

# Effects of Organized Hypocrisy Strategy on the Establishment of Political Relation of Rama I and Emperor Qianlong

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**Abstracts:** The paper deploys and develops the organized hypocrisy theory to account for the effect of organized hypocrisy strategy on the establishment of the political relation between Rama I and Emperor Qianlong from 1782 to 1787. Using the case study of Rama, I and Emperor Qianlong and a historical analysis, the paper shows that the logic of consequences of Rama I seek China's economic and military leads to Sino-Thai conflicting logics of appropriateness. Thailand uses the organized hypocrisy strategy to respond to this situation with two mutually negative versions of royal letters and transliterated terms. The key decoupling mechanism of the strategy is that the Thailand monarch conducts diplomatic interactions that maintain his status, while the Chinese in Thailand act as intermediaries to handle interactions that damage Thailand Monarch's prestige. Organized hypocrisy strategy allows Thailand to maintain Rama I's claim of universal kingship and meet the demand of Emperor Qianlong investing Rama I at the same time. Rama I and Emperor Qianlong formed a nominal tributary relationship on this premise. Thailand's organized hypocrisy strategy is largely the political hypocrisy of a small country dealing with a big one. Emperor Qianlong practicing the doctrine of 'no rule' and not sending envoys for investiture makes the hypocrisy strategy play a positive role. This study informs our theoretical understanding of Sino-Thai friendly official relations by introducing a focus on the organized hypocrisy strategy hitherto lacking.

**Keywords:** Organized hypocrisy, Rama I, Emperor Qianlong, Royal letter, Nominal tributary relationship.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Dellios (2019) argues that the monarch in ancient Southeast Asia aims to realize unification under the cakravartin as an ideal. That means Thailand's monarchs directed by Indian-influenced political culture should not succumb to the Chinese emperor. However, the Chinese official archives record the procedure for Rama I on how to seek investiture from China from 1782 to 1787, which is rare in other periods. Therefore, How Rama I established political relations with Emperor Qianlong in this period is an issue worthy of attention.

Up to now, there are extensive works on motives (Erika, 2004; Mi, 2014; Promboon, 1971; Shu, 2012; Viraphol, 1977) for Thailand to maintain tributary relations with China. These research results cover the factors, such as trade, political and cultural implications, survival, and dominance in the sub-regional order. Starting from the identity politics of Cautilya's mandala model and the structural characteristics of the mandala system, some scholars' research (LÜ, 2017; Mancall, 1968; Manomaivibool, 2014; Wolters, 1968), explores reasons why Thailand, the center of the mandala system, could seek accommodation with China. Some researchers (Erika, 1995, 2007; Manomaivibool, 2017) have specifically studied the effect of different versions of the credential on Sino-Thai interaction, however, these works also pay little attention to clarifying the Thai interactive strategy behind the different versions of the credentials from the perspective of international relations.

Although the above research are helpful to understand the values and rationality of Thailand's establishing friendly political relations with China from 1782 to 1787, they paid less attention to the diplomatic interaction process of Rama I with the Qing emperor and did not refine interactive strategy.

To gain a fuller understanding of how Thailand's diplomatic actions made the Qing authorities think that the two sides reconfirmed the hierarchical relationship, this paper will focus on the examination of interactive strategy from the perspective of organized hypocrisy. In addition, this study is aimed at advancing into the realm of empiricism of and within the framework of organized hypocrisy. To sum up, this paper explores the organized hypocrisy strategy and its effects on the establishment of the Sino-Thai political relationship from 1782 to 1787 to fill the existing gap.

## **2. METHOD**

This study used qualitative research in the form of an instrumental case study for three reasons. This is because Thai and Chinese culture-influenced views of the world order constituted a complex social setting and made shaped the significance of the interaction based on diplomatic etiquette. The case selection was based on the expertise and relevance of the case in respect of the study. Thailand Monarch Rama I and the Chinese Emperor served as an example since both are the policymakers and important participants in the diplomatic interaction. Because the credentials are the concentrated expression of the monarch's will, Chinese and Thailand's diplomatic correspondence serves as the unit of analysis.

This paper drew upon two sources of data: archival data and secondary historical sources. Due to the limitation of language ability for literature search, it mainly focuses on Chinese and English literature. Thai archives mainly refer to the dynastic chronicles regarding Rama I. Chinese archives related to this study have been published, so they are easy to access. Taking Sino-Siamese, Rama I, Emperor Qianlong, and investiture as keywords, the full-text search is carried out via <https://www.proquest.com>, <https://www.cnki.net>, <https://scholar.google.com>, and <https://www.duxiu.com>. The results are further screened by the disciplines of international politics provided by the database. This study mainly resorts to qualitative historical analysis regarding data analysis.

