

**STUDENT REVOLT OF 1973 :  
A STUDY IN THE DEMOCRATISATION PROCESS IN  
THAILAND**

*Dissertation Submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University in  
Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the award of the  
Degree of Master of Philosophy.*

**GHAN SHYAM**

**Division of South East Asia and South West Pacific**

**Centre for South, Central, South East Asia**

**and South West Pacific Studies**

**School Of International Studies  
Jawaharlal Nehru University**

**NEW DELHI - 110067**

**INDIA**

**1997**



JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY

NEW DELHI - 110 067

SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

SOUTHEAST ASIAN & SOUTH WEST PACIFIC DIVISION

CSCSEASWPS

21 JULY, 1997

## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation, entitled “**Student Revolt of 1973: A Study in the Democratisation Process in Thailand**” submitted by **Mr. Ghan Shyam** in partial fulfillment of six credits out of total twenty-four credits for the Degree of **Master of Philosophy (M.Phil)** of the University, is his own original work according to the best of my knowledge and may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Prof. Baladas Ghoshal

SUPERVISOR

Prof. I.N. Mukherji

CHAIRPERSON

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am deeply indebted to my supervisor, Professor Baladas Ghoshal for his learned guidance and stimulating discussions which enabled me to complete my work in time. His wide experience, unrivalled knowledge of Southeast Asian Politics and criticism and comments helped me immensely in writing this work.

I am beholden to Phra. P. Mahaviro, Teacher of Thai language, who has been a great source of inspiration in pursuing my work on Thailand. I must thank Mr. Niyom Watthammawut, Minister Councillor of Thai Embassy, who has helped me in getting an access to the materials available in Thai embassy.

I must also acknowledge my friends' timely assistance and support in making this work successful. A. Gangatharan, Hriday Narayan, Manoharan, Trilok Narayan, Vinay Shankar and Pankaj deserve special thanks.

Errors, mistakes and other limitations are entirely my own.



GHAN SHYAM

To My Parents  
&  
Brother

## CONTENTS

	PAGE NO.
CHAPTER - I INTRODUCTION	1-10
CHAPTER - II THE ROLE OF MILITARY IN THAI POLITICS	11-30
CHAPTER - III THE STUDENTS REVOLT OF 1973	31-56
CHAPTER - IV DEMOCRATISATION OF THAI POLITICS	57-75
CHAPTER - V CONCLUSION	76-85
BIBLIOGRAPHY	86-90

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The new historical research which is based on recent archaeological findings shows that very ancient civilization existed in Thailand. However, most of the scholars are of the view that present Thai speaking people migrated in the region from the mountainous areas of Yunnan province of China.<sup>1</sup> Their further southward migration brought them to the edge of Chao Phraya river system where they established their first Kingdom known as Sukhothai Kingdom.

The Sukhothai Kingdom was headed by paternalistic kings who were the protector at the time of war and the “father and advisor” of their subjects in peace time.<sup>2</sup> King Rama Kamhang (reigned 1238 AD -1317AD) was the greatest King of Sukhothai Kingdom. He extended his kingdom’s influence against both Khamer and Mons to the south and west and established Thai power over the central plain. During Rama Kamhang’s reign, Buddhism got prominence in the region. He established the standard Thai writing system, deriving from Indian scripts.<sup>3</sup> After his death Sukhothai Kingdom declined due to pressure from neighbouring principalities.

---

<sup>1</sup> Clark D Neher, ed, *Modern Thai Politics: From Village to Nation*, (Cambridge, 1979), p.3

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p.4

<sup>3</sup> D. G. E Hall, *A History of South-East Asia* (New York, 1981), p. 188

After the fall of the Sukhothai Kingdom in 1350, Rama Tibodhi I established a new kingdom, some 200 miles south of Sukhothai, with capital Ayudhya. He conquered Ankor in 1368 and emerged as a major power in the region. This new kingdom grew out of the process of “Indianisation,” which was the result of extensive contact with India and Ceylon during the Sukhothai era and also because of close contact with ancient Indianised Cambodian kingdoms.<sup>4</sup>

The King Trailok (reigned 1448 AD-1488 AD) further followed the expansionist policy and conquered some portion of Burma. He greatly strengthened the Thai state organisation by centralizing bureaucratic structure and ranking system. He also codified customary rules into law.

During sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, capital Ayudhya played important role in the development of trade and commerce between Europe and Far East because of its location. Portuguese sent a mission to Thailand after conquering Malacca in 1511, thereafter Ayudhya became involved in European rivalries until King Narai accepted a French military mission. But after the death of King Narai, Ayudhya kingdom lost its importance.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Clark D Neher, No. 2, p. 5

<sup>5</sup> D. G. E Hall, *A History of South-East Asia* (New York. 1981). p. 199



After the fall of the Ayudhya kingdom, Phaya Taksin, a former governor of Tak province, restored the Thai Kingdom. Throughout his reign he was fighting against the Burmese, the Khamers, and dissident Thai leaders of rival principalities. Phaya Taskin was thrown out by leading army general and Great Minister of North, General Chakri, in 1782. The new king assumed the title Rama I and founded Chakri dynasty with Bangkok as a new capital.<sup>6</sup> The early Chakri kings extended their authority over Laos, western Cambodia and the northern Malay states. They also strengthened the central administrative structure and substituted old tributary system with modern tax system.

King Mangkut ascended the throne in 1824 after the death of his brother. In his early years as a monk he got perfect knowledge of the Pali scriptures and later on he studied Latin, Mathematics, Astronomy, English from the scholars of various European countries. After becoming king, he concluded some fifteen treaties including the famous Bowring Treaty with various European countries. That's why Thailand was able to cope with the demands and threats made by the Western nations, who were seeking commercial and imperial power<sup>7</sup> He started reform programme in Thailand

---

<sup>6</sup> *The Making of South-East Asia* (Berkley and Angles, 1967), p. 165

<sup>7</sup> D. G. E Hall, *A History of South-East Asia* (New York, 1981), pp. 707-710

along western lines by introducing western education and abolishing outdated customs and beliefs.

The reformation programme was further strengthened by the King Chulalongkorn the Great (1868-1910). He pushed full speed ahead the reform programme, initiated by King Mankut, by Chakri reformation in 1892. As a result, number of changes took place in the areas such as administration, fiscal policy, the legal system, military organisation and abolition of corvee and slavery system. He transformed the traditional Thai Kingdom into a modern nation state by introducing modern bureaucratic system.<sup>8</sup> Due to his pro-western policies, an agreement between Britain and France took place in 1896 by which they accepted Thailand as a buffer state, thereby the chances of maintaining Thai independence increased.<sup>9</sup>

The various reform programmes initiated by King Monkut and Chulalongkorn gave rise of a new group of elite, particularly those who were educated abroad. Influenced by the Western ideas of progress and efficiency the members of new group, soon acquired an ethos which clashed with the principles of royal absolutism and patronage. In 1912, an attempt

---

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Likhit Dhiravegin, *Democracy in Thailand*, in Mr. Anand Panyarachur, ed., *Thailand: King Bhumibol AdulYadej - The Golden Jubilee, 1946-1996* (Singapore, 1996), pp. 106-107

<sup>9</sup> F. Nuechterlien, *Thailand and Struggle for South-East Asia*, (New York, 1965), p. 20

was made by young army officers to overthrow the king Wachirawut in favour of a republic but the rebellion was suppressed.<sup>10</sup> The king Wachirawut was succeeded by King Prachachihpok. It was during his reign a bloodless coup took place on 24 June, 1932 and king was invited to rule under the constitution which he accepted. This laid the foundation of constitutional monarchy in Thailand.

After 1932 revolution, king became constitutional monarch, and real power shifted from the royal princes to a new class of elite which generally came from the middle class, and especially from the bureaucracy and the military. However, the coup of 1932, which transformed the Thai government from an absolute monarchy to a bureaucratic military polity, did not bring any social change because the masses remained unaffected and they had still great respect for the monarchy.<sup>11</sup>

The promoters of the 1932 coup formed the People's Party. However, the majority of the members of the first democratic government in Thailand, including Prime Minister Phray Mano, were old civil servants who served under monarchy. Very soon confrontation began among the leaders of the people's party, especially between the Prime Minister Phrya Mano and pridi

---

<sup>10</sup> Dr. Likhit Dhiravegin, p. 102

<sup>11</sup> Clark D Neher, No. 2, p. 11

Phanomyong. The radical features of Pridi's economic plans were condemned by the Mano and Pridi was branded as a communist which led to an increase in tension between Mano and Pridi. As a result, the assembly was closed down on first April 1933. On twentieth June 1933, the People's Party staged a coup and Mano and his followers were thrown out. Phraya Phohan Phonphyuhasena formed a new government and requested Pridi to join his cabinet. Pridi agreed and joined Prime Minister Phahon's cabinet as minister for the Interior and as minister of Foreign Affairs<sup>12</sup>

Phibun Songkhram became Commander-in-Chief of all armed forces during Phahon's regime and got so much of popularity. After the retirement of Phahon Phibun became prime minister. Thawee wrote in his memoirs that "Phahon retired because he found Phibun's interference in sphere of his work more and more intolerable".<sup>13</sup> However, Phibun brought many liberal civilians into his cabinet. During his reign military glory reached its zenith. He gave emphasis on nationalism, militarism and territorial expansionism, but his top priority was armed forces. Phibun took fascism as a model of his government and started a campaign against Chinese and the West. During

---

<sup>12</sup> Jayant Kumar Ray, *Portraits of Thai Politics* (New Delhi, 1972), pp. 2-4

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 5-6

World War II, he collaborated with Japan and declared war against the Allied powers.<sup>14</sup>

Phibun's decision to collaborate with Japanese caused split within his government. Pridi always opposed the collaboration with Japan and supported the Allied powers. During the war years Pridi formed Free Thai Movement. After the defeat the Japanese forces in World War II, the political fortune of Phibun began to decline. He was forced to resign when two bills were defeated in National Assembly.

The period from August 1945 to November 1947 is characterized by the period of political conflict among the three political groups. The first group which consisted liberal and socialist politicians was led by Pridi, the second group consisted of more conservative and more royalist members of parliament led by Khuang Aphainwong, and the third group was the military group who stayed out but still played dominant role. Khaung Aphaiwong became Prime Minister after the election of 1946 but very soon he reigned and Pridi became new Prime Minister. Pridi consolidated his position by promulgating new constitution. New elections were held and Pridi secured majority in both the Houses but the stability of his

---

Zakaria

<sup>14</sup> Chai-Anan Samudavanija & Suchit Bunbongkorn, *Thailand*; in Hazi Ahmad & Harold Crouch, ed, *Military Civil Relations in Southeast Asia* (New York, 1985), p. 81

government was still not secured because of economic difficulties and corruption among government officials and pro-government politicians. The king Anand died on ninth June in mysterious circumstances and Pridi was blamed for his death by the opposition. As a result, he resigned.<sup>15</sup> The leader of Democratic Party, Khuang Aphaiwang, became Prime Minister but very soon he was forced out at the gun point and Phibun succeeded him as new prime minister. In his second tenure, Phibun tried to consolidate his position by patronage and intermarriages among the country's leading military and bureaucratic families. There were informal ties between political power holders and wealthy local Chinese. Phibun and some other military officers and bureaucrats got place in the board of directors of Chinese run enterprises. To consolidate his position, Phibun staged another coup in November 1951. He replaced the 1949 constitution by the original constitution of 1932 which enabled him to appoint half of the seats in the National Assembly. After a trip to Europe and USA, Phibun restored free speech, allowed the formation of political parties and announced that new election will be held in February 1957. Phibun's party won the majority in the National Assembly but discontent with frauds led to the mass demonstrations. It was the first time after 1932 coup, general public and

---

<sup>15</sup> David A. Wilson, *Politics in Thailand*, (New York, 1962), pp. 23-24

students went for demonstrations against political misconduct. Field Marshal, Sarit who was 'City peace keeper' used this opportunity to seize power. A care-taker government was formed under the premiership of SEATO Secretary General, Pote Sarasin. In October 1958, Sarit staged another coup and overthrew the care-taker government.<sup>16</sup> In December 1957 elections were held but no party won the majority, in October 1958 Sarit took over the government.. He abolished the constitution, dissolved the Assembly, banned the political parties, sent jail to suspected leftist and declared martial law. He promulgated an interim constitution which remained in force until June 1968 when a new constitution was promulgated by General Thanom. Sarit ruled, from 1958 to till his death in 1963, with absolute power. General Thanom Kittikacharn succeeded Sarit in 1963 after his death. He ruled the country with the help of his deputy, General Prapas Charustiara until 1968 when new constitution was promulgated.

