CHANGES IN PATTERNS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

AND ENGAGEMENT IN THAILAND, 2001-2007

by

Stithorn Thananithichot

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of
The University of Utah
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Political Science

The University of Utah

December 2011

The University of Utah Graduate School

STATEMENT OF DISSERTATION APPROVAL

The dissertation of **Stithorn Thananithichot** has been approved by the following supervisory committee members:

Claudio Holzner	, Chair	**6/16/2011** Date Approved
Matthew Burbank	, Member	**6/16/2011** Date Approved
Lauren Holland	, Member	**6/16/2011** Date Approved
Thad Hall	, Member	**6/16/2011** Date Approved
Stephen Reynolds	, Member	**6/16/2011** Date Approved

and by **James Gosling** , Chair of the Department of **Political Science**

and by Charles A. Wight, Dean of The Graduate School.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation presents political participation and engagement trends in Thailand, seeking to explain how and why the quantity, quality, and equality of political participation and engagement have changed during the past decade (2001 – 2010). Data for its quantitative analyses are taken from two major sources. The first source is information collected by several government agencies such as the National Statistics Bureau (NSB) and the Office of Election Commission (ECT). The second source is data taken from several national surveys conducted in Thailand during the last decade by the Asian Barometer (ABS) and the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES).

Relying on its longitudinal analyses, this dissertation argues that political participation and engagement in Thailand since 2001 has changed—not only in its quantity (number of participants) but also in its quality and equality. In order to explain changes in patterns of political participation, this dissertation proposes a participatory model that included not only socioeconomic status but also various attitudinal and mobilization factors to be tested in several contexts (years). This dissertation claims that participatory differences among groups of Thai citizens were not solely a consequence of differences in socioeconomic status backgrounds. Rather, there are various psychological, motivational, and contextual factors affecting participatory disparities among social groups. Additionally, people participate in politics differently depending on types of political activity and on the political environment.

This dissertation also finds that the attitudes toward politics between rural and urban Thai citizens were neither constantly negative nor positive, and were not easy to explain based on each group's differences in socioeconomic status or area of living, as preceding scholars have suggested. Obviously much evidence shown in this dissertation indicates that rural Thais were not less interested in, less informed about, and politically less efficacious to engage in politics than their urban counterparts.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

LIST OF TABLES

viii

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The nature of citizen participation and engagement in public life in Thailand has

changed dramatically over the last decade. This change was apparent even before April

2010 when thousands of Thailand's Red Shirts, antigovernment protesters, occupied a

central commercial district in Bangkok demanding that the government resign, an event

that *Time* ranked tenth in its survey of top world news stories in 2010 (Tharoor, 2010). As

a celebration of political reform under the new electoral system engineered by the 1997

Constitution, on average, 70 percent of eligible Thai voters went to the polls in the

elections for House Representatives in 2001, 2005, and 2007. This is the highest average

turnout in the modern political history of Thailand, compared to about 40-50 percent

during the period between 1958 and 1983, and around 60 percent on average from the

mid-1980s to the 1990s. Millions of Thai citizens also join political parties and various

civic organizations. Accompanied with the overwhelming support for democracy among

a large number of Thai citizens,[1] some scholars (e.g., Albritton, 2006; Albritton and

---

[1]Using the 2002 Asianbarometer Survey data, Albritton and Thawilwadee (2006)
find, for instance, that 88.9 percent of Thai respondents were satisfied with the Thai state
of democracy, with of those surveyed 54.7 percent reported "fairly satisfied," and 34.2
percent reported "very satisfied."

Thawilwadee, 2005) view this improvement as a good sign for democratic consolidation.[2]

However, in contrast, other scholars such as Amy Freedman (2006: 58) claim that those

who conclude that democracy has been fully consolidated in Thailand have naively

ignored other measures of democratic consolidation such as leaders playing by the rules

of the game—not seeing themselves as above the law—and respect for civil rights.[3]

In addition, because of the wide openness of the political system and the well-developed communication technology, individual people can also express their opinions

on public issues faster and more conveniently than they previously did (Carthew, 2010;

Poowin, 2010). Moreover, protest politics are more common in Thai citizens' lives

(Chairat, 2010; Ockey, 2009; Thitinan, 2008). Since 2006, a pattern of citizen

involvement in Thailand has been apparent through several massive protests organized by

two opposing groups of Thai citizens. The first group is the Yellow Shirts, the anti-

Thaksin movement that emerged as the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) in late

May 2006. The second group is the Red Shirts or the United Front for Democracy

Against Dictatorship (UDD) that first formed in September 2006 to oppose the military

coup, which overthrew the government of Thaksin Shinawatra five weeks before

---

[2]Albritton (2005: 146-147) states that "stability and continuity of democracy demonstrated in the 2005 parliamentary elections both bode well for the consolidation of democratic government in Thailand."

[3]This argument is based on what Freedman's (2006) criticism of Prime Minister Thaksin and his administrative styles. She noted, "He [Thaksin] brought up on corruption charges and was able to avoid punishment for what the [anti-corruption] commission found were violations. He seemingly tried to manipulated media outlets critical of his regime. He used draconian tactics to implement security policies against Muslims in the south, and against those involved in the illegal drug trade" (p.58).

scheduled elections. Both of them grew rapidly with hundreds of thousands of citizens joining each camp's several demonstrations during the past five years.

Among the Yellow Shirts' protests, critical events include their months-long occupation of the Government House (August–December 2008), their blockage of the Parliament Building on October 7, 2008, and their weeklong shutdown of Bangkok's two airports (November 25–December 3, 2008). The Red Shirts' protests in early 2009 caused the cancellation of the 4th East Asian Summit[4] scheduled to be held in Pattaya. The violent clashes with police and soldiers during the demonstrations in Bangkok in April 2009 left hundreds of people injured. During the two month-long protests in April-May 2010, the Red Shirts spilled hundreds of liters of their own blood at the Government House, in front of Prime Minister Abhisit's private house, and in the Democrat's headquarters building. Between April 3 and 9, 2010, they occupied the richest shopping area of Bangkok, Ratchaprasong, confronted a group of people who disagreed with their protests, and clashed with the armed forces, which led to nearly a hundred deaths and more than 1,800 injuries. One scholar views these kinds of street politics as a new political "culture" that make Thailand very difficult to govern (Ockey, 2009). Others see a growing trend of protest activism as evidence of a political awakening of the Thai rural masses (Chairat, 2010).

---

[4]The East Asian Summit (EAS) is a forum held annually by leaders of, initially, 16 countries in the East Asian region, so-called ASEAN plus 6, including 10 ASEAN countries and other 6 countries in Asia and Australia (i.e., Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea and New Zealand). The main purpose of the EAS is to be a forum for dialogue on broad strategic, political and economic issues of common interest and concern with the aim of promoting peace, stability and economic prosperity in East Asia (see http://www.aseansec.org for more detail).

The ultimate goal of this dissertation is to understand this change in patterns of political participation and engagement in Thailand since the late 1990s. Have political participation and engagement increased in Thailand? Has the change in patterns of citizen participation and engagement in Thailand during the past decade increased the number of participants without increasing citizens' political interest or knowledge about politics? In addition, do Thai participants equally engage in the political process; or is there still an uneven distribution of citizen participation across gender, age, level of income, level of education, and geographic area? In other words, how and why have political participation and engagement changed among different groups in Thailand during the past decade?

My dissertation seeks to answer these questions by using a quantitative analysis of political participation and engagement in Thai politics since 2001, the year of the first House of Representatives elections under the new electoral system engineered by the introduction of the 1997 Constitution of Thailand. The period since then has been momentous, characterized by several political changes including a celebration of political reform from 2001 to 2005; then the military coup in late 2006; and political conflict between the two opposing camps, one that supposedly supports Thaksin and the other that protects the interests of Bangkok elites, that emerged in late May 2006 but has continued even after the military government stepped aside and the civilian government regained control in February 2008.

In order to avoid any confusion with "civic engagement," a term often used in discussions about the decline in civil society (Burns, Schlozman, and Verba, 2001: 99), I prefer to use two separate terms, "political participation" and "political engagement" in my explanations regarding citizens' political behaviors and attitudes. It is also recognized

that the term political participation can be considered in a broad sense by including "any activity, individual or collective, devoted to influencing the collective life of the polity" (Macedo et al., 2005: 6). However, the attempt has been made here to distinguish sharply between political and civic (or nonpolitical) activity. That is, when talking about political participation in this dissertation, although I refer this term broadly to include both participation in traditional (voting and involvement in campaign activities) and unconventional (contacting officials and protesting) forms of political activism, I exclude civic activism (membership in civic organizations and taking part in voluntary civic activities) from my measurement of political participation, and instead it is considered as an explanation of changing patterns of political activity. As an explanation for political behavior, I also use the term "political engagement" to refer to the set of political attitudes that motivates people to engage in political activity (Burns, Schlozman, and Verba, 2001: 99-100). This means that my definition of political engagement is much broader than what Zukin et al. (2006) call *cognitive engagement* (participation by paying attention to politics and public affair) by including political interest, knowledge, and efficacy in its operationalization.

In countries where democracy has long been established, such as the United States, the erosion of traditional forms of involvement, such as voting and membership in political parties, was accompanied by an expansion of action repertoires, the rise of protest politics, and more individualized forms of action (Dalton, 2000; Macedo et al., 2005; Norris, 2007; Putnam, 2000; Zukin et al., 2006). Based on these patterns of political participation that have been changing during the last decades, some scholars claim that democracy is at risk (Macedo et al., 2005), while others argue that there is no

problem: citizens are just participating in a different mix of activities than in the past (Zukin et al., 2006). However, for many countries where democracy is new, such as Thailand,[5] an opposite trend can be seen in several modes of political activity: more people go to vote and an increasing number of them join political parties and various civic organizations, while protest politics and individualized forms of participation are, at the same time, more common in Thai citizens' lives.

This dissertation discusses the progression of political participation and engagement in Thailand, and argues that evidence of such progression could be analyzed through its quantity, quality, and equality of citizen participation and engagement. By quantity of political participation and engagement, the author refers to Marcedo et al. (2005: 8-10), who suggest that, first, democracy is better if participation is widespread, more people go to vote, get involved with political parties or electoral activities, as well as participate more frequently in an organization or group. Second, a healthy democracy also needs quality of participation, both in individual and institutional terms. That is, to participate in public affairs, citizens should have proper participatory knowledge and skills, while institutions, such as elections, should provide civic environments that are appropriate for citizens to participate in. For example, for electoral competition to be meaningful, democratic regimes must allow freedom of expression, availability of alternative sources of information (freedom of the media), and associational autonomy (freedom to form parties, interest groups, and social movements) (Dahl, 1971). In

---

[5]Although democracy in Thailand has been established since 1932, nonelected prime ministers were approved by the constitutions until 1992 and the most recent military intervention occurred in 2006.

addition, quality civic environments should provide political activity that is increasingly informed, harmonized, and less polarized. Finally, democracy is better if the voices and interests of the people as a whole are involved. A good democracy must ensure that all citizens are in fact able to make use of all formal rights of political participation, including the right to vote, to organize, to assemble, to protest, and to lobby for their interests, and to influence the decision-making process (Diamond and Morlino, 2004). Indeed, political institutions and inequalities in political resources should not be an obstacle for lower-status individuals, particularly the young, the poor, the less educated, and many racial and ethnic minorities, to exercise their participatory rights.

Using these dimensions of political participation and engagement, one of the main assumptions of this dissertation is that Thailand's democratic politics would be healthier if the quantity, quality, and equality of political participation and engagement were greater. That is, first, if the quantity of political participation in Thailand were greater, participation in political activities and voluntary groups/organizations would be in a positive trend. Second, if the quality of political participation were increased, Thai citizens would be interested more in politics, would be better-informed about politics and elections, and would have a better sense of political efficacy. Third, if the equality of political participation were improved, there would be less uneven distribution of political participation, a smaller participatory gap among Thai citizens with different genders, ages, levels of income, levels of education, and areas of living. Thus, the very goals of this dissertation are: (1) to measure the quantity, quality, and equality of political participation and engagement in Thailand; (2) to explain how and why such quantity,

quality, and equality of political participation and engagement have changed during the past decade.

Justification for the Research

With only a few notable exceptions, most previous studies of the Thai case focus on political participation as participation in electoral activities, especially voting and some campaign activities; there are few empirical studies on political contacting and protest. By considering political participation in a broad sense by including four key activities—voting, campaign activity, political contacting, and protest—this dissertation provides a clearer understanding than previous research of political participation in Thailand. This dissertation also provides answers not only to questions about the extent to which Thai citizens participate in a set of political activities but also questions relating to what particular types of political acts they engage in more often and how much.

Moreover, while recent studies in other developing societies have moved beyond the so-called "standard model," socioeconomic status and resources constraint theories of political participation, to the more advanced models that pay attention to variety of factors such as mobilized, institutional, and contextual factors (see for example Booth and Seligson, 2008; Bratton, 2008; Desposato and Norrander, 2009; Holzner 2010; Moehler, 2008), empirical studies that focus on those factors are still rare. Most previous studies in the Thai context have paid a great deal of attention to either a socioeconomic explanation or the impacts of motivated agents and/or clientelism factors on how and why people get (or do not get) involved in politics (e.g., Albritton and Thawilwadee, 2005; Sombat Thamrongthanyawong, 2010; Suchit 1996). In order to fill this gap, this

dissertation describes and explains political participation in Thailand over the past decade by examining impacts of socioeconomic status factors along with other potential factors, especially political engagement (political interest, knowledge, and efficacy), group mobilization, clientelism, and political experience factors. This dissertation also pays attention to the impact of political contexts by addressing questions regarding changes in political behaviors and attitudes (e.g., knowledge and interests) across time: how and why political participation and engagement have changed among different groups in Thailand during the past decade.

Although this dissertation focuses on a single country, the answers derived from the Thai case provide a clearer understanding of the relationships between individual-level factors (particularly socioeconomic and psychological factors), motivation (group engagement), political contexts (as political changes and reforms have dramatically occurred in many new democracies during the past decades), and political participation, that could be applied to other developing countries as well.

Finally, this dissertation makes an important contribution to the participatory and Thai politics literature because it focuses on political participation and engagement in the "divided" society of Thailand, where political conflicts among people with different political positions (or ideologies)[6] and socioeconomic backgrounds[7] have major effects on the way Thai citizens currently participate in politics, express their political views, and

---

[6]I.e., "Yellow," royalist, and anti-Thaksin versus "Red," liberalist, and pro-Thaksin.

[7]As the majority of the Red Shirts are rural residents who have less income and a lower level of education than the majority of the Yellow Shirts, who come from the larger cities.

make decisions regarding public policies and political choices. As a result, differences in participatory patterns between different groups in Thailand go far beyond the dominant explanations that claimed more active in politics of the less-resource/skill (the poor, the less-educated, or the rural) because they are more easily mobilized into politics by personal benefit than the more advantaged. This dissertation reexamines the so-called "a tale of two democracies" thesis that has dominated perceptions toward urban and rural Thais since the mid-1990s by providing more updated and clearer pictures of political participation and engagement for those two groups of populates.

Method and Sources

Data for the analyses were taken from two major sources. The first source is information collected by several government agencies such as the National Statistics Bureau (NSB) and the Office of Election Commission (ECT). The second source is data taken from several national surveys conducted in Thailand during the last decade by King Prajadhipok's Institute (KPI) and its partners, including the Asian Barometer (ABS), the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES), and the World Values Survey (WVS). The respondents for these surveys were identified through a probability sampling of eligible Thai voters, which included all Thai citizens 18 years of age and older. Collecting almost the same type of responses to questions on political interest, knowledge, and the efficacy of Thai voters in 2001, 2005, and 2007, the CSES survey series was considered appropriate for use in a year-by-year longitudinal analysis of political engagement.

The ABS, the leading comparative survey of citizens' attitudes, values, and political actions in Asia, allowed us to examine the changing patterns of political participation in Thailand between 2002 and 2006 that were not limited to participating in electoral activities but included various unconventional forms of civic action, such as being a member in voluntary groups or associations, contacting the official government, parties, or the media, and taking part in demonstrations, marches, or protests. Both the ABS and CSES survey series also provided individual-level data that could be utilized in both a descriptive and regression analysis to test models of political participation and engagement. The WVS was conducted only one time in Thailand (i.e., in 2007), but contained information about various forms of protest actions that can be used along with the 2006 ABS in explaining more clearly Thai citizens' protest behaviors.

These sources of quantitative data were used in the two stages of examination. The first stage employed tables, graphs, and bivariate tables in order to describe the changes in quantity, quality, and equality of political participation and engagement in Thailand during the past decade. In order to investigate the changes in the quantity of political participation, a longitudinal analysis of a year-by-year participation in four key political activities—voting, campaigning, political contacting, and protesting activities— was developed. The data used in this longitudinal analysis were mixed, consisting of both existing statistical data taken from public organizations (e.g., ECT, NSB, and KPI) and survey data obtained from the ABS (2002, 2006) and CSES (2001, 2005, 2007).

First, the official voter turnout rates in Thailand collected by the Office of Election Commission were employed in order to describe voting trends. Second, data for the examination of progress in campaign activity participation were taken from two

survey questions of the ABS (2002, 2006) and CSES (2001, 2005) that asked the Thai respondents whether they attended election meetings or rallies or had shown support for certain political parties or candidates in the previous election. The analysis also added information about these two campaign activities in 2003 and 2004 reported by King Prajadhipok's Institute (2007) into a graph in order to make it more clearly a trend.

Third, a graph of the tendencies of Thai citizens in initiating contact with public officials obtained from ABS (2002, 2006) and CSES (2005, 2007), was created in order to investigate changes in political contacting participation. While the study excluded contacting other public persons and organizations such as political parties, NGOs, and the media from the measurement of political contacting, the percentages of people contacting those organizations are illustrated in the graph for the purpose of comparison. Fourth, data for the longitudinal analysis of protest activism were taken from the ABS (2002, 2006) and CSES (2005, 2007), using a question that asked Thai respondents whether they have taken part in a protests, marches, or demonstrations during the past years. Other forms of protest activism, including (1) refusing to pay taxes or fees to the government, (2) getting together with others to raise an issue or sign a petition, and (3) using force or violence for a political cause, obtained from the 2006 ABS, the only source that collected such information, were also examined but not as a trend and in a separate table.

Political interest, political knowledge, and political efficacy as key indicators of political engagement were utilized in order to examine the quality of political participation and as an explanation of changes in political participation. Political interest was first measured following the CSES's 10-point scale questions on how interested the respondents were in the election, asking respondents approximately two weeks before the

election day of 2001, 2005, and 2007 House Elections. Existing statistical data on attention to news media through TV, radio, and newspapers recorded by the Thai National Statistic Bureau were also employed to measure political interest.

In order to evaluate respondents' political knowledge, I employed the CSES's three survey questions asking respondents to (1) name as many candidates and (2) political parties in their electoral district as possible, and to (3) match the candidate to the party that he/she belonged to. Then, the responses of those that could name at least two candidates, parties, and matches were compared between candidate and party. Finally, the CSES's four survey questions that measure the feeling of political efficacy were used. These efficacy questions included both questions that reflected internal efficacy, "beliefs about one's own competence to understand and to participate effectively in politics" (Niemi, Craig, and Mattei, 1991: 407), and external efficacy, the perceived responsiveness of the political system to citizen's participation (see Craig, Niemi, and Silver, 1990: 289-314; Madsen, 1987: 571-581).[8]

In order to examine the equality of political participation, bivariate tables of the 2002 and 2006 ABS data were developed. The two separate-year surveys of the ABS (2002, 2006) were more appropriate in the context of this study than the three separate-year surveys of the CSES (2001, 2005, 2007) because the ABS constantly collects information about many political activities, including voting, campaign activities (e.g.,

---

[8]Internal efficacy was measured by agreement with the statement, "If people like us go to vote, we can change what happens in the future," and disagreement with the statement, "Sometimes I think that I just don't understand politics." External efficacy was measured by disagreement with the statement, "Government officials really do not care what people like you and me think," and disagreement with the statement, "Common people like me don't have any influence on what goes on in politics."

attending election meetings or rallies and showing support for certain political parties or candidates), political contacting (e.g., contacting government officials or high-level officials), and protesting (i.e., taking part in demonstrations, marches, or protests) that allowed this study to consider political participation and its changing patterns in a broad sense. In contrast, CSES collected different information about political participation. In 2001, the CSES survey asked whether the respondents had: (1) attended campaign meetings or rallies and (2) had shown support for parties and candidates, but did not collect any political contacting and protest activism information. For 2005 and 2007, several questions about political contacting and protest activism were added, but electoral activity questions were taken out; the survey in 2005 asked only the question about showing support for parties and candidates, while this question, and the question about attending campaign meetings or rallies, were both excluded from the 2007 survey.

With the help of the survey data obtained from the ABS, an analysis of the variable correlations in each bivariate table was applied to see the associations between five demographic factors (gender, age, level of income, level of education, and area of living) and six political activities (voting, attending election meetings or rallies, showing support for certain political parties or candidates, contacting government officials, contacting high-level officials, and taking part in demonstrations, marches, or protests).

The second stage of the examinations dealt intensively with three major questions: (1) how political participation has changed among different groups in Thailand; (2) how political engagement has changed among different groups; and (3) how political engagement can explain the patterns of political participation among groups of Thai citizens, especially between the rural and the urban. The first question could be

partly answered by the bivariate analysis of equality of political participation. However, to make the answer even more clear, multivariate regression models of a political participation index[9] were analyzed. Controlling for political engagement (i.e., political interest[10] and political efficacy[11]) and other psychological and mobilization factors (party attachment[12] and group membership[13]), these regression models explain whether participatory gaps among citizens with differences in demographic backgrounds (i.e., gender, age, income, education, and rural-urban) actually exist. By conducting regression analyses for both the 2002 and 2006 data, the results obtained from the models could also be utilized to explain the factors that affected the changing patterns of political participation in Thailand between those years.

---

[9]These political participation index models used similar sets of dependent (i.e., sum of six political activities—voting, attending election meetings or rallies, showing support for certain political parties or candidates, contacting government officials, contacting high-level officials, and taking part in demonstrations, marches, or protests) and independent variables (i.e., five demographic variables) that were applied in the bivariate examinations of equality of political participation.

[10]Survey questions taken from the ABS 2002 and 2006 to measure political interest variables included: (1) citizens' self-reports on is the extent to which they were interested in politics and (2) individuals' responses to a 5-point scale question, asking the respondents how often they followed news about politics and the government.

[11]Two separate political efficacy variables were taken from the ABS questions asked (1) whether the respondents thought, "I think I have the ability to participate in politics," and (2) whether the respondents believed, "Sometimes politics and government seems so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what is going on."

[12]*Party Attachment* variable was constructed based on two ABS questions: a question asking the respondents whether they thought of themselves as being close to any particular party; and if yes, another question asking the respondents how much close they felt.

