

CHAPTER VII

RELIGION AND THE EDUCATION

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1. The Functional Aspects of Education :

Socialization and Adaptive Primacy

The social function of education is primarily identified with socialization process, which goes on continuously. Socialization points to the process of internalization of norms and values relevant to a given social system, so that effective and efficient role performance by new incumbents can be anticipated and ensured. Interaction amongst the members of a society hinges on the adequate internalization of norms and values by its members. Obviously this can be attained in various ways, formal and informal. The formal method of socialization (institutionalized and structured) is generally called, "education". Whatever is worth perpetuating is sought to be transmitted and steps are taken to ensure that the young generation internalize and incorporate these skills, ideas, norms and values in their behaviour and interaction etc.¹ This in turn involves selective learning which implies systematic institution of certain orientations towards actions on the hand and reinforcement^{of} certain behaviours and roles on the other.

Social mechanisms for learning include educational institutions, family, religious institutions etc. Educational institutions include schools, colleges, and universities to use the inclusive terms rather than in contrast to the primary ones, such as family peer groups etc.

The educational institution, to follow Parsons, helps the taught or the trainees to acquire and internalize both capacities and commitments for successful performance of their future roles and secondly to allocate these human resources within the role structure of the society² in favour of the dominant cultural value-orientation. The dominant value-orientations of industrial society are, for example, universalism, specificity, affective-neutrality and achievement. In the Thai situation the dominant value-orientations place greater emphasis on achievement. Social status and prestige are heavily based on political power and economic wealth, the prime means for which the educational attainment^{is sought}. Therefore, the explicitly intended aim of the would-be-educated is to get trained in order to have an access to the government services or state bureaucracy. Their preference goes to general academic subjects, such as, literature, history and mathematics, but rarely to vocationally oriented subjects such as handicrafts, agriculture and technology etc. Thai education also aims at assimilation of diverse groups, and growth of patriotic loyalty and a consciousness of being a Thai and a Buddhist.

2. The Educational Development and the Role of the Sacred Community (Literati) in Education

The present system of education in Thailand is the product of many forces and influences operative over several centuries. The first educational system in Thailand was quite similar to that of the monastic and cathedral schools of Medieval Europe, i.e., it had a religious orientation and was centred in the temples. Historical evidence shows that the system was quite informal and offered only limited subject teaching. The primary purpose was to provide moral and religious instruction, and for all practical purposes, was designed to train only the male members of the society. Occupationally oriented training was imparted under apprentice in the family units. Young boys were taught how to farm, hunt, fight and develop some of the basic skills in handicrafts; girls were also given training in farming as well as domestic skills. Only the children of aristocracy could expect to receive training in arts and other subjects associated with higher education.³

The monasteries and the palaces were the only places of higher learning for the younger generation of the land prior to the Chakri Reform in the latter half of the 19th century. They were the centre of all learning, namely, art, medicine, astrology, law, philosophy, sculpture, and science. These were

considered ancillary attributes of the monkhood and taught by either monks or ex-monks. While the education at the palaces was made available for members of the royal family and the nobility, the one at the monasteries was meant for the masses.

But the education was relatively undifferentiated and was basically the same for all men. Kings, princes, nobles, merchants and common peasants entered and left the same system at a wide variety of points. They shared the common bonds of a universal language and a universal religion. The educational activities were identified with the religious acts of merit, thus upholding ascetical salvation as a value, in the educational outlook.⁴

As it was, learning and scholarship in Thailand never became the exclusive preserve of a single class, caste or order on account of the fact that the religious career was open and accessible to the masses in the society, and thus social and economic mobility in the traditional Thai society was relatively greater. In Thailand there was no rigidified class of the literati, such as Brahmins in India, Chinese Pao che, or Jewish Rabbi. However, the literati (Rajapurohit) employed by the royal court were mostly recruited from a group of Buddhist and Brahmanist scholars whose basic training was imparted within the temples.

In addition, the educational pattern, though it was religious in tone, was also competent over wide areas of secular learning for those in need of such instruction and the requisite bent of mind.

Looking back in Thai history one may find it difficult to make a judgement on the educational activities before the Sukhodaya period. But it is conceivable that in the Sukhodaya kingdom the educational activities were closely associated with those of the polity. The important fact is that the early educational system of the Siamese at Sukhodaya was heavily influenced by the educational traditions of Classical India : Brahmanist outlook through the Khmer on the one hand and Buddhist through Sinhalese, the Mon, and the Burmese on the other. It was modified to serve the secular and religious ends of Thai society.

It is no exaggeration to say that since the Sukhodaya period down to the Chakri Reform the educational activities were identical with the religious ones. The office of the Educational Ministry might be identified with the highest office of the religious order headed by the Supreme Patriarch who was appointed by the king and acted on the latter's behalf. The monasteries organized their attendant schools throughout the kingdom and the monks acted as the unpaid

teachers. Added to these are the Brahmans who played a similar role in education, but confined themselves within the palace walls with the political aristocracy. Christian missionaries were active in preaching of Christianity, through their educational institutions particularly in the reign of King Narai of Ayudhya and later in the reign of King Rama III of Chakri dynasty of Bangkok.

Evidently, with the maximal assistance of the literati well-versed in the educational traditions of Indian origin, King Ramkamhaeng was successful in the invention and institution of Siamese script. It was the foremost monumental work in the field of Thai education. Two well-known writings of the earlier days, were the Traibhum Pra Ruang and the Treatise of Lady Nopamas officially known as Thao Srichulaluk.

Judging from the Traibhum Pra Ruang, one may note that students in those days studied in comparable modern callings, such as, Buddhism, geography, public administration, astrology and ethics.⁵ By carefully reading the Treatise or Text of Thao Srichulaluk, one may also categorize subjects taught during Sukhodaya period as military arts (weaponry and strategy), medicine, construction, art and craft and girl's handicrafts (craving, embroidery and cloth making).⁶

This established educational pattern is said to have been

followed by the Thais at Ayudhya. It was modified and readjusted by King Trailok. As was noted before, in reorganizing the country's administrative structure he was assisted by the Khmer Brahmins who introduced a good number of laws on the pattern^{of} those of Hindu tradition. The result was the codification of the voluminous books of laws as Code of Manu, the Laws of Civil and Military Hierarchies etc. This is said to have supplemented the existing system of Thai education and contributed to further development. It also led to the crystalli-^zation of two separate roles in education : one played by the Buddhist literati and the other by the Brahmanist.

In the area of Buddhist learning, there were some remarkable works, such as, Mahachart Kamluang (in Thai) composed under the full patronage of King Trailok, Manggalatthadipani by Phra Sirimanggalacharya and Chinakalamali by Phra Siriratanapanyacharya (both in Pali), to mention only three chosen ones composed during the 15th and the 16th centuries illustrate the point.⁷

Judging from the standpoint of civil religion these works have played a significant role in instilling the masses with Buddhist ethics and its attendant social values such as ideas of a good man, good behaviour etc. in relation to a community, state and society. From time to time when need arose, the Buddhist literati monks were, according to Wyatt, recruited to

serve the state at the expense of their monastic life. Undoubtedly constant consultation on educational matters was sought from the religious order by the secular order.⁸

In the 1670s and 1680s, in response to the European Christian mission especially the French Missionaries who established the religious school at Ayudhya for the purpose of propagation of Christianity by means of education, the Thai scholars were found seriously engaged in intellectual activities. As a result, an outstanding treatise called "Chindamani" (the Gem of Thoughts), the first textbook in the Thai language, was composed by Phra Horathibodi, the Court Astrologer of King Narai for teaching the Thai language to the children of the land.⁹

In this text are laid down the principles of Thai writing system and their applications which are in many ways typical of Indian textbooks and treatises. The book abounds in list of words derived from Pali and Sanskrit, the various types of verse forms and such statements as "once you know this you can become a clerk and enjoy easy life". With the help of the text, the existing educational standards were improved as evidenced by improvement in style and orthography in documents, as well as development of Thai literature.¹⁰

After the Petraja revolution in 1688 Siam was forced to be an isolationist state. It was realized that unless foreign

relations were handled with great caution, there could be a loss of the national independence.¹¹ There was stagnation in education, except for a little revival in the reigns of King Songdham and Boromkot.

During the early Bangkok period, King Rama I and King Rama II were preoccupied with the work of nation-rebuilding, after the city of Ayudhya was destroyed by the invading Burmese in 1767. One of the important features of reconstruction of Siam by these kings was in the area of education.

With these ends in view, King Rama I convened a great Council of the Sangha to undertake compilation of a new edition of the Tripitaka. This action brought orthodox standards to bear upon the working of monasteries, while at the same time bringing great merit to the name of the king as patron and defender of Buddhism. His patronage was also extended to the royal monasteries and the instruction and the examination of monkhood. Another of the best known works under his reign is the great legal revision that culminated in the completion of the Laws of the Three Seals (Kotmai Tra Samduang) in 1805 which gave the kingdom a single consistent code of the country's laws. The Ayudhya-patterned state ceremonies and their implications attendant on kingship were also restored. Outstanding works, such as, the Ramayana or the Ramakien in Thai, classical Dalang, Inao, Aniruth, Rajathiraj and Samkok were compiled and

brought into public notice. The focal thrust of these works is to demonstrate social obligations - what and how one should sacrifice oneself to one's community, country and society exemplified by heroic leader or king and his heroic soldiers, loyal to their leader or king.