The election was held in February 1969 for the House of Representatives, the government's United People's Party (UTPP) won 35 percent of the total seats and another 33 percent was won by independents. Later on most of the independents joined the UTPP. Therefore, Thanom was able to rule with majority in the house until 1971 when he staged a coup and

---

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, pp. 32-33

abrogated the constitution, dissolved the parliament, and banned the political parties and gatherings. The reason behind the coup of 1971 was the non-cooperative attitude of opposition members of the House, who were demanding for more control over the government by the civilians and they also attacked government policies and ministers leading to an increase in tension between government and elected house.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Chai-Anan Samudavanija & Suchit Bunbongkorn, p. 86-88



# CHAPTER II

## THE ROLE OF MILITARY IN THAI POLITICS

During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when most of the Third World countries were fighting for their independence, Thailand still was an independent country and was playing with one colonial power against other to retain her independence. However, in 1932, a group of middle level officials in the military and civil services organized a coup d etat which ended the control of royal family over the government and established a quasi-parliamentary constitution. There was no exclusive or effective “cause” for the 1932 coup which created a constitutional monarchy. In fact, it was more the culmination of long process begun in 1892, or even before;<sup>1</sup> but there were three more additional and immediate factors; the diminishing psychological power of the monarchy, the impact of the democratic ideas from the West and world wide economic depression.<sup>2</sup>

The plan for the coup had been originated among the Thai students a decade earlier. The conspiracy began in Paris, in 1924-25, by Phibun Songkhram, Pridi Phanomyong, Thaweese, Tasnai and Priyoon. Others also

---

<sup>1</sup> J. R. E. Waddel, *An Introduction to Southeast Asian Politics* (Sydney, 1972), p. 29

<sup>2</sup> David A Wilson, *Politics in Thailand* (New York, 1962), p. 11

joined the conspiracy in Europe and later in Thailand.<sup>3</sup> This group consisted both military and civilians and most of them belong to dominant “sakdina” class.<sup>4</sup> The sakdina class consisted of royalty, local chieftains, and others, who held large grants of land at the pleasure of the King who headed the sakdina society. The goal of the coup was to establish a constitutional monarchy, as coup promoters were influenced by the European constitutional government as a model.

Since the very beginning of the constitutional region the army played very important role in Thai politics; even when among the persons appointed to the House of Representatives, only 16 out of 70 were military officers. The first Prime Minister, Phray Manopakon, was a civilian. The first constitution was written by a civilian, and the committee for drafting a permanent constitution was mainly consisting of civilians. Civilians might have continued to rule if they had stuck together, but they did not. There was division among the civilians in the first constitutional government. On the one hand, there were those who had promoted the coup were fired with the idea of revolution. On the other hand, older and more conservative

---

<sup>3</sup> David Elliott, Thailand: *Origins of Military Rule* (London, 1918), p. 86

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 47

bureaucrats, who served monarchy and had been brought in after the coup to lend solidarity and respectability to the government.<sup>5</sup>

As a result of this internal conflict among civilians, the army was provided with the opportunity to overthrow the Praya Manopakan government and to seize power. In a situation of infighting among the civilians, the military-civilian coalition automatically established the supremacy of the military.<sup>6</sup> After this incident, until 1973, the Thai politics was more or less dominated by military regime. It would be useful to discuss the circumstances in which the Thai military was able to capture the power and rule the country.

The civilian political institution in many countries proved weak and unstable after independence. In contrast, the military preserved a stable and efficient organization.<sup>7</sup> Because army being disciplined and action oriented was felt to be more beneficial for the developing countries, than the civilian political parties which appeared disorganized and divisive. "In these countries military has symbolic character; they represented the guardian and custodian of the state against its external enemies, and with this goes an

---

<sup>5</sup> David A Wilson, p. 175

<sup>6</sup> Morris Jāngwitz, *The Military in Political Developments of New Nations: An Essay in Comparative Analysis*, (Chicago, 1962), p. 7

<sup>7</sup> Edwards Shils, *The Military in the Political Developments of New States* (New Jersey, 1962), p. 62

activistic popular sentiment for the so-called military virtues of self-sacrifice, austerity, self-discipline, valor and the like.”<sup>8</sup>

The emergence of military as a dominant force in the domestic politics of a country is accompanied by a decline of political institutions. Though legitimization is sought by holding elections, promulgating constitutions and even forming military backed political parties, served as mere ploys for consolidation of power.<sup>9</sup> Once entrenched in power, they strive to perpetuate it by various methods, and in this way they are often aided by foreign powers. This aid is given to help in anti-subversion activities, development projects and other national building programmes. In the case of Thailand, the Thai-American alliance was strengthened by the Military Assistance Treaty in 1950, the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization in 1954, and the Secret Contingency Plan of 1965, all enabled the Thai army to strengthen its position.<sup>10</sup>

Having discussed the conditions in which the army acts as a political force, we should now see how military became dominant in Thai politics. After the coup of 1932, a civilian Phraya Mano became Prime Minister,

---

<sup>8</sup> S. E. Finer, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of Military in Politics*, (London, 1962), p. 30

<sup>9</sup> Morris Janowitz, p. 30

<sup>10</sup> Clark. D. Neher, ed., *Modern Thai Politics: From Village to Nation* (Cambridge, 1971), p. 31

but very soon conflict started between Dr. Pridi Phanomyong, a youthful intellectual leader of the coup, and Phraya Mano, the old and more conservative bureaucrat. The dispute, which initially revolved around an economic plan, developed into a virtual counter-coup, in which Phraya Mano closed the assembly. This was a blow on the coup group as a whole and as a result, military seized power from Phraya Mano and installed Phraya Phahan as Prime Minister, who was one of the leaders of the coup of 1932. The period of Phraya Phahan's government, between 1933 to 1938, was a time of inner conflict in the military. During this period, Phibun Songkhram emerged as the most prominent because of his role in the seizure of power from Phraya Mano and suppression of rebellion in October, 1933. In 1934, he became Phraya Phahan's minister of Defence.<sup>11</sup>

During his tenure as Minister of Defence, the Army and Navy launched a vigorous programme of modernization and development. He also organized a public campaign to support his accelerated military programme. A military youth corps was established to instill nationalism and militarism in the young. During the period, the budget of the defence doubled. He made speeches comparing his administration favourably with the royal administration and said that a strong military was necessary to prevent the

---

<sup>11</sup> David A Wilson., *Politics in Thailand*, pp. 174-175

Kingdom.<sup>12</sup> In this way, Phibun Songkhram constructed a solid constituency in the army and surpassed the influence of his main rival Dr. Pridi Phanomyong. With all these efforts, Phibun was able to establish himself as an unchallenged national leader and in 1930 when Phraya Phanom voluntarily resigned, no one was able to contest against him for the premiership.

After becoming Prime Minister in 1938, he took fascism as his model. He pressed forward a nationalistic policy, initially against the Chinese minority in the country, and then against France on the borders of Indo-China. In December 1941, he took Thailand into Japan's camp along with his own future and the army's political position. Stressing his role as supreme leader and pioneer of a modern society, he changed the country's name from Siam to Thailand in 1939 and imposed a model of dress that he considered modern. He acted ruthlessly against his opponents, encouraged the beginning of state sponsored industrialism in order to achieve autarchy in basic military supplies, and took an expansionist course aimed at securing, with Japanese aids, the land which had been lost to the British and French.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 176

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, pp. 176-177

Military glory reached its zenith during the Phibun Songkhram's administration. With emphasis on nationalism, militarism, and territorial expansionism, the armed forces were given top priority in development. The victory over French in the Indo-China incident in 1939 increased military prestige and popularity of Phibun, who became a national hero. The international tension caused by the German and Japan aggrandizement also helped justifying Phibun's military rule and expansion of armed forces.<sup>14</sup>

However, his decision, to collaboration with the Japanese, caused split within his government. And also some prominent Thais had always opposed the Japanese alliance, among them the Ambassador to the USA, who has established the free Thai movement with the U.S. help, and made contact with Pridi, who also strongly opposed Phibun's collaborations with Japanese.<sup>15</sup> Pridi set-up an anti-Japanese resistance which enjoyed some immunity from the Thai authority. In August 1944, Phibun was formally deposed by the National Assembly and in Sep 1945, Senis Pramoj was named as Prime Minister. The constitutional democracy was restored and free play was given to the formation of political parties.

---

<sup>14</sup> Chai-Anan Samudavanija & Suchit Bunbongkorn, "Thailand," in Hazi Ahmad & Harold Crouch, ed, *Military Civil Relations in Southeast Asia* (New York, 1985), p. 21

<sup>15</sup> David A Wilson, *Politics in Thailand*, p. 178



In March, 1946, Pridi became Prime Minister, but in spite of his long association with Phibun, he was still feared as a socialist by many conservatives. Phibun still had a strong followers in the armed forces, which increased as he put himself forward as the spokesman for resentment at civilian corruption and mismanagement. In June, the young King Ananda died under mysterious circumstances, and Phibun had major role in assigning the blame to Pride, who was forced to resign. In November 1947, the army again seized power, in a coup led by Gen Phinchoohnwan. He acted on behalf of Phibun, who took power in his own name in April, 1948.<sup>16</sup>

The second regime of Phibun from 1948 to 1951 was considered illegitimate by major political groups and was challenged by three attempted coups. The first was the general staff coup on October 1<sup>st</sup> 1948; the second was Pride's abortive coup in Feb 1949 and the third, which was the bloodiest, was the navy attempted coup in November 1951, with the co-operation of 1947 coup group. Phibun staged another coup to consolidate his power through the suspension of the 1949 constitution. It was replaced by the constitution of 1932 with certain modifications which enabled the government to appoint half of the seats in the National Assembly and most

---

<sup>16</sup> David A Wilson, p. 178

of these new appointees were middle ranking military officers. After consolidation of power, the 1947 coup group deeply involved in politics and commercial activities. They built up their economic base by setting up their own business firms, secured control over state enterprises and semi-governmental companies and acquired free share from private firms, mainly owned by the Chinese.<sup>17</sup> This active involvement in business ventures also resulted in the division of the 1947 coup-group into two competing cliques, the first clique was known as Rajakarn led by General Phao and second one was led by Sarit, known as Sisao Deves Cliques.

As a result, the politics from 1951 to 1957 was almost the politics of conflict between General Phao, the police chief and Marshal Sarit, the army chief. Phibun acted as balancer, who played one against the other in order to retain his leadership. However, Phibun found it difficult to defend his position against the ambitions of these two leaders. Therefore, he attempted to consolidate his position by various means. In 1955, after a trip of Europe and USA, he restored free speech, allowed the formation of political parties and announced elections in 19 February 1957.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Chai-Anan Samudavanija & Suchit Bunbongkorn, p. 86

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 85

The election of February 1957 was Phibun's first attempt to acquire power through democratic means. His party got majority in the National Assembly, but discontent with fraud in Bangkok election led to mass demonstrations. Sarit, who was 'city peace keeper' reaped most benefits out of these demonstrations, since the target of attack were Phibun and Phao. Sarit used this opportunity sieged power and installed the SEATO Secretary General, Pote Sarasin, as Prime Minister and finally in October 1958, Sarit himself became Prime Minister <sup>19</sup>

Sarit's seizure of the state apparatus ended the Phibun's and Phao's careers by sending both of them into exile. There were mainly three factors behind the success of Sarit: his control of troops, contact with United States and his association with capitalist class.<sup>20</sup> He further improved his position by consolidating the Sakdina and capitalist classes into a single capitalist ruling class under military hegemony.<sup>21</sup> Sarit's 1957 coup opened a new chapter in the history of military rule in Thailand. His rule, from 1958 to 1963, was different from the previous military governments in many

---

<sup>19</sup> Dr. Likhit Dhiravegin, Democracy in Thailand, in Mr. Anand Panyarachur, ed., *Thailand: King Bhumibol AdulYadej - The Golden Jubilee, 1946-1996* (Singapore, 1996)

<sup>20</sup> David Elliot, p.118

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p. 158

respects. First, he introduced absolute rule which Thailand had hitherto never experienced in its modern history. He ruled the country with absolute power during 1958-1959 and under the interim constitution he was granted vast discretionary powers to solve social, economic and national security problems. Secondly, he replaced the parliamentary form of government by a semi-parliamentary system in which the executive was independent of the legislature. Thirdly, he totally prohibited the popular participation.<sup>22</sup>

Apart from these, he urged for the restoration of traditional values, including an appeal for loyalty to the King, since he knew that royalty was no longer a challenge for military rule. Therefore, he could restore it as a major element in the nationalist appeal for popular support. He said that Thailand should open itself for the economic modernization and removed the limits of land holdings and welcomed foreign investment.

