THE COGNITIVE FRAMEWORK OF ANIMISM AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MOVEMENT IN THAILAND

— with special reference to the notion of "Popular Wisdom"—

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Introduction

The present might be the second time since the World War II that the community development comes into fashion in Asian countries. The first time was in 1950s, when rural development projects by the UN inititative were implemented on the community level of rural Asia, in such fields as mass education, agricultural extention, cooperative, and public health. During that time such ideas as "participation", "initiative", "mutual-aid", and "self-help" by the community members themselves were emphasized [Sonoda 1978:99-122].

Today we hear almost the same slogans as "participation", "self-reliance", "potentiality" by "people" themselves. The main differences seem to be; firstly, the initiative comes from the NGO private groups instead of the UN official organization, and secondly, the traditional community as such is advised to be applied as a valuable tool for development, instead of reorganizing it on a more democratic principle in the former fifties.

This paper is a series of case study for the NGO community development movement in Thailand, discussing analytically and critically the theoretical

framework of the movement, albeit with a special reference to the concept of "popular (or local) wisdom" (*phumi pan'ya chaoban*[*thongthin*]) for this time.

Among streams of the movement, there are mainly two types, group-oriented and individual-oriented ones. "Popular (local) wisdom" is typical of the latter and its nature is interesting to discuss by comparing with that of traditional animistic culture of "passive individualism".

I discussed in the former part of the previous papers, focusing upon reviewing the works of the two famous movement theorists, Prof. Chatthip and Dr. Prawet, as follows; (1) The traditional community that the movement workers or theorists are talking about is not a reality itself but their ideal value for social order, (2) It echoes the "post-modernism" of that recent Western ideologists present their discourse, (3) The framework of their theory are, (a) "Anti-modernism" (refusal of market economy, competitive individualism, state-integrated politics, and materialist culture), (b) "Populist domination ideal" (villagers sovereignty, villagers self-reliance, domination by small community government), and (c) "Cultural national-

ism", looking for national identity, (4) The most serious problem is their naive dichotomy of the community versus the modernity, and their resultant over-their expectation to the former in contrast to too much easy total denial of the latter [Kitahara 1993b;1995].

I admit that the community level development will play one of the essential parts of the public system in remeding and solving the destructive results of nascent capitalist development in the recent rural Asia, but it has not almighty power in solving every defect of the modernity. Advocators should cool to the gap between their over-idealized community value and their objective modest achievement of the real community project in the present rural development[1].

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1   A Japanese Sociologist, Nakata discusses an important role of Japanese traditional local community that controls local corporative resourses (especially land). However, he does not admits the traditional community framework as it is, and insists that it should be refined into more active nature in controling and managing local resources autonomously, in a suitable way for civil society. At the same time, he also gives proper public role to both local government and national government in such fields as beyond the limited capacity of the small local community. His reflected and analytical view point to the community seems to be different from that of pure populist thought in Asia countries [Nakata 1993:chap 1].

The raison d'etre of the movement seems to be, first of all, in the field of ideal presentation. It is a case of radical critics to the Western originated modernity and to the late-developed state-led capitalism, in the same way as many streams of populist movements of many countries in a past century [Kitching 1982]. Their real achievement would be a kind of educational or cultural movement to implant a self-reliant attitude among community people. However, in terms of the real achievement, there should be a number of other supplemental public apparata than the community to solve the encountering problems of emerging destructive capitalism in Asia. In short, they should be more modest in realizing the proper position of the community in both aspects of ideal and achievement of development, instead of expecting an almighty role to salvage the defective modernity and the problematic capitalism.

In the following chapters I will focusing upon the concept of "popular (or local) wisdom" (*phumi pan'ya chaoban* [*thongthin*]), that a limited number of model peasants are showing on the community level, and that is unconditionally appraised as trials to go back to traditional community culture, by theoretists and workers of the movement. My point is that it is not a group trial to go back to the past cultural roots, but an individual trial of innovation with hopeful potentiality to change the traditional community culture itself.

Chapter 1 discusses the general characteristics of "popular wisdom" that has a critical balance of individual innovation and group solidarity. Chapter 2, 3 discusses the animistic cognitive dualism of community members, and the passive individualistic approach to this cognition to the outsider. Chapter 4 discusses about the active nature of the "popular wisdom" that may be qualitatively different from that of the traditional negativism of community animism to the outsider.

The community solidarity as such might not be so strong in the past rural Thailand as some theoretists imagine. Animistic approach is, in its essence, said to be passive and negative individualism to the outsider. However, it showed some activeness to domesticate outsider spirits and change them into protecting members' own family, lineage and community, on the other hand, and this activeness would correspond to the present active approach of "popular wisdom" in introducing outside factors

selectively. Question remains if it would create or destruct community solidarity.