Similarly the Samkok (the Three Gangs) is the first classical work drawn from Chinese literature to Thai, thereby pointing to a process of "sinicization" by which a Chinese way of life had an impact on Thai society in the First Reign of the present Chakri dynasty. Later on, the Chinese way of life got itself established in the subsequent reigns particularly of Rama IV and of Rama V.¹² The same influence is apparent in Thai architecture and decorative arts during the early Bangkok period as evidenced by those encountering anyone while entering and walking along Wat Pra Kaew and Wat Phra Jetupon in Bangkok. This was developed in close association with the economic activities carried out by the Chinese immigrants as already pointed out. This is tempting to see this Sinicization as a prelude to later Westernization, thus both being important aspects of changes of the nineteenth century.¹³

~~At~~ Wat Phra Jetupon established during the reign of King Rama III, came to be known as "open university", where inscriptions from the Tripitaka and various educational sources were kept and exhibited. The texts of the inscriptions cover ethics, literature, arts and sciences.

The educational pattern took a new turn under impact of Western influences in the latter half of the 19th century, in the form of Christian missions and Trading Firms.

In order to cope up with such new influences King Rama IV and King Rama V initiated certain trends of reform and reorganization. Education which was one amongst these was shifted from its religious outlook to be organized as secular activity.

To be able to deal with the complex problems regarding education the two kings firstly got themselves educated under Western teachers and then tried to secure services of specialists in the Western type of education based on secular outlook. There were none in the circle of the Buddhist and Brahmanist traditions. So Christian missionaries from outside the realm of Thai traditional intellectual life were employed by the Chakri royal court to help Thais run national education. The King's School at Suan Anand, the first school of the Western-oriented education, established by King Rama V in 1878 was put under direction of an American missionary, the Reverend Sammual G. McF^aland. Similarly the Royal School at Suan Kulab founded in 1883, and the Medical school at Siriraj started in 1891 were put under Missionary scholars. In addition, Robert Morant was appointed as an educational advisor, to the government, when the Department of Education

was established in 1887. Besides many other Western Christian missionaries were seen operating independent missionary schools. However, all these educational activities were under the close purview of Prince Damrong, the capable minister of the Interior. Obviously, the prime orientation of Western type education, was to train the young to serve the state bureaucracy, and help counter Western imperialism. In the 1880s training schools were opened by the Royal Survey Department, the gendamerie, the military and various other departments, under leadership of King Rama V.¹⁴

Later education of a similar orientation was extended to the masses. The first public school for the commoners was established at Wat Mahanaparam in 1884, and was followed by several schools of the same pattern at Wat Prayunrawong and Wat Rakhang in Dhonburi. With the lapse of time the number of the public schools was on a rapid increase. By August 1885, sixteen vernacular schools had been established in Bangkok. The administration of these schools was in the hands of the Buddhist monks who also served as the teachers while financial support came from the king. The government-supported monastery-style schools of the sort were also established in the provincial monasteries. To carry out this task effectively learned Buddhist monks were assigned educational activities at the various schools both in Bangkok and provinces over the kingdom. These were carried out under the leadership of

Prince-monk, Wajirayan, in close cooperation with Prince Damrong. In this connection the two Buddhist academies, namely, Mahamakut and Mahachula were established in Bangkok to train the monks for the purpose.¹⁵

In 1921 the Primary Education Act was decreed by King Rama VI, making primary education compulsory. Accordingly a National Education Plan was for the first time drafted in 1921, and was put into practice. Consequently education was classified into primary, secondary and higher levels.

Thus Thai educational thought shifted from its Buddhist outlook to a Western outlook in favour of empiricism, more suited to a secular life. The former was on a decline while the latter has been making headway in Thai intellectual life. In response to the latter the Buddhist literati, both monks and laymen (particularly King Rama IV, King Rama V, Prince Damrong and Prince-monk Wajirayan), put their all-out efforts to redefine their own traditions and reorganize their activities in this regard. As a result, the Buddhist studies were recodified and rearranged in a more systematic manner. The text-books on Buddhism were written in Thai for different courses in the Buddhist studies. Series of text-books, namely, Mulabot Bunpakit, Vahanitikorn, Aksornprayok, Sangyokpidhan, Vipotvicharn and Pisarn Karan were written, replacing the Chindamani, for being used in the public schools.

More importantly, a further and far-reaching step taken to develop the educational activities was the sweeping reorganization of the national education which was carried out under the Ministry of Education in 1892 in concert with other governmental organizations. The Royal Guard Pages School was raised to the university status, in 1917, and was known as Chulalongkorn University. This first university in the land was to be a model for development of ^{the} country's higher education. Meanwhile some of the younger generation started going abroad for an advanced study.

But in this development from 1910 onwards no monk was selected to study the advanced courses in modern sciences and technology for the sake of further development in the massive education. As a result, in the post-1932 coup period, the Buddhist Order was ignored and left out and has been separated from secular education. To make the matters worse monks are at present barred from state-run institutions of higher education, or the state universities. Two Buddhist universities were only lately organized and put into the academic stream. They are still quite young and are facing many problems.

3. The Structure of Modern National Education

In Thailand as in other Asian countries, formal education is organized, into the primary or elementary (excluding pre-

primary), the secondary and the higher or university stage. The 7+3+2(3)+4 pattern of education consists of the following : seven years of primary education (four years for the lower primary and three years for the upper primary); three years of junior secondary; two years of senior secondary (three years for vocational education), and four years of degree courses. This is being replaced by a newly introduced educational pattern of 6+3+3+4. This pattern consists of the following : six years of composite primary education, three years of junior secondary, three years of senior secondary and four years of degree courses. The initial state of adjustment will have been completed by 1983.¹⁶ The present exposition follows the former.

The academic and administrative responsibilities are vested in the different offices assigned with the tasks concerned. At the pre-primary and primary levels, the responsibility is shared by the Ministries of Education and of the Interior. At the secondary level it is mainly by the Ministry of Education and the schools for professional specialization, such as, Royal Military Academy are accountable to the concerned ministries. At the higher or the university stage, it is the state universities Bureau that looks after. However the two Buddhist universities are accountable to the ecclesiastical Council of Elders. Tables 7.1 A, 7.1 B, and 7.1 C, point to the overall organization of educational activities in Thailand.

Table 7.1A : Distribution of Educational Institutions by Type, Courses, Instructors and Students under Jurisdiction of Ministry of Education in Thailand, 1974.

Type of institution	Courses of study	Location		Instructors		Students	
		Bangkok-Thonburi Metropolitan	Provincial	Bangkok-Thonburi Metropolitan	Provincial	Bangkok-Thonburi Metropolitan	Provincial
1. Department of General Education		125	1,046	8,759	31,252	190,467	717,798
A. Division of Secondary Education	Secondary I-V	76	744	6,391	23,136	136,085	515,447
B. Division of Primary Education	Kindergarten III Primary I-VII	41	206	2,036	6,662	46,003	138,173
C. Division of Special Education	Kindergarten III Primary I-VII Secondary I-III	8	96	362	2,454	7,404	64,174
2. Department of Vocational Education		24	137	1,901	4,638	36,315	64,934
A. Division of School	Secondary I-VI	3	121	342	3,442	3,903	46,302
B. Division of College	Secondary IV-VI Diploma Course	16	16	1,559	1,196	32,412	18,542
3. College of Technology and Vocation	Degree Course	4	1			801	122
4. Department of Teacher-training	A. Certificate Course Diploma Course Degree Course	6	30	1,117	3,342	13,708	53,517
B. Kindergarten I-III Primary I-VII Secondary I-V		5	5			2,541	1,560
5. Department of Fine Arts	Primary V-VII Secondary I-V Diploma Course	2	1	247	56	2,000	399
6. College of Physical Education	Diploma Course	-	5		162	-	1,705
7. Private Education		1,012	1,667	20,723	32,377	503,977	729,384
A. General	Kindergarten I-III Primary I-VII Secondary I-V	948	1,640	18,703	31,739	455,338	713,687
B. Vocational	Secondary IV-VI	64	27	2,020	638	48,639	15,697
Total		1,174	2,391	32,777	71,827	749,899	1,569,419

Source : The Ministry of Education of Thailand, Educational Statistics Booklet (in Thai) prepared and published by the Office of Private Education, 1976, p. 13.

Table 7.1C : Distribution of Students, by Stage of Education, and by Age, Enrolment, and the No. at the schooling Age, Thailand, 1975.

