

THE ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVE IN CONTEMPORARY THAI SOCIETY

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INTRODUCTION

In an earlier contribution to this Journal (17/4), I concentrated on the perceptions that seem to give meaning to Thai behaviour in 'third person' interaction. In this article I intend to evaluate and integrate the interpretations of Thai social interaction by placing perceptions into the structure of Thai society as I see it (1978b). I shall do this against the background of McClelland's theory of the achieving society and Weerayudh's theory of affiliative society. In the last part of this article I shall open a comparative perspective by classifying the findings according to my theory of the meaningful structure of experience (1978).

STRUCTURE, EXPECTATIONS, AND BEHAVIOURAL MOTIVES

Ever since McClelland published *The Achieving Society* (1961), the achievement motive has fascinated students of economic development. According to McClelland, the achievement motive is strong in certain economically developed countries and can be psychologically expressed as the need for Achievement (*n* Achievement). This need would promote entrepreneurship, which in its turn would be the key to economic growth. This need is located in individuals and its occurrence highly dependent on childhood socialization practices.

In Thailand, Weerayudh Wichiarajote (วีรยุทธ วิเชียราจote), obviously inspired by McClelland's thinking, has discovered the need for Affiliation (*n* Affiliation), on basis of which he has developed two contrasting models, namely, a model of **Achieving society** and a model **Affiliative society**. This latter model lists the

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Transcription of Thai : names according to their owner's preference, otherwise according to the phonetic system of Mary Haas (1964)

basic traits of Thai society and is of immense heuristic interest to understand the thrust and ethos of Thai society; yet I have my doubts about the choice of words. 'To achieve' means 'to accomplish', 'to do successfully', 'to obtain by way of exertion, work' (Webster 1971), and it is by sticking to this dictionary meaning that I want to begin this analysis of the achievement motive in Thai society. Paraphrasing Weerayudh, I would say that the Thai are motivated 'to achieve affiliation'.

In his subsequent studies about the relationship between *khwaamkreengcaj* (ความเกรงใจ) and affiliation (n.y.), it becomes clear that Weerayudh mainly analyses the affiliative motive in the behavioural area that I have called 'second person' interaction (1978a) and that he pays comparatively little attention to the motives of affiliation and achievement in stratified, hierarchical society, or the area of behaviour that I discussed as 'third person' interaction, where affiliation is a means to achieve something else and not necessarily an end in itself (1977).

Thai society is characterized by two very basic dimensions: a horizontal and a vertical one. The horizontal dimension comprises the vast mass of common people who work in the fields, in the factories, and in government offices as fourth grade (ชั้นที่ 4) functionaries. They may be seen but should not be heard. They constitute the subject class of citizens who have no power, and who are differentiated among themselves in terms of ranked roles more than in terms of stratified hierarchical statuses (Keyes 1977: 168). Spectacular social mobility among them is rare; they climb in status while fulfilling their lifecycle, from child to adult, from just married to elder, from peasant to labourer, from ruralite to urbanite, from peddler to holder of a market stall, and by way of some education they may achieve positions as teacher, minor official, or clerk. Great ambition among them is rare; they take life as it comes, and beyond the hope of minor improvements in their position over time they have little other social expectation. They have no exciting future perspective and are rather inert in terms of achievement. They are hardly at all mobile, have few ideas about 'becoming' and more about 'being'; necessarily they are traditional in their outlook and style because a perspective of beneficial change is beyond their horizon.

If I understand Weerayudh's model of Thai society well, and especially its elaboration in his *kreengcaj* studies, then I think that his description and analysis is especially valid for the *phuu-nooj* (ผู้พุ่ม) type of people who fall into the category just described. Through the ages of Thai social history they have developed a sense of 'affiliation' to keep life as pleasant as possible; deprived of the possibilities of great social mobility or radical changes in their positions, they are well-advised to *kreengcaj* each other, to seek friendship, love, warmth, and social acceptance, and eventually to seek the protection of those who are more powerful and command more resources. Feeling *kreengcaj*, friendship, respect for each other, and safety in their group, being cooperative and willing to sacrifice, they are basically socially motivated. Their respectful attitude serves the double purpose of harmony and

avoidance of conflict and unpleasantness. In respect to the powerful hierarchical society outside, they feel insecurity and a sense of fear (*kreengkluua*, เกรงกลัว). The best thing that they can *achieve* is a harmonious and non-problematical existence.

