

Siam's New Detectives: Police Work and the Press from 1900 to 1950¹

Samson Lim²

Abstract

This article describes the parallel development of 'modern' police practices, crime news, and crime fiction. It argues that investigative techniques introduced during the first three decades of the 20th century, including fingerprint identification, crime scene photography, criminal records, and statistics, were methods for understanding and representing crime that resulted in a novel way to tell history rather than in the 'scientification' of police work. That is, when combined with the emerging narrative forms found in local newspapers and popular crime fiction of the same period, the new police practices produced what might be called 'real-crime' drama, in a form which commonly appears in the press and on television today.

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² Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

Introduction

A series of changes occurred in the way the police and the press told stories about crime in Siam during late 19th and early 20th centuries. Crime news stories, part of the newspaper since its inception, became more detailed and sensational. Crime fiction, including detective stories, was introduced and became an instant hit. The police, meanwhile, were undergoing a series of organizational and practical reforms that altered the way they went about detecting crime. This article traces the parallel histories of these three methods of producing knowledge about crime, arguing that the investigative techniques introduced during the first three decades of the 20th century, including fingerprint identification, crime scene photography, criminal records, and statistics, became intertwined with the emerging narrative forms found in local newspapers and popular crime fiction of the same period to produce what might be called 'real-crime' drama, a narrative form that could both reveal the past and prove it as true, useful to the police and sellable by the press.

Kingdom of Crime

Stories of armed robbery, drunken brawls, shootings, stabbings, rapes, and murder filled the newspapers of Siam between the end of the Fifth Reign and the beginning of the 1940s. On 19 May 1902, for example, someone picking up a copy of the English language *Bangkok Times* would have come across an article entitled, "Gang Robbery at Paklat."³ The report describes a group of 40 men raiding a gambling house in southern Bangkok. Eleven were killed and many injured during the incident. A letter written in 1903 from a retired official in an area north of the Bangkok requested permission to organize a "vigilante posse to bring order to a situation in which banditry rendered it impossible to earn a simple, happy livelihood."⁴ Things

³ "Gang Robbery at Paklat," *Bangkok Times*, 19 May 1902, from David Bruce Johnston, "Rural Society and the Rice Economy in Thailand, 1880-1930," Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1975: 178.

⁴ Johnston 178.

were so out of hand during the turn of the 19th century that even Buddhist monks were being kidnapped.⁵ One police officer in 1906 described Bangkok by saying: “Rarely a night passed in which we [the police] had not to turn out to keep order. The floor of the Bangkok [Police] Station was often covered with blood. People carried knives and swords as a matter of course until the ‘Arms Act’ was put into force, when things became more peaceable.”⁶

Almost two decades later, however, things had not become ‘more peaceable.’ A news clipping from the Ministry of Metropolitan Government’s files dated 22 March 1921 asks why people attended temple fairs strapped with guns and knives. The article called the practice alarming, especially when even the police were frightened of the armed toughs. Another article from the same Ministry of Metropolitan Government file, this one from the newspaper *Jinosayam Warasap* [จินโนสยามวารศัพท์], dated 4 June 1921 claimed that banditry in Samut Prakan and Phrapradeng provinces were raging, especially with Ai Thai wreaking havoc in the area.⁷

Crime was not limited to urban Bangkok and its ‘suburbs.’ A report from Chonburi on the eastern seaboard said that on 12 March 1917, villains slashed and killed a 60-year-old man in his own house. Then on 1 April 1917, in the middle of the day, someone hacked a woman to death in public. Two days later, several men attacked and cut a Chinese man to death while he walked outside.⁸ In the south, the British were complaining about uncontrolled violence in tin mining areas like Ranong and Phuket.⁹ In ‘Isan,’ a report from 4 February

⁵ Johnston 179.

⁶ Cremation Volume for Police Lieutenant Colonel C.H. Forty, 1967: 6.

⁷ NA R6 N 4.20.5/36 Newspapers: Provincial News, “News from Phrapadaeng.” See bibliography for key to abbreviations of all archival sources. I am translating *Krasuang Nakhonban* [กระทรวงนครบาล] as ‘Ministry of Metropolitan Government’. Though the name ‘Ministry of Local Government’ is used on their letterhead, the ministry administered the capital, not the provinces. Some have used the name ‘Ministry of the Capital.’ See bibliography for key to abbreviations of all archival sources.

⁸ NA R6 N 4.20.5/9 Newspapers: Provincial News, “News from Chonburi.”

⁹ NA R6 N 4.2/21 Announcements and Royal Decrees, “Opinion Regarding the System of the Provincial Police, 1917-1921.”

1924 claimed that criminals had gathered *en masse* in Nakhon Ratchasima. At least two to three incidents of crime took place each night, with bandits preying particularly on homes headed by old people and women.¹⁰ From the north, Police Colonel Chao Ratchabut, Inspector of Police for Lampang, reported in 1916 that crime, including murder, was on the increase.¹¹ In Sawankhalok, a Police Lieutenant Colonel named Jarmer reported that same year that the area was awash with guns and that gunfire could be heard nightly.¹²

Problems of Proof

For the police and other government officials, the on-going crime problem was in large part a predicament of the legal system's inability to convict suspects in criminal cases. A lengthy report in 1917 from Police Major General Eric St. John Lawson, Commissioner of Metropolitan Police and advisor to the Ministry of Interior, shows that between 1910 and 1916 the number of criminal cases recorded by the police increased sharply. Of these, the number of murders increased twice as fast as other criminal cases. There were 496 murders in 1910 and 1,124 in 1916. The total for the six-year period was 6,280.¹³

More disturbing than the large number of crimes was the shocking inability for the police and local officials to bring their perpetrators to justice. The arrest rate over the six-year period was just 47 out of 100 murder cases. The conviction rate in these arrests was an abysmal 13 out of 100 cases. Of the total 6,280 murders, just 736 people were punished. In Siam, there were 51,314 criminal cases in all the *monthon* [มณฑล] outside of Bangkok in 1916. A total of 40,415

¹⁰ NA R6 N 4.20.5/7 Newspapers: Provincial News, "News from Nakhon Ratchasima."

¹¹ NA R6 N 4.5/2 Department of the Inspector of Police, "Increase in the Number of Bandits in Lampang, 1916." The inspectors (*ja-rae*) referred to in this paper were officers in charge of inspecting police work, not *sarawat* [สารวัตร], the term for officers with the title of Inspector.

¹² NA R6 N 4.1/91 General Government News, "Report on Bandits by Police Inspector Jarmer," 25 October 1916. Officer Jarmer was one of several Danish nationals in the Provincial Police.

