

CHAPTER I

Introduction

This chapter covers the discussions of background, research questions, research purposes, theoretical framework, hypothesis, research methodology, research range and system of writing.

A. PROBLEM BACKGROUND

Globalization is a process of interaction and integration among the people, companies and governments of different nations, driven by international trade and investment and aided by information technology. Now everything become easy for our daily life because of the advance of technology, communication, transportation, which make life better than before. Our life style has changed. Globalization makes states become more modern. Thailand is a developing country which become more modern in every aspects in ASEAN region. There are some important elements to develop a country. One of them is electricity. The main source of electricity in Thailand is water / river.

Thailand uses constitutional monarchy system. The head of the state is a King and the head of government who controls politic in the country is a Prime Minister. Thailand needs to develop more. Thailand will not only develop it's economic but military also.

Thailand is located in the center of South Asia peninsular. Burma borders Thailand in the west, Laos, Cambodia and Malaysia border Thailand in the north east, south east, and south consecutively. The total area of Thailand is

around 513,000 km.¹ Thailand is the world 51 st-largest country and the 20 thousand most populous country in the world with around 66 million people. Thailand has several rivers in country, such as Chao Phraya River, which, with its tributaries, irrigates about 33 percent of the national territory and flows south into a delta at Bangkok. Mun River and many other smaller upland rivers are tributaries of the Mekong, which form the border between Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam and South China sea.

Thailand has a big river named is Mekong river. Mekong is the river of ASEAN and there are 6 countries related to it. Mekong is a trans-boundary river in Southeast Asia. River gives many benefits, such as food, transportation, agriculture, people daily life and electricity for the country. All the countries located next to the river and the companies that related with it want to take benefits. For instance, if the country wants to use the energy from the water (Mekong river), the government should build a dam.

Mekong River is the daily life of the people in that area. Mekong River does not only belong to Thailand but also belong to countries such as China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodian and Vietnam. Therefore, Mekong River can be called International River. If some countries build dam in Mekong River area; there will be an effect to the lower country this area. Therefore, this problem may became an issue, because Mekong River is the world's largest inland fishery. The business about fish catch is now worth US\$3 billion per year. Not only are

¹ *Country profile Thailand*, Library of Congress-Federal Research Division, Country profile : Thailand, July 2007, Geography, pp. 9

these fisheries an important source of income for local fishers, which include many of the area poorest people, but they are also important in ensuring provincial food security. About half and four fifths of the animal protein, consumed by the 60 million people in the lower Mekong basin come from the river's fisheries if Lao build the Dam project it would be permanently damage the habitat and ecosystem of the Mekong River, placing at risk the rich species diversity of the Mekong. At least 41 fish species are at risk of extinction due to a severe change in their environment. The Xayaburi Dam would also block a vital fish migration route that allows at least 23² migratory fish species to travel to the upper reaches of the Mekong to Luang Prabang in Lao, and Chiang Khong and Chiang Saen in Thailand, disrupting the lifecycle necessary for these fish, including their spawning, breeding and growth. One such migratory species that could be driven to extinction is the critically endangered.

China is the first state which build a dam in Mekong river then Laos wants to build dam too. For the dam project, Laos will build it in Mekong River by having Thai government support and Thai business group as a sponsor. In 2012 (The Xayaburi dam), the first dam, which would be built, was Xayaburi project dam. In Mekong River, the Xayaburi dam would generate 1,285 megawatts of Mekong river flow. Xayaburi dam project would be financed by Thailand's bank and source of loan around 1,15 trillion³ coming from bank in Thailand. However, Thailand also has group of people who disagree with the dam project. The dam

² Xayaburi dam, International river protecting, people, water, life page.

³ Tay prom Xayaburi kean ti kham kho khon Thai-Rataban Thai, *Isra new agency*. 2012/10/09.

building will give a side effect to the country in Mekong area. It will affect people who live in Mekong area, aspects such as agriculture, fishery, eco-tourism, transportation. Never the less it will threaten the river's ecology and risk well-being of people occupy the area. Main sectors of basic consumption is from agriculture, fishery, and culture. Thus, Mekong River is very important for those who live in Mekong.