1. Vulnerable Balance of "Popular (Local) Wisdom"

Documents and books on NGO type development movements in Thailand tend to discuss "community culture" and "popular (local) wisdom" almost in the same category. They realize that community culture (*watthanatham chumchon*) is local tradition that a community as a whole has inherited from olden times, while "popular wisdom" (*phumi pan'ya chaoban*) is also a part of local tradition that a particular wiseman has inherited as a representative of the community.

Popular wisdom seems to be based on a critical balance of two factors; socio-politico-cultural integration of the community on the one hand, and innovated intermediate technology of a certain charismatic individual, based upon ecologically balanced way of life, on the other hand. At a glance the two factors seem to have a good harmony and do not contradict each other, because most of individual local wisemen behave also as representatives of the community interest.

Here I will pay my special attention to this vulnerable nature of "popular wisdom" that depends upon this critical balance of the community integration and the individual initiated innovation, albeit that is admirably combined within a certain personality of a traditional type community leadership, giving higher priority to the community interest than to his private interest. Problems to be raised would be as follows, for examples; Firstly, might this miracle balance within a charismatic model person be replaced by the systematic structure, if he might not endure the burden ? Secondly, might the member act independently and positively in applying the model knowhows, in contrast to passively imitating them in the past ? Thirdly, might a community as a group react actively to the outsiders, instead of conventional passive adopting to them on an individual level ? Forthly, as a result, might "popular wisdom" as such be elaborated enough to adopt, resist and challenge more actively to the ever increasing penetration of such outsiders as state and capitalism ?

If these kinds of problem would not be solved, he role of " popular wisdom" is of a short life, and the application of intermediate technology might be easily changed into such an opposite case that may be interpreted as "success story" of an individual climbing up to

the upper class ladder, rather than a praising effort of realizing better life of the whole community. In this sense, we should be more analytical about the relation of "community culture" and "popular wisdom".

To consider it more analytically, I will firstly focus on the dual cognition of Thai community culture to the social space and their way of approaching to the outside realm in the following chapters.

As will be discussed in Chapter 2 by referring on some works of sociologists, the animist cognition, one of the basic community cultures, classifies the social spaces into two: those of the inner close community and of the outer distant circumustance, and people's action is contrary in nature between these two spaces. In order to approach to the outer world (as well as to the higher status), the community members are said to have formal passive attitude of individualism, that is common to traditional animistic belief and ritual.

However they sometimes have active attitude of pragmatism in introducing symbol and technology of the outside world positively. The problem is, therefore, not in total rejection of outside culture by keeping their own

indigenous culture, but a way of individualistic, selective and pragmatic introduction of the outside culture. For instance, as is well known, protective spirits(*phi*) of family, lineage, and community was sometimes introduced from the outside world and the past unreliable spirits have been domesticated to be changed into the present reliable protective spirits of their own. Therefore, such stereotyped interpretation as dual gap and discontinuity between the inner indigenous and the outer civilized culture would be misleading[2]. Animistic cognition has a perspective of continuity between the inner and the outer world and it does not always negatively reject the outer innovative culture.

There is an interesting episode of my field experience in Nakhon Pathom Province of Central Thailand. While talking with an old lady informant, I happened to ask the reason why people gave up the traditional rain ritual of the village recently. Her reply was far be-

2 In summary of a seminar in 1990, they emphasise the severe confrontation of local indigenous culture and modern advanced culture on the rapid modernizing process of society, being contrast to the harmonious continuity of both cultures on the past process of slow change [SKWC 1991:9]. Could this past harmonious continuity of cognition not be seen at the present?

yond my expectation. According to her explanation, the reason was simply because the whole village was able to have enough water in the rainy season due to the completeness of feeder canal into the village by the national govenment, so that they did not need to ask for rain water to the heaven any more [Kitahara 1987:,363].

There seem to be two points of continuity of her cognition. First is a pragmatic equation of function to get water by the animistic ritual of the village with that by the canal construction of the government. Second is a common passive approach to both outsiders who are beyond the direct control by the villagers themselves. The discontinuity seems to be in the point that a group approach of ritual to the former outsider, the heaven godess, has changed into an individualistic approach to the achievement of new outsider, central government. This individualization is naturally suitable to the development of commercial relation in rural area.

In the following parts, I will discuss on the inner and outer dualism of animistic cognition to the social space in Chapter 2, and the nature of its action to the outer world in Chapter 3. Then I will turn to consider the main theme, if

"local wisdom" innovation might break through the limitation of animistic ethics of dualism in Chapter 4.