Fortunately, US involvement in Vietnam war created the condition for economic boom and profitable foreign entanglement. Thailand became major provider of military bases and supplies and Bangkok became rest and recreation centre for US troops. US funded various development schemes and, as a result, communication and transport facilities increased rapidly.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Chai-Anan Samudavanija & Suchit Bunbongkorn, p. 81

<sup>23</sup> David. K. Wyatt, Thailand: A Short History (London, 1982), pp. 281-284

DISS  
322.409593  
G3412 St



TH5942



However, Sarit's government contributed considerably to Thailand's development in several fields. "He recognised government administrative structure pushed forward economic and industrial developments and cracked down opium dens, drug trafficking, hooliganism and prostitution."<sup>24</sup> He achieved all these developments through denying democratic rights to Thai people. Sarit's health failed rapidly and he died on Dec 8, 1965. Soon his family began claiming over his estate, and it was revealed that he had left property worth of \$150 million including large holdings in numerous business enterprises.<sup>25</sup>

After his death, General Thonam KittikaChorn, who was Sarit's deputy, became Prime Minister. He was generally regarded as modest, relatively honest and most tolerant and flexible. He carried on with little change in the political structures and the policies followed by Sarit. Throughout his reign, he was supported by General Prapas Charusathiam, who was the deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Interior. This alliance was further strengthened by the marriage of Thonam's son, Narang with Prapas's daughter. In 1960, they sought to broaden their power base by cautious revival of constitutional democracy. After almost ten years of

---

<sup>24</sup> Chai-Anan Samudavanija & Suchit Bunbongkorn. p. 86

<sup>25</sup> David. K. Wyatt, Thailand: A Short History (London. 1982), p. 85

drafting, a new constitution was proclaimed in 1960 and a semi-parliamentary system was established with a two-house legislature.<sup>26</sup> Politicization among the students was very much on the increase during this period. Their organization N.S.C.T. was creating problems for the Thanom regime. Elected members of the parliament were also not satisfied with the government. They also criticised the government policies and demanded more control over the government, more recognition and more financial support. Their interference created trouble in functioning of the government. All these led to increase tension between government and the elected house. As a result, Thanom staged a coup with the help of the Army in 1971. He abrogated the constitution, dissolved the parliament and political parties and banned the gatherings.<sup>27</sup>

The US government's discussion to withdraw from Vietnam and to seek a rapprochement with China brought greater uncertainty. The economic boom was ending and creating hardship in the capital which had been swollen by rural emigrants. Several pressure groups, particularly University students, became increasingly political and began to express publicly their disaffection with the monopolistic grip on government led by

---

<sup>26</sup> Chai-Anan Samudavanija & Suchit Bunbongkarn, p. 87

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p. 27

Thanom Prohat and Narang. During 1972, students-led demonstrations began, which were aimed ever more sharply against the regime. The military leaders outside the ruling faction also expressed their view that army should withdraw from direct responsibility of the rule. In early 1973, the NSCT organised series of demonstrations against the dismissal of student activists of Ramakhamhaeng University.<sup>28</sup> The arrest of students and political activists in Oct 1973, while they were distributing pamphlets demanding a permanent constitution, sparked off another protest when Thanom and Praphat tried to halt the demonstration by armed actions but General Kris refused to do so. Additionally, King Bhumibol Adulyadej stepped-in to control the situation by asking Thannom, Praphat and Narang to leave the country. As a result, military regime collapsed and its leaders went into exile.<sup>29</sup> The King appointed Dr Sanya Dhammasakdi, a distinguished legal scholar, who had been the rector of Thammasat University, as the Prime Minister.

Elections were held in 1975 but none of the parties obtained the working majority. A coalition government was formed under the leadership of Kukrit Pramoj. He gained some initial success in securing a promise of

---

<sup>28</sup> Ross Prizzia, *Thailand in Transition: The Role of Oppositional Forces* (Hawaii, 1985), pp.52-59

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 60-71

rapid American troops withdrawals from Thailand and negotiating the resumption of diplomatic relations with People's Republic of China.<sup>30</sup> Changes in international situation contributed to souring Kukrit's relation with coalition partners. He was defeated in a no-confidence motion and resigned. New elections held in April 1976, by which Seni-Pramoj formed a coalition government with four parties. The political tempo accelerated a violent climax in Oct, 1976.<sup>31</sup> Former Prime Minister Thannom, returned from exile to lead the life of a Buddhist monk. His return had been welcomed by the right wing and the members of Royal family also visited him.

Apart from these developments the young military officers, those who had fought in Vietnam and also had been fighting against communist insurgents at home, were the most frustrated. The growing students radicalism and activism inside the country and due to the perceived threat emanating from the communist victory in Indo-China states, they feared that the situation was getting out of control. Therefore, they were very much apprehensive of the leftists influence in the country's political process.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> David K. Wyatt, p. 301

<sup>31</sup> Dr. Likhit Dhiravegin, p. 106

<sup>32</sup> Chai-Anan Samudavanija & Suchit Bunbongkorn, p. 90



The monarchy, the urban elite and the middle class had also become frightened by the radicalism of students whom they viewed as either communist directed or inspired. On 5<sup>th</sup> October, 1976, several Bangkok newspapers published photographs depicting Thammasat University students hanging crown prince Vajiralongkarn in effigy. An army radio station called upon patriots to join against the students and “kill communists.” On 6<sup>th</sup> October, 1976, Red Gours and police attacked on students of Thammasat University. Students were lynched, burnt alive and beaten mercilessly. Left wing activists were arrested. Student leaders fled to the jungle and joined the communist forces. Labour unions, Left wing parties and farmer’s associations were firmly suppressed.<sup>33</sup> A military dominated National Administrative Council (NARC) took over, banning political parties dissolving the National Assembly and setting up a government which was headed by a right wing supreme court judge Thanin Kraiyixien.<sup>34</sup>

However, in October, 1977, the armed Commander-in-Chief, General Kraingsak Chomanon, seized power and restored some elements of democracy by reducing censorship, releasing detainees and permitting

---

<sup>33</sup> David K. Wyatt, p. 301-302

<sup>34</sup> Dr. Likhit Dhiravegin, p. 106

resumption of party activity under an arrangement that assured conservative control of the legislature and key government appointments.

In March 1980, having failed to find economic policies, that were both realistic and acceptable to the elite, Kriangsak was replaced as a Prime Minister by the commander-in-chief and Defence Minister General Prem Tinsulanonda. Prem's regime was also based on the combination of military and centre-right party politicians. However, ultimate power lay with the armed forces, but the political parties played major role in linking military, civilian, bureaucratic and business interest. The efforts to reform the system culminated in the constitutional changes endorsed by the general election to the House of Representatives in April 1983, which greatly reduced the power of the appointed Senate and banned the civil servants and military officers to positions in the Council of Ministers.<sup>35</sup> In 1983, General Arthit Kamlangek, supreme commander of the Armed Forces and commander-in-chief of the Army formed an alliance with 'Young Turks,'<sup>36</sup> in his attempt to

---

<sup>35</sup> Clark. D. Neher, ed., *The Transition to Democracy in Thailand*, "Asian Perspective", Vol. 20, No. 2, (Fall-Winter, 1996), p. 309

<sup>36</sup> Note – Young Turks → The young army officers of the 1960's, underwent the new five year course pattern after the American West Point model. They decided to form a secret movement and called themselves "Khana Taharn Num" (Young Military Officers' Group) and became popular as 'Young Turks.' These army officers saw themselves as 'professional soldiers' had not had the privilege of gaining access to the patron-client network which Thanom and Praphat had established. They became increasingly frustrated with their Army commanders' attitude and behaviour under civilian governments. But in 1980's, the members of this 'Young Group' had been assigned major command positions of a number of regiments in and around Bangkok.

consolidate military support against the constitutional reforms. This culminated in a coup attempt in Sep 1985, led by Col. Roopkachorn and quietly supported by senior military officers. Its failure resulted in Arthit's replacement as a supreme commander-in-chief by General Chavalit Yongchaiyuth, who was Prem's closest adviser and also a leader of the successful campaign against the insurgency.

In April 1988, 16 ministers of Prem's government, all from Democratic Party, resigned from the government. Prem dissolved the parliament and announced general elections on July 24. In this election no party got the majority. The King asked Prem to continue as Prime Minister, but he refused in favour of the leader of Chart Thai, General Chotichai choonhvan.

Chotichai initiated reforms that opened Thailand to a major expansion of the business sector. His innovations were notable, particularly in foreign affairs. He declared his ambition to turn Indo-China from a battle field to a market place. In Nov, 1988, he succeeded in settling border dispute with Laos and in Dec, 1988, he visited Myanmar. In spite of all these initiatives, his government lost in 1991, when military seized power from him by a bloodless coup. A National Peace Keeping Council (NPC), headed by the

Sunthron, took command of the country. Martial law was declared; the constitution was suspended; and the National Assembly dissolved. The President of the Federation of Thai Industries, Anand Panyara Chun was appointed as Prime Minister. Anand declared that an interim National Legislative Assembly would be created to draft a new constitution.<sup>37</sup> In December 1991, the new constitution was proclaimed which insured the protection of conservative, military-bureaucratic interest. In December 1992, National Assembly elections were held, but no party got a clear majority. In such a situation, Gen. Suchinda captured the power, but this act was opposed by the general public of Bangkok. A massive demonstration took place in Bangkok in May 1992 in which hundreds of people died. Finally, Suchinda was forced to resign since demonstrators got support from the King and the Press.<sup>38</sup>

On 10 June 1992, the King again appointed Prem as Prime Minister. Prem announced that he would organize new elections within four months. On the same day of his appointment, the National Assembly approved constitutional amendments, reducing the power of the non-elected Senate and stipulating that Prime Minister must be an elected member of the

---

<sup>37</sup> Dr. Likhit Dhiravegin, p. 108

<sup>38</sup> Clark. D. Neher, p. 310

Assembly. General elections were held in 13 Dec, 1992, Thailand's oldest party D.P. won the largest number of seats and its leader Chuan Leekpai became Prime Minister and formed a coalition government with the help of other parties. His becoming Prime Minister is being seen as the end of the military dominance in Thai politics.

# CHAPTER III

## THE STUDENTS REVOLT OF 1973

The students' revolt of 1973 was not a new phenomenon in Thailand, for they have been playing a very crucial role in the making of modern Thailand. The story goes back to 1920's when young student revolutionaries like Phibunsonghram, Nai Pridi Phanon and Nai Khung Aphaiwong engineered a plan in Europe during their study and in 1932 they overthrew the absolute monarchy with the help of middle level civil and military officials. They invited the King to rule under the constitution which he accepted.<sup>1</sup> But unfortunately the democracy did not last long and very soon the army generals seized power. They ruled the country with absolute power, except on few occasions. As a result, the Thai politics from 1932 to 1973 was almost dominated by the Thai army generals.

The majority of Thais had for generations been living in an isolated environment. But after 1932, the spread of Western ideas, exposure to communist ideology in various rural areas and ferment within the ranks of urban middle class, contributed to an increase in political awareness.<sup>2</sup> Many big business houses had an alliance with the

---

<sup>1</sup> David A. Wilson, *Politics in Thailand* (New York, 1962), pp. 11-13

<sup>2</sup> Franc C. Darling, *Political Developments in Thailand and Philippines*, "Southeast-Asia, Vol. 14, No. 6 (June 1974), p. 95

ruling classes and they offered key posts in their firms to the top level army officials. Owing to the preponderance of Chinese workers the government put restraint against the formations of labour Unions as, it would lead to dissemination of communist ideas. In such an atmosphere, students became increasingly vocal and active and participated in demonstrations and protested against the academic, economic and political issues.

The first time the Thai students went for a demonstration was when France surrendered in 1940. Thai government utilized this opportunity to regain her territory. Throughout the country the anti-French demonstrations were held. The students of Chulalongran and Thammasat Universities actively participated in demonstrations organized by various organizations.<sup>3</sup>

In November 1947, when a military coup forced Nai Pridi to leave the country, he was supported by the students of Thammasat University and also by some of the army men and civilian leaders, many of whom use to be his students. He sneaked into Thammasat University on night and held a meeting among his followers in one of the campus buildings.