1 Education stage	2 Age Group	3 Enrol- ments	4 Population at this schooling age	3 : 4 Average	% of Total students
1. Kindergarten I	4	82,818	1,349,106	6.14	1.02
" II	5	67,237	1,303,438	5.16	0.83
" III	6	53,630	1,259,640	4.26	0.66
Sub-total Pre-Primary	4-6	203,685	3,912,184	5.21	2.52
2. Lower Primary I	7	1,529,830	2,217,584	125.65	18.91
" II	8	1,271,609	1,177,144	108.02	15.72
" III	9	1,229,740	1,138,104	108.04	15.20
" IV	10	1,109,190	1,101,104	100.73	13.71
Sub-total Lower Primary	7-10	5,140,367	4,634,026	110.93	63.54
3. Upper Primary V and equivalent	11	590,761	1,066,247	55.41	7.30
" VI	12	470,404	1,031,007	45.60	5.82
" VII	13	407,687	994,263	41.00	5.04
Sub-total Upper Primary	11-13	1,468,852	3,091,517	47.51	18.16
4. Junior Secondary I and equivalent	14	326,913	957,381	34.15	4.04
" "	15	281,452	922,056	30.52	3.48
" "	16	242,168	886,907	27.30	2.99
Sub-total Junior Secondary	14-16	850,533	2,766,434	30.74	10.51
5. Senior Secondary IV and equivalent	17	158,477	857,901	18.47	1.96
" V	18	108,626	837,460	12.97	1.34
" VI	19	35,807	822,578	4.35	0.44
Sub-total Senior Secondary	17-19	302,910	2,517,948	12.03	3.74
6. Graduation degree Course					
First Year	19	30,273	822,578	3.68	0.37
Second Year	20	35,651	807,353	4.42	0.44
Third Year	21	25,494	792,906	3.22	0.32
Fourth Year	22	20,357	775,898	2.62	0.25
Fifth Year ¹	23	2,134	754,050	0.28	0.03
Sixth Year ²	24	1,175	728,796	0.16	0.02
Total graduation degree course	19-24	115,084	4,681,561	2.46	1.42
7. Postgraduate course					
Postgraduate certificate	-	368	-	-	-
Master's degree	-	7,931	-	-	0.10
Doctorate degree	-	52	-	-	-
Sub Total	19-24	123,435	4,681,561	2.64	1.52
Grand Total	4-24	8,089,802	20,781,112	38.93	100.00

Notes : 1 Exclusively for the courses for architecture and Technology.

2 Exclusively for the courses for medicine and some applied sciences.

Source : The Ministry of Education of Thailand, Educational Statistics Booklet 1975, pp. c. 1, p. 14.

Table 7.1 B.: Distribution of Educational Institutions, by Sponsoring Bodies, Courses, Instructors and Students beyond Jurisdiction of Ministry of Education in Thailand, 1974.

Type of institution	Courses of Study	Location		Instructors		Students	
		Bangkok-Dhomburi Metropolitan	Provincial	Bangkok-Dhomburi Metropolitan	Provincial	Bangkok-Dhomburi Metropolitan	Provincial
1. Bangkok-Dhomburi Metropolitan	Kindergarten III Primary I-VII	386	-	7,690	-	220,879	-
2. Provincial Administrative Authority	Kindergarten III Primary I-VII	-	27,307	-	137,239	-	5,252,991
3. Municipality	Kindergarten III Primary I-VII	-	381	-	6,091	-	194,743
4. Division of Border Patrolling Police	Kindergarten III Primary I-VII	-	142	-	-	430	10,934
5. State Universities Bureau		26	16	8,120	2,518	71,562	19,375
A. Universities*	Degree Course	6	3	3,719	2,038	41,219	11,479
	Kindergarten I-III Primary I-VII Secondary I-V	3	4	394	136	5,111	11,479
B. Sri Nakharindrajavidyalaya University	Degree Course	4	4	602	368	5,548	4,130
	Kindergarten I-III Primary I-VII Secondary I-V	3	1	159	43	2,971	768
C. Dhomburi Technical Institute	Degree Course	3	-	560	-	5,350	-
D. Institute of Agricultural Technology	Degree Course	-	1	-	67	-	382
E. Private College	Diploma Course Degree Course	7	3	386	166	11,363	1,204
Total		412	28,346	15,810	196,578	292,441	5,478,043
Grand Total for Tables 7.1A and 1B.		1,586	31,237	48,587	268,405	1,042,340	7,047,462

* The figure excludes that of Ramkamkaeng University and Buddhist Universities.

Source : The Ministry of Education of Thailand, Educational Statistics Booklet 1975, prepared and published by the Office of Private Education, 1975, p. 13.

3.1 The Primary Education (Prathom Suksa)

To begin with, schools, with the exception of those affiliated to universities or to specific higher educational institutions may be classified into four categories : local, municipal, government and private. Local and municipal schools are maintained partially by local funds and partially by the national budget (Teachers' Salary). They are administered by local government agents, namely; Provincial Administrative Authority and Municipality, both of which are attached to the Ministry of the Interior. The government schools intended to be the models are run directly by the Ministry of Education while the private schools are established and maintained by private individuals or voluntary agencies, but are academically controlled and partially financed (for teachers' salary) by the government through the Ministry of Education. The local and municipal schools manage only primary education (the pre-primary included), while the government and private schools look after pre-primary, primary, secondary education and vocational training.

The primary education is made compulsory by the state for children in the age groups 6-15. A child of either sex must attend the primary school run by any agency, as aforesaid. Below and above the line it is left to the guardian's discretion.

With regard to the administrative aspect, the Thai educational system is centralized through the Ministry of Education. The government control extends even to the village school. The means of control are funds which are mainly drawn from the national budget. The teaching and administrative staffs of all the public schools are government or semi-government employees. Regulations issued by the Ministry of Education determine school hours, curricula, text-books and examination. The Ministry has also made rules concerning the dress of students and style of new schools built in the villages. The private schools do not escape from such control.

The public primary school students, particularly in the rural sector, are not discriminated by their social class. For example, all the children of the schooling-age at Ban Wangchai and Ban Nampong are found attending the same village primary schools. Anyone of the schooling-age failing to undergo primary education or their guardians are bound to get punished under the state law. Through the demographic records for the educational purpose kept at the office of the village Head and the office of the District Educational Inspector, the shirkers could be easily found out. Inevitably, both the village head and the educational inspector are required to submit an annual report on those entering the school age, to the District Educational Officer, before the commencement of an academic year. Of course, failures are treated as an exception deserves it.

In case of the urban-residential public and private schools, reputed ones attract children from well-to-do families. Accordingly, their children are preferably sent to attend the schools. The Christian-styled schools and the experimental schools called, "the Demonstration School" run by a university faculty or a college of education are the case in point.

By and large the religious school is not allowed to recruit anyone of this schooling age for purely religious training unless he or she completes primary education, or could do so simultaneously. The Buddhist Order recruit its members from those who have completed the primary education.

The curriculum prescribed for primary education puts emphasis on simple arithmetic and reading and writing of the Thai language. However geography, history, civics, morality, health education, handicrafts and physical education are also taught.

As it is, the urban children are better than the rural children, because of better qualified teachers, better equipped classrooms, better environment and high achievement motivation.

Notably, at the primary education stage, there is

emphasis on civics courses, with a stress on duty - the student's duty to family, school, society, religion, king, constitution and nation. In the courses on morality, a student is to learn ethics according to conscience. In the great majority of schools this instruction pertains to Buddhist ethics and traditional Thai values, such as, respect for the aged. Content of instruction throughout the curriculum is strongly anticommunist. The classes in Thai history stress the roles of the heroes of Thai history and sometimes the roles of the present leaders of the government. Each morning there is a flag hoisting ceremony, at which the national anthem is sung, both in the private schools as well as public schools. On national holidays as Chulalongkorn Day, students as a group representing their institution are expected to participate in the proceedings which are conducted at the national level down to the district. There may be speeches, group singing and a service led by Buddhist monks. A brief Buddhist ceremony is observed on the first and last days of the school year, as well as on major holidays. Boy scout training for boys and Junior Red Cross training for girls are intended to emphasize similar values. The Thai language, or more specifically the speech of Central Thailand is used in teaching, reading and writing throughout the country.¹⁷ The same is also applicable to those who attend the secondary school.

3.2 The Secondary Education (Madhyom Suksa)

The secondary stage education is divided into junior secondary school (the plus three - Maw Saw I-III) and senior secondary school (the plus two for academic course - Maw Saw IV-V, and the plus three for vocational course - Maw Saw IV-VI). Secondary school facilities are limited and competition for admission is increasing rapidly as more children complete the primary course and wish to continue their education. Half the districts had no secondary schools in 1951. In 1954 there were only 1,100 secondary schools available,¹⁸ and in 1964 there were 1547 government and private secondary schools.¹⁹ With the lapse of time the number is on the increase.

The scholar's primary aim at this level of training, is for an access to government service and for entrance to University education. Otherwise, they are vague in their purpose of educational training.

The curriculum prescribed for the secondary education is more or less similar to that of the primary school, with the exception of addition of a foreign language. The course content is designed intentionally for those who wish to join the university with an emphasis on either arts or sciences or vocation. In all the government schools the study of English

is prescribed. French, German, Pali, Chinese or Arabic, in that order of popularity, are offered in addition to English, in the pre-university course.

At this stage the scholars get ~~prop~~ned due to reasons of economic wealth, and value attached to education. From the secondary stage upwards, education is by one's own discretion. Children of poor peasants get terminated from secondary stage, while some of the well-to-do peasants are discouraged to send their children further for training secondary education, because of favouritism or nepotism operative in the recruitment to government service. Evidently, the children of civil servants even of a peasant-background and of well-to-do families, are sent up to attend the secondary schooling. This applies to children from rural areas, such as, the children of the Wangchai village, who are the case in point. Out of the 32 boys and girls attending the secondary school outside the village, 21 are children of civil servants with peasant-background (mostly, primary school teachers), and the rest are those of the well-to-do peasants.

The social background of the aforementioned secondary school pupils is of some interest. For example, two of the most influential families, namely, Chumwaengwapi and the Atthapongpichet at the Wangchai village have got their children

comparatively better educated. Among their siblings, two are graduates : one Chumwaengwapi with L.L.B., and another Atthapongpichet with B. Ed. Both are well-established in the provincial capital of Khonkaen. Their fathers in their 70s are ex-monks who completed their primary education while being monks, and were employed as the primary school teachers at Phuripat school at Ban Nampong, about 30 kilometres away from Ban Wangchai in the 1920s. Interestingly, the first school master of this school, as shown in the school records, was a monk.