The vertical and powerful dimension of Thai society needs other terms of analysis, because there is a vast difference in perceptions and strategies about the right way to act. When we look at hierarchical Thai society, the interpretation of affiliation has little to do with friendship, love or warmth, and far more with social acceptance in the perspective of the complementary motives of power and ambition. In that segment of society we find an overelaboration of rank rather than role, and status as a thing to strive for rather than to accomplish as a life-cycle phenomenon. It is the quest for prestige (*khwaam-mii-naa-mii-taa*, ความมีเกียรติ) and power (*khwaam-pen-cawnaaj*, ความเข้มแข็ง) as highly ambitious and achievement oriented endeavours. This type of achievement is also purely social, but not so much in terms of social acceptance *per se* as in terms of prestige. It may be argued that prestige is also a form of social acceptance, but the underlying motive is rather recognition than the quest for warmth, love, and friendship. In its most simple terms, it is the quest for power and rank as a purpose in itself, money and riches being its instruments, and prestige its result. From the third grade level (*chan-trii*, ชั้นตรี) upwards this seems to be the motive, and only then Phaitun Khryakaew's (ไพฑูริย์ เกษมแก้ว) Bangkok based enumeration of 'central values' makes sense (2512 : 69-79).

In spite of the emergence of small groups of people who occupy modern middle class positions and who may be motivated by entrepreneurial achievement or the achievement of professional excellence, the old division between those who can hope to achieve power, rank, and prestige and those who should not and cannot, is still very vivid and visible to this day. The division runs parallel to the historical situation of a royal and noble ruling class and a subject class of commoners and slaves. Also to-day power is still concentrated in a capital that represents the state and vested in a highly stratified hierarchy of ranks. Those who are, or have become part of this hierarchy, by accident of birth, because of connections and patronage, because of superior education, or money, or a combination of all these, are potentially status mobile and live in the perspective of gaining prestige and of growing in stature and recognition. As the ruling class they command the resources of political, military, and administrative power, of privilege, and they are 'fearfully respected' (*kreengkluua*) by the members of the subject class who cannot reasonably aspire to spectacular social mobility and the acquisition of power.

In terms of the analysis of motives, we will normally find, that, depending on the class to which one belongs, motives for social achievement will be differentiated. The elite is motivated to remain a ruling class and allows for very little upward mobility of member of the subject class (Evers 1966), although it employs a vast quantity of low level officials, soldiers and NCO's, police personnel, and

even workers in state enterprises to consolidate their hold on the national structure of resources and political power. As a class they are motivated to maximize, and safeguard their power; as individuals and groups (*khana, nam*) within that class they are motivated to hold as much power as the others let them; that power is expressed in social visibility such as rank and prestige. These motivations of conspicuousness are further demonstrated by a grand style of living, ceremonies, lavishness, and the constant effort to outdo each other in the demonstration of importance and power, be it political or economic. Somehow they cannot see another (of more or less equivalent rank) to be better and they are highly sensitive to criticism of any kind. Their attitude is the attitude of being unquestioned boss

Their motive is social excellence as defined by the Thai system : rank and riches, power and prestige. To fulfil that motive they need to be highly ambitious, keenly aware of their possibilities for advancement, ingenious in devising strategies to do just that, and they can therefore be characterized by a high need for Achievement. The motive is primarily to achieve prestige and power, rank and riches being instruments. To be born with a title is not enough : rank needs to be demonstrated. Because of the instrumentality of rank and riches to the social goal, everything is permitted in order to obtain these scarce commodities, whether it is coup d'état or corruption, simple murder or direct theft. The thing that is admired is to be 'big', to have a 'face' and the work that one has to do for it, the material task, is not of absorbing interest. The achievement motive is social *par excellence*.