¹³ NA R6 N 4.1/125 General Government News, "Report on Efforts against Bandits," June 1917.

arrests were made in these cases, but only 21,972 convictions were obtained. For murder cases in 1916, the conviction rate was just 15 out of 100. For robberies, only 12 out of 100 cases resulted in a conviction.¹⁴

Perhaps even more embarrassing for the Siamese government, the number of murders in Burma during the same period was not even half that of Siam and the conviction rate was an astounding 81 out of 100 for murder cases. For robberies, Burma managed a conviction for 74 out of every 100 cases. In cases of destruction of property, Burmese officials gained a conviction in 66 out of every 100 cases. For physical assaults, the conviction rate was 71 out of 100 cases.¹⁵

To get to the root of the problem, Lawson interviewed police officers and, from their replies, he generated a long list of contributing factors. First, officers claimed that local officials, including the village headman or *phuyaiban* [ผู้ใหญ่บ้าน] and village chief or *kamnan* [กำนัน], were not cooperating with them. They often reported crimes late, thus allowing time for suspects to flee and witnesses to leave a crime scene. In some situations, local officials did not just delay reporting crimes, they went as far as to obstruct criminal investigations.¹⁶

Second, people did not like being witnesses in criminal cases because they feared retribution from local hooligans. Lawson wrote: "Very often the villagers know perfectly well who has killed another. But if they speak and he is acquitted they know that probably they will be the next victim."¹⁷ Many also felt the entire legal process was a waste of time, having sometimes to travel great distances to get to court. The Police Inspector of Nakhon Sawan wrote, for example, that

¹⁴ NA R6 N 4.1/125 General Government News, "Report on Efforts against Bandits," June 1917.

¹⁵ NA R6 N 4.1/125 General Government News, "Report on Efforts against Bandits," June 1917.

¹⁶ NA R6 N 4.1/164 General Government Related News, "Report on the Work of the Provincial and Metropolitan Police and Statistics on Criminal Cases for 1918."

¹⁷ NA R6 N 4.1/164 General Government Related News, "Report on the Work of the Provincial and Metropolitan Police and Statistics on Criminal Cases for 1918."

cases from Mae Sot had to be tried in Tak and witnesses were loath to make the long trip.¹⁸

Third, provincial police officers lacked the legal power to produce evidence in a criminal case and send that case to court. These powers belonged to district level administrators (กรมการอำเภอ), which consisted of the district head (นายอำเภอ), the deputy district administrator (นายปลัดอำเภอ), and the district secretary (สมุหบัญชี). Chaophraya Yommarat (Pan Sukhum) [ปั้น สุขุม], Minister of Metropolitan Government from 1908 to 1922, noted the problem saying that in some cases the Provincial Police would investigate a crime but could not send a suspect to court since the district head was the official that was legally allowed to do so.¹⁹

Fourth, many police privates were conscripts who worried that after their two-year term the people they arrested would seek revenge on them and their families. Lawson wrote that most just wanted to “get away” after their term was over. Compounding the issue, many conscripts were not adequately trained for investigative work. Police Inspector Jarmer stated in a meeting on the future of the police training school in 1923 that, because conscripts were forced to be police, they had no incentive to actually learn the orders and laws related to police work.²⁰

Fifth, local district officials had too many responsibilities outside of peace keeping to do police work. Thus, they often could not and did not investigate cases. Lawson explained: “The investigation of crime by *amphurs* [district heads] is a failure” because they did not have the time, knowledge or subordinates to do the work properly. He

¹⁸ NA R6 N 4.5n /11 Inspector of Police Inspects Police Work, “Report of Police Inspector for Nakhon Sawan on Khamphaengphet, Tak, and Mae Sot,” 16 September 1916.

¹⁹ NA R6 N 4.1/160 General Government Related News, “Opinion of Minister of Nakhonban on Metropolitan and Provincial Police,” from 1919.

²⁰ NA R6 N 4.1/224 General Government Related News, “Meeting of Officials to Consider Issues Related to the Provincial and Metropolitan Police,” 25 July 1923.

estimated that only five percent of cases were investigated at the scene of the crime.²¹

Sixth, provincial prosecutors were not directly responsible for crime suppression and thus felt no compunction to sentence a defendant if the case was not properly investigated. In a case from 1916, for example, a suit against a criminal suspect was dropped after a mistrial when police officers and a *phuyaiban* gave different accounts of who got to a scene of a crime first and what happened when they got there.²²

For the police, then, the crime problem was about evidence – the legal power to produce and record it and effective, convincing ways to display it in court. In the absence of either, criminals would continue, literally, to get away with murder.

New Detectives²³

When King Vajiravudh took the throne in 1910, there were two separate police units, the Metropolitan Police (then known as the *kong trawen* [กองตระเวน]), which operated primarily in Bangkok, and the Provincial Police (*tamruat phuthon* [ตำรวจภูธร]), which functioned outside the capital. The Metropolitan Police date back to 1860, when King Mongkut established a Police Constabulary unit to patrol the Sampheng area of Bangkok. Their officers had the power to make arrests, conduct investigations, and send a case to trial since around

²¹ NA R6 N 4.1/164 General Government Related News, “Report on the Work of the Provincial and Metropolitan Police and Statistics on Criminal Cases for 1918,” from 1919.

²² NA R6 N 4.1/93 General Government Related News, “Conflicting Reports of Investigation of a Robbery in Bangkok,” 24 November 1916.

²³ This section focuses on the police, but the government also pursued other legal reforms to reduce crime. Some studies analyzing Siam’s legal reforms include David M. Engel, *Law and Kingship in Thailand during the Reign of King Chulalongkorn* (Ann Arbor: Centre for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan, 1975); M.B. Hooker, “The ‘Europeanization’ of Siam’s Law 1855-1908,” ed. M.B. Hooker, *Laws of South-East Asia, Volume 2* (Singapore: Butterworth & Co. (Asia), 1986); Robert Lingat, *Prawatsat Kotmai Thai* [ประวัติศาสตร์กฎหมายไทย] (Bangkok: Thai Wathana Phanit, 1983); and Tamara Loos, *Subject Siam: Family, Law, and Colonial Modernity in Thailand* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

the early 1890s, when the *polit sapha* [โปลิศสภา], or magistrates courts for minor offences, was established.²⁴

The Provincial Police, established in 1897, did not have the same powers as their metropolitan counterparts. According to successive laws on local administration, one in 1897 and another in 1914, local civil officials were in charge of keeping peace and order as well as producing evidence for trials in the provinces. The Provincial Police were, in many cases, simply the local officials' 'muscle' sent out to make arrests. If there was ever a situation that could not be handled locally, a special force from Bangkok could be sent to deal with it. Crime typically decreased after these expeditions, but the positive results were usually only temporary.²⁵

The two units were eventually merged (in 1915) and then shifted to the Ministry of Interior in 1922.²⁶ After the consolidation, officers outside the capital still did not have the power to produce evidence or bring a case to court. In fact, the combined police force was envisioned along functional, as well as geographical lines. In a Ministry of Interior document dated 28 April 1926, the unified force was described in terms of legal power. The police that could arrest criminals, question them, and compile a report for trial in the *polit sapha* were called the *tamruat nakhonban* [ตำรวจนครบาล]. The *tamruat phuthon*, on the other hand, could arrest criminals but had to send them to the district head for questioning; it was the district head

²⁴ NA R7 M 11/1 Provincial, Metropolitan, and Investigative Police [ภูบาล], "Changing the Department and Title of the Head of the Metropolitan and Provincial Police," 1926.