## **3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF ORGANIZED HYPOCRISY**

The researcher observes that the Thailand monarch adopted an organized hypocrisy strategy in the establishment of Sino-Thai political relations in the early reign of Rama I. Therefore, this study will construct a theoretical framework based on organized hypocrisy theory.

### **3.1. The Concept of Organized Hypocrisy**

The concept of organized hypocrisy was increasingly applied by scholars such as Stephen Krasner (Krasner, 1999b), Michael Lipson (Lipson, 2007), Robert Egnell (Egnell, 2010), Eugenio Cusumano (Cusumano, 2018) in their IR studies. While organized hypocrisy theory does not form part of international relations mainstream theorizing, it is still necessary to elaborate on this concept here.

The concept of organized hypocrisy in international relations studies is based on the research of Nils Brunsson about domestic organization. Brunsson states that organized hypocrisy relates to the organization's decoupling of its external outputs. Thus, organized hypocrisy refers in particular to actions inconsistent with talk and decisions (Brunsson, 1989).

Krasner is a noted scholar who introduced organized hypocrisy to international relations studies through his work on the sovereign. Inspired by the concept of "decoupling" by John Meyer (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) and building on the research of Nils Brunsson (Brunsson, 1989), he defines organized hypocrisy as a condition in which institutions are durable but weakly institutionalized and therefore frequently infringed (Krasner, 1999b).

It's to be noted that the starting point of Krasner's study is rulers of the state, rather than international organization and state when he holds the opinion that rulers, specific policymakers, usually but not always the executive head of state, make choices about policies, rules, and institution (Krasner, 1999b). Krasner's rulers are unitary rational actors, comparatively autonomous from the societies they govern, and centrally and rationally on the realization of organizational goals (Lipson, 2007). This is different from Brunsson's research because the subjects in Brunsson's study on organized hypocrisy are fundamentally domestic organizations characterized by porous boundaries. Thus, "Krasnerian" organized hypocrisy is considered suitable for the analysis of autonomous rational, unitary actors (Lipson, 2007).

To sum up, the definition of Brunsson will be used in this study while the starting point of Krasner's study is also borrowed. That meshes well with the situation in Thailand, where the rulers hold inviolable power to manage conflicting demands with the Emperor of China through an organized hypocrisy strategy.

### **3.2. The Reasons for Organized Hypocrisy in International Relations**

When it comes to the reasons why organized hypocrisy is prevalent in the international environment, Krasner argues that these independent variables, including the ruler's desire to consolidate and expand power, conflicting logics of appropriateness, the absence of any hierarchical authority and power asymmetries in the international system, should account for this phenomenon.

Krasner posited that the two logics of actions have deeply imprinted on all political and social environments, which are logics of expected consequences and logics of appropriateness pointed out by James March and Johan Olsen (Krasner, 1999a). Logics of consequences refers to the rational calculation that dominates political action and outcomes, including institutions (Krasner, 2001). Logics of appropriateness refers to that rules, roles and identities are the leading factors the political and social organizations behave, that is, the appropriate behavior first considers how the rules, roles, and identities require how to act, rather than how to maximize self-interest in a specific situation (Krasner, 2001).

Krasner asserted that the international system is an environment in which the logic of consequences dominates the logic of appropriateness (Krasner, 1999b). At times rulers abide by conventional norms or rules because these norms and rules furnish them with resources and support (both material and ideational). The rulers have acted contrary to the norms at other times also because norms could meet the material and ideational needs of the rulers. Organized hypocrisy is the normal situation. When norms from the international environment and domestic levels respectively could conflict with each other, and there is no hierarchical authority in the international system to prevent the rulers from violating the logic of appropriateness, if the rulers hope to secure resources from the environment to retain power, the rulers must endorse certain norms but in the meanwhile take action in a manner that infringes these norms. In addition, Krasner's theory demonstrates that stronger actors tend to employ power asymmetries in the international system when the logic of consequences and logic of appropriateness conflict occurs (Krasner, 1999b; Krasner, 2001).

It should be emphasized that roles and rules are not of little account in the international environment. Rulers do have to give reasons for their actions, but their audiences are usually domestic. For example, when the West with different norms met China, China's normative structures, namely the concept of the Celestial Dynasty, limited China's policies.

