

Chapter II
THE VILLAGES STUDIED

Choice of Villages for the Present Study

At the present time, data collection is complete for 18 villages (10 from Round I, and 8 from Round II as detailed above). The scope of the present study makes it impossible, however, to deal with more than a few of these villages. The choice has been narrowed down by the fact that the data for the 8 villages of Round II are not yet all available for analysis. The villages chosen are consequently all from Round I, as the data for Round I are all presently available, they have already been subjected to considerable analysis, the research assistants' reports are complete, and the present investigator is familiar with the data, the reports, and, in most cases, the villages themselves.

Of the 10 villages of Round I, 5 must be eliminated because of the impossibility of identifying the Socio-Economic Profile data for all of the intensively studied households. The villages which must be eliminated for this reason are all of those in Changwat Khon Kaen (Project Areas III and IV) and 1 village in Project Area III, Changwat Chiang Mai. This means that the three villages from Project Area I (Changwat Ayutthaya), and two of the three from Project Area II (Changwat Chiang Mai), are available for the present study.

One of the five villages readily available to this study is particularly interesting for the purpose of the study, as this village was

the one radical departure from the procedure described above for selecting the intensively studied sample. Because of difficulties arising in the course of fieldwork, the village studied extensively was not the one in which the intensively studied households were located, but the village adjacent to it. However, the Socio-Economic Profile Schedule was administered to the 10 intensively studied households, as well as to the extensively studied village.

Brief Description of the Villages¹

1. BAN CHUNG

Ban Chung is the name of a tambon in Amphoe Nakhon Luang (Changwat Ayutthaya) and also of the main wat² in the tambon. Three of the six villages in the tambon are located around an elongated swamp or pond 280 rai² in area. The other three are built along the road to Amphoe Pha Chi.

The land in the tambon is slightly higher than that in most of Changwat Ayutthaya. The pond has been connected to the local irrigation system, making it possible for it to be filled and used as a reservoir. These two factors make rice transplanting possible, so that yields here are higher than in many parts of the province. In fact, rice from this tambon is of good quality, and in high demand at the provincial rice mills.

Wat Ban Chung and one of the schools are located together on one side of the pond, and in their immediate vicinity there are about twenty

¹For more information, see Amyot (1974).

²See glossary of Thai terms, Appendix C.

shops and a fresh produce market. This market area at Wat Ban Chung serves most of the daily needs of the villagers of the tambon, and attracts customers from outside as well. For goods and services not available here, the villagers go to the market at Amphoe Pha Chi as a first choice, to that near Wat Tanot, one and a half kilometers away as a second, and to Hua Ro market in Ayutthaya town as a last resort.

The village studied in tambon Ban Chung was administrative village number 2, which is located adjacent to, but not including the market area near Wat Ban Chung. The village population early in the year of study was 469 persons, (86 households) of which 54 % were in the labour force, 32 % were children 10 years old or less, 3 % were aged or handicapped, and 11 % were persons 11 years or older who were engaged in full-time study or training.

The main occupation in the village was rice farming. In fact, 82 % of the labour force named agriculture as the industry of main occupation, and an additional 7 % named it as the industry of subsidiary occupation. The remaining 18 % of the labour force who did not name agriculture as industry of main occupation were distributed among several industries, the largest group being in trading (5 %). Trading was also the industry of subsidiary occupation for 17 % of the labour force. The percentages in other industries were small, ranging from 0 % to 4 % in the case of industries of main occupation, and from 0 % to 3 % in that of industries of subsidiary occupation.

Rice farming was not the only agricultural work, as many households also grew fruits and vegetables, (the most important being bananas, coconuts, mangoes, and lamut), or raised buffalo and/or chickens. None of these were nearly as important as rice, however. Fruits and vegetables were sold by 10 % of households in the one-year period preceding the interviews. Buffalo were being raised by 60 % of households, but in small numbers. They are essential to rice farming here, as rice is transplanted, and hand tractors are only just beginning to come into the village. No one was raising cattle. Hogs were being raised by 5 % of households, and this was an important activity for those involved, as 3 of the 4 households had 5 to 15 head at the time of interviewing. Poultry were being raised by 70 % of households, but only 11 % had 20 or more. During the year preceding the interviews, 29 % of households sold poultry, but again the number sold per household was less than 20 in all except 6 % of all households.

