspect of these attempts was the change of the name of Siam to Thailand in 1939."⁶¹ Phibun's idea of nationalism, unlike Vajiravudh's, concentrated on the significance of military states and leadership as in Germany and Japan before World War II.⁶² Phibun's policy of building a new nation had a great deal of influence upon the perception by the Thai of their country and their nation in the wartime period and after.

To conclude, it was in the political climate in which the idea of "unified state" and "nationalism" were first imported and then "localized" that I find that changes occurred in the image of the Burmese in Thai historical consciousness.

In the past, the Burmese were basically understood as an enemy of Buddhism, but in the nation-building period they came to be characterized as an enemy of the Thai nation. King Chulalongkorn, in his commentary on the memoirs of Princess Narinthewi, considers the 1767 war to have been a war between two countries, *Muang Thai* or *Phaendin Thai* and *Muang Phama* (Thailand and Burma), instead of a war between the two rival rulers.⁶³ Vajiravudh, in his article on the benefit of living in *dhamma*, condemns the Burmese as *adhamma* or an unjust nation which, without moral justification, had subdued "our righteous nation" and inflicted a great deal of damage, mentally and physically upon the Thai.⁶⁴ Luang Wichitwathakan, Phibun's most important propagandist, in many places in his works on history and in his theatrical scripts, pictured the Burmese as an enemy of the Thai Nation.⁶⁵ Since then, the image of the Burmese as an enemy of the Thai nation has become an invariable ingredient in modern Thai historiography.

Before the reign of King Mongkut, history was written in the form of *phongsawadan*. By and large, the *phongsawadan* (chronicle) is a chronological, narrative record of major events in each reign and is directly concerned with the chronology of the kings or the dynasties that ruled over the capital cities of the kingdom, Ayudhya, Thonburi, and Bangkok,

respectively.⁶⁶ *Phongsawadan* writers never incorporated in their records any major events which included common people and their history. They also never took into account the history of local cities (*prawatsatmuang*), usually regarding them as separate from "Thai history." The *Luang Prasert* chronicle, for example,

strongly emphasized Ayutthaya and its kings. This *phongsawadan* totally ignored all the myths, folklore and other oral tradition which represented the ideas and social expression of that period. It referred to Ayutthaya as *Krung Phranakorn Sriayutthaya* which implied its dominance over other states. Even Chiang Mai was merely mentioned as '*Muang Nua*' (the northern state).⁶⁷

The creation of a "nation state" and the implantation of nationalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries gave birth to a new historical conception which later dominated the world view of Thai historical thinking and historiography—the conception of national history. Unlike *phongsawadan* historical writing, national history is written with the spirit and consciousness of building political unity and social integration. It means to represent not merely the history of the ruling class and the history of the capital (*krung*), but also the history of the whole nation or the Siamese Country (*Prathet Sayam*), with the king at the center as the symbol of unity.⁶⁸ Even though national history, to a considerable degree, adopts the framework of *phongsawadan* writing, emphasizing the glory and significance of the capital cities, it incorporates the history of some local *muang*, which never in the past had captured the interest of traditional chroniclers, into what comes to be known as "Thai history." The history of Sukhothai, the principality which has an independent development separate from Ayudhya and Bangkok, for example, is absorbed into the framework of national history as the first beach-head state of the Tai race.⁶⁹ In addition, national history, unlike *phongsawadan*, does not totally overlook the significance of the common people. The life and activities of the commoners whom national historians consider as national heroes and heroines are usually emphasized and exceptionally glorified. Many of them are apparently heroes and heroines of battles with the Burmese, such as the Bang Rachan villagers who fought against the Burmese army to their death in the 1767 war, and Lady Chan, wife of the governor of *muang* Thalang and her sister, who successfully saved their city from the Burmese attack in 1785.⁷⁰ It is in the perspective of national history that I find, first, that the wars between Siam and Burma are made to be understood as wars of "national independence;" and, second, that the Burmese, who in the past had once been characterized as the enemy of Buddhism, were now clearly depicted as an enemy of the Thai nation.

The first historical work which has been used as a standard for writing Thai national history was written in the reign of King Mongkut and published in the year 1912, under the title *Phongsawadan chabap Phraratchahatlekha* (The Royal

Autograph Chronicle).⁷¹ Two years after its first publication, it was revised with additional research on particular subjects such as the coming of the Tai people to the Chaophraya River basin and the early history of Siam before the Ayudhya period. It then becomes "the first piece of work that proposes a total outline of Thai history, starting from the origin of the Thai people, to the first kingdom of Sukhothai, Ayutthaya and to Bangkok."⁷² It is in this work that the kingdoms of Ayudhya and Thonburi are clearly referred to as *Sayam Prathet*⁷³ and the idea of wars for national liberation and independence is first introduced in the tradition of Thai historiography.