[13]*Group membership* variable was a dummy variable for a question asking the respondents: "Are you a member of any organization or formal groups?"

However, the explanations obtained from the political participation index models could not explain the changes in participatory patterns in each particular kind of political activity—voting, campaigns, political contacting, and protesting. The logistic regression models of participation in each of the four key activities for 2002 and 2006 were then developed in order to: (1) test the impact of socioeconomic, political engagement, and mobilization factors on participation in individual kind of four political acts; and (2) explain the changing patterns of political participation for each activity by comparing the results from the 2002 to the 2006 models.

Using the 2001, 2005, and 2007 CSES data, the bivariate and multivariate analyses of political engagement were then developed to examine the differences in political engagement between rural and urban Thai populates. The CSES was appropriate for the examinations of political engagement because it constantly collects a variety of information about political attitudes that allowed this study to consider political engagement and its changing patterns in a broad sense by including political interest, knowledge, and efficacy. Conducting surveys in all three House of Representatives elections held in Thailand between 2001 and 2010, the CSES provides time series data that can be utilized to investigate changes in political engagement between rural and urban citizens.

In the bivariate tables, rural-urban disparities in the three engagement factors for each election year were developed in order to investigate how political interest, knowledge, and efficacy were different between rural and urban Thai respondents and how such a rural-urban difference has changed over the last decade. The 2007 CSES was the only survey conducted in Thailand after the promulgation of the 2007 Constitution

and collected a rich set of information about political participation (voting, political contacting, and protesting activities) and political engagement (interest, knowledge, and efficacy). Moreover, a question that helped to categorize voters into Red and Yellow supporters was also available only in the 2007 CSES; that is, the question asked which political party represented the respondents' views best. In terms of the political positions that the Red or Yellow supporters take, we can roughly define those who identified the PPP as best representing their view as Red-voters, those who identified the DP as Yellow-voters, and those who identified neither the PPP nor the DP as in-between voters. These voters' identifications were used as one of the independent variables for the 2007 multivariate models for voting, political contacting and protesting by rural and urban residents. These multivariate models were excellent in terms of their ability to explain how rural-urban differences in political interest, knowledge, and efficacy can explain patterns of political activism between rural and urban voters, when controlling for other demographic, attitudinal, mobilization, institutional, and most interestingly, Red/Yellow attachment factors.

Relying on these methods of examination, this dissertation explains changes in patterns of political participation in Thailand over the past decade. This dissertation is particularly interested in uncovering areas where participatory inequalities exist and, importantly, in measuring how politically sophisticated Thai citizens are. This dissertation also revisits in a productive way the debate about how rural citizens are different from urban citizens. The major attempt made here is to show that rural Thais are not less sophisticated and so perhaps not as dependent on patron-client ties as generally described by the literature. Or at least, if beholden to patron-client ties, they enter these

relationships for strategic reasons, not as blind actors easily duped and manipulated by patrons.

<div align="center">Outline of Chapters</div>

The next chapter (Chapter 2) outlines Thailand's political chronology since the country began its democratization process in 1932 up to the period where this research begins its interpretation (2001-2010). The main attempt is to provide a historical background for the analyses of changes in political participation and engagement in this dissertation. It starts by drawing out the two major lines of thought—a "vicious circle" in Thai political development and the "tale of two democracies" thesis—that have dominated explanations of democracy and politics in Thailand for decades. The chapter argues that due to political changes in Thailand during the past ten years, those conventional explanations have become outdated.

In order to develop a theory that can explain more clearly how and why political participation and engagement of different groups in Thailand have changed during the past decade, Chapter 3 reviews a number of political participation studies conducted in several contexts: the United States and other Western democracies, developing countries, and Thailand. In the first part of the chapter, two key terms—political participation and political engagement—are defined in a broad sense. The second part of the chapter deals with the factors influencing political participation (socioeconomic status, political engagement, mobilization, and political context factors), and proposes participatory models that contain a variety of those potential factors to be tested in various contexts

(years) as a more proper way to explain the changes in patterns of political participation in Thailand during the past ten years.

Chapter 4 analyzes the changing patterns of political behaviors and attitudes in Thailand during the past decade. The major attempts are to examine: (1) whether political participation and engagement of Thai citizens have quantitatively and qualitatively improved; (2) if any improvement has been made, then by how much. In order to clarify these puzzles, the chapter develops a longitudinal analysis of year-by-year political participation and engagement in Thailand since 2001. If the quantity of political participation in Thailand during the past decade was improved, Thai citizens would increasingly participate in politics. If the quality of political participation was improved, positive trends of political interest, knowledge, and efficacy of Thai citizens would clearly be observed. The topics examined in this chapter are, therefore: (1) the changing patterns of participation in voting, campaign activities, political contacting, and protesting activities; (2) evolution of party membership and civic engagement; and (3) changing patterns of political interest, knowledge, and efficacy of Thai citizens since 2001. Even though progress in the quantity and quality of political participation in Thailand during the past decade appears in ebb and flow trends rather than straightforward increases, evidence derived from the examination of these three topics is convincing enough to conclude that the quantity and quality of political participation in Thailand have changed in an optimistic direction.

How has political participation changed among different groups in Thailand? Chapter 5 responds to this question in three aspects. The first aspect emphasizes equality of political participation topic, seeking to explain changes in the distribution of political

participation among Thai citizens of different genders, ages, levels of income, levels of education, and areas of living. The chapter contends that participatory gaps between people with different geographic and socioeconomic backgrounds still exist but are smaller than what prior Thai scholars have argued.

The second aspect then focuses on the factors influencing participatory disparities between groups of Thai citizens: What are those factors? Have their impacts on political participation changed over time, if any change, then how and why? The chapter confirms that participatory differences between groups of Thai citizens are not a consequence of differences in socioeconomic backgrounds but of various psychological, motivational, and contextual factors. However, because we should not expect the same set of factors to affect different modes of political activism in the same way, the third aspect of examination for Chapter 5 focuses on the factors that foster each kind of the four political actions considered in this study—voting, campaign activities, political contacting, and protests. The chapter concludes that the more equal distribution of political participation among Thai citizens is a consequence of changes in participatory patterns among different groups of Thai citizens, especially of those who are female, affluent, and urban. Such changes are driven by several activities and fostered by various socioeconomic, engagement, and mobilization factors, the impact of each on participation varying according to the political context.

The differential rates of participation for any subgroup deserve attention, but rural-urban differences are particularly worthy of attention in the case of Thailand. Chapter 6 investigates rural-urban differences with respect to the diverse set of predispositions that shape an individual's motivation and propensity to take part in

politics. The chapter addresses two major questions to be examined: (1) how has political engagement changed between rural and urban Thai citizens in the past decade?; and (2) How can these changes in each group's political engagement explain its patterns of political participation? In the first part, the chapter deals intensively with rural-urban differences in three dimensions of political engagement—political interest, knowledge, and efficacy—in the 2001, 2005, and 2007 elections. The chapter presents mixed patterns of political engagement between these two groups, with growing trends in political efficacy for both rural and urban electorates and ebb and flow trends in political interest and knowledge among these two groups. The chapter thus concludes that the attitudes toward politics between rural and urban Thai citizens were neither constantly negative nor positive, and were not easy to explain solely based on each group's differences in socioeconomic status or area of residence, as preceding scholars have suggested.

The second part of Chapter 6 then focuses on explaining how the changing pictures of rural-urban differences in political interest, knowledge, and efficacy can explain patterns of political activism (i.e., in voting, political contacting, and protesting activities) between the rural and urban Thai voters. The chapter suggests that the factors facilitating greater political participation are relatively different between rural and urban residents, and such differences cannot simply be explained as a result of a deeper engagement in the patron-client relationship of the rural than of the urban. Indeed, those differentiations depend on several factors and vary according to different kinds of political activity.

Chapter 7 evaluates the various results of this study and discusses the implications of these findings for future research.

CHAPTER 2

A BRIEF HISTORY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND

ENGAGEMENT IN MODERN THAI POLITICS

Based on knowledge about Thai politics, there are two major lines of thought

dominating the explanations of political participation and engagement in Thailand. The

first one, conventional wisdom, asserts that the democratization impasse in Thailand was

caused by the endless quarrels among two political villains: the ambitious (dictatorial

officers) and the greedy, irresponsible politicians who manipulate the dependant, ordinary

people, the majority of whom are conceptualized as poor, ignorant, and unhealthy. Thai

scholars who understand, examine, and seek ways to improve democracy in Thailand call

what is going on in the Thai democracy a "vicious circle"[14] in Thai political development

---

[14]Borwornsak and Burns (1998) explain that this circle starts with increasing
public pressure on the civilian regime (normally functioning with the approval of the
military) due to its social, political, and economic dysfunction. This dysfunction was
typically revealed by the media reporting on the regime's overt corruption. This, in turn,
provoked increasing political conflict between factions in the government coalition.
Finally, in compliance with the bureaucracy, the military stepped in to restore order and
establish a functional legislature, able to pass the laws that the bureaucracy has drafted.
Usually an interim constitution is quickly implemented followed by a permanent
constitution with possibly an election to create an ostensibly civilian government. Once
the government is up and running, it is allowed a honeymoon period where everyone
settles back to the business of state affairs. But then rumors of corruption arose yet again,
and renewed social and political turmoil caused the governmental factions to again turn
on one another. And the vicious cycle began yet again.

(Borwornsak and Burns, 1998; Likhit Dhiravegin, 2007). According to this school of thought, public participation in Thailand is meaningless because it has been carried out by nonactive citizens who have an inadequate understanding of politics (democracy). This line of thought seems to be out of date since the military decided to withdraw and disengage itself from active politics due to the uses of violence against the pro-democracy demonstrators in the people's uprising event of May 1992, which caused hundreds of campaigners to die or disappear. However, the military coup in September 2006 suggests that military intervention cannot be overlooked or totally ignored, especially in a country where the military has been in power and has retained a strong influence in politics until the present, such as Thailand.

The second line of thought, called "a tale of two democracies," is first introduced by a famous Thai political scientist, Anek Laothamatas. Instead of explaining Thai politics as a vicious circle and viewing most Thai citizens as nonactive and fools, Anek (1995) suggests that the reason democracy failed to be firmly established over the past decades is to be found in the differing views and expectations of the middle class and the poor in the country over democracy, elections, and politicians. Anek defines the rural electorate as Thai populations who reside in villages (in the 1980s almost 70 percent of the workforce are farmers or peasants), while the Thai middle class are those socially situated between the wealthy property classes and the poverty-stricken peasants, farmers, and workers. He theorizes that rural voters are still very much part of the patron-client relationship whereas urban voters may be more educated and wealthier. These two groups appeared to desire different things from Thai democracy and this led to the instability and the coups. However, as we could observe through Thailand's political

phenomena that occur in the past decades, the opened political-space provided by the 1997 Constitution, the new style of political campaigns, in which practical public policy is the most effective strategy to attract voters through a variety uses of media and advertisement, utilized by PM Thaksin and his Thai Rak Thai Party, and the new roles of high-technology media, especially those that have been used by the protest leaders (e.g., website and satellite TV) in combination may affect and change the characteristics of individual voters—their perceptions and understandings about democracy, their assessments on political systems and institutions, as well as their political behaviors. The two dominated line of thoughts are therefore old fashioned and cannot explain these changing in patterns of political behavior and attitude among different groups of Thai citizens.

Attempting to provide the background for my discussion, this chapter presents a summary of Thai political history since the country began its democratization process seventy-seven years ago. Though several critical events have occurred during the past fifteen years, this chapter suggests that the period since the year 2001 is important for the study of changes in patterns of political participation and engagement in Thailand.

<div align="center">Political Participation and Engagement in the</div>

<div align="center">Early Years of Thai Democracy</div>

In the early hours of June 24, 1932, a small group of military and civilian officials, calling themselves the People's Party, seized control of the government and brought an end to the 800-year absolute monarchy in Siam (known as Thailand since 1939). Thailand began its democratization process since then, particularly after King

Prajadhipok (King Rama VII) signed Thailand's first permanent written constitution on December 10, 1932. However, the effects of this change on the Thai people were not immediately apparent, and successive shifts in power did not greatly disturb the placid surface of daily life. In order to minimize internal resistance and avoid the dangers of foreign intervention that they thought civil discord might invite, the People's Party initially stayed in the background and drew up a long-term program for political development (Wyatt, 2003). According to the political development program, half of the members of the National Assembly would be selected and appointed by the People's Party. The major attempt was to ensure its control over the elected members (Suchit, 1987). The People's Party promised to allow a fully elected democracy only when at least half of the population had completed primary education or ten years had passed, whichever came first (Wyatt, 2003). As a result, the first National Assembly election was held in November 1933 through an indirect electoral system in which the voters at the subdistrict (*Tambon*) level elected local representatives who would then choose between candidates for the National Assembly. As the outcome of this electoral process, the first national assembly included numerous senior officials of the old regime, amounting to approximately one-third of the total membership.

Thailand held its first direct election in November 1937, and only 40.2 percent of the electorate participated in choosing half of the National Assembly. The second direct election was held a year later in the same month, but still the National Assembly remained half-appointed and the voter turnout dropped to only about 35 percent.[15] No

---

[15]See Thailand's voter turnout rates over time in Chapter 4

new election was held until 1946 due to World War II. Prime Minister Plaek Pibunsongkhram (Pibun), during this period, experimented with Italian Fascism and a mixture of elements of the Japanese *bushido* code, trying to organize, discipline, and militarize Thai society (Lynch, 2006), which was carried out in a highly authoritarian manner. Thus, during the first two decades of constitutional monarchy, the concept of democracy remained alien to the majority of Thai people for much of that time. Democracy in Thailand has undergone a long process of refinement and adjustment in order to produce a political system specific to the needs of establishing the Thai nation rather than of providing the ordinary citizens with the rights to govern or at least, opportunities for political participation.

Thailand then experienced a short period of democracy during the postwar era, when the 1946 Constitution provided for a fully elected House of Representatives and a Senate chosen by the House. Nevertheless, on November 8, 1947, amid internal conflict between parliamentarians and the political chaos that followed the mysterious death of King Ananda Mahidol (King Rama VIII), the military overthrew the elected government of Admiral Thawal Thamrongnavasawat (prime minister, 1946-1947), and restored power to Pibun. Thai institutions, during 1947-1958, were held in the hands of elitists with great support from the military. Even though the House of Representatives elections were held four times in January 1948, February 1952, February 1957, and December 1957, public participation in these elections remained low with approximately 40 percent on average voter turnout. Moreover, the election results were criticized by the public, particularly middle classes in Bangkok (e.g., the press, business organizations, and unions), as the product of a "dirty" electoral process (Suchit, 1996: 187). Following the

1957 election, there was considerable public dissatisfaction and even demonstrations against the election results. This kind of instable event did not lead to the improvement of election; in contrast, it created another coup led by Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat, who abolished the parliament and the constitution, placed a ban on political parties and unions, and established the "Revolutionary Party" and a highly authoritarian regime. An external threat by Communism allowed the military government of Sarit (prime minister, 1959-1963) and Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn (prime minister, 1963-1973) to develop and maintain a series of authoritarian governments for the next fourteen years with strong support from the US government and the World Bank.

Citizens Uprisings: The Two Turning Points of

Thai Public Participation

The first stage of a turning point in the Thai democratization process was reached in October 1973, when the student-led popular uprising overthrew the corrupt and unpopular military government of Field Marshal Thanom. A coalition of workers, farmers, students, and members of the middle class began to mobilize for democracy, clearly demonstrating the potential for political change at the grassroots level. Legitimacy was withdrawn from the nation's top military leaders, who were forced to go into exile, after the use of violence to attack masses of Thai citizens in the streets of Bangkok. Without its authoritarian leaders, Thailand's military returned to its barracks, at least temporarily, permitting the expansion of democratic space in which human rights became more respected, the media received more freedom to criticize politicians and governments, and political parties had greater opportunity to form and play an extensive

role in Thai parliamentary politics. However, the 1973-76 period of civilian rule did not provide harmonious politics and widespread public participation. Rather, it was a period of great political conflict and competition among polarized people at the top of society who split into two ideological camps—left, progressive, and right, conservative.

After the 1973 student upheaval, the 1974 Constitution was promulgated, applying several new electoral rules, including a rule that made membership in a political party a requirement for election to the House of Representatives. When the House of Representatives election was held in January 1975, 42 political parties and 2,199 candidates contested for 269 seats, while 47.17 percent of eligible voters cast their ballots. Another house election under the 1974 Constitution was held on April 4, 1976, and the voter turnout dropped to 43.99 percent. Moreover, ordinary people, whose participation improved very little in the 1975 and 1976 House of Representatives elections, were mobilized and brought into the left-right conflict. The time that the political space was opened (Girling, 1981; Morell and Chai-Anan, 1981; and Hewison, 1997) was short and ended in October 1976 when protesting students, who gathered to oppose Field Marshal Thanom's return from his exile, were killed or imprisoned by the right-wing Village Scouts and the military. An inability of the government to control the situation provided a perfect opportunity for the military to step in again. This bloody restoration of authoritarianism not only brought armed forces back into power but also illustrated the residual strength of conservative forces (McCargo, 2002).

However, as it had mobilized several groups of Thai people (not only residents of Bangkok, laborers, taxi drivers, and businessmen but also ordinary villagers, farmers, and provincial elites), political conflict during the 1973-1976 period indicated an imperative

task facing Thailand "to devise political systems that can balance participation with stability, change with order" (Morell and Chai-Anan, 1981: 4). Unlike the Sarit-Thanom strong authoritarian era, the military was now forced to share some of its absolute political power with the elected members of Parliament (Kobkua, 2003: 17), thereby proposed a new form of military's control over the government. From late 1977 to 1988, there was an evolution of a constitutional and parliamentary regime under several governments led by former military leaders.

In order to loosen the authoritarianism, the governments of General Kriangsak Chamanan (prime minister, 1977-1980) and General Prem Tinsulanonda (prime minister, 1980-1988) allowed the expansion of the role of the parliament and political parties. Three consecutive House of Representatives elections produced an increase in voter turnout from 43.9 percent in the 1979 elections to 50.8 percent in 1983 and 61.3 percent in the 1986 elections. Nevertheless, during their twelve years in power, both Kriangsak and Prem were never once running in an election, and it soon became clear that the polity established under both of them was one which appealed to conservatives, as decision-making and policy were not entrusted to popularly elected politicians but remained with an elite of civil and military bureaucrats and technocrats (Hewison, 1997). Many Thai scholars therefore labeled the form of government in this period as a "half-a-page democracy" (*prachathipatai khreung bai*) (Kobkua, 2003) or "semidemocracy" (Case, 1996; Chai-anan, 1989; Neher, 1987) which is basically one form of a limited/guided democracy. The major characteristic of the semidemocratic government of Thailand is that it is the form of government in which the prime minister, regardless of whether he/she is a member of the House of Representatives, is elected by a coalition of parties,

and major ministries are given to retired military figures, famous politicians, or high-level bureaucrats. Under this form of government, participation of many groups within the society is allowed but the military and top level bureaucrats continue to play the most important role in determining the direction of country's politics (Neher, 1987). However, after the House of Representatives election on July 24, 1988, General Prem was forced by thousands of protesters integrated surrounding his house against the prospect of an unelected premier. As a result, he decided to step aside,[16] permitting a full-fledged civilian government of elected Chatchai Choonhawan (prime minister, 1988-1991), leader of Chart Thai Party, to be formed in August 1988.

The second stage of a turning point in the Thai democratization process was reached on February 23, 1991 when the National Peace Keeping Council (NPKC), led by General Sundhorn Kongsompong, the Supreme Commander of the Royal Thai Armed Forces, took over the administration of the country. Instead of retaining power, as had happened in the event of military interventions in the past, the NPKC promulgated a provisional constitution and, after a brief period, paved the way for a civilian interim government headed by Anand Panyarachun (prime minister, 1991-1992 and once again in

---

[16]It would be great to make some critical notes here that after his rejection to continue his position as a prime minister after the 1988 election in the late July 1988, General Prem was appointed by the current king (King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Rama IX) to be the King's Privy Council since August 23, 1988. He was later promoted to be the Privy Council President since September 4, 1998, and has maintained this position until the present (2011). During the country's political crisis of 2008-10, General Prem was accused by the ex-Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and his supporters of being mastermind of the 2006 coup (Crispin, 2008; Käng, 2011; Thanong Khanthong, 2009) as well as influencing in the appointment of the post-coup legislature assembly and the interim government of General Surayud Chulanont. However, the military junta that ousted the occupying Thaksin government in September 2006 denied that General Prem had any important political role.

1992), a bureaucrat turned businessman. A majority of the new cabinet was composed of well-respected, experienced technocrats who were known for their liberal thinking and belief in democracy. The interim government was entrusted with administering the country until a new constitution was promulgated and a general election held, scheduled for early 1992.

After the general election in March 1992, five political parties (Rassadorn Party, Samakkee Dhamma Party, Social Action Party, Thai Citizens Party, and Chart Thai Party) designated General Suchinda Kraprayun (prime minister, April-May 1992), a leading member of the NPKC who promised that he would not seek political power after the election, as the prime minister (Callahan, 1998). Suchinda's appointment as Prime Minister accompanied by the appointment to his cabinet of almost the same corrupt politicians who were ousted in the 1991 coup resulted in massive demonstrations in Bangkok and a few other cities in May 1992. Due to Suchinda's use of violence against the demonstrators, many prodemocracy campaigners died in the uprising. "Black May" became a common name for the 17-20 May 1992 bloody confrontation between the unarmed prodemocracy demonstrators and the NPKC, backed by tanks and modern ammunition. In response to negative sentiments against the armed forces being used as political instruments, the military, since the end of the Black May event, decided to withdraw and disengage itself from active politics (Kobkua, 2003).

The Black May event of 1992 contributed to the realization within government that calls from civil advocacy organizations to introduce genuine political reform could no longer be ignored (Arghiros, 2001). The pressure and desire for a new constitution was felt and expressed at every level of Thai society, resulting in the eventual

promulgation of a new constitution in 1997. This constitution is said to be different both in intent and in the way it was drafted. It was drafted with the specific aim of political reform and, unlike previous constitutions, through widespread consultation with the Thai people.

The Constitution of 1997 has been known as the "people's constitution" because it is the first Thai constitution in which ordinary people had an opportunity to participate in various stages of the drafting process. Several reasons can be applied to explain this notion. First, in the composition of the Constitution Drafting Assembly, seventy-three of ninety-nine members were provincial representatives who had been directly elected among citizens (who are willing to be a constitution drafter) of each province and then these representations were approved by the parliament. Second, during the drafting process, there was public consultation and debate, including a series of public hearings across the nation that was organized as a significant part of the Assembly's decision-making process. Finally, the "green flag" campaign, leading by the group of 1997 Constitutional drafters and middle class in Bangkok, succeeded in pressuring the "old-paradigm" parliament to vote to pass the Constitution.