Similarly two Ban Wangchai boys, moved to Bangkok for further education as monks. One of them took B.A. at Mahachula Buddhist University. Later, giving up the monk status, he served at the government secondary school in the provincial capital of Khonkaen. Another, got promoted on the basis of his academic qualification in Pali VI, to the post of Phra Gru, a privileged position in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. He still remains in monastic life at Wat Kanyanamitr in Bangkok-Dhomburi and with his influence, two boys of his native village are admitted to secondary education and higher education, respectively. One more boy of the village, took a similar step to get himself educated at Wat Srakaew in the provincial capital of Nongkhai province in the Northeast, and now serves as a civil servant in that province after-disrobing. These

examples highlight the mobility, through access to education, taken advantage of, by the Wangchai village boys.²⁰

Those presently undergoing secondary education, are the third generation who are both directly and indirectly encouraged and pushed ahead by the first or second generation kinsmen or co-villagers as above. However, the process seems to have been on the decrease since the beginning of the current decade on account of the fact that recently the government decided to establish at least two secondary schools in each district (Amphur) : one for boys and one for girls. In addition, the rural-residential private schools are being encouraged by the government.

Those who can attend the secondary schools are relatively few. The majority of them are made to take up the agricultural activities like their predecessors, for the rest of their life after their primary education.

3.3 The University or Higher Education (Udom Suksa)

At the university stage, education upto the bachelor degree programme, consists of the plus four pattern with certain exceptions, such as, medicine, architecture, and technology. There are ten state universities and one national Institute of Development Administration, two Buddhist

universities. Added to these are several independent, government colleges, such as military and police academy, Dhonburi, Institute of Technology etc., and unaffiliated private colleges, all of which offer course studies upto bachelor degree only. Among them Chulalongkorn University is the oldest (founded in 1917) and has the highest standards. All these institutions offer the advanced training courses which are largely oriented towards providing specialized preparation for a career. Ramkhamhaeng University recently established acts as an open university.

The fields of study taught at the above institutions are as follows :

1. Humanities : archaeology, history, psychology, theology, arts and similar subjects.
2. Education
3. Fine Arts : archetecture, painting, sculpture, drawing, speech, dramatic arts and similar subjects.
4. Social Sciences : banking, commerce and accountancy, political science, diplomacy, geography, international relations, journalism, public administration, sociology, economics, statistics and similar subjects.
5. Law

6. Natural Sciences : astronomy, bacteriology, bio-chemistry, biology, botany, chemistry, entomology, geology, mathematics, meteorology, physics, zoology and similar subjects.
7. Engineering : applied science, construction, surveying, mining and similar subjects.
8. Medical Sciences : anatomy, dentistry, medicine, nursing, midwifery, pharmacy, physiotherapy, public health and similar subjects.
9. Agriculture : horticulture, forestry, fisheries, veterinary medicine, dairy and similar subjects.
10. Military and police studies : graduates are recognized to be equivalent to Bachelor of Science, majoring in military and police studies.²¹

All the universities and other institutions of higher education are attached to or supervised by the State Universities Bureau. The Buddhist universities are institutions which offer a programme of general and religious higher education

and run under the Council of Elders' supervision. The National Education Council is assigned the task of supervision and educational policy. The medium of instruction at this level remains extensively the Thai language.

The enrollments to the above mentioned fields of study are overwhelmingly dominated by those who get themselves registered in Social Sciences and related subjects other than natural sciences and technology. Table 7.2 presents a distribution of enrollment in different fields of study of men and women, from the initial to the highest stages. Table 7.3 gives a subjectwise distribution for 1966 and 1967 of male and female candidates who successfully completed their graduation or higher courses of studies.

Finally in this series, the educational output is predicted accordingly. Here is an illustration of one aspect in favour of the fields of study offered by the institutions of the higher education as above stated. To make the point explicitly the data is given in Table 7.3.

The recruitment or admission to higher education is of interest from the social stratification standpoint. These admitted to the degree courses are dominantly from homes where parents are engaged in government services or in private enterprises (commerce and industry). Or they are urbanized

2. Enrollment by Sex, Field of Study, Academic Year 1968, Thailand.

Undergraduates													Higher				Master's				Doctorates						
		2nd Year		3rd Year		4th Year		5th Year		6th Year		Total	Certificates														
F	T	M	F	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T						
676	581	68	513	501	48	453	407	59	438	-	-	2464	324	2060	32	5	27	69	3	66	-						
720	855	251	604	3301	1740	1561	1800	898	902	76	75	1	-	7197	3340	3857	94	43	51	216	118	136					
35	182	157	25	201	161	40	160	125	35	150	126	24	-	867	708	159	-	-	-	-	-						
380	2649	1227	1422	2347	1145	1202	3065	1353	1712	-	-	-	10606	5074	5622	55	25	30	1635	1075	560	1	1				
153	766	645	121	731	634	97	1143	1020	128	-	-	-	3396	2857	529	-	-	36	36	-	-						
230	833	260	273	352	188	164	247	149	98	-	-	-	1776	1503	773	4	2	2	115	46	67	-	-				
9	658	843	15	658	652	6	414	406	8	-	-	-	2845	2307	38	22	22	-	200	201	7	-	-				
525	1119	575	544	1282	518	764	874	436	438	501	276	225	295	192	103	5222	2530	2609	249	71	176	74	34	40	28	8	20
213	718	572	146	340	446	102	470	337	133	36	31	5	22	19	3	2681	2079	602	-	-	51	30	21	-	-	-	
-	392	392	-	315	375	-	364	364	-	220	220	-	-	-	1774	1774	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
154	6653	4950	3663	10294	5907	4389	3029	5147	3892	963	728	255	317	211	106	36915	22556	16389	456	166	288	2446	1549	699	20	9	20

1. Education Council, Educational Report on Institutions of Higher Education, Thailand (1968), p. 33.

Table 7.2 : Enrollment by Sex, Field of Study, Academic Year 1968, Thailand.

	Undergraduates														Total										
	New Entrants		1st year				2nd year				3rd year					4th year		5th year		6th year					
	I	M	F	M	F	T	I	M	F	T	I	M	F	T		I	M	F	T	I	M	F	T		
Humanities	217	194	623	865	209	676	561	68	513	501	48	453	497	59	438	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2464	384	2080
Education	983	307	681	1163	376	789	855	251	604	3301	1740	1561	1800	898	902	76	75	1	-	-	-	-	7197	3340	3857
Fine Arts	160	127	33	174	139	35	182	157	25	201	161	40	160	125	35	150	126	24	-	-	-	-	867	708	159
Social Sciences	2507	1326	1272	2635	1349	1286	2649	1127	72	2347	1145	1202	3065	1353	712	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10696	5074	5622
Law	711	536	175	741	556	183	767	645	121	731	634	97	1146	1020	126	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3386	2857	529
Science	554	330	216	644	406	235	533	260	273	332	188	164	247	149	99	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1776	1003	773
Engineering	832	823	9	945	906	9	858	843	15	638	652	6	414	406	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2845	2207	38
Medical Sciences	1070	508	518	1156	533	625	1119	575	544	1282	518	764	674	435	438	501	276	225	192	103	5222	2530	2699		
Agriculture	868	662	206	887	674	213	718	572	146	548	446	102	475	337	133	36	31	5	22	19	3	2681	2079	602	
Military and Police Academy	406	406	-	423	423	-	392	392	-	375	375	-	364	364	-	220	220	-	-	-	-	1774	1774	-	
Grand Total	9023	5227	3796	9627	5573	4054	8653	4950	3663	10296	5907	4389	3039	5147	3892	923	728	255	317	211	106	38915	22556	15359	

Source : Office of the National Education Council, Educational Report on Institutions of Higher Education, Thailand (1968), p. 33.

I = Total
M = Male
F = Female

Table 7.3 : Number of graduates by subjects offered, in 1966 and 1977, Thailand.

Fields of study	Number of graduates *					
	1966			1967		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Humanities	27	190	217	20	273	293
Education	652	708	1,360	652	656	1,308
Fine Arts	71	16	87	84	19	103
Social Sciences	626	548	1,174	505	644	1,149
Law	451	59	510	263	19	282
Natural Sciences	94	49	143	130	114	244
Engineering	361	7	368	394	13	407
Medical Sciences	438	307	745	488	415	903
Agriculture	231	66	297	472	174	646
Military and Police study	253	-	253	313	-	313
Grand Total	3,204	1,950	5,154	3,321	2,327	5,648

* Bachelors degrees and over

Source : Thailand : Statistical Yearbook 1970-1971 (National Statistics Office, 1972), p. 131.

residents, especially in Bangkok-Thonburi Metropolitan centres. After Bangkok-Thonburi metropolitan area, the Southern region appears to have more graduates than other regions. Table 7.4 illustrates the point. Thus the intellectual life seems to be monopolized by a

minority of the urbanized bureaucratic and economic elites. The traditional intellectuals, such as, the Buddhist and Brahmanist literati, are no more intellectual leaders, in modern life.

Table 7.4 : Regionwise and Parents' Occupationwise Distribution of University Students, Thailand, 1971-1972.