Krasner's works demonstrate that organized hypocrisy can happen when stronger actors take advantage of power asymmetry (Krasner, 1999b), it can also take place when bipolar or multipolar occur in the region order (Krasner, 2001). In both cases, there is no hierarchical authority to prevent hypocritical strategies. However, in this study, it is Thailand with relatively weak comprehensive strength that carried out a hypocritical strategy against the relatively powerful China. In this context, this study should think of whether the diplomatic ideas and policies of the relatively powerful countries could tolerate an organized hypocrisy strategy.

### **3.3. The Effects of Organized Hypocrisy**

Although organized hypocrisy carries strong negative connotations as a concept, it may have a positive effect. That means organized hypocrisy functions as a safety valve by which conflicts can be mitigated in a society of conflict and inconsistent normative pressures. This also applies to international relations. Krasner's statement in his work suggests that organized hypocrisy is an available strategy when a state's ruling elites seek to deal with conflicting demands in international relations.

The state's response to the negative effects of organized hypocrisy is also mixed in different international patterns. Organized hypocrisy may create a credibility crisis in Inter-state relations. In a multilevel or two-level system, the control of negative effects is limited to one country. For example, when ancient Chinese historians wrote the history of the previous Dynasties, they avoided commenting on the emperor of China's organized hypocrisy to control the negative effects of the organization (Wang, 1968). Under the condition of asymmetric power, the strong side may not worry about the negative influence, but the weak side has to consider the countermeasures of the strong side. If foreign policy and the concept of the strong would accommodate organized hypocrisy from the weak, the crisis of political mutual trust crisis between states is manageable. According to this, this paper would develop Krasner's theory to some extent.

In brief, the analysis framework of this paper is guided by the setting, the performance, and the effects of organized hypocrisy. Its purpose is to explain how the Thai diplomatic strategy from 1782 to 1787 was conducive to establishing the political relationship between Rama I and Emperor Qianlong.

#### **4. THAI'S NORM AND ITS DISINCENTIVES IN EXCHANGES WITH CHINA**

This part will analyze the logic of expected consequences and logic of appropriateness of Thailand's interaction with China under Rama I and point out that if China requires Thailand to seek investiture, it will exert a negative impact on the logic of appropriateness Thailand's monarch follows, which is the main condition for Thailand to adopt the strategy of organized hypocrisy.

##### **4.1. Cultural Norms and Thailand Monarch Supremacy**

The political culture that shaped Thailand's foreign relations under Rama I was Hindu-Buddhist culture and Indian political philosophy. This mainly involves the universal kingship theory with the core concept of the cakravartin, which plays a key role in shaping the supremacy of the Thai monarch.

Buddhism believes that the highest in the sacred world is the Buddha, the highest in the secular world is the cakravartin, and the cakravartin is the counterpart of the Buddha in the world (Sun, 2015). In the Thai religious classics, the primary embodiment of accepting the universal ruler theory centered on the cakravartin is the description of the universal monarch in *The Traiphum* (Discourse on the Three Worlds) re-edited and reviewed by Rama I. The cakravartin, as the ideal Buddhist monarch, was described locating at the apex of the hierarchy of the world of men stated in *The Traiphum*. When the universal monarch went forth, all the kings and rulers of the earth should prostrate themselves before the universal monarch and pay tribute to him, and he taught them the Law of Buddha (Gesick, 1976; Tambiah, 1987).

As far as I know, as for the main practice of Rama I's claiming universal kingship, Rama I called himself a Bodhisattva. For example, Rama I issued laws emphasizing morality to represent his image as a religious philosopher and as a bodhisattva who bestowed moral teaching upon his people. In each regulation, Rama I cited religious principles and his status as the bodhisattva to endorse his secular laws (Dabphet, 1990). In Buddhist belief, the cakravartin, Lord Buddha, and bodhisattva are regarded almost equally because their great qualities are rare in the real world (Tambiah, 1976). Accordingly, the claims to be an embodiment of bodhisattvas lies in the sought the highest degree of worldly power (Harris, 2007).

In theory, Thailand's monarchs claimed sovereignty over the whole Jambudipa continent. But in reality, they were not able to rule over all the Jambudipa regardless of their desire to be acknowledged as the only universal king. From the Ayutthaya Dynasty to the Bangkok Dynasty, due to limited strength, the Thai monarchs established their royal circles in Laos, Cambodia, and the northern part of the Malay Peninsula.