Unlike traditional chronicles, the Royal Autograph Chronicle does not totally overlook the significance of the commoners. It describes the "heroism" of the Bang Rachan villagers in detail, covering events never written in any preceding chronicles. Step by step, it vividly portrays how the villagers formed their fortifications, how they achieved victory in almost every battle regardless of their smaller force, and how they were finally defeated by their opponents, who possessed better weaponry. In my opinion, the story of the Bang Rachan battle described in the Royal Autograph Chronicle is important in the sense that it introduces a new image of Siamese-Burmese warfare, different from wars conducted exclusively within the group of the ruling class and now including wars led by commoners. National historians and novel writers in the following period take this as a piece of evidence to support the idea that the Thai commoners, like their strong kings in the past, fought to the death against the Burmese in order to protect their beloved motherland and their freedom. The "heroism" of the Bang Rachan villagers is also used by the nationalist government as a tool to arouse national consciousness and to create political unity within the nation.⁷⁴

In the framework of national history, then, Thai history is a history of continuing warfare fought for gaining and regaining national independence as well as for protecting the country from external invasion. Research done by Western scholars helped national historians to complete the long history of the Tai people, believed to be a mighty race that migrated from China. W.C. Dodd's research, for example, proposed the theory that the Tai people had to move southwards because they were attacked by the Chinese.⁷⁵ Prince Damrong Rajanubhab, in an article attached to the first publication of the Royal Autograph Chronicle (1912), also offered the idea that the Tai people, in order to establish an independent kingdom separate from the Khmer domain, had to conduct war against the *Khom* (Khmer) who ruled part of present-day Thailand long before their arrival.⁷⁶ A Thai history written completely in the framework of national history is found in W.A.R. Wood's *A History of Siam* (1926). Like Thai national historians, Wood explains how the Tai people successfully built up the nation regardless of oppression from their powerful neighbors.

It will, I think be frankly admitted that the Siamese have some right to feel a pride in the history of their country. It is the story of a collection of

more or less uncultivated immigrants from Southern China, who settled in the country now known as Siam, overcoming a mighty (sic) empire, and establishing a number of free states, which became finally fused into the Siam of today. We see them humbled to the dust again and again by a more powerful neighbor, yet always rising up and regaining their freedom. A hundred years ago there were dozens of independent states in South-Eastern Asia. To-day there remains but one : Siam.⁷⁷

In the framework of national history, the Burmese, no less than the Chinese and the Khmer, are characterized as an important enemy of the Thai, particularly in the period after the kingdom of Ayudhya was founded (1351). Thus, the wars with the Burmese, as Wood puts it, are wars of rising up and regaining national independence, and, were by no means wars to establish a beachhead state, as in the case of Sukhothai, or wars to expand territory.⁷⁸ In the context of national history, the Burmese were unjust intruders.

King Rama V, in his commentary on the memoirs of Princess Narinthewi, and Prince Damrong in his *Thai rop Phama*, suggest that the Burmese were aggressive intruders whose concern was to suppress the Mons and then the Thai, while the Thai, in contrast, were righteous and legitimate defenders whose main object was to protect their freedom and nation from the attacks of outsiders.⁷⁹ In his introduction to *Thai rop Phama*, Prince Damrong clearly explains: "Hostilities began because the Burmese conquered the Mon country and they consequently carried the war into Siam. For this reason, the war which the Siamese carried into Burmese territory, though it was the initiative of the Siamese, was only a reprisal for what the Burmese had done to the Siamese territory on previous occasions."⁸⁰

The image of the Burmese as an enemy of the Thai nation was systematically depicted in this long research work by Prince Damrong, which was first published in 1917.⁸¹ *Thai rop Phama* deals principally with the wars between the two rival kingdoms, covering almost every fighting episode that appeared in the Thai chronicles and foreign records. The battle of Bang Rachan previously mentioned is also described in detail in this classic text.⁸² There is no mistaking the fact that *Thai rop Phama* is one of the most influential historical works, responsible for popularizing the image of the Burmese as an enemy of the Thai nation. With the help of modern printing technology, this classic work has been widely reprinted and disseminated for public consumption on various occasions over the past seventy years. It was first printed in 1917-20 and was reprinted in 1932 (vol. I 1917; vol. II 1920; revised edition 1932), 1951, 1958, 1962, 1963, 1964 and 1971. *Thai rop Phama* was also translated into English under the title "Our Wars with the Burmese" by Phra Phaison Sararak (U Aung Thein) in the *Journal of the Burma Research Society* in 1955, 1957 and 1958.⁸³ It casts a long shadow over later historical writing, especially textbooks written for Thai schools and colleges. Among these is Khun Wichitmatra's *Lak Thai* (The Thai Basis), one of the most important historical works, the

impact of which was quite extraordinary (see below).⁸⁴

It is important to stress here that the image of the Burmese as an enemy of the Thai nation in the early modernizing period would not have been able to capture the interest and punctuate Thai consciousness without the support of Chulalongkorn's reform of the educational system, officially founded in 1885.⁸⁵ The educational reform of this king and his successors not only successfully enlarged the number of educated people but also effectively implanted in the people's mind a sense of nationality.⁸⁶ In the Decree on the Education of Siam, presented to the king on August 23, 1910, the nature and objectives of education were announced as follows :