<u>Participation and Engagement in the Decade of</u>

<u>Democratization Attempts, 2001-2010</u>

Reform Celebration (2001-2005)

The 1997 Constitution deals mainly with reform of the electoral system, establishment of new bodies charged with checking abuses of the political process, and popular rights. Under this new election system, senators are now elected instead of

appointed, and members of the House of Representatives are chosen through a mixed system—a majority and proportional system combination that involves constituent elections (400 members) and party list selections (100 members). A number of independent organizations, such as the Election Commission, the Administrative and Constitutional Courts, the National Counter Corruption Commission, the State Audit Commission, the Human Rights Commission and the Ombudsman, have been set up to guarantee the intention of the constitution and promote transparency and accountability. Decentralized government is promoted and the voting age has been lowered to eighteen.

Under the new structure designed by the 1997 Constitution's mandates, new patterns and forms of citizen participation and engagement in Thai politics can be observed. First, there was the almost 72 percent voter turnout, the highest rate since Thailand held the first general election, in the first direct senate election in Thai democratic history ever in March of 2000. In addition, consider the House of Representative elections held under the new electoral system in January 2001. Under the new system, political parties tend to encourage people to vote for them based on their policy package rather than on the reputation of individual candidates which was the major criterion voters, particularly in rural areas, used when casting ballots in the past (Suchit, 1996).[17] This indicates a positive sign for party development. The interest in making political parties better linked to ordinary people (which is partly forced by the Constitution) caused a rapid growth of membership in political parties. According to the

---

[17]Suchit (1996: 196) concludes that the urban electorates tend to vote more for a party than for individuals. In contrast, the rural voters pay no attention to party policies and tend to vote for candidates who have personal ties with a constituency.

Office of Election Commission's database, party membership of Thai people has increased from 2.8 million in 1998 to almost twenty million in 2005, or by nearly seven fold within only seven years.

Emerging Crisis and Military Coup (2006-2007)

However, the landslide victory[18] of the government party, Thai Rak Thai Party (TRT) led by the Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, in the 2005 election, the second election after the 1997 constitutional reform, led to many concerns about the development of democracy in Thailand, particularly the development that may produce the "single party" form of government in which one large party gets a majority and lets other medium or small parties have seats in the cabinet but with a little bargaining power. This pattern has long occurred in other Asian democracies such as Singapore and Malaysia[19] rather than a liberal democracy, in which a contested election is one of the most important features.[20] Antigovernment reactions then emerged, starting from various concerns raised by journalists, academicians, and activists about its high popularity due to the implementation of various "populist policies" (*prachaniyom*), its intervention in the mass media and independent organizations, and various "conflict of interest" issues. The

---

[18]The TRT gained 377 of 500 seats in the 2005 House of Representatives election.

[19]In Malaysia, there is only one partisan-group of political party – United Malays National Organization or UMNO – that was elected to govern the country since its dependence from the United Kingdom in 1957, while Singapore's political system can be categorized as a multiple-party system with single-party dominating (i.e., People's Action Party, PAP) since its independent from Malaysian Federation in 1965.

[20]See a definition of democracy in this sense, for example, that defining by Joseph Schumpeter (1942) and Adam Przeworski et al. (2000).

latter provoked a public movement when Prime Minister Thaksin's family sold telecommunication shares (Shin Corporation) to the Singaporean government investment arm Temasek for about 70,000 million baht ($2 billion at the beginning of 2006) without paying any taxes. Moreover, in the eyes of many people, this sale was not simply a sale of private property to a foreign investor but a sale of one of Thailand's most important companies to a foreign power (McCargo, 2009).

The People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), a large group of middle class citizens and a coalition of anti-Thaksin protesters, gathered in Bangkok, demanding that Thaksin resign from the Prime Minister position.[21] But a counter organization occurred due to Thaksin's high popularity, when a group of lower middle class and working class in Bangkok and rural people from North and Northeast regions gathered to support the Prime Minister. Thaksin responded to this crisis by dissolving parliament in February, and holding a new election in April 2006. However, the situation was worsened when the opposition parties boycotted the election. The end of the "first round" political conflict was neither a victory for anti-Thaksin or pro-Thaksin groups, but for the military. The bloodless military coup on September 19, 2006 shocked not only Thai scholars who never thought such an intervention could occur in the 21st century, but also those foreign scholars for whom consideration of democracy is their major concern.

Military rule was short lived. Under today's world of liberal democracy and the internal political environment, in which popular rights cannot be ignored, the military government had to transfer the regime back to democracy as quickly as possible.

---

[21]The PAD's movement grew very fast due to a wide use of mass media such as newspapers, websites, and satellite TV to communicate among protesters.

Moreover, rather than using their superior power, the military leaders let the court and a number of independent organizations that were established according to the 1997 Constitution's mandates (e.g., the Constitution Court, the Administrative Court, and Election Commission) to function. They also did not terminate political parties, even though three parties (which include the TRT party) were dissolved by the judge of the Constitution Commissions in May 2007. Eventually, a new Constitution was drafted,[22] accepted by the majority of voters in the national referendum, and promulgated in late 2007. Roughly 56.5 percent of the electorate went to the referendum voting, and the draft Constitution was passed with a majority vote (58 percent) to become the 18th Constitution of Thailand since August 20, 2007.

One key element in the 2007 Constitution[23] is a new electoral system that combines the switch back to the pre-1997 multiseat constituency system with the new provincial-groups party list one. According to the Constitution, the House of Representatives now consists of 480 members: 400 members are from the election on a constituency basis and eighty are from the election on a party-list basis (Section 93). In

---

[22]The selection of the 2007 Constitution drafters was begun by the military leaders requested several organizations (included public, private, and civil society sectors) to suggest the names of people who are suitable to be a Constitutional drafter to be appointed by the junta as a National Assembly member. The 1982-member junta-appointed National Assembly then elected 200 of its members as candidates for the Constitution Drafting Assembly. The 100 of the 200 shortlist nominees were, finally, approved by the military leaders to act as constitution drafters. Based on this selection process, the appointed National Assembly is drawn mainly from the Bangkok elite, with few representatives of workers, farmers, or other political parties (Hewison, 2008).

[23]For an unofficial English translation of the 2007 Constitution, see <http://www.ifes.org/publication/76cb46cff3a833ae3de747514b49440b/Translation%20of%20Thai%202007%20Constitution.pdf>Thai%202007%20Constitution.pdf>

the election on a constituency basis, the eligible voters shall cast ballot for candidates that can be elected of each constituency. Each constituency, which shall be regarded by province, contains House of Representatives members ranging from one to a maximum of three seats based on the total population in that province (Section 94). Although this electoral system is questioned about providing an unequal right to vote—in particular between voters in large provinces who can vote for up to three candidates and those in smaller provinces who can vote for only two or even one candidate, the prominent claim that this is the proper system that can avoid Thai politics from a one-party dominant system.[24] The party list system is retained, but reduced from one hundred to eighty seats; voting is no longer national, but conducted by dividing the country into eight provincial groups, in which each provincial group has ten seats in the House of Representatives (Section 95-98).

The wholly elected 200-member Senate created by the 1997 Constitution is replaced by a 150-member Senate with some members elected and others appointed. Under Section 111 of the 2007 constitution, the 150 Senate members consist of one elected member per province (currently seventy-seven) and the rest that are selected by the Selection Committee for Senators (Section 111-112). A Selection Committee for Senators consists of the President of the Constitutional Court, the President of the Election Commission, the President of the Ombudsman, the President of the National Counter Corruption Commission, the President of the Office of Auditor General, the

---

[24]Based on Thailand's experiences in using this electoral system in several House of Representatives elections between late 1970s and mid 1990s, a coalition form of government is the expected outcome.

President of the National Human Rights Commission, a judge of the Supreme Court of

Justice, and a judge of the Supreme Administrative Court (Section 113). In the selection

process, the Selection Committee for Senators would select the remaining seventy three

Senators from a name-list received from the Election Commission. Candidates included

in this name-list are nominated by academic organizations, governmental organizations,

private sector, professional organizations, and other official civic groups.[25] These

nominating organizations must be established in Thailand for at least three years (Section

114). On one hand, this process of Senate selection would bring people who are

representatives of groups or organizations into the body; on the other, the selection by a

panel of only seven members could be criticized as undemocratic.[26]

On the Path Back to Democracy, Political Conflicts Return

The military government stepped aside after the House of Representative election

was held and approved by the Election Commission. The general election on December

23, 2007 was a "symbol" showing that democracy was back in Thailand. However, the

conflict continues because the People Power Party (PPP), which is Thaksin's proxy party,

emerged as a replacement for TRT, won the election by a solid margin (233 of the 480

seats) and formed the coalition government after five minor parties joined it (Table 2.1,

---

[25]According to the 2007 organic law on the election of members of the House of
Representatives and Senators, the composition of these 73 selected senators shall consist
of 14 people nominated by academic organizations, 14 representatives of governmental
organizations, 15 nominees from the private sector, 15 from professional organizations
and 15 from other groups.

[26]Debates on the pros and cons of the Senates selection can be found precisely in
Chambers (2009: 24-26).

Table 2.1

Election Results, 23 December 2007

	Constituency		Party List		Total
	seats	% vote	seats	% vote	seats
People Power Party (PPP)*	199	36.6	34	37.6	233
Democrat Party (DP)	131	30.3	33	37.0	164
Chart Thai Party (CT)*	30	8.9	4	3.7	34
Puea Pandin Party (FMP)*	17	9.2	7	4.9	24
Ruamjai Thai Chart Pattana Party*	8	4.7	1	2.3	9
Machima Thippathai Party*	11	5.4	0	1.4	11
Pracharaj Party*	4	2.3	1	1.2	5
Total	400	100.0	80	100.0	480

Source: The Office of Election Commission (www.ect.go.th)

*Parties joined PPP's coalition government

the election results). In late May 2008, a hundred thousand street protesters led by the PAD gathered in Bangkok, demanding that the government stop the plan to revise the 2007 Constitution—to change Article 237 of the 2007 Constitution, which gave the authority to the Election Commission to recommend dissolution of political parties for the electoral violations of party executives. For the PAD, this revision signaled the reversal of the ban imposed on executives of the disbanded TRT and the possible return and acquittal of the self-exiled Thaksin (Askew, 2010).

Then on August 26, 2008, approximately 30,000 protesters moved in and seized the Government House, extending their goal to force Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej, who was invited by Thaksin to become a PPP leader during his exile and was elected to be the Prime Minister of the first government under the 2007 Constitution, to resign. Prime Minister Samak rejected PAD protesters' request and tried to terminate the protest. He responded to the occupation of the government house by calling an emergency session of parliament. He also declared emergency law in Bangkok and issued arrest warrants for PAD leaders. However, the situation was still unresolved. The crisis was punctuated when Samak was judged by the Constitution Court to be disqualified, due to his being a private employee (receiving payment for hosting and participating in two television cooking shows) while holding a Prime Minister position. As a result, Samak had to relinquish his position, while a special House of Representatives session to elect a new chief executive was required. Technically, Samak was eligible to be reelected, but his hope for a political comeback was rejected by the coalition parties (BBC NEWS, September 12, 2008).

Instead of Samak, the PPP nominated Somchai Wongsawat, Thaksin's brother-in-law, for a new prime minister (BBC NEWS, September 15, 2008). Somchai was then elected by a majority vote in the House of Representatives as prime minister on September 17, 2008, while the PAD was still in the Government House. Because of his close relationship to Thaksin, Prime Minister Somchai was very quickly disapproved of by the protesters. On October 7, 2008, PAD protesters blocked all four entries to the parliament building, trying to hold 320 parliamentarians hostage inside. They also cut off power, attempting to impede Prime Minister Somchai's policy address to the National Assembly.[27] Although Somchai could complete his statement (so that his government was approved by the Constitution), the event in which the police clashed with the protesters caused 452 injures and two deaths led the PAD to be more furious.

Claiming the government's lack of responsiveness due to the use of violence forcing the protesters, on November 25, 2008, the PAD protesters shut down two major international airports of Thailand—Don Moung International Airport and Suvarnabhumi International Airport, compelling Prime Minister Somchai to resign. This airport siege, as noted in some international media coverage (Beech, 2008), led to a Thai political crisis that immediately became an economic and global one: it is an economic crisis because it devastated Thai tourism, which is one of the most important sources of the country's revenue; and it is a global crisis because shutting down the airport means closing down

---

[27]According to Section 176 of the 2007 Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, the Council of Minister which will assume the administration of the state affairs must, within 15 days as from the date it takes office, state its policies to the National Assembly and explain its administration by the directive principles of fundamental state policies. Thus, if PAD could make PM Somchai unsuccessful in addressing his policies to the parliament, he and his cabinet would be unable to function legally.

the gateway to the wider world. Prime Minister Somchai, finally, stepped down, not because he surrendered to the protesters but again and similarly to Samak, to the judgment of the Constitution Court. On December 2, 2008, the Constitution Court dissolved the three parties of the government coalition, including PPP, Chart Thai, and Matchima Thippatai, for accountability on electoral fraud involving party executives. This party disbandment caused Somchai to be disqualified from the Prime Minister position and banned from politics for 5 years. Consequently, the PAD declared "victory" and ended the protest.

Arguably, the end of the "second round" conflict was a victory neither for the PAD nor the PPP government, but for the unelected courts that intervened to end the political impasses. As we have seen from the two previous attempts of jurisdiction power to solve the conflict, two Prime Ministers from PPP (Samak and Somchai) had to step down according to the judges of the Constitution Court. Moreover, the almost 200-day long protest produced a deep fragmentation in Thai society by polarizing the people more deeply into the "yellow-clad," royalist anti-Thaksin, and the "red-clad," liberalist pro-Thaksin groups.

The conflict still exists, particularly after the failure in reestablishing a coalition government, led by Phuea Thai Party (PT), the second generation of Thaksin's proxy party, emerging as a replacement for PPP. The pro-Thaksin movement reintegrated, forcing Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva, leader of the Democrat Party, who has been a Prime Minister since December 15, 2008 with the support of the military and small parties (those that decided to defect from PT, the majority-party, after the 2008 political crisis), to dissolve the parliament (Bell, 2008; CNN World, December 15, 2008; Mydans,

2008). Current politics of Thailand occur in the midst of new political parties, which emerged as replacements for the decertified parties, in the House of Representatives (Table 2.2) and the conflict between the Red-clad and the Democrat government, whose administrative power is backed by the Yellow Shirts and the military (The Guardian, April 14, 2009).

Soldiers Never Died, Democrat-led Government, and

Red-Yellow Divided Politics

The election of Abhisit as a new prime minister was immediately rejected by the pro-Thaksin movement, the Red Shirts. Outside Parliament on voting day (December 15, 2008), about 200 red-shirted Thaksin loyalists shouted and threw bricks, showing that street demonstrations would now begin from the other side of the political divide. Less than a week after that (December 20), more than 40,000 red-shirted supporters gathered in downtown Bangkok to hear a video address by Thaksin (recently a fugitive from justice), taped in Bali, Indonesia, in which he implicitly condemned what he called military interference in the House's vote for prime minister (Mydans, 2008). For the Red Shirts, the assembling of the Democrat-led government was illegitimate and undemocratic because it was established by another kind of military coup—an indirect coup or what the pro-Thaksin leaders called a "coup in disguise" (Bell, 2008; Käng, 2011; Mydans and McDonald, 2009; The Nation, December 8, 2008) to explain the way in which the military intervened in politics by engineering the civil government instead of making a coup.

Table 2.2

Political Parties in the House of Representatives, 6 May 2011

Party	Founded	Members	Seats	Ideology	Kinds of Supporters
Pheu Thai Party (PT)	2007	23,778	188	Liberal	North and Northeast people, poor, rural residents, lower-middle class and working class in Bangkok, the Red-clad (pro-Thaksin)
Democrat Party (DP)	1982	2,873,960	170	Conservative (Royalist)	South people, rich, urban residents, middle class and upper class in Bangkok, the Yellow-clad (anti-Thaksin)
Chart Thai Pattana Party (CP)	2008	363	24	Opportunist*	People in some provinces of the Central
Puea Pandin Party	2007	9,416	30	Conservative/ Neutral	People in some provinces of the Northeast

Table 2.2 (continued)

Political Parties in the House of Representatives, 6 May 2011

Party	Founded	Members	Seats	Ideology	Kinds of Supporters
Chart Pattana Puea Pandin Party (CPN)	2007	10,338	9	Opportunist	People in some provinces of the Northeast especially Nakorn Rachasrima province.
Phumjai Thai Party (BJT)	2008	36,370	31	Opportunist/ Royalist	People in lower-Northeast and upper-Central
Pracharaj Party	2006	13,814	8	Opportunist	People in Sakaew province (East)
Social Action Party (SAP)	1982	27,237	5	Opportunist	People in Khonkaen province (Northeast)
Matubhum Party	2008	7,760	3	Opportunist	People in the deep south province (Muslim provinces)

Note: PT emerged as a replacement for PPP; CTP emerged as a replacement for CT; Phumjai Thai emerged as a replacement for Matchima Thippatai.
*By opportunist, I means "no" specific political ideology—going for whatever opportunity available.

The first biggest challenge to Prime Minister Abhisit's government occurred in April 2009 when hundred thousands of the Red Shirt demonstrators[28] streamed into Bangkok throughout the day of April 8 from Thaksin's political strongholds in the rural north and northeast. The protesters gathered in front of the government house and outside the home of Prem Tinsulanda, a former prime minister and current Privy Council President, who was accused by the protesters of being the mastermind of the 2006 coup that ousted Thaksin while he was out of the country as well as influencing a more recent "coup in disguise" (Mydans and McDonald, 2009), starting a week-long protestation against the government of Prime Minister Abhisit.

Some of these protesters, integrated with others from the eastern provinces, went to the East Asian summit, a meeting of government officials from the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, and six other nations from Asia and the western Pacific, organized that year in Pattaya in order to show leaders from various countries that Abhisit had no legitimacy to be the prime minister of Thailand. At the meeting, hundreds of Red Shirts broke through a cordon of police officers on April 10, 2009 and then blocked the main entrance to the convention center where leaders were gathering. Eventually, the summit meeting was canceled only a day later after the

---

[28]For the Yellow Shirts and many Bangkok-based elite, such numbers of Red Shirt protesters are meaningless (particularly when compared to the Yellow Shirt protesters) because they represent the voices of the poor and low-educated people who usually sell their vote to corrupt politicians or parties (such as the former TRT or PPP of Thaksin); as a result, these groups of people might have been paid by Thaksin to join the protest with a lack of understanding of what was ("exactly") going on in politics (see the Yellow Shirts leaders' perceptions toward the Red Shirts in, for example, Nophakhun Limsamarnphun, 2009; The Nation, May 2, 2009).

protesters forced their way past security forces into a convention center where leaders were preparing to discuss the global economic crisis (Fuller, 2009).

The highlight of the April 2009 event then returned to Bangkok where thousands of Red Shirts protesters were still gathered outside the government house. The crisis intensified when the government announced a state of emergency in Bangkok on April 11, 2009 and claimed it as a legal mechanism for controlling the situation. But for opposition protesters, they called such an announcement "a declaration of war against the people of Thailand" (Johnston, 2009). As a result, unrest spread in Thailand a day later, with clashes between antigovernment protesters and security forces in at least three locations in Bangkok and major highways closed in many provinces outside the city. Following a day of violent clashes with police and soldiers that left more than 120 people injured, the army hemmed in several thousand activists over night. On the morning of the next day, more soldiers then moved in, prompting the protest leaders to call on their remaining followers to go home to avoid further bloodshed (Bristow, 2009). The media later labeled the confrontations that took place between April, 10 and 14 2009 "Bloody Songkran," bloodshed crashing during a Thai new year (Askew, 2010).

In the early morning of April 17, 2009, three days after a tumultuous week of Songkran, Sondhi Limthongkul, the Yellow Shirt leader, narrowly escaped death when his car was riddled with automatic gunfire. Many Thais assumed that the attack was the work of sympathizers of the Red Shirts movement and their figurehead, exiled former Prime Minister Thaksin. However, because this assassination attempt was staged during the enforcement of the Emergency Decree in Bangkok, for many others, the mastermind of this operation may be no other but those who have close relations to the military.

While the name of the groups or persons that acted behind the attack by gunmen still remains a mystery, the Yellow Shirts celebrated the anniversary of their 2008 protestations against Samak-Somchai by making an announcement that they were creating a new political party. The New Politics Party or the NPP was officially registered on June 2, 2009 as another political mechanism of the Yellow Shirts that would be used in electoral politics. The name PAD remains to represent the entire Yellow Shirt supporters but now plays a more intensive role in protest activities. One might claim that the Yellow Shirts just replicated the political strategy that the Red Shirts have used for years—having the Phue Thai Party in the parliament while organizing street politics under the name of the UDD. The Yellow Shirt leaders argued in contrast that they were totally different from the Red Shirts because the NPP was created and was under supervision of the Yellow supporters, but the Red Shirts were a by-product of the ex-TRT and were under the control of Thaksin.

However, the establishment of the Yellow Shirts' own political party (rather than acting support to other political parties, especially the Democrats) gave much concern to their supporters, in particular those who were close to the Democrat Party. The biggest concern was that Thaksin's Puea Thai Party might gain the most benefits in future elections because the NPP would split voters of the Democrat Party in several areas such as in the South and Bangkok. Evidence asserting this concern can be observed through the NPP's decisions to not nominate any candidate to the by-elections for the House of Representatives, which were held two times since the NPP was established—the first one was held in District 6 of Bangkok on June 24, 2010 and the other on October 30, 2010 in District 1 of Surat Thani (a province in the southern region). The first and only time that

NPP candidates joined the election was in the Bangkok Metropolitan Representatives elections (local-level election) held on August 29, 2010. Yet, none of them won any of the total 61 seats.

The Democrat-led government's victory over the Red Shirts' movements during "Bloody *Songkra*," did not bring the conflict to an end. The Red Shirts still existed and were even stronger than they were due to their experience of defeat, accompanied by the coalition government's poor performance in solving the country's problems, in controlling corruption, and providing equitable justice (especially between the Yellow and Red protesters regarding what both groups did illegally during each movement, e.g., the Yellow Shirts' blockade of the airports and the Red Shirts' clash with the security forces). Much criticism came not only from the government's red-shirted opponents but also from the Yellow and neutral camps.

During late 2009 and early 2010, the Red Shirts reunited in Bangkok and several provinces in the north, northeast, and central regions, aimed at discrediting the government and the elite as well as preparing their supporters for the huge demonstration on "judgment day," February 26, 2010, when the court verdict was presented on Thaksin's assets (Askew, 2010). This series of protest did a good job of pressuring the government and the judiciary agents to act in the way they expected, such as the judgment that forced former prime minister (and still Privy Councilor) General Surayud Chulanont to remove his holiday from a national park. However, there was no impact on Thaksin's case. On February 26, 2010, Thailand's Supreme Court confiscated $1.4 billion in frozen assets from Thaksin after finding him guilty of illegally concealing his ownership of a family company and abusing his power to benefit the companies he

owned (Mydans and Fuller, 2010). Thaksin, PT, and the Red Shirts were not surprised by this judgment, so plans for the mass red-shirts demonstration in Bangkok for mid-March went ahead.

