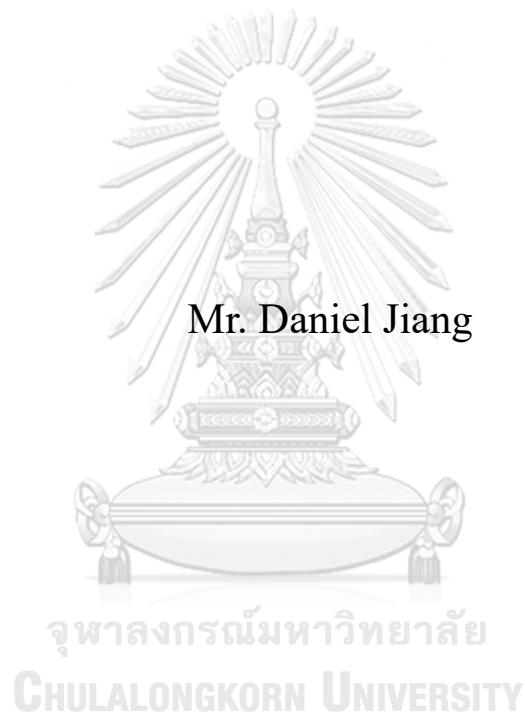


THE CHINESE ASSOCIATION IN THAILAND AND ITS
DEVELOPMENT FROM 1907 TO 1963



A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts in Southeast Asian Studies
(Interdisciplinary Program)
Inter-Department of Southeast Asian Studies
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ความเปลี่ยนแปลงของสมาคมจหวแห่งประเทศไทย ระหว่างปี 1907-1963



วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต
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การวิจัยครั้งนี้ถือปรัยว่าประวัติศาสตร์ของสมาคมจหัวแห่งประเทศไทยมีความเชื่อมโยงอย่างมากกับการเปลี่ยนแปลงในอัตลักษณ์ไทย-จีนของกลุ่มผู้สนับสนุนสาธารณรัฐจีน นับตั้งแต่ก่อตั้งในปี ค.ศ. 1907 (พ.ศ. 2450) โดยสมาชิกถงเหมิงฮ่วยสมาคมเองก็เป็นตัวแทนของกระแสดินนิยมจีนที่เพิ่มขึ้นท่ามกลางกลุ่มชาติพันธุ์จีนในสยาม กระแสดินนิยมจีนในประเทศไทยถูกท้าทายด้วยปัจจัยสำคัญหลายประการในช่วงเวลาดังกล่าว ประการแรก การเพิ่มขึ้นของลัทธิชาตินิยมสยามที่ปะทะกับลัทธิชาตินิยมจีนตั้งแต่สมัยรัชกาลที่ 6 ในทศวรรษที่ 1910 ประการที่สองคือนโยบายต่อต้านจีนในช่วงสงครามโลกครั้งที่สอง เนื่องจากพันธมิตรไทย-ญี่ปุ่นได้ก่อตั้งขึ้นในสมัยรัฐบาลพิบูลสงคราม และประการที่สามคือท่าทีต่อต้านคอมมิวนิสต์ที่มีต่อไทย-จีนหลังจากก๊กมินตั๋งแพ้สงครามกลางเมืองจีน และพรรคคอมมิวนิสต์จีนเข้ายึดครองจีนแผ่นดินใหญ่หลังปี ค.ศ. 1949 (พ.ศ. 2492) ดังนั้นการวิจัยจึงจำกัดอยู่ในช่วงระหว่างปี ค.ศ. 1907 (พ.ศ. 2450) เมื่อมีการก่อตั้งสมาคมและคงอยู่ต่อไปจนกระทั่งสิ้นสุดการปกครองของจอมพลสฤษดิ์ ธนะรัชต์ ในปี ค.ศ. 1963 (พ.ศ. 2506) เนื่องจากประเทศไทยต้องรับมือกับนโยบายต่อต้านคอมมิวนิสต์ของสหรัฐอเมริกา วัตถุประสงค์หลักของการศึกษานี้จึงถูกกำหนดขึ้นเพื่อศึกษาการเปลี่ยนแปลงของเป้าหมายของสมาคมจหัวแห่งประเทศไทยและเหตุการณ์สำคัญภายใต้กรอบระยะเวลาของการวิจัย

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Daniel Jiang : THE CHINESE ASSOCIATION IN THAILAND AND ITS DEVELOPMENT FROM 1907 TO 1963 . Advisor: Prof. Dr. SUNAIT CHUTINTARANOND

This research argues the history of the Chinese Association in Thailand (CAT) is strongly connected to the transformation of self-identity among the pro-Republic of China Thai Chinese. Since the foundation of CAT in 1907 by the Tongmenghui members, the association itself represents the rise of Chinese nationalism amongst ethnic Chinese in Siam. The Chinese nationalism in Thailand was challenged by several major factors during the following periods: first was the rise of Siamese nationalism that clashed with the Chinese nationalism since the reign of Rama VI in the 1910s; second was the anti-Chinese policies during the second World War, as the Thai-Japanese alliance was formed during the first administration of Phibunsongkhram; third was the anti-communist stance towards Thai-Chinese after Kuomintang lost the Chinese Civil War, and the Chinese Communist Party took control of mainland China after 1949. Therefore, the research limits in between the period from 1907 when the association was established and lasts till the end of the administration of Sarit Thanarat in 1963 while Thailand coped with the anti-communist policies of the United States of America. The primary objective of this study is therefore set to examine the purposes of the transformation of CAT and its major events during the research period.



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As the journey of my student life in Thailand is approaching its end, I think I'm quite ready for another adventure. The road goes ever on and on.

Daniel Jiang

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Chapter 1

Introduction

*The Chinese Association in Thailand*¹ (CAT), refers to one of the oldest and most prestigious association founded by the *overseas Chinese*² that live in Bangkok. The history which this association inherited could be dated back to 1907 as shown in Figure 1, even before the *Republic of China*³ (ROC; 中華民國) was formed. The foundation of CAT in 1907 also marked the start of Chinese education in Bangkok, whereas education plays a significant role to preserve and promote not only the Chinese language, but also the Chinese culture up to the present day. The members of CAT, however, are assembled not by their occupations, nor by any single dialect groups of Chinese. This association itself has been assembling Chinese who lives in Thailand (mainly located in Bangkok area) that are willing to abide by Dr. Sun Yat-sen⁴'s (Dr. Sun) ideology of *Three Principle of People* since its founding era till the

¹ According to the Articles of the Chinese Association in Thailand, the official name of the association in English shall be known as "THE CHINESE ASSOCIATION IN THAILAND;" and its Chinese name "泰國中華會館" could be abbreviated as "中華會館." Therefore, in this paper, the term "The Chinese Association" would also solely be used to indicate this specific association. However, different names are used to indicate this association in different articles, such as "the Zhonghua Huiguan Association (Manomaiviboon, 2004, p. 12)," "the Chung-hua Association (Skinner, 1957, p. 158)," or "the Sino-Siamese Consolidation Club (Chantavanich & Limmanee, p. 236)."

² The overseas Chinese here refers to people of Chinese ethnicity reside outside the Greater China (including mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau), and regardless of whether they hold the Chinese citizenship. The definition in this thesis thus mainly focusses on the overseas Chinese who reside in the current day Thailand, especially around the city of Bangkok.

³ This thesis sees the ROC founded in 1912, and the current days ROC in Taiwan as one continuity, as the Kuomintang regime played an important role in its shaping and its relocation to Taiwan, also to CAT itself.

⁴ Dr. Sun Yat-Sen (孫逸仙, 1866-1925), also wildly known in the Chinese speaking world as Sun Zhongshan (孫中山) or Sun Wen (孫文), was the first provisional president of the Republic of China and the first leader of the Kuomintang. He is also being seen as the founding father of the ROC by the ROC regime itself, and the "Forerunner of the Revolution (革命先行者)" by the People's Republic of China (PRC) due to his key influence during the revolution period against the Qing Dynasty and founded the ROC consequently after the result of Xinhai Revolution (辛亥革命). The main ideology and legacy of Dr. Sun is known as the "Three Principles of People (三民主義)" that become a political philosophy not only followed by the ROC regime (even after they relocated to Taiwan), but also by the CAT members in Bangkok and many overseas Chinese supporters of the ROC regime.

current days, as Figure 1 shows Dr. Sun’s calligraphy “The world is for the public (天下為公),” which can be seen as a motto for Dr. Sun and his ideology into shaping a Chinese republic named the Republic of China.

Figure 1

A profile picture from the Facebook page of CAT



Note. The profile picture of CAT for memorizing its 110th Anniversary in 2017, with its logo and its name in three languages, also includes a calligraphy from Dr. Sun Yat-sen below the logo. Adapted from the Facebook page of CAT, by the Chinese Association in Thailand in 2017.

Since late 19th century to early 20th century, the number of Chinese in *Siam*⁵ started to be seen to flourish in numbers, due to the aftermath of the impact of the Opium War (Zhuang, 2021). As the capital of Siam, Bangkok was being regarded as one of the

⁵ The former name of Thailand, the terms Siam and Siamese would be used in this thesis when it is referring to Thai elements that was before the change of official name of the country on 24 June 1939, unless otherwise mentioned.

largest immigration locations in the kingdom, statistic shows that around 60% of Siamese Chinese were located in Bangkok and its surroundings from a 1909 census report (Koshpasharin, 2008). These overseas Chinese had formed various of associations in needs to unite the people that were from the same dialect groups to gain collective strength and to look after their own people. At the same period, the foundation of the Siamese Chinese Clubhouse (暹羅中華會館, the predecessor of the Chinese Association in Thailand, hereinafter referred to as CAT) in 1907 was different from those associations that chose to welcome those overseas Chinese by their own dialect groups and or welcome those overseas Chinese by their occupations. Instead, CAT was seen to be a *comprehensive overseas Chinese association*⁶ which unites the overseas Chinese in Bangkok who supports the creation of a new Chinese republic. Therefore, we could argue that the formation of the Clubhouse itself also marks the start that the Chinese immigrants were forming a collective strength in the Chinese communities in Bangkok.

The formation of CAT was in 1907 soon before a visit of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the founding father of the ROC, to the mainland Southeast Asia (SEA) in 1908. According to CAT (2020), Dr. Sun came to Bangkok after his visit in Vietnam in 1908, and this visit of Dr. Sun to Bangkok became the main reason that the Thai branch of *Tongmenghui*⁷ in Bangkok was established, and also came along with the foundation of CAT in Siam.

⁶ The meaning of *comprehensive overseas Chinese association* (綜合性僑團) here is defined as an association that allows the local Chinese, regardless of their dialect group or occupation to join in a foreign country. Two of the Chinese associations in Thailand were being categorized in Shen Ke-chin's (2002) book as comprehensive overseas Chinese associations, namely the *Chinese Association in Thailand* and the *Thai Chinese Chamber of Commerce*.

⁷ The Revolutionary Alliance (中國同盟會, 1905-1912), also known as *Tongmenghui* (同盟會), was

The foundation of this association also marks the start of Chinese education in Bangkok. Several Chinese schools were under the supervision of CAT since 1908, as a way to arouse revolutionist ideas towards overseas Chinese (CAT, 2004). The Clubhouse reformed and renamed to CAT after the establishment of ROC in 1912, and many of its members left Siam and go back to mainland China, so the Chinese schools were left to be abolished (CAT, 2004). We could therefore argue that the start of Chinese education in Bangkok linked with the establishment of ROC itself, and CAT played a fundamental role to unite the patriotic pro-ROC Siamese Chinese.

To categorize the history of CAT and its members in Bangkok in the following years until the present day into different periods, several factors need to be taken into consideration. First, the shifts of Thai Chinese's self-identity, as of how they recognize themselves from Chinese citizens who lives in Bangkok, and later integrated into Thai citizens with Chinese ancestry. Second, Thai government's attitude towards the Chinese regimes influenced its view towards the Chinese education in the kingdom. This can be further narrow down to Thai government's relationship and diplomatic changes towards the Chinese regimes, namely the ROC under the rule of Kuomintang (KMT) and a later formed People's Republic of China (PRC) by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Third, the influence of Thai government's strategic affiliation towards the international situation on its Chinese education policy, such as their affiliation towards Japan during the second World War, their anti-communism stance that aligned with the United States (US) during the Cold War era.

the predecessor of the Kuomintang.

To sum up, as we can see from the timeline above, we could argue that CAT and its members plays an important role in the shaping of the *national-identity*⁸ of the Thai Chinese in Bangkok since 1907, and this study aims to analyze the factors behind its influence on this topic.

1.1 Research Questions

1. How did CAT and its members influence and participate in the shaping of national-identity of Thai Chinese throughout the years?
2. What challenges did CAT face after the PRC took control of mainland China, and how did these challenges impact the national-identity of its members?
3. Who were the key members within CAT, and how were these members participated and influenced within Thai Chinese community throughout the research period?

1.2 Research Objectives

1. To examine the transformation of the purposes of CAT and its major events during the research period.
2. To examine Thai government's policy changes towards Thai Chinese and their influence on CAT during the research period.
3. To examine the relations between CAT and the ROC during the research period.

⁸ The term national-identity would be defined clearer in the literature review part later in this chapter. See the section 1.6.1 of this thesis.

1.3 Research Methodology

The research of this topic will be based on qualitative research. As the study itself is historical research, most of the research materials will be based on historical documents. For this documentary study, the historical documents which will be applied for this study can be roughly divided into four different categories. The first category of documents would be official documents. Documents such as treaties or agreements signed between the ROC and Thailand, and the promulgated policies on Chinese residents in Thailand could be added into this category. The second category of documents would be the documents related to the historical events during the research period that are related to CAT. Documents such as memoirs, historical research, or literatures by authors from Taiwan with the perspective from within the ROC regime; or outside of the ROC regime such as the works of Thai, Japanese, or western scholars, can be put inside this category. The third category of documents will be the historical newspaper clippings that are related to the CAT members during historical events can be put into this category. The fourth and the last category will be historical documents that are from the perspective of CAT with regards to the events taking place in Bangkok during the period. In the said category, literature such as the publications from CAT and those documents that have mentioned CAT by its key members can be placed into this category.

1.3.1 Collection of Historical Literatures

When collecting the documents for this study, primary sources will be mainly focused on the history of CAT, and the general overseas Chinese history in Thailand. These sources might include official documents and memoirs of the persons who were

involved or experienced in those historical events. Apart from those primary sources, literatures such as writings of the historians on Thai history, Chinese Cross-Strait history and world history will also be included if highly related to the study.

With regards to the language of the documents and literature, those being collected will be mainly from the document with its original writing. Since the research is regarded to the history of Thai Chinese, sources that are related to Thai Chinese persons, might be expected to be originally written in Chinese as well. On the other hand, the sources in English will be collected in English. And for those sources originally written in Traditional Chinese, documented in Traditional Chinese will be collected and translated to English to allow cross comparison with those documents and literatures originally written in English. It is important to realize that as documents in Traditional Chinese are mostly collected from Taiwan, the points of view of these sorts of documents that published after 1949 are often in favor of the ROC regime instead of the PRC.

For the transliteration of certain Chinese names in this thesis, since Mandarin Chinese was not the mother tongue of many Siamese Chinese in the early 20th century, it is therefore more proper to do the transliterate of their names into English as address them as how they were pronounced during the time. Certain documents found from the mid-20th century also follow this way, such as Skinner's analytical book that was published in the 1950s. To avoid confusions, their name written in Traditional Chinese would be given when first mentioned, as references. As for the names of associations and organizations, the official English names of theirs would be chosen to indicate the associations and the organizations, unless stated otherwise.

1.4 Hypothesis

The Chinese Association in Thailand plays a fundamental role in the transformation of the pro-ROC Thai Chinese's self-identity. Three factors during the research period, namely rise of Chinese and Siamese nationalism in the 1910s, the anti-Chinese policies during the second World War, and the Thai anti-communist stance after 1949 had deeply impact the transformation of Thai Chinese identity. The aggregation of these factors had eventually shaped the members in the Chinese Association in Thailand into a unique self-identity as the pro-ROC Thai nationals.