2. Animistic Cognition of Dualism

As often said, animism, Brahmanism and Buddhism are main factors of traditional culture in Thailand. I will focus my discussion on animism, mixed with some factors of Brahmanism. Buddhism is another important factor of the traditional culture, but historically it was imposed on the community from the outside political power, so that it does not seem to be community origined culture. That is the main reason why I try to pay more attention to animism[3].

Embree's famous paradigm of "loose structure" still has a value to be reconsiderd analytically. In my interpretation, H.D.Evers once tried to elaborate the "looseness" into the following three situations, according to his three model of the social science: the perceptive model (personal understanding of the member), the normative model (normative legitimacy of the society), and the statistical-behavioral model (objective distribution of frequency) [Kitahara 1993 :190]. They seem to correspond respectively to: "(1) only a small number of unprecise or alternative prescriptions for

3   I cannot say much on Buddhism, but the belief structure of secular practical Buddhism seems to be similar to that of animism, at least in terms of its formalism, pragmatism, and individualism.

The formalism can be observed in the definition of merit-making in such concrete forms as donation to priest and ordination at temple. Actors inner belief and moral conviction do not seem to be given so much great priority. In a word Thai secular Buddhism is formal in the sense that the degree of individual's consciousness is scaled not by the abstract inner belief but by the material and visible sign [Ishii 1975;1986].

The pragmatism can be observed in the conventional thought that such a form of merit-making is the best way for salvation. The popular saying, *tham bun, dai(ao) bun*, can be literally transelated into ,"if you do merit at the moment, you will receive merit in the future " . Indeed, the *thambun* (merit making) practice is not a fatalism of cyclical karma and merit maker may have a chance to be salvaged from the karma just now on once they have done initiative *thambun* practice [Ishii 1975:35; 1986:15-16]. This kind of "give and take" exchange relation of utilitarian thought in secular Buddhism seems to be more stable than people's uncertain contract relation to animistic spirits.

This nature of formal pragmatism will get more strengthened, as in the case of Priest Phra Payom, if any sect of recent reformist Buddhism will evaluate this world value more than that world value. His emphasis on the present moment and everyday secular labor seems to have no clear cut from the past traditional Buddhism, in the sense that it is not appealing to the inner moral base of diligent work itself.

The third is its methodological individualism in doing *merit* in social context. "Society is good, if person is good". Past Thai style Marxism, influenced by Buddhism, shares the same ethics, as Yuangrat elaborated it [Yuangrat 1982]. It also echoes the analysis of modern Thai novels that Mulder made clear [Mulder 1983].

social action are perceived and known, (2) beliefs are widespread that prescriptions for action or 'folk models' of social structure are not binding and must not be implemented, (3) there is a low frequency of the same type of action in similar situation" [Evers 1969: 117].

His model may suppose a continual and integrated structure of society. However, we should take account of a kind of discontinued dualism of social structure for Thai society, in the same way as other Asian countries might be. The first is the division of the inner and outer space of the community, and the second is that of the upper and lower status of the hierarchy. Towards the outer space as well as the upper status, actor's way of behavior will be totally different from that towards his intimate fellows. The animistic cognition seems to be just suitable to this kind of dualism and hierarchy. Sometimes the actor behaves passively without any active inner intention and motivation to do so, but the objective result of the act will take the concrete form, being independent from his subjective will. The existence of bureaucracy power outside of the community may be a good example. We may also count this kind of situation into that of "looseness". In this respect, the

three kinds of "looseness" by Everes do not exhaust every case. The problem is by what mechanism this particular kind of "looseness" is formed and accepted to Thai actor.

There was disagreement on the dimension of "looseness" in a panel of 1968 annual meeting of Association of Asian Studies, that Evers chaired [Kitahara 1993a].

For Boonsanong, "looseness" is limited to his/her interpersonal relation of close membership, but in such institutional level as social class system, "tightness" is strictly kept [Boonsanong 1969]. For Phillips, on the contrary, "looseness" is rather observed in the distant relations from the community, and "tigtness" is kept in the face-to-face relation within the community "Most face-to-face Siamese peasant situations approximate a sociologist's model of bahavior: highly patterned, predictable and conservative. Yet when the same people leave each other's presence they behave in a strikingly different manner. No longer occupants of a particular social role with its associated definitions and constraints, they do very much what they as individuals wish to do." [Phillips 1969:29]

Phillips is mostly right, but he cannot explain a seemingly tight structure of political domination, that Boonsanong points out. This kind of "tightness" would need another answer. The hierarchy relationship would be another alternative reply to the rule that Boonsanong might be expecting[4].