---

<sup>3</sup> R. Prizzia and N. Sinsawasdi, "Evolution of the Thai Student Movement (1940-74)" *Asian Quarterly* Vol. I (1975), pp. 7-8



After the meeting, Pridi and his followers went on to seize the old palace nearby and some of his followers took over the government radio station and announced the news of the coup. However, within two days Pridi's followers were crushed and he had to flee the country.<sup>4</sup>

Again in 1959, the students became involved in national politics when a group of navy men attempted a coup against the government and occupied the Thammasat University campus to fortify their position. They were crushed by the army-backed government forces which occupied the Thammasat University. First the University was closed for almost one month and later on some of the students were directed to attend classes in Chulalongkarn University, while others were told to go and study at the auditorium of the Ministry of Justice. On 11<sup>th</sup> October, 1959 around 2,000 students went to attend the session of the parliament and asked one of the MPs to request the government to withdraw its troops from the Thammasat University. Students met the Prime Minister, Field Marshal Phibunsongkhram, and requested him to withdraw the troops from the campus. Although Phibun assured the students that the troops would be withdrawn, he did not give any specific date for that. In November 1959, around 3000 students went for a trip to Nakornsawan. When they came back to Bangkok, they marched from the railway station

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, pp. 8-9

to the campus and occupied it, but left peacefully later. A few days later government withdrew the troops from the campus and Thammasat University was reopened for the students again.<sup>5</sup>

After the trip of Europe and USA Phibun allowed the formation of political parties, lifted control on press and free speech and announced elections, which held in February 1957.<sup>6</sup> In this election, Phibun's followers used notorious methods to get candidates of his party elected. For example, in some of the provinces the votes for the government party exceeded the number of eligible votes. This act of government was vigorously criticized by the press, the students and the general public. The discontent among general public, press and students caused the government to declare a national emergency. This act of Phibun angered the civilian population of Bangkok. They began to gather regularly at the Paramain Ground and gradually the students of Chulalongkarn and Thammasat Universities also joined them. They publicly criticised the government for fraud practices in the elections. Some of the students of Chulalongkarn University hung the Flag on campus at half-mast, designating the "death of democracy" in Thailand.<sup>7</sup> Several days later, the students from various University campuses joined the general public

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, pp. 8-9

<sup>6</sup> David K. Wyatt, *Thailand: A Short History* (London, 1982.), pp. 273-74

<sup>7</sup> R. Prizzia and N. Sinsawasdi, p. 10

at the Paramain Ground and then they marched to the office of the Prime Minister breaking police barriers along the way. They forcibly entered inside the Prime Minister's office and demanded a meeting with Prime Minister immediately. The Prime Minister eventually came out and spoke to the protesters and promised to remedy the situation. However, the general public was not satisfied with his promised and later on Field Marshal Sarit took advantage out of this situation and he was able to overthrow Phibun's regime with the help of students and general public.<sup>8</sup>

The students became active again in 1962, when the World Court verdict had gone in favour of Cambodia. Thailand was told to withdraw her forces from the temple grounds. This World Court verdict led to the demonstrations throughout the country. Although, this was not initiated by the students, later on they joined in great numbers. On June 12, 1962 around 50,000 students from all major educational institutions marched from Paramain ground to the Parliament building, shouting slogans and carrying placards denouncing the World Court verdict. In front of the Parliament building student leaders made speeches and denounced both the World Court verdict and Cambodian leaders. Although government

---

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 11

did not support openly, some of the government-backed politicians openly supported and promoted it.<sup>9</sup>

The martial law which was imposed by Sarit in 1958 continued almost ten years. The drafting of new constitution which began in 1959, was finally completed in 1968. According to the constitutional provision, the election had to be held within 240 days of the date the constitution went into effect. The students of Thammasat University, together with some politicians, requested the government to lift martial law to ensure fair campaign and elections, and protecting certain civil liberties which were denied since the martial law was imposed. In support of their demands, students from various Universities marched from Paramain Ground to Parliament building. Government wanted not to have any kind of confrontation with students just before the election, therefore, the martial law was lifted except in some areas of the outer provinces.<sup>10</sup>

In February 1969, students again went for demonstration against the 30 percent increase of the bus fare. This time, however, again the government wanted not to have any kind of confrontation with the students before the election, therefore, Prime Minister himself ordered the bus fare back to its original price.<sup>11</sup> Immediately after this successful,

---

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 12

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. 14

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. 13

demonstration the student representatives from Thammasat, Chulalongkarn and Chiangmai Universities and also from some of the other major educational institutions formed “National Student Centre of Thailand” (NSCT) which played very crucial role in the democratisation of Thai politics.

On Sep 2, 1970, students of Chulalongkarn University held a rally in the campus against the corruption charges of three University administrators. After these rally, they marched to the office of the Prime Minister and on the way the students of other Universities joined them. Ten student representatives met Prime Minister Thanom and requested him to suspend all three administrators, the Deputy Director, the Secretary General and the Dean of Architecture.<sup>12</sup> Although Prime Minister promised to look into the matter and that he would be meeting those administrators and students on the next day in the University auditorium. But the students were not satisfied with this and the very next day they marched towards the office of the Prime Minister under the banner of National Student Centre of Thailand. The students were of the view that the Prime Minister should take much stronger stand against the three administrators than just to have discussions with them and forget about their real grievances. They demanded again a meeting with the

---

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 14

Prime Minister, but he refused. After this students marched to the Parliament building and occupied the seats reserved for the members of the Parliament and they said that they would not leave until they receive a definite answer from the Prime Minister on the dismissal of the three administrators. Finally, the Prime Minister met with the students and told them that he had already discussed the matter with the authorities of Chulalongkorn University and explained that a special committee would be set-up to investigate the allegations of corruption; and the three persons would be removed from their administrative positions but they would remain in the University with their professorial position.<sup>13</sup> The students were quite happy with the outcome of this meeting and abandoned the Parliament building.

Before the formation of NSCT, Thai Universities did not have any inter-University organization. Although, each University had a very strong student union these student unions were not political in their nature. It was the first time in 1969, during the elections, they co-operated with each other. During this election, the students from various organisations informally organized to assure an honest election and to prevent the irregularities which occurred during previous election.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, pp. 14-15

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, pp. 15-16

After the election, the representatives from all Universities met at Cheingmai to attend the “World University Service” and jointly they proposed that Thai students should have an intra-University organisation. This meeting was followed by a number of meetings in various Universities. Their last meeting was held at Prasammitra Teacher college in Dec, 1969 and a resolution was passed to form an intra-University organisations which was known as “National Student Centre of Thailand (NSCT).”<sup>15</sup> A committee was formed to draft the constitution and the drafting committee comprised two representatives, each from Chulalongkorn University, Thammasat University, Kasesart University, Silpakorn University, Mahidol University, Cheing mai University, Kohkhean University, Sangkla University, Prasammitra teacher college and Patumwar teacher college.

The constitutional drafting committee set forth the following goals and objectives for the centre:<sup>16</sup>

1. To promote a good relationship among the students of all Thai Universities and also between the students of Thailand and other countries;

2. to serve and promote the welfare of the students;

---

<sup>15</sup> Somporn Sangchai and Lim Joo Jock, ed, *Trends in Thailand* (Singapore, 1976) p. 4

<sup>16</sup> R. Prizzia and N. Sinsawasdi, pp. 16-17

- 3.to promote the students freedom and to protect student benefits;
- 4.to further the educational standards and academic cooperation;
- 5.to promote a good understanding between students and the people;
- 6.to preserve and promote the Thai culture and
- 7.to render services for the welfare of the society;

The NSCT had three committees: The first was the Executive Committee which consisted the Chairman of the Student Unions of each University. Their main duty was to formulate the policy for NSCT and to select the leaders of all units working under the Secretariat Committee. This committee acts as spokesman of all University leaders. There were many sub-committees under the Executive Committee namely Public Relations, Foreign Affairs, Academic Volunteers, Public Welfare, Office Arrangement, Sports, Fund Raising and Security Committee.

The Financial Committee consisted of a representative from each University. This committee looked after the financial affairs of the centre. This committee was also directly responsible to the Executive Committee.

In the organizational hierarchy of the National Student Centre of Thailand, the Secretary General was the most powerful and he was directly responsible to all the NSCT activist. During the year 1970-71,



NSCT was not much interested in the political matters. Rather, it concentrated more on the social issues and raised funds for flood victims, organization of a TV programme blessing the King and assisting high school students.<sup>17</sup>

Thirayuth Boonmee was elected Secretary General for the academic years 1971-72 and 1972-1973. He was an engineering student with best academic records since his school days. He gave new directions to the Thai student movement. Under his leadership the activities of NSCT turned from social issues to political issues.<sup>18</sup>

National Students Centre of Thailand attracted the attentions of Thai people when students launched a ten days “Boycott Japanese Goods” campaign.<sup>19</sup> The Thai-Japanese trade balance was very much in favour of Japan since last ten years. The deficit was increasing at an alarming rate for the fiscal years 1970, 1971, 1972. and by the end of 1972, the trade deficit with Japan increased, approximately to \$215 million.<sup>20</sup> In November 1972, the students started a campaign against the purchase of Japanese goods and the period between November 20<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>, they proclaimed as “anti-Japanese Goods Week.”<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, p. 18

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 18

<sup>19</sup> M. Rajaretnam and Lim So Jean, ed, *Trends in Thailand* (Singapore, 1973), p. 10

<sup>20</sup> *Bangkok Post*, November 17, 1972

<sup>21</sup> R. Prizzia and N. Sinsawasdi, pp. 21

During this period students from various Universities joined together under the banner of NSCT. They requested the public not to buy Japanese goods. They visited various business districts for the campaign, distributed handbills and pasted stickers on public vehicles. They distributed leaflets among the public. One of such leaflets appeared in Bangkok Post Nov 10, 1972, in which they wrote, "We would not have been in trouble at all if Japanese role was to help to develop our economy as they often claim."<sup>22</sup> According to them the Japanese were taking advantage of Thai foreign policy of present government and Japan was putting Thailand gradually into the position of 'Japan's economic slave.'<sup>23</sup> In this task, they also got support from the King. The students presented 10 point plan to the government for the economic revival, which included, the government to urgently enforce laws preventing aliens from taking jobs from local residents; the foreign owned department stores are not necessary for the country and National Executive Council should prohibit the expansion of the existing ones and the establishment of new one, and government should consider controlling or prohibiting the importation of necessary goods and investments.

---

<sup>22</sup> *Bangkok Post*, November 19, 1972

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

During 'anti Japanese goods' campaign, the students got support from large number of Thai public and media also highlighted the genuineness of students' worries. King Bhumibol extended his full support because he was also in favour of decreasing the purchase of Japanese luxury goods. He said, "careful consideration must be given what demands are made or the goals of the movement might be defeated."<sup>24</sup>

During the anti-Japanese goods week, the sale of the Japanese goods decreased considerably. On the last day of the anti-Japanese goods week, students organized a protest march from Pramain Ground to the headquarters of the National Executive Council to put pressure on the government. Prime Minister's representatives met with six representatives of students and the former insured the latter that the Prime Minister is supporting their demands and an attempt would be made to enforce the feasible section of their ten point demands.<sup>25</sup> In response to this issue, the Japanese Foreign Ministry reviewed the loan agreement which was signed between two countries in April 1972.

This was followed by the visit of Japanese Minister of International trade and Industry, Mr Yasuhiro Nakasone. He came to explore the prospects

---

<sup>24</sup> *Bangkok Post*, December 1, 1972

<sup>25</sup> R. Prizzia and N. Sinsawasdi, pp. 20-21

of greater Japanese import of Thai agricultural products. Japanese took all these immediately because they were very much afraid of spreading such movements to other neighbouring countries where they were economically active and exploiting their markets.<sup>26</sup>

Thai students demonstrated again in Dec, 1972, when the National Executive Council issued Decree No. 299. According to this judges would be controlled by the Minister of Justice, whereas according to Justice Act of 1952, the Chief justice of the Supreme Court held the highest post and presided over all judges in Thailand.<sup>27</sup> The very next day of the announcement of Decree No. 299, the law students of Thammasat University began their protest movement and later on they were joined by the students of other Universities. Students also got support from the members of legal profession and Thai Press. On 17 Dec. 1972, the representatives of all universities except Sangkla University presented a letter to the Prime Minister and requested him to continue the judicial Act of 1952. Prime Minister realized the unpopularity of the Decree No. 299 and immediately called a meeting of National Executive Council and in the Legislative Council the Decree No 299 was voted out.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> M. Rajaretnam and Lim So Jean, pp. 12-13

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p. 13

<sup>28</sup> R. Prizzia and N. Sinsawasdi, p. 22

The students, Press and public raised their voice when the “Thung Yai” scandal was exposed. This involved high officials whose helicopter crashed on Burma-Thai border. An investigation by a team of students and newspaper reporters revealed that the helicopter was filled with carcasses of protected animal and the helicopter was returning from an illegal hunting expedition in the “Thung Yai” gem pressure.<sup>29</sup> But Marshal Thanom immediately announced that helicopter was returning from a “secret mission.” This whole episode was highly criticized by the students, press and the public. Mr. M. R. Kukrit wrote in a Thai language daily, “Army government, which lacks moral standards, cannot continue to be government.”<sup>30</sup>

In June 1973, another student demonstration broke out when nine students of RamaKarnhaeng University were expelled by the Rector Dr. Sakdi Pharookhirand. The students were accused of issuing an illegal magazine. The editorials and cartoons of the magazine criticized the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister and depicted them as “beasts.”<sup>31</sup> Actually it was an expression of students’ anger against the

---

<sup>29</sup> Jaffery Race “Thailand 1973:” “We certainly have been Ravaged by something ....,” *Asian Survey*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (Feb, 1974), p. 196

<sup>30</sup> Quoted in “*Far Eastern Economic Review*,” (15 June, 1973), p. 18

<sup>31</sup> R. Prizzia and N. Sinsawasdi, p. 23

handling of “Thung Yai Affair” by the government. The students of Ramakamhaen University started mobilizing the support through distributing leaflets. They were able to organize a huge protest rally at the Pramain ground with the help of the students of other universities. Student leaders from various universities criticized the government in their speeches and thereafter they marched towards the Democracy monument. At the Democracy Monument, students staged a protest rally and the speeches of the student leaders were not confined to the release of nine students of Ramakamhaen University. Rather they denounced for a new constitution, an end of corruption, measures to the rising rice price and sagging Thai economy. In this task, the students were supported by a group of University lecturers from various Bangkok universities. In an open letter these lecturers protested against the dismissal of the nine students of Ramakamhaen University.<sup>32</sup> As a result, government ordered to close all major universities in Bangkok. But this move proved to be a great mistake because many students who would have gone to classes, decided to sit-in at Democracy Monument. Ultimately, the government was forced to withdraw the expulsion decision of nine students and Dr. Sakdi resigned from the post of rector.