1.5 Structure of the Study

This study will be divided into five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction which was already discussed above and gives the research objectives, questions, methodologies, and hypothesis. Also, this chapter will mention the literature review on the shifts of self-identity of Thai Chinese since the 20th century, which also explains the rise of Chinese nationalism and the anti-Chinese policies during the research period in Siam / Thailand. The chapter also study the anti-communism since the absolute monarchy period in Siam, until the Cold War era when Thai foreign policy aligned with the US.

The second chapter will discuss the factor of the rise of the Chinese nationalism in Siam, and its linkage with the establishment of CAT. This part of the research focus on analyzing the linkages that the founders of CAT achieved towards unifying the Chinese ethnic groups inhabited in Bangkok prior than 20th century. Specifically indicating the importance of Mr. Seow Hudseng, to the rise of Chinese nationalism in

Siam. The chapter studies the background history of Tongmenghui members in Bangkok and the factors to establish the Chinese Association in Thailand. The period of discussion during this chapter started since the foundation of CAT in 1907, until its dissolution in the early 1930s. Which was highly overlapping with Seow's influence towards CAT itself.

The third chapter will discuss the factor of the anti-Chinese policies in Siam (Thailand), also being known as the clashes between Chinese nationalism and Siamese (Thai) nationalism. This part will discuss the significant events of this period that influenced by the members of CAT, first is the clashes during Rama VI's reign in the 1910s; second is the anti-Japanese movements started since the 1920s to the early 1930s that became the rising internal conflict in Siamese society and clashed with Phibunsongkhram (Phibun)'s pan-Thai and anti-Chinese policies during the late 1930s to 1940s; the third one was the anti-Chinese stance that became a reason of the reestablishment of CAT in the late 1940s.

The fourth chapter will discuss the anti-communist stance of the Thai nation, specifically focus on the Cold War era, and its influence towards the transformation of the members of CAT. This chapter also studies the factor of the early influence of communism amongst Thai Chinese since the 1920s, that have caused several splits between the members of CAT, and the result is that only the members with anti-communist stance chose to stay within the association. The chapter also indicating the importance of Mr. Hoon Chu-ting, as one of the business elites in Thailand, and an early member of CAT since 1908, he who became one of the members to reestablish CAT in 1947. This chapter argues Hoon's strong stance against communism became

the main factor of CAT's anti-communist stance, and also the reason that CAT reformed and aligned with the stance of Thai regimes during the 1950s. However, this chapter also argues the active anti-communist stance of CAT became a double-edged sword that limited its further development to bring new blood into the association. CAT suspended its activities circa as Sarit Thanarat's (Sarit) ruling era ended in 1963. CAT's revival in the late 1960s with the younger generations of pro-ROC Thai nationals marked the transformation of national-identity within itself.

The last chapter of this study will discuss and conclude all the previous chapters, and analyze the objectives and questions mentioned above. And this chapter will also give an argument that the influence of all three factors mentioned above, namely the rise of Chinese and Siamese nationalism, the anti-Chinese policies, and the Thai anti-communist stance that impact the transformation of Thai Chinese identity, could be seen from the transformation of CAT itself.

1.6 Literature review

In discussing the national-identity of CAT members, the study has mentioned three factors in the previous chapter, which is the rise of national identities, the anti-Chinese policies, and the anti-communist stance. The first two factors can be seen as the shifts of Thai Chinese's self-identity during the research period. While the third factor mainly linked with the conflicts between Chinese nationalists and Chinese communists since the 1920s, and Thai-US alliance since the 1950s during Cold War era.

1.6.1 The shifts of Thai Chinese's self-identity since 20th century

The research on overseas Chinese in Thailand in this thesis, focus on the groups of ethnic Chinese people that have relocated in Siam since or before the early 20th century. According to Suryadinata (2007), the ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia are often considered to be a security risk. In non-communist states, they are considered to be communistic; also regarded as a threat to the development of the country, as they often play an important role in local economies (Suryadinata, 2007). In the case of Thai Chinese, we can also notice these two factors influenced Thai nation-building and Thai administrations' suspicious viewpoint on the Chinese self-identity and became the reason that have shifted Thai Chinese's self-identity throughout the years.

Chantavanich and Limmanee (1997) argue that Thai official nationalism had been the main factor to assimilate Siamese-Chinese into Thai identity since King Wachirawut (Rama VI)'s coronation in 1910, and its counterfactor being the Chinese nationalist movement to resist against assimilation. Two waves of Thai nationalist movements were seen in 20th century, the first was from 1913 to 1925, and the second wave was from 1938 to 1950. And two major waves of Chinese nationalism were being identified during the similar periods, first was since 1908, after Dr. Sun Yat-sen visited Bangkok; and the second one was during the 1930s, as known as the anti-Japanese movement that linked with the WWII (Chantavanich & Limmanee, 1997).

Skinner (1957) also argues that the year 1910, being the *turning point* of Chinese history in Siam, as it had seen the death of King Julalongkon (Chulalongkorn, Rama V) and came with the coronation of Rama VI. The succession to the throne marked

the transition from Chinese-friendly policies in Siam to *anti-Sinicism*⁹. The rise of Chinese nationalism and the Siamese nationalism being developed in the first two decades of the 20th century in Siam, and ultimately confronted each other. In the same book of Skinner, he indicated that Siamese elites who had foreign education experiences in Europe surged during Rama V's era, was a factor that shaped Siamese nationalism and differentiate them from the Chinese residents in Siam. Skinner further argues that the European anti-Sinicism bias at the time became a critical factor to the narrative of the different self-identities that Siamese elites segregates them from the Chinese, and therefore contributed to a Nationality Act during the reign of Rama VI (Skinner, 1957). Based on Chantavanich and Limmanee's argument (1997), they believed that "the Chinese nationalism played a significant role in preserving the Chinese qualities of the Sino-Siamese (Chantavanich & Limmanee, 1997, p. 236)."

The second wave of clash between two nationalist ideologies would be during the era of constitutional monarchy and Phibun's administration. Chantavanich and Limmanee (1997) argue that two factors in this period should be taken into consideration for the need of a *chauvinistic nationalism* for Phibun, that is the ongoing wave of Chinese nationalist movement and the fear of the expansion of communism. Following this argument, the Chinese identity of the nationalist Thai Chinese was strongly impacted when the KMT lost the Chinese Civil War in 1949. Some Chinese decided to naturalize into the Thai society after this event. Therefore, it is logically to believe that during the mid-20th century, the second wave of clash and the Thai assimilation policies had resulted in that most Thai Chinese still inhabited in Thailand chose to convert and become Thai citizens. Chantavanich and Limmanee argue that this shift

⁹ Another term to refer to anti-Chinese.

of national identity creates a *dual identity* that the Thai Chinese get to keep ethnic Chinese identity and also use Thai national identity as they are loyal to the *Thai nationalist symbols*: nation, religion and king (Chantavanich & Limmanee, 1997).

All in all, regarding the *cultural assimilation* and its linkage with ethnic Chinese in Thailand, Suryadinata (1997) mentions that Thailand was among one of the highest rates of Chinese assimilation within SEA. He argues that it is due to an *assimilationist policy* that Thai administration adopts, as the Chinese were being assimilated into the Thai society (Suryadinata, 1997). This assimilation policy towards the ethnic Chinese within the kingdom affects *three pillars* that sustain the Chinese society and identity within the nation, namely the Chinese schools (Chinese education), Chinese mass media (or Chinese press) and Chinese associations (Suryadinata, 1997, p. 12). In Thailand's case, although the Chinese schools were heavily restricted throughout most part of the 20th century, Chinese language was still allowed to be taught up to certain limitations. And the Chinese press and Chinese associations were also tolerated in Thailand. This situation, from Suryadinata's point of view, creates the environment for the Thai Chinese to adapt to a *double identity* within Thailand, that they are able to display their *Thai-ness* perfectly in public, and certain degree of *Chinese-ness* are also allowed in Thai society (Suryadinata, 1997, pp. 12-13), this argument basically aligns with Chantavanich and Limmanee's argument mentioned above.

To sum up for this part, it is clear that the development and the transformation of Thai Chinese's self-identity during the 20th century was directly linked with the two nationalist ideologies that counters each other within the kingdom, the stronger the Chinese nationalism surged, causes the counter assimilation from the Thai elite's

nationalist point of view. The other important factor that decided the Thai Chinese to assimilate into Thai culture is the anti-communist idea during the cold war. From Thai elite's view on national security, making ethnic Chinese less "Chinese" and adapt into Thai indigenous society means the PRC would have less influence on the local Chinese community (Suryadinata, 1997, pp. 10-11). And since the ROC lost the civil war, the result of the decrease of Chinese nationalism among Thai Chinese communities had therefore affected Thai Chinese's self-identity that leaning towards assimilation into Thai nationality. Yet the continuity of Chinese education and Chinese associations in the kingdom, also kept the Thai Chinese from complete assimilation and able to maintain a dual identity within Thailand.

Also, it is important to define that the term *national-identity* being described in this thesis generally refers to the dual identity of Thai Chinese's self-identity influenced by both Chinese and Thai nationalism. However, when indicating the self-identity of CAT members, the term *Chinese* after the Chinese Civil War in 1949 is strongly linked with the complex political status of the Chinese regimes, in other words, which regime represents China. In the case of this thesis throughout the research period, the term *China* for the CAT members solely refer to the ROC regime that relocated to Taiwan, and therefore shall not to be mistaken from the PRC in mainland.

1.6.2 The origin and the factors of anti-communist policy in Thailand

To discuss *anti-communism* in Thailand, it is necessary to first understand the origin of communism in Thailand. According to Casella (1970), it was hard for communism to flourish inside Thailand before the 20th century, because it was the only non-

colonized state in SEA, so the royalists remain a crucial part of society; and thanks to the fertile land of Thai soil and underpopulation, there were no peasant revolts in Thai history, and made Marxism difficult to settle in Thailand during the time. Casella further argues that the first appearance of communism in Thailand was within the Chinese and Vietnamese society in Thailand during the 1920s, and the origin of the communist ideas were the results of the split between the KMT and the CCP in 1927, and increased communist activities were spotted amongst the Chinese minority in Thailand (Casella, 1970).

Besides the origin of communism within Thailand, many have also argued the timing of the beginning of *the Cold War* and anti-communism in Thailand, some also holds the belief that this ideology had started as early as in the first half of the 20th century. Barthel and Wongsurawat (2021) argue that the anti-communist ideas can be dated back as early as in the 1920s in Siam, when the Siamese elites tried to leverage imperialist powers to counter communism (Barthel and Wongsurawat, 2021). Nevertheless, more have focus on the aftermath of the Second World War (WWII), such as the impact of the US-Thai relationship build after the mid-1940s as a direct result of post-WWII power shifting in the SEA that urged the two countries to form a Cold War alliance. Hewison (2020) examines the Cold War collaboration between the US and Thailand in the early period based on the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) documents, namely its *black site* in Thailand (Hewison, 2020). Rattanasengchanh (2016) focuses more on the Sarit period started in 1957 until 1963, which is the period that he defined it as the rise of Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat and King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama XI), and the strengthening of a *military-monarchical-anti-communist state* which formed a strong alliance with the US during this period of

Sarit's administration (Rattanasengchanh, 2016). Feangfu (2016) also focuses on the era of 1950s, and until the anti-communist policy lasted till the 1970s, where anti-communist propaganda played a significant role in the decision making of Thai government which lasted until the current days. This policy making can also be traced back as early as Phibun's second premiership that started in the late 1940s till the 1950s (Feangfu, 2016).

As for why anti-communism played a significant role in the shaping of modern Thai political power, many scholars also tried to cut in from different perspective and have indicated different factors that intentionally (or unintentionally) helped strengthened not only the Thai monarchy and military governance, but also the US-Thai relationship during the Cold War. The most important factor being mentioned is the involvement of the US towards Thai politics. Hewison (2020) investigated in the CIA documents and found claims from the organization claiming that the US "desire for Thailand to be a stable Cold War ally in the fight against supposed communist aggression (Hewison, 2020, p. 552)." This dogma has explained why the US would dump the relationship with the leader of *Free Thai Movement*, Pridi Banomyong, and form an alliance with Pridi's rival Field Marshal Phibun. As the US rejected Thailand's war declaration after WWII, and the fact that Thai army formed an alliance with the Japanese during the war, it was natural that the US had a closer relationship with Pridi. However, Hewison (2020) argues that Pridi's supportive attitude towards *Viet Minh*, created by the Indochina Communists, became the reason why US officials started to wary of Pridi's ideology would be too radical from their hope to maintain a stabilized society within Thailand, and thus regarded Pridi as "politically unreliable (Hewison, 2020, p. 553)." As for the result, the 1947 military coup which overthrown

Pridi's administration fits the strategy of the US to establish an anti-communist alliance within the SEA. Also, Hewison (2020) mentioned the wary of a separatist northeast Thailand could become the nest of communism in the country. Hewison (2020) thus concluded that as Pridi being described as a pro-communism activist and had to fled to the communist China, the alliance between the US and a corrupted military-dominated black-site of Thailand became the need from both ends during the Cold War era, and this military authoritarianism regime left remarkable legacies for the shaping of Thailand ever since, even until the present-day (Hewison, 2020).

Some have focused more on the US' pacific alliances network, which commonly known as the *San Francisco system* that includes bilateral defense relationships with anti-communist allies on the west end of the Pacific Ocean, Thailand is regarded as an important component that shapes up this networking structure in the SEA (Lankowski, 2003). This is also being discussed by Dian and Meijer (2019) in their article, where it is described as a *US-led hub-and-spokes system* that was formed in the Cold War era.

Barthel and Wongsurawat (2021) argue that from the US' perspective, after the defeat of the KMT in the mainland China, the nature of communism in Asia has shifted. And thus, SEA became the next in line to be considered as "a region with a common political destiny (Barthel & Wongsurawat, 2021, p. 659)." They also argue that the Siamese absolutists' support of colonial anti-communist from the late 1910s to 1920s indicated that the US regarded internal uprising a larger threat than outside imperialism (Barthel & Wongsurawat, 2021). As for the result, it was not hard to understand why a US backed anti-communist policy was welcomed also by the Thai

administration, since the Thai administration has been trying to counter communist threats long before the WWII and the soon after Cold War.

Besides the US and the Thai military regime, Rattanasengchanh (2016) also argues that the Rattanakosin monarchy should also be considered as an unneglectable factor that shaped up the anti-communist stance of Thailand during the Cold War era. According to Rattanasengchanh (2016), he described the Thai administration as a *military-monarchy* combination where “the royal family organized rituals and religious ceremonies (Rattanasengchanh, 2016, p. 58).” Through the rituals, the prestige of Thai monarchy remains high amongst Thai citizens, and this image helped to build the national loyalty and became the foundation of a pro-US, anti-communist state that could strived through the Cold War era (Rattanasengchanh, 2016).

To sum up for this part, it is clear that anti-communism has guided Thailand’s national beliefs before the communist expansion became the US’ concern. It is commonly agreed that during the Cold War, the US wanted Thailand to maintain a stable governance where anti-communist idea could be spread and planted in the minds of Thai citizens. However, although some of the literatures above mentioned Thai Chinese in Thailand, it was not considered an important factor helped shaping the anti-communist policy in Thailand. And the China in the narratives during this period were often communistic (PRC) and thus neglect much of the nationalist influences from the ROC.

Therefore, this research limits within the period between 1907 when CAT was established and lasts till the end of Sarit’s administration in 1963 as Thailand coped with the United States of America’s (USA) anti-communist policies. As CAT also

faced major changes in the early 1960s, the ending of this thesis at this point of time can be seen as the end of certain phase of the development of CAT, and also to that of Thailand itself.