On March 14, 2010, several hundred thousand Red Shirt protesters held the first big rally in an historic area of Bangkok around the Phan Fah Bridge, starting another month-long protest against the Democrat-led government and the elite. Many critical events followed this integration. On March 16, 2010, the protesters spilled hundreds of liters of donated blood collected from the protesters themselves at the Government House, in front of Abhisit's private house, and the Democrat's headquarters building (CBSNews, April 7, 2010). Weng Tojirakan, one of the Red Shirts leaders, explained that the blood is a symbol for the willingness of the people to give their blood for democracy, and for the blood already spilled by the people (Nostitz, 2010).

On April 3, 2010 protesters occupied the shopping district of Ratchaprasong in the richest area of Bangkok. As a reaction, the government (again) announced a state of emergency three days later. With enforced authority approved by the emergency decree, the troops attempted to take back control of the Phan Fah bridge protest site, but the mission failed. As a result of the violent clash, hundreds of people were injured and twenty five were killed, including Japanese Reuters cameraman Hiro Muramoto, ten protesters, nine civilians, and five uniformed soldiers (Reuters, April 4, 2010). The event came to a climax on May 14, 2010 when Thai police and army units moved in to surround and cut off the protesters' main camp (now at Ratchaprasong after the April 10 clash).

On May 19, 2010, the Thai Army stormed the protesters' camp, resulting in six deaths, which included Italian journalist, Fabio Polenghi (The Guardian, May 19, 2009). The Red Shirt leaders surrendered to police in a bid to avoid further bloodshed. The brutal crackdown and dispersal of the Red Shirts led to at least ninety-one deaths and more than 1,800 injured (Tharoor, 2010). After that the protesters went home, many Red Shirts leaders were put in jail, and others went into exile, but emotions were still painful. Signs of future actions and protests continue to exist, especially when thousands of Red Shirts supporters marched in Bangkok in memory of the April-May 2010 events. Now and then, "unusual politics becomes usual" (Chairat Charoensin-o-larn, 2010) in Thai politics.

This outline of the Thai political chronology up to the period where this research began its interpretation shows that the trend of change patterns of political participation and engagement in Thailand is not a recent phenomenon. Rather, the ebb and flow of this trend have been a result of political struggles that have occurred in the past and have long dramatically developed since Thailand launched its democratization process in 1932. Since then, eighteen constitutions have been drafted and used to implement democracy in Thailand, while seventeen military-coup attempts (ten successes) occurred as a special mechanism provided by the privilege of the society to solve the country's crisis and to maintain peace for the nation.

The brief review of Thailand's political history also reveals that the period between 2001 and 2010 was momentous, characterized by several political changes starting from a celebration of political reform in the first five years; then the military coup only a year after the 2005 election; and a transitional period from when the military

government stepped aside until the civilian government took control of the country in 2008. The period since then has not been consolidated, as political conflicts among several groups of political leaders have continued and many concerns about the return of the military still exist. The future Thai democracy will be shaped by a clash between the "political awakening of the Thai rural masses and the ascendancy of the military in Thai politics" (Chairat Charoensin-o-larn, 2010: 331), at least for several years from now. Empirical examination of citizen activism during the past decade is therefore important. Before moving forward to the quantitative analysis of the political participation and engagement in such a crucial period of Thai democracy (2001-2010), the next chapter discusses how past scholars have used and explained these two concepts.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL CONTEXTS FOR POLITICAL

PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Drawing on a rich set of research traditions, this chapter examines the perspectives on political participation and political engagement in Thailand. The major attempt is made to learn about what scholars of Thai politics field understand about citizen participation, and how they explain Thai citizen engagement in public affairs. In order to understand this topic more clearly, this chapter begins with a section describing how behavioral scholars conceptualize political involvement—participation and engagement, how and why it has changed over the years, and what conceptual frameworks have been applied by recent research. It then reviews a number of works, seeking to explore how previous studies have explained political participation and engagement in several contexts: the United States and other Western democracies, developing countries, and Thailand. In the concluding section, the chapter discusses what this dissertation has been able to do better than previous studies in explaining change patterns of political participation and engagement in Thailand.

Conceptualizations

This dissertation aims to explain both political participation (behavior) and engagement (attitude). In order to explain people's involvement in politics, scholars have used several words or terms, such as political participation, civic engagement, political activism, and so on, in both specific and broad senses. In the early years of behavioral political science (see for example Merriam and Gosnell, 1924; Boechel, 1928; Tingsten, 1937), political participation was defined in most studies simply as voting turnout. As studies became more sophisticated, the operational definition of political participation was then broadened to include other electoral activities such as campaigning, attending political meetings, giving money to a candidate or a party, running for an office, and so on (Milbrath and Goel, 1965; Almond and Verba, 1965; McClosky, 1968). Influenced by studies in the 1970s, particularly those of Sidney Verba and his colleagues (1971; 1978), several studies on political participation tended to add nonelectoral activities, for instance, involving community activities, contacting officials, protesting, and communicating with others, into their conceptual framework as well.

In the classic work of Milbrath (1965), political participation was viewed narrowly as behavioral acts and investigated as belonging solely to electoral politics. Milbrath divided the patterns and procedures of political participation into 14 levels based on the intensity of the participation level, starting from the most fundamental form of participation (the one most often engaged in) to the more advanced ones (those that are respectively less often engaged in). These activities include (1) exposing oneself to political stimuli; (2) using the right to vote; (3) initiating political issues into group discussion; (4) attempting to persuade others to vote in the direction that one finds

appropriate; (5) joining in political public relations activities, such as wearing promotional clothes or putting campaign stickers on the car; (6) having contact with government officials or political leaders; (7) donating of money or materials to support political parties or candidates; (8) joining in or listening to electoral campaigns or political assembly; (9) working for candidates or political parties in electoral campaigns; (10) being a member of and participating in political parties' activities; (11) joining in the meetings of political parties to elect representatives or to determine policy strategies; (12) conducting activities to raise funds for political parties; (13) being electoral candidates on behalf of political parties, and; (14) holding political positions and overseeing the operation of a political party, which is the highest level of activity.

Although this conceptualization of political participation includes most, but not all, common activities that characterize the normal process of an electoral democracy, it was modified by the new notion that views political participation as multidimensional, focusing on "modes" or "styles" rather than level of political participation. The modes of participation were first reported in a cross-national comparative study of political participation under the supervision of Sidney Verba and Norman Nie (e.g., Verba, Nie, and Kim, 1971). This conceptualization includes both behavior in electoral politics and other forms of nonelectoral involvement, including community activity, protesting, and communicating. Verba, Nie, and Kim (1971; 1978) also argue that people do not use these activities interchangeably, as many early analyses assumed. Instead, people tend to specialize in activities that match their motivations and goals.

Recently, political participation has been conceptualized either in a broad or narrow sense depending on what scholars seek to explain and what kind of data are

available for their analysis. For example, Sidney Verba, Henry Brady, and Kay Lehman Schlozman (1995) have summarized previous theories of participation and explain political participation in terms of what they call *voluntary political activity*. In this regard, they examine *political* participation by referring to it simply as "activity that has the intent or effect of influencing government action—either directly, by affecting the making or implementation of public policy, or indirectly, by influencing the selection of people who make those policies" (p. 38). They also focus on *voluntary* activity, by which they mean "participation that is not obligatory—no one is forced to volunteer—and that receives, if any pay at all, only token financial compensation" (pp. 38-39). Finally, by political *activity* they are concerned "with doing politics, rather than with being attentive to politics" (p. 39). However, while Verba, Brady, and Schlozman try to distinguish between political and nonpolitical activity (e.g., being involved in civic organizations/activities such as churches and other nonprofit groups), voluntary and paid work, and participation by doing politics and by paying attention to politics, their conceptualization of *voluntary political participation* has moved beyond the vote to consider a wider range of political acts. These acts include voting, working in campaigns, making campaign distributions, contacting public officials, taking part in protests, working informally with others to solve community problems, belonging to local governing boards, and being affiliated with political organizations.

Unlike Verba and colleagues, Pippa Norris (2002) does not differentiate sharply between *political* and *civic* activism. To explain the patterns of participation in countries around the world, Norris uses the reinvented term "political activism" and applies it to include both participation through traditionally political channels such as elections

(electoral turnout) and parties (party membership) and engagement in civic activities (belonging to common types of voluntary associations, social clubs, and civic organizations) and protest politics.

Macedo et al. (2005) use the term "civic engagement" to examine how political choices undermine citizen participation, and define it, like Norris, to include "any activity," political or civic, "individual or collective, devoted to influencing the collective life of the polity" (p.6). However, in contrast to Norris and Verba and colleagues, Macedo et al. do not distinguish civic engagement precisely from the term "political engagement," by which they mean "reasons and motives for political action" (p.6). That is, for them, civic engagement also includes the acquisition of relevant knowledge, skills, and a wide range of acts in both electoral and nonelectoral (civic) activities. Cliff Zukin et al. (2006), on the other hand, try to distinguish among four dimensions of political participation and engagement: *civic engagement*, participation aimed at achieving public goods through direct hands-on work in cooperation with others; *political engagement*, participation in political activities aimed at influencing government policy or affecting the selection of public officials; *public voice*, the ways in which citizens give expression to their views on public issues; and *cognitive engagement*, participation by paying attention to politics and public affairs.

Inspired by Macedo et al.'s conceptualization of civic engagement, this dissertation focuses on both citizen participation and engagement in order to explain citizen political activism in Thailand. Yet following Verba, Brady, and Schlozman (1995), this dissertation attempts to differentiate between doing politics and being attentive to politics by using the term "political participation" to examine citizens'

political behavior, and another term "political engagement" to explain citizens' political attitudes. This dissertation defines political *participation* specifically as participation in four key political activities—electoral turnout, campaign activities, contacting officials, and protesting—that have direct relevance on the selection of government personnel and in influencing their decisions. This does not mean that participation in civic activity is unimportant or irrelevant to political activism, but it is considered as an explanation of political activity rather than part of a measure of political participation. As an explanation of political behavior, this study also uses the term political *engagement*, which simply refers to people's political attitudes—political interest or partisanship—that motivate people to get involved in political activity (Burns, Schlozman, and Verba, 2001: 99-100). Based on this definition, this dissertation views political engagement in a broader sense than what Zukin et al. (2006) call *cognitive engagement* (participation by paying attention to politics and public affairs) by including political interest, knowledge, and efficacy in its operationalization.

Whether used for broad or specific purposes, for most scholars, people's involvement in politics is important and necessary for a democratic polity (Almond and Verba, 1989; Dalton, 2006; Macedo et al., 2005; Verba, Brady, and Schlozman, 1995). Active public participation is required because it is through discussions, popular interest, and involvement in politics that societal goals should be defined and carried out (Dalton, 2006). In order to improve democratic processes, enhancing the quantity, quality, and equality of participation is therefore required (Macedo et al., 2005). Further, in order to know what should be done to achieve this ultimate goal, I believe as Macedo et al. (2005) suggested that we must pay close attention to the factors that affect political participation

as well as the factors that affect political engagement. The next section reviews a number of studies, seeking to draw as many of the potential factors as possible employed in previous studies in several contexts—the United States and other Western democracies, developing countries, and Thailand—that may be useful in explaining the changing patterns of political participation and engagement during Thailand's past decade.

<div align="center">Political Participation According to Previous Explanations</div>

Research on the factors that may affect people's political participation has been widely conducted by American political scientists, and those studies' models and theories have long been applied and modified by scholars in many other countries in order to be tested in various democratic contexts. Many researchers have made it clear that political participation in less-democratic or young democratic systems has several different meanings and, thus, very different demographic contours compared to what has been explained in well-established democracies (Schlozman, 2002). In Thailand, many scholars have adopted scientific theories and methodologies to examine the factors that could affect public participation and electoral behavior. The dominant view claims that females and the young, because they have lower participatory resources and skills, are less likely than males and older people to participate in politics. Furthermore, the rural, because they are poor and less-educated, are easily mobilized by influential persons and by personal benefit, and are thereby the most active group in electoral activities. This conventional premise has done a very good job in explaining how and why Thai people become involved in politics. However, previous explanations about how and why Thai citizens participate in politics cannot tell us much about how and why participation

among Thai citizens has changed across time and context because too much focus was placed on the factors of socioeconomic status and mobilization (which mostly means the influence of clientelism).

This study does not totally ignore the impacts of such factors on political participation in Thailand but views previous explanations as incomplete. This study recognizes that political participation is fostered by a variety of characteristics that predispose an individual to becoming politically involved (Verba, Brady, and Schlozman, 1995). These political predispositions have changed over time and might be shaped by political contexts (Leighley, 1995; Holzner, 2010). In this dissertation, I thus propose several factors that include not only socioeconomic status but also various attitudinal and mobilization factors to be tested in several contexts (years) as a more proper way to explain changes in the patterns of political participation in Thailand during the past ten years. In order to identify those factors, the following discussion reviews the existing literature that has explained political participation in American and developing democracies, as well as previous explanations about political behaviors and attitudes in Thailand.

Political Participation in American Democracy

Socioeconomic Status Factors

Several decades of empirical research have established *socioeconomic status (SES)* as a major determinant of political participation (Leighley, 1995; Schlozman, 2002). The central theme in the developed democracies is that higher status individuals, especially the better educated and people with higher incomes, are more likely to

participate because they have the *resources* (e.g., money and time) and *skills* (e.g., knowledge and ability to access political information) to manipulate their involvement in politics. Using individual-level data, Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995, for example, observe that people with lower incomes are less likely than those with higher incomes to participate in all kinds of political activities (i.e., voting, campaign work, campaign contributions, contacting officials, protests, informal community activities, board membership, and being affiliated with political organizations). Using aggregate-level data, Brady (2004) asserts that income inequality across states is a factor explaining why some states have higher levels of participation than others. Similar patterns, and with even larger effect, are found in the relationship between education and participation (Conway, 1991; Kenny, 1992; Nie, Junn, and Stehlik-Barry, 1996; Verba, Nie, and Kim, 1978; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995).

Apart from the voluminous empirical evidence supporting this "standard model," many studies, especially in the American context, have focused on other personal characteristics, such as gender, age, and demographic groups, to explain who participates more in politics and why. A common premise is that females,[29] the young,[30] and

---

[29]The most frequent finding on gender differences in political participation is that men are more politically active than women (Campbell et al., 1960; Christy, 1987; Burns, Schlozman, and Verba, 2001; Norris, 2002). For many recent studies, differences in resources, especially education, income, and employment patterns, explain a large part of this gap (Miller and J. Merrill, 1996; Burns, Schlozman, and Verba, 2001).

[30]For some scholars, a declining trend of young citizens taking part in campaign activities and joining political parties has appeared in many countries over the past decades (while remaining stable among older people) and mirrors the lesser attention that the new generation has paid to politics and is a bad sign for the future of democracy (Putnam, 2000; Niemi and Weisberg, 2001; Blais et al., 2004; Wattenberg, 2008).

minorities (such as Africans, Asians, and Latino-Americans) are less politically active than males, the older generation, and White Americans (Macedo et al., 2005). However, according to many recent studies, this explanation seems to be only partly true. For example, with women voting at higher rates than men in the developed world, many scholars claim that gender differences have faded or even reversed (e.g., Bean, 1991; Inglehart, 1990; Inglehard and Norris, 2003).

Recent studies also indicate that while young citizens are less likely to participate in traditional forms of political activities, they engage heavily in many other forms of civic activities (Vogelgesang and Astin, 2005, Shea and Green, 2007), as well as in single issue movements and networks (Della Porta and Mosca, 2005; Norris, 2002). Many studies also show that when income and education are taken into account, participatory differences among Whites, Africans, and Latino-Americans disappear (Leighley and Verdlitz, 1999; Verba, Schlozman, and Nie, 1993; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995).

Recent studies have tended to conclude that members of some demographic groups may participate in politics more, on average, than others: women are more likely to know female politicians than male ones and may be more likely to try to persuade others how to vote when there is a woman on the ballot (Hansen, 1997; Campbell and Wolbrecht, 2004); African Americans report voting at moderately lower levels and are less likely to contact a political official or to be affiliated with a political organization than White Americans, but they are more likely than Whites to report doing campaign work and participating in protests (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995); and factors such as English proficiency, foreign-born status, and political socialization account for much of the lower participation of Asian Americans (Citrin and Highton, 2002; Leighley and

Vedlitz, 2006; Lien, 1994). For Schlozman, Verba, and Brady (1999), the differences in political resources such as educational level, income, and employment patterns among these groups explain a large part of these participatory inequalities. Thus, it is not socioeconomic status, *per se*, that stimulates participation, but socioeconomic status as it relates to skills and orientations that directly influence participation (Dalton, 2006: 50). This does not mean that socio-demographic factors cannot or should not be use to explain political participation, but they should be examined along with other factors such as psychological, mobilization, and institutional factors. That is, we should expect that the effect of socioeconomic status factors on participation will diminish after controlling for other potential factors, in particular political engagement, mobilization, and contextual factors.

Political Engagement Factors

Standard explanations of political participation also pay attention to *political engagement* factors—people's psychological orientations such as political interest, knowledge, and efficacy that motivate them to become involved in political activity (Burns, Schlozman, and Verba, 2001). Many scholars suggest political interest, the degree to which politics arouses a citizen's curiosity,[31] as a critical source of most political behaviors that define democratic citizens in general and as an important

---

[31]Political interest could be a result of a long-term (e.g. pre-adult learning and experiences in political events and economic circumstances) and/or contemporary stimulus (e.g., current social context and political campaigns). Socialization approaches suggest that pre-adult political learning affects future adult political participation by arousing individuals' interest to become involved in politics (see, e.g., Beck and Jennings, 1982).

explanation of political participation in particular (Milbrath and Goel, 1977; Miller and Rahn, 2002; Verba, Nie, and Kim, 1978; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995). Political interest is the "motive" for individuals to gather and retain political information (Luskin, 1990), leading them to become more politically informed (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996). It is the *strongest* predictor of voting (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995), and plays a key role in most types of political activities (Milbrath and Goel, 1977; Verba, Nie, and Kim, 1978). In an exhaustive model of campaign participation in the 2000 election, Joanne Miller and Wendy Rahn (2002) found that interest in the campaign was a powerful antecedent of voter turnout, second only to habit (that is, previous turnout).

In addition to political interest, many other studies indicate the link between political knowledge and political participation. That is, people who know more about politics are more actively engaged in it[32] (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996; Popkin and Dimock, 1999; Milner, 2002). Political knowledge also enhances citizens' civic capacities—the ability of individuals to see the connections between public policy and their own interests, as well as the ability to make voting decisions based on sophisticated criteria such as a candidate's positions on issues (Kahn and Kenny, 1999; Bartels, 1996). In this regard, appropriate levels of political knowledge are thought to be important in

---

[32]Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) examined Americans' political knowledge, what they know—and don't know—about politics and why it matters, and found that many American citizens are remarkably informed about the details of politics. However, the greatest concern, according to their findings, was that there is an unequal knowledge-distribution among people based on differences in social and economic status. That is, Whites, males, and older, financially secure citizens have substantially more knowledge about national politics than do Blacks, women, young adults, and financially less well-off citizens. This result indicates that the citizens who are the most socially and economically disadvantaged are least able to redress their grievances politically.

allowing individuals and groups to effectively participate in politics (Converse, 1964; Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996; Lua, Andersen, and Redlawsk, 2008).

Political efficacy is another psychological factor that various studies expect to be positively associated with political participation: the greater the level of political efficacy, the more active are individuals in participating in politics (Bobo and Gilliam, 1990; Campbell et al., 1960; Pranger, 1968). However, recent studies have tended to distinguish between internal efficacy, "beliefs about one's own competence to understand and to participate effectively in politics" (Niemi, Craig, and Mattei, 1991: 407), and external efficacy, the perceived responsiveness of the political system to citizens' participation (see Craig et al., 1990: 289-314; Madsen, 1987: 571-581). Many studies also have tended to report on the different relationship between these two separate factors and political participation. For example, Finkel (1985) found that while internal efficacy was a strong predictor of voting and campaign participation, external efficacy was relatively not and instead was a consequence of participation. According to this finding, people who feel more efficacious about their ability to understand and to participate in politics are more likely to participate in politics. Once they participate and have a good experience (i.e., perceived responsiveness of the political system) with their participation, they are more likely to participate again in the future.

Studies on the impact of political partisanship show that people who are most likely to turn out to vote and to participate in other forms of campaign activity are those people who identify themselves with a political party, while those who do not so identify themselves are less likely to vote and otherwise participate in electoral activities (see for example Bartels, 2000; Campbell et al., 1960). Many studies find evidence supporting

this premise, and view political partisanship as one of the most critical factors that may explain voter turnout trend in the United States (e.g., Abramson and Aldrich, 1982; Shaffer, 1981). Using data on turnout among non-Southerners in the presidential elections from 1960 through 1976 collected by the Survey Research Center and the Center of Political Studies of the University of Michigan (SRC-CPS), Shaffer (1981) concludes that approximately one-fourth of the decline in presidential turnout results from the decline of partisanship. Employing the same source of data (SRC-CPS) but analyzing the eight presidential election surveys conducted between 1952 and 1980 and the six off-year congressional surveys conducted between 1958 and 1978, Abramson and Aldrich (1982) confirm that the strength of partisan affiliation is strongly and positively related to turnout in each election. They find, in addition, that this relationship has grown over time, and the erosion of partisanship in the electorate can explain even more of the decline in participation in off-year congressional elections than of the decline in presidential elections.

In short, this discussion illustrates that political interest, knowledge, efficacy, and partisanship matter for political participation. That is, we should expect that people (1) who are interested more in politics, (2) who are better-informed about politics, (3) who feel more efficacious about themselves in terms of participating in politics, and (4) who identify themselves with a political party are more likely to participate in political activities than people who are interested less, have lower political knowledge, feel less politically efficacious, and do not identify themselves with any political party.

However, because people's political attitudes can be influenced by experiences in either pre-adult (Beck and Jennings, 1982; Greenstein, 1960; Jennings and Niemi, 1968)

or adult institutions such as group relations (Kinder, 2003), belief systems (Bartels, 2003), information (Kuklinski and Hurley, 1994; Lupia, 1994), and so on, which at the same time, are generated by the political and socioeconomic environments surrounding an individual's life and early life such as political events (Sears and Valentino, 1997) and economic circumstances (Inglehart and Abramson, 1994), one common criticism of applying political engagement and attitudes to explain political activism is that it is not attitudes that cause participation, but experiences with politics and participation that create greater engagement with politics (Holzner, 2010). Thus, together with political engagement, individuals' experiences with groups, regimes, and current political contexts are important political variables that may explain political participation among different groups of citizens in Thai society.