Parents' regionwise residence	Parents' Occupation						Total
	Govern- ment service	Commerce and industry	Agri- culture	Emplo- yee	others	un- known	
Bangkok-Thonburi Metropolitan	1,058	2,154	51	740	401	39	4,443
Central	232	357	70	28	28	3	718
North	322	754	50	51	55	5	1,237
Northeast	295	495	51	21	28	10	900
East	166	538	111	42	49	6	912
South	250	778	187	76	55	10	1,356
West	192	507	95	27	50	8	879
Abroad	-	5	-	1	-	-	6
Unknown	14	13	1	3	2	5	38
Grand Total	2,529	5,601	616	989	668	86	10,489

Source : Adapted from Report on the Joint Higher Education Entrance Examination, Academic year 1971-1972, (Bangkok : Office of the National Education Commission), pp. 11-12.

Furthermore, on the basis of ethnicity, nationality, sex and age considerations, the Chinese stand out significantly. The age-groups of 17-20 years old are dominant, and there more males than females, who go to the University for education. Table 7.5 reveals these relevant distributions. The final end product must have been out accordingly.

3.4 The Private Institutions

No less than 1,340,000 persons as shown in Table 7.6 are to be found as teachers and students in privately run institutions of education. More than 4,000 private schools and 10 private colleges are academically and vocationally operative in Thailand, varying greatly in purpose and in the quality of instruction imparted therein. The vocational schools also offer degree courses. In particular~~X~~, Asian Institute of Technology is a recognized institution of higher learning. This postgraduate educational institution offers courses leading to master's and doctorate degrees only.

The private educational institutions are mainly owned and run by the Thais under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. Among them are small schools set up by individuals, and evening schools which offer classes in English, secretarial work, and such other useful subjects. In the rural~~X~~ areas, the educational standards in the private schools are marginal in

Table 7.5 : The candidates admitted to the university or bachelor degree courses by ethnicity, nationality, sex and age, 1971-1972, Thailand.

Sex and Age	Ethnicity					Nationality				
	Thai	Chinese	Others	Un-known	Total	Thai	Chinese	Others	Un-known	Total
Male										
15 years and under	1	1	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	2
16 "	67	13	1	-	81	81	-	-	-	81
17 "	473	114	1	2	590	590	-	-	-	590
18 "	1,461	442	4	5	1912	1909	2	-	1	1,912
19 "	1,155	549	4	7	1715	1709	2	2	2	1,715
20 "	677	377	1	4	1049	1046	2	1	-	1,049
21 "	226	124	1	-	351	350	-	1	-	350
22 "	101	53	-	1	155	153	2	-	-	155
23 years and over	82	29	-	-	111	110	1	-	-	111
unknown	2	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	2
Total	4,235	1,702	12	19	5,968	5,952	9	4	3	5,968
Female										
15 years and under	1	1	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	2
16 "	56	7	-	-	63	63	-	-	-	63
17 "	603	89	-	-	692	692	-	-	-	692
18 "	1,461	317	1	2	1,781	1,780	-	-	1	1,781
19 "	864	346	1	1	1,212	1,210	2	-	-	1,212
20 "	388	176	2	2	568	566	1	1	-	568
21 "	85	55	-	-	140	139	-	1	-	140
22 "	22	24	-	-	46	46	-	-	-	46
23 years and over	10	4	-	-	14	14	-	-	-	14
Total	3,492	1,020	4	5	4,521	4,515	3	2	1	4,521
Grand Total	7,727	2,722	16	24	10,469	10,467	12	6	4	10,489

Source : Adapted from Report on the Joint Higher Education Entrance Examination, Academic Year 1971-1972, op. cit. pp. 4-5.

Table 7.6 : Number of Private Schools, teachers, and students by type of school,
academic year 1975, Thailand.

Type of School	Bangkok-Thonburi Metropolitan				P r o v i n c i a l				T o t a l	
	School	Teacher	Student	School	Teacher	Student	School	Teacher	School	Student
Academic	948	18,703	455,338	1,640	31,065	713,218	2,588	49,768	1,168,556	
Vocational	391	3,380	89,172	238	982	25,713	629	4,362	114,885	
Special	350	822	24,490	614	1,320	38,518	964	2,142	63,008	
Total	1,689	22,905	569,000	2,492	33,367	777,449	4,181	56,272	1,346,449	

Source : The Ministry of Education of Thailand, Educational Statistics Booklet 1975, in Thai,
prepared and published by the Office of Private Education (1976), p. 15.

comparison to those of the local public schools. The most important private schools in the country are those managed by Chinese, and as also by the Christian missions.

In the early stage of development of modern national education in the country, the Christian missionaries played an important part. The modern private schools in Thailand are the products of such efforts since the early decades of the 20th century. Their efforts have been directed mainly towards achieving academic excellence; some schools such as Bangkok Christian College, Watana Academy, Assumption College and Prince Royal College are among the best private schools in the country. Some of the more influential personalities in the country such as Phya Anuman, Pote Sarasin and Puy Ungpakorn have been graduates of either of these schools.

3.5 The Vocational and Adult Education

Among the people remains the traditional attitude that education is by nature academic and that where vocational training is necessary it is best learnt on the job or in the case of agriculture on the family farm. However, this attitude is changing slowly.

In this connection the Thai government has made serious efforts to provide the youngsters of the country with vocational training. A number of vocational schools have been

established. With the passage of time, their number is on the increase. The vocational education consists of short courses, lower and upper vocational secondary courses, technical courses and teacher-training-cum-vocation courses.

The vocational courses are run by the government as well as private schools. The subjects taught include agriculture, carpentry, construction, radio, electricity, auto-mechanics, machine-shop, typing-shorthand, welding, commerce, business administration etc. In 1967 and 1968 there were 238 vocational schools at all levels with a total enrollment of 70,647 and 76,974 respectively.²² The multivocational schools, such as, Thonburi Technical Institute, College of Construction and Design, College of Telecommunication at Nonburi, and the Technical institutes at Songkla, Nakorn. Rajisima and Chiangmai are among the best vocational institutes in the country. Some of them now offer degree courses in some fields of study.

Adult education : To provide education to the illiterate adults and to make it available to those who fail to continue their studies at one or the other of the educational institutions, a number of adult education schools have been established. They are under control and supervision of Adult Education Division of the Ministry of Education.

The schools of this type cover primary, secondary, and vocational schools. They are operative and spread over the kingdom. These schools play a significant role in providing a useful alternative to the educational problem facing the country. In 1967 and 1968 there were 381 adult education schools with a total enrollment of 21,477 and 21,569, respectively.²³

Added to these are a good number of special schools for the handicapped, correspondence courses, art and crafts etc. which are put into operation for the same purpose. In 1965 the total number of students attending these types of schools was 57,996. Of these, approximately 56.1% were male, while 43.9% were female students.²⁴

6. Military and Police Academy

There are three military cadet academies, one each for the Royal Army, the Royal Air Force, and the Royal Navy, respectively, and one academy for the police. Management of the first three is the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence, whereas the last one is under the Police Department in the Ministry of the Interior.

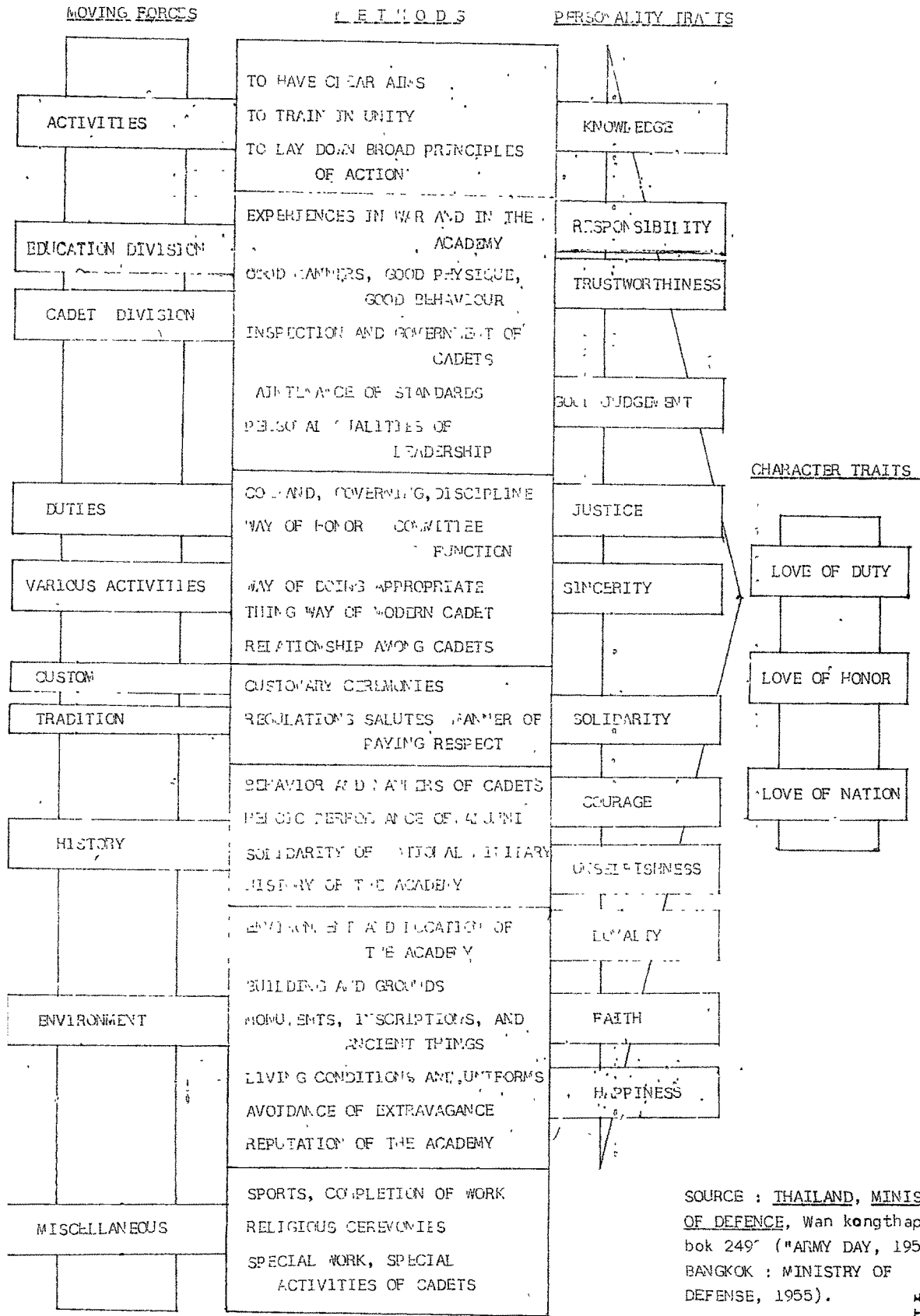
Their courses of study are highly professional. Courses are designed for such boys only, who are highly motivated to