---

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p. 24

The co-operation among the students of various universities in support of nine students of Ramakamhaen University gave new dimension, strength, and significance to NSCT. At this occasion, NSCT got support from the working class, the middle class and the intellectuals. Now they became the champion for the cause of Thai people.

The 'Student Revolt' of 1973 was unprecedented in the history of Thailand because of lack of democratic traditions. In such an atmosphere, where there was no tradition of democratic politics and organized political parties were weak, students became the focal point of all opposition. The youth was frustrated due to threat of unemployment and angered by the army's attempt to curb their freedom. The students became the champion of Freedom and free expression and raised the banner of revolt.<sup>33</sup> Students activism was widespread in 1973 and people were becoming increasingly disenchanted with government's delaying tactics with regard to the promulgation of permanent constitution. At the same time, Boonchi Rajanasathien, executive Vice President of Thailand's largest Bank, talked of increasing gap between the rich and the poor. He concluded "Those who are responsible for the nation's business, are lacking in personal rectitude."<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Frank C. Darling, p. 7

<sup>34</sup> Jaffery Race, p. 192

The shaky economic situations, due to the decrease in rice production, a deficit trade and World wide inflation, further worsened the situation. There was 12 percent drop in the rice production during 1972, which reduced the supplies of staple food, leading to an increase in hoarding life. The rise in the prices of imported goods due to the world wide inflation, and an increase in money supply at an annual rate of more than 10 percent by the Central Bank resulting in deficit financing.<sup>35</sup> The government responded by establishing price control which led to the disappearance of rice from the market. As a result series of strikes broke out in Bangkok because “Politics has never been of much concern to Thai wage earners, the price of rice always has been” as rightly said by Jafery Race.<sup>36</sup>

All above mentioned happenings, mostly after the imposition of Martial law in 1971, led to the student uprising in October 1973. Long before the uprising, the students had frequent discussions and symposiums on drafting a new constitution. The students collaboration with the University professors and intellectuals aimed at promoting democratic constitution in the country. In this task, they were supported by the public and press. An additional factor in their favour was the

---

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, p. 194

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p. 194



cracks that were appearing in army ranks, as it was later apparent from the refusal of general Kris Sivara to massacre the unarmed students during the revolt. At the same time capitalist ruling class also wanted to get rid of the dictatorship which became too corrupt and ineffective.<sup>37</sup>

The revolution actually began when the National Student Centre of Thailand (NSCT) announced on July 10 that the students would begin drafting a national constitution themselves.<sup>38</sup> But the final struggle started when 12 students were arrested while urging support for the early promulgation of constitution. These students were accused of violating a National Executive Council's Decree No. 17 which forbade the gathering of more than five people for political purposes. Later on, the police claimed that they have discovered some documents which show these people planning to overthrow the government with the help of communists.<sup>39</sup> As a result, there was total ten days unrest in Bangkok. Following major happenings took place during those ten days:<sup>40</sup>

1. On October 6, 1973, the first day of the uprising, Thirayuth, the Secretary General of NSCT, and ten other activists were arrested and held on an initial charge of violating Article 17 of

---

<sup>37</sup> David Elliot, *Thailand: Origins of Military Rule* (London, 1978), p. 135

<sup>38</sup> Robert F. Zimmerman, "Student Revolution in Thailand: The end of the Thai Bureaucracy Policy," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 14, No. (June 1974), p. 511

<sup>39</sup> R. Prizzia and N. Sinsawasdi, pp. 30-31

<sup>40</sup> Jidbhand Kambhu, "Thailand: Death of a Regime," *Far Eastern Economic Review* (October 22, 1973), p.

the Provisional Constitution, which forbade more than five persons together for political purposes.

2. On the second day October 7, 1973, another member of the activist group, Ramakamhaen student Kongkit Kongka, was arrested with the stipulation that bail could only be granted by Field Marshall Prapas.
3. On the third day, October 8, 1973, Prapas announced that a plan has been uncovered, which indicated that the twelve arrested students were involved in a plot to oust the government and to instigate a major uprising with the help of communists. He claimed that Police had found documents promoting the activities of Thai and Chinese communists.
4. On the fourth day, October 9, 1993, Article 17 of the interim constitution was evoked which gave the cabinet absolute power in the matters of National Security.
5. On the fifth day, on October 10, 1973, more than three thousand students from various universities from Bangkok and teachers training colleges rallied at Thammasat University campus and demanded speedy release of arrested leaders and the promulgation of new constitution by December 10, 1973.

6. On the sixth day, October 11, 1973, a delegation of National Student Centre of Thailand (NSCT) members met with Field Marshal Prapas to deliver an ultimatum asking for immediate release of those arrested.
7. On the morning of the seventh day, October 12, 1973, a senior officer hinted that five student activists might be released if investigation shows that they were not aware of a plot of overthrowing the government. The legal action against other eight would be taken.
8. On the eighth day, October 13, 1973, the members of NSCT steering committee confirmed their decision to demand unconditional release of all those who were arrested.
9. On October 14, 1973 around 4,00,000 students and public marched from Thammasat University campus to Chitralada Palace. However, King mediated between student leaders and army officials. All arrested students were released and government promised a new constitution in a year. When this news came to the demonstrators most of them disappeared but around 80,000 demonstrators refused to disperse because they were not happy with one year delay in the new constitution. At the same time, there was split in NSCT and these people

decided to continue their agitation under the leadership of Saekansan Prasertkal, who was the leader of “hard core” group.

10. On 15<sup>th</sup> October, 1973, early morning at 6:00 am, students started dispersing at the request of the King’s representative. But due to communication problem there was a tussle between students and police and as a result, police opened fire on demonstrators and within an hour violence spread in all parts of Bangkok. Police used machine guns, tanks and helicopters to massacre the students. Students attacked police headquarters and other government buildings. It was the worst political violence in the modern history of Thailand.

At 7:00 p.m. King Bhumibol, appeared on TV and announced that he had appointed Prof. Sanya Dhammasakdi as the new Prime Minister to replace Marshal Thanom who had resigned. But Thanom continued as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and therefore, the crowd refused to disperse and fighting continued into the night. Marshal Thanom instructed new Army Commander Kris Sivara to call more army units from outside Bangkok to use against the demonstrators. But the latter refused. Air Force, Navy and Border Patrol Police indicated that they were unwilling to see further violence. On the next day, Marshall

Thanom and Field Marshall Prapas had resigned from all government posts and left the country along with Colonel Norang Kittikacharn.

The student uprising of 1973 had presented the nation an opportunity to evolve a stable democratic government. The appointment of Dr. Sanya Dammasakdi as a Prime Minister by King was a valuable step towards democratization of Thai politics. The new Prime Minister, Dammasakdi, promised a new democratic constitution within three months instead of originally announced six months. On 16<sup>th</sup> October, he announced formation of new civilian dominated cabinet, in which only two senior army men were allowed.<sup>41</sup> The new government announced its intention of upholding the monarchy, continuing a friendly attitude with the members of southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In the economic field, it promised policies beneficial to farmers and agricultural workers, acceleration of industrial production and a stable home currency. Prime Minister also urged the students to educate the people in democratic processes and stated his intention of promoting academic freedom in the universities and smoother relationship between the government and the students.<sup>42</sup> After the revolt, the normal life was disrupted in Thailand

---

<sup>41</sup> Frances Starner, Premier Sanya: On side with the Students," *Far Eastern Economic Review* (October 22, 1973), p.

<sup>42</sup> Chai Anan Samudavanya and Suchit Bunbongkarn, "Thailand," in Hazi Ahmad and Harold Crouch, ed, *Military - Civilian Relations in Southeast Asia*, (New York, 1985), p. 89

several weeks due to strikes in Industrial plants, Factories and even Railways and Commercial Banks. Long years of dictatorship had kept the Thais subservient, but the students revolt seemed to have awakened the people to an awareness of their rights.

During the October uprising, the Thai Royal Navy and “Young Turks” supported the student cause. The army maintained low profile after the students uprising and General Kris Sivara retained his anti-coup stand. Air Marshal Chulasaphy announced that the military and Police personnel could be required to resign from the government services, if they wanted to indulge into politics. The monarchy received an increase in prestige. During the revolt students carried the photographs of the king and queen, and negotiated between student leaders and individual Army commanders. King was an unifying force in Thailand at the time when the country was experiencing its first civilian government after 43 decades. He served to “legitimize a turning point in Thailand.”<sup>43</sup> The student’s Revolt of 1973 was not an end of student’s activities, after the revolt the NSCT and other student organizations attempted to consolidate their power and there was steady increase in student activism and protest

---

<sup>43</sup> T.D. Allman, “Bhumibol: Asian Phenomenon,” *Far Eastern Economic Review* (17 Dec, 1973), p. 10

demonstrations against the many corrupt high-ranking officials in the bureaucracy and got them removed from the important positions.<sup>44</sup>

After the “Revolt of 1973” various independent student organisations emerged and the influential student organisation, National Student Centre of Thailand (NSCT), got split and a radical organisation, the Federation of Independent Student of Thailand (FIST), was formed. This new organisation was led by Seksan Prasert Kul who resigned from the leadership of NSCT due to the allegation of corruption charges against him. Seksan played a significant role in the demonstrations leading to overthrow of the military regime. Infact, it was Seksan who initiated them towards the Chitralada Palace, and it is reported that his rhetoric persuaded the students to go beyond the demand of release of twelve detainees.<sup>45</sup>

The Seksan’s activities widen the gulf between the NSCT and vocational students. The differences between the NSCT and vocational students. The differences between various student organisations further widened when inter-University and inter-disciplinary classes started in various Bangkok Universities. The situation became worst in Oct 1976,

---

<sup>44</sup> Ross Prizzia, *Thailand in Transition: The Role of Oppositional Forces*, (Hawaii, 1985)

<sup>45</sup> Robert F. Zimmerman “Student Revolution in Thailand: The End of the Thai Bureaucratic Policy?,” *Asian Survey*, Vol. 14, No. 6 (June, 1974), p. 510

when a bloody battle started between leftist students, right wing group and police.<sup>46</sup>

The political system has changed after the students revolt of 1973 which laid down the foundation for the democratic processes leading to the gradual democratization of Thai politics, a shift from personalized clientlist politics to institutionalized politics and the beginning of the weakening of military's role in the politics of Thailand and in its governmental affairs.

---

<sup>46</sup> Ross Prizzia, p. 80



# CHAPTER IV

## DEMOCRATISATION OF THAI POLITICS

The democratisation of Thai politics has started long back when enlightened King Rama IV started reform programme along Western lines. He introduced Western education and abolished the outdated customs and beliefs. This process was further strengthened by the king Chulalongkorn the Great who started various reform programmes in 1892. In the process, number of changes took place in areas such as administration, fiscal policy, the legal system, military organization, abolition of carvee and slavery system.<sup>1</sup>

King Chulalongkorn helped in the development of democracy in Thailand. He considered elections as an integral part of democracy and ordered the first election of judges. Development of legal system during his reign was the most important in laying foundation for democracy. He granted religious freedom, elevated the status of women, gave right to submit an appeal to the King, advocated equality in law, and to make people aware of the law of the land, he initiated the printing of civil service news in Royal Gazette.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Likhit Dhiravegin, "Democracy in Thailand" in Mr. Anand Panyarachun, ed, *Thailand: King Bhumibol Adulyadej - The Golden Jubilee 1946-1996*, (Singapore, 1996), p. 102

<sup>2</sup> *Democracy in Thailand*, Published by the Armed Forces information Supreme Commander Headquarters (Bangkok, 1996), p. 5

During the reign of Chulalongkorn, Council of Councilors on National Affairs and Privy Council came into existence. Judicial system and control, as well as regional administrative systems had undergone major changes. For the promotion of democracy, within the country, the local administration Act of 1897 was promulgated to use as guideline for regional administration in provinces, districts and villages. The king ordered the election of village headmen and the most important was the king who granted voting right to women also. With the abolition of slavery and by making education available to all people he granted his subjects freedom and equality.<sup>3</sup>

A group of people from royal and noble family submitted an appeal to the King Chulalongkorn to introduce a legislative assembly along the lines of Western democracy. But the King rejected their demand due to presence of Western Powers in the region who were waiting to exploit the Asian countries' weaknesses and also the fact that the majority of the people had very little understanding about democracy.<sup>4</sup>

The King Rama VI also realized this fact that the country was not yet prepared to have parliament since the majority of the people had little

---

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 3

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Likhiti Dhiravegin, pp. 102-103

understanding about democracy. Therefore, he passed the bill of compulsory Primary Education Act to lay foundation for democracy. He understood the role of the press in a democratic society and granted the freedom of the press. He himself wrote an article cautioning the people to use their judgment before believing news that appeared in newspapers.<sup>5</sup>