Mobilization Factors

Many studies indicate the important role of organizations and political leaders in mobilizing people into politics. Verba and Nie (1972) find that active memberships in voluntary organizations increase individuals' overall participation level. The main reason is, as Verba and Nie (1972: 184) have suggested, that active engagement in voluntary organizations may provide individuals with an opportunity for training in participation within the organization that can be transferred to the political realm.[33] Also, engagement with political organizations (i.e., organizations that have political goals or in which political discussions take place) is positively related to and has even stronger effects on

---

[33]Similar arguments also are addressed in many other studies such as by Putnam (2000), Rosenstone and Hansen (1993), Skocpol (2003).

individuals' participation than memberships in voluntary organizations. This impact is greatest for communal activity, campaign activity, and voting.

While Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) also claim a critical role of voluntary associations in mobilizing individuals to be active in politics, they pay additional attention to the role of political leaders. Examining both participation in electoral and governmental politics, Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) argue that political leaders mobilize participation in electoral activities through a function of party contacting, electoral competitiveness, and social movement activity, whereas mobilization into governmental politics results from the *direct* efforts of voluntary associations or *indirectly* via television coverage of political events and issues. They claim that the strategic calculations of politicians, parties, interest groups, and social movements are crucially important for the pulse of citizen activism in American elections and government: there is evidence that these mobilization factors have accounted for approximately half of the decline in voter turnout since the 1960s, as well as the decline in party-related participation activity.

This argument has been asserted by more recent studies, such as those of Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995), which acknowledge the positive impact of mobilizing agencies such as trade unions and churches in assisting working-class communities to participate in politics, and the work of Rosenstone and Hanson (2003), which confirm the critical role of parties and interest groups in fostering participation, as well as indicate the important role of party workers in activating voters through local campaigns. Thus, scholars should not overlook the roles that political party and civic groups have played in encouraging citizen activism. More specifically, the more individuals are members of

voluntary organizations, the more likely they are active in political activities. However, because interactions between individual citizens and political organizations, such as parties and civic groups, have usually existed under opportunities and constraints provided by political structures (Holzner, 2010), scholars should consider group mobilization factors as the sources of political actions that link the political system and institutions.

Structural Factors

Structural factors—those that reflect the characteristics of the political system and institutions, including the media environment, political campaigns, political competition, and obstacles to enfranchisement (Macedo et al., 2005)—can influence the political choices that citizens make in various ways. For example, since the media have several benefits, especially in getting people interested in politics, an inappropriate use of information distribution, in contrast, might have a negative impact on political participation. Stephen Ansolabehere, Shanto Iyengar, Adam Simon, and Nicholas Valentino (1994) have developed experimental research that examines the effects of negative campaign advertizing on turnout, and they found that negative advertisements decrease intention to vote by 5 percent. Voters who watch negative advertisements come to lack confidence in the responsiveness of electoral institutions and public officials. As campaigns become more negative and cynical, citizens' intentions to vote thus decline.

A well-designed electoral process is another factor that may enhance citizens' capacities to participate actively in electoral activities. Rosenstone and Wolfinger (1978) adopted a cross-sectional empirical method, utilizing survey data as well as information

about each state's voting laws, using the state as the unit of analysis, and they found that if every state made its laws easier for people to register to vote, voter turnout would increase about 9.1 percent for a presidential election. Using the panel method to analyze data at the county level (61 counties in New York and 88 counties in Ohio), Ansolabehere and Konisky (2006), in contrast, indicated that the target that aimed at increasing voter turnout by 5-10 percent, as prior research such as Rosenstone and Wolfinger found, was overestimated. They argue that by making registration requirements easier reformists should recognize that new laws can cause some confusion among election workers (and therefore a depressed rather than an accommodated turnout). For this reason, registration reform would succeed if reformists set the goal to increase voter turnout by only 3-5 percent.

However, reducing the barriers to register to vote for others, such as Adam J. Berinsky (2005), is ineffective in terms of motivating more people to participate in an election, especially for those who exhibit a low level of interest in politics. Learning from a number of studies of electoral practices, Berinsky suggests that instead of providing easier processes for voter registration, helping voters to cast their ballots more conveniently in terms of time (through early voting), place (by allowing absentee voting), and procedure (via voting by Internet or voting by mail) is a better way to increase voter turnout.

In short, structural factors such as the media environment and the features and designs of the electoral process affect political participation in various ways, both directly and indirectly. As the above literature pointed out, these factors impact the ways in which citizens participate in politics directly by shaping the incentives and choices individuals

have for becoming involved in public life. Structural factors may also impact political participation indirectly by influencing citizens' political attitudes. In this regard, political participation should not be understood narrowly as an outcome of individuals' personal resources and psychological motivations, but it should be considered more broadly as a response to contextual cues and the political environment.

The existing studies in the American context, as discussed above, provide us with several potential factors—socioeconomic status, political engagement, mobilization, and structural factors—that could be applied to the analytical models of political participation in Thailand. However, without modification, adopting analytical frameworks and methodologies from American participatory research may be inadequate for explaining political behaviors and attitudes in another context, especially in the transitional societies of developing democracies. Before moving forward to the case of Thailand, exploring what previous studies have explained about political participation in other developing countries is thus required.

Political Participation in Developing Democracies

"While the positive association between socioeconomic status and political participation seems to obtain across western democracies,[34] many researchers have made clear that voter abstention in nondemocratic [or less-democratic or young democratic] systems may have a very different meaning and, thus, very different demographic contours" (Schlozman, 2002: 442). The evidence supporting this argument is ample. For

---

[34]Nevertheless, the criticisms of the SES model can be found in, for instance, Leighley (1995: 183-88) and Holzner (2010: 26-32).

example, seeking to explain why urban voters vote less than rural voters in South Korea, C.I. Eugene Kim, Young-Whan Kihl, and Doock-Kyou Chung (1973) argue that the low turnout rate of urban voters, apart from male and female differences, is due to the low turnout rate of those who are young and those who are highly educated. In addition, Brady and Kaplan (2001) found no relationship between education and voting in Estonia during the 1980s and argued that the act of voting during the Soviet era in Estonia was not about political choice and representation, but was a ritual from which the better educated may have chosen to abstain.

Furthermore, recent studies have tended to assert that poor citizens in poor countries are not at all less politically active than their richer counterparts. Booth and Seligson (2008), for example, examined recent survey data from eight Latin American countries[35] and found that individual wealth was not significantly associated with several aspects of participation, such as voting, party and campaign activism, communal and civic engagement, or protest participation. Only one aspect of participation that wealth was significantly associated with was contacting public officials, but it was negatively rather than positively related: the poor were more likely than others to contact officials. As these differences in participatory patterns among demographic groups are observed, we might expect to see different patterns of political attitude and mobilization, as well as differences in the way such political attitudes and mobilization impact participation in developing democracies.

---

[35]Those countries are Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, and Columbia.

Mobilizing Agents and Clientelism

Previous scholars of less-democratic politics have long asserted low levels of political engagement—interest and efficacy—among the citizens of developing countries, apparently those who are poor and less-educated. In their classic work regarding political participation in developing countries, Huntington and Nelson (1976) argued that the poor (both those that live in rural and urban areas) usually take little part in politics because participation often seems irrelevant to their primary concerns, which are urgent problems such as jobs, food, and medical aid—for today, tomorrow, or next week. According to Huntington and Nelson's findings, "comparatively small proportions of low-income, poorly-educated people are interested in politics, regard politics as their concerns, or feel able to exert any influence on local or national authorities" (pp. 119-120). Huntington and Nelson (1976) called such patterns of political participation (particularly by the poor) in developing societies "mobilized participation," participation in "activity that is designed by someone other than the actor to influence governmental decision-making" (p.7). For these scholars, this participatory pattern is sharply different from what they called "autonomous participation," participation in "activity that is designed by the actor himself to influence governmental decision-making" (pp. 6-7), which is a typical pattern of participation for advanced (Western) democracies.

However, as we have seen from the previous section of this chapter regarding the impact of mobilization factors on political activism in American context, the way in which Huntington and Nelson divided patterns of political activism into "mobilized" and "autonomous" participation and claimed a greater degree of democracy for the latter might be questioned by recent research. Many recent studies tend to view mobilizing

agents such as local leaders, civic groups, and political parties in developing societies positively rather than negatively, as they are seen to provide citizens with channels/ways to access politics. Moehler (2008: 99-100), for instance, found in the case of participation in Uganda's constitution making that Ugandan citizens were more likely to participate in the process if they had a close relationship with the government councils, the local community, and civil society, as well as if they had received and accepted messages from the program organizers. Krishna (2008) discovered quite a similar pattern in the case of India, where individuals who gained access through the agency of local leaders or political parties felt more efficacious politically and thus were more likely to participate in politics at higher rates. These findings partly confirm what Verba, Nie, and Kim (1978) concluded in the case of India (and United States) about the critical role of institutions (they focus on the terms "recruitment of activists and leaders") in fostering interest in elections and participation in campaign activities. In order to make democracy stronger and more accessible by all, Krishna therefore suggests that improving access through strengthening institutions is a key.

"Clientelism"[36] is another term (or factor) that scholars have used to examine the ways in which citizens in developing societies and new democracies engage in politics. As James C. Scott (1972) indicated in the case of Southeast Asian countries, while many countries in this subregion have had functioning electoral systems at one time since their

---

[36]The field of clientelism is vast, and the forms of clientelistic networks are diverse. However, focusing on clientelism as a method of electoral mobilization, Susan Stokes (2007: 605) defined it simply as "the proffering of material goods in return for electoral support, where the criterion of distribution that the patron uses is simply: did you (will you) support me?"

independence, these new systems have been applied in those countries as a reestablishment of the redistributive mechanisms of the traditional setting—patron-client structures—rather than as a participatory mechanism for the establishment of democracy. Because it runs against the ideal model of democratic life and autonomous civil society, most scholars of clientelism have concluded that participation in electoral activity (especially by voting) in developing countries and new democracies has meanings, dynamics, and consequences different from those found in advanced industrial democracies (see for example Edie, 1991; Fox, 1994; Martz, 1997; Stokes, 1995). For instance, in the Philippines, patronage politics linked to "Bossism," named to explain the critical role of local landowning oligarchs that function as both electoral and economic powerbrokers and enjoy virtually monopolistic control over entire localities, has dominated the Philippine political system, both at national and local levels (Sidel, 2004). The ways in which Filipinos engaged with and participated in politics therefore have been influenced by those monopolistic powers.

In the case of Mexico, Beatriz Magaloni (2006) called the influence that political parties can exercise over individual voters a "hegemonic party autocracy." In order to retain its monopolistic control of all levels of Mexican government for seven decades, Magaloni argues that the Institutional Revolution Party (PRI) relied not only on fraudulent and repressive practices but also long-term economic growth and its ability to generate widespread mass support through vote buying and the distribution of government transfers through what she called a "punishment regime." A punishment regime is "the autocrat's threat to exclude opposition voters and politicians from the party's spoils system" (p.20). Directed most often toward the poor, a punishment regime

operates simply through budget circles by delivering payments to its friends and punishments to its enemies, and economic policies that promote state-led industrialization while creating a poverty trap to secure a large electoral base. Trapped in such a punishment regime, Mexican voters (especially those who are poor) remained systematically dependent on state patronage and clientelistic practices for survival. Under such circumstances, many resource-poor Mexicans felt less efficacious in and exit from the formal political arena by voting less often, attending fewer electoral rallies, disdaining protests, and rather pursuing their interests through community organizing, cooperative problem solving, and joining nongovernmental or other kinds of grassroots organizations (Holzner, 2010). In addition, recent voting behavior studies in Mexico indicate a lack of attention to politics on the part of the Mexican electorate (Camp, 2009; McCann, 1998; McCann and Lawson, 2003; 2006). Indeed, according to the Mexico 2006 panel study, approximately two-thirds of voters in 2005 expressed little or no interest in politics or in the presidential campaign, and 55 percent of all voters rarely or never talked about politics with other individuals (Camp, 2009). This low level of political engagement, for McCann and Lawson (2006), affects the influence that political parties can exercise over Mexican voters. Hence, if the roles of mobilizing agents and clientelism have altered the patterns and modes of political participation in recent developing societies, then we should find consistent evidence in the case of Thailand during the past ten years.

Institutional Constraints and Political Changes

One reason that scholars have used to explain why mobilizing agents and clientelism could have undemocratic effects on political participation and engagement is

the lack of resources and skills to manipulate involvement in politics among citizens, especially those that are poor and less-educated. As a result of rapid economic growth in many developing countries around the globe, many other scholars, particularly modernization theorists (e.g., Lipset, 1959; 1994) may thus expect to see a positive (more democratic) trend of political participation in currently-developing countries. However, the "incomplete democratization" of Southeast Asian countries (Hewison, 1999, Putzel, 1997; 1999, Kelly and Reid, 1998) has shown little influence of ordinary citizens on political fortunes. For example, in Malaysia, while regular elections both at national and state levels have been held since independence in 1957, only one partisan-group political party—the United Malays National Organization or UMNO—has been elected to govern the country with only a limited role of the opposition party. The growth of nongovernmental organizations and associations has been permitted but cracked down on by the state, especially when they are linked with opposition parties. There is evidence showing that a number of opposition leaders in Malaysia have faced harassment, arrest, and imprisonment (Hewison, 1999).

The situation seems similar, even worse, for Singapore, where the People's Action Party (PAP) has been in power since 1959, with only limited opposition (existing since 1968) and rarely active civic organizations. Furthermore, while the fall of the authoritarian regime of President Suharto in 1998 brought tremendous democratic change to Indonesian politics, the residue of the patrimonial structure (patronage) and money politics has caused the inability to ensure the rule of law, widespread corruption, excessive influence on state policies by the military, and an underdeveloped civil society in Indonesia (Bünte and Ufen, 2009; Webber, 2006).

One explanation for the incomplete democratization of Southeast Asian countries is linked to regional political values that are collectively not conducive to the development of Western style *liberal* democracy, that is, democracy with a focus on the individualistic aspects of political freedom (see for example Zakaria, 1997). In Singapore and Malaysia, there are political values, called "Asian values"—that claim harmony, consensus, and unity rather than the conflictual adversarial approach characterized by Western political competition (Hewison, 1999; Maravall, 1995). In order to maintain these ideologies, these regimes practice "Asian-style" democracy, which allows conservative regimes to constrain opposition and to maintain limited political space for participation by the public (Hewison, 1999: 231). These explanations have long been employed by Southeast Asian scholars to explain why political participation and engagement in this region are limited, although economic growth and modernization there provide several conditions that fit the establishment of democracy, such as a growing number of middle class and well-educated citizens.

Political changes since the "third wave" of democratization (Huntington 1996) are another factor that may raise positive expectations toward political participation and engagement in less-developed countries. However, many studies, such as those of Berg-Schlosser and Kersting (2003), find that overall, political participation in Chile, Brazil, Kenya, and the Ivory Coast are characterized by a large group of either *not active* or *voting only* participants that are mostly female or those with low income. In addition, in these countries, participants in both *conventional party-oriented* and *unconventional* activities (i.e., demonstrations, strikes, payment boycotts, and squatting) more often are male, those with strong political interest, and those that have an optimistic view of the

future. These findings suggest not only that there is little improvement in political participation and engagement in developing democracies, but also that an unequal distribution of political participation among groups of citizens in such societies still exists.

The discussion in this section not only reminds us that political participation in developing countries may be different from that in well-established democracies, but also indicates the important roles of the structure of political systems in shaping and influencing citizens' participation and engagement. The above findings in many developing democracies confirmed what we have found in the American literature—that individuals' capacity and willingness to engage with and participate in politics do not rely solely on how adequate are the resources and skills of the citizens, but they also depend upon the opportunities and obstacles that the political regimes set up for them (Holzner, 2010). Indeed, the structure of opportunities for political participation within each society might be shaped and influenced by institutional and contextual factors, such as the nature of the regime-type, overall levels of democratization, and the existence of political rights and civil liberties. For this reason, we could understand changes in the patterns of political participation among different groups of citizens more clearly if those institutional and contextual factors were taken into account. However, because the structure of political systems usually appears as an outcome of political behaviors and values rooted in each society, it would be useful if institutional and contextual factors were constructed and used with adequate knowledge about how political participation and engagement of citizens in such societies have been understood and explained. The next section discusses political participation and engagement in Thai Politics literature.

Political Participation and Engagement in

Thai Politics Literature

Like several conventional premises regarding political participation and engagement in developing democracies, Thai participatory research has labeled ordinary citizens in Thailand as ill informed, uninterested, and easily deceived. Thai citizens' political participation is thus considered to be motivated and influenced under patron-client relationships and vote buying (e.g., Askew, 2008; Ockey, 2004; Pichai Ratanadirok Na Phuket, 1990; Rungsan Thanapornphan, 1993). Many studies on voting behavior and electoral participation in Thailand indicate that political mobilization by community leaders (Kheangkai Chongalarn, 1993; Nopparat Tawee, 1993; Natthawuth Jinagool, 1995; Suvat Siripokaphirom, 1997), land/local business owners (Akarawit Khankaew, 1996), and local politicians and government officers (Dacha Jaiya, 1989; Abhichart Naksook, 1993; Chansak Thawil, 1991) affect the ways in which Thai citizens participate (or do not participate) in voting and in campaign activities.

Political mobilization is also related to vote-buying, which is another mechanism that political leaders and parties use to foster Thai voters to participate in elections (Hewison, 1997; McCargo, 2002; Paithoon Boonwat, 1995; Rungsan Thanapornphan, 1993). Many studies after 1997 indicate more complex forms of vote-buying that include not only motivation by giving money to voters when asking them to vote for a specific candidate or party, but also by providing voters with entertaining activities (e.g., free concerts, free movies, and free tours to some attractive places), and/or giving them food and money when participating in campaign events (Bookhoree Yeema and Narin Sompong, 2002; Sunee Treethanakorn, 2002; Tossapol Sompong, 2002; 2003; Tossapol

Sungkasup, 2003). The conventional wisdom is apparently that these mobilization factors—the patron-client relationship and vote-buying—have a significant impact on political participation among participants with fewer resources; that is, the rural, because they are poor and less-educated, and are easily mobilized by influential persons and for personal benefit and thereby are the most active group in electoral activities (Natpong Sukvisit, 1993; Somchai Tilangkarn, 1994; Suchit Bunbongkarn and Phonsak Phongphaew, 1979; 1983; Wittaya Suwanmas, 1998).

Differential rates of participation between rural and urban residents are particularly worthy of attention in the case of Thailand, and almost all of the explanations are influenced by Anek Laothamatas' (1995; 1996) "a tale of two democracies" thesis. According to this thesis, the reason why democracy has failed to be firmly established in Thailand over the past several decades is to be found in the differing views and expectations of the urban middle class and the poor in the country over democracy, elections, and politicians. Anek bases his arguments on a combination of quantitative data, national election surveys, existing statistics collected and reported by scholars and academic institutes, and qualitative information, mostly interviews with many politicians. He indicates that for the rural electorate,[37] democracy is valued not as an ideal but as a mechanism to draw greater benefits from the political elite to themselves and their communities. Elections, in the view of rural voters, according to Anek, are very much local, not national affairs, dealing with the exchange of votes for benefits of a nonpolicy

---

[37] Anek (1996: 203) defines the rural electorate simply as the Thai population that who resides in villages (in the 1980s almost 70 percent of the workforce were farmers or peasants).

type. Rural people do not regard their voting as separate from other socio-cultural obligations. Instead, they feel obligated to use their votes as repayment to those who have been friendly, helpful, or generous in coping with daily difficulties while bringing progress and prosperity to their community. In this respect, the rural electorate does not expect abstract rewards such as laws, policies, or public interest.

On the other hand, for the educated middle class, which he defines as those who are socially situated between the wealthy property classes and the poverty-stricken peasants, farmers, and workers, democracy is a form of legitimate rule adopted by most civilized nations. However, Anek argues that while middle class voters admit that democracy is rule by the people, they also believe that people who can rule democratic games should be individuals who are knowledgeable and public-regarding. For Anek, to be considered knowledgeable, middle class voters believe that voters must understand the implications of the policy positions of the candidates and use these as criteria in casting their ballots. To be considered pubic-regarding, voters, in the middle class's opinion, should transcend personal or local interests. Voters must understand that elected politicians are representatives of the nation, as well as of their own constituencies. According to Anek, for the educated middle class, elections are mechanisms of recruiting honest and capable persons to serve as lawmakers and political executives rather than a process through which voters get parochial and personal benefits. Voting decisions should be made independently of social, cultural, and especially financial obligations.

For Anek, these conflicting perceptions of elections have existed in Thai society and have led to instability regarding democracy in Thailand, in which the rural majority votes to set up a government, while the fewer-in-number but louder-in-voice middle class

criticize and weaken the poor-performing and corrupt cabinet, ending with their own internal conflicts or with an external military coup. Basing their arguments on Anek's a tale of two democracies thesis, the connecting thread among studies related to political participation and engagement in Thailand seems to be the clash between rural and urban Thai voters.

In addition to studies on impact of socio-demographic and attitudinal factors, there are many other studies in Thailand, especially those conducted since the 1990s, that mainly focus on the impact of structural factors (e.g., media environment and the effects of laws and regulation changing) on political engagement and public participation. Many studies regarding the media effects on electoral participation, for instance by Naruepon Sethsuwan (1990), Jittipon Ponpriksa (1993) and Chittra Pomchutima (1998), claim that eligible voters receive political information most frequently from television, and that media exposure to politics affects voters' political knowledge (Charinya Charoensuksai, 1996 and Nilubol Chai-onnom, 2000). In addition, Juthathip Chayangkura (1998) found that campaign advertisements have a moderate effect on people's consideration of candidates, while public opinion polls, according to Pitha Thawornkul (1994), have a weak effect on changing people's attitude toward elections.

Studies on the impact of changed laws and regulations on citizens' participation, on the other hand, were conducted, especially after the 1997 Constitution promulgation, to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the new electoral system—both its procedure and the performance of the Election Commission. King Prajadhipok's Institute (2001) evaluated the lessons learned from the 2000 senate election, and discovered many procedural problems that caused voting inconvenience, made voters miss important

information about elections, and produced bad attitudes toward electoral officers. Paying attention to the performance of the Election Commission, Patcharodom Limpisatien (2000) and Chatree Pinengam (2001) indicated that there are some procedures, such as investigation and judging processes, that need to be improved in order to develop the Election Commission's mission in providing free and fair elections. For these studies, problems in the electoral process and the poor performance of the Election Commission are the reasons for many Thai citizens disengaging from electoral activities and not voting in elections. We have learned from previous studies regarding the impacts of structural factors on public participation in Thailand that accurate information widely provided through political campaigns and news media, as well as well-designed electoral processes, help to enhance citizens' ability to participate actively in political activities. These findings are well-confirmed by many theories suggested by American scholars. Nevertheless, the impact of these structural factors is relatively weaker than mobilization factors such as patron-client relations and vote-buying.