In discussing the world that Thai children face with, Mulder finds three basic dimensions: the inside, the outside and the hierarchy. Both inside and outside realms have their own hierarchy, but the former is based on unequal *morality* and the latter is based on unequal *power* ." There are important differences in the psychological or emotional components of the two situations, the 'inside' being 'natural' and informed by benevolence, trust and protection, while the 'outside' is informed by the power to rule, to compel, and to relish." [Mulder 1992:68].

This dualism is parallel to the animistic cosmic view on their society, according to Mulder. "To the animist, the centre of the world is his group, and that centre means continuity, stability and safety. His order is close to home,

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4 He divides the dimension into two: the first, close inter-personal relation, where the actor behaves by his will and the second, whole structure, where the objective rule functions apart from the actor will, and he seems to be looking for the answer in the latter structural dimension, being apart from personal action.

the outside being chaotic and *ad hoc,* and he only bothers to subjects to parts of that outside temporary order as need arises. Inside and outside remain separated, and his notion of order and disorder, and the means to deal with these, remain separated too." [Mulder 1979:47].

This division of inner and outer space for the actor seems to just correspond to the famous division of internal and external ethics of the community by Max Weber.

"Internally, there is attachment to tradition and to the pietistic relations of fellow members of tribe, clan, and house-community, with the exclusion of the unrestricted quest of gain within the circle of those bound together by religious ties; externally, there is absolutely unrestricted play of the gain spirit in economic relation, every foreigner being originally enemy in relation to whom no ethical restrictions apply; that is, the ethics of internal and external relations are categorically distinct" [Weber 1981 :356].

Of course, Weber had an insight into gradual merge of this double ethics through the penetration of common market system to the community, that has an ethic of "gain spirit" of a ascetically restricted nature in the historical development of Western capitalism [Otsuka 1969(1955):40-42].

Mulder is also prospecting the similar corresponding merge in the development of a single god belief, by critically pointing out the persistent dualism in Thai practical religion. "The point to wander about is rather why other religious thinking has been seeking to overcome the basic dualism of existence of cosmic equiliblium [between the inner and the outer realm]. As far as in this universe is concerned, both [practical] Buddhism and animism have developed world views that are much closer to and therefore more realistic vis-â -vis everyday experience" [Mulder 1979:48]

If this proposition of "double ethics" is applied to animistic cognition, the internal community of fellow members will correspond to living space of human being and the external enemy circumus-tance outside of the community will correspond to the living space of amoral capricious spirit beings (*phi*), who are symbols of such outsiders as exploiting merchants and bureaucrats, as well as disastrous natural forces. In this way, Thai animistic cosmic view of dualism has basically a similar structure to "dual ethics", that Max Weber made clear, and in this sense, the animistic

cognition proves to be product of community.

Another dualism can be seen in such senior-junior, superior-inferior, and higher-lower relationships. It is this hierarchy that Mulder also paid his attention, in addition to the inner and the outer division. I will discuss it in the following Chapter 3, by relating to the characteristics of behavioral sturucture that Titaya, a Thai sociologist, made clear and gave a strong inspiration to Mulder.

In summary the community cognition looks at society from the viewpoint of dualism, and divides clearly it into the inner moral world and the outer amoral power space. The sturctural nature of action also has a kind of contrast dualism, just as "double ethics" behavior by Max Weber. The different status in the hierarchy ladder has similar structure. Now the problem is not in the dual structure itself, but rather in the nature and quality of the relation that community people have with others of the outside realm and of the higher status. In the following Chapter 3, I will discuss it in more details.

3. How Does Animism Approach "Phi"?

The animistic logic is the best case to understand a passive and individualistic nature of common people(*chao ban*) in adapting themselves to such outside perils as natural disaster, demand of bureaucrat, and exploitation of merchant.

Piker is a pioneer to pay attention to the cognitive gap between unpredictable intention of others on one hand, and the apparent coherence of rural society on the other hand. Thai social order seems to be situational of a short term nature, and the intention of actor in it is very unpredictable. He can avoid his cognitive dilemma of the situational coherence and the lack of mutual expectation, by referring to Buddhist idea of "fluidity of everything", and to animistic belief in capricious and whimsical *phi* spirit [Piker 1969 : 69 - 70]. This ognitive dilemma may be generalized into the gap between actor's subjective intention and unexpected result of situational cohesive structure. The same kind of dilemma would be applicable to the animistic dualism, in which actor lives in the community and he will often experience unexpected result of action in approaching to the outsider.