In addition, the relationship between monarchs claiming to be the cakravartin in real politics was in a state of competition and mutual non-recognition due to their limited power. Such a situation often makes competitors tend to accept political relations on an equal footing instead of yielding to each other. For example, when the Burmese king

wrote to Rama I claiming that he had no equal in Jambudvipa, all capitals and all cities were his servants (Gesick, 1976). Rama I asked the Burmese king to acknowledge that he was dealing with a king equal to him, which was the premise of both parties for negotiating peace (Gesick, 1976).

To sum up, belief in the Hindu-Buddhist worldview, the Thai had accepted that Thailand monarchs claim superior religious and political authority with the image of the chakravartin. Based on these cultural norms, it is difficult for Rama I to submit to another monarch who claims to have universal kingship, and Rama I can accept the equal political relation with regional power in real politics.

## **4.2. Gaining China's Resource**

After the looting of the Burmese war and the short-lived Thonburi dynasty, Rama I's Thailand continued to face economic and security challenges. To alleviate and even solve the multiple difficulties, the Thai ruling elite headed by Rama I attempted to obtain resources from China.

### **4.2.1. Seeking Support from the Chinese Military Resource**

In the early days of Rama I's reign, Thailand's national security still faced military threats from Myanmar. The main forces of the two sides fought a decisive battle in Kanchanaburi in southern Thailand, and the Burmese army was defeated in 1785. After that, Myanmar's threat to Thailand gradually evolved into a local border conflict, and its influence and scope gradually narrowed. Seeking foreign aid or allies is a policy option in continuous military conflict.

Since Myanmar is at war with Thailand and China, the direct union of China's military forces and the acquisition of China's strategic military resources once prompted King Taksin to send envoys to China in 1775, 1776, 1777 (Yu & Chen, 2009). Although rejecting the request for the Qing Dynasty to send troops, Emperor Qianlong granted special permission to Thailand to purchase sulfur three times.

Thailand being approval to purchase its badly needed military supplies from China should have impressed monarch Rama I, who mastered the military command in wartime during the reign of King Taksin (Duan, 2014), and encouraged him to continue to seek Chinese military support after taking charge of Thailand. In May 1786, monarch Rama I sent an envoy to China. The letter from monarch Rama I to Emperor Qianlong carried by the messenger proposed to purchase two thousand pieces of bronze armor to defend against Burma (Yu & Chen, 2009).

### **4.2.2. Seek Economic Support**

After Rama I came to power in Thailand, he faced economic ruin. It was inevitable to obtain economic resources to maintain national order through foreign trade and relying on China.

King Mongkut in 1853 stated when Rama I established himself initially in Bangkok there was no tax given the government could assert and the tendency of the populace to revolt. They therefore resorted to the junk trade to defray the expenses of the state (Viraphol, 1977).

Foreign trade was the lifeline of early Bangkok (Hong, 1984). Thailand still relied on China for wealth during the reign of Rama I. When Rama I's younger brother complained that the 20,000 Siamese taels given by the government a year were not enough to support his family and officials, the monarch suggested that he trade with China and seek supplementary income. Rama I said that the country itself now ensures the distribution of government subsidies to the nobles through trade with China (Hong, 1984; Viraphol, 1977). The existing economic difficulty during the reign of Rama I made Sino-Thai trade still a panacea for the economic downturn.

To sum up, from the logic of appropriateness, Thailand, like China, also advocates universal kingship. From the logic of expected consequences, Thailand has interests in China's military, and economical resources. In particular, Thailand has a trade dependence on China.

### **4.3 China's Political Requirements and its Consequence on Thailand's Monarch Supremacy**

Emperor Qianlong put forward his concerns to the Thai side in the process of Sino-Thai interaction in 1782 and 1784, that is, the new monarch of Thailand needed to seek investiture. This political request would pose a threat to Rama I's supreme status.

#### **4.3.1. The Political Demands of Emperor Qianlong**

Before Rama I officially sent the envoy to apply for the seal in 1786, the Chinese side formally proposed to the Thai embassy twice that Rama I should submit a memorial to ask for investiture.

The first time the Qing Dynasty put forward the canonization request to Rama I was when Rama I sent an envoy to inform him of his enthronement. When Rama I sent an envoy to announce his enthronement in China in September 1782, Emperor Qianlong ordered the minister of the Grand Council to write a letter in the name of the Governor-General of Liangguang. The letter stated that if Rama I wanted to accept the title of the Celestial court, he must express his request (Qin & Dong, 1986a). When the mission sent by King Taksin returned to Thailand, the letter was brought back (Wang, 2018).