The 'big people' expect obedience and respect from the 'little people'. These latter common citizens know that and they also know that to challenge the power and the resources of the 'big' is a dangerous affair. They know that it is better to stay away from power to which they pay respect (*sadaeng khwaamkhawrap, สดาง ความเคารพ*) and toward which they feel fear (*kreengkluat*). They had better remain modest in their ambitions, may hope to strive for 'enough' (*khwaam-mii-phoo-jnu-phoo-khin, ความมีพอนพอน*), and they know that their chances for upward social mobility are extremely limited. Their aspirations for prestige are fulfilled during the successful completion of their life-cycle, and that characterizes their achievement aspirations. With a little success they may find themselves under the patronage of a big shot and secure in a minor position in the lower ranks of officialdom, that is, as a tool of the interests that rule. They know, and with reason, that their chances for further mobility are blocked, so why would they aspire to achieve frustration only by being ambitious and achievement oriented within the limits of Thai society? They are better advised to stick to their traditional wisdom and ethos, striving for a maximum of peace and friendliness among themselves by *kreengcaj* behaviour and respecting each other while avoiding powerful and stratified society. Consequently avoidance motives are common and the needs for entrepreneurial or professional achievement hardly developed. Their wise attitude is resignation; ambition dose not pay, and the best thing to strive for is to be accepted, affiliated, and safe in one's community.

Exceptions to this overall picture are provided by the small modern groups of critical students and intellectuals, or the urban proletarians who protest and seek new ways to realize themselves and to shape society. In spite of their changed life situation and ambitions, it still appears that 1) the best strategy of those who are relatively powerless in their dealing with more powerful persons or positions, is to seek their protection and to place themselves under their patronage. 2) If this is not possible, the relatively powerless person who seeks a favour, protection, or access to a scarce commodity, may try to buy it, his money or services so to say protecting him in buying favour. 3) When also this is not possible, because he does not have the money or other resources to influence those who hold power he had better stay away, low profile and avoidance being his best strategies. 4) Ultimately he may try to maximize his satisfaction by sticking to his primary groups of family and community by strengthening the bonds of friendship, exchange, and cooperation. The first three strategies relate to dealings with hierarchically stratified society; the last to the more communal system of ranked roles.

EVALUATING THE AFFILIATIVE MOTIVE

1. Patronage and protection

Whether one is a small man who needs work or a favour, or a relatively big man who hopes to become bigger, if one wants to advance one's purposes, one knows that one has to cultivate the right connections to persons who are higher up and who command resources. This system is a personal system, based on direct or indirect relationships between individuals in different positions, for instance, family connections or recommendation; teacher-pupil relationships; 'old boy' networks, or belonging to the right groups (*khana*; *phakphuak*, *พรรคพวก*).

To advance one's purposes one needs to be protected, that is, to be personally connected to those who can reward, and thus one needs to develop one's ways of access to that relative power, affiliation being the core drive and strategy. Paraphrasing and adding to Weerayudh (1973 : 7), to establish affiliation it helps the *phuu-nooj* to be smooth and polite, gentle or suave, quite and accepting, careful, respectful, and conscious of the occasion in order to establish acceptance and kindness on the part of the patron. Obedience, conformity, to know one's place, and sycophancy may also be helpful. One could say that much of the success of the *phuu-nooj's* affiliative operation depends on his presentation and careful stage management in order to establish the right relationship and access to the desired goods. Moreover, to be a relative or to be recommended by a buddy of the potential patron will prove to be most helpful, affiliation being a very personal matter.

The patron also has his motives. After all, to be big depends on recognition and a vast number of people who attribute that recognition to his status. To have a

vast number of dependents may also increase his resources : by having 'his men' in the right places he expands and extends his power, his ability to give favours and to receive services and recognition. To bind his client (*luuk-noong*, ลูกน้อง) the patron is expected to care for him and to protect him under all circumstances.