[It was the responsibility of the Ministry of Public Instruction to lay down the principles upon which such education should be based, namely, that in their studies His Majesty's subjects should] ...pursue learning and cultivate arts and thereby develop intellectual faculties and perfect moral powers;...support the common good, which is the good of all together; obey the laws; and, when the time comes when the *nation* and *country* need your help, give your bodies and your loyalty with bravery, with loyalty to His Majesty the King and gratitude for his great mercy, and be you always loyal to the King.⁸⁷

Through the channel of national education, the government slowly but effectively introduced to the public yet another image of the Burmese as an enemy of the Thai nation.

School textbooks were one of the most important means the government used to fill the intellectual gap between them and their people in the early period of nation-building. The concept of "nation" and the significance of national unity were emphasized in the textbooks and in lessons concerning the duties of the good citizen (*nathiphonlamuang*), morality (*sinlatham*) and history (*phongsawadan chat Thai* or *prawatsat Thai*). *Dhammachariya* (Dhamma-behavior), one of the most popular school texts of the early twentieth century, for example, clearly explained the necessity of preserving national freedom : "it was something worth fighting and dying for."⁸⁸ *Phonlamuang di* (Good Citizenship), another influential text of the same period, emphasized the duties of soldiers in protecting the nation from external attack.⁸⁹ Khun Wichitmatra's *Lak Thai*, one of the most popular textbooks (1928), clearly depicted the Burmese as an enemy of the Thai nation. "In the 1767 defeat, our national treasures (*sombat khong chonchat Thai*) were totally ravaged at the hands of the Burmese. Since the Burmese had no intention of keeping Ayudhya as their client state, they burned the temples and the cities they had captured, then took all properties and war prisoners back to their kingdom."⁹⁰ Thomya Sophonchit, in his high school textbook concerning the duties of the good citizen (1938), describes the Burmese as an enemy of the Thai nation in a different manner:

Good citizens have to do military service so they can protect their nation (*prathet chat*) in time of

war. We must not forget the times when our country was invaded by enemies. During the Ayudhya period, we fell to the Burmese two tiems. In the Bangkok era, we again lost our north-east Lao territory, Cambodia and Battambang district (*monthon*) to the French. This was not all; in 1893 a French fleet operated to close the Gulf of Siam. Two of their warships moved up river towards Bangkok. In order to avoid any confrontation, we had to sacrifice the territory on the left side of the Mekong River to the French. This was a result of the weakness of our military force. Thus, it is an obligation of our citizens to join military service. By doing this, we can save our land and maintain our national freedom which our ancestors created and protected for us with their lives and blood.⁹¹

Textbooks concerning the duties of the good citizen and history written for Thai schools and colleges usually highlight the lives of King Naresuan and King Taksin and their victories over the Burmese. Both kings are referred to as the most important national heroes in the sense that they successfully regained Thai independence from the Burmese after the conquests of Ayudhya in 1569 and 1767 respectively.⁹² The heroism of the Bang Rachan villagers is also emphasized in school textbooks and has been used as a classic example for teaching the young how their ancestors fought to the last drop of blood in order to protect their beloved country and the freedom of the nation from the Burmese intruders.

Through textbooks for school and college students, nationalist governments, especially military regimes, successfully instilled in the minds of the young the image of the Burmese as an enemy of the Thai nation. Undoubtedly, the political purpose underlying this national propaganda relates to an attempt of the government to stir up a sense of nationalism and at the same time legitimize their ruling authority by claiming that they, like all their brave ancestors who fought against the Burmese, take as their primary concern the task of protecting the nation, religion, and monarchy from external invasion. Viewed in this light, the negative attitude of the Thai towards the Burmese does not occur solely as a result of their past relationship. It is, rather, the outcome of political maneuvers by the Thai government to stabilize their power and authority and secure their own interests.⁹³

The image of the Burmese as an enemy of the Thai nation is implanted not only through the educational structure but also by means of historical novels, drama and music. King Vajiravudh's reign saw the bulding of modern literature (1900-1932).⁹⁴ During this period many Thai and foreign novels were published in newspapers, magazines, and journals, circulated mainly in Bangkok, such as *Lak Witthaya*, *Thalok Witthaya*, *Thawi Panya*, *Sayam Muai*, *Phadung Witthaya*, *Sena Suksa*, *Sri Krung*, *Phro Witthaya*, *Thai Kasem*, *Phrae Witthayasad* and more. Among these were various historical novels such as *Dap lek namphi* (The Iron Sword) of Ayannakot, *Okphra Thanthathikorn* of Phanngam, *Thahan-ek Prachao Rachathirat* (King Rachathirat's Musketeer) of Khuruphap (1925), *Ekkhun*