The King Rama VI had a toy model town in the compound of his Dusit Palace, which he named "Dusit Thani." This town was divided into districts, sub-districts and villages according to characteristics of the local administration. The designated owners of all the toy model - houses participated in the administration of the municipality. The constitution of this toy-model town gave its supposed citizen the right to select their political leaders from the two available parties named Red Ribbon and Blue Ribbon and the party with the majority of votes would form a government. To make the administration of the toy model-town realistic, there were, a parliament, a forum for debate, discussions and criticising, and a newspaper named "Dusitsmitr."<sup>6</sup>

King Rama VII, King Prajadhipok, gave support to the training for the people in self governing at local level in the form of municipality. For the implementation of democracy, he was having a constitution by

---

<sup>5</sup> *Democracy in Thailand*, p. 5

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, p. 6

Raymond B. Stevenes, adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Phraya Srivisarnwaya, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. But it could not be promulgated due to objection from the royal family members on the ground that the time was not yet proper to do so.<sup>7</sup>

The reign of Chakri dynasty by its centralised rule and along with reforms and modernization programme helped Thailand to get through the period of imperialism with its independence intact. However, the absolute monarchy came to an end on June 24, 1932 and monarchy became constitutional. King was to remain the head of the state, but from now onwards he exercised his sovereign powers through the Council of Ministers.<sup>8</sup> In fact, the coup d' etat which overthrew the monarchy, did not bring any fundamental changes in the pattern of the rule as, the real power simply shifted from monarchy to top-level bureaucratic and military leaders.<sup>9</sup> The revolution took place with the very little involvement and understanding of masses. In real sense, it was a coup d' etat of bureaucrats and military leaders against the monarchy which was the offshoot of the modernisation process started by the King Chulalongkorn.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 7

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 8

<sup>9</sup> David A. Wilson, *Politics in Thailand*. (New York, 1962)

<sup>10</sup> Dr. Likhit Dhiravegin, p. 103

In democratic countries, where the constitutional monarchy exists, the Kings have played very significant political role at the time when there was any emergency or external and internal crisis. The American columnist, Walter Lippmann, has rightly stated that, "Democracy, with Kings as heads of State was better than democracy with President since history had it that, in both World Wars, in time of crisis, Kings were more able to help solving crisis than Presidents such are the cases in England, Sweden, Denmark and Norway, for the obvious reasons inherently associated with the title."<sup>11</sup> This statement may not be true for all constitutional monarchies but, in the case of Thailand it is exactly the same what Lippman has stated.

After the replacement of traditional monarchy by constitutional monarchy, Thailand's initial experiment with democracy proved a failure due to civil divisiveness, or a result the military stepped in to fill the vacuum. The Army provided order and security but at the cost of freedom. Martial law and repression in the form of harassment of opposition members became frequent. Although, the constitutional democracy was restored on few occasions and free play was given to the formation of political parties, the political groups, those who participated in elections, were little more than the personal followers of the

---

<sup>11</sup> *Democracy in Thailand*, p. 10

politicians in the capital. Therefore, these parties were unable to discipline themselves and did not co-operate with each other on a common platform. As a result, army stepped in, captured power and was to remain in power more than six decades, legitimizing their rule by occasional elections and promulgation of constitution. The kind of rule which existed in Thailand for more than six decades was described as “Thai Democracy” by those who ruled during this period but, most of the Western scholars do not agree with them. Some of the Western scholars argue that Thailand still has only ‘semi-democracy,’ in which “the effective power of elected officials is so limited, or political party competition so restricted, or freedom and fairness elections so compromised, that electoral outcomes, while competitive, still deviate significantly from popular preferences; or where civil and political liberties are so limited that some political orientations and interests are unable to organize and express themselves.”<sup>12</sup>

A nation can be described as democratic nation in which the citizens participate in choosing government leaders, candidates for the elective offices compete against one another, and government’s recognition of citizen’s civil and political liberties. This definition comes mostly from the Western scholars and philosophers of democracy which

---

<sup>12</sup> Jib Logerfo, “Attitude towards Democracy among Bangkok and Rural Northern Thai,” *Asian Survey*

cannot be universally acceptable to all the nations because the degree of civil liberties varies from nation to nation. "In Southeast Asia, the process has proceeded by fits and starts, characterised by difficulty reconciling Western democracy with Asian traditions."<sup>13</sup> In Thailand, the word "Prachathipatai" is generally defined as "democracy" which does not mean popular sovereignty, control by elected representatives over the executive branch or power of the people. Rather, the term Prachathipatai, sees politics as emanating down, from the monarchy and bureaucracy to the common citizen and not up from the masses. This was the reason why Western scholars have described Thai democracy as a 'semi-democracy.'<sup>14</sup>

The political parties and elections are integral part of democracy. The concept of political parties in Thailand was concurrent with the introduction of democracy in Thailand. After the change in administration of the country from absolute monarchy to democracy in 1932, political leaders who were prime movers behind the change, tried to set-up a political party in order to maintain political power for themselves and their group.<sup>15</sup> In fact, it was an association rather than a

---

(Sep, 1996), p. 303

<sup>13</sup>Clark D. Neher, "The transition to Democracy in Thailand," *Asian Perspective*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (Fall 1996), p. 303

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p. 303

<sup>15</sup> *Democracy in Thailand*, p. 42



party known as “Somakon Khanaret” (Association of People). Their main motive behind the formation for this association was to pursue the same belief in order to change the country’s administrative system and to gain the control of the national administration thereafter. The concept behind forming political parties at the time was a system with only one party since the idea of a political party was still quite new to the Thai people, and most of them still lacked knowledge and understanding in party system. Till 1946, Thailand had only one political party known as People’s Party. The members of Parliament were either affiliated with the People’s Party or independent individual. A movement to set-up political party began after the constitution of 1946 came into effect.<sup>16</sup>

The first election of the members of the House of Representatives took place on November 15, 1938. This election was an indirect election since, the people elected their representatives who would in turn elect members of the parliament. Second election of members of the parliament took place in November, 1937. This election was different from the first one. In this election, people directly elected their representatives, making for the first time a direct election in Thailand. But the Parliament was dissolved and election again held in 1938

---

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 42

because government lost the votes on a motion to modify a budget bill.<sup>17</sup> The constitution was amended in 1942 and the terms of the members of the Parliament had been extended for two years because election could not be held on time due to the second World War. After the end of the Second World War, M. R. Seni Pramoj became Prime Minister. He dissolved the House of Representatives and new election took place on January 6, 1946. It was also a direct election with divided precincts.

The fifth election was held on August 5, 1946, which was an additional election since the National Assembly had drafted the new constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand. This new constitution has changed the parliament from uni-cameral to bi-cameral which consisted of 'House of Representatives and the Senate.' The constitution allowed political parties to merge together. In the ensuing elections, Pridi won the majority in both the houses and was elected Prime Minister but, he had to resign soon due to economic difficulties and mysterious death of King AnandMahadol.<sup>18</sup> The death of King Ananda brought about political tension which led to a coup d' etat in November 2, 1947.

Next election was held on February 22, 1957. This election was important for political developments. Totally, 23 political parties

---

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, p. 61

<sup>18</sup> Chai Anan Samudavanya and Suchit Bunbongkarn, Thailand, in Hazi Ahmad and Harold Crouch, ed, *Military - Civilian Relations in Southeast Asia*, (New York, 1985), p. 89

participated in this election. The main competition was between the government's Serimanangkasila Party led by Field Marshal Phibum Songkharam and Democratic Party led by Khuang Aphaiwangse. The government party led by the Phibun won the election and formed the new government; but, discontent with frauds in elections led to the mass demonstrations. It was the first time Thai students went for demonstrating against the government.<sup>19</sup>

The new Field Marshal Sarit took benefit out of this situation and seized the power by staging a military coup d'etat.<sup>20</sup> The House of Representatives was dissolved and martial law was imposed. New election took place on December 5, 1957. After this election, Lieutenant General Thanom KittiKachorn became the Prime Minister and ruled the country until 1959 when Field Marshal Sarit staged another coup d'etat and seized the power. He again imposed martial law, dissolved the House of Representatives and put a ban on political parties. He promulgated a proximal constitution and appointed a committee to draft a new constitution. This new constitution was promulgated in June 1968. According this constitution, the National Assembly was bi-cameral which consisted of House of Representatives with elected members and

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, pp. 85-86

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, p. 85

the Senate with appointed members. The election was held on February 10, 1969 and 219 representatives were elected.<sup>21</sup>

The demand by elected members to more control over the government administration created tension between elected members and army. The deliberate delays in passing budget, and attack on government policies and ministers, by elected representatives led to seizure of power.<sup>22</sup> Thanom staged a coup d' etat with the help of army and annulled the constitution, disbanded the political parties and administered all the political affairs on autocratic fashion. Meanwhile, National Legislative Council as well as constitution drafting committee were formed.

The National Student Centre of Thailand (NSCT) was playing very important role since its formation in 1969 by organizing several demonstrations against various social and political issues. In such an atmosphere, where there was no tradition of democratic politics and organised political parties were weak, students became the focal point of all opposition. In 1973, even before the uprising, the students held frequent discussion and symposium on drafting a new constitution. The students in collaboration with the University Professors and intellectuals,

---

<sup>21</sup> *Democracy in Thailand*, p. 65

<sup>22</sup> Chai Anan Samudavanya and Suchit Bunbongkarn, p. 87

aimed at promoting new democratic constitution. In this task they were supported by the press and public. The demand of quick promulgation of new constitution and arrest of some University students led to a big violent demonstration against the government. As a result, hundreds of people, mostly students, were killed. This led to resignation of Thanom from premiership and he left the country with his followers.<sup>23</sup>

The students revolt of 1973 had presented the nation an opportunity to evolve a stable democratic government. King appointed Sanya Dhammasakdi as Prime Minister of new care-taker government. New Prime Minister announced the new civilian dominated cabinet and promised a new constitution within three months.

The new constitution was drafted and promulgated on Oct. 7, 1974, requiring that the National Assembly would be bi-cameral which consisted of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

The October uprising indicated the end of the military regime and the beginning of the fully democratic form of government. But contrary to this, Thai society witnessed the most discouraging political phenomena in modern Thai political history. In next three years, four elected governments and one semi-democratic government were formed but no one was able to provide political stability. Instead, situation

---

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, pp. 88-90

became worse; violence embraced with such methods as political assassination, grenade throwing at political demonstrations and rallies, and attack on Prime Minister's house and an attack and burning of Thammasat University. At last, polarisation started on the basis of political ideologies.<sup>24</sup> Thai society experienced its worse on Oct 6, 1976, when political violence took place in Thailand, when followers of left ideology were attacked by rightists and army. In this political violence, hundreds of people were killed and more than three thousand students fled Bangkok and joined communist insurgent forces in remote areas of the country. This incident once again brought back the military into Thai politics. After this bloody coup, the government was headed by a former supreme court judge. His dictatorship was in many regards more horrifying than the military government.<sup>25</sup> Finally, the military staged a coup d'etat and seized the power in Oct 1977.

From that time onwards the era of "semi-democracy" started in Thailand. The new constitution which was promulgated in 1978, stated that it is not necessary for the Prime Minister to run for the election. Anyone with the support of parliament could become the Prime Minister.

---

<sup>24</sup> Dr. Likhit Dhiravegin, p. 106

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p. 106

This constitution allowed the permanent civil servants and military officials to hold political posts at the same time.<sup>26</sup>

General Prem Tinsulananda became Prime Minister in 1980. Although during his reign the real power lay with armed forces, the political parties played major role in linking military, civilian bureaucratic and business interests. The efforts to reform the system culminated in the constitutional changes endorsed by the general election to the House of Representatives in April 1983, which greatly reduced the power of appointed Senate and banned the appointment of civil servants and military officers to position of council of ministers. The clearest sign of democratization was the rise to power of Chatichai Choonvan, in 1980 elections, the first elected member of Parliament to become Prime Minister since 1976.<sup>27</sup> Also, the smooth transition from Prem to former general Chatichai reflected the new optimism about Thailand's inclination towards democracy.

On February 23, 1991, Army Commander-in-Chief, Suchinda Kraprayam, seized the power in a bloodless coup. The constitution was suspended, the National Assembly was dissolved and martial law was imposed. He appointed a respected civilian, Anand Panyarachun, to the

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, p. 107

<sup>27</sup> Clark D. Neher, p. 309

position of Prime Minister. Anand included technocrats and senior officials in his cabinet and carried out significant reforms and cleared the way for elections. On 22 March 1992, National Assembly elections were held under the new dispensation but no one got the clear majority. In such a situation, Suchinda captured the power, but this act was opposed by the general public of Bangkok since they were demanding an elected Prime Minister. A massive anti-military demonstration took place in Bangkok in May 1992. Unlike the demonstration of October 1973, which was dominated by students, this time, it was dominated by the businessmen and people belonging to upper income group.<sup>28</sup> Suchinda underestimated the power of the general public and resorted to violence with the help of his supporters, in which around 100 people died in Bangkok. He stayed in his office only 48 days and finally submitted his resignation. The demonstrators achieved this victory due to King Bhumibol and modern technology (mass media) which kept demonstrators aware of their progress during the course of action.<sup>29</sup> This incident is being seen as an end of military dominance and beginning of political democracy in Thailand.