The favour of the patron creates a personal *bunghun* (บุญคุณ) relationship and places the recipient under a certain obligation of loyalty, a kind of a debt of honour as it were. Yet, depending on the closeness of the relationship and the favour (s) received, affiliations may become vague over time and the *bunghun* involved may become exhausted. Basically these are temporary dyadic relationships and such relationships need to be reinforced while the patron needs to stay in power if the relationship is to remain mutually beneficial and alive. One could say that such relationships are informed by pragmatic *bunghun* that dissipates when the two parties have lived up to their contract. It makes sense to reinforce the *bunghun* involved if the relationship is to survive, affiliation with power being *ad hoc* and temporary *per se*.

2. Money and protection

To understand the laws of social relationship, much more reflection is needed about the mechanics of power, money, and technology. Power corrupts, and corruption may breed power; both money and power want to grow and to exploit, and the same mechanism appears to be built into the expansion of and the fascination with technology. Somehow these appear to be blind and amoral forces that go their own way, and when they play their role in social relationships, we need to evaluate these forces in their own right together with the positions of its human actors, and their intentions and value orientations.

To be big and to have prestige was for a long historical period a function of one's relationship to the centre of power in terms of royalty and nobility, and political power and riches rather depended on one's patrimony than that they were sources of power in themselves. It appears that this situation has drastically changed over the last ten to twenty years in an expanding and developing economy. The power of money *per se* has become an essential element for the understanding of the Thai social process and plays havoc with the traditional system of patronage and protective relationships, money becoming a purpose rather than a means. Formerly, the aristocrats, or the nobility who held political and executive power, were supposed to be rich; today it seems that to be rich also qualifies to be an aristocrat and that money can buy all the necessary favours, cutting short the personal and affiliative channels of patronage and protection (Mulder 1978b)

There is a clear tendency in the Thai system for relationships to become monetized and businesslike, a tendency that also fits the forceful influence of the concept of power (Mulder 1977a and forthcoming). Where extensive networks of personal relationships were the necessary ingredient to advance one's purposes, 'affiliation', at least its purposes of protection, facilities, and favours can now be bought

outright. When I read Bunchoke Chiamwiriya's (บุณโชค เข็มมณี) publications, the newspaper, or the lamentations of the Anti-Corruption Committee, then I cannot be but impressed by the scarcely hidden moral outrage that the old system does no longer work but begins to be dominated by the blind power of money and its mechanics that go their own way, irrespective of prestige and other traditional considerations. In such cases the affiliative motive has become a caricature of itself, devoid of motives of friendship, *bunghun*, or even temporary loyalty. It is affiliation because of money, and the money seems to be able to buy the power, and so indirectly even the prestige that prostitutes itself, which was also expressed in the lines of the song 'ไม่ว่ามี หุ่นเงินซื้อรักกันได้' ('This is the way it is : 'exalted people, have the money to buy (our) love').

3. Avoidance

The vast masses of people who have no access to a patron or the money to buy themselves the protection and the favours they need, had better stay at home and avoid dealings with power as much as possible. When confronted with power they will show the same behaviour that may lead to affiliation and protection, buy yet their smile, their show of politeness and acceptance, etc., are informed by *kreengklu* and feelings of powerlessness and inferiority. It is not a quest for affiliation, but a quest to be left alone and to avoid.

Power evokes two basic reactions : 1) to be protected by it and to seek more of it, as discussed under 'Patronage, and 2) avoidance. In the analysis of Thai behaviour and social process these motives have most often been blended, for instance in Weerayudh's view of affiliation, and in Phillips' terms more oriented to avoidance and self-reliant individualism. By placing the avoidance motive more squarely in the structure of interaction, we are in a better position to think about its significance.

Weerayudh notes a vast variety of behavioural expressions in *phuunooj-phuuaj* interaction that he evaluates as avoidance and fear, such as self-restraint (*kaankebtua*, ควบคุมตัว), *kreengcaj*, politeness, fear of causing loss of face, to be on the safe side, avoidance of conflict, inferiority feelings, etc., but he always structures them into the perspective of his model of affiliative society while explaining them as mechanisms of *maitriisamphan* ('affiliation', ไมตรีสัมพันธ์) that serve friendship-, acceptance- and dependency needs. Still it appears to me that avoidance will often be the more basic motive of the *phuunooj* in the interaction with a *phuuaj* whom he primarily perceives as powerful.