Ratchasena of W. Phaomani, *Thahan Phrachao Krung Thon* (The King of Thonburi's Soldiers) of Siwasariyanon, and *Chat sua mai thing lai* (A Tiger Never Loses Its Stripes) of Lopburi. Suphanni Warathon suggests that historical novels are written about national heroes. The authors used their works as a means of expressing their adoration towards nation, religion, and monarchy.⁹⁵ However, the zenith era of Thai historical novels and dramas emerged after 1932, when the idea of the nation was very much stressed. Luang Wichit, the brain of Phibun's regime, involved himself in all government campaigns to establish the national myth in the framework of nationalism. He wrote many historical novels and plays extolling the past glory of the Thai nation and the life and activities of important national heroes and heroines who had fought against the Burmese, such as King Naresuan, King Taksin, and Lady Chan and Muk.⁹⁶ One of the most popular plays written by Luang Wichit is *Luat Suphan* (Suphan Blood). In brief, it is the story of Suphanburi prisoners of war in the late eighteenth century who fought against the Burmese until they were all killed. Another well-known play is *Maha Dewi* (The Great Queen). It is the story of the queen of Chiang Mai who, in reality, fought against the Burmese and against Ayudhya in the sixteenth century in order to protect the autonomy of her rule over the city; but in the play, historical facts were distorted by depicting Maha Dewi as helping to unify Siam into one great country.⁹⁷

In my opinion, the most influential historical novels written before the second half of the 20th century were Mai Muangdoem's (Kan Phungbun na Ayudhya) *Bang Rachan* and *Khunsuk*.⁹⁸ *Bang Rachan* is the story of the Bang Rachan villagers who conducted warfare against the Burmese to their death, despite their smaller force. With his vivid imagination and his knowledge of Thai history, Mai Muangdoem sharply portrayed the Burmese as an evil enemy of the Thai people. Here is an example of how he creates a theater of battle in his novel :

...numerous houses, cabins and barns were burnt down to ashes, leaving behind many corpses in the fire and on the ground when the Burmese bandits came to sack [the village]. The babies died because their mothers had died. The number of the old and the young slaughtered by the swords of the Burmese was uncountable. Wives and daughters of the villagers were robbed and carried on horseback back to the central fort. Wisetchaichan had become an abandoned city.... People left their houses and their villages to go to Bang Rachan.⁹⁹

Mai Muangdoem has talent in recreating history in the novel form. His works capture the interests and feelings of people of all ages. *Bang Rachan*, for example, has been reproduced again and again in the form of theatrical plays and movies. However, the most popular historical novel of this author is *Khun Suk*.¹⁰⁰ It is the story of a blacksmith, Sema, who, with exceptional skill in using dual hand swords against the Burmese intruders, fought his way to become one of the best

soldiers of King Naresuan's army. In this story the Burmese were again characterized as an enemy of the Thai nation, of the king, and particularly of Thai commoners. Like *Bang Rachan*, *Khun Suk* has been reproduced again and again in the form of stage and radio plays, television dramas and movies since the end of the Second World War. People have been known to become addicted to *Khun Suk* as opium smokers are addicted to opium.¹⁰¹ There are many more historical novels on Siamese-Burmese warfare written since World War II which, no less than the pioneer works, depict the Burmese as a strong and unjust enemy of the Thai nation.

This discussion of the history and development of historical writing and perceptions relating to Siamese-Burmese warfare would not be complete if I failed to mention the way in which military historians express their antagonism towards the Burmese. I think I would not be far wrong in suggesting that it is in the community of the armed forces that the seeds of nationalism which were systematically planted in the early twentieth century attained full growth. The image of the Burmese as an enemy of the Thai nation is interestingly emphasized on various occasions by military historians who, by borrowing the framework of national history, equate the Burmese with their most important enemy, the communists. Colonel Chinnawut Sunthonsima, in his lecture on national stability and the role of Buddhism, suggests that "the nature of the problems regarding the stability of the nation of each historical period are not the same. In the early Bangkok period, this problem concerned mainly wars against the Burmese, and then the threat of the colonial powers. In the present, the problems of national stability are engaged with the war of ideology, and our enemy is the communist."¹⁰² The same attitude and explanation also appear in Colonel Chong Supchakyong's work on the life of King Naresuan, an outstanding hero of the Thai army. The author emotionally describes "the most disgraceful moment" that ever happened in Thai history, the time when King Mahit had an audience with the King Bayinnaung after being defeated in 1569. Based on this historical incident, he convinces readers that they have to join together intellectual, mental, and physical force in order to fight against the evil communists and to protect the independence of the nation: he writes, "We must not let history repeat itself."¹⁰³