2. KHAYAI

Tambon Khayai is located along the Lopburi River in Amphoe Bang Pahan, and is only about a fifteen minute boat ride away from the town of Ayutthaya. The villagers of this tambon have two major occupations, both important. Rice is grown by the broadcast method, and the villagers are engaged in brick-making as home industry. Brick-making is made possible by suitable local soil, and convenient transportation provided by the Lopburi River.

For goods and services the tambon is oriented entirely towards the town of Ayutthaya, close by. Marketing of produce, both rice and

bricks, is done in the tambon. Traders come into the villages from rice mills in town, and from various places in the Central Plains to buy bricks.

The village chosen for study, consisting of administrative villages 2 and 3, contained 656 persons in 134 households. Henceforth, the name "Khayai" will be used to refer only to this composite village.

Early in the year of fieldwork, the population of 656 was divided as follows: labour force, 58 %; 10 years old or less, 24 %; aged or handicapped, 7 %; 11 years or older but studying full-time, 11 %.

Home industry (mostly brick-making) was the industry of main occupation for 50 % of the labour force, and agriculture the industry of main occupation for an additional 31 %. Trading and Government Service each occupied 5 %. The remaining 9 % of the labour force were distributed among other industries.

The same pattern existed for industry of subsidiary occupation, where 23 % were in home industry, and 14 % were in agriculture. (53 % had no subsidiary occupation.) This in effect means that 73 % of the labour force were involved in home industry, either as a main or as a subsidiary occupation, and 45 % were involved in agriculture as a main or a subsidiary occupation.

Farming in this village really means rice growing. No household grew other crops for sale, or raised cattle or hogs. Only 31 % of households raised buffalo, the number per household ranging between 1 and 5. This is largely because most households in Khayai use

tractors for ploughing, as rice is broadcast. Moreover, tending buffalo and ploughing by this slower method where not necessary would reduce the labour force available for brick-making in households engaged in it as well. Only 14 % of households raised any poultry, and the numbers raised were small (all fewer than 20) with the exception of 1 household raising between 50 and 100. Poultry was sold by only 7 % of households.

3. THAP NAM

Tambon Thap Nam is in Amphoe Bang Pahan (Changwat Ayutthaya) adjoining Amphoe Pa Mok of Changwat Angthong. Its communications with the town of Ayutthaya are very limited, partly because there are local centres with most of the goods and services the villagers need, and partly because of the transportation difficulties involved in going to the town. During the wet season, the villagers go to the market at the amphoe seat (Bang Pahan) for goods and services, as it can be reached by boat in about 40 minutes. It is a further quarter of an hour by bus or three quarters of an hour by boat to the town of Ayutthaya. During the dry season when the canal from Thap Nam to Ban Li, half the distance to Bang Pahan, is not navigable, the villagers prefer to go to the market in Amphoe Pa Mok, a 45 minute trip over the fields by bicycle or motorcycle, rather than to spend almost an hour walking to Ban Li and an additional 20 minutes in a boat to get to Bang Pahan. The market in Pa Mok is also much bigger, and preferred by the villagers.

The difficulty of communication is only the first of the tambon's problems. A greater one is the irrigation system which has deteriorated as a result of linking the area with the Chainat reservoir eight years before the field work. Early in the rice planting season when some water is needed to finish ploughing the fields, and for the germination of the rice seed, no irrigation water is available. If the rainfall during this period is too light (and it is rather unpredictable in May and June) the seed does not germinate and grow sufficiently to withstand the floods which come in late August or September. So the rice crop in any year can be destroyed either by drought early in the season, or by floods in August and September, or by a combination of the two.

The unreliability of the rice crop has caused the villagers of Thap Nam to turn to livestock raising as a subsidiary occupation. A substantial part of the labour force (especially in those households without agricultural holdings, or with very small ones) is also involved in casual labour, hiring themselves out to do whatever work is available at the time. Most of the available work is actually agricultural labour, for which the demand is high during the rice harvesting season.

The village studied in tambon Thap Nam was administrative village number 4. Early in the year of study, the population was 352 persons, divided among 65 households. Of this population, 54 % were in the labour force, 9 % were students 11 years or older engaged in full-time study or training, 32 % were children 10 years of age or less, and 5 % were aged or handicapped.

The data on industries of main and subsidiary occupations bear out what was said earlier about the economic base of the village.