According to prior literature investigating in the Thai context, it can be concluded that the participatory disparities among different groups in Thailand have existed because the Thai citizens have different attitudes toward politics and democracy. These politically attitudinal differences can mostly be explained by differences in the socioeconomic backgrounds among groups, in particular the poor and less-educated rural and the higher-socioeconomic status urban. The rough picture is that the former group is more likely than the latter to participate in political activity because they are mobilized to engage in politics by non-democratic actors or mechanisms (i.e., patron-client relations and vote-buying). However, the focus of this dissertation on citizen participation and engagement

is in sharp contrast with this conventional approach because many changes have occurred in Thai politics in the past decade. These changes, for example: the opened political-space provided by the 1997 Constitution; the new style of political campaigns, in which practical public policy is the most effective strategy by which to attract voters through a variety of uses of media and advertisement, utilized by PM Thaksin and his Thai Rak Thai Party; and the new roles of high-technology media, especially those that have been used by the protest leaders (e.g., websites and satellite TV), in combination, may affect and change the characteristics of individual voters—their perceptions and understanding of democracy, their assessments of political systems and institutions, as well as their political behaviors.

It is time, therefore, to subject the conventional wisdom regarding political participation and engagement in Thailand to systematic empirical testing. This does not mean that the conventional wisdom which based their arguments mostly on socio-demographic factors such as gender, age, income, education, and area of living do not matter for political action among Thai voters, but these factors should be considered along with other factors such as psychological, mobilization, and institutional factors. More precisely, we should expect that the effect of socioeconomic status factors on participation among groups of Thai citizens will diminish after controlling for other potential factors, in particular political engagement, mobilization, and contextual factors.

Moreover, if political engagement, mobilization, and contextual factors mattered, then one would expect to find systematic differences in average levels of political participation between different groups of citizens. That is, people with more positive attitudes toward politics (being more interested in politics, knowing better about politics,

and feeling more efficacious about engaging in politics) should be more politically active in various democratic activities than those with more negative attitudes. Further, individuals who have close relationships with specific groups/parties should be more likely to participate in political activities than those who have fewer such relationships or none. The levels of political participation of individuals who have had a positive experience with political institutions should be systematically greater than those of individuals who have had worse experiences.

Last and foremost, using time-series data with several controls and considering the impacts of many potential factors on various modes of political actions, this study expected to see that socioeconomic status, attitudinal, mobilization, and structural factors, should affect political participation depending on the groups of citizens, types of action, and across time.

In the next chapter, parts of these hypotheses are tested with a longitudinal analysis regarding the quantity and quality of political participation. The chapter presents a variety of quantitative evidence indicating that political participation and engagement in Thailand during the past decade have changed and exhibit a progressive trend—not only in terms of their quantity (number of participants) but also in relation to their quality (widespread engagement by more sophisticated citizens).

CHAPTER 4

PROGRESS IN QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

AND ENGAGEMENT IN THAILAND, 2001-2010

This chapter focuses on the change patterns of political behaviors and attitudes in Thailand during the past decade. The major attempts are to examine: (1) whether political participation and engagement of Thai citizens have *quantitatively* and *qualitatively* improved; (2) if any improvement has been made, then by how much. The chapter is divided into two main sections based on the two premises stated in the first chapter: (1) if the *quantity* of political participation in Thailand during the past decade was improved, Thai citizens would increasingly participate in politics; (2) if the *quality* of political participation was improved, positive trends of political interest, knowledge, and efficacy of Thai citizens would clearly be observed. Obviously, these enquiries entail sub-questions such as: What does this chapter mean by "quantity and quality of political participation"? How does this chapter explain the changes involved?

In order to examine the quantity of political participation and its change patterns in Thailand, the first section discusses how Thai citizens since the 2001 general election in particular have gotten involved in several types of political actions. As with the

distinction between political and nonpolitical (civic) activities mentioned in Chapter 3, the progress of political participation is observed through the evolution of four major political acts: voting, joining campaign activities, contacting officials, and protesting. However, because the vibrancy of political activity may also be understood as the vibrancy of civic engagement and other ways of political involvement (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995; Putnam, 2000; Rosenstone and Hansen, 2002; Macedo et al., 2005), the evolution of party membership and civic engagement are also traced as a brief explanation of changing patterns of political activity. The second section then devotes considerable attention to change patterns of political engagement (e.g., political interest, knowledge, and efficacy) among Thai citizens by examining how much Thai citizens are interested in what is going on in their polity, how much they are informed about government and politics, how much they are confident in their own political abilities, and how these political attitudes have changed during the past decade.

This chapter develops a year-by-year longitudinal analysis of political participation and engagement in Thailand since 2001, in order to explain changes in these behaviors and attitudes. As described in Chapter 1, the data used in this longitudinal analysis are mixed, consisting of both existing statistical data taken from public organizations (e.g., ECT, NSB, and KPI) and survey data obtained from ABS (2002, 2006) and CSES (2001, 2005, 2007). The analysis can reveal whether Thai citizens have increasingly participated in political activity in the past decade; whether they, at the same time, have increasingly engaged in civic activity and other forms of political involvement that may motivate them to do political activity; whether they have become increasingly

interested in politics; learned more about politics and elections; and had a great sense of political efficacy.

<u>Quantity of Political Participation</u>

My investigation into the change patterns of political behaviors begins by describing a clear picture of an improvement in *quantity* of political participation in Thailand since 2001. Firstly, the discussion focuses on the change patterns of participation in four key *political* activities: (1) voting, the most common form of political participation seen in democratic polity, (2) campaign activities, (3) political contacting, and (4) protesting. Secondly, in order to better understand these changes, the discussion then also considers the evolution of party membership and civic engagement.

Voting

Voter turnout in national elections in Thailand has dramatically increased during the past decade, especially since the 2001 election. Figure 4.1 presents voter participation rate over time, starting from the first National Assembly voting that took place in a subsequent year (1933) since Thailand began its democratization process in 1932. The data indicate that the turnout rate in Thailand has continued to rise from about 40 percent (or lower) recorded before 1957 to about 40-50 percent during the period between 1958 and 1983. Since 1986, the voter turnouts were on average around 60 percent. After the 1997 Constitution went into force, two House elections were held. On January 6, 2001, 69.8 percent of eligible Thais went to the polls, and on February 6, 2005, that percentage rose to 72.5 percent of eligible Thais. Although the military coup
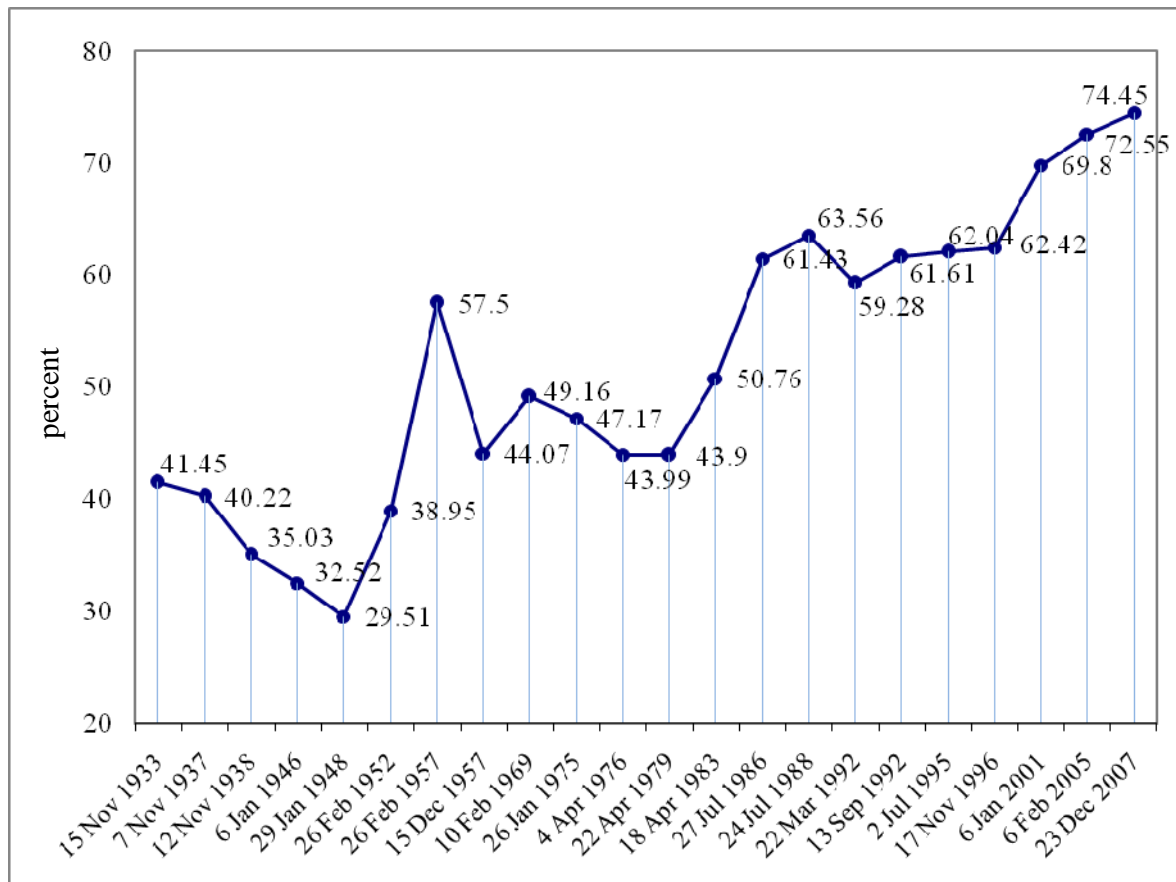
Source: The Office of Election Commission (http://www.ect.go.th)

Note: The right to vote was granted to all adult Thai citizens (i.e., 20 years of age and older for House of Representatives elections between 1933 and 1988, and 18 years of age and older from the 1992 House of Representatives election to present), without any restrictions such as gender, level of education, property ownership, or payment of tax, since Thailand changed its political system from an absolute monarchy to a western democratic system in June 1932.

Figure 4.1: Voter Turnout in House of Representatives Elections, 1933-2007

taking place in September, 2006 was a setback to democracy in Thailand, the voter turnout did increase to almost 75 percent in the election held on December 23, 2007, which was the first House election after a 13-month long military government and the first election under the 2007 Constitution.

The turnout rates of around 70 percent in the three latest elections were considered satisfactory when compared to that of neighboring countries like Malaysia and the Philippines and industrialized countries like Japan, South Korea and Taiwan and were even higher than an old democracy like India. The rates were also higher than the average rate of the entire Asian region and closer to that of liberal democratic countries in Western Europe, although Thailand's average voter turnout since 1977 stands at 61.75 percent.[38]

Campaign Activities

Electoral activities can take several forms, depending on the context of the electioneering in the country (Dalton, 2006). The ABS (2002; 2006) and CSES (2001; 2005) have selected some electoral activities to be regularly included in their survey conducted in Thailand that can be utilized in the present longitudinal analysis, such as persuading others to vote for certain political parties or candidates, attending election

---

[38]The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (www.idea.int) reports the voter turnout rate over time of Asian countries as follows: Malaysia, 70.2 percent; the Philippines, 80.9 percent; Japan, 69.5 percent; South Korea, 72.9 percent; Taiwan, 70.4 percent; and India, 59.4 percent. The average voter turnout rate over time by regions is also available: Western Europe, 77 percent; Oceania, 72 percent; Eastern Europe, 69 percent; Asia, 62 percent; North America, 61 percent; Africa, 55 percent; and South America, 54 percent.

meetings or rallies, and showing support for certain political parties or candidates. However, there has been debate in the participation field as to whether "persuading others to vote" is a form of political activity,[39] particularly in the case of developing countries. In this dissertation, therefore, the progress of Thai citizens participating in campaign activities by paying attention only to "attending election meetings or rallies" and "showing support for certain political parties or candidates" was examined. In order to make the evaluation more clearly, information about these two campaign activities in 2003 and 2004, was added, as collected by using similar questions in the surveys and reported by King Prajadhipok's Institute (2007), as seen in Figure 4.2.

Beyond voting, a large number of Thai citizens in the past decade have tended to participate in campaign activities. Yet few of them have shown support for certain political parties or candidates. Figure 4.2 indicates that the proportion of participants in campaign meetings or rallies has increased, from lower than 40 percent in 2001 to over 50 percent in 2002, and to almost 60 percent in 2003 and 2004. At the same time, the propensity of Thai citizens showing support for certain parties or candidates has increased from less than 3 percent on average during 2002-2004 to almost 10 percent in 2005. However, as a result of the 2006 political crisis in which the House of Representatives election was scheduled but all major opposition parties boycotted, Thai citizens' participation in 2006 for both campaign activities dropped by about half compared to the past year's results. This indicates that the electoral atmospheres, characterized by particular events and specific circumstances surrounding political and

---

[39]See more details about the discussion about this debate in Brady (1999: 770-771).
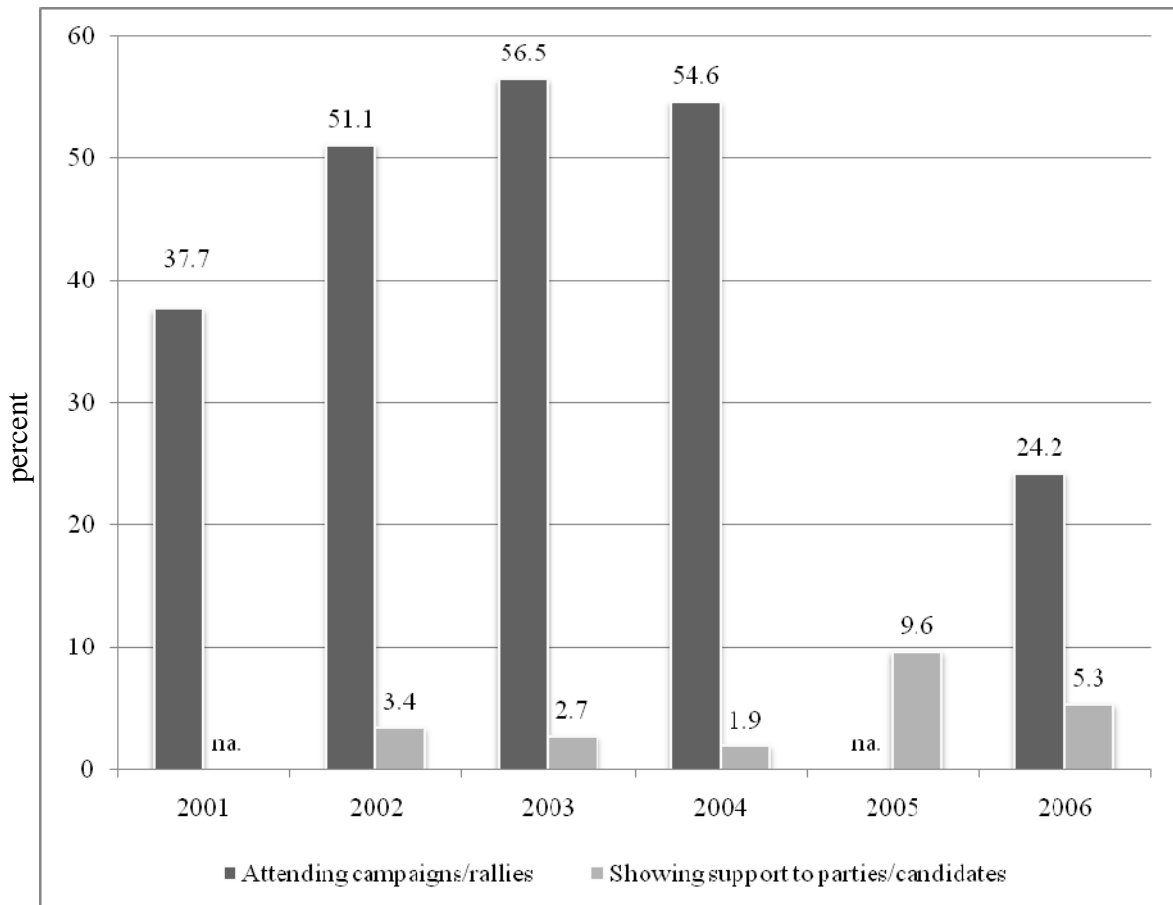
Source: ABS (2002; 2006); CSES (2001; 2005); King Prajadhipok's Institute (2007).

Figure 4.2: Percentage of Thai Citizens Participating in

Campaign Activities, 2001 – 2006

the degree of political competition, are critical factors that influence citizens' willingness to participate in politics.

Political Contacting

Apart from political activities that have direct relevance to the selection of government personnel (e.g., voting and being involved in electoral activities), political contacting is another mode of political action that on the other hand aims at influencing the decisions of government personnel. Based on this concept, the changing patterns of political contacting are examined by focusing mainly on the tendency of Thai citizens to initiate any contact with public officials, including elected representatives and government officers. Although there are many other public persons and organizations, such as political parties, NGO, and the media, who may have some influence on government personnel's decisions, this study excluded those organizations from the measurement of political contacting because they did not hold decision-making authority. However, in order to investigate whether the percentages of political contacting were high, other organizations (i.e., political parties, mass media, and NGOs), those that may assist citizens in transferring their requests or concerns to the government personnel were considered for a comparison purpose. Considering the propensity of citizens to contact those organizations also provides us with a clearer picture of whether the change patterns of contacting a public official relates to the change patterns of contacting political parties, the mass media, and NGOs.

When they are asked whether they have contacted any public persons or organizations during the past years, many Thai respondents say that they have contacted
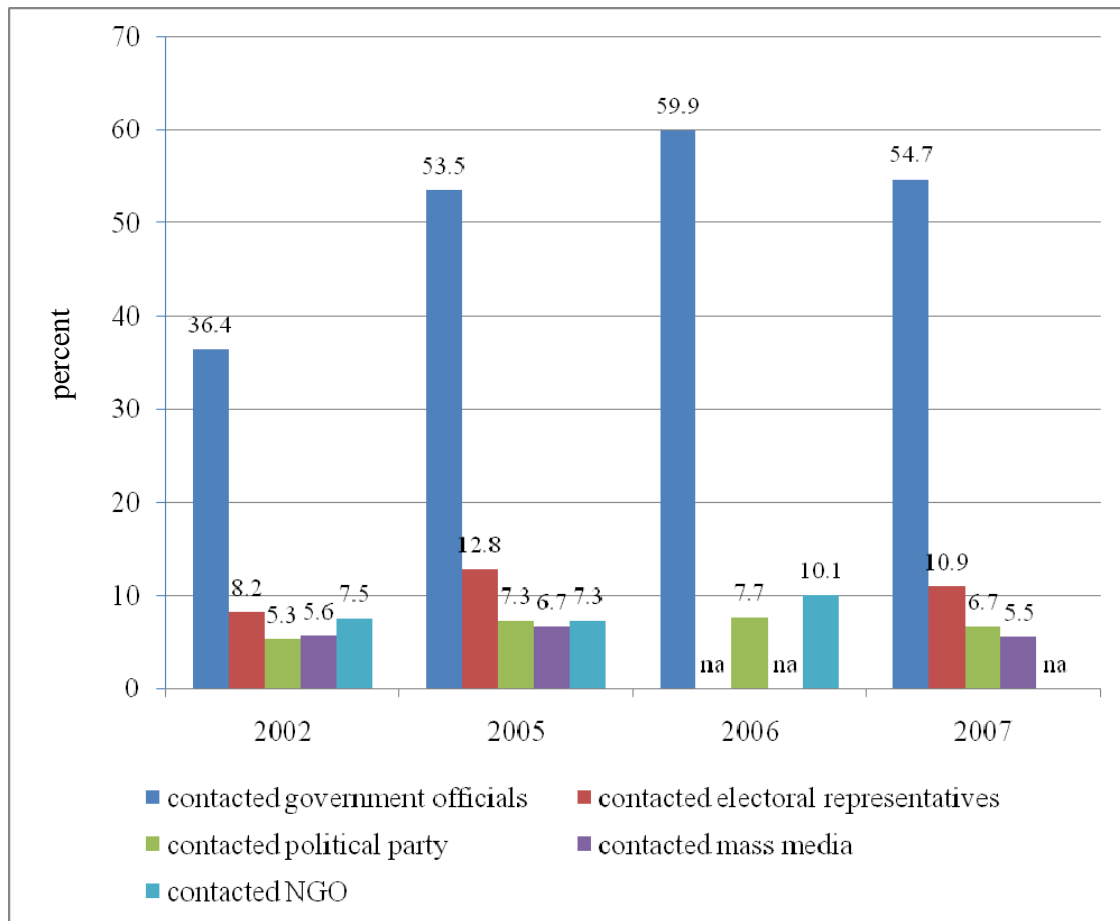
Source: ABS 2002, 2006; CSES 2005, 2007

Figure 4.3: Percentage of Thai Respondents Who Have Engaged in

Political Contacting, 2002-2007

government officials quite a bit more often—than other persons or organizations. Figure 4.3 shows that among five activities, contacting government officials was the most frequent activity that Thai citizens engaged in the past decade. More interestingly, the percentages of citizens using this channel to make their opinions and requests heard dramatically increased—from 36.4 percent in 2002 to almost 60 percent in 2006, before dropping by 5 percent a year later. In addition, these percentages were higher than those of contacted elected representatives, although the citizens expressed their opinions through both of these channels more frequently than through political parties, the mass media, or NGOs.

Approximately 8 percent of Thai citizens in 2002 reported they had contacted elected representatives concerning political problems or issues. This proportion increased to more than 12 percent in 2005. As with the propensity to contact government officials, however, this decreased by almost 2 percent in 2007. The patterns of citizens contacting political parties, NGOs, and the mass media were quite similar to the up-and-down trend of contacted politicians and government officials, although only a very few reported using these two channels.

Protest Activism

Not only paying attention to political contacting, recent studies have tended to add protest activism to their measurement of political participation (see e.g., Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995; Burns, Schlozman, and Verba, 2001; Norris, 2002; Zukin, 2006; Holzner, 2010). Several survey questions have been used by scholars as a measurement of protest activism, such as signing petition, joining in boycotts, attending

lawful demonstrations, joining unofficial strikes, and occupying buildings or factories

(see for example World Value Survey, WVS). However, survey data collected from a

variety types of protest activism in the case of Thailand are rare,[40] and almost all of them

are unavailable for developing a longitudinal analysis. Given these limitations, included

in this study's longitudinal analysis of protest activism is only one question asked of the

Thai respondents, whether they had taken part in a protests, marches, or demonstrations

during the past years. Other forms of protest activism, including (1) refusing to pay taxes

or fees to the government; (2) joining in boycotts; (3) getting together with others to raise

an issue or sign a petition; and (4) using force or violence for a political cause obtained

from the 2006 ABS and the 2007 WVS, the only two sources that collected such

information, were also examined but in a separate table. I do not claim this table a

longitudinal analysis because these two surveys used fairly different question-words

when asking the respondents.[41]

The first issue for analysis is whether Thai citizens in the past decade have

increasingly engaged in protest politics. Surprisingly, while critical events such as the

Yellow Shirts' anti-Thaksin movements in 2006 and 2008, the anti-military government

---

[40]The CSES did not include any questions regarding protest activism in the 2001 survey, while in 2005 and 2007 they added a question, taking part in a protest, march, or demonstration, asked of the respondents.