Conclusion

The history of historical writing on Siamese-Burmese warfare and historical perceptions regarding the Burmese as an enemy are inseparable from their social context, which changes from one sociopolitical situation to another. What I have done is to demonstrate how the particular sociopolitical conditions of each period may lead to a particular understanding, interpretation and reshaping of the past concerning the relationship between Thailand and Burma. The negative attitude of the Thai towards the Burmese is a deliberate, not a chance, happening. It is quite obvious that it is a product of profound changes in the sociopolitical structure of the Thai state from the Thonburi and the early Bangkok period to the

present. The governments of both the traditional and the modern Thai state play very important roles in instilling a hostile image of the Burmese in the minds of the people, aiming at the benefit of their political legitimacy and social integration.

The image of the Burmese as an evil enemy of the "Thai nation," popularly understood and accepted, is, of course, the result of a powerful "institutionalizing" and "socializing" process built and developed mostly in the world of the ruling class before being distributed for public consumption. In other words, sanctions against the Burmese are inspired by political and intellectual leaders. Prejudicial feelings towards the

Burmese are widely and effectively ingrained in the minds of the Thai people through the channels of oral tradition, historical literature, textbooks, plays, music and movies, especially during and after the nation-building period, the time when the idea of nationality came to be emphasized. It is first introduced to children as they are socialized, and thereafter it is repeated either formally by leaders of the society or informally by word of mouth or through public media. Thus, on the psychological level it is impossible to prevent a prejudiced view of the Burmese as an historically hostile state when certain beliefs exist within the social heritage and are then perpetuated by the leaders through the means of the mass media and the educational system.

ENDNOTES

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- 34 *Ibid.*, pp. 214-15.
- 35 *Phra kret bang prakan nai Somdet Phramahasommanachao Krom Phra Paramanuchit Chinorot* [Some Accounts of Prince Paramanuchit Chinorot] (Bangkok: Rongphim Prayunwong), pp. 129, 133, 150-151, and 166.
- 36 Somdet Phra Phonnarat Wat Phra-chetuphon, *op. cit.*, pp. 408.
- 37 *Prachum phleng yao*, p. 38.
- 38 Sangermano, *op. cit.*, p. 71.
- 39 *Thai rop Phama*, pp. 487-527; Wyatt, *Thailand*, p. 142.
- 40 *Thai rop Phama*, pp. 552-71, and 583-89.
- 41 Suzanne Karples, "Notes on a Manuscript Relative to a Burmese Embassy to CochinChina," *JBR*, 42:2 (Dec. 1959), 1-7; Sri Krishna Saxena, "Causes leading to the deputation of a Burmese political mission to the court of CochinChina (1822-1824) and its results," *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient* 45:2 (1952), 573-79.
- 42 Sam Keen, *Faces of the Enemy*, p. 13.
- 43 Leonard E. Doob, *Panorama of Evil: Insights from the Behavioral Sciences*