Chapter 2

Rise of the Chinese nationalism in Thailand: The establishment of CAT

It is known that the early ethnic Chinese communities in Bangkok were settled alongside Chao Phraya, the river that flow through the city and divided Bangkok into two parts (the Thonburi side in the west and the Bangkok side in the east) in the current days. According to Chantawanic and Triamvithaya (2021), three major communities are identified as *old Chinese*¹⁰ settlements that are all close to the *old town* of Bangkok, namely the Rattanakosin island. Out of these three communities, the two communities along the eastern bank of Chao Phraya, namely *Sampheng* and *Samphanthawong*, are the ones closely linked with the rise of Chinese nationalism since the 19th century to the early 20th century, and the establishment of CAT in the first decade of 20th century. In this chapter, the geographic and historic factors of the said Chinese communities would be taken into consideration to the shaping of CAT. The origin of Chinese nationalism in Thailand was strongly related with the Tongmenghui members, their ideology against the Chinese who were *pro-Qing Dynasty*¹¹, and also on the contrary of a rising Thai nationalism as a counterpart.

¹⁰ The definition of Old Chinese / New Chinese in Chantawanic & Triamvithaya's book (2021), refers to the Chinese immigrants came to Thailand before / after the era of Rama VI.

¹¹ The *pro-Qing Dynasty Chinese* in this thesis is defined as “the ethnic Chinese who wanted to preserve the Qing regime through Constitutional reform and support a constitutional monarchy regime.”

2.1 Chinese newspapers in Siam and their relationship to Chinese nationalism in 1900s

The origin of CAT is strongly related with the *pro-revolutionist*¹² Chinese newspaper *Chino Siamese Daily News*¹³ (華暹新報, hereinafter refer to as CSDN) and its founders. According to Lee (1965), he argues that the earliest creditable record of Chinese newspaper published in Siam should be the *Meinan Ribao* (美南日報) in 1906 by a Chinese revolutionist, Tan Keng Hua¹⁴ (陳景華), who fled to Siam from mainland China since 1905. Lee also argues that the newspaper soon split into different ones because of the different ideologies between co-publishers in the next year. The Chinese newspapers in Siam were also categorized into two factions, the pro-Qing Dynasty ones, and the pro-revolutionist ones. In 1907, CSDN was founded by Seow Hudseng¹⁵ (蕭佛成), Tan Keng Hua, and Sam Hing Si¹⁶ (沈荇思) as a platform to spread the Chinese revolutionist ideology. According to Chiang (2011), CSDN has both Chinese version which Tan was the editor-in-chief, and the Thai version which Seow's daughter was in charge. The newspaper was the platform for Seow, Tan, and Sam (hereinafter referred to as *the founders of CSDN*) to spread their

¹² The *pro-revolutionist Chinese* in this thesis is defined as “the ethnic Chinese who were against the rule of Qing Dynasty and wanted to overthrow its regime through revolutions.” Thus, the definition is also similar to the definition of the Chinese revolutionist and the Chinese nationalist in this thesis.

¹³ Known as จีนโนสยามวารศัพท์ in Thai. The term *Chino Siamese Daily News* was being used as the official name on the front page of the newspaper, however, it is also referred to as “China Siamese News (Chiang, 2011)” as Chiang indicated the postal address of the newspaper; and as the “Siamese-Chinese Magazine” and “Hua Sian Sin Po” by Chantavanich & Limmanee (1997).

¹⁴ Since Tan was a Cantonese Chinese, therefore, this thesis chooses the Cantonese phonetic spelling indicated in Murashima's (2013) article, instead of its mandarin spelling Chen Jing Hua in English. Same logic goes for the following names if the phonetic spellings of their names are indicated in previous studies.

¹⁵ Seow (1862-1940) was a Siamese born Chinese also known by his Thai name เขียวสุดเสียง สีนุกูเรื่อง. Also spelt as Xiao Focheng in various research papers written in English.

¹⁶ Sam was a Cantonese Chinese served as a comprador of Banque de l'Indochine (Murashima, 2013). Also spelt as Shen Xingsi.

Chinese nationalist ideas, and the publishing office itself was also the address of CAT where it is being recorded as the “mansion of Seow that was located around the riverbank of Chao Phraya¹⁷” in the Chronicle of CAT (2004). And Seow (1936, cited in Chiang, 2011, p. 301) also recorded that CAT was founded in 1907, by the founders of CSDN and two other Chinese nationalists, which align with CAT’s record (2004) as they indicated the *Chinese Clubhouse* (中華會所)¹⁸ was founded in 1907. Therefore, the office of CSDN can be seen as the assembly of Chinese nationalists in Siam and have naturally become the first assembly of CAT members where Seow played a significant role to establish it.

What is also worth noticing for the linkage of CSDN and the Chinese nationalism in Siam, is that the address of CSDN is being recorded as the liaison office when Dr. Sun Yat-sen visited Bangkok in November 1908 (Chiang, 2011), and gave his speech to provoke Chinese nationalism in the Sampheng area, which we would then discuss in the following section.

2.2 The visit of Dr. Sun Yat-sen in Bangkok in 1908 and its influence on CAT and the Chinese nationalism

According to the biographical anecdote that CAT published for promoting Dr. Sun Yat-sen’s ideology (2020), the main argument in the book claims that Dr. Sun visited

¹⁷ “會所初設於四披耶路湄南河濱之蕭寓 (The Chinese Association in Thailand, 2004, p.1).”

¹⁸ It is also important to point out that from CAT’s narrative (2004; 2019), Chinese Clubhouse (中華會所) was renamed into CAT (中華會館) soon after the founding of the ROC, therefore, the only minor difference is the terminology used for its Chinese name, while they appear to be the same association. Which is evidential from Seow’s record (1936, cited in Chiang, 2011, p. 301) that mentions the foundation of CAT was in 1907. Also, Murashima (2013) refers to the name of the association as Zhong Hua Hui Guan (中華會館). Therefore, any documents mentioning Chinese Clubhouse would be recorded as CAT hereinafter.

Bangkok three times during the Chinese revolution movement¹⁹. Amongst his visits, the visit during 1908²⁰ became the most important one, as he gave speeches in the Sampheng area near Yaowarat road to provoke his idea of overthrowing the Qing Dynasty and building a new nation by the Chinese nationals. Two speeches were mentioned during this visit in 1908: According to Murashima (2013), the first one was given at the house of Wong Hang Chao (王杏洲) at Sampheng, one of the founding members of CAT. According to CAT (2020), the purpose of this visit of Sun was to attend a reception of patriotic overseas Chinese held by CAT in Bangkok on 20 November 1908. Also, the speech was held at an open space on *Mangkong road* (thanon Mangkon), and the speech quickly spread among the Chinese residents living in the area. After the foundation of the ROC, this street was being known as “the street of speech (演說街),” as a memory of this speech and its influence on Chinese nationalism that he brought amongst the Chinese nationals in Siam (CAT, 2020). After the first speech, the second speech was recorded to be given at the newly founded CAT on 1 December 1908 (Murashima, 2013).

This visit of Dr. Sun in 1908, however, also triggered the nerves of the Siamese government and the Qing government. Chiang (2011) mentions that the speech itself arouse the attention of the Siamese government, and Dr. Sun was asked to leave the country the next day. He then argues that this request was clearly under the influence of the Qing government, and since Siam was a small nation (compared to the Qing Empire), they could only adhere to this request. On the contrary to the government’s

¹⁹ CAT (2020) argues that there were three visits of Dr. Sun to Bangkok in 1903, 1905 and 1908.

²⁰ According to Seow’s record (1936, cited in Chiang, 2011, p. 301), Hu Hanmin (胡漢民) and Hu Yishen (胡毅生) were two of the key Tongmenghui members accompanied Dr. Sun to Bangkok. According to CAT (2004), Wang Jingwei (汪精衛) accompanied Dr. Sun during this visit. All of the mentioned members were Cantonese Chinese.

stance, Siamese Chinese were more leaning towards the pro-revolutionist ideas. As Chantavanich and Limmanee (1997) argue that the number of pro-Qing Chinese in Siam were smaller in portion compared to the pro-revolutionist. Another evidence on the Siamese Chinese's stance on revolution is recorded in Lee's article (1965), that the pro-Qing newspaper *Chinan Daily* (啓南日報) was discontinued even before the foundation of ROC in 1912, while the pro-revolutionist CSDN survived until 1932. Both of these newspapers were derived from Meinan Ribao as mentioned in the last section, but the ideological differences between pro-Qing and pro-revolutionist caused their split.

As we have discussed in the last section, Chinese nationalism in Siam had already been aroused by pro-revolutionist Chinese newspapers like CSDN before 1908, and the founders of CSDN was also the first members that have founded CAT in 1907. According to Chiang (2011), a letter by Dr. Sun that sent before his leaving from Singapore to Bangkok on 20 November 1908 had shown that the liaison of his in Bangkok was located on the second floor of the newspaper office of CSDN²¹. Also, according to Murashima (2013), during this visit in 1908, "Dr Sun Yat Sen and others stayed at Seow Hoot Seng²²'s house. (Murashima, 2013, p. 169)" Which can be seen as yet another evidence that shows the office of CSDN, the assembly of CAT, and the mansion of Seow were trinity in unity at the time during 1908. Furthermore, it clearly

²¹ According to Chiang's research (2011), the location of the newspaper office was "China Siamese News, 35 Birth Day Bridge, New Road, Bangkok, Siam (Chiang, 2011, p.301)." However, the "35 Birth Day Bridge" here is likely referring to "สะพานเจริญทัศน์ 35", which was built during Rama IV's reign, which means it was not existed in 1908. Therefore, the "35 Birth Day Bridge" here should be a typo for "53 Birth Day Bridge", or "สะพานเฉลิมพันธุ์ 53" in Thai, which was built during Rama V's reign and was built across a canal close to the Odeon circle near Yaowarat. Also, the term "New Road" here, should be the famous Charoen Krung Road (ถนน เจริญกรุง) that still runs through this region of Chinese settlements.

²² An alternate spelling of Seow Hudseng.

showed that Dr. Sun and the founders of CAT and CSDN, especially Seow, were closely related during this visit. Both Seow and Tan joined the Tongmenghui and returned to mainland China briefly after the ROC was established. The Bangkok branch of Tongmenghui was founded in 1908 and set its assembly on the second floor of CSDN, and the founders of CSDN were holding important positions in this branch, as Seow being the chairman, Tan being the secretary, and Sam being the treasurer of the branch (Chiang, 2011).

Nevertheless, according to CAT (2004), although the founders of CSDN are recognized as three of the members among CAT's founding members, a non-Tongmenghui member was assigned by Dr. Sun to be the chairman of CAT. Which is because Tongmenghui back then was in need to remain as an underground organization, while CAT was already holding public events (such as Dr. Sun's speech in Bangkok). Therefore, it was wiser to assign a patriotic overseas Chinese who was not a Tongmenghui member to act as the leader of CAT, and thus could have welcomed more overseas Chinese to join the association. Since CAT legally registered under the Secret Society Act of 1897 (Murashima, 2013), public events amongst Siamese Chinese could be arranged through CAT. On the other hand, this also means that CAT was closely related to Tongmenghui. In fact, all the first nine members recorded as the founding members of Tongmenghui's Bangkok branch (Chiang, 2011) were all also recorded on the list of CAT's founding members (CAT, 2004). Which indicates that Tongmenghui and CAT were two sides of the same coin and signifies that the idea of Chinese nationalism has been risen in Siam.

To further spread the revolutionary ideas to the Siamese Chinese, the visit of Dr. Sun and his Tongmenghui members in 1908 not only was closely related to the foundation of CAT, but also boosted the foundation of multiple other Chinese associations and Chinese schools that were also related to CAT, which we are going to discuss next.

2.3 The relationship of CAT and Tongmenghui, and the joint of five Chinese dialect groups

As we mentioned in the last section, the founders of CSDN and CAT hosted Dr. Sun during his visit to Bangkok in 1908, and then helped establish the Bangkok branch of Tongmenghui. Although most pro-revolutionist Chinese can be identified as Han Chinese, the origins of their revolutionary organizations were dispersed. For example, the *Hsing Chung Hui* (興中會) was founded by Dr. Sun Yat-sen in 1894 in Honolulu, Hawaii, and naturally consisted with many overseas Chinese members; the *Huaxinghui* (華興會) was founded by Huang Hsing (黃興) in 1904 in Hunan; and the *Guangfuhui* (光復會) was founded by Cai Yuanpei (蔡元培) and consisted with many members from *Chekiang* (the current days Zhejiang Province), those were three of the largest Chinese revolutionary organizations at the time. This has shown the complexity that there were different ideologies amongst Chinese revolutionists from different regions, although they all have the same motivations that were to overthrow the Qing regime and to form a Chinese republic. Despite that, in Bangkok, the boundary among these organizations towards revolutionists was not visible. Many of the early revolutionists transited between different organizations, such as Seow first joined the *Guangfuhui* and organized a Bangkok branch when it was established in Shanghai (The China Weekly Review, 1931), and then soon joined the Tongmenghui

and was recorded that “he was appointed chairman of the branch; since then, he has been a faithful disciple of Dr. Sun’s Three People’s Principles (The China Weekly Review, 1931, p. 147).” Which obviously happened since Dr. Sun’s visit in 1908 as we mentioned. As the three organizations above and other minor groups were combined into Tongmenghui in 1905, it is also understandable that different factions therefore coexisted within Tongmenghui, and often conflicted with each other ideological-wise, even after the Tongmenghui reformed into KMT, as it constantly splits into different factions in the history of the party.

In the case of Tongmenghui members in Bangkok, the first noticeable difference on the founding members was that they were from different dialect groups of Chinese. According to Chiang (2011), the founding members’ hometown in mainland China were mostly from *Canton* region, while three of them are from the *Teochew* region (both are from the Guangdong Province in current days), and Seow was of *Hokkien* origin (from the current days Fujian Province). Skinner (1957) also mentioned that the Hainanese were active as Tongmenghui members in their early days in Bangkok. As we mentioned that all these members were also the founding members of CAT, we can know that the original CAT had naturally affiliated with Cantonese and Teochew Chinese in Siam.

According to CAT (2004), after the *Second Guangzhou Uprising* in 1911, more revolutionists fled to Bangkok from mainland China, and therefore they decided to expand the numbers of members from the five dialects groups of Siamese Chinese. All five of the dialect groups, including Teochew, Hokkien, Hainanese, Hakka, and Cantonese all have leading members who were responsible for the correspond

members of their own dialect groups²³, and became relatively influential within their own dialect group. For example, Seow Hudseng also helped restored the *Hokkien Association of Thailand* (福建會館) in 1911. This has relatively transformed CAT into a comprehensive association which unites the overseas Chinese in Bangkok who supports the idea of creating a new Chinese republic. There were no direct records or evidence that have shown the operation of these sort of associations known as the *district-dialect clubs* (like the Hokkien Association of Thailand), were of any sort of subsidiary under the direction of CAT. However, since many of the Tongmenghui members also joined and participated in the district-dialect clubs of their own dialect groups', it can be seen as a way to expand influence of their revolutionary ideology amongst their fellow community members from the same dialect group.

The foundation of CAT also marks the start of Chinese education in Bangkok. Several Chinese schools were under the supervision of CAT since 1908, as a way to arouse revolutionist ideas towards overseas Chinese (CAT, 2004). According to Intarapirom (2007), the Chinese school named *Hua Iah* (華益學校) associated five largest dialect groups²⁴ of Siamese Chinese together and had then chosen the language from the largest dialect group, Teochew dialect, as its language to teach their ethnic Chinese students. Besides *Hua Iah*, according to Skinner (1957), there were other Chinese schools established by all five dialect groups of Chinese and using their own dialects to teach children of the same ethnic Chinese groups, including: *Hsin-min* (新民學校)

²³ According to CAT (2019), Seow Hudseng was responsible for the Hokkien members of CAT; Chen Yiru (陳繹如) for the Teochew members; Ip Ting-sz (葉定仕) for the Hakka members; Liang Shechang (梁社長) for the Cantonese members; and Wang Fujun (王斧軍) for the Hainanese members.