join military and police services. The graduates are awarded a B. Sc. degree, with specialization in military or police studies.

The recruitment is restricted and open only to a Thai by blood, and is highly competitive. Candidates are carefully scrutinized on the basis of academic merit and physical fitness. The academies receive a large number of applicants. Therefore, they are able to select candidates as they want. This selection process has so far contributed to the traditional formation of the military and the police, as the elite groups. On the contrary the administrative cadres are graduates of numerous colleges, ^{universities} and institutes of learning. Together they all enjoy various privileges and rewards, denied to others.

More importantly, control over the cadet officers' education permits the army and the police to mould the mind and morale of officer candidates. A uniformity of perspective towards politics, and unique personality formation is almost certain to result from such specialized education. Nationalism, love of duty, love of honour and love of the nation are the topmost values which are inculcated into a trainee. ~~the~~ Chart 5 would give an overall idea of such values and attitudes.

CHART 5 : THE INDOCTRINATION OF CHARACTER IN THE ARMY ACADEMY, THAILAND, 1955.



SOURCE : THAILAND, MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, Wan kongthap bok 249 ("ARMY DAY, 1955"; BANGKOK : MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, 1955).

4. The structural aspects of the ecclesiastical education

Since an early time, educational activities in Thailand were carried out under one and the same agency, namely, the government representing both the state and the church. Only recently in the early 20th century under the reign of Rama VI, education of the ecclesiastical Order was separated from that of the state to such a great extent that there was later on no mention of the ecclesiastical education in the national scheme of education. This resulted in the absence of any active role for the Buddhist Order in the state education.²⁵ Since then the education of the Buddhist sangh has been operative separately from that of the state. However, some adjustment has now been brought about.

The ecclesiastical education in Thailand may be discussed under the four major categories, viz., 1. The Pali Study, 2. The Nakdham or Dhamma Study, 3. The General Ecclesiastical Education, 4. The Buddhist University Education.

The first two may be classified as "traditional" because they are entirely religion-oriented courses dealing with Buddhist studies, philosophy, ethics, philology (Pali) and monastic life. The last two are modern because they are more secular-oriented courses purposefully designed to absorb modernizing elements from modern sciences and technology.

The Ministry of Education through the Department of Religious Affairs provides the limited aids both financial and academic, to the above educational institutions.

4.1 The Pali and Dhamma Studies

As early as in the Ayudhya period the ecclesiastical education was known as "Parien", consisting of three stages, namely, (1) "Parien Tri" (Study of Suttanta Pitaka - Discourses in Pali, (2) "Parien Tho" (Study of Vinaya Pitaka - Codes of conduct of the Buddhist Order) and (3) "Parien Ek" (Study of Abhidhamma Pitaka) - philosophical courses including the aforesaid two Pitakas). All the texts were in Pali and no examination system in the modern sense was in practice. This educational pattern was reorganized in the reign of King Rama II, resulting in the creation of nine grades in the Pali study, namely, Pali I-II (composite course) to Pali IX. Some commentaries in Pali were later added to the aforementioned texts, and an examination system was introduced. This pattern was restructured during the reign of King Rama V, resulting in the creation of two divisions of Buddhist studies, namely, the Nakdham and the Pali. The former consists of three grades while the latter consists of nine grades, each being a course of one-year duration. Both of them are effective at present.

The Pali study is run under the Department of Pali study,

with a Head of the Department acting as chairman of the study board. The monk administrators of different ranks in the ecclesiastical administrative structure share responsibility of undertaking education in their own monasteries or educational institutions. The Head of the Department controls the Pali study all over the country with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education, and through the Department of Religious Affairs.

The Pali study consists of nine grades. The course contents remain unchanged, providing the monks and novices with Buddhism and the Pali language. The examination takes place once a year, being organized by the Department of Pali Study.

The Dhamma study (Nakdham) is organized by the Department of Dhamma Study with the Head of the Department as chairman of the study board. To run it effectively, the responsibilities are shared by the monk-administrators and the Department of Religious Affairs.

The Dhamma study consists of three grades, namely, Nakdham Tri (Elementary Grade), Nakdham Tho (Intermediate Grade), and Nakdham Ek (Advanced Grade). Obviously, the course contents cover Thai composition on Buddhism, Doctrine, History of Buddhism and Discipline. The examination is organized once a year by the Head of Dhamma Study. The Dhamma study courses

are also made available for the laity being called "Dhamma Suksa" but there are hardly any candidates desirous of this course of studies.

The teachers of both the Pali study and Dhamma study, are advanced graduates of the respective courses in Pali or Dhamma study. They are appointed by the Department of Dhamma Study or of Pali Study as the case may be. Table 7.7 illustrates the point on the Pali-Dhamma studies explicitly.

Table 7.7 : Number of Ecclesiastic Teachers, Dhamma Students and Pali students throughout Thailand, 1966-1970.

Year	N u m b e r			Ratio of teachers to students
	Teacher	Dhamma students	Pali students	
1966	18,824	167,365	19,553	1 : 993
1967	19,331	181,423	20,051	1 : 1,042
1968	19,663	179,068	22,455	1 : 1,025
1969	20,306	206,112	24,152	1 : 1,134
1970	20,089	208,324	24,579	1 : 1,159

Source : Department of Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Education, Report on Education of Buddhist Order in Thailand (1973), p. 30.

As long as the monk graduates stay in a monastic life

their status is recognized according to grades of the Pali-Dhamma study plus their duties thereupon assigned by the order and the state. The advanced grade in the Dhamma study and Pali IX in the Pali study are considered as the topmost.

A monk or novice, after his disrobing, can find a job in the government service according to his graduation. One with Pali V and Pali IX grades is entitled to the government service with the rank of the fourth, and the third grade (or their equivalent) respectively.

A graduate with the Intermediate Grade in the Dhamma study is permitted to appear for an examination for Lower Secondary Certificate (Mathayom Suksa III). One with the graduation in Pali IV is privileged to sit for an examination for the Primary Teacher Certificate (Professional course) organized by the Ministry of Education. And one with Pali VI Certificate is deemed to get an admission into a B.A. degree course in any state university.

4.2 The General Ecclesiastical Education

In order to meet the demands for secular education by those in monastic life, a pattern of education with three levels is made available for them. It is organized by the Ministry of Education through the Departments of General

Education and Religious Affairs in cooperation with the monk governors. These three levels consist of the Upper Primary School, the Lower Secondary School and the Higher (Senior) Secondary School. The curriculum for the secular subjects is equal to that of the government schools at the respective levels. The religious curriculum lays emphasis on Pali language, Buddhist history, doctrine and discipline (monks' code of conduct). In 1975 there were 78 schools of the General Ecclesiastical Education with 1,290 teachers and a total enrollment of 67,000.²⁶

In addition, the adult education as given to the laity is also made available for the monks and novices. This is with the exception of vocational education. The education of this kind is of great help and alternative to the young monks and novices, especially those who reside outside Bangkok-Dhumburi Metropolis and its neighbouring provinces. The graduates of these two categories enjoy the same rights and privileges as those from the government schools.

The enrollment in these schools appears to be gaining popularity than the Pali-Dhamma study courses in recent time. Sometimes monks just attend the Pali-Dhamma studies, simply to justify the traditional value or religious merit, while at the same time attend the adult education classes so as to

satisfy their educational interests. This is because a monk or a novice who attends the secular education only is hardly given an accommodation in a monastery. Wat at Banwangchai and Wat Thatu at Khonkaen Municipality are the case in point. The former has become depleted with only 12 monks and novices. It is said that during 1959-1964, it used to accommodate more than 80 monks and novices. Some of the residents of the latter unofficially attend the secular education outside their monastery, even while being afraid of being expelled from the monastery.

Table 7.8 compares the monks and novices of Wats at Ban Nampong, Khonkhaen Municipality and Wat Mahadhatu and Wat Sraket who attend the religious studies and/or secularly oriented courses also. Similarly the latter half of the Table brings out their desired preferences.