[41]While the 2006 ABS asked Thai respondents, whether they, personally, have *never*, *once*, or *more than once* done any of these things during the past three years—(1) refusing to pay taxes or fees to the government, (2) getting together with others to raise an issue or sign a petition, and (3) using force or violence for a political cause, the 2007 WVS asked whether the Thai respondents *have actually done* any of these things, whether they *might do* it or *would never*, under any circumstances, do it—(1) signing petition, (2) joining in boycotts, (3) attending lawful/peaceful demonstrations.

movements in 2006, and the Red Shirts' protestations against the government of Abhisit in 2009 and 2010 have been clearly observed in Thailand throughout the second half of the last decade, not very high numbers of Thai citizens have reported that they actually have participated in protest activities. Figure 4.4 shows that less than 6 percent of Thai respondents in 2002 said they have taken part in a protest, march, or demonstration. This proportion decreased by slightly more than 3 percent to around 2.4 percent in 2005, but steadily increased to 3.2 percent and 4.1 percent in 2006 and 2007, respectively. The highest proportion appearing in 2002 can be understood as an explosion of demonstrations, protests, marches, and new civic organizations by people of various ways of life that emerged since 1990 (Pasuk Phongpaichit et al., 2002). Praphat Pintoptaeng (1998: 34-39) has recorded the numbers of demonstrations, marches, and protests in Thailand between the 1970s and 1990s and found that there were 42 demonstrations, marches, and protests in 1978, 170 in 1990, and 988 in 1994.

This outburst of protest activism in Thailand, for many scholars, is a result of the combined impact of democratization, the rise of the market-oriented economy, and new forms of global power (hegemonic states and dominant multinationals) that on the one hand, have caused conflicts over resources, dislocation of communities, and erosion of ways of life, and on the other, have opened up political opportunities and given legitimacy to social movements (Hirsch and Warren, 1998; Missingham, 2000; Pasuk et al., 2002, Praphat, 1998). In contrast, a sharply decreased trend of protest activism between 2002 and 2005, the year in which the TRT won the election by landslide margins, can possibly be interpreted as a result of the combined success of the political

Protesting

percent

5.7

4.1

3.2

2.4
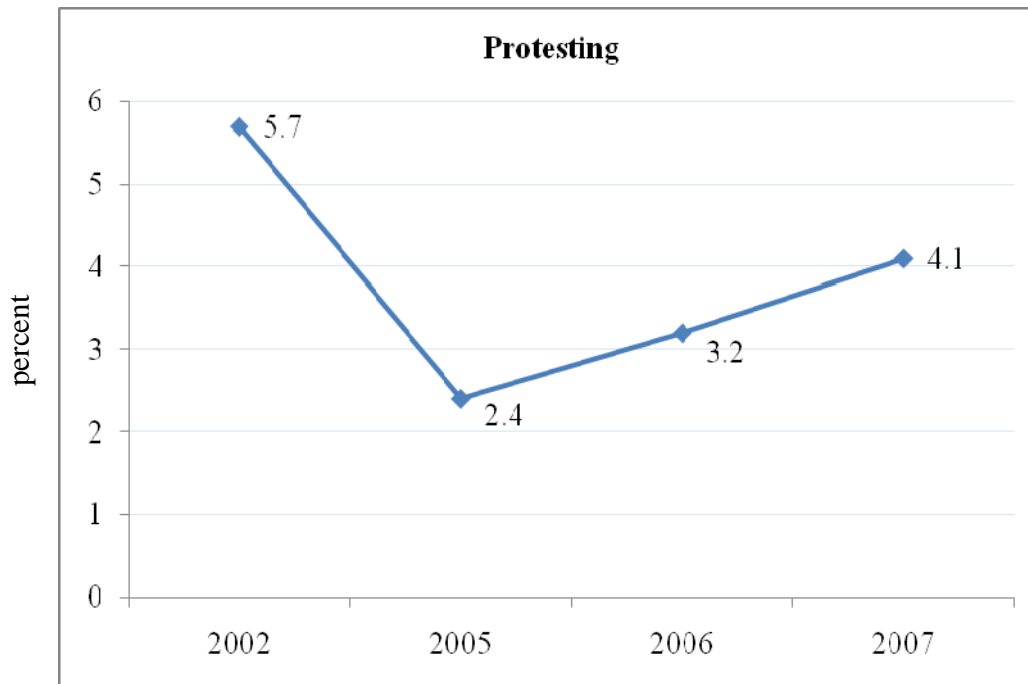
2002   2005   2006   2007

Source: ABS 2002, 2006; CSES 2005, 2007

Figure 4.4: Percentage of Thai Respondents Who Have Taken Part in

a Protest, March, or Demonstration, 2002-2007

reform under the 1997 Constitution (Suchit, 1999; Bowornsak, 2003) and Thaksin's administrative strategies, which were able to make the voice of the less well-off people heard through traditional ways of political expression, such as by going to the polls or contacting politicians /government officials about problems or concerns.

A growing trend of protest activism since then can be simply understood as a consequence of the political crisis that occurred since the integration of the Yellow Shirts in early 2006. Yet many questions have remained, for example, why the proportions of Thai citizens that participated in demonstrations, marches, and protests in 2006 and 2007 were still low, and how many of these people could be observed if data for the years 2008-2010 were available.

Because none of the national survey data about protest activism has been released since 2008, this dissertation can clarify only some parts of these puzzle by considering participation in other forms of political activism—refusing to pay taxes or fees to the government, joining in boycotts, getting together with others to raise an issue or sign a petition, and using force or violence for a political cause—collected in 2006 by the ABS and in 2007 by the WVS. Though this represents evidence from only two years, the frequency of these protest behaviors provides a broader picture in terms of the protest activities that Thai citizens have engaged in. In other words, such frequency can be applied to examining whether Thai citizens have used various forms of protest actions, and to what extent those proportions of involvement in protest activities can explain the overall level of Thai citizens' involvement in protest politics in 2006-2007. Moreover, since the year 2006 and 2007 are critical, when the Yellow Shirts became integrated and organized their month-long movement in early 2006 while at the same time, the pro-

Thaksin movement emerged firstly as a group of people supporting for Thaksin government and then became the Red Shirts after the 2006 coup, another issue for analysis is whether the respondents' protest behavior is related to what was going on in those events.

Conducted between 2006 and 2007,[42] information about protest activism derived from the 2006 ABS and the 2007 WVS can tell only half of the story about Thailand's protest politics since those years. However, many interesting points from this information can be adopted to explain more clearly the nature of citizen involvement in protest politics in Thailand in particular, and in other societies in general. Table 4.1 illustrates that among four protest actions, the most popular protest activity for Thai citizens in 2006 was refusing to pay taxes or fees to the government (7.7 percent), while the least popular protest activity was using force or violence for a political cause (1.9 percent). Getting together with others to raise an issue or sign a petition (4.4 percent) and attending a demonstration, protest, or march (3.2 percent) were the second and the third most popular activities in 2006, respectively. Only three protest actions were included in the 2007 WVS. Among those activities, the most popular protest activity for Thai citizens in 2007 was signing a petition (8.4 percent). The second and the third most popular were joining in boycotts (3.1 percent) and attending lawful/peaceful demonstrations (2.4 percent), respectively.

---

[42] The 2006 ABS conducted in Thailand before the Military Coup (19 September, 2006) in April 2006, whereas the 2007 WVS conducted in Thailand less than one year after the coup, between June 1 and July 31, 2007.

Table 4.1

Percentage of Thai Respondents Who Have Engaged in

Various Forms of Protest Politics, 2006-2007

Protest Activism	Year	Percent
Refused to pay taxes or fees to the government	2006	7.7
Joined in boycotts	2007	3.1
Got together with others to raise an issue or signed a petition	2006	4.4
Signed a petition	2007	8.4
Used force or violence for a political cause	2006	1.9
Attended a demonstration, protest, or march	2006	3.2
Attended lawful/peaceful demonstrations	2007	2.4
Participated in at least one of the above four protest activities	2006	11.4
Participated in at least one of the above three protest activities	2007	12.2

Source: ABS 2006; WVS 2007.

Note: the table presented percentage of those who have *once* or *more than once* done each protest action for the 2006 ABS; and of those who have actually done each protest action for the 2007 WVS.

At the first glance, this information about protest activism of Thai respondents in 2006 and 2007 indicates that Thai citizens have engaged in various protest activities other than directly participating in demonstration or protest marches. Furthermore, for both 2006 and 2007, more than 10 percent of Thai citizens said they had been involved in at least one of these protest activities during the past three years. These percentages reveal that the overall level of Thai citizens' involvement in protest politics seems to be higher than this study's previous estimation.

A relatively high differentiation between the proportion of people who engaged in at least one of those four activities in 2006, of those three activities in 2007, and of those who engaged in each activity also confirms what the aforementioned scholars (e.g., Verba, Nie, and Kim, 1971) have argued—that people do not use political activities interchangeably; instead, they tend to specialize in activities that match their motivations and goals. In other words, Thai citizens had engaged in protest politics by selecting to do what they could do, or should do, rather than doing everything.

Moreover (and related to the prior point), the proportions of people refusing to pay taxes (for 2006), joining boycotts (for 2006 and 2007), and signing petitions (for both surveys), which were even higher than those of people attending a demonstration or protest for each year, were consistent with the political events that occurred during the times the surveys were conducted. For example, one of the protest actions the Yellow Shirts leaders encouraged protesters, as well as people who supported their movement (in 2006), to do, in order to express their voice and show that the Thaksin government lacked the necessary legitimacy to administer the country was to refuse to pay taxes to the government. During their protestation in 2006, the Yellow Shirts also urged their

supporters to boycott goods and products that were owned in particular by the Thaksin family companies. Additionally, the Yellow Shirts supporters were asked to sign a petition submitting to the President of the Senate to pass a resolution under section 307 of the 1997 Constitution in order to remove Thaksin from office.[43]

This evidence suggests that people may engage in protest politics by showing support to the protest, which can be done in several ways, such as donating money to the movement, wearing shirts and/or other signs of the protest, posting stickers and/or protest messages on cars, and so forth. Beyond the case of Thailand, in order to conclude whether the levels of involvement in protests are high or whether the impact of the movements is widespread, scholars need to pay more attention to various forms of protest behaviors (which tend to appear nowadays in more innovative forms than in the past).

To sum up, this longitudinal analysis of political participation, as shown above, asserts that overall, Thai citizens increasingly have participated in many forms of political activities, although decreasing trends of some forms of participation can be observed during some periods. During the first half of the past decade, Thai citizens tended to participate quite often in electoral activities, in particular by voting, attending campaign activities, and showing support for parties or candidates. Also, large numbers

---

[43]According to the 1997 Constitution, voters of not less than fifty thousand in number have the right to lodge with the President of the Senate a complaint in order to request the Senate to pass a resolution removing the person holding a position of Prime Minister, Minister, member of the House of Representatives, senator, President of the Supreme Court of Justice, President of the Constitutional Court, President of the Supreme Administrative Court or Prosecutor General, who is under the circumstance of unusual wealth indicative of the commission of corruption, malfeasance in office, malfeasance in judicial office or an intentional exercise of power contrary to the provisions of the Constitution or law from office (Section 304).

of Thai citizens have gotten involved in political contacting. However, the levels of participation in these three political actions have tended to decrease since the country experienced the crisis in 2006. In contrast, protest activism, which tended to decrease between 2002 and 2005, steadily increased from 2005 to 2007. These results suggest that people participate in politics differently depending on types of political activity and on the political environment.

This dissertation argues that the development of political activism in Thailand relates to the vibrancy of civic engagement and other modes of political involvement that also can be observed precisely in the past decade. In order to learn about such relationships, the following section discusses party membership and civic engagement trends in Thailand since 2001.

Party Membership and Civic Engagement

Party Membership

Since the late 1990s, as with participation in political activities, the proportions of Thai citizens being members of a political party have been high. However, the ebb and flow trend of party membership proportions raises some questions, particularly whether Thai citizens tend to intentionally engage in a political party. According to the official data on the number of political parties, as reported to the registrar from the year 1998, the overall membership to political parties of Thai people has increased rapidly. Figure 4.5 shows that only 2.8 million people registered as members of political parties in 1998. This number increased to more than 25 million in 2002, the peak year, before decreasing to slightly less than nineteen million in 2005 due to an official adjustment. The total
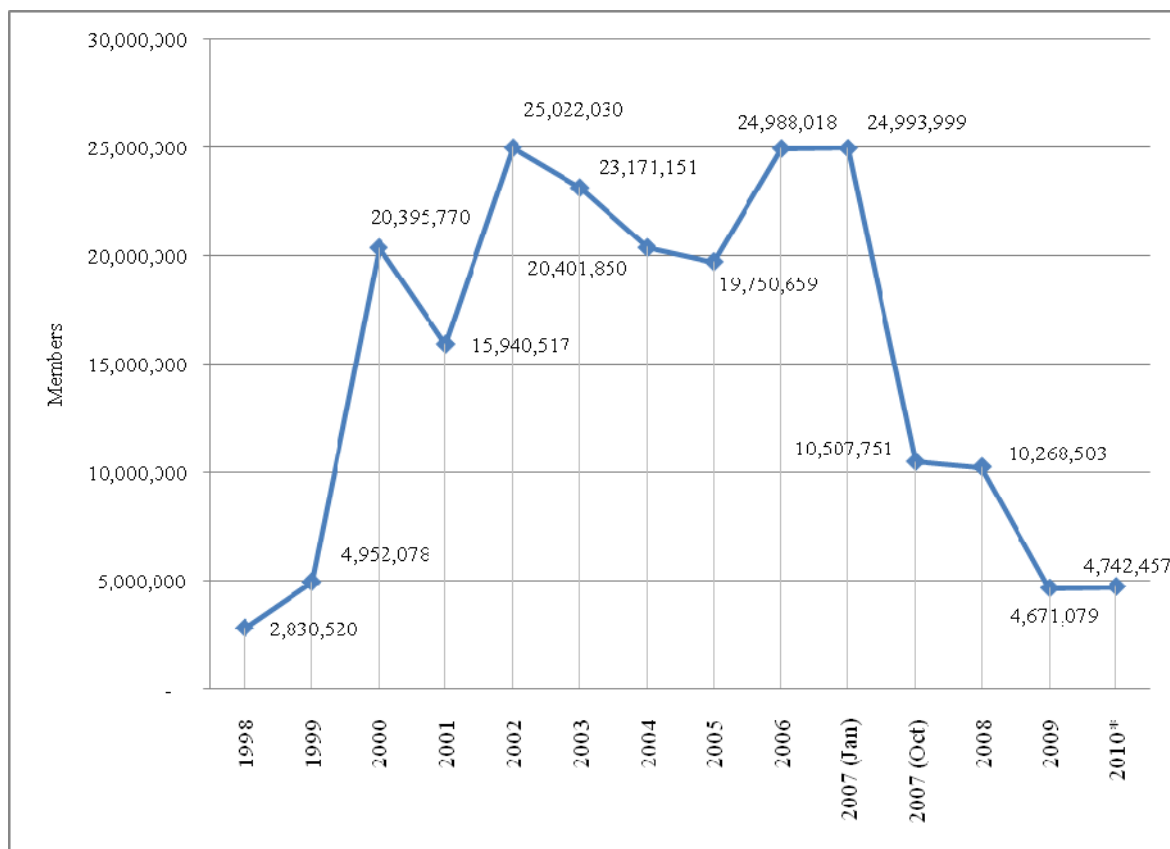
*September 30, 2010

Source: The Office of Election Commission (http://www.ect.go.th)

Figure 4.5: Total Number of Party Memberships, 1998 – 2010

number of party memberships increased again to nearly twenty-five million in 2006, and remained not very much different until early 2007. It can therefore be said that political party membership of Thai people has increased by almost nine fold within only nine years (i.e., from 1998 to 2007).

There are several factors affecting the rapid growth of political-party membership since the late 1997 to early 2007. First, this growth resulted from the continuity in the operation of the political parties. It is accepted that the military coup by the Peace Maintenance Group in 1991 was the first revolution in which political parties were not dissolved (McCargo, 2002). Hence, several political parties have been able to maintain their status as political institutions up to now. Moreover, the enthusiasm among people's sector also has played an important role in the process of drafting a new constitution, hence resulting in the promulgation of the 1997 Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand. This Constitution includes the clear stipulation to enhance people's participation in politics. As a result, there has been movement of various groups of people to establish several new political parties.

As for the information on budget allocation to support the operation of political parties by the Political Party Development Fund in the year 2006, a total of 24 political parties that were currently operating requested funding from the Political Party Development Fund (Figure 4.6). Among them, 4 parties comprise over 1 million members. These parties are Thai Rak Thai, the Democrats, Chart Thai, and Mahachon. Thai Rak Thai has the highest number of 12,081,088 party members (only those that are not members of other political parties), or 26.9 percent of eligible voters, followed by 2,510,471 members of Democrats, 2,452,224 members of Chart Thai, and 1,411,160
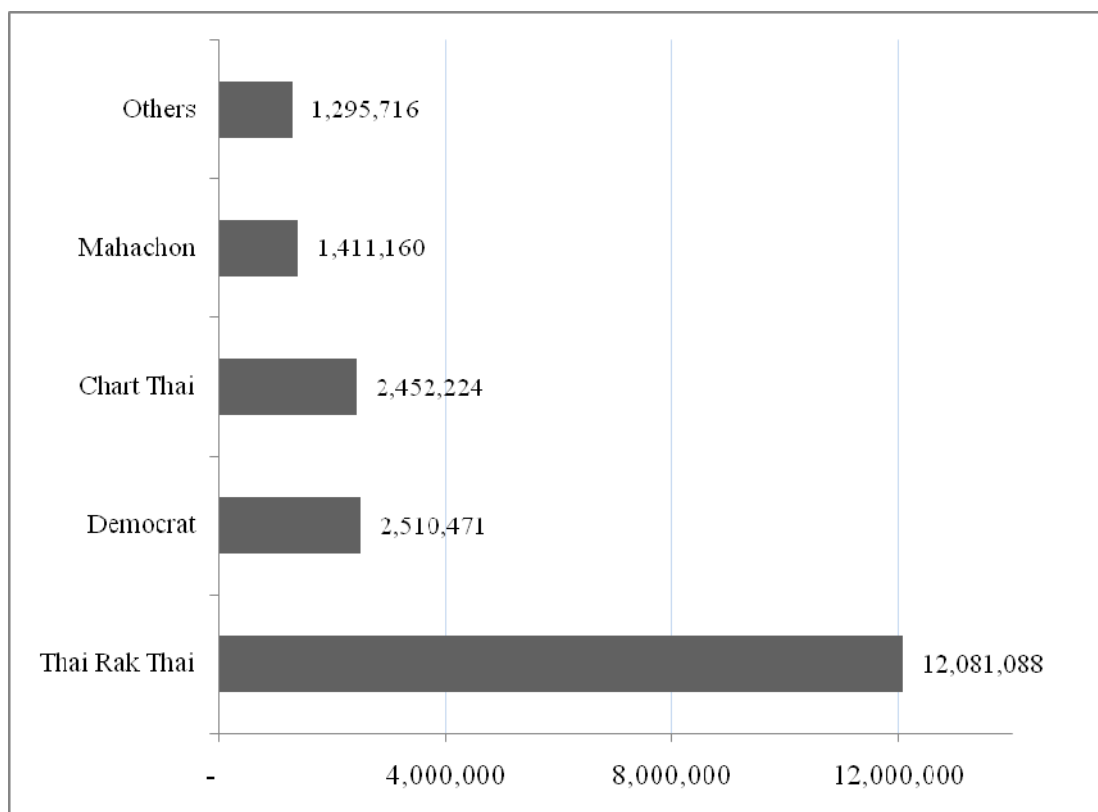
Source: Political Party Development Fund, the Office of Election Commission

Figure 4.6: The Number of Party Members for Thai Political Parties with

Over 1 Million Members and Others, 2006

members of Mahachon. The total number of other parties' members is only 1,296,716, which is even fewer than the number of members of the fourth largest, Mahachon.

In addition to the above institutional factors, political parties' own intentions and citizens' own incentives are potential factors that have aroused the rapid growth of political-party membership in Thailand. In their latest article, entitled "Unraveling Intra-Party Democracy in Thailand," Aurel Croissant and Paul Chambers (2010) argued that the main reason why almost all political parties in Thailand are active in the pursuit of members is not because they need support in terms of money, volunteer work for the party or candidates, or to broaden their reservoir of potential candidates; rather, Thai political parties try to recruit as many as members as they can in order to enhance their public image and reputation. This argument is true in the case of "large" political parties—those are able to gain financial support from private companies and/or public donations. On the other hand, for small or "emerging" political parties, recruiting more members means more money for support from the Election Commission's Political Party Development Fund.

Moreover, it is important to note that according to the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, B.E. 2540 (1997) and the Political Party Act of 1999, the establishment of a new party only requires at least fifteen people, but these numbers need to be expanded to a minimum of 5,000 members, and new parties have to establish a local branch in each of the four national regions. Consequently, in order to achieve these requirements, various newly-established parties have used inappropriate methods of gaining party members. Croissant and Chambers (2010) discovered that in Thailand, to become a political party member, an extensive prior screening is not required.

Paying membership contributions also does not matter. Instead, political parties and MPs usually pay individuals to join the party and to attend party activities. With extremely low opportunity costs, Thai voters are willing to join a political party as a member without strong party identification. As a result, the numbers of party members are questionable.

However, party membership has sharply declined since 2007 (Figure 4.6). The reasons are at least two fold. First, the dissolution of the TRT and other three small parties in May, 2007 caused a sudden loss of more than fourteen million party members. Second, in order to guarantee the accuracy of the official membership numbers, the Political Party Act of 1999 was revised in August, 2008. According to this revision, party membership of citizens that are members of more than one party is invalid. As a result, more than 5.6 million party members were disqualified from the ECT's official record. Based on the most recent ECT's party members records (as of September, 2010), the total number of party memberships in Thailand was 4,742,457 (Figure 4.6). However, this number is almost two million higher than that in 1998, when party membership was first officially recorded by the ECT, approximately 10.5 percent of the total number of Thai eligible voters (roughly 45 million). Compared to other democracies in Europe and North America, this density still seems to be "high."[44]

---

[44]Based on the 1997-2001 party membership records, few European countries have more than 5 percent of their citizens enrolled as party members (Scarrow and Gezgor, 2010: 825). Furthermore, among 27 Western democracies, including Canada, only Austria (17.66), Iceland (27.29), and Malta (23.8) have more than 10 percent party membership density – percent of party members among the total number of registered voters (Weldon, 2006: 476).