- (London: Greenwood Press, 1978), p. 85.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 33. Sir John Bowring observed that "The retreat of a Siamese soldier before the enemy without orders of his chief is punishable with death." Sir John Bowring, *The Kingdom and People of Siam*, vol. I (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 479; "Phra Aiyakan Kabotsuk" (the law of preventing an act of usurping), in *Kotmai tra sam duang lem 4* (Bangkok: Kurusapha, 1962), pp. 128-148; "Phraratchaphongsawadan krung Thonburi lae Chotmai het raiwan thap samai krung Thonburi" *Prachum phongsawadan lem 40* (Bangkok: Kurusapha, 1969), pp. 65, 74, 87, 100, 102-03, 105, and 107; *Thai rop Phama*, p. 568.
- ⁴⁵ "The British annexation of the Tenasserim provinces blocked the main route by which Burmese armies formerly had attacked the Siamese capital and reduced Siam's security risk on its western flank, at least so long as Anglo-Siamese relations were friendly." In *Search of Southeast Asia: A Modern History*, rev. ed., David Joel Steinberg (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987), p. 116.
- ⁴⁶ *Phraratchawichan nai chotmai khwam-songcham khong Phrachao Paiyikathoe Krommaluang Narinthewi* [The Memoirs of Princess Narinthewi with Commentary by King Chulalongkorn] (Bangkok: Bamrungnukunkit, 1908), pp. 259-260.
- ⁴⁷ Harvey, *History*, p. 214; Phongsawadan Krung Sayam, pp. 600-02; Hmannan Mahayazawin Dawgyi, III (Mandalay, 1963), pp. 378-84.
- ⁴⁸ Tej Bunnag, "The Provincial Administration of Siam from 1892 to 1915: A Study of the Creation, the Growth, the Achievements, and the Implications for Modern Siam, of the Ministry of the Interior under Prince Damrong Rajanubhab," Ph.D. diss., University of Oxford, 1968, pp. 75-76.
- ⁴⁹ Dhida Saraya, "The Development of the Northern Tai States from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Centuries," Ph.D. diss., University of Sydney, 1982, p. 13.
- ⁵⁰ Wyatt, *Thailand*, p. 180.
- ⁵¹ Dhida Saraya, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
- ⁵² Tej Bunnag, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-78.
- ⁵³ Dhida Saraya, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.
- ⁵⁴ Wyatt, *Thailand*, p. 181.
- ⁵⁵ Dhida Saraya, *op. cit.*, p. 14. King Rama IV is the first king who spelled the name of his country "Siam," and his profound knowledge of Latin had him sign his kingly title as Rex Siamensis, meaning the king of the Siamese country. Pridi Bhanomyong, "Khwampenma khong chu 'Prathet Sayam' kap 'Prathet Thai' [From Prathet Siam to Prathet Thai]," *Muang Boran*, 11:2 (April-June, 1985), 13; see also Vilailak Mekharatana, "Pramuan khwamkhaochai kieowkap kham wa Sayam," *Muang Boran*, 11:2 (April-June 1985), 19.
- ⁵⁶ Dhida Saraya, *Tamnan & Tamnan History: A Study of Local History* (Bangkok: Office of the National Culture Commission, Ministry of Education, 1982), p. 91; Tej Bunnag, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-124; Wyatt, *Thailand*, pp. 190-222.
- ⁵⁷ Sombun Suksamran, *op. cit.*, pp. 121, 191, and 192.
- ⁵⁸ Wyatt, *op. cit.*, p. 223.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 225, quoting from a speech by King Vajiravudh at his coronation in 1991, published in *The Souvenir of the Siamese Kingdom Exhibition at Lumbini Park B.E. 2468* (Bangkok, 1927; reprint, 1976?), p. 167.
- ⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 229.
- ⁶¹ Ibid., p. 253.
- ⁶² *In Search of Southeast Asia*, p. 330.
- ⁶³ *Phraratchawichan*, pp. 1-4.
- ⁶⁴ King Vajiravudh, Rama VI, "Prayot haeng kan yu nai tham" [The Benefit of Living in Accordance to Dhamma], in *Pramuan bot phraratchaniphon* [Collection of His Majesty's Works] (Bangkok: Rongphim Sirisan, 1961), pp. 40-41.
- ⁶⁵ Luang Wichit Wathakan, *Wichitwannakadi lem 1: bot lakhon ruang yai tangtae ph. s. 2479 tung ph. s. 2483* [Wichit's Literary works, vol 1: Theater Scripts, 1936-1940] (Bangkok: Rongphim Phrachan, 1941), pp. 37, 101-08, 318-19.
- ⁶⁶ Dhida Saraya, *Tamnan & Tamnan History*, pp. 82-83 and 86.
- ⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 86-87. Ayudhya is referred to in the Nan Chronicle as the "Southern Country" [*Muang Tai*] : *Prachum phongsawadan*, pt. 10 (Bangkok: Kaona, 1964), IV, 420.
- ⁶⁸ However, in 1939 the Phibun government decided to change the name of the country from "Siam" or "Sayam Prathet" to "Thailand," as suggested by Luang Vichit Wathakan. Pridi Bhanomyong "Khwampenma khong chu 'Prathet Sayam' kap 'Prathet Thai,'" p. 13.
- ⁶⁹ Dhida Saraya observes that there was a political reason underlying the incorporation of Sukhothai history into history of the Thai nation. Such incorporation was the impression which the grandeur of Sukhothai and King Ramakhamhaeng made on Rama IV. According to Sukhothai stone inscription No. 1 (now the subject of controversy), Sukhothai territories were extensive, covering a number of dominions and people of various races. This confirmed Rama IV's claim that various races and states were united under his sovereignty. Such a claim could be used against the claim of Western powers on the Siamese territories. The incorporation of Sukhothai in to the scope of "Thai history," however, originated the idea that Sukhothai was the first Thai kingdom, succeeded by Ayudhya and Bangkok. Through this belief the history of Bangkok and the sovereignty of Bangkok's kings could be traced as far back as the 17th century. Dhida Saraya, "The Development of the Northern Tai states," p. 15, and the same author's *Tamnan & Tamnan History*, pp. 89-90.
- ⁷⁰ Prince Damrong Rajanubhab, *op. cit.*, pp. 349-57, 577-82, see also, Dhida Saraya, "Mong prawatsat thongthin Thalang-Phuket kan sang 'tamnan' kiao kap bukkhon samkhan lae kan subnuang khong prawatsat thongthin [An investigation on the local history of Thalang-Phuket, the creation of "myth" concerning important leaders and the continuity of local history]" in *Prawatsat thongthin* [Local History] (Bangkok: Muang Boran, 1986).
- ⁷¹ For an English summary of this chronicle see, Bowring, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 341-63.
- ⁷² Dhida Saraya, *Tamnan & Tamnan History*, p. 91.
- ⁷³ *Phraratchaphongsawadan chabap Phraratchahatlekha lem 2*, ton 1 lae 2 (Royal Autograph Chronicle, parts 1 and 2) (Bangkok: Odeon Store, 1952), part 1, p. 484 and part 2, p. 3.
- ⁷⁴ *The Heroism of Bang Rachan Village* (Bangkok: Rongphim Samnak Thamniap nayok rattamontri, 1965); *Wirachon khai Bang Rachan* [The Heroes of Bang Rachan] (Bangkok: Rongphim Kan Satsana, 1976) and *Ode to Ayudhya* (Bangkok: Kaow-Par-Nee, 1984), pp. 390-97.