²⁴ Including ethnic Chinese immigrants from major southern Chinese dialect groups. Namely Teochew, Hokkien, Hainanese, Hakka, and Cantonese.

by the Teochew people in 1911; *Pei-yuan* (培元學校) by the Hokkien people in 1914; *Ming-de* (明德學校) by Cantonese people in 1914; *Chin-te* (進德學堂) by the Hakka people in 1916; and *Yu-min* (育民學校) by the Hainanese people in 1921. Also, CAT (2004) mentioned that these schools like Hua Iah, Hsin-min, Ming-de, and another Hainanese school named *Kuo-wen* (國文學堂) are all subsidiary Chinese schools of CAT. Therefore, it is also obvious that the Chinese nationalist ideas were spreading through these Chinese schools in Bangkok, and we could argue that the start of Chinese education in Bangkok linked with the Chinese nationalism which contributed to the establishment of the ROC, and CAT played a fundamental role to unite the patriotic pro-ROC Siamese Chinese in all five dialect groups through these Chinese associations and Chinese schools mentioned above.

2.4 Internal conflicts among CAT members during the 1910s and 1920s and its consequence

As indicated in the last section, different factions coexisted amongst Tongmenghui (and the later KMT) members, and the difference of ideologies among members came to light after the new Chinese republic was founded, as many of its original members decided to go back to mainland China and therefore left Bangkok. As for CAT, many of its members, especially the ones who were also KMT members, returned to the mainland China after the ROC founded in 1912, thus the CAT went into a period in a slump (CAT, 2004).

According to CAT (2004), another important reason why the members were having differences in opinion right after the Chinese republic founded, was an aftermath of

the *Second Revolution* (二次革命) happened in mainland China. This revolution was a conflict between the KMT members from the Southern provinces of China that supported Dr. Sun, and the *Beiyang Government* (北洋政府) that supported Yuan Shikai (袁世凱) as the President of ROC. The Second Revolution ended with the victory of the Beiyang Government, and resulted in the defeat of KMT that caused the split amongst KMT members on the opinions whether to forge another anti-Yuan movement. Chiang (2011) argues that the KMT split into two opinions on the stance towards anti-Yuan and the following anti-warlords movements: one is Dr. Sun's opinion to try to oust Yuan as soon as possible, and therefore formed a more centralized *Chinese Revolutionary Party* (中華革命黨) in Tokyo in 1914; on the other hand, some KMT members like Huang Hsing believed that the timing to overthrow Yuan's regime was not right and should have waited a bit longer as the public opinions (in China) were still in favor of Yuan.

According to Chiang (2011), this split between KMT members nonetheless reflected among overseas Chinese in SEA. However, in Siam, the split amongst Siamese Chinese were still mostly between former pro-Qing Dynasty Chinese who held an anti-KMT stance and the pro-KMT Chinese. An obvious example was the *Zhong Hua Min Bao* (中華民國報), a Chinese newspaper in Siam since 1912 and lasted for a long time until it was banned in 1939, was founded by the anti-KMT Siamese Chinese, and was the inverse of CSDN's stance. Lee (1965) referred to the stance of *Zhong Hua Min Bao* as *Junxianpai* (君憲派), literally pro-constitutional monarchy, therefore, it is clear that their stance contradicted to the KMT and CAT members' s revolutionary viewpoint, regarding the form of government of China.

To understand why the CAT's stance was highly aligned with Dr. Sun, it was clearly because of Seow acted as the most significant member in CAT, who was loyal to Dr. Sun's ideology and dedicated with fundraising from Siamese Chinese. The importance of Seow to CAT can also be seen from the CAT's chronicle (2004), that Seow being the person in charge of CAT during this period until CAT's dissolution in 1931.

According to Seow's record (1936, cited in Chiang, 2011, p. 306), he mentions his stance on fully supporting Dr. Sun and his movements against warlords in China like Yuan, Long Jiguang (龍濟光) and also against Chen Jiongming (陳炯明). Those three respectively corresponding to the *Anti-Monarchy War* (護國戰爭) against Yuan between 1915 and 1916, the battles against Long during the *Constitutional Protection Movement* (護法運動) between 1917 and 1922, and the battles between Chen and the pro-Sun KMT members after Chen's coup against Dr. Sun in Guangzhou in 1922. According to CAT (2004), the former two movements against the Beiyang regime did not affect much on the unity of CAT members in Siam. In fact, according to Skinner (1957), from 1925 to 1927, the support rate of KMT regime surpassed the Beiyang regime, as most Siamese Chinese in Bangkok chose to hoist the Chinese national flag of the KMT regime²⁵ instead of the old five-barred flag of the Beiyang regime (五色旗) by 1927. And regular KMT membership in Siam was "estimated at about twenty thousand. (Skinner, 1957, p. 236)" Which makes it the most powerful force amongst

²⁵ Known as the flag of "Blue Sky, White Sun, and a Wholly Red Earth (青天白日滿地紅)." And the flag remains to be the national flag of ROC until the present-day.

the Siamese Chinese communities, and also means the unity of ideology among CAT members.

However, the ideology split after Chen's coup, split the pro-KMT CAT members into two factions: pro-Sun and pro-Chen, and the members of pro-Chen faction correspondingly withdrew from CAT afterwards. Another significant ideology split amongst CAT members happened after Dr. Sun decided to accept the members of the newly formed CCP to join KMT individually after 1923. Since the leftists and communist members joined CAT, they attempted to take control of CAT and other organizations related to CAT, which can be seen as the split between factions of left-wing and right-wing KMT members. After the KMT decided to purge the party in 1927, CAT also formed its purge committee to banish the left-wing members within CAT. Which we will further discuss this issue in the chapter 4, as we will discuss the factor of anti-Communism in Thailand.

The constant internal conflicts in the 1920s was one of the reasons why CAT was being forced to terminate by Siamese authority in 1928, according to Seow's record (1936, cited in Chiang, 2011, p. 312). However, the date of CAT's closure was recorded as during June 1931 by Murashima (2013); the year 1931 aligned with CAT's (2004) description, that the operation of CAT suspended after the *Mukden Incident* happened in September 1931 as Seow returned to mainland China afterwards. The reason why Seow decided to go back to mainland China might be the result of the forced shut down of CSDN soon afterward in 1932 (Chiang, 2011). And we can therefore also argue that Seow's decision to return to mainland China also ended the era of a rising Chinese nationalism amongst Siamese Chinese, as the

remaining CAT members in Siam lost the backbone of their organization, CAT was only to be reestablished by some of its former members after WWII in the late 1940s.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have stated that the rise of Chinese nationalism in Siam was highly related to the establishment of CAT, which, many factors have contributed to the phenomenon.

The first factor is the linkage of pro-revolutionist newspapers and the foundation of CAT. The most influential pro-revolutionist newspapers CSDN was founded in 1906, and spread the revolutionist ideas against Qing Dynasty, which therefore gather more Siamese Chinese with similar ideologies and founded CAT in 1907. The founders of CSDN were being recognized amongst the founders of CAT as well, where Seow Hudseng became the most influential member since his good relationship with Dr. Sun Yat-sen, and the first assembly of CAT was located at Seow's mansion in the Chinese community near the riverbank of Chao Phraya.

The second factor is the invitation from CAT that contributed to the visit of Dr. Sun to Bangkok in 1908 and gave a speech towards Siamese Chinese in the Sampheng area. This visit accelerated the rise of Chinese nationalism in Bangkok and resulted in the foundation of Tongmenghui's Bangkok branch in 1908. Again, this branch was directly related to Seow, as the assembly located in the same building with CSDN, and Seow being the first president of this branch. The linkage of CAT and Tongmenghui was also obvious, the Tongmenghui members were also members of CAT, and CAT was therefore acted as the *façade* of Tongmenghui to recruit Siamese

Chinese that were enthusiast towards Chinese nationalist ideas, whether they choose to join Tongmenghui or not.

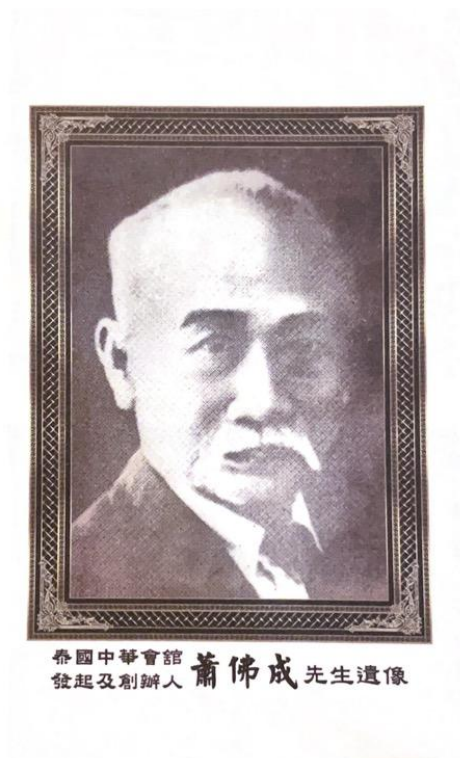
The third factor is the joint of five Chinese dialect groups in Bangkok and had therefore truly united the Chinese communities through their revolutionary ideology. As more Chinese people arrived in Bangkok during the 1910s, CAT decided to expand its influence amongst all five dialect groups of Chinese communities through establishing sub-branches within CAT for each dialect group. Also, the Chinese school Hua Iah as the first Chinese school in Bangkok was founded by CAT, all five dialect groups of Chinese students could join this school and learn Chinese (which was taught with the majority language: Teochew dialect). Other than this school, all five dialect groups started to establish their own schools to teach their descendants. This has shown the union of Chinese communities in Bangkok, and the rise of Chinese nationalism through the form of Chinese education and Chinese newspapers.

The fourth factor is the importance of Seow Hudseng to CAT from its foundation till it was suspended by the Thai government in the 1930s. Seow was in charge of KMT's Bangkok branch and CSDN throughout the period and was a founding member of CAT. As mentioned in the section, Seow was loyal to Dr. Sun's ideology, and aligned with the right-wing KMT members in the late 1920s, this might have caused the split amongst CAT members, however, it also made sure the union of the remaining CAT members, as they are always loyal to Dr. Sun's ideology until the present-day. This also aligned with Murashima's (2012) description of CAT, that he mentioned CAT as

“A cover-up organization for the KMT’s Siamese Branch led by Seow Hudseng.²⁶”

Figure 2

A photo of Mr. Seow Hudseng



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Note. Mr. Seow Hudseng’s photo with captions below that referred to him as the initiator and founder of CAT. From *Biographical anecdote of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen* (p.62), by The Chinese Association in Thailand, 2020, Bangkok: The Chinese Association in Thailand.

To sum up, several factors contributed to the rise of Chinese nationalism and the establishment of CAT. The most important factor here shall be the influence of Seow

²⁶ “中華會館 [蕭佛成を長とする中国国民党暹羅総支部の隠れ蓑組織] (Murashima, 2012, p. 38)”

Hudseng, as shown from the photo of Seow in Figure 2, which is derived from one of CAT's publications published in 2020. The Chinese description of the photo referred Seow as the "initiator and founder of CAT." Also, in this chapter we can see that the CAT members were highly associated with the patriotic pro-ROC Siamese Chinese, namely the Chinese nationalists of KMT. Thus, their Chinese nationalist ideology clashed with the rising of Siamese nationalism in the same period, which we will analyze in the following chapter.



Chapter 3

Anti-Chinese policies: The clashes between Chinese nationalism and Thai nationalism

The foundation of CAT not only linked with the rise of Chinese nationalism, but also with the rise of Siamese nationalism at the other end. The clashes between both ideologies became the main reason for the people in Siam to realize the differences in national-identity between Siamese and the Chinese living amongst them. It is arguably that the Siamese nationalism was aroused before or after the rise of Chinese nationalism during this period. Chantavanich and Limmanee (1997) argue that the first wave of Siamese nationalism started in 1910 after the succession of King Wachirawut (Rama VI), yet Sivaraksa (2002) argues that the *crisis of Siamese identity* was already threatened by the *farang*, the westerners from Europe, during the time of King Mongkut (Rama IV). The clash between Siamese nationalism and Chinese nationalism in Siam during the reign of Rama VI in the 1910s has shown that the Siamese and those Chinese who inhabited in Siam, started to face, and recognize their differences in between during this period. CAT and its members played an essential role to the recognition of national-identity of Siamese Chinese. As CAT expanded and accepted more members during 1920s, members from different political factions with different political ideologies became the main reason for its internal conflicts. Furthermore, the Japanese invasion towards mainland China became the reason for the revival of Chinese nationalism, and CAT served as the role of the assembly of Chinese nationalists until its forced closure during the reign of Rama VII, as mentioned in the last chapter.

After the 1932 coup in Siam that forced the absolute monarchy being replaced by constitutional monarchy under military junta's rule, the anti-Chinese policy towards the Siamese Chinese only went exacerbated. Phibun took control of the government and became the prime minister (PM) of Siam in 1938. As Phibun planned to pursue his *pan-Thaism* ideology and changed the official name of the country to Thailand, it also intensified the anti-Chinese policies towards the Thai Chinese communities. Also, as the hostile stances between ROC and Japanese Empire went raging since the late 1930s, the Thai Chinese's stance against Japanese went viral. At the same time, as Phibun decided to form an alliance with Japan, the contradiction between the stances of Phibun's administration and the Thai Chinese communities resulted in the prohibition against Chinese media and Chinese schools during Phibun's first administration. This was only revived until the allies won WWII in 1945, and CAT was reestablished in 1947 consequently.

However, the third clash between Thai nationalism and Chinese nationalism came shortly afterward, that was also strongly linked with the anti-communist stance of Thai government towards Thai Chinese. After KMT lost the Chinese Civil War, and the CCP took control of mainland China after 1949. The anti-Chinese policies of the Thai government focused more on the external factors towards a communistic China, rather than towards the internal factor, which is its Thai Chinese nationals.

3.1 The rise of Siamese nationalism during Rama VI's reign and its influence on CAT

Since CAT were mostly joined by Tongmenghui (and later reformed into KMT after the ROC was formed) members from different dialect groups, the formation of CAT

means the union of Siamese Chinese in Bangkok, regardless of their origins. More importantly, according to CAT (2004), many of its members returned to mainland China and joined the Second Guangzhou Uprising in 1911. After the establishment of the ROC, over 300 of the members returned to mainland China to serve in the newly established republic. This has shown that these ethnic Chinese in Bangkok who joined the CAT at the moment, were more eager to regard mainland China as their motherland worth sacrificing for, had them the chance to choose in between.

For the non-Chinese Siamese people in Bangkok, the rise of Chinese nationalism in the early 20th century became visible as the strike of Siamese Chinese regarding a tax augmentation occurred in 1908, that they started to realize the issues of Chinese aliens within the nation. The Chinese riots in 1911 after the Siamese authority required the Chinese merchants in Siam to pay the same amount of tax as the rest of the Siamese citizens, caused the result of riot and the closure of Chinese stores paralyzed the Siamese economy, according to Landon's (1940) article. Also, according to Anderson (2006), he argues that King Wachirawut (Rama VI) developed an anti-Chinese stance as a leader while the Siamese king "dramatized himself as his country's 'first nationalist' (Anderson, 2006, p. 100)." This stance was soon followed by a series of laws and restrictions mostly targeted on the Chinese residents in Siam since 1913 (Chantavanich & Limmanee, 1997), and these restrictions have influenced heavily on the KMT members. As the restrictions were promulgated to assimilate local Siamese Chinese, and to counter the rise of Chinese nationalism.

Anderson (2016) argues that the anti-Chinese stance of the newly reigned Rama VI can be seen in his two pamphlets: *The Jews of the Orient* (1914), and *Clogs on Our*

Wheels (1915), described the Siamese Chinese as a significant yet alienated component within the Siamese society economical-wise. In an article of Charatchanyawong (2021), he mentioned that Rama VI himself was using a pseudonym²⁷ to publicly expressed his opinions towards the public. On the other hand, Seow used different pen names²⁸ to express his counter-opinions. On the issue of China's form of government, it was undoubtedly that Rama VI himself was supporting Yuan Shikai's attempt to revive the monarchy in China as Yuan tried to form a Chinese Empire in late 1915 and claimed that this had shown that Chinese people were still in favor of a monarchy. However, as Yuan's attempt opposed not only by the revolutionists, but also by his subordinate military commanders and the warlords in other Chinese provinces who claimed independence from Yuan's newly formed Chinese Empire, the revival of the monarchy in China faced a rapid failure within months. The democratic government of ROC was reestablished quickly after Yuan's death, proved that Rama VI's hopes throughout the years on a Chinese monarchy revival were futile. This has much explained the reason why Rama VI was the main reason of the laws and restrictions targeted on Siamese Chinese, as he feared the rise of Chinese nationalism would encourage the Siamese people toward similar revolutionary ideologies.