B. RESEARCH QUESTION

Those explanations have referred to the basic question related to this study:

Why does Thai government support Laos's dam project?

C. RESEARCH PURPOSES

1. To describe the process of conflict resolutions in Mekong River as the new potential power in Thailand government, population and MRC
2. To apply the concept of International Relations directly to International issues

D. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Bureaucratic politic theories explain of why particular public policy decisions got made the way they did stressing the motivation by the relevant officials in the government bureaucracy to protect or promote their own agency's special interests (in competition with other agencies) as a major motivating factor in shaping the timing and the content of government decisions.

According to Allison Conceptual models, there are three models of government (and bureaucratic) action, any of which might correctly explain what happened during the Cuban Missile Crisis. A central point is the difficulty in proving exactly why a government follows a particular course of action. Allison presents three models, producing decisions, outputs, and outcomes.

Mode I

The first is the rational actor model (what Allison termed as Model I, or the classical model). Model I proposes that government decisions can be understood by viewing them as the product of a single actor in strategic pursuit of his own self-interest. (The state acts as a unitary rational actor to make “decisions”.)

Model II

The second model is the organizational process paradigm, or Model II, which argues that numerous actor are involved in decision making, and decision making process are highly structured through standard operating procedures (SOPs).

The sub-units of the state act according to pre-determined procedures to produce an “output.” The state is still essentially a unitary actor, but the analogy is now a quarterback, not a chess player. Just as a quarterback calls certain (pre-planned) plays, the government can only dictate policy options that are already in the standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Model III

According to Model III, The “leader” who sit on top of organization are not a monolithic group. Rather, each individual in this group is, in his own right, a player in a central, competitive game. The name of the game is politics, bargaining along regularize circuits among players positioned hierarchically within the government. “Player” makes government decision not by a single rational choice but by the pulling and hauling. Model III therefore explains deviations from ideal rationality by revealing the political gamesmanship behind them.

The body of theory has spawned far less clear, far less plausible, and more difficult to test. The central difficulty revolves around the hypothesized relationship between a player’s bureaucracy position and his or her preference. The tightest theoretical proposition is captured by Miles’s Law “where you stand depends upon where you sit.” Allison writes, “For large classes of issue for example budgets and procurement decisions, the stance of a particular player can be predicted with high reliability from information about his seat. In addition, Allison suggests that bureaucratic position determines a player perception of an issue; where you sit influences what you see as well as where you stand (on any issue).⁴ But Allison confuses matter by insisting that “Each player pulls and hauls with the power at his discretion for outcomes that will advance his conception of national, organizational, group, and personal interest, and that “each person

⁴ Halperin and Allison The Essence of decision "bureaucratic politics". p 44.

comes to his position with baggage in tow. His bags include sensitivities to certain issues, commitment to various projects, and personal standing with and debts to groups in society”⁵ Moreover, “individuals’ perception of the issue will differ radically. These differences will be partially predictable from the pressure of their position plus their personality”⁶. It is not clear, therefore, whether, or on what issues we should expect bureaucratic position to be determinative. As Stephen Krasner puts it, bureaucratic analysis implies that the office not its occupant determines how players behave.⁷ Indeed, at points Allison position and his or her preferences and perceptions. “The peculiar preference and stands of individual player can have a significant effect on government action, Allison writes. “ Had someone other than Paul Nitze been head of the Policy Planning staff in 1949, there is no reason to believe that it would have been an NSC 68. Had [Douglas] MacArthur not possessed certain preferences, power, and skills, U.S. troops might never have crossed the narrow neck [of Korea].⁸ If the idiosyncrasies of particular individuals determined these important actions and policies, specifically bureaucratic determinants can hardly have played an important role. A second and related difficulty concerns the theoretical relation between bureaucratic position and influence in the decision-making process. “What determines each player’s impact on results? Allison asks; “1. Power. Power (i.e., effective

⁵ Allison, *The Essence of Decision*, pp 166.

⁶ Allison, *The Essence of Decision*, pp 181-188.

⁷ Krasner, *Are bureaucratic important*, pp 171.