In contrast, Phillips' interpretation of Bang Chan interaction of *phuunooj* among themselves makes avoidance a principle of his analysis, and he thus finds 1,771 people who avoid other than superficial contacts, resulting in the same number of individualists who are somehow self-sufficient and without the need for affiliation (1965).

The problem seems to lie in the behavioural expressions that look alike but are yet trained to different purposes; these purposes can only be explicated by considering the structure of interaction in its specific times, places, and persons involved; also, whether there is any *bunghun* and benefit (*phonprajood*, ผลประโยชน์) involved in the relationship. Affiliation carries the hope of benefit, and thus *bunghun*; avoidance means to be without hope, to expect exploitation or trouble, and thus resignation and avoidance (*khwaam-maj-jaak-jung-kiao*, ความไม่พอใจกลัว). Yet situations may be such that one cannot avoid being there, and thus one smiles to avoid further trouble. Weerayudh exaggerates the quest for friendship, Phillips exaggerates the perception of trouble, disturbance, and the wisdom of non-involvement and superficial participation, while Piker (1975) sees *kreengcaj* type behaviour primarily as motivated by the quest to avoid personal disappointment, an interpretation that we can already find in Blanchard (1958).

There are many situations in life that are superficially informed by the forms of affiliation and the wisdom of promoting a smooth and conflict-free atmosphere but that, at a deeper level, can also be explained by the avoidance motive. By caring for and appreciating a smooth and pleasant social atmosphere in interaction of all types, individuals are necessarily fairly conscious of their presentation. They are careful and polite, know their place, are tolerant and somewhat suspicious. In this way they can avoid deeper contacts, conflicts, trouble, and unpleasantness. When the hierarchical dimension imposes itself on the situation, as in generalized *phunooj-phuujaaj* interaction, or in a clear structure of powerlessness on the one side and power and command on the other, people have even more reason to try to avoid inferiority feelings (*noojnaa*, ภูมิใจ,) feelings of compulsion (*khob-ok-khab-caj*, ควบคุม), and then it is certainly not *kreengcaj* that informs their behaviour, but rather *kreengkluua* and avoidance. These situations and the behavioural strategies to deal with them are common enough in generalized 'third person' interaction and also occur in certain strongly ranked 'second person' relationships (for instance, authoritarian father versus son), and are difficult to explain with the affiliative drive, avoidance strategy and *kreengkluua* feeling apparently explaining more.

4. The primary group of 'second persons'

To me it seems that Weerayudh's affiliative motive can best be applied to understand the relationships in communal life, where hierarchy is not a strongly outstanding feature but rather has the characteristics of a system of ranked roles and statuses that most people may hope to achieve during the completion of their life-cycle. It applies, in my terms, to the extended area of 'second person' interaction that should extend over the borders of one's immediate community to include the vast mass of common, simple people that comprises the majority of the Thai population. These people do not live in the perspective of great social mobility, spectacular social manipulation, of being rich or big in the wider context of Thai society, but live within the boundaries of a changing traditional society. They are rather conservative, have low future expectations, and whether they are

members of the expanding lower urban middle class or villagers, their ethos of *kreengcaj* and the affiliative motive in the sense of achieving love, warmth, friendship, and social acceptance is most visible among them. They deeply appreciate a quiet and predictable society and have a rather low level of achievement aspirations. To them the care for politeness and smoothness, peacefulness and tradition (*khanob-prapheeni-an-dii-ngaam*, ขันอบประเพณีอันดีงาม) through *kreengcaj* attitudes, the quest for friendliness and compromise makes deep sense and is invested with considerable emotion.

It is also among them that we find the truly reciprocal relationships of cooperation and exchange, and the relationships between ranked family and community roles, including relationships with teachers and those *phuuajaj* who are relatively near in terms of social distance. Such relationships are informed by reciprocity, and often by the deep moral *bunghun* that qualifies them as the 'closed interpersonal relationships' of Titaya (1976); such relationships tend to be enduring.