- ⁷⁵ W.C. Dodd, *The Tai Race: The Elder Brother of the Chinese* (Cedar Rapids: Torch Press, 1923).
- ⁷⁶ *Phraratchaphongsawadan chabap Phrachahatekha*, lem 1, ton 1 (The Royal Autograph Chronicle, vol. 1, part 1) (Bangkok: 1952), pp. 53, 56-85, and 103.
- ⁷⁷ W.A.R. Wood, *A History of Siam* (London: Fisher Unwin, 1926), p. 7, cited by Dhida Saraya in "The Development of the Northern Tai States," p. 27.
- ⁷⁸ Luang Wichit Wathakan, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
- ⁷⁹ *Phraratchawichan*, pp. 1-4.
- ⁸⁰ "Our Wars with the Burmese," *JBR*, 38:2 (1955), introduction; *Thai rop Phama*, pp. 4-5 and 377.
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. (2).
- ⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 349-57.
- ⁸³ See note 2.
- ⁸⁴ In 1928 the author of *Lak Thai* received an award from the Thai Royal Academy (*Ratchabandit Sapha*) for writing it, and most textbooks written for Thai schools were based on it. See Dhida Saraya, "The Development of the Northern Tai States," p. 28. See also, Khun Wichitmatra, *Lak Thai* (The Thai Basis), (Bangkok: Odeon Store, 1963), pp. 143-44; *Thai rop Phama*, pp. 377-78.
- ⁸⁵ David K. Wyatt, *The Politics of Reform in Thailand: Education in the Reign of King Chulalongkorn* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), pp. 102-03.
- ⁸⁶ The number of schools, teachers and students increased 200 percent after the year 1898. Briefly, there were 18 schools, 29 teachers and 791 students before the mentioned year. However, it is evident that in 1898 and the following year there were 196 schools, 232 teachers and 5,682 students found in Thailand. See also Wutthichai Munlasin, *Kanpatirup kansuksa nai ratchakan thi 5* (Educational Reform in the Fifth Reign) (Bangkok: Samakhom Sangkhomsat haeng Prathet Thai, 1973), p. 148. According to David K. Wyatt, "The 350 schools and 12,000 provincial elementary school students of 1902 had grown by 1901/11 to 2,732 elementary, 197 primary, and 6 secondary schools in the provinces with a total of nearly 70,000 students, and further expansion to nearly double this number of students in government-supported schools was to be reached by 1916/17." Wyatt, *The Politics of Reform in Thailand*, pp. 372, 387.
- ⁸⁷ Wyatt, *The Politics of Reform in Thailand*, p. 366; Wutthichai Munlasin, *op. cit.*, p. 96.
- ⁸⁸ Sombun Suksamran, *op. cit.*, pp. 100, 105.
- ⁸⁹ Chao Phraya Phrasadet Surentharithibodi, *Phonlamuang di ton klang* (Good Citizen: the Mid-part) (Bangkok: Rongphim Akson Nithi, 1916), pp. 103, 104. The same idea was also illustrated in a special allocution of Prince Vajiranana, who promoted a great improvement in the standards of religious provincial education and wrote many religious school texts. The prince, who at that time held the rank of Supreme Patriarch, stated that "The defence against external foes is one of the policies of governance, and is one that cannot be neglected. War generally occurs suddenly, and victory cannot be won solely by having a large number of men, arms, and munitions; it must also depend upon Presence of Mind (*Sati*), Knowledge (*Pañña*), Bravery, Experience, Readiness in Commands, and good fighting positions, and so forth, in order to make victory certain. Therefore, war must be prepared for, even in time of peace, otherwise one would not be in time and one would be in a disadvantageous position towards one's foe." Prince Vajiranana, *The Buddhist Attitude towards National Defence*, p. 19.
- ⁹⁰ Khun Wichitmatra, *op. cit.*, p. 143. See also *Baep rian sangkhomsuksa wicha prawatsat chan matthayom suksa pi thi 2 khong krasuang Suksathikarn* [Text on history for junior high school students, level 2, of the Ministry of Education] (Bangkok: Khurusapha 1963), p. 61; Praphat Trinaron, *Prawatsat Thai samrab chan mo. so. ton-plai fukha kru p.k.s.* [Thai history for teachers' college students] (Bangkok: Samnakphim Udomsuksa, 1964), pp. 5, 8.