As slightly touched above, Mulder made clear this mechanism of approach of keeping respectful distance to the outside realm, that can be codified by

animistic cognition. His essence of analysis on animism may be summarized as follows [Mulder 1979: chap2]

(1) *Phi* (spirit) is the owner or lord of everything in this world, but the legitimacy to dominate is a kind of natural right and is not seriously questioned by people. As a result, *phi* is of amoral nature that is not screened by people's moral judgement. He is sacred, but he protects both goodness and badness of this world. (2) People's relation with *phi* is that of unreliable contract. *Phi* is so capricious and whimsical that it is difficult for people to control exactly. The most wise way is mechanically and passively manipulating it by conventional worship rituals whose inner moral base is not questioned, by keeping always a suitable respectful distance (*krengklua*) to *phi*. (3) *Phi* are also reacting mechanically and pragmatically, though often capriciously, to the formal ordinance of ritual by people, without qestionning about the inner motivation or moral base of such acts. (4) The relation of both sides is so much particularistic that people must also do non-routined ritual.

In short, spirits have no moral legitimacy base. As a result, they are so willful, capricious, and unreliable, that it is not easy for people to control by any moral principle. People must have a ritually superficial contract with him, with a nature of particularistic dyad. It may symbolize "loose structured" relation of the community with the state, but at the same time, it may also symbolize another typical loose relation between the client and the patron.

There are two dimensions of dualism as slightly referred in Chapter 2. The community dualism is that of horizontal spaces, but the hierarchy dualism is that of the vertical order of that each space. Titaya discusses the nature of behavior in the hierarchical ladder in his rather non-systematic style paper: (1) "looseness" phenomena will be found in inconsistency between thinking (a will to take action) and action of people, especially under the hierarchy situation. (2) The inconsistency is maintained without conflict, both by generosity of the superior and by politeness of the inferior. (3) This formal politeness needs inner control of emotion by both sides, based on disengagement to others. (4) The abstruct public and formal system is quite different from his concrete personal informal relations, and "Thai recognizes formal relationship as a show or ritual relationship which requires less psychological investment" [Titaya 1976:182]. (5)

"When the role interaction of the social system's members is patternized and predictable with less variation, it does not mean that the behavior was effectivelly socialized, consequently[sic] implies the role is structured efficiently and tightly" [Titaya 1976:186]. (6) However, even under the hierarchial relation, tight consistency is observed among actors who have moral obligation (*bunkhun*) to their superiors, for instance, subjects to king, children to parents, and students to teachers.

In summary, firstly, actors behave quite differently in the formal public field and in the close private relation. Secondly, in such formal public system as the hierarchy, Thai actors tend to act as if in a show, irrelevant of their inner investment and motivation, and the result sometimes happenes to turn into a kind of solid structure. Thirdly, however, in some rare cases, the consistency of will and action can be seen even under the hierarchical situation, if the relation is based on the moral obligation rather than the power or interest.

Some common nature of this animistic approach to the outside world are clarified by Mulder and Titaya, that is, formalism, particularlism, and negativism. Formalism is apparent in the nature of ritual and showy action, being independent from his inner intention. It is because the outside spirit has mere power with no moral legitimacy to be checked by the community member. The relation lacks a reliable and sustainable nature, based on the common moral base. This naturally leads to a particularistic and transient contract relation of the community with the outsider.

According to Mulder, motivation of the community to contact to the outside seems to be not so much active. One of the reasons is that Mulder emphasizes the outward direction only. Actually the community has his protective *phi* of family, lineage and village, being inwardly invited from the outside and domesticated to protect the commanity. For this *phi*, people have more active motivation to contact to. As I touched on it slightly in the former paragraphs, they have flexible and pragmatic attitude of introducing such outside useful factors as protective spirit, technics, and way of life. Mulder's evaluation to animism would be more positive and favorable one, if he would analyse this pragmatic activeness at the same time[5]. Anyway, in contrast to practical Buddhism, that emphasizes an utilitarian pragmatism of reciprocity, animism, as far as Mulder

and Titaya understand, is negative and passive to the outsider.

In the former paper, I referred to the analysis of Burumelhuis on formal and superficial inquiry of the inner psychology by Thai common people [Burumelhuis 1984; Kitahara 1995: 14]. His characterization on Thai way of approaching to his own inner personality, "negative individualism", is amazingly parallel to that of Mulder's discussion of that to the outer social space, and supplements each other. He observes the same kind of formalism among Thai neurotic patients of common people who expresses the physical troubles instead of phychological explanation, and the same kind of negativism that does not inquire into his inner moral base at depth.

This psycho-analytic discussion of Burumelhuis corresponds to and supplements what Mulder and Titaya try to do on Thai attitude to the outsider and the superior. For these "ethno-centric" sociologists, animism and "negative indi-

vidualism" have a common structure of mind and behavior.

Animist ndividualistic approach to outsiders seems to be somehow close to fashionable "everyday form of resistance" that J.C.Scott advocated. T.Brass made a severe critical comments to negative "everyday form of resistance" of individual peasant of Southeast Asia, that Scott elaborated in place of his past formulation of active group rebellion of "moral economy" [Scott 1990].