Democracy in Thailand had been struggling since more than six

---

<sup>28</sup> Dr. Likhit Dhiravegin, p. 106

<sup>29</sup> Clark D. Neher, p. 310



decades due to dominance of military and weakness of political parties in Thai politics. However, it has contributed to the country's economic, political, and social progress extensively.<sup>30</sup> Thai political system has also changed in the last several decades, as new institutions have arisen and co-opted many of traditional prerogatives of the country's patron-client grouping. Thai Political parties, the parliament, the non-governmental organisations, and the myriad interests groups all play new roles, formerly carried out by personal patron-client entourages. Moreover, as the middle class has grown; education has reached all sections of the Thai society, and more than 90 percent of the citizens have become literate; per capita income has gone up drastically, and the media has found its way to virtually every village and town dweller through newspapers, radio, and television. Therefore, Thai has become far more sophisticated about the politics than in the past. At the same time, the traditional values of "Knowing one's place" and respect for authority are rapidly being replaced by modern egalitarian values.<sup>31</sup>

In 1995, a survey was conducted in Bangkok and far northern states. The respondents were asked series of questions related to democracy and the findings were quite interesting. The majority of the

---

<sup>30</sup> *Democracy in Thailand*, p. 20

<sup>31</sup> Clark D. Neher, "Thailand's Politics as usual" *Current History* (Dec, 1995), p. 435

people, both in Bangkok and rural stated that regular elections are necessary for democracy. And only four per cent said that they are not. In Bangkok, only 68 percent respondents said that regular elections are necessary to democracy but the fact that 37 percent replied that they are not.<sup>32</sup>

On the question of provincial elections, which are still being governed by a governor appointed by the centre, over 90 percent Bangkokians favoured elections for provincial governor. Contrary to this only 46 percent from rural north favoured the elections to provincial governors, 35 percent preferred to retain the system of appointment of governors and 19 percent replied “don’t know.”<sup>33</sup>

Respondents from both areas strongly supported political participation of individual. Interestingly, most of the Bangkokians said that the involvement of military in politics is not necessary but their northern rural counterparts were divided on the issue. As a whole, on a broad range of issues, Bangkokians had more democratic attitude than their northern counterparts.<sup>34</sup>

The election of September 1992 was a historical event in many ways. This election brought about a coalition of parties who opposed the

---

<sup>32</sup> Jib Logerfo, p. 910

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, p. 911

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 912

military rule and supported civilian government. It was also because Chuan Leekpai, who became Prime Minister, was the first Thai Prime Minister from an humble family background. He became the longest serving elected civilian Prime Minister in Thai history. After losing the support of his coalition partner, he called for elections, which was further a saga of routinization of democracy. For the first time in many years, a free and fair election was carried out by a civilian Prime Minister and virtually no group in Thailand called for an authoritarian rule. The election was held on July 2, 1995, the Chart Thai party won the majority of seats and its leaders Banharn Silpa-archa became the Thailand's twenty-first Prime Minister.

The country has achieved enormous economic growth which is positive sign for the development of democracy, because political system becomes stronger when economy is flourishing. The emergence of various organisations, such as labour unions, farmer's groups, women's association and slum organisations, has helped Thai people to know their rights.<sup>35</sup> Now Thai people are enjoying the liberty of speech, expression of ideas and free press, which are back bone of democracy.<sup>36</sup> At present the subject of democracy is being taught in high schools and secondary

---

<sup>35</sup> Clark D. Neher, p. 314

<sup>36</sup> *Democracy in Thailand*, p. 21

schools throughout the country.<sup>37</sup> Recently, Thai government has made an attempt to reform Thai politics, from representative democracy to participatory democracy, is certainly going to shape the future of Thai 'democracy.'

---

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, p. 23

# CHAPTER V

## CONCLUSION

The democratisation process in Thailand in reality has been started long back during the late nineteenth century, by the enlightened Thai kings when most of the third world countries were either being ruled by the despotic Monarchs or by the Western Colonial powers. Unlike the European Monarchs, who were either thrown out by a revolution or were forced to rule under the constitution, Thai kings themselves took the initiative and started social and political reforms. King Monkut was the first Thai King to start social and political reforms, when he introduced Western education and abolished the outdated customs and beliefs.

King Chulalongkorn the Great, further strengthened the democratisation process by bringing out reforms in various areas such as administration, fiscal policy, the legal system, military organisation and abolition of carvee and slavery system. King Chulalongkorn the Great, formally led the foundation of democracy in Thailand when he ordered for the election of Judges because he considered elections as an integral part of democracy. To make Democracy successful, he granted religious freedom, elevated the status of women, gave right to appeal to the King, advocated

equality before law and highlighted the role of press in democratic society by giving the permission to print civil services news in Royal Gazette. To make people aware of democratic norms, he gave order to election of village headman and also granted the voting right to women.

The King Rama VI passed the bill of compulsory primary Education Act and granted the freedom of press. To make people aware of their rights, he himself wrote an article in a newspaper. To train people into democratic norms, he established a toy-model town. To make the administration of the toy-model town realistic, he promulgated a constitution which gave its supposed citizens to select their political leaders from two political parties and party with the majority vote would form the government. There was a parliament, a forum for debate and discussion and a newspaper to criticise the government – To train the people in self-governing at local level, King Prajadhipok started municipal elections. He tried to promulgate a democratic constitution but he could not do so due to the objection from the Royal family members.

Thailand was able to retain her independence because of the centralized rule, political and social reforms and diplomatic policies of its kings. However, the absolute monarchy came to an end on June 24, 1932

and monarchy became constitutional, when Western educated military and civilian officers staged a coup.

The first democratic government was formed in Thailand immediately after coup of June 1932. The first Prime Minister, Phraya Manopakon was a civilian, first constitution was written by a civilian, and the committee for drafting a permanent constitution was mainly consisting of civilians. Civilians might have continued to rule if they have stuck together but internal conflict among them provided an opportunity to army to seize power. Therefore, Thailand's initial experiment with democracy proved failure due to civilian divisiveness. The army provided order and security but at the cost of freedom. Martial law and repression in the form of harassment of opposition members became frequent. Army remained in power for more than three decades, legitimizing their rule by occasional elections and promulgation of constitutions.

Thai students have been playing very crucial role in making of modern Thailand. In fact, it were the students, those who were studying in Europe, engineered a plan to overthrow the absolute monarchy, which they succeeded on 24<sup>th</sup> June 1932. But after the coup of 1932, the students activities were not much until the formation of National Student Centre of



Thailand (NSCT) in 1969. Although, during this period they went for the demonstration against various social and political issues such as in 1940 against the French, in 1947 against the military coup, in 1959 against the Phibun's government because of evidence of fraud in the elections, in 1962 against the World Court verdict which had gone in favour of Cambodia and in 1969 against the 30 percent hike in bus fare.

The National Student Centre of Thailand (NSCT) was formed immediately after the successful demonstrations against the bus fare hike. After the formation of NSCT, the students for the first time attracted the attention of general public when they observed ten days "Boycott Japanese Goods" campaign from November 20, 1972 to November 30, 1972. In this task, the students got support from the press, public and even the King also supported their view. In December 1972, students again went for demonstrations against the government's decision to issue Decree No. 299 which gave power to Minister of Justice to control the Judges. By this time NSCT, at the beginning of which was a liberal organization and was more concerned with social issues, turned from social to political issues under the leadership of new Secretary General Thirayuth Boonmee.

In such an atmosphere where there were no traditions of democratic politics in the western sense of parliamentary party politics as organised political parties were weak, students became the focal point of all opposition. The youth, frustrated due to unemployment and angered by the army attempt to curb their freedom, the students became the champion of people's cause, clean government free from corruption and free expression, and raised the banner of revolt.

In 1973, even before the uprising, the students held frequent discussions and symposium on drafting a new constitution. The student in collaboration with the University professors and intellectuals aimed at promoting a democratic constitution in the country. In this task, they were supported by the press and the public. An additional factor in their favour was cracks that were appearing up in army ranks, as it was later apparent from General Kris Sivara's refusal to massacre the unarmed students during the revolts.

After student uprising, the normal life was disrupted in Bangkok for several weeks due to strikes in industrial plants, factories and even Railways and Commercial Banks. Long years of dictatorship had kept the Thai people

subservient, but students revolts seemed to have awakened the people to an awareness of their rights.

However, the students uprising of 1973 had presented the nation an opportunity to evolve a stable democratic government. The King appointed Dr. Sanya Dhammasakdi as the new Prime Minister of new care taker government. Dr. Sanya promised a new constitution within three months and his cabinet was dominated by civilians, in which only there were only two senior army officials.

From October 1973 onwards, the political climate in Thailand became highly volatile. Between 1973 to 1976, several governments had been formed but no one was able to give a stable government. Finally, on October 6, 1976 a bloody coup took place in which hundreds of leftists were massacred by the rightists and police forces. After the coup the new government was headed by the former Supreme Court Judge Thanin Kraivixien. This dictatorship was the worse than the military governments in many respects. Finally in October 1976 armed forces commander-in-chief, General Kriangsak Chomnan, seized power. The new constitution was promulgated in 1978, according to which anyone with support of parliament

could become the Prime Minister and permanent civil servants and military officers could hold the political posts at the same time.

General Prem Tinsulananda became Prime Minister in 1980 due to failure of the Economic policies of previous government. During his tenure the military was still quite dominant but political parties played major role in linking military, civilian, bureaucratic and business interests. After the election of 1983, the power of appointed senate was greatly reduced and appointment of civil servants and military officers to the position of Council of Ministers were totally banned by the constitutional reforms.

New election was held in 1988 for the House of Representatives and Chaticahi Choonhvan became the new Prime Minister. He was the first elected member of parliament to become the Prime Minister after 1976. The new constitution was promulgated in December 1991 and National Assembly election was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1992. Since now party got the majority seat, in such a situation general Suchinda seized power. But he had to face opposition from the general public of Bangkok who were demanding for an elected Prime Minister. There were so many demonstration against the military government and hundreds of people were killed by army and the police. However, finally general Suchinda resigned because people got

support from the King and media. This was a historical event in Thai political history. Unlike the demonstration of 1973, which was dominated by the students, this time it was dominated by the businessmen and people belonging to upper income group. It was a historical event also because first time in Thai history people rejected the government led by the army General and demanded an elected Prime Minister.

On 10<sup>th</sup> June 1992, King appointed Ananda as the new Prime Minister. On the same day of his appointment, National Assembly approved constitutional amendments which reduced the power of non-elected Senate and stipulated that the Prime Minister must be an elected member of Assembly. The new election was held on 13<sup>th</sup> September, 1992 in which Thailand oldest party, Democratic Party (DP), ~~won~~ won the largest number of seats. The leader of Democratic Prty, Chuan Leekpai, found a coalition government with the help of other political parties. Leekpai's becoming Prime Minister is being seen as an end of the military rule in history of Thai political.

Since last fifty years various social, political and economic changes took place in Thailand. One of the greatest changes during the last fifty years has been the rapid economic growth and ~~size~~ size of middle class. Rural

areas of whole country is also changing. The access of better communication and commercialization of agriculture led to the emergence of new wealthy middle class in Thai village. The development of mass media and availability of television, even in interior villages, awaken the people's desire for better standard of living. The emergence of various organisations such as labour unions, farmers group, women association and slum organisations made Thai people aware of their rights.

The stride towards democracy in Thailand is certain as the people are now enjoying the liberty of speech, expression of ideas and free press which are the backbone of democracy in any country. The movement, however, is slow because of the absence of a proper civil society and grassroot party politics and institutions. There are also some negative impacts of these changes on Thai democracy as the emerging new dominant groups, particularly in rural areas, are intensively indulging in vote buying activities.