4.3 The Buddhist University Education

In Thailand there are two Buddhist universities which are run by the Buddhist Order exclusively for the monks and novices, with the exception of certificate courses which are open also for the laity. These are Mahamakut Buddhist University and Mahachula Buddhist University which have been elevated from the Mahamakut and Mahachula academies. Their actual academic activities were started with a degree course in 1946 and 1947

Table 7.8 : Distribution of Rural/Urban Monks and Novices according to the actual and the desired courses of religious and/or secular studies, Thailand, 1975.

	R u r a l		U r b a n		Grand Total %
	Number	Ban Wangchai- Nampong %	Khonkaen Municipality %	Bangkok %	
1. Study courses attended by monks and novices					
A. Religiously oriented Courses only	64	9.60	14.41	3.39	27.94
B. Secularly oriented Courses only	48	3.49	2.18	15.28	20.96
C. Both	83	15.72	13.53	6.98	36.24
D. Nonstudents	34	4.36	1.74	8.73	14.84
Total	229	33.18	31.87	34.93	100.00
2. Study courses they wanted to attend					
A. Religiously oriented courses only	52	9.17	7.86	5.67	22.70
B. Secularly oriented courses only	145	20.52	13.53	29.25	63.31
C. Both	32	3.49	10.48	-	13.97
D. None	-	-	-	-	-
Total	229	33.18	31.87	34.93	100.00

respectively. The Mahamakut is run by the Dhammayuttanikaya sect and the Mahachula by the Mahanikaya Sect. They offer certificate, diploma and degree courses. Both are located in Bangkok.

The established aims of these two universities are more or less similar viz. :

1. To provide monks and novices with a higher education, enabling them to correctly and deeply understand Buddhism and comparative religions and to have an ability to preach Buddhism to the people, with a view to a peaceful life in the society.
2. To produce qualified teachers with good behaviour based on morality, and to produce preachers of ability in promulgation and Dhamma practice.
3. To increase virtues, namely, loving kindness, compassion, generosity, and to support monks and novices to undertake religious, social and cultural activity, as good friends and spiritual guides of the people, leading to their advantage and happiness.²⁷

Accordingly the courses of study are designed and heavily based on the religiously oriented studies or theology, especially Buddhism, philosophy, languages (Thai, Pali, Sanskrit, English, French and German), social sciences and

education. In short, the courses are prescribed in humanities and social sciences, which are closely related to religions—mainly Buddhism.

The requirements for admission are the pre-university certificate, or the Pali III or VI grade certificate. In case of foreigner these requisites may not be strictly enforced. A candidate must be a Buddhist monk or novice.

Only B. A. degrees and undergraduation certificates are conferred on a graduate at present. No branch of natural sciences and related subjects is included in the syllabi of those two universities. Natural sciences taught here are just general and basic. These universities are quite new and limited in scope. They have still a long way to go before earning popular recognition in the world of the intellectual life.

However, these two universities are the only place of higher learning for the Buddhist monks and novices in the country, where modern secular education is coupled with religiously oriented education of the traditional pattern. Through these two universities the traditional intellectual Buddhist literati are being slowly transformed and modernized. Graduates of these universities are employed by the government as well as private firms. Some of the scholars are engaged in postgraduate studies at various internationally recognized

universities in foreign countries especially India, the Philippines, the U. K. and the U.S.A. With the lapse of time, these two Buddhist universities are gaining popularity and their enrollment is on the increase as shown in Table 7.9. Further^{Table} 7.10 indicates actual degrees and certificates awarded in these two Buddhist universities during 1949-63.

Some of the graduates^{of} the Mahachula University were sent abroad for advanced postgraduate studies to earn Master's and Doctorate degrees Table 7.11 reveals their number as in the year 1973. Since then the same must have further increased as the process was continuing steadily.

Table 7.11 : Distribution of Mahachula graduates earning postgraduate degrees from foreign universities of U.S.A., U.K., India and the Philippines, 1973, Thailand.

Countries	No. of graduates
The Philippines	3
India	175
The United Kingdom	3
The United States of America	5
Grand Total	186

Source : Mahachula : Brief Curriculum and Activities, 1973, p.87.

Table 7.9 : Distribution of enrollments by degree and certificate courses at Mahamakut and Mahachula Buddhist Universities, 1946-1974, Thailand, 1976.

Year	M a h a m a k u t			M a h a c h u l a			Grand Total
	Degree	Certificate	Total	Degree	Certificate	Total	
1946-48	106	-	106	-	156	156	262
1948-50	105	59	164	-	200	200	364
1950-52	67	207	274	34	288	322	596
1952-54	56	485	541	52	465	517	1,085
1954-56	60	660	720	75	732	807	1,527
1956-58	102	825	927	136	1,685	1,819	2,746
1958-60	146	794	940	113	2,080	2,193	3,133
1960-62	165	762	927	287	1,726	2,013	2,940
1962-64	161	750	911	392	2,099	2,491	3,402
1964-66	201	888	1,089	372	1,766	2,138	3,227
1966-68	209	896	1,105	356	2,287	2,643	3,748
1968-70	243	972	1,115	406	1,838	2,244	3,359
1970-72	326	854	1,180	489	1,664	2,153	3,333
1972-74	311	1,200	1,511	430	1,499	1,929	3,440
Grand Total	2,258	9,352	11,510	3,142	18,485	21,625	33,135

Source : Adapted from Phramaha Boondham Buatong, A Critical Study of Development and Problems of the Buddhist Universities in Thailand, M.Ed. unpublished Dissertation, M.S.University of Baroda, India 1976, p. 183.

Table 7.10 : Distribution of degrees, diplomas and certificates conferred by the Buddhist Universities, 1949-1973, Thailand.

Year	M a h a m a k u t			M a h a c h u l a			Grand Total
	Bachelor's degree	Diploma	Certificate	To- Bachelor's degree	Certificate	Total	
1949-51	-	-	-	-	43	43	43
1951-53	8	-	49	-	49	49	106
1953-55	22	3	68	6	102	108	201
1955-57	29	1	232	12	173	185	447
1957-59	41	4	395	11	375	386	826
1959-61	38	5	324	18	433	451	818
1961-63	47	2	309	20	575	595	953
1963-65	56	11	287	80	528	608	962
1965-67	16	11	315	69	599	668	1,010
1967-69	53	2	350	72	685	757	1,162
1969-71	47	4	402	74	615	689	1,142
1971-73	30	2	452	106	643	749	1,233
Grand Total	387	45	3,183	468	4,820	5,288	8,903

Source : Adapted from Phramaha Boondham Buatong, A Critical Study of Development and Problems of the Buddhist Universities in Thailand, M.Ed. unpublished Dissertation, M. S. University of Baroda, India, 1976, p. 196.

Apart from the above said educational activities, some interesting joint projects, namely, Project for Participation of Monk-graduates in the Upcountry Buddhist Activities, Project for Encouraging the Participation of Bhikkhus in Community Development, and Project for Training Dhammatuta (Mission) Bhikkhus Going Abroad, are undertaken through joint efforts of the two universities.

The first project is designed for giving a pre-service training to the monk-graduates who are obliged to join Buddhist activities, particularly at centres located in the country-side assigned under joint sponsorship of the Buddhist Order and the government. In the second project, an in-service training is given to the native monks who are already engaged in similar activities in their own native villages or towns over the kingdom. They act as community development leaders in cooperation with the government officials. All these are secular activities as such, but are guided by the concept of "merit" since they help materially as well as spiritually. To uplift members of a community, socially and spiritually, constitutes a meritorious action.

The third project is a training given to the monk-graduates who are assigned the task of preaching Buddhism abroad known as "Dhammatuta" or a Buddhist Mission. This work is sponsored and organized by the Department of Religious

Affairs in collaboration with the two Buddhist universities.

Besides, Buddhist Sunday Schools are organized by the Buddhist universities. The Sunday school courses are designed with a view to a simplified dissemination of basic Buddhist teachings and ethics for youngsters of both sexes. The courses are at four levels : primary, intermediate, high, and advanced. All the Sunday classes are held once a week. The teachers for this activity are generally drawn from amongst the monk-students of the third or fourth year degree courses.

Finally, Pali Special School for Pali study, is organized by the universities for laymen who are interested in Buddhist studies and the Pali language. The latter is of more help to the state university students who attend courses in languages particularly in the Thai language. These classes are run on Sundays once a week. The teachers again are the monk-students with graduation in Pali V, or above.

Both Buddhist Sunday School and Pali Special School are organized for social service on no profit no loss basis.

4.4 The Social Background of the Monk-students

The monk-novice students who attend ecclesiastical education are drawn from rural- peasant family backgrounds.

The percentage of Rural-peasant students at present is as high as 95 at the minimum. Practically all the graduates i.e. the Bachelor degree holders of Mahachula Buddhist university in the academic year 1968 (B. E. 2511), have a lower-income rural-peasant background with the exception of only one who is Bangkokian by residence but also a farmer by occupation. Those of the year 1973 are all of them from a rural low-income peasant background. None of them are urban residents with a familial background of commerce or industry.