For example, the *Nationality Law* in 1913 was the first law in Siam to include Siamese Chinese as Siamese nationals if they were born in Siam (Chantavanich & Limmanee, 1997). Which also followed by the *Surname Law* that allowed certain Siamese Chinese to acquire a family name after their existing name in order to fit in

²⁷ Written as *Asawaphahu* (อัสวาพาหุ) in Thai.

²⁸ Such as *Padung* (ผดุง), *Ayomaistre* (อโยมัยเสตร) and *Batkunjon* (บาทกุนจัน) in Thai.

the Siamese society. The most renowned example is the KMT leader in Bangkok, Seow Hudseng's new name: Seow Hudseng Sibunruan²⁹. Where Chantavanich and Limmanee (1997) also argue that many CAT business elites “exhibited a new trend of national identity by changing their names (Chantavanich & Limmanee, 1997, p. 237).” On the other hand, many members of the Sino-Siam Chamber of Commerce (暹羅中華總商會) with no political affiliation chose to keep their Chinese names.

Another important law was the 1914 *Association Law*, that “controlled the activities of all associations and clubs, especially the Chinese associations in order to make them non-political (Chantavanich & Limmanee, 1997, p. 236)” This aligned with the description we have discussed in the last chapter, as a reason why although many members of Tongmenghui's Bangkok branch were also founding members of CAT, a non-member of Tongmenghui was chosen to act as the chairman of CAT. Therefore, as a registered association, CAT was to arrange non-political gathering amongst Siamese Chinese and not to violate the Siamese law, while Seow and the Tongmenghui members secretly hide behind the protection of CAT as an underground society. Skinner (1957) also describes CAT and the *Hainanese Association* (海南會館) as “the major front organizations (of Tongmenghui) in Bangkok. (Skinner, 1957, p. 236)”

From the examples above, the tension between the Chinese and Siamese nationalism had clearly surfaced after the successful Chinese revolution in 1912, which resulted in that Seow and other CAT members to adjust their names to fit the Siamese society. Even though they were being seen as Chinese nationalists in Siam, they chose to cope

²⁹ Written as เซียวฮุดเส็ง สิบบุญเรือง in Thai.

with these new *Thaification* laws instead of against them publicly. However, their Thaification names only applies on the situations to deal within Siamese society; when they face a situation to deal in a Chinese context, they would choose to use their Chinese names only. This situation of dual identity was evidential as Seow remained to only use the name *Seow Hudseng* (蕭佛成) when it was needed to be written in Chinese, and his Thai name was being used when written in Thai. Same duality can still be spotted on CAT's council directory (2019) in the present-day, most of the members being mentioned on the directory have therefore inherited this dual identity of displaying both their Chinese and Thai names.

For the CAT members who remained in Siam in the following decades, it was evidential that they did not want to abandon this duality of both a strong Chinese nationalist ideology, along with a respectful attitude towards the Siamese Kingdom, which segregate themselves from the native Siamese people. According to Chantavanich and Limmanee (1997), members of major Chinese associations such as CAT, insisted to hoist both the Chinese and Siamese national flags during important occasions in the 1920s and 1930s. This has shown that the CAT members chose to express their Chinese identity within Siam, which therefore became the main reason for a period of more aggressive anti-Chinese policies in the near future.

3.2 The anti-Japanese movements in Bangkok during 1920s to 1930s, and its influence on CAT

Since the 1920s, the Chinese nationalism in Bangkok was largely aroused in the form of anti-Japanese movements. These movements were to against the Japanese invasion

towards mainland China since the mid-1920s and had deeply affected Siamese Chinese of different social classes. The earliest protest against Japanese can be dated back to 1925, as Teochew Chinese workers and students from the Puy-yin school (培英學校) led a strike against Japanese (Chantavanich & Limmanee, 1997). This strike was more likely to be led by the left-wing Chinese, as certain personnel of the Chinese school were being accused as “CCP members” and purged from CAT in 1927, while KMT’s overseas purge committee started to repel left-leaning members and communists from the party. On the other hand, the secret society within Siamese Chinese also started to boycott Japanese products after the *Jinan Incident* during May 1928. According to Murashima (1996, cited in Chantavanich & Limmanee, 1997, p. 238), the secret society boycotters threatened Chinese traders in Bangkok to join the act of boycotting Japanese trading and Japanese goods since June 1928, and these organized acts of boycotting went eased in April 1929.

During the 1930s, as CAT was dissolved by the Siamese authority, important CAT members such as Seow Hudseng had therefore returned to mainland China and served in the *Cantonese government*³⁰ of the *Southwest faction* (西南派) located in Canton. Seow himself were optimistic on the results of the *1932 Siamese revolution*, as mentioned by Charatchanyawong (2021) that Seow sent a telegram from Canton to congratulate the Siamese King Rama VII for the decision to change the form of

³⁰ Since Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石) held Hu Hanmin (胡漢民) under house arrest in Nanjing over their political dispute in 1931. The pro-Hu/anti-Chiang factions gathered in Canton and formed the *Southwest Political Council of the National Government* (國民政府西南政務委員會) in the beginning of 1932, in order to counter Chiang’s regime in Nanjing. Seow was a faithful friend of Hu, since they met in Bangkok during Dr. Sun’s visit to Bangkok in 1908. Therefore, after the closure of CSDN, Seow returned to Canton from Bangkok and became one of the most important members in this Southwest Political Council until Hu passed away in 1936, and the council was disbanded in the same year consequently.

Siamese government from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy. However, the coup in 1932 did not turn the Siamese nation into a democratic government in the long-term, as Phibun became the Siamese PM in 1938.

3.3 Influences of Phibunsongkhrum's anti-Chinese policies and the Thai-Japanese Alliance to pro-Seow faction Chinese in Bangkok

The second clash between the Siamese nationalism (which later became the Thai nationalism) and the Chinese nationalism was the anti-Chinese policies during the WWII, as the anti-Chinese policies went to its peak since the Thai-Japanese alliance was formed during Phibun's first administration. Nonetheless, the revival of Chinese nationalism was mainly linked with their anti-Japanese stance.

As described in the last section, anti-Japanese movements of Siamese Chinese in Bangkok during the 1920s and 1930s has shown the influence of Chinese nationalism economical-wise within Siam, and the boycotts towards Japanese went on and off until 1937. In the same year, the situation in mainland China worsened after the outbreak of the *Sino-Japanese War* since July 1937, and the capital of the ROC nationalist government, Nanking³¹, quickly seized by the Japanese in December, forcing the government led by Chiang Kai-shek³² to retreat to Chungking³³. Seow also returned to Bangkok after Hu Hanmin passed away in 1936, yet the dissolved CAT was not reestablished, due to the anti-Chinese stance of the Siamese authority, as the Siamese government strictly executed the former mentioned 1914 Association Law on depoliticizing Chinese associations.

³¹ Also known as Nanjing.

³² 蔣介石 (1887-1975), also known as Chiang Chung-cheng (蔣中正) in Chinese.

³³ Also known as Chongqing.

Instead of reforming the CAT, an *Overseas Chinese Anti-enemy and National Salvation Support Association in Siam* (暹羅華僑抗敵救國後援會) was formed by the KMT members of Seow's faction for fundraising purpose, and the former CAT members acted to response (CAT, 2004) as Seow became the president of this fundraising association. Five Teochew Chinese³⁴ including Hia Kwang-iam (蟻光炎), was the vice-president of this association and Hia was in charge of the fundraising tasks. Hia at the time was the president of the Sino-Siam Chamber of Commerce, and also a member of Overseas Community Affairs Council (OCAC; 僑務委員會) of the ROC. The fundraising events continued from 1937 and lasted until Phibun became Siamese PM.

From Phibun's point of view, in order to counter this seemingly raging Chinese nationalism within Siam, a stronger Thai nationalism must be composed within the nation. The most obvious evidence of this second clash was seen in the fact that Phibun decided to change the name of the country from Siam into Thailand, literally the land of Thai people, to arouse his pan-Thaism ideology. In order to suppress the Chinese nationalism, Phibun decided to shut down Chinese schools and Chinese newspapers in 1939, and his economic nationalist policies also aimed to limit and to reduce the economic power of Thai Chinese.

The remote cause of this economic policy can be seen from the 1911 riot formed by the Chinese as we mentioned in the first section of this chapter, showing the importance of Chinese to the business sectors within Thailand. During the first

³⁴ According to Murashima (1993), these Teochew Chinese were being regarded as pro-Seow faction in KMT and founded the Teochew Association (潮州會館) in 1938. See Murashima (1993) pp. 286-296.

Phibun's administration since 1938 to 1944, this anti-Chinese sentiment became the reason for Phibun's government to take over Chinese-run businesses, gave the contracts to ethnic Thais or ethnic Chinese close to Phibun's administration only. According to Pacific Atrocities Education's (2022) article, there were other restrictions and systematic discrimination towards ethnic Chinese including unfair taxes, limit job opportunities, closure of Chinese schools (that we mentioned in the Chinese school section), abolish Chinese language media, and an unfair annual alien registration fee (Pacific Atrocities Education, 2022). All these policies were aiming towards the Chinese minority in Thailand, forcing them to obey the Thai-oriented rule and surrendered their economic benefits to Phibun's administration. However, Landon argues that since "the Thai had never shown aptitude or interest in business (Landon, 1940, p. 156)." Phibun's goal of the economic reform, to let ethnic Thai to participate more in business sector and to replace the Chinese influence, never succeeded consequently.

Also, as Chantavanich and Limmanee (1997) argue, Phibun "used naturalized Chinese businessman like Ma Liab-kun³⁵ (Ma Bulkul) and Ung Chak-meng³⁶ (Amporn Bulpak) to run state-owned companies (Chantavanich & Limmanee, 1997, p. 241)." Nonetheless, the immigration number from Southern China to Thailand dropped circa since 1938, which Skinner (1957) believes to be the result after Japanese occupation of several southern Chinese ports. And Chantavanich and Limmanee (1997) also argue that situation of the dropping number of incoming Chinese immigrants and the Thai regime's stance to pressure its Chinese residents to naturalize, had accelerated

³⁵ 馬立群, also referred to as Ma Bulakul by Murashima (1993).

³⁶ 黃作明 in Chinese.

the younger generation of Thai Chinese to be assimilated into Thai identity. That said, Thai government's official statements denied they had anti-Chinese intentions.

On 21 November 1939, Hia was shot in front of the *Hangchow Theatre* after he visited a friend on Yaowarat road and passed away soon afterwards. This case of assassination not only shocked the Thai Chinese community, but also the people in mainland China. The case was reported by a main-stream newspaper in Chungking, questioned Thai government's official statement which claimed that the Thai regime held no anti-Chinese stance; and the newspaper also claimed that the Thai Chinese community was furious for this assassination towards a renowned Thai Chinese business elite (Er, 1939). On the other hand, as the suspect arrested was being revealed to be ethnic Chinese, this fact therefore caused the Thai Chinese community to reconsider their stance towards supporting Chinese nationalism publicly. The Chinese nationalist movements therefore went underground again respectively, according to a Chinese newspaper clipping after the WWII ("Xīnrèn Xiānlúo zǒnglǐ", 1945), the KMT members in Bangkok issued several newspapers irregularly, and distributed them to the Chinese communities in secret.

Chantavanich and Limmanee (1997) also argue that as the Chinese army seemed to be of no match against Japanese during 1938-39, the morale of Chinese nationalists was therefore weakened. This situation was only to revive until 1944, when Phibun was removed from his first premiership, and as the ROC triumphed in the WWII against Japanese Empire in the following year. As for the CAT members, not many of their activities directly linked with the Chinese nationalism were being recorded during the WWII. This phenomenon is highly likely a result that after Seow passed away in

1940, since the remaining CAT members were the Chinese nationalists of the pro-Seow faction, most of them switched from publicly expressing their anti-Japanese political opinions to only joining the fundraising events.

According to Murashima (1996), after the Japanese entered Thailand in December 1941, many Thai Chinese leaders started to turn the activities underground, and the Japanese policy towards Thai Chinese organizations were to utilize them instead of dismissing them. On 28 December 1941, a general assembly of Thai Chinese assembled around 10,000 Thai Chinese, including the largest Chinese associations in Bangkok at the moment. According to the same paper of Murashima (1996), it was recorded that the *Thai Chinese Chamber of Commerce*³⁷ (TCCC), along with six other Chinese associations³⁸ joined this assembly, and also the Japanese ambassador in Thailand. Together, they expressed that the associations aligned with the Thai government's policy to support Japan's *Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere* concept.

Therefore, during the Thai-Japanese alliance, TCCC became the bridge between the Japanese and the Thai regime to Chinese community, as the members of TCCC were business elites amongst Thai Chinese. According to Murashima (1996), since April 1943, the Japanese had requested Phibun's regime to hire Chinese workers to help building the Thai-Burma railway in Kanchanaburi, they also reached out to important members³⁹ in TCCC and demanded them to cooperate with the Japanese. The

³⁷ Known as 泰國中華總商會 in Chinese, formerly the Sino-Siam Chamber of Commerce.

³⁸ Including ethnic Chinese associations from the five largest dialect groups (Teochew, Hokkien, Hainan, Hakka, Cantonese) and Jiangzhe (Wu dialect).

³⁹ Including Tan Siew-meng (陳守明), Hoon Chu-ting (雲竹亭), Den Gia-hung (鄭寄雲), and Tia Lang-sing (張蘭臣, also known as Sahas Mahakhun).

cooperation of Thai Chinese business elites to the Japanese received criticism from mainland China, yet they were clearly under the pressure from both the Japanese and Thai regimes.

3.4 The reestablishment of CAT and the Thai anti-Chinese stance after the Second World War

The third clash between Thai nationalism and Chinese nationalism was a combination of anti-Chinese and anti-communism of Thai government towards Thai Chinese after KMT lost the Chinese Civil War, and the CCP took control of mainland China after 1949. Prior to that, as we mentioned in the last part, since the ROC was on the victory side in 1945, the Chinese nationalism in Thailand had therefore revived again. As Thailand and ROC signed a *Treaty of Amity* as seen in Figure 3 on 23 January 1946, and exchanged the treaties on 28 March in the same year. What was important to the reestablishment of CAT was that the sixth article⁴⁰ in this treaty mentioned that citizens have the freedom of right to form associations (Zhōng xiān yǒuhǎo tiáoyuē, 1946). Therefore, the Thai Chinese believed that the status of Chinese citizens would be revived once again, as they became on the victorious side. According to the chronicle of CAT (2004), on 1946, more than 50 members of Thai Chinese, decided to reestablished CAT and to register the association to the Thai government. As CAT recorded that the members⁴¹ who requested to register CAT as an official Chinese association from the Thai government, were also influential members in TCCC⁴² as

⁴⁰ For the full context of this treaty of amity (in Chinese), see the Laws and Regulations Database of the Republic of China (Taiwan). <https://law.moj.gov.tw/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=Y0010054>

⁴¹ Including Hoon Chu-ting, Tia Lang-sing, Shou Kung-kiam (蘇君謙), and Wong Hung-chau (黃鴻秋).

⁴² According to TCCC, Hoon Chu-ting and Tia Lang-sing were both president of TCCC before, Hoon

well. It shows that the business elites were amongst the ones that wanted to embrace Chinese nationalism again, in order to segregate themselves from the notorious image of pro-Japanese during the war. Also, Thai Chinese leaders like Hoon Chu-ting⁴³ (雲竹亭) were close to Dr. Sun himself when Sun visited Bangkok before the establishment of ROC. Hoon was amongst one of the first members to join CAT in 1908, soon after its establishment (CAT, 2004). And Hoon was also one of the first chairmen of the Hainanese Association. This also shown that the purpose of the reestablishment of CAT, was once again to align those Thai Chinese people who embrace Dr. Sun's ideology in Bangkok, namely the pro-KMT Thai Chinese.