- ⁹¹ Thomya Sophonchit, *Nathi phonlamuang samrap chan matthayom pi thi 4 tam laksut mai* [The Duties of Citizens for the Junior High School Level] (Bangkok: Rongphim Lepachan, 1938), p. 34.
- ⁹² Khun Wichitmatra, *op. cit.*, p. 139. See also Phraya Ahan Borirak (Pung Chuto), *Tamnan Thai sangkhep* (A Summary of Thai Legends) (Bangkok: Rongphim Bamrungnukunkit, 1941), pp. 30-31, and *Baep rian Sangkhomsuksa*, pp. 38-39. One of the most influential works on King Naresuan written by Prince Damrong Rajanubhab is *Phraprawat somdet phra Naresuan Maharat* [The Life of King Naresuan the Great] (Bangkok: Khurusapha, 1960). It widely affected school textbooks and historical works concerning the life of this king.
- ⁹³ As Jack S. Levy describes it in one of his articles: "Nationalism has created the sense of a common interest in the nation, a concept of the national interest as the highest value, and an intense commitment to the well-being of the state. This commitment is strengthened by national myths regarding the omniscience and omnipotence of the nation and the congruence of one's national morality with a supranational ethic. Such myths and doctrines can be used by elites to advance their own view of the national interest or their own political interests, but, once created, these myths and doctrines take on a life of their own." Jack S. Levy, "Domestic Politics and War," in *The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 91.
- ⁹⁴ Yot Watcharasathian, *Khwapenma khong kanpraphan lae nak-praphan khong Thai* [A history of Thai literary writing and novelists] (Bangkok: Phrae Phitthaya, 1963), pp. 71-104.
- ⁹⁵ Suphanni Warathon, *Prawat kan praphan nawaniyai Thai tangtae samai ruamraek chon thung ph. s. 2475* [A History of Thai Novels from the Beginning to the Year 1932] (Bangkok: Charoanwit Kanphim, 1976), pp. 185-87, 198-99, 220-21, 227-28, 242-43, and 254-55. More discussion of the history of Thai novels can be found in Yutthitsathian, *Klet chak Adit* [Pieces from the past] (Bangkok: Bamrunsan, 1970), pp. 201-307.
- ⁹⁶ See further discussion of Luang Wichit's historical novels in Luang Wichitwathakan, *Krung taek* [The fall of Ayudhya, 1767] (Bangkok: Rongphim Rung-ruangrat, 1971), and Chalio Phensida, *Luang Wichitwathakan lae ngan dan prawatsat* [Luang Wichitwathakan and his work on history] (Bangkok: Bannakit, 1977), and Suphanni Warathon, *op. cit.*, p. 243.
- ⁹⁷ Dhida Saraya, "The Development of the Northern Tai States," pp. 30-31.
- ⁹⁸ Mai Muangdoem is one of the most famous Thai novelists. He wrote many historical novels which have had considerable impact upon many writers of his following generation. He died at the age of 37. For more information see, Yot Watcharasathian, *Manat Chanyong*

- lae Mai Muangdoem* (Bangkok: Samnakphim Kret Thai, 1977).
- ⁹⁹ Mai Muangdoem, *Bang Rachan* (Bangkok: Samnakphim Bannakhan, 1968), pp. 98, 124, and 152-53.
- ¹⁰⁰ Mai Muangdoem, *Khun Suk*, vol. 1-10 (Bangkok: Samnakphim Bannakhan, 1969).
- ¹⁰¹ Prakat Watcharaphan, *Prawat nakpraphan* [Biographies of Novelists] (Bangkok: Phrae Phitthaya, 1973), pp. 277-85.
- ¹⁰² Chinnawut Sunthonsima, "Panha khwam mankhong khong chat kap botbat khong kan songserm phra-phutthasatsana [The Problem of National Stability and the Role of Buddhism]," in *Phra-Phutthasatsana kap khwammankhong khong chat* [Buddhism and the Stability of the Nation] (Bangkok: Siwaphon, 1987), p. 119.
- ¹⁰³ Chong Supchakyong, *Somdet phra Naresuan ton prakat itsaraphap lae triam kan su suk yai* [King Naresuan's Declaration of Independence and Battle Organization] (Bangkok: Kasemsuwan, 1971), p. 5.