Brass's critical comments on the nature of "resistance from below" approach are; (1)the concept of everyday form of individual resistance obscures the class interest of resistance by upper and middle peasantry, even by being based on social injustice. (2) In spite of his emphasis of conflict between peasant and state, "a further problem is that both their mode (resistance-not-revolution) and form (the aetheticisation of revolt, or cultural opposition) of mobilization effectively preclude a realistic challenge to the power and existence of power itself." [Brass 1991:184][6].

5 Indeed Mulder merely slightly touches on the domestication of outside spirits(phi) by villagers, but he considers it from the viewpoint of passiveness to rely on capricious power[Mulder 1979 :30]. On the contrary, I propose to interpret that this kind of pragmatic attitude, in applying outside sacred symbols to internal protective ones, may a kind of active and positive pragmatism, that is common to the active application of outside modern technology to subsistent family farming.

6 The problem is what is the relation between individual negative resistance of everyday life and such group revolutionary resistance of sporadic term as millennial movement, *Phi Bun* ? Is the latter state of mind really active to the outsider or is it comparable to that of animistic dualistic attitude to the outsider?

Some NGO ideologists pay special attention to animism among traditional cultures and making efforts to use it as way of causing their "self-respect" and "self-help" spirit [Bunthien 1988]. However, they should be more cautious about the animistic tradition, because its formal and passive individualism might not bring up such group ethics as negotiating with outsiders actively, in contrast to their expectation. Therefore, workers' role is not in reconstructing the solidarity of glorious past community, but in creating it from the beginning[7].

4 . Popular (Local) Wisdom and Its Possibility

In the former chapters, I have mainly discussed a negative aspect of traditional community culture. For these several years, however, we can observe a great number of active approach to the community development by the community members themselves. Roughly speaking, there seem to be two types of active approach by villagers to the outside: group and individual base.

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7 In this connection, the synical and bitter criticism of Vandergeest is not off the point totally. He interprets discourses of NGO workers as disguising *lethorics* of new rulers themselves who are replacing to old rulers of state bureaucrats [Vandergeest 1993].

The former is typical to such types of group action as rice bank, buffalo bank, village saving bank and village store, whose ideal purposes are to protect villagers from outside merchants and capital by their mutual help. The cooperative action usually depends upon the community solidarity, but sometimes rather upon associational type of common interest. This group work might originate from that of some initiative model villages and thereafter it has been made into the standardized model and applied to villages of wider range, and it is the very reason why it has been incorporating into an established set of community projects that the national government likes to advise for almost every village to adopt it uniformly. It would be sometimes useful to bring about "tightness" into the hitherto "loosely" organized community of traditional type [Shigetomi 1992 ; 1995]. However, the present established system has already lost its original ideal and is now getting into the routined set of projects for bureaucrats and village leaders. That is the reason why so many technical leaflets on how to organize them are available in private bookshops. Its technical nature is the main reason why I do not discuss them directly here.

The latter is typical to "popular (local) wisdom"(*phumi pan'ya chaoban*) that a limited number of local leaders exhibits. In the movement discussion, the meaning has not necessarily been clearly conceptualized, but some ten typical models of charismatic persons have been picked up as typical examples. According to one seminar of the National Cultural Commission in 1990, it seems to mean a kind of traditional local wisdom that is "the base of way of thinking for people to develop and adopt their way of life in order to fit in their potentiality and environmental context from olden time" [SKWC 1991 :4]. I wonder if there is a gap of this type of concept of old traditional wisdom and creative innovations shown by model persons. At least, put it roughly, the concept is mixing of harmoniously integrated socio-political group action, and the individual economic innovation of intermediate technology.

Ekawit points out the common nature of local wismen (*pan'ya chon chaoban*) as follows: (1) their experience in state primary education and Buddhism practice, with being versed about local tradition, (2) respect and obedience by ordinary people to their prominency of knowledge, ability and morality, (3) their past failure in big scale commercial and market-oriented farming and their return to modest scale subsistent and self-reliant farming, (4) improved ecology due to their way of subsistent life and intermediate technology farming, (5) their emphasis and practice for collective unity and harmony of community, (6) resultant recovery of self-respect and self-confidence for potentiality of ordinary people themselves. He adds that people do not reject sympathizing help by outsiders, and that the younger generation should learn lessons from these cases [Ekavidya 1991:126-7].