On 14 July 1947, the registration of CAT was approved by Thai government, and thus CAT became an official registered association in Thailand until the present-day. However, the revive of Chinese nationalism was once again suppressed as Phibun returned to a second time of premiership in 1948, and the Chinese nationalism faced suppression within the Thai nation once more. This situation was aggravated after the result of Chinese Civil War in 1949, the CCP and their newly founded PRC took over the mainland and forced the KMT nationalists and the ROC regime to retreat and relocate in Taiwan. Thai government had therefore stricken the control of Chinese schools once again in order to prevent the spread of communism in Thailand and restrict the number of Chinese immigrations from mainland China. According to Chantavanich and Limmanee (1997), the situation above has stopped the expansion in size of local Chinese communities, and also resulted in the assimilation of younger

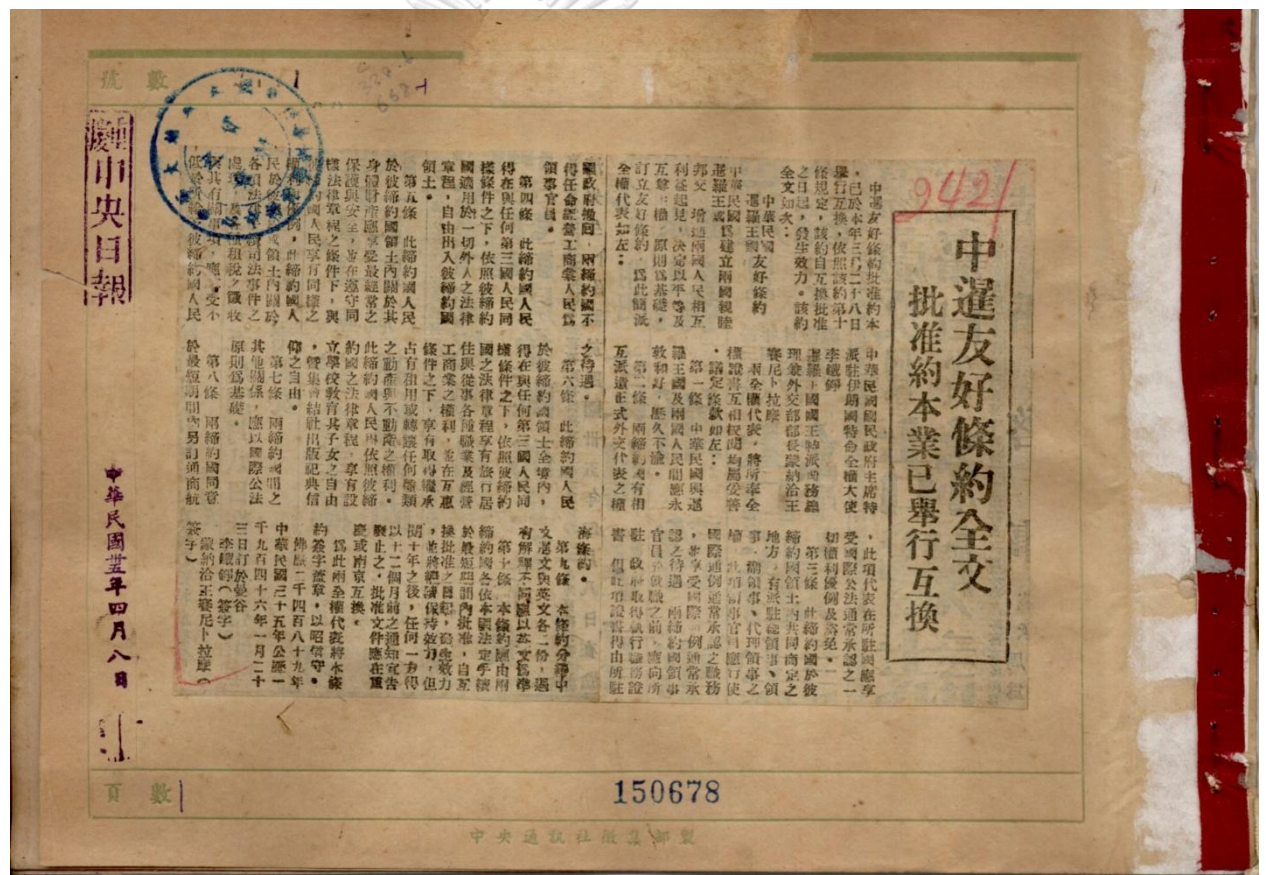
was the 19th president and Tia was the 17th and 20th to 27th president.

⁴³ Also known as Kosol Hoontrakul in Thai, the transliteral Chinese name in ROC's official documents is recorded as Yün Chu-ting. However, as the Chinese surname was clearly being used as part of the Thai surname Hoontrakul, this thesis therefore chooses to translate the surname as Hoon, as he was of Hainanese origin.

generation of Thai-born Chinese to assimilate within Thai society. Also, the *Nationality Act of 1956* have again expressed Thai regime's stance that they accepted any persons born within the Kingdom as its citizens, so it was the Thai-born Chinese automatically became Thai citizens and have less association with mainland China as a result.

Figure 3

A newspaper clipping of the full context of the ROC-Thai Treaty of Amity



Note. The newspaper clipping includes the full content of the treaty, from Chungking Central Daily News on 1946, April 8. Adapted from National Chengchi University Digital Archives. Copyright 2021 National Chengchi University Library.

On the other hand, since CAT was the association being regarded as the most pro-KMT association, the linkage between CAT and the ROC was only stronger ever since. According to CAT (2004), they organized several patriotic events during this period, such as banquets to celebrate National Day of ROC on 10 October, hoisted the ROC national flag during events, arranged visits for Thai Chinese to Taipei, and welcomed officials from both Taiwan (ROC) and the USA to CAT and gave speeches towards Thai Chinese. It was worth noticing that most of these events also aligned with the anti-communist stance that Thai government held, as the Cold War era US-Thailand relationship was based on the anti-communist ideology that we would discuss in the next chapter.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have stated that the anti-Chinese stance of Thai regime was strongly linked with the clashes between Chinese and Thai nationalist ideology. Since CAT is strongly linked with KMT and gradually shifted towards the right-wing KMT ideology as key members like Seow Hudseng. Three periods of clashes between Chinese and Thai nationalism can be spotted since 1910s to 1950s, and the timeline aligned with the history of CAT, as the association itself also went through three different periods during this period of time.

The first period started since Rama VI's reign in the 1910s, the rise of Siamese nationalism under the ideology of Rama VI himself started to flourish. As more Chinese schools and Chinese associations under the supervision of CAT that trying to arouse the patriotic ideology towards a democratic Chinese republic, Rama VI

expressed his support of Yuan's attempt to revive monarchy in China. This has shown that the contradiction between Siamese elites and CAT members were more focused on the form of government, as the Siamese royalty afraid that the rise of Chinese nationalism would spread the revolutionary ideology in Siam. Therefore, several laws were putted into effect, including an association law to restrict Chinese associations from politicization; a nationality law that included all Siamese born Chinese as Siamese nationals; and a surname law that allowed Siamese Chinese to thaifcate their surnames. It is worth noticing that even though key CAT members were mostly KMT members, they chose to obey the surname law and changed their surnames. Which showed that after the tension between the Chinese and Siamese nationalism intensified after the formation of ROC, CAT members chose to cope with the laws, and a dual identity amongst these members reflected on how they express their names in the Siamese society.

Second period of anti-Chinese policy was because of the Sino-Japanese tensions conflicted with the Thai regime's interest since the 1930s until early 1940s. The Siamese Chinese in Bangkok's anti-Japanese stance started during mid-1920s as they began to boycott the Japanese imported goods to Bangkok. At the same time, different factions of Chinese organized different measures against Japanese, including both left-wing and right-wing KMT members. As mentioned in the last chapter, left-wing CAT members were expelled from CAT since the KMT purge in 1927, which means the pro-Seow faction remained to be the main voice within CAT until its dissolvment. During the 1930s, as CAT was dissolved, the Chinese activists became more careful, political activities went underground and the fundraising events were arranged by non-political associations. For example, some of the pro-Seow faction

members were the business elites who became influential in the Sino-Siam Chamber of Commerce, such as Hia Kwang-iam, Hoon Chu-ting, Tia Lang-sing all elected as presidents of this Chinese association during the 1930s to 1940s. However, as Phibun became the PM and allied with the Japanese, the Japanese started to require TCCC to obey and follow their policy. Less Thai Chinese tried to express their political disagreements towards Japanese or Thai regime openly, and younger generation of Thai Chinese started to receive more Thai education than Chinese education under Phibun's anti-Chinese policy. Therefore, the revival of Chinese nationalism only happened after ROC won the war against Japan, and the pro-Seow business elites like Hoon Chu-ting and Tia Lang-sing became the ones to register CAT as official association again in 1947, as they believed it was necessary to bring back CAT as an association to unite Thai Chinese and support Dr. Sun's ideology as a pro-KMT association.

The third period of anti-Chinese policy was mainly linked with the anti-communist ideology. As mainland China was under the communist regime since 1949, Thai government once again restricted the incoming number of Chinese immigrants, and the number of Chinese schools. Since CAT's political stance was align with this anti-communist stance, it was able to arrange political events during this period, and support Thai government's anti-communist policies. And we will discuss the factor of anti-communism further in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

Anti-Communist stance: The alignment of nationalist ideas and the transformation of CAT members' national-identity during the Cold War

The anti-communist stance of Thai regime was visible since the 1920s. As Barthel and Wongsurawat (2021) argue that the anti-communist ideas can be dated back as early as the 1920s in Siam, when the Siamese elites tried to leverage imperialist powers to counter the rise of communism in Siam. However, the aftermath of the WWII, namely the result of the Chinese Civil War, and the start of Cold War, was the turning point that both the US and the Thai military regimes started to collaborate on stopping the seemingly spreading of communism within Thailand. Therefore, in this chapter, the main focus would be on analyzing the anti-communist stance of Thai regimes during the Cold War era, and on the influence of this stance towards the newly reestablished CAT in 1947.

4.1 Early influence of communism amongst Thai Chinese and CAT members

As mentioned in the literature review in the first chapter, the beginning of communism in Siam happened during the 1920s. As the first communist activities were being spotted during the 1920s, and the most significant wave was after the KMT purge against communist members in Shanghai in 1927. This aligned with Casella's (1970) argument, that the first appearance of communism in Thailand was found within the Chinese and Vietnamese communities in Thailand. The reason why these communist ideas penetrated into Thailand, was the results of the ideology split between KMT and the CCP in 1927. The SEA countries including Siam, became a

haven for CCP members from mainland China even before the purge, as increasing left-leaning activities were also spotted amongst the Chinese community in Thailand since the 1920s. According to Chantavanich and Limmanee (1997), strike led by Puy-yin school students and Chinese workers against Japanese were first started in 1925. This strike can be seen as an event held by pro-communist Chinese, or at least left-leaning KMT members. As influential personnel of Pyu-yin school like Wang Bu-xian (王步先), was being referred to as communist member in the chronicle of CAT (2004). Wang was repelled along with other communist members by CAT in 1927 (CAT, 2004). On the other hand, as Thomas (1986) argues, some Thai Chinese of peasant backgrounds decided to support the communist ideas. These pro-communist groups mostly followed *Maoism* rather than *Marxism-Leninism*, as they were derived from the CCP. These Chinese communists in Siam became the majority in Communist Party of Siam, which later became the *Communist Party of Thailand* (CPT).

As mentioned in the second chapter, Seow Hudseng was the backbone of CAT since it was established in 1907, to its dissolution in 1931. As Seow was the head of the Bangkok branch of Tongmenghui (and later KMT) since 1908, he was undoubtedly the most influential member in CAT. Therefore, his personal ideology was strongly linked with CAT's stance towards anti-communism during the 1920s. According to a biography of Chinese leaders named *Who's who in China* from *The China Weekly Review* (1936) during the 1930s, it recorded that Seow went to Canton during January 1926 as KMT holds its second National Congress, presented on behalf of the overseas Chinese in Siam. This happened after Dr. Sun passed away in March 1925. As

recorded in Chiang's book (2011, p.308), Seow mentioned that CAT held a memorial gathering for Dr. Sun, and the Siamese Chinese voluntarily participated this gathering, which resulted in the interruption of the traffic in downtown Bangkok for hours. Chiang (2011) argues that Siamese authorities therefore sees the Chinese nationalism as a threat and started to suppress Seow and the CSDN since then. This consequence in the rise of left-wing Chinese in Bangkok. The left-wing Chinese started to expand their influence within KMT's Bangkok branch, and Seow became the main target for the left-leaning members within KMT. According to Chiang (2011), Seow's membership of the *Central Executive Committee* (中央執行委員會) of KMT since 1925, was revoked in March 1927 as the left-wing members were in dominance and controlled the resolution of KMT's third *Plenary Session* of its second *Central Committee* in Wuhan. However, the left-wing and communist ideology never became the mainstream idea amongst the members of KMT in Siam. Chiang (2011) mentioned that only four out of twenty-one subbranches in Siam were controlled by the left-wing members.

According to *The China Weekly Review* (1936), Seow returned to China in 1927 again, and was appointed the chief of the overseas department of the Central Executive Committee by the Nanjing nationalist government; and the reason was recorded as "in order to assist Chiang Kai-shek and Hu Han-min in the elimination of the communists from the Kuomintang (*The China Weekly Review*, 1936, p. 87)." At the time, KMT's *Overseas Purge Committee* was led by Seow, and the purge also affected CAT, as the left-wing members got expelled, and the remaining CAT

members were therefore the pro-Seow faction members that aligned with his right-wing ideology until its dissolution.

4.2 Reestablishment of CAT and the Chinese Civil War during the late-1940s

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the Chinese communities, either pro-nationalist or pro-communist, all expressed their anti-Japanese stance through boycott movements as Japanese conflicted with the ROC regime since early 1930s. Even though CAT was dissolved in 1931, its members still participated in anti-Japanese movements as they joined the fundraising events. And the anti-Chinese stance along with the restriction on Chinese schools and media was the main reason why Thai Chinese business elites and Chinese associations chose to cope with Thai regime's policy during the Japanese occupation. The most obvious example of these business associations can be seen from the founding history of TCCC. They were formerly called the Sino-Siam Chamber of Commerce back in the days when it was established in 1910, TCCC was established to meet the trading needs of Chinese immigrants in Thailand. The purpose of its establishment was aiming to serve the ethnic Chinese businessmen without political affiliations, its early members were not known for their political opinions, nor their participation in supporting political events.