Seventy percent of the labour force were engaged in agriculture as industry of main occupation, 10 % were in trading, and 16 % in casual labour. The data on industry of subsidiary occupation do not change the pattern much, 61 % did not have a subsidiary occupation, 16 % were engaged in agriculture, and 18 % were working as casual labourers. Therefore, 86 % of the labour force were somehow involved in agriculture, and 34 % were somehow involved in casual labour. The only other industry with more than 3 % was trading, in which 14 % of the labour force were involved either as a main or as a subsidiary occupation.

Of the 65 households in the village studied in Thap Nam, 45 had agricultural holdings. In the year before the fieldwork, most of these grew other crops besides rice, namely corn, sesame, and watermelons, all of which were planted at the beginning of the rains in May.

Such crops are grown basically for household consumption, and the risk of crop failure is always about 50 %. Nevertheless, in the year previous to the fieldwork, 20 % of households sold some of this produce, or else fruits and vegetables, the average amount sold being about 85 % of what they harvested. Almost half of those selling crops other than rice said they sold directly to the consumer (other villagers). Livestock raising was an important activity of most households in Thap Nam. Households with no land holdings or very small ones usually concentrated on raising ducks or cattle. Households that were better-off preferred to raise pigs. Buffalo were

owned by 48 % of households at the time of interviewing, but only 2 % of households had 6 to 10 head. One-third of the households raising buffalo had one, and the rest had from 2 to 5 head. Cattle were being raised by 14 % of households, again with no household having more than 10 head. Buffalo or cattle had been sold by 20 % of the households during the year preceding the fieldwork. Hogs were being raised by 69 % of households, the frequency distribution of numbers raised being 1 or 2 head, 29 % of households; 3 - 5 head, 16 %, 6 - 10 head, 9 %; 11 - 15 head, 9 %; 16 - 25 head, 6 %. No household had more than 25 head. Hogs were sold by 39 % of households during the year preceding the fieldwork, the frequency distribution for numbers sold being: 2 head, 9 %; 3 - 5 head, 6 %; 6 - 10 head, 19 %; 11 - 15 head, 1.5 %; 16 - 25 head, 1.5 %; and 26 - 50 head, 1.5 %.

As chickens were only raised in small numbers, most of the poultry in the village were in fact ducks. Poultry were being raised by 70 % of households, the frequency distribution being as follows : 1 - 10, 16 %; 11 - 20, 24 %; 21 - 50, 15 % ; 51 or more, 15 %. (5 % of households were raising more than 200). Poultry were sold by 54 % of households, with a frequency distribution similar to that for numbers raised.

4. ON TAI

On Tai is the name of a tambon in Amphoe San Kamphaeng, Changwat Chiang Mai. It is located between tambons Tha Neua and Mee Tha on the east, tambon Chae Chang on the west, and tambon On Neua on the north. The tambon stretches south to the border between the amphoe

and Amphoe Muang, Changwat Lamphun. It can be reached from the amphoe seat by travelling 14 kilometers along the road between the seat of Amphoe San Kamphaeng and tambon On Neua, and then taking a branch road to the South, or by travelling along the road which goes through tambon Chae Chang. Both of these roads are dirt and laterite, and can be used all year. The southern route through tambon Chae Chang is used by the minibuses from On Tai which carry traders to the market early each morning, and back again before noon. There is no public transport later in the day as far as On Tai along this route. However, minibuses from tambon On Neua run over the northern route making about 10 return trips a day, depending on the number of passengers wanting transportation. These runs are concentrated in the morning, especially for leaving the village, but there are always some entering in the afternoon, as many village children from On Neua study in the Amphoe Mathayom Suksa³ School in San Kamphaeng. These buses from On Neua go all the way into Chiang Mai (a total distance of 26 km.) for the price of 3 baht.⁴ Villagers from On Tai wishing to use this service must walk out to the On Neua road, a distance of 3 kilometers from the village closest to the road.

Tambon On Tai is situated on flat flood-plains surrounded by mountains. The On River flows through the tambon, and is joined by two smaller streams, the Lan and the Pha Hen Rivers, which originate in the tambon.

³ - See glossary of Thai terms, Appendix C.

⁴ - Ibid.

Ban Pa Ha, the village studied in tambon On Tai (village 9) was a small village of 96 households during the survey period. The village is located in the center of its surrounding rice fields. The two tributaries of the On, the Lan and the Pha Hen Rivers, flow through the fields, one on either side of the village, and join the On River in a nearby village.