I can find common characteristics of typical models among documentary sources; firstly, there seem to be mixing varieties of such wisdom as compromising and harmonious leadership in community development, innovation and application of new intermediate technology agriculture, excellent knowhow of management and sale of agriculture, knowledge about traditional medical technics, deep knowledge and morality of Buddhism *etc*. Secondly, the model person has his experience to go out of his community to have such chances as secular education, religious training, official work, commercial business *etc*. Thirdly, he is not an ordinary common villager but a charismatic leader of the village. Fourthly, he

is unselfish and sacrifices himself for the community interest, or at least he is generous enough to expose openly his innovative technology and management. Fifthly, he has respectful human nature with high religious moral.

Another important point is the objective nature of model villages. They are usually located in such less commercialized peripheral region as the Northeast and the North of Thailand, where differentiation and the resultant conflict among inidividual and group are not so severe. However, it is difficult for them to be found among such part-time farming or commercialized farming community as in suburban areas near main cities. It is no wonder why there are few model examples in Central Thailand, where industrialization and agricultural commercialization have highly developed.

A particular person has some mixed factors of such knowledge, ability, and moral as above mentioned, but model types will be roughly classified into two: the first is such community leader who is initiative in adopting development project and/or intermediate farming technology as village headman, or Buddhist temple abbot, and the second is such innovative professional of sustainable farming as creative technician

and active manager. His ability is usually supported by moral and humanistic qualifications as a result of religious training of his earlier days. They mostly come from the upper and middle class background.

The first typical case is such wisdom as harmonious leadership that gives priority to collective interest than to personal interest, being sometimes supported by excellent humanity and deep morality. He is a type of local charisma endowed with balanced knowledge, ability and qualification of socio-political, religious and moral aspects.

The best case is *Phuyai* Phai, village headman in Sakun village of Buriram province in the Northeast. He is a leader of old type who listens to the diversified opinions of all the fellows patiently and tries to consolidate it into a particular policy by making them compromise carefully, but at the same time he has an initiative to adopt such new projects of rural development as integrated farming when he recognizes its usefulness, sometimes by negotiating with the district office on the needed budget [Seri 1992].

Luan Pho Nan, priest of Tha Sawan Temple in Surin Provinces is another case, who is in a religious

position but active in leading secular community development projects. He takes an initiative to construct such village public facilities and utilities as road, rice bank. In implementing community level cooperative projects, he implanted cooperative consciouness to villagers by Buddhist severe trainings [Phitthaya 1993].

Their villages have common objective characteristics of lesser differenciation and lesser conflict among fellow villagers that economic innovative efforts of the individual and developmental efforts of the community might cause. Such objective situation will effectively function to subjective harmonious leadership with moral authority of a certain charisma.

There is another famous village headman, *Phuyai* Wibun, who is earnestly advocating to return to the technology of traditional integrated farming in Chachoensao Province [Wibun 1988]. His efforts, however, does not seem to spread all over the village as in Sakun Village. This difference reflects the different stage of commercial development of both villages. In Chachoensao of Central Thailand, villager's way of life and way of farming is so differentiated that it might be difficult for all the villagers to adopt his integrated agriculture technology uniformally.

The second type wiseman has such wisdom as professional innovative ability with selective cautious orientation to the market. It is said to be "from bottom" innovation by the people, in contrast to that of "from above" by the state bureaucrat. However, innovators of such intermediate technology come from the middle and lower high class of the community. Moreover they are charismatic social and political leaders of the community. "From below" and "from bottom" may be fit to the populist framework trying to confront the state and the people, but it is silent about the hierarchical and class context just among the people.

At the present moment he does not want endless accumulation and is generous enough to open his innovative results for fellow villagers to imitate and follow them. His balance of initiative innovation and generous openness is so vulnerable that it sometimes falls into the one extreme of selfish innovator of commercial oriented farming, if his ability is not supported by his role of harmonious socio-political leadership. The higher is his managerial efficiency, the higher is his accumulation desire. This

possibility will become real, especially in case he has both technological and managerial ability of innovation. As a result, he will approach to the market individually, being free from moral limitation posed by the community.

The case of *Pho* Wichian Yutawan in Buriram Province who is an owner of 18 rai(2.9 ha)of rice field may be this case. Of course his land acreage belongs to the lower standard in Thailand, but his success has raised him as middle class peasantry of net profit of 56,000 Baht in 1990(?). His success seems to originate from the negotiative ability to sell fishes to merchants, beside the integrated farming of many crops and animals, namely, rice, vegetable, fruit, fish, and pig by constructing many ponds[Anan 1991:138-142]. *Pho* Mahayu in Korat is also another case for middle or upper class farmer in succeeding in big scale integrated farming depending upon market. He is an owner of more than 100 rai (16 ha) and an earner of 120,000 baht of gross gain in 1986 [Ekavidya 1991:123] . Indeed he earned it by innovating system of pond water irrigation, but the figures rather show his success story to climb up to rich peasantry and his case is different from other cases of innovative efforts by genuine "local wisdom".