In this connection, Phra Rajav^{ra}amuni (Prayuddh Payutto) has very suggestively commented that ninety percent of all the monks and novices who are residents of the wats in Bangkok-Dhonburi Metropolis are drawn from the rural-peasant poor family background. The same holds good of those who have completed either the Pali study Grades or the Intermediate Grades of the Dhamma Study or above. Of those attending different courses such as Pali Introductory Courses and above at Mahachula Buddhist University in 1968 (B.E. 2511) with a total enrollment of 687, there were 99.71% who were from the rural background and 90-95% who were peasant by occupation. If no education was made available to them by the wat institution, they would all have been left out uneducated or at best undereducated. It may be noted that the two Buddhist universities are given grants by the government, but not more than 5 per cent of what the state universities get. By contrast

a maximum of 6 per cent scholars at the state universities are peasant by occupation, whereas the majority are drawn from families with bureaucratic, commercialist, or industrialist elite background.²⁸

As a result, the influential intellectual elites are no more trained under the aegis of the Buddhist or Brahmanist literati who used to train kings, princes, nobility and peasant commoners almost on equal terms. Today the elite categories opt for the more advanced and secularized modern education, whereas the peasant masses stay close to the religiously oriented traditional education at the wat institutions. This is because they lack the means for gaining an access to the modern secular schools. The former go ahead the modernizing trends based on modern education, while the latter are intellectually and behaviourially unadjusted and alienated in the modernizing urban-industrial world. There is a rural/urban peasant/elite disjunction in economic and political behaviour patterns for Thais as a whole. One of the more significant consequences is the schism between the urban elite minority and the rural peasant majority. The elites implicitly look down the rustic masses and hold on to power, opportunities and privileges, whereby the intended Democratic political pattern has met with repeated reverses and setbacks. The schism continues unbridged. Notably on the

basis of modern educational opportunities modernized by the state bureaucracy, the operative institutional is so organized, consciously or unconsciously that a widening socio-economic gap between the intellectual elites and the common masses, is getting more and more crystallized than ever before. The Thai intellectuals are far from being able to solve these fundamental social systemic hurdles of the common masses. They have retreated into isolated ivory towers of the universities campuses, and/or bureaucratic jurisdictions. This certainly is a political explosive situation, flicking and smouldering, but non -the-less gathering momentum through an unconscious grudge against relative deprivation and societal injustice.

5. The Role of Thai Intellectuals

According to Sulak Sivaluksa, as long as the Siamese ruling cliques come to power through military coup d'etat, as they have since 1932, and as long as they can maintain the affairs of state by the use of military strength alone, they see no point in paying serious attention to the intellectuals with the exception of those who are willing to serve them. However, once one is in their service, what one can hope to achieve is very small, indeed. No oligarchy favours fundamental change in a society; change threatens their power

base. Intellectuals who choose to be outside the establishment can be critical of the government as long as the political elite feel sure in their positions. When there is a threat to their security or a split among the political leadership, intellectuals who differ with the government are either silenced or brought into one of the factions in the ruling clique or somehow cowed down.²⁹

Intellectuals hereby include, teachers, educationists, university professors, technocrats, lawyers, artists, journalists, writers, editors and the intellectual Buddhist monkhood, all of whom together have been referred to as a tiny group of people who provide for Thailand the most articulate, persuasive, precise and perhaps accurate definition of Thai society and Thai life. They have also a serious commitment to improve their society. They are by and large the products of the national institutions of education. But their intellectual training appears to have failed in resolving the fundamental problems plag^uing Thai society; being unable to bring about the rule of law, social justice or an honest government which really cares for the welfare of common men. The education is the means through which one can get included (and get lost) amongst the bureaucratic power elite. The creation and continuity of the bureaucratic power elite, drawn from the base of the educated intellectuals - both

academic and functional - is the fountain head for an arbitrary and despotic government, polity, and the state.

Riggs has observed that education which confers special prestiges and which has utility in government administration and politics, is preferred. The tendency for bureaucratic power to thrive is particularly strong in prismatic societies. An admission to the bureaucracy characteristically requires attainment of academic work. Hence students seek that type of formal education which will help them gain access to the bureaucracy. Even technological training such as in agriculture or engineering tends to be used to get government jobs, rather than to form or obtain private employment. This general pattern seems to apply to Thailand. In Thai situation observers have often noted a strong desire for education but lamented the stress on degree at the expense of learning. If intellegentia as a ruling class is really more concerned with the power struggle, than with direct application of learning to the problems of productivity and society, then it values schooling chiefly as a key to elite status rather than as a door to scholarship.³⁰

The intellectual community can be classified into two leading categories : the traditionalists or the conservatives and the social technocrats or the progressives. For the most part, the latter are members of government agencies - hence

few dissenting voices are heard from this quarter. They are concerned with the organization of their bureaucracies, the concept of public planning, the educational and economic systems of the country. One can find members of this group in the National Economic Development Board, National Educational Council, National Research Council, National Institute of Development Administration, and Bank of Thailand. Related to this group are a small number of university professors (who are also civil servants), military intellectuals in the command and in the General Staff College, and a few individuals in the Office of the Prime Minister.³¹

On the other hand, the traditionalists are concerned with the glorification and maintenance of Siamese art forms, literary styles, history, poetry, manners, and even grammatic forms. They have often been accused of being narrow nationalists who live in the past and refuse to have anything to do with present day problems. Like their counterpart, namely, Progressives, the Conservative intellectuals are making little contribution to solution of the most fundamental problems in Thailand today. They remain outside the government agencies. As their suggestions offered to the government are generally ignored, some of them get frustrated and become cynical. They see no point in what they are doing and express little hope in the future of Thailand. This is specially true if they

disagree fundamentally with the Progressives's approach of working within the establishment. Some have given up intellectual pursuits entirely and cling to superstition or astrology.³²

Well-organized voluntary associations of intellectuals in Thailand are few in number. One of the few worthy of mentioning is the "Siam Society" which ^{is} academically well-known and quite active in the country. However, on the whole there are very few monks who are deeply involved in intellectual activities. Hardly are there any scholarly works on Buddhism published and brought into the public notice. More than 50 per cent of the monk-graduates with Pali IX and bachelor degree, who are considered as intellectuals of the Buddhist Order are known to have left the order and joined the government services.³³ The intellectual monks who remain in monastic life are placed in the ecclesiastical bureaucracy. Like their counterpart, namely, lay intellectuals, the monk-intellectuals are preoccupied by the Chaokun or ritualistic activities, and organization of bureaucracy rather than by the seething problems, especially pertaining to education of ordinary monks and novices, and common men. Somehow they seem to blot out of their consciousness that these were the problems which they, too, had faced when they were themselves monk-students and therefore it is for them now to resolve them once for good.

With the increasing role taken up by the state in the educational set-up, the intellectual role of the monks in Thai society has become less and less active if not totally passive, and certainly secondary vis-a-vis non-monks. As of yore the intellectuals of the wat are no more the sole centre for producing Thai intellectuals. To make matters worse the monk intellectuals are for quite some time now domesticated and tamed by the state bureaucracy, through the Department of Religious Affairs. An over-all intellectual cynicism seems to be enveloping the Religious Order. However, the two Buddhist universities and their affiliated educational institutions show signs of some stirring howsoever incipient. They could, if they have the will, at this juncture of social and national crisis that has been brewing over for quite some time, provide an alternative to the intellectual and emotional sickness that is overtaking Thai society since the days of Western impact and implicit colonialism. As in the rest of the third world nations, Thais too seem to have picked up only the recessive features of modernization to the strange exclusion of many creative features that have made the West great.

6. The Educational Dilemma and Intellectual Sickness

In the present day Thailand, the role of education and educationists is being asked on account of the fact that education has so far failed to deliver goods either to the

society or even to the masses. It has shown incapacity to solve the fundamental problems of peasant masses; has been inadequate to bring about the rule of law, social justice or an honest government which really cares for the welfare of the common masses. The fruitful application of learning to the problems of enduring productivity and enlightening society has become controversial. The nature and quality of the educational goals both at personal and societal levels has been a matter of speculation. With the exception of the goal for getting the governmental jobs, the other educational goals are neither clearly nor objectively defined and therefore, have hardly been consequential.

Looking back in time one may find that the philosophy of Thai education prior to the 1932 coup was basically derived from Buddhism and quality of real life was guided and formulated with the help of the Eightfold Noble Path subsuming morality, commitment and wisdom, leading to nonviolent and peaceful life. The institution of wat based on education provided for the peasant masses an opening for mobility and integration with the elite levels in society and state. If monopolistic blocking of opportunity for the poor peasant masses could be termed as exploitation which is essentially violent, then the institution of wat based on education in the former days, was a formal way of reducing and removing this exploitation and violence. This was how it institutionally

established social morality and social justice by opening elite ranks to the peasant rustics, through individual effort and achievement. This was the Buddhist perspective of formal institutionalized morality and commitment for the mobile monk-student, and morality and wisdom on the part of elites to accept such incumbents in their fold. Thus the society was integrated between the two levels of elites and masses. Under the Western impact and education the new elite has blocked and monopolized opportunities and hence has become exploitative and violent. It has time and on ceased to be responsive or democratic to use a modern term and has tended to perpetuate itself by force, to deny freedom and opportunity.

The two basic components of the social order, the working peasant and the managing intellectual are increasingly getting polarized with little or no scope for wisdom and free communication of opinion, advice and action wise or insightful perspective. An ingenious grafting of Theravada Buddhist values and modes of socialization onto technical and scientific achievements and values could lift Thai society from the morass that is engulfing their nation and society. This, no doubt, would need a charismatic neo-Bothisatva who could initiate such cross-cultural fertilization. As it is now, he is nowhere in the sight, in the crumbling Thai social system.

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