FIRST CONCLUSION

Weerayudh gave the following operational definition of *khwaamkreengcaj*: 'it is a psychological strategy that is used by persons to maintain or to improve the existing social atmosphere, interpersonal relationships, attitudes, and one's self-image, through inhibition, such as not following one's personal goals or wishes, or even by going against them. In general *kreengcaj* occurs on the side of the person who holds a lower position in respect to another... as a feeling it is often inspired by the fear that the other person will be worried, irritated, lose his kindness, or will or lose face. *Kreengcaj* is further linked as a core strategic element to achieve an affiliative society that is characterized by a quest for the security of friendship and social acceptance' (n.y. : 8/1).

Considering the affiliative motive in the perspective of the preceding analysis, it appears that affiliation and its *kreengcaj* strategy need to be evaluated against the structurally defined relationships in which they play or do not play a role. For the small man, who holds no concrete hopes for social advancement and who is therefore low on *n* Achievement, *kreengcaj* toward and affiliation with his extended group of 'second persons' make sense, and to him it is worthwhile to sacrifice personality expression for the sake of social acceptance and harmony. To understand his behaviour we need to understand his social motive and social perceptions. He is not just psychologically 'inhibited' or going against his own wishes, as Weerayudh wants us to believe; he is not so prone to avoid individual disappointment, as Blanchard and Piker hypothesize; and he is certainly not so much an individual loner, as Phillips concludes. While all these negative motives are to a certain extent true, they are also born out of the contrast with the Western ideal of personality expression that underlies these evaluations. The small man is very much a social man who is well aware of the structural barriers that impede his social climbing or his achieving of extraordinary prestige. To understand his social

motive the emphasis should primarily be on 'affiliation' and maximizing social well-being as social strategies, and less on its personality centred interpretations. It may even be hypothesized that ordinary Thai will do comparatively well in terms of *n* Achievement if the structural barriers to their latent energy are relaxed.

Affiliation also made much sense when seen in the perspective of the personal quest for patronage and protection, or the quest for a refuge (*thiiiphyng*, หนี) in the area of strongly hierarchical relationships of powerful national society, but there we also noted a diversity of motives. To the small man *kreengcaj* behaviour and *kreengklu*a feelings, combined with some luck, might result in the enviable position of finding himself in the patronage of a big shot as a reward for his affiliative manipulation. For the socially ambitious person such affiliation would often seem to be purely instrumental, and his show of *kreengcaj* more of a personal strategy: the latter's drive for affiliation is more motivated by ambition than by care for the social atmosphere *per se*. Superficially his behaviour looked very similar, but motives and purposes appeared to be different: he affiliated with powerful persons in order to acquire power and prestige himself.

In many instances nowadays, affiliation to achieve power or riches appears to be achievable, not by *kreengcaj* or the show of it, but by placing the power of money at par with the power of status and command. While much power remains traditionally vested in persons and their ranks, the quest for their protection and affiliation is now open to another strategy, namely, to buy it, which has absolutely nothing to do with the theory of affiliative society, but is an outcome of modernity, businesslike affiliation, and an entrepreneurial achievement motive. It also stands in the way of the small and powerless man to seek traditional patronage: the potential patron is no longer interested in demonstrating his greatness by a vast retinue of dependents since he can more easily let himself be paid for his protection and favours.

Because of this tendency, the avoidance motive in the relationship between powerful and powerless society may be strengthened while the gap between these two segments grows. Avoidance may be dressed up in the old symbols of *kreengcaj* behaviour, while it is not guided by an affiliative motive any longer. In this expanding area of modern interaction, indifference, resignation, not to be interested, not to have anything to do with it, to care for oneself and one's immediate group, are becoming very concrete motives, together with feelings of *kreengklu*a, hopelessness, resignation, and an 'I don't care' attitude that are all far divorced from the care for a social atmosphere and the quest for affiliation.

COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE :

The Meaningful Structure of Thai Experience and the Achievement Motive

To understand the socio-cultural direction of everyday life, it may be helpful to apply the following analytical and comparative paradigm to the Thai experience. In every life situation, people live with ideas, other persons, their self or personality,

and material things, and, analytically, these four elements structure their experience. The way they live with them is made understandable, that is, meaningful, by their culture that attributes value to these four areas of experience. From the common ideas and values that constitute a culture we can learn which of these areas are of more than ordinary interest and in which achievement is valued. Achievement for its own sake in one area or another may carry prestige, be admired, and is thus socially valued, while achievement for its own sake in another area is an individual matter that receives little social recognition, and is thus socially not, or sometimes even negatively valued. Let us see what we learn from the application of this paradigm about Thai social dynamics and the meaningful structure of Thai experience.

Some cultures, such as old Greece, early Islam, or the West after the Middle Ages, greatly value the development and the discovery of ideas and honour intellectual, spiritual, or religious curiosity; consequently achievement in this area is stimulated. When we look at modern Thailand, however, we still find a traditional, rather static situation. Wisdom and knowledge are of course highly respected, as exemplified in the position of teachers and elders, but the cultural concept of wisdom and knowledge is static. To study means to amass the knowledge of one's teachers, and not its development, and whether it are university or ecclesiastical examinations, what society is interested in is a level of knowledge, and not the development of spiritual or intellectual curiosity. On the contrary, people who develop knowledge and come with new ideas are suspect, whether they are social critics (Sulak Sivarakas; Puey Ungphakorn), religious reformers (Buddhadasa Bhikkhu), politicians (Boonsanong Punyodyana), administrators (Bunchoke's 'Revolutionary District Officer', 'นนทบุรี'), or bright *phuunooj* who want to give their bosses advice. To achieve in the area of ideas is, in spite of the pressures of modernity, still negatively valued in Thai culture that prefers to go by recipes and the wisdom of tradition.

Some cultures, such as old China, Japan, and North America, are fascinated by the thing that they want to master, to improve, and to understand. Achievement in this area of experience easily translates into the development of technology as a purpose in itself, in the development of natural sciences, and in mastery of the physical environment. Artisans, engineers, inventors, scientists, and skilled people in general are admired and achievement in the realm of things carries social prestige and personal satisfaction while it may lead to an interesting and developed environment.

When we look at contemporary Thailand, the role of things needs to be evaluated in a different perspective. Things, including money, serve primarily to express social excellence, and leaving the Chinese apart, they have little intrinsic interest. One could say that the use things are put to, is to have them rather than to master them: they function as a social appendage. Yet Thai interest in things and material environment is certainly more developed than in Java. The drive is not mastery and development, but rather decoration. Things are the decoration of life, and that decoration is highly appreciated, yet of a purely consumptive nature.

The Thai are certainly interested in their material environment, not to achieve but to demonstrate prestige and also in terms of their contribution to beauty and the enhancement of a feeling of well-being. The development of art in Thailand, especially since the later Ayuthaya period, is highly decorative, not informed by a great vision, but extremely pleasant to the eye. Similarly, the art of cooking is highly developed, and whereas perhaps not advanced to a cultural preoccupation such as in China or France, the Thai cuisine must be rated as one of the best in this world. Also environment, be it clothing, gardens, housebuilding, flower breeding, or handicrafts receive much attention. Yet, of all this interest in material environment, its purpose should be rated as the decoration of life rather than a deep interest in the material world itself. Things serve to demonstrate social excellence or consumptive pleasantness and have no interest *per se*.

The same goes for the appreciation of work. While the Thai are an active and energetic people, work is hardly rated to be a valid enterprise in itself. The lowly peasant, who is in direct confrontation with nature, or the workman in his direct contact with things, receive scant recognition; to work at a desk, to be *caw-khon-naaj-khon* (เจ้าขุนนายคน) is much better. Work is the demonstration of status and position, and the greater the distance from direct thing manipulation, the higher the prestige. While for females this seems to be somewhat different, and while they often show a drive for achievement in the sense of McClelland, the general idea still seems to be that work demonstrates position and prestige rather than a task at hand, or a mastery and achievement motive *per se*.