²⁵ Wiwana Thewachala-angkun [วิวรรณ เทวชาลาอังคุน], "Government Policy and the Gendarmerie, 1897-1922 [นโยบายของรัฐกับการตำรวจภูธร พ.ศ. 2440-2465]," MA thesis, Silpakon University, 1984: 10-12.

²⁶ Royal Gazette, No. 32, 17 October 1915, "Royal Announcement on the Consolidation of the Provincial Police and the (Metropolitan) Gendarmerie" and NA R7 M 11/1 Provincial, Metropolitan, and Investigative Police [ภูบาล], "Changing the Department and Title of the Head of the Metropolitan and Provincial Police," 1926. The name of the department was changed to *Krom Tamruat* [กรมตำรวจ] after 1932.

that compiled case reports for the public prosecutor to use in trials in provincial courts.²⁷

The power to produce evidence was only gradually shifted to the Provincial Police. On 1 October 1935, the new Criminal Procedure Code was promulgated via Royal Decree. It held that in the provinces outside Bangkok and Thonburi, local civilian administrators (พนักงานฝ่ายปกครอง) or high-ranking police officers, deputy district heads, and police with the rank of Police Sub-Lieutenant or above had the power to produce evidence within their jurisdictions. In 1938, the Ministry of Interior under Rear Admiral Thawan Thamrongnawasat finally transferred the power to produce evidence from district level administration officials to the police.²⁸

Once the unified force became an ‘investigative’ unit, it required methods with which its new detectives could operate. Indeed, organizational reforms were accompanied by a series of changes in practice, including the introduction of statistics, criminal records, fingerprinting, and photography, that would usher in a new way of understanding crime.

Producing Crime

Pridi Phanomyong, in a lecture at the Teachers Society of Thailand (สมาคมอาจารย์สโมสรสถาน) on 10 August 1928, noted that crime was a “problem of science” because the reasons for people’s actions, legal or otherwise, could be discovered through various ‘scientific’ disciplines such as economics, medicine, or psychology.²⁹ While Pridi

²⁷ NA R7 M 11/1 Provincial, Metropolitan, and Investigative Police [ภูบาล], “Changing the Department and Title of the Head of the Metropolitan and Provincial Police,” 1926.

²⁸ Ministry of Interior document number 349/2480 dated 3 February 1938. See “History Related to Investigating Criminal Cases of the Local Administrative Officers in the Provinces” [ประวัติเกี่ยวกับการสอบสวนคดีอาญาของพนักงานสอบสวนฝ่ายปกครองในภูมิภาค] in *Krom Kan Pokkhong* [กรมกานปกครอง] (Bangkok, 1984): 4-5. This power was lost and regained several times afterwards.

²⁹ Pridi Phanomyong [ปรีดี พนมยงค์], “Problems Related to Punishing People that Break the Law [ปรากฏการณ์เรื่องปัญหาเกี่ยวกับการลงอาญาผู้กระทำความผิดกฎหมาย],” lecture given

did not accept wholeheartedly the idea that criminals were 'born' or that genetically determined criminal types even existed, he did not reject the notion that crime could be understood, and thus dealt with, by the methods of generating, organizing, and presenting information that emerged during the late 19th century in places like England, France, Italy, and the USA.

In Siam in the 1920s and 1930s, Pridi's sentiment that science was the key to solving the crime problem was shared by high-ranking police officers and government officials. Thus, police reforms revolved around rationalizing the detective practices used in the legal system and ushered in a new way of understanding and representing crime that, unlike Europe and America, did not result in the creation of a new 'criminal type' but a new way of telling stories about the past, a new form for displaying history.

Statistics

Luang Phetinthara, Acting Chief Inspector of Police, wrote to Chaophraya Yommarat on 25 August 1916 saying that the *banchi khadi* [บัญชีคดี], or list of cases, is very important as it allows people to know whether there has been an increase or decrease in crime.³⁰ That is, to see crime as a unified entity (as opposed to unconnected stories in local papers) required the introduction of numbers, in this case the systematic use of statistics. In Europe, statistics had been applied to understanding crime since at least the 1820s. By the 1830s, they had helped turn crime from an "individual act of will to a social phenomenon."³¹ In Siam, comprehensive statistics on crime were not kept until the very last years of the Fifth Reign. Beginning in about 1908, the police began tabulating the number and type of cases they

on 10 August 1928, *Cremation Volume for Samunwinathoramontri Na Susanluang at Wat Thepsirinarat*, 1931: 119.

³⁰ NA R6 N 4.5n /9 Inspector of Police Inspects Police Work, "Letter from Luang Phetinthara, Acting Chief Inspector of Police, to Chaophraya Yommarat," 25 August 1916.

³¹ Simon Cole, *Suspect Identities: A History of Fingerprinting and Criminal Identification* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001): 14-15.

processed in a systematic manner. So by the late 1910s, the police were able to assemble a table like the one below.

Table 1: Incidents of Serious Crimes in Siam, 1908-1918 ³²

Year (CE/BE)	Homicides	Gang Robberies	Robberies
1908/2451	429	281	310
1909/2452	658	598	347
1910/2553	661	709	303
1911/2454	859	707	346
1912/2455	1,052	610	296
1913/2456	1,218	701	345
1914/2457	1,201	691	448
1915/2458	1,222	612	365
1916/2459	1,139	668	404
1917/2460	1,299	653	405
1918/2461	<u>1,493</u>	<u>963</u>	<u>559</u>
Total	11,231	7,193	4,128

A complete list of crime statistics like this one could not be compiled prior to the 1910s because “the police simply did not keep any systematic records” before then.³³ David Johnston, writing about the Fifth Reign, added: “Archival materials provide no usable statistical series” about the crime situation in the time of Chulalongkorn; they simply did not exist.³⁴ Before statistics, then, ‘crime’ was the creation of newspaper reports (like those used at the outset of this article), gossip, and tall tales—interesting but not comprehensive and hardly usable as proof. Numbers and percentages

³² NA R6 N 4.1/164 General Government Related News, “Report on the Work of the Provincial and Metropolitan Police and Statistics on Criminal Cases for 1918.”

³³ NA R6 N 4.1/164 General Government Related News, “Report on the Work of the Provincial and Metropolitan Police and Statistics on Criminal Cases for 1918.” The police, however, began keeping statistics on crime in Bangkok systematically beginning in 1898, the first year they produced an annual report. Systematic data gathering and reporting for areas outside Bangkok came later.

³⁴ Johnston 178.

linked rumours, folk tales, and news reports with lists and tables that could be copied, distributed, managed, and presented. They made conditions for entire districts, cities, regions, and indeed the entire geo-body of Siam visible to officials in Bangkok. More importantly, they provided a common idiom in which the police and the press could communicate. That is, statistics about crime were commonly reported in newspapers to demonstrate to the reading public the efficacy (or ineptitude) of the police. In time, the police would compile tables like the one above into yearbooks, which were then distributed to newspapers to disseminate. Statistics, then, were one new point of intersection between the police and the press.