The most important occupation of the village labour force is rice farming. Water for irrigation is obtained from the two small streams by means of small canals dug through the fields. This is an old village-level irrigation system built and maintained by the villagers. In recent years the villagers have begun to grow tobacco, and more important, sugar cane. Sugar cane is usually grown along the streams, although some households rent land in neighbouring villages for this crop. Tobacco is grown in the rice fields during the dry season. Another lucrative enterprise is the collection of bamboo shoots in the forest. Selling them in the market in San Kampheng brings some village households an annual income of as much as 2,000 baht.

There is a small rice mill in the village owned by the Kamnan. For other goods and services the villagers must go either to Amphoe San Kamphaeng, or to the city of Chiang Mai.

During the year preceding the survey, farming was the industry of main occupation for 88 % of the village labour force, and the remaining 12 % were engaged in it as industry of subsidiary occupation. 3 % listed trading as industry of main occupation and 3 %, manufacturing. Participation in other industries was negligible. 67 % of the labour force had no subsidiary occupation. The industry of

subsidiary occupation with the highest frequency was farming (12 %), followed by casual labour (6 %), and trading (5 %). Construction was industry of main occupation for 2 % and industry of subsidiary occupation for an additional 4 % (the village's carpenters and woodworkers).

5. BUAK KHANG

In tambon Buak Khang the sampling procedure differed from that used in other places. The intensively studied households were in village 2, locally known as "Ban Buak Khang", while the Socio-Economic Profile Schedule studied administrative village 6, "Ban Roi Phrom". In order to differentiate between these two villages, they will be referred to by their local names.

Tambon Buak Khang is situated just south of the amphoe seat of Amphoe San Kamphaeng, Changwat Chiang Mai. To the west it borders on Amphoe Saraphi, and Changwat Lamphun. To the south and east, its borders are with Changwat Lamphun. Ban Buak Khang is just 2 kilometers from the amphoe seat, whereas Ban Roi Phrom is 4 kilometers from the amphoe seat, and just 2 kilometers from the border with tambon Ban Thi, Changwat Lamphun. Local communication is mainly by bicycle over the dirt and laterite roads of the tambon. The only public transport is bicycle "samlors" (usually called rickshaws in English). During the dry season, villagers without bicycles walk along paths through the fields, which are often substantial short-cuts.

Tambon Buak Khang is situated on a large flat plain through which the On River runs. Just beyond the tambon boundaries, the On joins

the Kuan River. The tambon has local irrigation systems, but water is always in somewhat short supply. The farmers terrace their rice fields slightly to enable water to run down from one to the next.

Rice farming is the main occupation in the tambon, and this is true of both villages studied. The other occupations pursued by the villagers differ, however.

At the beginning of the fieldwork, Ban Buak Khang had 78 households, and about 485 persons. It does not have the characteristics of a community distinct from other communities, as it is located very close to the amphoe seat, and there are other administrative village units close to it. The most important occupation here after rice-farming is cloth-weaving. The women of the village bring thread home from the tourist-oriented shops in San Kamphaeng to weave on their own looms. A single household may have as many as 3 to 4 looms, all with flying shuttles, if the household has many women in it. During most of the year, the looms are in use for many hours a day. If they are free from other work, the women sit under their houses weaving, and chatting to each other as they work. A third occupation in this village, pursued mainly by young men, is peddling "samlor" in the town of San Kamphaeng.

Ban Roi Phrom was a village of 171 households, and 929 persons early in the year of study. Again, rice farming is the main occupation for the village. However, the farmers also use their fields during the dry season for growing peanuts. This is possible because of the artesian wells which the villagers have begun to dig in their fields

in the past few years. The peanuts are sold in Changwat Lamphun. Home Industry is also an important occupation. There is some weaving of cloth for the shops in San Kamphaeng, but more people do basketry, for which the village is well-known. There are also a few chicken traders in the village who travel within the tambon and to neighbouring tambons buying and selling chickens.

Socio-economic data other than the above are not available for Ban Buak Khang. Detailed information can only be given for Ban Roi Phrom. Farming was the industry of main occupation for 53 % of the labour force, industry (working in the shops in San Kamphaeng as weavers) accounted for an additional 15 %, casual labour for 13 %, home industry for 7 %, and trading for 5 %. The remaining 7 % of the labour force were distributed among the other industries, with the exception of transport, in which no one was involved.

As for industry of subsidiary occupation, 34 % of the labour force were involved in farming, 5 % in manufacturing industries, 6 % in casual labouring, 3 % in home industry, and 3 % in trading, either as main or subsidiary occupations. 43 % did not have a subsidiary occupation.