When Rama I paid tribute in August 1784, the Qing Dynasty asked Rama I to seek investiture for the second time. When Sun Shiyi, the Governor-General of Liangguang, checked the credentials carried by the envoy, he did not find the content regarding seeking investiture. Sun Shiyi asked the mission why the Thai side did not comply with the previous letter. The embassy replied, fearing that they would go beyond their division to plead and be reprimanded., Sun Shiyi reported the situation to the Qing court in September 1784. After Emperor Qianlong received the report, he allowed the embassy to arrive in Beijing and planned to communicate with the mission about seeking investiture (Qin & Dong, 1986b).

Why did Emperor Qianlong put forward the request for investing in Rama I? This is mainly because the investiture in detail stipulates the political relationship between the emperor and the "foreign ministers". Strictly speaking, only when foreign kings accept the canonization of the Chinese emperor do, they officially become China's "foreign ministers" and have the obligation to pay tribute to the Chinese emperor in international relations. Another possible reason is the influence of intercourse with King Taksin. Emperor Qianlong ordered to prepare for King Taksin's seeking investiture in 1778. However, when King Taksin sent an envoy to China in 1781, he did not seek investiture. Rama I notified the Qing court of the death of King Taksin in 1782. In this way, under the background that Emperor Qianlong had put investing in the King of Thailand on the agenda, and the investiture was postponed to Rama I. In short, in the two Sino-Thai interactions in 1782 and 1784, the Qing Dynasty put forward the political requirements for the Thai mission, namely Rama I should seek investiture.

#### **4.3.2 The Effect of Emperor Qianlong's Political Claim on the Supremacy of Rama**

The investiture was an important medium that symbolizes the universal kingship claimed by the Chinese emperor. In this sense, the investiture from the Qianlong Emperor and the consequent obligation to pay tribute to China threatened the legitimacy of the Thai monarch's claim of universal kingship.

Investiture would stipulate Sino-Thai hierarchical political relations. Thailand's monarch seeking investiture corresponds to appointing the title of the Chinese emperor. After the investiture ceremony was completed, the regular tribute paid by the mission is to maintain hierarchical and orderly political relations. These two kinds of interrelated diplomatic acts were completed in Beijing, the capital of the Qing Dynasty. Their core significance was

to ensure that the supremacy of the emperor as the Son of Heaven could be maintained 'in the capital'. Meanwhile, Rama I's status as a universal monarch would be reduced to the king of the tributary state.

In brief, the political norms in the reign of Rama I cannot accommodate Rama I's seeking investiture. The political demands of Emperor Qianlong for Rama I led to Sino-Thai conflicting logic of appropriateness. However, Thailand needed to maintain contact with China to obtain military strategic resources and economic resources. The availability of various resources depends on the emperor's approval. Driven by the logic of consequences, Thailand should accept the logic of the appropriateness of the Qing Dynasty, that is, to seek investiture. But this move would put the Thai monarch in the embarrassing situation of violating their logic of appropriateness. Of course, the strategy of organized hypocrisy would help Rama I to defuse this situation.

## **5. ORGANIZED HYPOCRISY STRATEGY IN RAMA I'S MISSIVES TO QIANLONG EMPEROR**

The correspondence between Rama I and Emperor Qianlong includes the two royal letters seeking and thanking for investiture and canonizing edict from Emperor Qianlong. Thailand has used the organized hypocrisy strategy in handling these credentials.

### **5.1. Credentials for Seeking Investiture and a Letter of Thanks for Investiture**

Rama I decided to send an envoy to Beijing to seek investiture in 1786 with a royal golden nameplate and a letter written on paper (Thiphakorawong, 1990). The excerpts of the Thai version of the letter written on paper are as follows. These items were brought as tribute to the elder Emperor Qianlong, asking for the investiture of the King of Siam according to the royal tradition, to bring good fortune to Bangkok and continue friendly relations between our two kingdoms (Thiphakorawong, 1990).

The contents of the Chinese version of the credential preserved in China are incomplete. Some of the fragments are as follows. Rama I sent the envoy to the Jinque (the palace where the Son of Heaven resides), and Fu Ken (begged) the Emperor to grant a title and a seal. Rama I humbly thought how large and wide the emperor's favor is. Receiving grace was beyond expectation. Rama I would like to Quan Ma Zhi Bao (serve like a dog or a horse in return for) the Emperor's kindness (li, 1959).