It is possibly only the modern Western cultures that appreciate the development of the independent personality as a purpose in itself and as a legitimate goal for achievement. This achievement, however, should be bounded by a strong sense of social responsibility. There is nothing wrong with a non-conventional personality, and as long as he does not violently threaten the order of society, the eccentric may develop his own ideas and personality. His personal independence is a recognized right, at least tolerated, and often admired. In a general sense this is stimulated by modern Western socialization practices.

In this area Thai culture is highly ambiguous. As long as a person does not directly oppose, his personality expression may be tolerated. While Thai socialization has a strong emphasis on conformity and knowing one's place, to be an independent personality (*khwaam-pen-tua-khoong-tua-eeng*, ความเป็นตัวของตัวเอง) and the *caj-jen* (ใจสู้) attitude are also admired as long as they do not cause others the feeling of anger and frustration (*khwaam-dyad-roon*, ความเดือดร้อน). In certain areas of expression the demonstration of such personal independence may be admired, such as in the figure of the *nakleeng* (นักเลง) who goes successfully against social conventions, *Khun Phaen* (ขุนพัน) and *Srithanonchaj* (ศรีธนญชัย) being the classical examples; more commonly such contrapuntal behaviour is expressed in the demonstration of one's machismo (*citcaj-nakleeng*, ใจนักเลง), but this last behaviour is most often motivated by the quest for admiration and is not a true demonstration of personal independence. As soon as personality expression becomes outright social criticism, then sympathy

wanes and the person is ostracized; as long as it remains an individual show only, it may be appreciated.

At their core, all cultures have the tendency to promote social conformity and develop a powerful social achievement motive. Apart from an ambiguous individual motive, the thrust of Thai behaviour and society seems to be informed by this social motive, like most other societies that appreciate tradition and established order as purposes in themselves. In the earlier paragraphs we have discussed the two dominant motives that seem to inform Thai behaviour and social relationships. For the vast majority the care for a social atmosphere of pleasantness and reliability appeared to satisfy their achievement needs: they achieved by accomplishing their life-cycle from baby to elder, others, in hierarchical society, hoped to achieve rank, prestige and power. The other possible areas of meaningful experience were culturally not elaborated. The Thai achievement motive is therefore largely confined to social acceptance or social superiority, both being social motives *par excellenc*.

FINAL CONCLUSION

In terms of the need for achievement the Thai are social entrepreneurs who want to achieve satisfaction in the area of social relationships. Their personality achievement is tolerated as long as it has no consequences for the existing order. Achievement in the areas of matter and ideas is not appreciated. This contrasts with McClelland's achievement motive, in which it is argued that the need for achievement promotes personality development and the will to master the material environment, leading to entrepreneurship and economic development. This drive is low among the ethnic Thai, although not among the Thai of Chinese descent, and can be understood in the configuration of Thai culture. It is neither things, ideas, nor personality expression in their own right that are appreciated or ways to accepted achievement. The achievement motive that Thai culture fosters, is social and traditionally expressed in the achievement of affiliation. To understand Thai behaviour in these times of modernity and change, however, we need to postulate other motives besides affiliation. By placing behaviour within the structural dynamics of Thai society and by reflecting upon motives and ends in specific situations we could diversify the notion of affiliation and identify a few other core motives, such as the quest for power and the avoidance motive.

Next to these pervading motives, small groups of differently motivated and independently minded people are emerging; mostly they occupy modern middle class positions and they are motivated to achieve entrepreneurial or professional excellence. As modern journalists, scientists, students, authors, intellectuals and social critics they do not yet appear to have found their way to acceptance and relevance in the changing Thai system. They contrast with the commercial middle class that is entrepreneurially motivated and that seems to have found perfect ways of fitting itself in the quasi-traditional quasi-modern post-traditional system of present Thai society. This latter class does not so much strive for change as for survival through accommodation with the existing.

This cannot be said of the modern urban proletarians : in their anonymous environment of the Bangkok slums they have learned that the traditional affiliation motive does not lead to their well-being; they may hope to achieve a measure of social justice and just compensation for their labour; yet, these are abstract ideals that, like the ideals of the modernly motivated middle class intellectuals, cannot be fulfilled in the existing Thai order. In both these groups, however, the seeds of the Achievement motive in the sense of McClelland seem to have been shown.

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