However, after Japanese entered Thai soil, TCCC leaders like Tan Siew-meng (陳守明), and Tia Lang-sing (張蘭臣, also known as Sahas Mahakhun) have been asked to cooperate with Japanese's policy to hire Chinese coolies in Bangkok, in order to assist the construction of the Thai-Burma Railway since 1943. According to Murashima (2005), during the construction of this railway, the guideline of Phibun's regime was

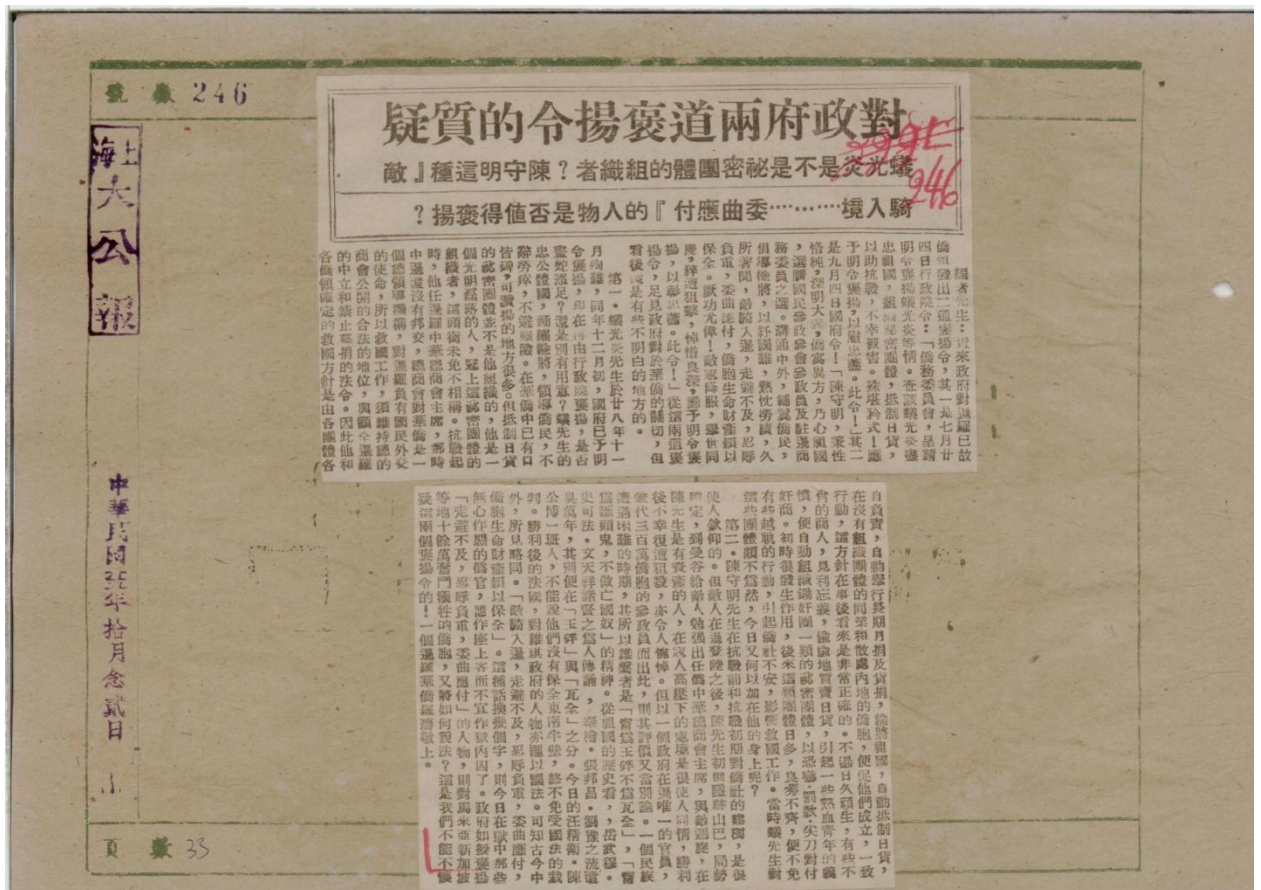
to assemble mostly the Chinese residents instead of Thai nationals, as the Chinese were considered *alienated* from his pan-Thaism ideology. Therefore, the TCCC leaders were considered *Han traitors* and often criticized by mainland Chinese public opinions. Murashima (2005) argues that since 1944, public opinions of Thai Chinese have switched towards questioning the business elites of TCCC, whether they shall be seen as traitors of the national interests. After Phibun resigned as PM in July, the public opinions started to strongly criticize the TCCC elites, as Murashima recorded a newspaper article that the “Chungking central radio has warned seven important members of TCCC, including Tan Siew-meng, Tia Lang-sing, Wu Chu-lin (伍竹林, also known as Chulin Lamsam), and Hoon Chu-ting, but Chen and the others ignored it and continued to discuss the recent Japanese labor recruitment for the construction of the Thai-Myanmar Railway (Murashima, 2005, p. 19).” This stance has spread quickly within the Thai Chinese community, and this resentful feeling finally broke out after the WWII ended in 1945. Tan Siew-meng, the 18th and 19th president of TCCC at the moment, was assassinated in his office on 16 August 1945, one day after Japan’s unconditional surrender, while different parties accused each other that the opposite side was the one to send the assassinator.

After the end of the war against Japan, the ROC government decided to praise several Thai Chinese leaders for their sacrifices, including the deceased TCCC presidents Hia Kwang-iam and Tan Siew-meng. However, some Thai Chinese questioned the legitimacy of this move, as an editorial article written by a Thai Chinese entitled “Doubts about the two commendations issued by the government [對政府兩道褒揚令的質疑] (Luo, 1946).” shown as Figure 4, the article itself questioned the stance of

ROC regime that linked Hia with secret society movements in Siam during the 1930s; and criticized its decision to praise Tan, as he believed that public figure like Tan who assisted the Japanese during the war, shall be seen as act of treason as the examples of their counterparts in France under the Vichy regime during German occupation.

Figure 4

A newspaper clipping of an editorial article submitted to Shanghai Ta Kung Pao



Note. The newspaper clipping entitled “Doubts about the two commendations issued by the government. [對政府兩道褒揚令的質疑].” In Shanghai Ta Kung Pao, 1946, October 22. Adapted from National Chengchi University Digital Archives. Copyright 2021 National Chengchi University Library.

Therefore, this increased local dissatisfaction towards business elites shall be also taken into consideration why many of them, including TCCC leaders like Hoon Chu-ting and Tia Lang-sing decided to reestablish CAT, in order to swear allegiance to the Chinese nationalism again, and to counter the increasing left-leaning opinions among Thai Chinese that was incited by the communist party members.

4.3 The alignment of anti-communist stance between CAT and the Thai military regimes during 1950s

From the literature review, we can see that it is commonly agreed that during the Cold War, the US wanted Thailand to maintain a stable governance where anti-communist idea could be spread within the nation, and this ideology could be planted in the minds among Thai citizens. However, we can also notice that although some of the literatures mentioned Chinese in Thailand, the Thai Chinese's political affiliation was not considered an important factor that have shaped the anti-communist policies in Thailand. As a pro-ROC (and also pro-KMT) Chinese association, the stance of CAT towards communism in Thailand have played a larger role before its dissolution as we analyzed in the previous sections, and the stance was succeeded during the Cold War era started within SEA after CAT's reestablishment.

The reestablishment of CAT also linked with the fact that the number of Chinese schools rebounded after the war. The main reason was that since Thai Chinese believed they are no longer restricted by this Thai law targeted at their culture as China won the war and experienced a short-rebound period of Chinese nationalism. According to Hsieh (2008), since Japan surrendered in 1945, some Chinese residents in Thailand believed that they were on the victorious side and regarded Thai citizens

as nationals of a defeated country. This stance further triggered the nerves between Thai nationalists and Chinese nationalists, and therefore became the proximate cause of the conflicts and bloodshed between Thai Chinese and Thai authority from August to November 1945. Thai government at the moment did not want to escalate the bloodshed events, the reason might be the worrisome of Chinese military interference, as the Thai PM Seni Pramo, indicated that “China is one of the superpowers in the United Nations (UN) (Hsieh, 2008, p. 158).” To ease the tensions between both countries, ROC and Thailand signed and exchanged a treaty of amity in 1946 as previously mentioned. This has shown that the post-war Thai regime did not wish to escalate the internal conflicts and hope to improve the relationship with the ROC in order to join international organizations, such as UN.

However, since the end of the war, the communist ideology also was spreading within the Thai Chinese community through Chinese schools. Since the end of WWII, the reopening of existed schools and the establishment of new schools also accelerated this trend, there were once around 450 Chinese schools in Thailand towards the end of 1949 (Manomaiviboon, 2004), and more teachers from the mainland China were therefore required during the post-war period. As the US government needed a stable political environment in Thailand, Phibun began his second term to administrate the Thai military regime, chasing the former Free Thai Movement regime led by Pridi out of Thailand, as it was accused to be sympathy towards the communist ideas. As Phibun returned to his second premiership, his anti-communist stance aligned with the US, and also related to his stance towards Chinese schools and immigrants. According to Manomaiviboon (2004), the restrictions on Chinese schools went stricter again in 1949, and there were only 177 schools left in Thailand in 1959, compared to the

situation in 1949. According to Chantavanich and Limmanee (1997), the last batch of Chinese immigrants from mainland China was in 1952, as a result, no more Chinese immigrants join the Thai Chinese communities, which became a factor for the Thai Chinese to assimilate into the Thai society.

As for the PRC, an evidence can be found on a 1949 article of the People's Daily, one of the CCP's official newspapers for propaganda, that the Thai-ism idea was already being raised by the CCP at the very beginning of Cold War era⁴⁴. In this CCP propaganda, the narrative was to accuse Phibun as a fascist leader that wanted to chase a pan-Thaism dream of annexing neighboring states with ethnic Tai in majority. We also see that the CCP allegedly accused Phibun to call overseas Chinese the *Jew of the East*, but as we mentioned in the third chapter, this idea was not raised by Phibun, but King Rama VI who mentioned anomalously in articles in 1911, referring that Chinese community cherishes their own clans and money more than the country that they lived in (Landon, 1940). Also, this notorious title given to Thai Chinese was to refer to the heterogeneity within the Thai society.

As for CAT, after the CCP took control of mainland China since 1949, they still swear their allegiance to the ROC regime in Taiwan. Since CAT was the association being regarded as the most pro-KMT association, the linkage between CAT and the ROC was only stronger than ever. According to CAT (2004), during the 1950s, they organized several patriotic events during this period, such as celebrated Chinese national day and hoisted the ROC national flag during banquets, arranged visits for Thai Chinese to Taipei, and welcomed ROC and USA officials to CAT for speeches.

⁴⁴ See Page 3, Renmin Ribao, May 16, 1949.
<https://cn.govopendata.com/renminribao/1949/5/16/3/#36402>. Accessed 31 May 2023.

This has showed their loyalty to the ROC regime and its anti-communist ideas, and therefore also aligned with Thai military regimes' anti-communist policies. For example, when the *Southeast Asia Treaty Organization* (SEATO) was founded on 8 September 1954, CAT co-hosted a parade to celebrate the foundation of SEATO (CAT, 2004). Another obvious pro-ROC example can be seen from the figure 5, showing a group photo (Academia Historica of the Republic of China, 1950) that Hoon met the president of ROC in Taipei on behave of Thai Chinese who supports the ROC regime. According to CAT (2004), a group of 15 Thai Chinese from CAT led by Hoon Chu-ting, met the President Chiang Kai-shek and his spouse Soong Mei-ling in the Taipei Guest House, which was the first Thai Chinese group to fly to Taipei after the government of the ROC relocated there.

Figure 5

A group photo of Mr. Hoon Chu-ting with President Chiang Kai-shek and his spouse



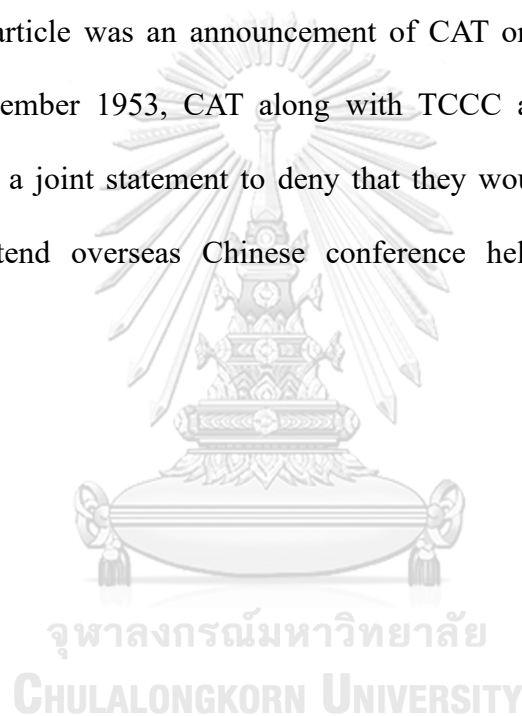
Note. A group photo of Mr. Hoon Chu-ting (Left), President Chiang Kai-shek (Middle) and the First lady Soong Mei-ling (Right) in the Taipei Guest House on 1950, October 28. Adapted from Academia Historica Collections Online System. Copyright 2017 Academia Historica (ROC).

In Bangkok's Thai Chinese communities, the confrontation between pro-ROC and pro-PRC ideology also causes the split amongst different Chinese associations. The situation was intensified more as the mansion of CAT⁴⁵ used for its assembly was burned down in an arson and caused a ROC musician from Taiwan and more than 20 people to decease on 8 May 1956 (CAT, 2004). The members of CAT decided to

⁴⁵ Located at No.417, Si Phraya Rd. (CAT, 2004).

relocate the association to its current location in Sathorn, which is further away from the traditional Thai Chinese settlements and as a matter of fact became less influential among Thai Chinese.

However, the key members in CAT were still not hesitated to promote their anti-communist ideology towards the public, especially towards the overseas Chinese communities. An example can be seen from Figure 6, the boxed paragraph on the right side of the article was an announcement of CAT on a newspaper from Hong Kong on 11 September 1953, CAT along with TCCC and other 7 Thai Chinese associations⁴⁶ had a joint statement to deny that they would send representatives to Beijing⁴⁷ and attend overseas Chinese conference held by the CCP (“Tàiguó qiáobāo”, 1953).



⁴⁶ Including the Hainanese, Teochew, Cantonese, Hakka, Hokkien, Jiangzhe, and Taiwanese Association in Thailand.

⁴⁷ 北平, also known as Peking or Beijing. Beiping was the official name of the nationalist ROC regime of how they referred to the city of Beijing until the 1990s.

Figure 6

A newspaper clipping with a joint statement from multiple Thai Chinese Associations



Note. The boxed paragraph (right) was the joint announcement of nine of the Thai Chinese associations including CAT correspondently. Along with an article on its left reporting multiple Chinese Associations in Thailand denying that they would participate in an overseas Chinese conference soon held by the CCP, in Hong Kong Hu Sheng News on 1953, September 11. Adapted from Chinese Newspaper Clipping Database. Copyright 2023 Hong Kong Baptist University Library. <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/newsclipping/record.php?ids=NCC-001153>

Another clear example can be seen from Hoon's speech in November 1956, when PRC planned to celebrate Dr. Sun's birthday in the same month as seen in Figure 7. Hoon strongly opposed CCP regime to fabricate their linkage with Dr. Sun, as he claimed that "the communists abandoned the official name and the flag of the ROC,

they have banished themselves from the ROC, they have no right to commemorate the founding father of the ROC, Dr. Sun Yat-sen (“Gòngfēi màiguó yāng mǐn”, 1956).” This stance aligned with most existing CAT members, and that of Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat’s, as he staged coups d’état in 1957 and 1958 and became PM himself. The anti-communist policies and the Thai-US alliance remained to be the Thai national policy under the governance of Sarit.

Figure 7

A newspaper clipping of an interview with Mr. Hoon Chu-ting where he expressed his anti-communist stance



Note. An article that reported an interview of the anti-communist stance of Mr. Hoon Chu-ting in Taiwan Shin Sheng Daily News on 1956, November 8. Adapted from Chinese Newspaper Clipping Database. Copyright 2023 Hong Kong Baptist University Library. <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/newsclipping/record.php?ids=NCC-004191>

4.4 Epilogue: The new national-identity of the younger generation of CAT members

The section focuses on the Thai-ism policies during Cold War and how these policies influence CAT members in regards of their national-identity. As we mentioned in the previous sections, to prevent the spread of communism in Thailand, and to align with the US policy of anti-communist ideas, the numbers of Chinese schools in Thailand were therefore completely frozen, new schools cannot be established and the existing ones under heavy surveillance and restrictions (Manomaiviboon, 2004). As we discussed in the previous section, since Thai government were afraid of communist infiltration during the 1960s, Thai government decided to accelerate the Thai-ism progress towards Thai Chinese, in order to form a unified Thai identity within the country.