Rama I sent a mission to China in June 1788 to appreciate the emperor for his investiture. The complete letter of thanks for investiture described Rama I as the courtier practicing the ceremony of "shouting long live" to the Qianlong Emperor and performing the ceremony of "facing north" when accepting the edict and seal. It also mentioned that Rama I would protect the fiefdom and the people to be in line with the son of Heaven's cherished (li, 1959).

### **5.2. Investiture Edict from Emperor Qianlong**

The coronation ceremony of Emperor Qianlong to Rama I was completed in China. The letter of coronation awarded by Emperor Qianlong to Rama I was brought back by the Thai delegation. It was translated into Thai in Thailand, so there are two versions of the investiture edict.

The Chinese version of the investiture edict states that the Qing Dynasty inherited the mandate of Heaven to rule the world, and Siam had always paid tribute to China. It is called Rama I the chief of the Siamese nation. It points out that Emperor Qianlong invested with Rama I "the king of Siam" because he could protect territory and people and won the support of his subjects. Finally, it mentions that the king of Siam was expected to defend his fiefdom to match the profound intention of Emperor Qianlong's cherishing overseas countries (Qin & Dong, 1986c).

The Thai translation has two independent copies in the National Library of Thailand. The first excerpt is as follows, "The Emperor of the Qing Dynasty wrote a letter to the ruler of Ayutthaya, wishing that the Sino-Thai friendship would last forever. The Chinese emperor was gratified that the ruler of the Ayutthaya sent envoys from

thousands of miles away to seek 'hong' and offer tribute according to tradition. Now, the emperor of the Qing Dynasty 'hong' the ruler of the Ayutthaya with the title 'the king of Siam'. Camel Seal was also granted to seal the letter of kham hap. The ruler of the Ayutthaya was expected to properly manage land, people, and property so not as to make the Qing emperor worry" (Manomaivibool, 2017); The second excerpt is as follows, the Emperor of the Qing Dynasty was pleased that Rama I sent envoys to "chimkong" to continue Sino-Thai friendship. The Qing emperor happily accepted the gift and gave it back (Manomaivibool, 2017).

### **5.3 Analysis of Rama I's Correspondence to Qianlong Emperor**

This part will analyze the Chinese and Thai letters' diction, point out their common points, and understand the use of Thailand's organized hypocrisy strategy. Compared to the Chinese version with the Thai version of royal letters, the latter was written in an equal tone. Firstly, they do not diminish the status of the Thai monarch as for the title. For example, "Somdet", means "noble, supreme". "Phra chao", refers to God (Manomaivibool, 2017). These two terms are included in the title of the Thai monarch and the Chinese emperor. Another is the Chinese version of Emperor Qianlong's letter to Rama I disparage Rama I as the chief of the Siamese nation, which was deleted in the Thai version. In addition, there was no mention of the investiture etiquette. The letters just show the Thai monarch's willingness to maintain the Sino-Thai friendship. Finally, they had vaguely dealt with two key terms symbolizing the political status of both sides. Specifically, the Thai word "hong", deriving from the Chinese word pronounced "hong" in Chaozhou and meaning "to appoint", referred to the term "investiture" above. The Thai "chim kong", pronounced "ching kong" in Chaozhou, meant the term "tribute" above (Thiphakorawong, 1990).

There was a special purpose for using direct transliteration instead of specifying Chinese terms by using the corresponding words in Thai. Understanding these terms, the Chinese side could recognize the vassal homage of Thailand while the Thai monarch still complied with Thailand's logic of appropriateness since they could claim to Thai subjects that the word "chim kong" simply meant "to visit china to deliver royal gifts and a letter" (Erika, 2001). The use of "hong" is supposed to obscure the true attitude of the Thai people toward their mission to China (Manomaivibool, 2017).

In contrast, the Chinese version of Emperor Qianlong was written as a vassal state. Investiture represents the emperor's grace to his subjects in ancient Chinese political culture. Therefore, a royal letter for seeking investiture needs to be written in a humble tone. These terms, such as 'Fu Ken', and 'Quan Ma Zhi Bao' are the embodiment of honorific language. What's more, the vassal state should formally express its gratitude to the emperor by sending the mission. In the letter of thanks for the investiture, Rama I was described as performing the investiture etiquette in the name of the vassal.