The path to democracy in Thailand is still quite arduous as the transition to any system is never smooth. Once a proper civil society develops and political institutions come into place many of the distortions of democracy will be corrected and Thailand would move towards a more

successful democratic system in course of time. The history of western democracy has also taken the path of turmoil and tension and ultimately settling down to a more stable democracy. Thailand is also moving towards that direction.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

## Books

1. Ahmad, Zakaria Haji and Harald Crouch, ed., *Military -Civilian Relations in Southeast Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985)
2. Almond, G. A. and G. B. Powell (Jr.), *Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach* (New Delhi, 1975)
3. Allison, Gordon. H., *All About Thailand* (Bangkok, 1967)
4. Audric, John, *Siam: Kingdom of Saffron Robe* (London, 1969)
5. Basche, James, *Thailand: Land of Free* (New York, 1971)
6. Ball, Macmohan W., *Nationalism and Communalism in Southeast Asia* (Melbourne, 1952)
7. Bienen, Henry, *The Military Intervenes: Case Studies in Political Development* (New York, 1968)
8. Brumell, J. H, *Communalism in Southeast Asia* (New York, 1959)
9. Blanchard. W. and others, *Thailand: Its people, Its society, Its culture* (New Haven, 1957)
10. Brailey. Nigel. J., *Thailand and the Fall of Singapore* (London: Western Press, 1986)
11. Butwell. Richard, *Southeast Asia Today and Tomorrow: A Political Analysis* (New York, 1961)
12. Butwell, Richard, *South East Asia: A Political Introduction* (New York: Praeger Publication, 1975)
13. Cady, John F., *Southeast Asia: Its Historical Development* (New York, 1964)
14. Chaloeintiarana. Thak, ed., *Thailand: The Politics of Despotic Paternalism*, (Bangkok: Social Sciences Association, 1979)
15. Coast, John. *Some Aspects of Siamese Politics* ( , 1953)
16. Crozier. Brian, *Southeast Asia in Turmoil* (Middlesex, 1965)
17. Darling, Frank C., *Thailand and United States* (Washington, 1966)
18. Dhiravegin, Likhit, *Demi Democracy: Evolution of the Thai Political System* (Singapore: Times Academy Press, 1992)
19. Elliott, David, *Thailand: Origins of Military Rule* (London: Zed Press Ltd., 1978)
20. Emerson. Rupert, *Americans in South East Asia: The Roots of Commitment* (New York , 1973)
21. Emerson. Rupert, *Representative Government in Southeast Asia* (Cambridge, 1955)
22. Finer, S.E. *The Han on Horseback: The Role of Military in Politics* (London, 1962)
23. Gavin, Kenedy, *The Military in the Third World* (London, 1974)
24. Girling, J.L.S., *Thailand: Society and Politics* (London: Cornell University Press, 1981)
25. Gutteridge, William F., *Military Institution and Power in New States* (London, 1964)
26. Hall, D.G.E. *A History of South-East Asia* (New York, 1970)
27. Heeger, Gerald A., *The Politics of Under Development* (London, 1974)
28. Hong, Lysa, *Thailand in the Nineteenth Century: Evolution of the Economy and Society*. (Singapore: Institute of SouthEast Asian Studies, 1984)
29. Imam Zafar. *World Powers in South and Southeast Asia* (New Delhi, 1972)



30. Insor, D, *Thailand: A Political, Social and Economic Analysis* (London, 1963)
31. Janowitz, Morris, *The Military in Political Development of New Nations: An Essay in Comparative Analysis* (Chicago, 1964)
32. Johnson, John J, ed., *The Role of Military in Under Developed Countries* (New Jersey, 1962)
33. Joseph, L, ed., *Problems of Politics and Administration in Thailand* (Indiana, 1962).
34. Jumsai, Manich M.L., *History of Anglo-Thai Relations* (Bangkok, 1970).
35. Jumsai, Manich M.L., *Popular History of Thailand* (Bangkok, 1970)
36. Jumsai, Manich M.L., *History of Thailand and Cambodia: From the days of the Ankor to Present* (Bangkok, 1970)
37. Kahin, George, *Governments and Politics in Southeast Asia* (New York, 1964)
38. Kautsky, John H., *The Political Consequences of Modernisation* (London, 1972)
39. Kearney, Robert N., ed., *Politics and Modernization in South and Southeast Asia* (Cambridge, 1975)
40. Kullick. Elliott and Dick Wilson. *Thailand's Turn: Profile of a New Dragon* (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1993)
41. Leys, C., ed., *Politics and Change in Developing Countries* (London, 1969)
42. Luttwak. E., *The coup d'etat* (London, 1969)
43. Lyon, Peter, *War and Peace in Southeast Asia*, (London, 1969)
44. McAlister, John T., ed., *Southeast Asia The Politics of National Integration* (New York, 1973).
45. Mook, Van. H. J. *The Stakes of Democracy in Southeast Asia* (London, 1950)
46. Morrel. D., and Chi-Anan Samudva Nji, *Thailand: Reforms and Revolution* (Cambridge: Olegeschdager Gun Hain Publications, 1981)
47. Neher, C.D., *Modern Thai Politics: From Village to Nation*(Cambridge, 1979)
48. Nuechterlein, Donald E., *Thailand and the Struggle for Southeast Asia* (New York, 1965)
49. Palmer. Monte and Larry Stern, eds., *Political Development in Changing Societies: An Analysis of Modernisation* (London, 1971)
50. Pye, Lucian, *Politics, Personality and National Building* (New Haven, 1962)
51. Prizzia. Ross, *Thailand in Transition: The Role of Oppositional Forces* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii, 1985)
52. Panyarachun, Anand, ed., *Thailand: King Bhumibol Adulyadej – The Golden Jubilee (1946-1996)* (Singapore: Archipelago Press, 1996)
53. Rajaretnam, M and Jone, So, Jean, eds., *Trends in Thailand* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1973)
54. *Royal Addresses and Speeches* (Bangkok: Office of the Prime Minister 1975)
55. Ray, Jayant Kumar, *The Portraits of Thai Politics* (New Delhi: Oriental and Longman Ltd., 1972)
56. Riggs, Fred. W. *Thailand: Modernization of Bureaucratic Polity* (Honolulu, 1966)
57. Said, Abdul A., *Protagonists of Change: Subcultures in Development and Revolution* (New Jersey, 1971)

58. Samudavanijha, Chai-Anan, *The Thai Young Turks* (Singapore, 1982)
59. Sanchai, Samporn and Lim, Joo-Jock, eds., *Trends in Thailand II* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1976)
60. Sarasas, Thra, *My Country: Thailand, Its History, Its Geography and Culture*. (Bangkok, 1952)
61. Speed, F.W., *The Southeast Asian Peninsula Today* (London, 1970)
62. Stiffin William J., *The Thai Bureaucracy Constitutional Change and Development* (Honolulu, 1966)
63. Sudhamani, S.R. *Political Development in Thailand (1958-1963)* (Tirupati: S.V.U. Press, 1980)
64. Vanhanen, Tatu, *The Process of Democratisation* (New York, 1990)
65. Vella, Walter F., *The Impact of Western Government in Thailand* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1955)
66. Wadell, J.R.E, *An Introduction to Southeast Asian Politics* (Sydney: John Wiley & Sons Publications Ltd., 1972)
67. Wilson. David A., *Politics in Thailand* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1962)
68. Wilson. David A, *United States and Future of Thailand* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1976)
69. Wilson Dick, *Asia Awakes: A Continent in Transition* (London, 1972)
70. Wright. Joseph J. *Balancing Act: A History of Modern Thailand* (Okland: Pacific Rim Press, 1991)
71. Wyatt. D. K. *Thailand: A Short History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984)
72. Yong Ernest., *The Kingdom of Yellow Robe* (London: Oxford University Press, 1982)
73. *Democracy in Thailand*, published by the Armed Forces Information, Supreme Command Headquarters ( Bangkok, 1996 )
74. *Political Reforms in Thailand: From representative democracy towards participatory democracy* published by News division information department Ministry of Foreign Affairs Saranrom Palace, (Bangkok , 1996)

### Articles

1. Ali, S.M., "Thailand After the Coup," *Pacific Community* (Tokyo), Vol. 3, No. 2, 1972
2. Allman, T.D., "Overthrow of The Thai Generals," *New Statesman* (London), Vol. 86, No. 2229
3. Chalkley, Alan, "Reserve Take over in Thailand: Why Kids Outface the Big Board Tycoons" *Insight* (Hongkong), December, 1973
4. Chalkley, Alan B., "Thailand in Transition" *Insight I and II*, Vol. 3, April, 1973 and May, 1973
5. Chandola. Harish, "Incomplete Struggle," *Economic and Political Weekly* (Bombay), Vol. 8, 3 November 1973.
6. Critchfield. Richard. "Thai Students," *New Republic* (Washington, DC) Vol. 170, No. 20. 18 May 1974
7. Darling, Frank. C, "Thailand: "De-escalation and Uncertainty," *Asian Survey* (California) February. 1969

8. Darling, Frank. C, "Student Protest and Political Change in Thailand," *Pacific Affairs* (Vancouver) Vol. 47, Spring 1979
9. Darling Franc. C, "Political Development in Thailand and the Philippines, A Comparative Analysis," *Southeast Asia* (Illinois), Vol. 1, Nos. 1-2, Winter-Spring 1971
10. "The Habit they never acquired" *The Economist* (London) Vol. 249, 3 November 1973
11. Embree, John F., "Thailand: A Loosely Structured Social System," *American Anthropologist* (New Hampshire) Vol. 52., April-June, 1950
12. "The Student Who Won," *The Economist* (London), Vol. 249, 20 October 1973
13. Evert, Hans Dieter, "The Formation of a Social Class Structure: Urbanisation, Bureaucratization and Social Mobility in Thailand," *American Sociological Review* (New York), Vol. 31, 1996
14. Feit, Edward, "Military Coups and Political Developments," *World Politics* (Princeton) 1960
15. Hanks, Lucien M., Jr. "Merit and Power in Thai Social Order," *American Anthropologist*, Washington, December, 1962
16. Heinze. Ruth-Inge, "Ten days in October-Students Vs. The Military: An Account of Student Uprising in Thailand" *Asian Survey* (California) Vol. 14, No. 6, June 1974
17. Hindley. Donald, "Thailand: The Politics of Passivity," *Pacific Affairs* (Vancouver), Fall 1968
18. Jumbala. Prudhisan, "Towards a Theory of Group Formation in Thai Society and Pressure Groups in Thailand after October Uprising" *Asian Survey* (California) Vol. 14, No. 6, June 1974
19. Kambhu. Jidhand, "Thai Fruits of Revolution," *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hongkong), Vol. 82, 5 November 1973
20. Kambhu. Jidhand, "Thailand: Death of a Regime," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Vol. 82, 22 October. 1973
21. Kraitzer, Ball, "Thai Demands," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Vol. 79, 22 January 1973
22. Logerito. Jim, "Attitude Towards Democracy Among Bangkok an Rural Northern Thais: The Great Divide" *Asian Survey* (California), September, 1996
23. Mezey, Michael L., "The 1971 Coup in Thailand: Understanding Why the Legislature Fails," *Asian Survey* (California), Vol. 13, No. 3, March 1973
24. Mopara G, "Ten days that Shook Thailand," *Indian Worker*, (New Delhi), Vol. 22, No. 19, February 1974
25. Morell. David, "Thailand," *Asian Survey* (California) Vol: 12, February 1972
26. Morell. David, "Thailand," *Asian Survey* (California) Vol. 13, February 1973
27. Morell. David, "Legislative Intervention in Thailand" *Development Process – A Case Study*," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 3, No.8, February, 1973
28. Neher, Clark D., "The Transition to Democracy in Thailand," *Asian Perspectives*, Vol. 20, No. 2, Fall Winter. 1996
29. Neher, Clark D, "Thailand's Politics as Usual," *Current History*, Vol. 94, No. 596, December 1995
30. Pillai, K.S.C., "Students Humble Military in Thailand" *Commerce* (Bombay), Vol. 127, 20 October. 1973

31. Praagh, David Van "Thailand Works at creating an Innately Asian Democracy," *International Perspective* July-August, 1974
32. Prizzia (Ross) and Narang, Sinsawasdi, "Evolution of Thai Student Movement (1940-74)," *Asian Quarterly*, Vol. 1, 1975
33. Race, Jaffrey, "Thailand 1973: We Certainly Have been Ravaged by Something .....", *Asian Survey* Vol. 14, No. 2, February 1974
34. Race, Jaffrey, "Can Democracy Sprout in Thailand," *Mirror* (Singapore), Vol. 10, No 4, 28 January, 1974
35. Shawcross, William, "Legacy of Revolt.," *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hongkong), Vol. 82, 19 November 1973
36. Shuck, Edward L.. Jr., "Thailand: In search of the last trail," *Current History* (Thailand), December 1975
37. Starner, Freances, "Power and Reluctant People" *Far Eastern Economic Review* (HongKong) Vol. 82, 5 November 1973
38. Stockwin, Harvey, "A new Democratic Conscience" *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Vol. 82, 19 November, 1975
39. Stockwin. Harvey, "Suddenly Politicians," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Vol. 82, 31 December 1973
40. Tamada, Yosifumi, "Coup in Thailand (1980-91): Classmates, Internal Conflicts and Relations with Government of the Military" *Southern Asian Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 3, December 1995
41. Weddington, P.A.J., "The Coup d'etat - An Application of a System Framework" *Political Studies* (Oxford), Vol. 22, September 1974
42. Zimmerman, Robert, "Student 'Revolution' in Thailand: The End of the Thai Bureaucratic Polity," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 14, No. 6, June 1974

### **Newspapers and Periodicals**

1. *Asian Recorder* (New Delhi)
2. *Asian Research Bulletin* (Singapore)
3. *Bangkok Post*
4. *Bangkok World*
5. *The Hindu* (Madras and New Delhi)
6. *The Hindustan Times* (New Delhi)
7. *The Indian Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis Journal* (New Delhi)
8. *Journal of Asian Studies* (Ann Harbor, Michigan)
9. *The New York Times*
10. *Southeast Asian Spectrum* (Bangkok)
11. *The Times of India*
12. *Washington Post*