Police Reports

While statistics generated 'crime' as a broad, regional, and historical phenomenon, the introduction and gradual standardization of making reports for crime scene investigations produced accounts of individual events, or micro-histories. Prior to the turn of the century, police and other government officials tasked with crime prevention did not make written reports; they only made lists. In 1877, for example, King Chulalongkorn requested the heads of the 'inner police' (สมุหเจ้ากรมพระตำรวจใน) to compile a list of names of bandits that had yet to be arrested or that had escaped. This list, he stated, could then be distributed to local leaders to facilitate arrest.³⁵ In the 1890s, Chaophraya Surasakmontri made personal lists of suspected criminals to use in his manhunt campaigns in the central plains.³⁶ Similarly, a district head in Phasi Charoen told *kamnan* and *phuyaiban* there in 1907 to keep tabs on the behavior of the people in their areas. Should they find anyone with a history of unethical behavior, their name and address should be recorded.³⁷ One reason police did not regularly take notes when, or if, they went to a crime scene was that many were likely illiterate. A letter from a medical officer in 1915 regarding the operation of the police hospital, for example, states that

³⁵ Phirasak Chaidaisuk [พิรศักดิ์ ชัยได้สุ], *Chat Sua Wai Lai* [ชาติเสือไว้ลาย] (Bangkok: Matichon Press, 2008) 174.

³⁶ Phirasak 77.

³⁷ Phirasak 145.

the “police officers that volunteer to work at the hospital can’t even read or write their own language.”³⁸ One of the first lessons at the School for Police Constables (โรงเรียนพลตระเวน) included instruction in the Thai alphabet and Thai numbers.³⁹ In any case, the lists being made hardly informed anyone of what crime exactly had transpired, let alone how it unfolded. They referred to individuals in society, thus allowing for their capture, but they did not produce convictions; the connection between a captured suspect, a name on a list, and a crime still had to be determined.

Accordingly, a key adaptation from the investigative techniques developed in Europe and the US was the practice of making detailed, standardized investigation reports. Beginning around 1903, when Lawson became Commissioner of Police, a system of recording criminal investigations was introduced. Describing how police should proceed in a case, Lawson wrote in 1909 that:

On receiving any report whether made by a Police Officer or by anyone else, a short entry briefly stating the facts is made in the General Diary. The entry in the diary shows the hour and minute at which the report was made. If the report was of any offence, not being one of those offences of which I attach a list, concerning which the Police have been forbidden to take action, a report is then entered in foil and counterfoil in the complain book. This report is made as nearly as possible in the exact words of the informant and is signed by him and by the Police clerk or officer who recorded the report.

He explained further that in complicated cases police were instructed to make a diary entry.⁴⁰ Also, several training manuals for police and civilian officials from the time urged investigators to carry with them a pencil and paper to take notes of what they had

³⁸ NA R6 N 4.1/56 General Government Related News, “Report from the Office of the Medical Officer of the Department of Local Sanitation,” 3 June 1915.

³⁹ NA R6 N 4.6/16 School for Police Officers (*rong rian roi tamruat phon tamruat*), “Basic Training and Teachings at School for Police,” 1916.

⁴⁰ NA Y 4/89 Files of Legal Advisor Stewart Black, “Letter from Eric Lawson,” 11 January 1909.

uncovered.⁴¹ The practice of making crime scene investigation reports also had precedent in other parts of the region, particularly those administered by the British. Police officer Phra Wichai Prachaban, sent to Moulmein to study police methods in 1922, reported that the police there were required to keep records on bandits and daily events in a 'Village Crime Book.'⁴²

Here an important point should be made. The police notebooks and the records of criminal methods they contained were not creating an archive of 'criminal types' *per se*. Anyone, after all, could break the law. According to police and other officials, criminality depended on circumstance and criminals, including several famous ones like Sua Fai of Suphanburi, could always 'return' to being law abiding citizens.⁴³ So while the new forms the police were filling out did include blanks for name, age, address, and physical description, these details (unknown in some cases) were linked to other blanks that required police to describe what, when, and how something happened, rather than to descriptions of other criminals to create generalized types. The police were making event logs, though not yet a full narrative, telling in as much detail as possible how a crime transpired. 'Modern' police work thus developed as a process of recording the past, linking the processes of detection and the production of evidence with the writing of micro-historical narratives.

Photographs

Perhaps the most celebrated form of evidence over the last 150 years has been the photograph. As early as 1840s, French and British police were taking pictures of arrested criminals.⁴⁴ In France and the US, photographs were used as evidence in courts since the since the

⁴¹ See for example, Phra Sisena (Kitkachachiwa) [พระศรีเสนา (คิตคชาชีวา)], *Methods to Investigate Criminals, Book 1* [วิธีสืบสวนโจรผู้ร้าย เล่ม ๑] (Bangkok, 1917) 339-340.

⁴² NA R6 N 4.1/197 General Government Related News, "Documents Related to Sending a Delegation to Moulmein and Penang to Talk to the British about Capturing Bandits Operating near the Border," entry dated 13 March 1922.

⁴³ Nai Chanthana (นายฉันทนา หรือ มาลัย ชูพินิจ), *Sua Fai Sip Thit* [เสือฟ้าสิบทิศ] (Bangkok, 1998) 33.

⁴⁴ Cole 20.

1850s.⁴⁵ By the 1870s, photos were used for proving identity in criminal cases.⁴⁶ In 1858 in New York, the police began putting up 'rogues' galleries at local police stations so that police would recognize criminals still at-large.⁴⁷

In Siam, the camera itself had been around since Fourth Reign when it is believed that Bishop Pallegoix had one imported. At first, it was used primarily by Kings Mongkut and Chulalongkorn and then by wealthy nobles and business men interested in portraiture. As with the case in Europe and the US, it did not take long for the camera's usefulness in criminal investigation to be noticed. Phra Sisena [พระศรีเสนา], author of one of the earliest manuals on criminal investigation in Siam (1917), recommended that local officials in charge of crime prevention bring with them to investigations someone capable of taking photographs as they might prove useful. He also stated that investigators should carry two "weapons" - a camera and a pencil and paper.⁴⁸ A year later, a letter from Police Lieutenant General Phraya Athikonprakat, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police from 1923 to 1929, cited the need for the police to have proper photographic equipment and recommended that they retain a fulltime photographer.⁴⁹

This idea was reiterated in a letter dated 3 September 1920 from Lawson to Chaophraya Yommarat, who recommended creating a new unit in the force that would include a photography section with adequate equipment and photographers. Lawson noted that suspects and prisoners were taken to privately owned shops and that photographic equipment had to be obtained and sent to crime scene investigations, a slow, inefficient process.⁵⁰ To address the issue, the

⁴⁵ Jennifer Mnookin, "The Image of Truth: Photographic Evidence and the Power of Analogy," *Yale Journal of Law and Humanities* 10 (1998): 8.