In summary their cases seem to show rather individualistic efforts of orientation to innovative technology and of selective approach to market. However, for the moment, their charismatic personal qualification of morality and humanity supports their generosity and openess of their personal innovations to others, and it seems to prevent them from changing into selfish businessmen. It might easily change into selfish market oriented type of integrated farming and easily lead to class differentiation among fellow villagers, if other individual, lacking this kind of morality, would imitate their innovative results mechanically , for example, by NGO network informations.

This vulnerability suggests the very rightness of market refusal principle by NGO groups. However many NGOs seem to encounter this dilemma of individual interest and group prosperity. Anyway many kinds of leaflets and textbooks, heating about the technical aspects of "how to practice sustainable or integrated type of agriculture", are mostly silent about this vulnerable balance.

Is it possible even through co-operative type of management, that would raise the level of income of all the fellow villagers? Or is it accepted

exclusively by the selected innovative persons, that might, after all, make the income gap wider among fellow villagers? The present base of individual family management may lead to the latter rather than to the former situation[8].

In this connection, NGO logic is right in rejecting the market orientation of agricultural management. The rejection of the market seems not to be in fear for bankruptcy as a result of market orientation, but rather in fear for competitive egoism and the resultant differentiation among fellow members. They have to be cautious and selective in approaching to the market. The vulnerable balance between community socio-moral target and personal techno-economic achievement will easily be lost and the principle of highest profitability will become apparent, if the market orientation will be unlimitedly permitted.

In this sense, the second case stands on more vulnerable balance and always has a transitional nature towards competitive market principle than the first one. However, it is important that

the nature of innovated individual is not so negative as that of animistic villagers in terms of approaching towards the outsider anymore. They will be able to negotiate more positively and more favorably with the outside market and the bureaucracy, because they have their solid subsistent base of their life style and are cautious and selective to the market.

In a sense, this cautious applicability to market system is very much similar to the past pragmatic and selective introduction of outside spirits by animism ritual. Perhaps because of this kind of pragmatic tradition, the modern technology has been introduced by Thai peasants without much resistance. They have accepted it passively and it has been proved not paying because of the high cost. On the contrary, the recent innovative technology by local wisemen is an innovation by peasant themselves with a nature of intermediate technology, and it has more room for paying to peasants farming. Therefore, we can say this innovation has a kind of "positive individualism" and it may be radically reforming the pragmatic tradition of past negative nature of animism. At least in less marketable areas the innovation has a positive role for a certain

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8   Nit points out sharply in a small leaflet that bureaucrats make extention of integrated agriculture exclusively on family business base, but silent about on cooperative base, because they want to make peasants sell the crops to private marchants [Nit 1994:8].

period of transitional stage towards the pure market orientation on a private base in the long run.

Conclusion

The traditional community ethic can be typically seen in the animistic tradition. The animistic cognition has its inherent dualism to divide the inner and the outer realm, and people's act is totally contrasted towards the inside fellow villagers and the outside stranger. They are negative and passive in approaching the outsider. The nature of this negativism in animistic belief might contribute to maintaining the present socio-political order of the state bureaucracy, in contrast to some theorists' value-judged insistence that it has protected the solid independence of community from the outer political power. Therefore, traditional culture as a whole should not be unconditionally appraised, as has been done by most theorists of the movement sympathizers. The problem is how to overcome this kind of negativeness.

However, animistic tradition has an active pragmatism in introducing outside capricious spirits to domesticate into the inner protective spirits, on the other hand. Most ethnocentric sociologists, who are mainly interested in comparing the animistic negativism with the modern Western individualism has not paid their proper attention to this active and positive aspect of animistic pragmatism. It seems to be inherited to and reflected in the active adaptability of innovative technology that some local wisemen have recently invented. It might contribute to the radical break with the past negativism of the community.

The problem is, however, in the balanced nature of it with the community solidarity ethics. The balance will be lost if adoptators of new intermediate technology lack the moral base for community solidarity, that original innovators used to have, and they would easily turn into cases of personal market orientation of integrated farming.

Another problem is the nature of the villagers themselves. As *Agricultural Statistics* of 1989/90 crop year shows, the 59.6% of cash farm income come from non-agricultural sources already [Ministry of Agriculture 1990:228]. In this situation, professional farming management seems to be limited to a part of upper and middle class peasants, and most of peasants are engaging in part-time farming in the sense that most

younger members of the family have been working in the non-agricultural sectors already. The subsistence inclined fully professional agriculture with intermediate technology would survive in such limited remote area as the Northeast and the North.

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