⁸ Allison, *The Essence of Decision*, pp 174.

influence on government decision and actions) is an elusive blend of at least three elements: bargaining advantages skill and will in using bargaining advantages, and other players' perceptions of the first two ingredients".⁹ But bargaining skills and advantages, and the will to use them, are idiosyncratic. They are not necessarily linked to bureaucratic positions. Again, Allison himself is his clearest critic on this point: "The hard core of bureaucratic politic mix is personality," he writes "How each man manages to stand the heat in his kitchen, each player's basic operating style, and the complementarity or contradiction among personalities and styles in the inner circles are irreducible pieces of the policy blend."¹⁰ The third major element in Allison's theoretical articulation of the bureaucratic politic paradigm is the conceptualization of the manner in which decision are made: though a bargaining process characterized by "pulling and hauling that is politics," the net result of which is action rarely intended by any player in particular.¹¹ This third conceptualization would seem to present no theoretical difference.

Model III, or the bureaucratic politic paradigm, explains government actors as the product of bargaining and compromise among the various organizational element of the executive branch. Allison's model of bureaucratic politics is construction from four basic propositions. How well does Model III perform at determining significant facts and matching fact with theory? Give the

⁹ Allison, *The Essence of Decision*, pp 168.

¹⁰ Allison, *The Essence of Decision*, pp 166.

¹¹ Allison, *The Essence of Decision*, pp 175.

evident confusing in Model III theory, the question would seem difficult to answer. Let us concentrate on the theoretical proposition that most analysts associate with Model III:

Proposition 1: Player preferences correlate highly with bureaucratic position.

Proposition 2: Player perceptions correlate highly with bureaucratic position.

Propositions 3: Player's influence in a decision-making process flows from his or her bureaucratic position.

Proposition 4: A decision-making process may be understood as a bargaining situation in which players "pull" and "haul" to promote their organization interest with the net result that government decision do not reflect the intention of any player in particular.

Allison's model of Bureaucratic politics has had a significant impact on how bureaucratic are studied. It was not just a series of propositions formulated to explain one study, but rather a workable theory for understanding the policymaking role of bureaucracy.

In this case, I use Model III to apply to the case of Thai business group in Laos's dam project in Mekong River that is supported by Thai government.

According to Fred W. Riqq, in his, book Thailand: Modernization of a Bureaucratic polity, Thailand is a bureaucratic state, not administration feudalism

state just like in past. The coming of external factors such as economy and new politic makes bureaucratic extend have duty in govern every class in country. Thai politics, the bureaucratic polity model formulated by Fred W. Riggs. defined a bureaucratic polity “in term of the domination of the official class as a rolling class.” It was the weakness or absence of extra bureaucratic force capable of controlling the bureaucracy effectively that gave rise to the phenomenon of bureaucratic polity (1, 1966) The significant changes have occurred in Thailand since The Sarit regime (1958-63) which now challenge that model. The present King has gradually emerged as a significant political institution. The fast economic growth has given rise to another important extra bureaucratic force, “that is to say political parties are supported by businessmen who once were characterized as politically powerless “aliens” and “pariah” entrepreneurs” by Riggs.¹² Business increase political role is evident from the number of MPs and cabinet minister’s whit business background.¹³ The ability, which a man exerts beyond his authority, is called influence rather than power. For example, the top military intervenes in politics, even under a civilian government. As long as their interventions not based on law but use influence rather than power. A businessperson who gives financial support to a political party or military leader in order to influence the decision-making of the government is not authoritarian but influential person because he has no official position or can call influential

¹² Riggs Fred, *Thailand: The modernization of a Bureaucratic polity* . Honolulu : East-West Center Press. 1966.

¹³ Suriyamongkol, Pisan; and Guyot, James F., *The bureaucratic ay Bay*. 1984,pp.30-36.

person live behind person in authority. According to Rigg,¹⁴ influence is very important within the bureaucracy. “Prime minister of Thailand, Prem Tinsulanon said in 1978 when he was the deputy minister of interior: “*Corruption for the most part results from group of influence and bureaucrats yielding to them*”. (Kanpokkhrong, 1979, p. 15) Can see bureaucratic politic in Thailand clearly, Thus businessperson influence with bureaucracy. However business person cannot be decision make because businessperson have no power officialy. on the other hand businessperson has influence and influence is very important within bureaucracy, it can be said that behind bureaucrat is businessperson.