⁴⁶ Mnookin 11.

⁴⁷ Cole 21-22.

⁴⁸ Phra Sisena 338, 339-340.

⁴⁹ NA R6 N 4.1/2 General Government Related News, "Documents on Setting up a Secret Police and Procedures for an Investigation Unit," 27 June 1918.

⁵⁰ NA R6 N 4.1/2 General Government Related News, "Documents on Setting up a Secret Police and Procedures for an Investigation Unit," 27 June 1918.

government sent a man named Charoen Purananda to study photographic techniques for investigation in Paris in 1929.⁵¹ After the Santiban (สันติบาล), the police department's investigative unit, was created in 1932, photographs and other records could finally be made and kept in-house. Manuals for police training after that invariably included sections on photographic techniques for criminal investigation.⁵²

Aside from putting faces to names, the Siamese police were beginning to employ photos to create what might be called 'pictorial narratives.' In the police documents for a murder investigation from 1929, for example, officers took eight photos of various locations, numbered them sequentially, and added symbols and short captions describing from beginning to end how the suspect began his crime at a nearby market, made his way to the house of the victim, and then attempted to escape.⁵³ It is likely this type of pictorial narrative developed to help judges in cases visualize a crime and facilitated conviction, for like maps, visual evidence was seen as something that "added weight" to witness testimony as they helped "judges can see what was real just as you [the investigator] have seen them."⁵⁴ What was left was just putting the right agent to the right narrative, as we shall see.⁵⁵

Fingerprints

To give agents to these new written and photographic histories, a system of fingerprint identification was introduced. The two men

⁵¹ NA R7 M 11/7 Provincial Police, Metropolitan Police, Investigative Police [ภูบาล], "Setting up a Secret Police" (Letter from Basil Thomson to Prince Paribatra dated 11 January 1929).

⁵² See for example, Police Major Luang Phisitwithiyakan [พ.ต.ต.หลวงพิสิฐ วิทยาการ], *The Police and Rules for Investigation [ตำรวจหลักการสืบสวน]* (Bangkok, 1935): 25.

⁵³ Phraya Manwaratchsewi [พระยา มานวราชเสวี], *The Investigation and Deliberation of the Murder of Nai Puen Aekharaphanit in Chanthaburi Province, 2472 [การไต่สวนและการพิจารณาเรื่องฆ่านายปิ่นเอกราพนิชตายที่จังหวัดจันทบุรี]* (Bangkok: Ministry of Interior, 1930). Photo pages not numbered.

⁵⁴ Phra Sisena 42.

⁵⁵ In this case, the narrative was agent-less; no criminal could be seen in any of the photographs.

credited for 'creating' fingerprint identification are William Herschel and Henry Faulds.⁵⁶ Herschel, an officer in the British Civil Service in India, claimed to have invented the practice in 1858, but it may have been an old Bengali practice imported from China which he simply borrowed. Faulds, while working as a medical missionary in Japan, noticed fingerprints on pottery and published an article about their potential uses in crime fighting in 1880. He later claimed to have solved a crime using fingerprints and went on to create a cataloguing system by assigning names for each print type. Back in India, two men, Azizul Haque and Chandra Bose, devised their own system of cataloguing prints, which was implemented in 1895.⁵⁷

This same system from India made its way into Siam at the end of the Fifth Reign. Lawson, then Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, claimed: "It was I who introduced the system to Siam. It was I who trained Johnson [the Deputy Chief of the Special Branch] who showed the method to HRH Prince Ratburi. It was I who drew up and submitted to HRH the original rules for the identification of criminals. Also it was I who have trained the Police."⁵⁸ Lawson may have been exaggerating his accomplishments, however, as Prince Rabi gave a different account:

About six years ago [about 1903], Lawson started the work from the system in use in India. He failed. I then with the assistance of a police officer started the work in Jail II and succeeded up to now. When it began the finger prints of those convicted in Bangkok, or rather those prisoners who were in Bangkok jails alone were taken. The head of the prisons wanted to extend the work, but he had not the where-with-all to start offices all over the Kingdom; so he sent some of his men to most jails in the provinces to teach them to take fingerprints.

⁵⁶ The Chinese had been using finger prints since about AD 200 as signatures in contracts.

⁵⁷ Cole 61, 63-65, 73-74, 81, 87.

⁵⁸ NA Y 4.1/39 Files of Special Advisor Stewart Black: Cases, "Letter from Eric Lawson to Stewart Black," 10 February 1906.

His men could not teach the provincial jails how to classify the prints as the whole work was then in experimental stage.⁵⁹

In either case, the Fingerprint Bureau had existed since the Fifth Reign, when it was under the supervision of the Prisons Department of the Ministry of Metropolitan Government. A report by Lawson in 1919 noted that the bureau was started “20 years ago” putting its inception sometime around the year 1899.⁶⁰ He recommended moving the bureau to the Special Branch, which he helped establish in 1903.⁶¹ The first use of fingerprints in the investigation of a criminal case at the scene of a crime is said to have been by officers of this investigative unit.⁶² The Bureau was still under the Prisons Department in 1910, when a notice was issued for officials there to use white colored paper to record fingerprints.⁶³ Basil Thomson recommended again in 1929 that the Fingerprint Bureau be shifted to the investigative arm of the police once it was created. This finally happened in 1932, when the Santiban was established. Division Three of the unit, the Police Science Section, was tasked with handling fingerprint identification, among other things.⁶⁴

Before fingerprints were put into wide use, the police had no way of linking individuals with the histories of crime they were filling their notebooks with. In a letter dated 7 March 1909, Probationary Legal Advisor Henri Laurent wrote that in Ubon the examination of a defendant in an illegal gambling case revealed that: “the Accused had been previously condemned to 4 years imprisonment for theft and had

⁵⁹ NA Y 4/75 Files of the Special Advisor Stewart Black, “Letter from Prince Rabi to Henri Laurent,” no date, 1909.

⁶⁰ NA R6 N 4.1/164 General Government Related News, “Report on the Work of the Provincial and Metropolitan Police and Statistics on Criminal Cases for 1918.”

⁶¹ NA R6 N 4.1/2 General Government Related News, “Documents on Setting up a Secret Police and Procedures for an Investigation Unit,” 27 June 1918.

⁶² NA R5 N 82n/34 No. 175 3/1 of 121 from Rotsasukon Jaratsi: 145.

⁶³ NA R5 Y 10/20 *San Dika*, “Designating Two Officials: 1. Official to Look for Fingerprints and 2. Official for the Duang Sang Temple,” no date, 1910.