However, as CAT strived to continue its dogma into the 1960s, the image of its strong anti-communist stance and linkage to political issues were high barriers for new members to join, or to keep the existing members who were not wanting to be linked with an image of political fanatics. According to the former ROC Consul in Thailand, Mr. Shen Ke-chin (2002), many influential Chinese leaders became hesitant to join CAT events, in order to avoid political quarrel after the arson of CAT in 1956. Therefore, the reputation of CAT started to decline amongst Thai Chinese community. As influential members started to leave the CAT, either resigning or passing away like Hoon in 1959, the operation and finances of CAT started to encounter difficulties. According to CAT (2004), a decision was made during June 1962, that “all staffs of CAT would be suspended without payment since June 1962 (CAT, 2004).” Which was as good as an announcement that the operation of CAT has ceased from the moment in

essential. In a visit of Shen to Sathorn during 1966, he recorded that he was surprised to find out the traditional Thai stilt houses that CAT used as assembly was in a dilapidated status (Shen, 2002). Which can be seen as the result of lesser participants to join CAT, and more Thai Chinese focus on the Thai society instead of the problematic, complex Chinese political issues.

On the other hand, newborns of Thai Chinese started to learn Thai language as their mother tongue, and they self-identified themselves as Thai rather than Chinese, this trend started since the second generation of Thai Chinese, and the following generations completely changed their identity to blend into a united Thai nation (Burusratanaphand, 1995).

According to CAT (2004), the composition of its committee members had major changes during the late 1960s. CAT also confirmed their new policies, such as to recruit new members, and to assist overseas Chinese students to study in Taiwan. This has ultimately resulted in the changes of CAT members' national-identity in the following years. In order to attract more members, CAT started to focus more on holding cultural events to attract younger generations of Thai Chinese to join. However, since the younger generations of Thai Chinese that was grown up under Thai government's anti-Chinese policies, they identified themselves as Thai citizens with Chinese ancestry rather than Chinese inhabitant in Thailand. But still, their linkages with Chinese culture were more aligned with the ROC regime in Taiwan at the time, rather than the PRC regime in mainland China.

4.5 Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, Thai Chinese had strong relationship with their motherland before the mainland China failed into the communist rule, as Thai Chinese supported revolution ideology within China and in Siam and was considered as a large faction economically in Thailand, forcing Thai government to put limitation on Thai Chinese. This became the reason for the dissolution of CAT during the 1930s.

Also, after the WWII, in order to prevent communism from overthrowing the regime, Thai military junta and the US government propagandized and linked the Chinese image with communism during the Cold War. This fear of the linkage between Chinese and communism therefore became the reason that Chinese study inside Thailand were suspended, and the Thai Chinese were forced to seek education in official Thai schools rather than private Chinese schools. The assimilation of Thai Chinese therefore happened naturally on the new generations when they received Thai education indistinguishably from the rest of Thai citizens.

For the members of CAT, although their anti-communism stance aligned with the Thai regimes, and they were able to express their ideology during Cold War era. It was considered dangerous to some of the members who did not want to express their political stance aggressively, especially after the 1956 arson. The location of CAT moved further away from the traditional Chinese communities than its previous locations, and less members were active, which cause the suspension of CAT's operation in 1962.

After CAT adjusted its strategy towards holding more cultural events, it did attract more young generation of Thai Chinese to join CAT. However, after years of Thaism ideology through Thai education, these younger members of CAT regarded their national-identity as Thai nationals with Chinese ancestry, instead of Chinese citizens. However, the anti-communist ideology in Thailand still influenced these new members, as they continued to regard the ROC regime in Taiwan as the Chinese regime with political legitimacy.



Chapter 5

Conclusion

Since CAT's establishment in 1907, Chinese who live in Siam started to show the influence not only affect the Chinese political issue, but also greatly towards the Siamese politics. The governmental form of China, namely the Chinese imperial system, had been existed for centuries without changes, and therefore the Chinese politic had no impacts towards Thai absolute monarchy. The foundation of CAT marks the influence of Chinese revolution movements became significant in Siam, as we see that the rise of Chinese nationalism and its concepts of a new systematic ways of ruling. This also encouraged the Siamese citizens to question the traditional concept of power in the Kingdom of Siam, which never occurred in the history of the Siamese Kingdom before. The rise of Chinese nationalism introduced by CAT therefore also boosted the recognition of Siamese nationalism. This phenomenon was also the start of a series of clashes between Chinese and Thai nationalism, which influenced the Siamese elites' stance towards the Chinese residents in Siam, as they seem to bring more instability towards the Siamese society. Nevertheless, the major reason that caused the CAT to be shut down in the early 1930s was mainly linked with its consisting internal ideological conflicts upon Chinese political factions from the 1910s to the 1920s. The three major splits upon CAT members had therefore resulted in the fact that the remaining members of CAT were the right-wing KMT members in the pro-Seow faction before its closure.

Then, the coming of Japanese onto the Thai soil was another new phenomenon. Before the coming of Japanese, conflicts between Chinese and Japanese were already

intense during the 1930s in mainland China, and the Chinese residents in Siam were also participated in the protesting events against the Japanese regardless of their differences in political views. The rise of Phibun and his concept of pan-Thaism ideology, changed the name of the Kingdom from Siam to Thailand. Phibun's ideology had got the situation more complicated when Thailand joined the pacific war at the beginning of the WWII, which resulted in the conflict between Thai and Chinese nationalism and influenced greatly upon the Chinese residents in Thailand. During this period, many Thai Chinese elites were requested to assist the Japanese and were criticized by certain Chinese residents. This has become one of the reasons why CAT was established in 1947.

Without doubt, the politics in Thailand connected with the new world order and the US rose to become of the new superpower after the WWII. After the fallen of mainland China in 1949 to the communist regime, Chinese in Thailand was suspicious of their linkage with the communist ideology. Before, the Thai government never went against its neighboring countries, this is new in Thai politics as Thailand formed its anti-communist stance while allying with the US. CAT aligned with the Thai government's stance during this period, as they expressed its anti-communist stance with strong will and support Dr. Sun Yat-sen's ideology and the ROC regime.

To answer the first research question of how did CAT and its members influence and participate in the shaping of national-identity of Thai Chinese throughout the years. As CAT was formed as a frontal organization of Tongmenghui, CAT itself spread the Chinese nationalist idea since its foundation. Based on the findings of the study, the third chapter specifically focused on the early CAT members and their direct linkages

with the rise of Chinese nationalism in Siam, their national-identity towards building a new Chinese republic and their self-identification as overseas Chinese conflicted the Siamese regime and became a major factor of Thai anti-Chinese policies in the following decades. The first finding in this chapter has indicated that the establishment of CAT in 1907, was before Dr. Sun Yat-sen's visit to Bangkok during 1908. Instead, the direct reason that the Chinese Association was established, was because of the founders of CSDN, a pro-revolutionist newspaper that published in Chinese and Thai language. The founders of CSDN used this newspaper as the platform to spread the Chinese nationalist ideas since its foundation in 1906 until its closure in 1932. Another reason why the CSDN is important to the establishment of CAT, was that the first assembly of CAT was located at the mansion owned by Seow Hudseng, one of the founders of CSDN. The first floor of the mansion was being used as the office and publishing house of CSDN, and the assembly of CAT was located on the second floor of the building. This has shown that the CAT at the moment was directly associated with the founders of CSDN, especially Seow who played a significant role in establishing CAT in 1907.

Also, as mentioned in the third chapter, Seow and other founding members of CAT were being recognized as members of Tongmenghui, it was also evidential that the Dr. Sun Yat-sen's visit to Bangkok in 1908 was one of the reasons for the linkage of the rise of Chinese nationalism and CAT, two speeches within the Chinese communities and both speeches were related to CAT. The visit of Dr. Sun in 1908 not only arouse revolutionary ideology through speeches, but also became the reason to boost the joint of five Chinese dialect groups within Bangkok. The study found that even though the first founding members were mostly of Cantonese descent, the new

members quickly expanded within all five dialect groups, and transformed CAT into a comprehensive association that unites pro-revolutionary Siamese Chinese that supports the foundation of a new Chinese republic.

However, this rise of Chinese nationalism also relatively raised the Siamese nationalism in the 1910s, which was supported by the king Rama VI himself. The conflict during this period was because of CAT's pro-revolutionary ideology can be seen as an anti-monarchy ideology against the Qing Dynasty, however, it can also be interpreted into anti-monarchy in general from certain Siamese elites' point of views. The study found that in order to lower the suspicion from the Siamese authority, two examples can be found from the CAT members' decisions during this period. First is that main members of CAT who were born in Siam, such as Seow, chose to cope with the Siamese authority to use a Thaification name when using Thai language; second is that CAT chose a non-political affiliated member to be its first chairman, who was not a Tongmenghui member. However, this also shows the duality identity of CAT members, they remained to use their Chinese names in Chinese context, and CAT itself was nonetheless strongly linked with the Chinese revolutionary ideology during the 1910s.

Since the mid-1920s, the motivation of CAT members to strongly support the Chinese nationalist ideas, switched from anti-Qing monarchy to anti-Japanese movements. The anti-Japanese movements were being participated by both the right-wing and left-wing CAT members. Many of the left-wing CAT members were affiliated with the communist ideology, and attempted to took control of the Chinese associations. As the split of KMT and CCP in mainland China in 1927, the left-wing and communist-

leaning members were expelled from CAT, which showed that CAT members afterwards were mainly constituted by right-wing KMT supporters or could be seen as pro-Seow faction KMT members.

The dissolution of CAT in 1931 could be seen as the end of era for the rise of Chinese nationalism in Siam. Nevertheless, Seow himself was still optimistic about the change of form of the Siamese regime from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy after the 1932 coup. Which also shown that the Siamese Chinese who joined CAT did not seek to abolish Siamese monarchy, but mainly focus on the democratic ideology itself. This ideology not only segregate them from the pro-Qing royalist Chinese, but also from the communist Chinese. However, as CAT being dissolved, TCCC became the only comprehensive Chinese association to unite and organize Thai Chinese on anti-Japanese fundraising events. As Phibun regime decided to align with the Japanese Empire, TCCC members were forced to cope with certain Thai policies against Thai Chinese interests, and some of the business elites in TCCC were being criticized as traitors of their own people. Therefore, after the Second World War ended, the Chinese nationalism rebounded back in Thailand, CAT was soon reestablished and registered by these Thai Chinese business elites in 1947 in accordance to show their support to the ROC.

The rebounded Chinese nationalism did not last long as the CCP took control of the mainland China. As the communist Chinese regime founded the PRC in 1949, anti-communist ideology became the main reason of the anti-Chinese policies in Thailand. However, CAT members' anti-communist ideology aligned with the Thai authority, and therefore it was able to arrange anti-communist events to the Thai Chinese

community in the early 1950s. As in the late 1950s, CAT's political stance became a reason for its conflict with communist Chinese, deterred the newer generations of Thai Chinese to join CAT, and therefore had to temporarily suspend its operation in 1962.

Therefore, the CAT members influenced and participated in the shaping of national-identity since its establishment in 1907, was through its reputation as a comprehensive association that attracted the pro-democratic Chinese nationalists from different dialect groups to join. Throughout the years, CAT members did not choose to act aggressively against the Thai regimes, the members remained in CAT were the ones in line with Dr. Sun's ideology to support the ROC, and at the same time they were not against their identity as Thai nationals.

To answer the second research question of what impacted the national-identity of its members after the PRC took control of mainland China, it was obvious that the anti-communist ideology played an enormous factor in the shaping.

After the end of WWII, CAT was reestablished in 1947 and their anti-communist stance aligned with Thai regime's stance. However, the conflict in between the Chinese regimes and the Thai anti-Chinese policies had influenced greatly on the new generations of Thai Chinese, which resulted in the shift of national-identity amongst CAT members into a unique self-identity as pro-ROC Thai nationals. As mentioned in the last section, the alignment of CAT members' anti-communist ideology allowed the association to arrange events that aligned with Thai regime's stance to form an anti-communist alliance with the US, and also aligned with the ROC's anti-communist stance.

Therefore, the duality of the national-identity of the CAT members seemed to show some syncretism, it became an association that gathered the pro-ROC Thai nationals of Chinese ancestry, and this alignment can still be seen until the current days.

To answer the third and final research question that who were the key members within the Chinese Association in Thailand, and how were these members participated and influenced within Thai Chinese community throughout the research period, first we have to separate CAT's history during the research period into two periods, namely from 1907 to 1931, and from 1947 to 1962. The study has shown that two members were influential accordingly to these two periods, namely Seow Hudseng for the first period, and Hoon Chu-ting during the second period.

As mentioned in the first section of this chapter, Seow played a significant role in establishing CAT in 1907 and remained to be influential in CAT. Seow himself was close to Dr. Sun and Hu Hanmin during their trip in 1908. Seow became a firm believer of Dr. Sun's Three Principle of People ever since and was assigned as the chairman of Tongmenghui's new branch in Bangkok. The stance of CAT in this first period for recruiting new members was highly overlapping with Seow's personal stance and his steadfast loyalty towards the KMT in mainland China. As mentioned in the third chapter, left-leaning members were being accepted in CAT before Dr. Sun's death in 1925, yet they were all expelled from CAT since 1927. The fact aligned with Seow's stance which followed Dr. Sun's decision to welcome CCP members into KMT individually since 1923. And after Dr. Sun's death, the contradiction between both sides had made right-wing KMT members like Hu Hanmin and Chiang Kai-shek to agree on the purge within KMT in 1927. This was obvious as Seow's personal

stance was more aligned with the right-wing KMT ideology, specifically the pro-Hu southwest faction in Canton. After this event, the dominance role of right-wing KMT ideology in CAT became unshakable, and the reestablished CAT in 1947 also aligned with this right-wing ideology.

The second period of CAT's history was relatively strongly linked with Hoon Chu-ting. One can argue that there were also other influential members during this period, but since Hoon was one of the first members of CAT since he joined the association in 1908 and was one of the pro-Seow business elites to register CAT as official association in 1947 again. We could therefore argue that his personal stance has been aligned with CAT's principles, and the newly reestablished CAT inherited the old one that was dissolved in 1931. Based on the findings of the study, Hoon strongly and openly expressed his anti-communist stance during the 1950s, which aligned with his political status in ROC. Hoon became a member of OCAC of ROC in 1948, and he became one of the members in KMT's Central Advisory Committee since 1952.

All in all, although both Seow and Hoon were being seen as pro-KMT Thai Chinese leaders, some differences can be found. While Seow was more influential through the influence of media, as he was the owner of the CSDN that can spread his political ideology through the newspapers; Hoon was being seen as a business elite that was also influential within TCCC, as he was a former president of this chamber of commerce. During the first period, CAT was more regarded as a frontal association that acted less politically and promote Chinese culture through its related Chinese schools; but during the second period, CAT was seen to participate more on anti-

communist events before the arson in 1958, the political aggressive image of CAT became an important factor for its temporarily cease of operation in 1962.

Also, there were also similarities being spotted between the two figures. Both of them were regarded as important overseas Chinese from the point of view of ROC, as they both acted as members in OCAC that was in charge of the overseas Chinese affairs in Thailand. On the other hand, it is also noticeable that both Seow and Hoon had coped with the policy to use Thai names in Thailand, Seow was being known as Seow Hudseng Sibunruang and Hoon was Kosol Hoontrakul, which had shown their cooperative stances towards the Thai regime.

Another worth mentioning phenomenon is that CAT's geographical location went further away from the traditional Chinese settlements throughout the years. The study showed that the first assembly of CAT was located within the Sampheng area, and then it relocated on Si Phraya Road. After the mansion on Si Phraya Road got burnt down after the arson, CAT relocated to its current location in Sathorn. Therefore, the fact that CAT relocated from the traditional Chinese settlements, might have also contributed to the issue that why less members were willing to participate CAT's events, and therefore resulted in its suspension in 1962.

To sum up, the study found that the three major factors during the research period, namely the rise of Chinese nationalism in the 1910s, the anti-Chinese policies, and the Thai anti-communist stance after 1949 had deeply impacted the transformation of Thai Chinese identity of CAT members. In the research, it was also obvious that the three main factors, namely the rise of Chinese nationalism since the late 1900s to early 1930s, the anti-Chinese policies since 1910s to 1950s, and the Thai military

regime's anti-communist stance after 1949 did not happen separately but coexisted frequently throughout the research period. They had deeply impacted the transformation of Thai Chinese identity of the CAT members throughout the research period.



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