It can be noted through two versions of the credentials that when the Thai side communicates with China, the Thai side has the practice of rewriting the royal letter from China and the royal letter in Thai. The Chinese in Thailand took on the role of rewriting. There are three reasons. Firstly, an archive of the Thonburi dynasty shows that the translation of the Thai script was done by Thai officials who knew Chinese. The archive records that Phraya Phiphat Kosa at the throne hall read out all of a royal letter of kham hap (Kanche) to King Taksin. After the king thought it was ok, Phraya Phiphat Kosa ordered Khun Kaeo Ayat, who resigned from government service to write out Chinese letters. Thus, it is inferred that the Chinese version of the royal letters may have been prepared in Thailand (Erika, 2007)

Secondly, the royal letter in Chinese to Emperor Qianlong was stamped with the official seal of the Thai side and the seal given by the Chinese side. For example, the letter of 1782 was stamped with the Thai lotus seal (John E. Wills, 2012). The letter in 1787 was stamped with the "seal of the king of Siam", which was given by Emperor Qianlong. In Memory of the Throne about Siam's Tribute, Tian Shengjin recorded that the Chinese version of Kham hap was stamped with the seal of Siam (Tian, 2007). Thus, the Kham hap in Chinese in 1784 and 1786 should be stamped with a three-headed elephant seal due to the lack of a Loto Seal. All in all, the space for the China side to rewrite is very limited owing to the official seal.



Finally, Rama IV's proclamation of 1868 on the review of the credentials presented to China suggests that the Chinese in Thailand play a role in rewriting the credentials. Rama IV pointed out that the Thai side used Chinese in Thailand to provide interpreters in Sino-Thai exchanges. When Thai officials were told that those translators distorted the content of the royal letter in Thai, Thailand asked the translator to translate accurately. However, the official in Guangzhou was outraged by the credentials that did not conform to the discourse of the tributary state. Rama IV stated that the Thai court decided not to terminate the official relationship with China to continue the prosperous trade with China. This decision continued the practice of rewriting the royal letter in Thai by Chinese businessmen who often acted as Thai envoys and translators. These Chinese businessmen also continued to act as translators and rewriters of the letters from the Chinese emperor (Junko, 2007; Manomaivibool, 2017; Wongcharoenkul, 2012).

## **6. ELIMINATE SINO-THAI CONFLICTING LOGICS OF APPROPRIATENESS**

Credentials are the most formal manifestation of the attitude of the tributary state towards the Celestial Empire. Thailand's use of organized hypocrisy at the level of credentials created favorable conditions for the establishment of the Sino-Thai political relationship.

### **6.1 Reducing the Possibility of Conflicting Logics of Appropriateness in China**

Due to the organized hypocrisy of the Thai side, the credentials from Thailand are not fundamentally contrary to the discourse of the political relationship between the Celestial Court and the vassal states.

Credentials from Thailand should first be reviewed by the governor of the entering province (He, 2020). This is because the credentials on public display in the domestic politics of the Qing Dynasty must be in the form of Hua (Chinese) Yi (barbarian) discourse and monarch and minister discourse. The methods of review include Tongshi's (the translator) translation and review, that is, to compare whether the golden plate is consistent with the Chinese version of the royal letter. During this process, officials at the governor level also respectfully read the Chinese version of the credential (li, 1959). In addition, The Thailand diplomatic mission arrived in the capital of the Qing Dynasty, and the golden plate and the royal letter in Chinese would be reviewed again. The Ministry of rites first got the credentials and read them. The official procedure for translating foreign language credentials in Beijing was based on the use of Tongshi (the translator) by the governors who translated them into Manchu and Chinese through the Hanben Hall of the Cabinet (He, 2020).

After two procedures, the China side has not found that the golden plate does not conform to the tributary document paradigm. This is because Cabinet translators, local governors, and officials of the Ministry of Rites in the Qing Dynasty are not proficient in Siamese (J. Wang, 2018). When the royal letter in Chinese is in line with the tributary discourse system, and officials who read the credentials have obtained the key political information they need through the transliterated words in the royal letter in Thai, they have no strong motivation to study the contents of the golden plate. From the perspective of China, when the credentials from Thailand met China's political requirements, the basic condition for establishing formal official relations between Rama I and Emperor Qianlong was already met.

From a Thai standpoint, organized hypocrisy preserves the prestige of the Thai monarch. For the emperors of the Qing Dynasty, the bottom line was that they could not accept the ritualization of equal exchanges (Wang, 2017). For the monarch of Thailand, ideologically, is the universal monarch, but when dealing with actual international relations, the bottom line is that it could not accept subservience to monarchs of other countries. Therefore, when the Thai version of the credentials in an equal tone was accepted by China, Thailand's pragmatic diplomatic strategy effectively reduced the possibility of conflict between Chinese and Thai logic of appropriateness in China.