In this case, Laos want to build dam in Mekong River and Thailand involved in terms of certain business in the project. The first dam project of Laos in Mekong River is Xayaburi dam. For the Xayaburi dam. Has Thai business (Ch,kamcang) become the sponsor. In last October 2011, the state-owned Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) sign contract of sale officially with Ch, Kamcang and contain Xayaburi dam in Power Development Plan (PDP) in country. The Laos will sell electricity that came from this dam around 95% to Thailand and 5% will be used by Laos. Thai will get electricity from Laos at low price. Thailand as a developing country, Thailand need energy electricity to develop its economy aspects and infrastructure. Since Laos will sell 95% of the electricity to Thailand with low price, Thai government make a foreign policy to support the Laos dam project. Thailand want to shows that the

¹⁴ Rigg Fred., *Honolulu : East-West Center Press*. Thailand : The modernization of a bureaucratic polity., 1966. pp 139-146.

country can meet its future energy needs. However, the project dam of Laos in Mekong River has most impact to resident Mekong river area.

According to Allison, Model III (Bureaucratic politics) is a construction from four basic propositions.

Proposition 1: Player preference correlate highly with bureaucratic position.

Conduct of Thai bureaucratic it is outcome of business preference.

Proposition 2: Player perceptions correlate highly with bureaucratic position. (Where you sit influence what you see as well as where you stand) (Allison, pp. 178,166)

In Thailand, bureaucratic can govern every class in the country and have business are background or influence and product of government have business involve.

Propositions 3: Player's influence in a decision-making process flows from his or her bureaucratic position.

In Thailand Business influence to order the decision-making of the government.

Proposition 4: A decision-making process may understood as a bargaining situation in which players "pull" and "haul" to promote their organization interest with the net result that government decision do not reflect the intention of any player in particular.

A decision-making process of Thailand are understand which who is live behind government; it is result of government decision.

The decisions and actions of governments are essentially domestic political outcomes. Political in the sense that the activity from which the outcomes emerge is best characterized as bargaining. The decision for supporting the project dam of Laos, Thai will gain the purchasing electricity at a low price from Laos. This is the reason why Thai government supports this project. Thai lack of electricity to develop its economy but have one important reason is business group behind decision. Model III explains deviations from ideal rationality by revealing the political gamesman ship behind them.

E. HYPOTHESIS

Based on the theoretical frameworks, then it is proposed the following hypothesis, Thai government support the Lao's dam project because:

- Thai government supports Laos dam project because it is the heavily influence by business group. In Thai political system, every single policy or decision-making process always has interest group involved, especially the business group which has a close relation to the key politician within the any party.
- F. METHODOLOGY RESEARCH
- This thesis used a qualitative approach.

- The data are collected from library research, internet media, news in television, activist documentaries of Mekong River.

G. RESEARCH RANGE

- This undergraduate thesis is focusing on Thailand foreign policy in Mekong issue.
- The actors are Thai government and population that near with Mekong or lower Mekong countries which are the members of MRC. Although Myanmar belongs to the Lower Mekong countries but Myanmar is outside the MRC countries. So, Myanmar is not being explained in this undergraduate thesis.
- The writer also limited the time during 1995 to May 2015. So, the writer explained about the process of Mekong River becoming South East Asia hot topic in 1995 and finally the issue was peter out. Although the writer used the time range but other important thing before or during that time would be considered by the writer.

H. SYSTEM OF WRITING

In CHAPTER I the write about background the problem , Research question, Purpose of research, Theoretical Framework, Hypothesis, Method of research, and System of writing.

In CHAPTER II The write dynamic of Thailand and Mekong River.

In CHAPTER III The write about Laos, the project dam of Laos in Mekong River, and Thai decision to support the project.

CHAPTER IV The write answer the research question and the business group influence the policy.

That the, in CHAPTER IV Conclusion.