⁶⁴ Somphong Jaengrew [สมพงษ์ แจ่มเร็ว], “The Origins of the Santiban in the Political History of Thailand in 1932 [กำเนิดตำรวจสันติบาลในประวัติศาสตร์การเมืองไทยสมัย 2475],” *Art and Culture [ศิลปวัฒนธรรม]*, Bangkok (November 2008) 127.

just been released from prison 6 months ago, without the Public Prosecutor saying anything about it.”⁶⁵ Laurent then went on to note that this was due to the irregular use of fingerprint identification in the province. Thus, if criminals were not connected to their pasts, they would be free to repeat their offences over and over again. This only began to change in the late 1910s. In 1918, Lawson reported that 16,998 prints were sent for search. From these 4,691 identifications were made. Lawson wrote that while this showed good work, it also meant the recidivism rate was high, at least 30%.⁶⁶ The fingerprint, then, helped police link individuals to the events they were putting in writing for the first time, in effect bringing criminals and their plots together.

Section Summary and Caveat

‘Reality,’ as usual, lagged behind the idealizations and the orders of higher-ups in government. The practice of making notes, filling out forms, taking pictures, and other investigative practices remained terribly uneven well into the 1930s. In a letter to Chaophraya Yommarat dated 26 March 1917, the Chief Inspector of Police wrote that not all police stations in Bangkok were keeping records. Some did not even have a record book.⁶⁷ In another letter to Yommarat, this one dated 25 August 1916, Luang Phetinthara, Acting Chief Inspector of Police, wrote that in Chiang Mai police stations did not record cases properly, or at all, in some instances.⁶⁸ In the south, the Police Inspector of Phuket, F.T.E. Steiner, complained on 3 November 1916 that the police were not filling out their forms correctly. From April to August of 1916, he wrote, officers recorded

⁶⁵ NA Y 4/75, Files of Special Advisor Mr. Stewart Black, “Letter from Henri Laurent to Prince Rabi,” 7 March 1909.

⁶⁶ NA R6 N 4.1/164 General Government Related News, “Report on the Work of Provincial and Metropolitan Police and Statistics on Criminal Cases for 1918.”

⁶⁷ NA R6 N 4.5 n/17 Inspector of Police Inspects Police Work, “Letter from Luang Phetinthara to Chaophraya Yommarat,” 26 March 1917.

⁶⁸ NA R6 N 4.5 n/91 Inspector of Police Checks Police Work, “Letter from Luang Phetinthara, Acting Chief Inspector of Police, to Chaophraya Yommarat, Minister of Metropolitan Government,” 25 August 1916.

280 cases, while district administration officials listed 339, or 59 more than the police.⁶⁹

It was not until the late 1930s that it might safely be said that criminal records, statistics, forms, and other documents were being kept 'properly'. By then, documentation had become so inculcated into the daily practices of the force that corruption and cover-ups comprised in large part the manufacture or alteration of documents (and thus histories). Police officers as early as the mid-1910s, when documentation was just taking off, were already aware of its potentially damning evidentiary power and had begun to intentionally 'mis-document' events. Luang Phetinthara, for example, wrote that the provincial police were going out to inspect their assigned areas not to solve cases or prevent crime, but "only to make the record book look nice."⁷⁰ In another letter, this one from April 1916, the Chief Inspector of Police wrote to Chaophraya Yommarat that a clerk from the Forestry Department, the deputy district head of Amphur Pong, Nan Province, and a district office clerk went drinking and then started an argument at the local police station. This was not recorded in the station's record book. Neither was the theft of a box of books from an English envoy in July 1916. Moreover, judging from the record books the police at Tha Pla, Amphur Sa and Phak Bo Wa did not catch a single criminal between April and November.⁷¹

Proving a crime took place (or did not take place), in other words, became synonymous with documenting it: The production of false evidence meant the production (or non-production) of documents. This brings me to the next section, ostensibly about the police practice known as the 'reenactment,' but really about the cumulative effects of these new techniques.

⁶⁹ NA R6 N 4.5 n/10 Inspector of Police Checks Police Work, "Report from Inspector of Police for Pattani," 3 November 1916.

⁷⁰ NA R6 N 4.5 n/11 Inspector of Police Inspects Police Work, "Report of Inspector of Police for Nakhon Sawan Regarding Khamphaengphet, Tak, and Mae Sot," 16 September 1916.

⁷¹ NA R6 N 4.5n /13 Inspector of Police Inspects Police Work, "Letter from Chief Inspector of Police to Chaophraya Yommarat Regarding the Misconduct of the District Administration in Amphur Pong, Nan Province," 1916.

Reenactment: Evidence, Crime News, Popular Fiction

A curious thing began appearing in the daily papers and weekly and monthly magazines of Thailand during the first years of the 1950s. In *Phim Thai Rai Duean* [พิมพ์ไทยรายเดือน] of April 1954, two photos of Liang Muangphrae appear in which he demonstrates to the police, at the scene of the crime, how he shot and killed his lover.⁷² Looming behind a stand-in for his lover, he holds a gun and is about to shoot. In another, he stands over his lover's 'dead body.' Dozens of onlookers are at the scene of the 'crime.' The police, the captions explain, are there to take photos for their records. In July 1956, Nin Saisa-at shows up on the pages of *Phim Thai Bueang Lang Khao* [พิมพ์ไทยเบื้องหลังข่าว] showing how he beat a man named Phrom over the head with a wooden staff as police took notes for evidence.⁷³ In April 1957, three men show up in the same magazine letting people know how they derailed a train.⁷⁴ These images of criminal's 'in action' and the stories that accompanied them represent a form of 'real-crime' drama, one that gained popularity in Thailand during the early 1950s, well before 'reality TV' and the American television show CSI ever became pop culture phenomena around the world.

The origins of the reenactment in Siam are unclear. The few sources that mention the topic indicate the procedure emerged as part of the investigative reforms of the 1920s: "Crime reenactment was first introduced in Thailand in 1929, based on the British system of criminal behavioural study and analysis. The Police Department at that time noted that criminals were basically cunning and would not confess unless there was solid evidence against them."⁷⁵ The year 1929 is also given in a Thammasat University Master's of Law thesis from 2007 and is repeated in an interview of retired police officers

⁷² Suthep Muanprasitthiwet [สุเทพ เหมือนประสิทธิ์เวช], "Jot Mai Rak Chok Luat [จดหมายรักโชคเลียด]," *Phim Thai Rai Duan* [พิมพ์ไทยรายเดือน], April 1954: 8.

⁷³ S. Photiriang [ส. ณโพธิ์เรียง], "Pit Pak Phayan Aek [ปิดปากพยานเอก]," *Phim Thai Buang Lang Khao* [พิมพ์ไทยเบื้องหลังข่าว], July (1st half), 1956: 10.

⁷⁴ Chalothorn [ชลอทร] (pseudo.), "Plon 617 [ปล้น 617]," *Phim Thai Buang Lang Khao* [พิมพ์ไทยเบื้องหลังข่าว], April (2nd half), 1957: 21.