## **6.2. Eliminating Sino-Thai Conflicting Logics of Appropriateness in Thailand**

Thailand's practices of organized hypocrisy eliminated conflicting Sino-Thai logics of appropriateness in Thailand. First, the Thai monarch does not participate in the process of translating the royal letter from Thai into Chinese version, nor does he monitor its content. The second is the use of transliterated words in the royal letters in, such as 'chim kong', and 'hong'. The third is that the Thai side translated the imperial edict given to Rama I by Emperor Qianlong in 1786, which is full of tribute words, into a royal letter written in an equal tone (Manomaivibool, 2017).

These practices could achieve at least two purposes. Firstly, once the tactics of organized hypocrisy were exposed, the Thai monarch would blame the officials, believing that the translator had deceived the monarch. The second is to limit the words and deeds that show Thailand as a tributary state as much as possible, away from Thailand's capital, the universal monarch's residence.

Eliminated conflicting Sino-Thai logic of appropriateness in Thailand was premised on the Chinese emperor's ideas and practices in handling Thailand's political relations. Qing Dynasty applied the doctrine of "no rule" to the countries with which it established tributary relations. The emperors of the early Qing Dynasty insisted on the concept of the Lord of the world centered on China and regarded other countries as their subjects. However, when it comes to actual dominion, the emperors of the Qing Dynasty practiced different principles governing the sea territory inside and outside. They had a clear sense of territorial ownership (Li, 2018; Liu & Wang, 2019). When a country forms a tributary relationship with China, the emperor of the Qing Dynasty would not interfere with its monarch's ruling power, especially for overseas countries. That means China's alleged suzerainty had no direct effect on Siam's integrity. Therefore, while the organized hypocrisy strategy satisfied Emperor Qianlong's political demands on Rama I, it did not cause Emperor Qianlong to pose a substantial threat to Rama I's power.

Not sending a mission to Thailand for investiture is another key factor. According to the investiture system of the Qing Dynasty, when the envoy was sent to invest in the king, the king must lead several officials to stand in the north and bow three times and nine kowtows to the tally and edicts (He, 2020). Fortunately, Emperor Qianlong followed the old practice of not sending an embassy to Thailand for investiture in 1673. If this were not the case, the purpose of organized hypocrisy in trying to preserve the authority of Thailand's monarchy would be defeated.

To sum up, the organized hypocrisy strategy of the Thai side eliminated the Sino-Thai conflicting logic of appropriateness under the condition that the Qing Dynasty practiced the doctrine of "no rule" and did not send envoys to confer the title.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

Based on the case study of the royal letters between Rama I and Emperor Qianlong, this paper attempts to analyze the reasons, manifestations, and effects of the organized hypocrisy strategy adopted by the Thai side based on organized hypocrisy theory and puts forward the following views on how the diplomatic strategy contributed to the establishment of Sino-Thai political relation from 1782 to 1787.

Rama I and Emperor Qianlong were conceived to enjoy universal kingship under the influence of the respective political cultures of China and Thailand. This restricts them from yielding to each other. The Logic of the consequences of Rama I's interaction with Emperor Qianlong lies in seeking China's military resources and wealth. That results in Sino-Thai conflicting logic of appropriateness. That means Thailand needs to maintain Rama I's claim of universal kingship and meet the demand of Emperor Qianlong investing Rama I simultaneously. Thailand uses the organized hypocrisy strategy to respond to this situation with two mutually negative versions of royal letters and transliterated words. The key decoupling mechanism of conflicting responses is that the Thai monarch only engages in diplomatic interaction to maintain his status, while the Chinese in Thailand act as intermediaries to deal with diplomatic interaction to damage the status of Rama I.

Organized hypocrisy strategy contributes to eliminating Sino-Thai conflicting logics of appropriateness. While the royal letters in Chinese rewritten by Thai personnel embody the supremacy of the Chinese emperor, those in Thai written by them deny China's universal kingship and preserve the prestige of the Thai monarch. Using transliterated words meets the universal claims of both monarchs concurrently. Thus, Rama I and Emperor Qianlong formed a nominal tributary relationship.

Different from the organized hypocrisy of international organizations and major powers studied by the current academic circles, Thailand's organized hypocrisy strategy is largely the political hypocrisy of a small country dealing with a big one. However, the weak side's pretense does not result in a political trust crisis. This is attributed to Emperor Qianlong practicing the doctrine of 'no rule' and not sending envoys for investiture.

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