⁷⁵ "Techniques for Investigation," *Chiangsan Police Station*, 19 December 2008 <<http://chiangsan.chiangrai.police.go.th/detective%20lesson4.html>>.

conducted by a Bangkok Post reporter in 2008.⁷⁶ The method itself is said to have been developed by Major General Sir Llewellyn W. Atcherley, who was appointed second inspector of the Royal British Police in 1919 and promoted to 1st inspector in 1930. The method was then refined by August Vollmer, Chief of Police of Berkeley, California between 1909 and 1923.⁷⁷ It is possible that the technique was then brought to Siam via a foreign police advisor or perhaps even by Siamese students studying criminology overseas during that period.⁷⁸

At first, the technique was likely used on a case by case basis without any standardized procedures. Indeed, as the photographs from the murder investigation of Nai Puen in 1929 show, early crime scene reconstructions did not involve people at all. Instead, they contained only numbered photos of locations with arrows and other signs written on them. Nor was the practice codified in law, as no mention of it was made in the Criminal Procedure Code of 1935. A *san dika* [ศาลฎีกา] decision in 1938 (number 901/2482) referred to evidence stating that the police had taken a suspect to the scene of the crime to verify his confession. The court, however, stated that pointing out the location of a crime alone was not sufficient proof of guilt. It was not until 1948 that the technique was formally made part of police procedure, which stated that if a suspect confessed to a serious crime, police should take him to the crime scene and *demonstrate* what transpired. Confessions by themselves were not seen as adequate proof of wrong-doing in a court.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Pattaravit Obsuwan [ภัทรวีทย์ ออบสุวรรณ], "Crime Science Reconstruction by the Accused to Support Confession of the Accused in Thailand [การฟื้นฟูแผนประทุษกรรมประกอบคำรับสารภาพในระบบกฎหมายไทย]," Master of Law Thesis, Thammasat University, 2007: 103. The *Bangkok Post* interview was conducted by Erika Fry, who graciously provided me the translated text from the interview on 15 October 2008.

⁷⁷ "Techniques for Investigation."

⁷⁸ Along with designated photo expert Charoen Purananda, Prince Wongnirachon Thewakul studied criminal investigation in Paris under Basil Thomson and Harry Soderman, a well-known Swedish criminologist. Prince Wongnirachon would then return to Siam to head the new 'secret police' [ตำรวจภูบาล] in 1929.

⁷⁹ Pattaravit Obsuwan 107-8. (Emphasis added)

If the exact origin of the practice in legal circles is a bit foggy, its cross-over into the popular press is even harder to pinpoint. Crime stories, both ‘real’ and fictional, had been part of the news since the newspaper was first published in Siam. *Darunowat* [ดุรินโรวาท], Siam’s “first Thai language newspaper published for entertainment,” for example, contained basically everything – political news, opinion pieces, society gossip, poetry, non-fiction articles, and of course crime stories.⁸⁰ One story from 1874, for example, tells of the mysterious suicide of a slave. Another from the same year presents a crime report that states over a period of 13 days in the 6th month of the year, the military arrested 15 criminals in the capital, a rate of 1.15 arrests per day.⁸¹ The well-known English language daily from the turn of the century, the *Bangkok Times*, often published articles about crime, many critical of the government’s poor efforts in prevention, suppression, and investigation. Some examples include: “The Nakleng” (26 May 1898), “Buffalo Robbery” (12 April 1900), “Thieving, pawning, and gambling” (23 June 1894), and “Gang Robbery at Paklat” (19 May 1902).

In the beginning, most of these stories were fairly ‘factual’ and ‘newsy’ rather than ‘sensational’. The incredibly popular *Sayam Ratsadon* [สยามราษฎร์], for example, printed short crime reports every day.⁸² A typical edition, like the one from 5 July 1921, included the following stories under the heading ‘Provincial News’: “Shot to Death,” “Slashed Arm Almost Falls Off,” “Neck Almost Broken,” “Slashed to Death,” “Robbed - Property Damaged,” “Chinamen Gather Together for Rumble,” and “Robbed Twice in One Night.”⁸³ Up until

⁸⁰ Wipha Senana Kongkanan [วิภา เสนานาญ กองกานันท์], *The Origins of the Novel in Thailand* [กำเนิดนวนิยายในประเทศไทย] (Bangkok, 1997) 128.

⁸¹ Wipha 128-129.

⁸² The title of this newspaper is transliterated here as *Sayam Ratsadon* rather than *Sayam Rat* (following its pronunciation) to distinguish it from the better known *Sayam Rat* published by Krukrit Pramot later.

⁸³ *Sayam Ratsadon*, 5 July 1921: 5, 9.

the 1920s, the extent of a reporter's duties was simply to hang out at police stations (or court houses) to get stories.⁸⁴

Over time crime stories became longer and more detailed. In the late 1920s, the *Krungthep Daily Mail* [กรุงเทพฯ Daily Mail] began exploiting the sensational aspect of crime stories to help sell papers. Andrew Freeman, the *Daily Mail*'s American editor, is credited with starting the practice of choosing sensational news for his front pages. He also began printing headlines in large font to draw the eyes of readers. The editor of the Thai language version of the *Mail*, Luang Saranuphraphan [หลวงสารานุประพันธ์] (editor of *Senasueksa lae Phrae Witthayasat* [เสนาศึกษาและแพรววิทยาศาสตร์] and author of *Phrae Dam* [แพรวดำ]) followed Freeman's in-your-face style. The increasingly sensational crime stories in the *Daily Mail* were aimed at siphoning interest away from the popular translations of Chinese fiction being published by competing dailies (like *Sri Krung* [ศรีกรุง] and *Sayam Ratsadon*).⁸⁵ Eventually photos of criminals (and police) were published along with stories in prominent cases. It is not surprising, then, that Siam's first photojournalist, Chuang Midet, worked for the *Daily Mail*.

The crime stories that appeared in the newspapers were not confined to 'real' events. Crime fiction and dramatized versions of news stories were both popular and the line between the two often quite porous. *Sayam Ratsadon*, for example, covered extensively the story of Nang Kim Lai, a woman who, while 'possessed' by a spirit, killed her husband. Court reports from Kim Lai's trial, including verbatim witness testimony, were serialized and printed over several days. This story was almost immediately turned into 'pulp fiction' – it was published as a *lamtat* [ลำตัด]⁸⁶ the same year as the trial. One version (there were at least two) proved immensely popular and went

⁸⁴ "The Story of Newspapers in Thailand: A Record by An Interested Person [เรื่องของหนังสือพิมพ์เมืองไทย เป็นบันทึกความของผู้สนใจหนังสือพิมพ์คนหนึ่ง],” *Life and Work of Ari Leevira* [ชีวิตและงานของอารีย์ ลีวีระ], (Bangkok: Thai Phanithiyakan, 1963), no page numbers.

⁸⁵ "The Story of Newspapers in Thailand."

⁸⁶ *Lamtat* are a type of story told as 'repartee' between two people.

through at least four printings, running 3,000 copies each time.⁸⁷ One famous bandit active in the suburbs of Bangkok in the early 1920s was Ai Sua Thai. *Sayam Ratsadon* wrote of his exploits regularly and was the first paper to print a copy of his photograph. From the pages of daily newspapers, Ai Thai then made his way to Siam's 'first' crime novel, *Phrae Dam*, written coincidentally by Luang Saranupraphan of that pioneering paper the *Krungthep Daily Mail*.

The reenactment (and police 'science'), then, emerged in the same milieu as the modern crime story. From their inception to the 1950s, the two forms concerned themselves with two things – describing a historical event (a crime) and giving a name and a face to that event (or 'solving' it). What emerged, by chance, was a narrative form mutually comprehensible to the law and the general public, acceptable as evidence in court and marketable as news and entertainment. What remains to be discussed now is the implication of this entanglement on the possibility for 'truth' in criminal cases.

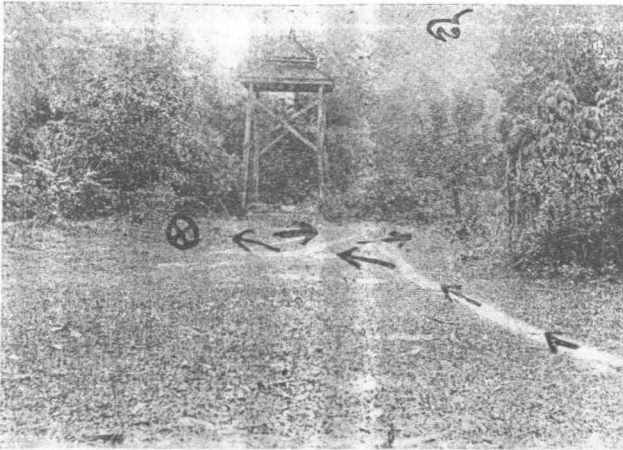
Conclusion

From what I have been describing, the problem of crime since the end of the Fifth Reign has been in part one of evidence—what it is and how to produce and demonstrate it. The techniques and technologies that were brought into Siam during the 1920s were seen as the solution to this problem. Statistics, crime reports, maps, forms, and other heuristic devices, however, were not used to relate physical characteristics to criminal tendencies or deviance. Criminals (and victims) could be anyone: a truck driver, a *farang* tourist, a nurse, a teacher, a monk, your neighbor. The object defined by the new techniques was thus, not 'criminal man', but history, rather histories of criminal events. The reenactment's power, seen in this light, was its ability, in a single form, to discover and reveal the truth about a sometimes mysterious past, one admissible in courts of law as evidence and sensational enough to be sold to the public as news.

⁸⁷ Anek Nawigamune [เอนก นาวิกมูล], *Murderers in the Olden Days [ฆาตกรยุคคุณปู่]* (Bangkok, 2003) 86.

Upon closer examination, then, it can be argued the fingerprints, the photos, the finger-pointing and the line-ups, the displays of confiscated weapons and drugs—these practices ushered in by Lawson, Chaophraya Yommarat, and others in the 1920s and 1930s did indeed create a revolution—a narrative rather than a scientific one. That is, a new way of explaining a crime—specific incidents, criminals, and crime scenes – emerged that was linear and sequential. If anything, the reenactment indicates that truth about the past is revealed through a ‘fiction’ of sorts, told in prose and in pictures, as a crime story meant to reveal who-done-it and how they did it. When told properly, these stories become real, referring to nothing outside themselves; the documents, data, facts, and other information developed to capture the outside world and the past no longer have an existence outside the story they help to tell. Truth is an ‘effect’ of narrative.

APPENDIX 1:
Photos from Police Investigation for the Murder of Nai Puen,
1929

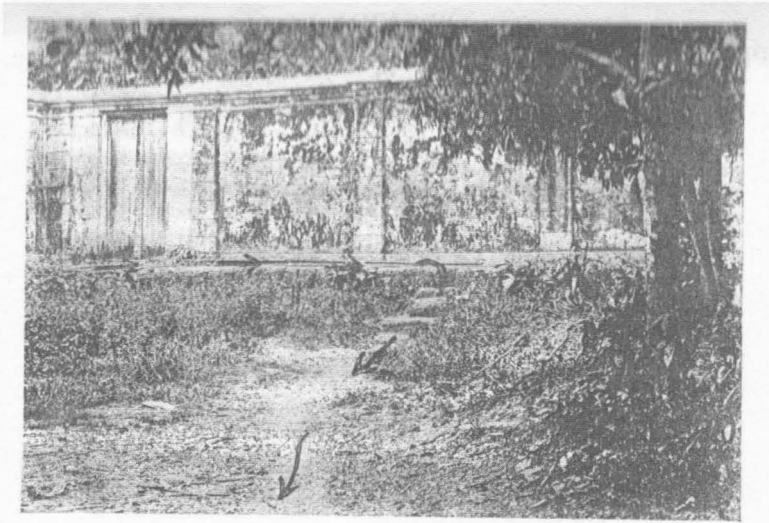


รูปที่ ๘ → ลูกศรนี้เป็นทางที่ผู้ร้ายวิ่งหนีมาตามทางคนเดิน ซึ่ง
 เป็นทางไปไร่ส้มของนายบัน (คือทางไปหนองบัวและพลู)



เป็นจุดที่นายหลวน, นายหว่าง, ได้มาหยุดคอยนายทาพวก
 ของคนอยู่.

→ ตามลูกศรนี้เป็นทางที่นายหลวน, นายหว่าง, นายทา, ได้มา
 รวมพร้อมกันทั้ง ๓ คนแล้ว จึงพากันเดินต่อไปตามทาง
 ที่เศษของวัดไผ่ล้อม.



รูปที่ ๓ รูปนี้แสดงว่าเมื่อผู้ร้ายได้ยิงบนที่หน้าบ้านนายบันแล้ว ได้วิ่งหนีหลบกำแพงบ้านนายบันไปตามสะพานไม้ แล้วมาลงตามทางคนเดินหนีต่อไปตามเครื่องหมาย → ซึ่งเป็นทางที่จะไปยังไร่นาของนายบัน.

Examples of 'pictorial narrative' crime scene reconstruction from police documents for the murder of Nai Puen, 1929.

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Fifth Reign, Ministry of Metropolitan Government, Provincial and Metropolitan Police (เอกสาร ราชการที่ 5 กระทรวงนครบาล กรมตำรวจนครบาล) (abbreviated as R5 N 11.3)

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- Sixth Reign, Ministry of Metropolitan Government, Announcements and Royal Decrees (เอกสารรัชการที่ 6 กระทรวงนครบาล ประกาศ และ พ.ร.บ.) (abbreviated as R6 N 4.2)
- Sixth Reign, Ministry of Metropolitan Government, Inspector (จเร) of Police Department (เอกสารรัชการที่ 6 กระทรวงนครบาล ข้าราชการ) (abbreviated as R6 N 4.5)
- Sixth Reign, Ministry of Metropolitan Government, Inspector of Police Inspects Work (เอกสารรัชการที่ 6 กระทรวงนครบาล จเรตำรวจตรวจราชการ) (abbreviated as R6 N 4.5ก)
- Sixth Reign, Ministry of Metropolitan Government, School for Commissioned Police Officers (เอกสารรัชการที่ 6 กระทรวงนครบาล โรงเรียนร้อยตำรวจพลตำรวจ) (R6 N 4.6)
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