Civic Engagement

Thai citizens have gotten increasingly involved in civil society by becoming members of civic associations and by joining activities organized by their groups. Figure 4.7 illustrates data concerning the membership status of Thai people obtained from a survey of King Prajadhipok's Institute between 2002 and 2005. These figures indicate the continuing and increasing trend of membership in civic groups of Thai people. Asked whether they have been members of any civic groups, approximately one third of the people in 2002 said that they were members of at least one group or association. This proportion increased to over 40 percent in 2003 and to over 45 percent in 2004, and finally rose to over a half of the people in 2005.

Nevertheless, when considering the data from the 2005 survey in detail, it was found that slightly over 60 percent of the respondents held membership status in only one group or association, while less than 30 percent were members of two groups or associations. Apart from these, less than 10 percent of Thai respondents indicated that they were members of three civic groups or associations or more (Table 4.2). Moreover, Table 4.3 indicates the frequency in attending the activities of groups or associations of which the respondents were members. More than half of the people, or 56 percent, participated in the activities of the groups or associations only once in a while (at least once a year). Approximately 40 percent of the people participated in those activities quite often (at least once a month), and less than 2.5 percent often participated in such activities (at least once a week). The proportion of group memberships and frequency of participation in civic-group activities among Thai citizens, as obtained from the survey, was relatively low, compared to findings in other countries such as the USA (Putnam,
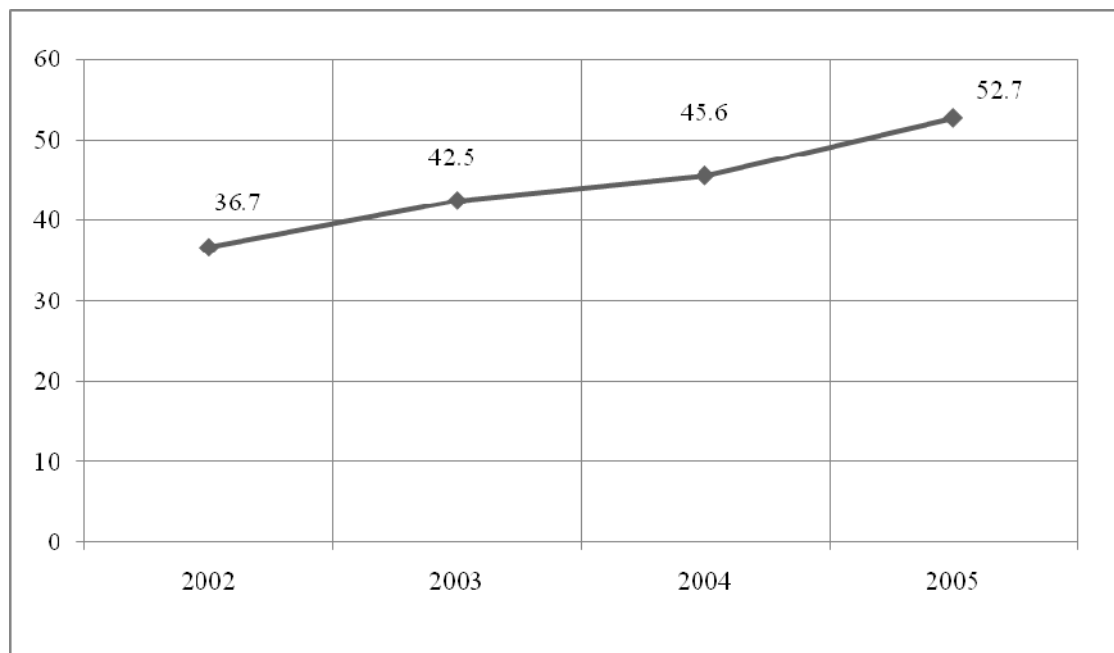
Source: King Prajadhipok's Institute (2007)

Figure 4.7: Percent of Thai Citizens Who Are Members of

Civic Groups/Organizations, 2002 - 2005

Table 4.2

Member of Groups/Associations, Classified by the Number of Groups/

Organizations of Which Thai Respondents Are Members

n = 1,200

Membership	Percentage
• **Membership of groups/ association**	**52.7**
- Being a member of 1 group/ associations	60.1
- Being a member of 2 groups/ associations	28.1
- Being a member of 3 groups/ associations	9.2
- Being a member of 4 groups/ associations	2.2
- Being a member of 5 groups/ associations	0.4
• **Nonmembership in any group/ association**	**47.3**
Total	**100.0**

Source: King Prajadhipok's Institute (2007)

Table 4.3

Participation in the Activities of Groups/ Organizations of Which Thai Respondents

Are Members, Classified by Frequency of Participation

n = 1,200

Frequency	Percentage
Often *(At least once a week)*	2.4
Quite often *(At least once a month)*	41.6
Once in a while *(At least once a year)*	56.0
Total	**100.00**

Source: King Prajadhipok's Institute (2007)

1995, 2000; Wuthnow, 2002), Sweden (Rothstien, 2002), and Japan (Park and Shin, 2005).

Robert Wuthnow (2002: 68), for instance, shows in the case of the USA that 71 percent of American citizens in 1994 claimed to be a member of at least one kind of civic organization. In Sweden, 92 percent of all Swedish adults in 1992 belonged to at least one voluntary organization, and the average membership per person was between 2.9 and 4 (depending on the measure) (Rothstien, 2002: 299-300). Based on the 2003 Asianbarometer Survey in Japan,[45] approximately two thirds of Japanese adults claimed to be a member of civic groups (Park and Shin, 2005: 71), with those surveyed (24.1 percent) saying that they participated "often" in group meetings or activities, and 32.9 percent reporting "very often." Thus, the assembly of Thai citizens conducting public activities also requires a great deal of enhancement to be more efficient.

<div align="center">Quality of Political Engagement</div>

An increase in the number of Thai citizens going to vote, engaging in campaigns and nonconventional political activities, and joining parties and voluntary groups alone may not be sufficient to conclude that Thailand now has a progressive and meaningful political participation. As mentioned earlier in this dissertation, a healthy democracy also requires quality political participation, both in individual and institutional terms. More specifically, to participate in public affairs, citizens should be actively interested in

---

[45]The proportion of frequency of participation in group meetings and activities obtained from the ABS website online data analysis (http://www.jdsurvey.net/eab/AnalizeQuestion.jsp).

politics, have proper participatory knowledge and skills, and believe in their potential to bring about change or influence what is going on in politics. This section focuses on changing patterns of political interest, knowledge, and efficacy of Thai citizens since 2001. Data from several national surveys conducted in Thailand during the past decade indicate "moderate" levels of political interest, knowledge, and efficacy of Thai citizens. More interestingly, most but not all of these levels have changed in a positive direction.

Political Interest

In this chapter, the political interest of Thai citizens during the past decade is observed through two survey questions: (1) how often citizens use news media (i.e., TV, radio, and newspapers) to follow what is going on in politics and public affairs; and (2) the extent to which citizens are interested in the forthcoming election. Data for the former were taken from the national survey reports conducted by Thailand's National Statistic Bureau (NSB) in 2002, 2004, 2006, and 2007, while data for the later were obtained from CSES 2001, 2005, and 2007.

For political science scholars, whether the expansion of media use, such as TV viewing, is a boon or a curse for public participation is controversial. Robert Putnam (1995) claims that the amount of TV viewing was strongly and negatively related to social trust, group membership, and voting turnout. In contrast, Pippa Norris (1996; 2000) argues that it depends. In "Does Television Erode Social Capital? A Reply to Putnam," Norris (1996) found that the relationship between total hours of TV consumption and political participation confirmed the thesis that the amount of time people spend watching TV was negatively related to all types of participation. In

particular, across all of the political participation activities included in her analysis (i.e., voting, campaign work, campaign contributions, contacting government officials, protesting, being a member of voluntary organizations, and working informally with others to solve community problems), it was found that the more people watched TV, the less active they were. Moreover, heavy viewers also proved to be less interested in national and local community politics, and were less likely to engage in political discussion.

However, when paying attention to the content of what people were watching, Norris found that people who regularly watched the network news were significantly more likely to be involved in all types of political activity, and the association between watching public affairs programs on TV and civic engagement proved even stronger (p. 477). Furthermore, in another study conducted by applying campaign panel surveys of Britain and America, Norris (2000) asserted that heavily watching TV news caused only short-run negative effects on political attitudes (e.g., less interested in politics, mistrust in the government, and ill-informed about politics) among British and American citizens. In the long run, people who regularly watched TV news in Britain and the US had greater than average political interest, knowledge, and efficacy.

As in most other countries, citizens in Thailand cite TV as their most frequently-used source of political information, and these number have steadily increased during the first half of the last decade before reducing after the political crisis that emerged since late 2005. Table 4.4 shows that between 2002 and 2007, more than 60 percent of Thais reported that they watched TV every day to follow what was going on in politics, while

Table 4.4

Attention to the News Media (percent of "every day")

	2002 (n=30,872)	2004 (n=30,872)	2006 (n=35,220)	2007 (n=34,776)
TV	64.3	82.5	75.5	62.0
Radio	10.8	13.6	12.3	8.1
Newspaper	15.3	15.4	16.0	12.7

Sources: National Statistic Bureau Report (2002; 2004; 2006; 2007)

about one-tenth and one-eighth listen to news on the radio and read newspapers, respectively. Moreover, the proportion of the public that regularly watches politics news and public affairs programs on TV has increased from 64.7 percent in 2002 to 82.5 in 2004, before dropping to 75.5 and 62.0 in 2006 and 2007, respectively. Based on Norris' findings, the high proportions of Thai citizens watching political news and public affair programs on TV thus does not seem to be harmful to the democratic health of Thai society, and may even prove beneficial to its quality of political participation.

Interest in the election is another indicator that participatory scholars have typically used to measure the extent to which citizens are interested in politics (for example, on the NES). This section utilizes the CSES's 10-point scale questions on how interested the respondents were in the election, asking respondents to rate their degree of interest—ranging from not at all interested (0) to very interested (10). Based on the 2001, 2005, and 2007 CSES data, the proportions of Thai voters interested in the election were relatively high, but in an up-and-down direction.

Table 4.5 shows that while the rates (mean scores) of those interested in the election were approximately 7.5 and higher for all three years, the rate increased from 7.5 in 2001 to 8.07 in 2005 before dropping to almost the same rate in 2007 (even though the voter turnout rate for the 2007 election was higher than that of the previous two; see Figure 4.1). The high political interest rates in the 2001 and 2005 elections, for some scholars, can be understood as a result of Thailand's economic crisis in 1997, which served as a reminder of the importance of democratic reform and the adoption of good governance (Albritton, 2006; Albritton and Thawilwadee, 2005; 2008). The crisis was a blessing in disguise, as it made Thai people value democracy more. Using the 2002 ABS

Table 4.5

Interested in the Election

	2001	**2005**	**2007**
Mean	7.50	8.07	7.54
S.D.	2.39	2.11	1.98
N (valid)	1,067	1,995	1,628

Source: CSES (2001, 2005, 2007)

data, Albritton and Thawilwadee (2006) found, for instance, that 88.9 percent of Thai respondents were satisfied with the state of Thai democracy, with those surveyed (54.7 percent) reporting being "fairly satisfied," and 34.2 percent reporting being "very satisfied." According to the 2006 ABS data, 93 percent of Thai respondents said that "democracy is desirable for our country now," 88.1 percent agreed that "democracy is suitable for our country now," 89.6 percent viewed that "democracy is effective in solving the problems of society," and 82.6 accepted that "democracy is preferable to all other kinds of government" (Chu, Nathan, and Shin, 2008: 21-24).

Thus, Thai people had placed high interest in the election since they viewed it as a way through which they could directly participate in controlling state authorities, as Verba, Nie, and Kim (1978) suggest, as well as a way of leading to democracy, as Huntington (1991) argues. In contrast, the decline of political interest in the 2007 election may be understood as an outcome of the events that had occurred during the 2006-07 military era and the electoral designation of the 2007 Constitution, which will be discussed, together with the level of political knowledge, in the next section.

Political Knowledge

Political knowledge could indicate the quality of public participation because it enhances citizens' civic capacities—the ability of individuals to see the connections between public policy and their own interests, as well as ability to make their voting decisions based on sophisticated criteria such as a candidate's positions on issues (Kahn and Kenny, 1999; Bartels, 1996). There are very few survey data that provide information regarding Thai citizens' political knowledge, and question series that regularly ask Thai

respondents their knowledge about Thai politics and democracy in general are none. In order to evaluate how political knowledge of Thai citizens has changed across 2001 and 2007, political knowledge in this chapter is measured in terms of knowledge about candidates and political parties, ability to name as many as candidates and political parties as possible in one's own electoral district, and to match that candidate to the party to which he/she belongs.

Table 4.6 compares the percentage of citizens who could name at least two candidates, two parties, and two correct matches between candidate and party in their own district. There is evidence that Thai voters' ability to name at least two candidates in their electoral district in the 2007 election dropped approximately 10 percent compared to the 2005 election. At the same time, the ability to name at least two parties and to correctly match at least two candidates with one's party decreased more than 15 percent. These findings suggest that although more than half of Thai voters had sufficient knowledge about their candidates and/or parties when they went to the polls, there have been some institutional obstacles that have made eligible Thais ill-informed.

As with the decrease in political interest rate, a lower ability to recognize the name of the candidate and party of eligible Thais than in the previous two elections can be understood as a result of both the political events that occurred during more than a year under the military government and the new electoral system set up by the 2007 Constitution.

First, the event in which the TRT party of ex-Prime Minister Thaksin was judged to be dissolved in late May 2007 by the Constitutional Court Commissions, who were

Table 4.6

Knowledge about Electoral Selection Choices (Percent)

	2001	**2005**	**2007**
Name correctly at least 2 candidates	74.4	74.5	64.8
Name correctly at least 2 parties	82.9	84.3	67.1
Match correctly at least 2 candidates with parties	66.7	69.4	52.6
N (valid)	1,079	2,000	1,656

Source: CSES (2001, 2005, 2007)

*Note***:** ( ) = N (valid)

appointed by the coup leaders, led 111 big-named politicians to be banned for five years from politics. The PPP was established as a proxy of TRT very quickly and shortly before the election. About one fourth of PPP's candidates were rookies who became candidates under the great support of those who were banned.

In addition to changes in the candidates' and parties' faces, the new electoral system that expanded the size of the electoral district from a one-seat constituency to a three-seat maximum, may have led to some problems for eligible voters concerning their ability to remember the names of numerous candidates in such a huge district. According 2007 data, many respondents could identify a given "number" of candidates and/or parties, but such identifications have not been counted as knowledge about the candidate and/or the party.

This evidence can also be applied to explaining the high voter turnout rate of the 2007 election, where what many voters brought to the polls was not the names of candidates or parties they wanted to vote for, but the given number, which was the most convenient way for all, even those who were seniors or less-educated, to recognize their vote choices. For this reason, the decreasing proportions of Thai citizens' knowledge regarding their electoral vote choices in 2007 are not evidence of the low political ability of Thai voters. Rather, evidence that approximately two thirds of eligible voters named correctly at least two candidates and parties, and more than half of them correctly matched at least two candidates with his/her party, can be interpreted as high political knowledge given the complicated development of the political atmosphere and of the new election system.

Political Efficacy

Political participation through the election process that is a motivation for a good political system must be supported by the public's impression regarding the belief that the people must take part in politics and such participation shall lead to change (Nie et al., 1969). This is because once the people feel that they can achieve what they want through the political system, they then have an attitude toward the system. This also leads to beliefs, cooperation, acceptance, and expression through the channel opened up by the system, including the preservation of the best system ultimately. Therefore, the voting of the people should not be carried out just because it is a duty or is enforced by the law— the people should vote because they feel that they can exert an influence, that they have power, or that they have political efficacy to push for the change in the government, public policies, or to help the those who they support to be elected and work to represent their position.

In order to examine the changes in political efficacy of Thai citizens during the past decade, this chapter employs four survey questions taken from the 2001, 2005, and 2007 CSES. As described earlier, in Chapter 1, these questions include both questions that reflect *internal efficacy*, "beliefs about one's own competence to understand and to participate effectively in politics" (Niemi, Craig, and Mattei, 1991: 407), and *external efficacy*, the perceived responsiveness of the political system to citizen's participation (see Craig et al., 1990: 289-314; Madsen, 1987: 571-581). Internal efficacy was measured by agreement with the statements: (1) "If people like us go to vote, we can change what happens in the future;" and (2) "Sometimes I think that I just don't understand politics." External efficacy was measured by agreement with the statements: (3) "Government

officials really do not care what people like you and me think;" and (4) "Common people like me don't have any influence on what goes on in politics."

Table 4.7 reports a mixed trend of political efficacy by Thai voters. Optimistically, large numbers of Thai citizens expressed relatively high confidence in their ability to participate in politics through voting. When asked to evaluate the statement, "If people like us go to vote, we can change what happens in the future," more than 70 percent of respondents for all surveys agreed. The percentage of confidence extended roughly 9 percent from 72.7 percent in 2001 to slightly more than 80 percent in 2005 before dropping a little bit by less than 3 percent in 2007. This tendency has tended to increases correspondingly with high voter turnout and political interest rates, as presented in the above discussions.

Moreover, even though the confidence of Thai citizens in their ability to understand politics has not increased very much, it is high compared to other Asian countries. When asked to evaluate the statement, "Sometimes I think that I just don't understand politics," 62.8 percent of respondents in 2007 agreed. This percentage was about the same compared to those in 2001 and 2005: a little more than 3 percent higher than those in 2001 and lower than those in 2005 by 2 percent. Conversely, these proportions indicate that overall, slightly less than 40 percent of Thai citizens think that they can understand politics. These levels of a subjective sense of pride in the power and ability of oneself to participate in and understand politics among Thais are relatively higher than those of other democracies in the region, such as Japan (16.9 percent), Korea (36.3 percent), and Taiwan (11.4 percent) (Chu, Nathan, and Shin, 2008).

Table 4.7

Feeling of Political Efficacy (Percent)

	2001	2005	2007
Internal efficacy			
If people like us go to vote, we can change what happens in the future (% agree).	72.7 (1,071)	81.5 (1,984)	78.8 (1,631)
Sometimes I think that I just don't understand politics (% agree).	59.5 (1,075)	64.8 (1,983)	62.8 (1,635)
External efficacy			
Government officials really do not care what people like you and me think (% agree).	54.2 (1,074)	54.0 (1,981)	50.2 (1,636)
Common people like me don't have any influence on what goes on in politics (% agree).	49.6 (1,071)	56.0 (1,988)	47.7 (1,635)

Source: CSES (2001, 2005, 2007)

Note: ( ) = N (valid)

Respondents' attitudes on government officials also tended to improve. When asked to evaluate the statement, "Government officials really do not care what people like you and me think," 54.2 percent of respondents in 2001 agreed. This percentage was almost the same in 2005 (54.0 percent) but decreased by almost 4 percent in 2007. These figures are quite different from those from the established democracies. For example, in the US, the proportion of citizens who agree that "most elected officials don't care what people like me think" increased from one-third by the 1960s to nearly two-thirds in 1998 (Pharr and Putnam, 2000: 9). This pattern of negative assessment can also be found in other Western democracies such as Canada and Italy. In Canada, the percentage of citizens who said that "the government doesn't care much what people like me think" increased from 45 percent in 1968 to 67 percent in 1993. In Italy, the percentage of citizens who agreed that politicians "don't care what people like me think" swelled from 68 percent in 1968 to 84 percent in 1997 (Pharr and Putnam, 2000: 9-10).

Confidence in their ability to influence politics among Thai citizens was low, but we can expect an optimistic trend from the responses. When asked to evaluate the statement, "Common people like me don't have any influence on what goes on in politics," slightly less than half of Thai voters in 2001 agreed. This percentage increased to roughly 56 percent in 2005 but dropped by almost 9 percent to 47.7 percent in 2007. This mixed pattern of Thais' feeling regarding political efficacy can be understood as a consequence of the promulgation of the reformist 1997 Constitution, which increased people's confidence in their ability to participate in politics, particularly through the elections that were held frequently during the last decade.

A short period of military government after the 2006 coup and a referendum on the 2007 drafted constitution are other evidence suggesting that public opinions cannot be ignored, even in an authoritarian period. In addition, protest politics, both of the Yellow-clad and the Red-clad, not only encourages ordinary people to believe in their voices, but also makes them better-informed about what is going on in politics through either participating in protests (attending protest events or watching such events live on TV)[46] or following news reports about them. As several political knowledge proponents have argued, informed persons are better able to discern their own interests and are more likely to advocate those interests through political actions (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996; Popkin and Dimock, 1999; Milner, 2002). Thus, the changing level of Thai citizens' perceived responsiveness of the political system to citizen's participation (in particular between 2005 and 2007) is evidence of gradual improvement rather than backwardness, in the quality of public participation in Thailand.

In summary, this chapter provides evidence of mixed-patterns in the quantity and quality of political participation in Thailand during the past decade in several aspects. First, Thai citizens have increasingly participated in voting. Moderate numbers of them also took part quite often in campaign activities and political contacting, at least for the first half of the decade. These patterns accordingly are in line with ebb-and-flow trends of party membership and group engagement. Based on results that show large proportions of Thai citizens following news on TV and reporting being interested in elections, political

---

[46]Both the PAD and UDD have their own satellite TV (i.e., PAD's ASTV and UDD's D Station), have used these channels to communicate with their supporters, and have displayed real time protest events when organizing a protest.

interest among citizens seems to be relatively high. More than half of Thai voters can correctly name at least two candidates and parties as well as match correctly which party the candidate belongs to, indicating that Thai electorates have fairly sufficient knowledge about their vote choices while showing up at the poll. Together with a moderate level of Thai voters' perceived responsiveness of the political system to citizen's participation, these trends of political interest and knowledge are evidence of gradual increase in the quality of citizen participation in Thailand.

However, changes in the quantity and quality of political participation in Thailand during the past decade appeared as ebb and flow trends rather than as constant increases. In terms of the country's democratic development, there are still many areas that require considerable attention. Moreover, the quantity and quality of political participation may be ineffectual if they produce uneven distribution. In this respect, democracy is better if the voices and interests of the people as a whole are concerned. There should be no institutional obstacle that undermines political participation among the disadvantaged, particularly the young, the poor, the less educated, and many racial and ethnic minorities. In the next chapter, the discussion moves forward to an emphasis on equality in political participation, seeking to explain changes in the distribution of political participation among Thai citizens regarding gender, age, level of income, level of education, and area of living.

CHAPTER 5

HOW POLITICAL PARTICIPATION HAS CHANGED

AMONG DIFFERENT GROUPS IN THAILAND

Scholars of democratic politics have long focused on political participation, aiming to develop and test theories about who participates in politics, with whom, how, and why. Much of this work is motivated by a belief that political participation is at the heart of democracy (Schlozman, 2002; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995) and that participatory inequalities are democratically troublesome (Dalton, 2006; Macedo, et al., 2005). Influenced by studies in the Western democracies, political behavior research in Thailand has been conducted, seeking to find the best answer for the same type of these participatory questions. The dominant view claims that females and the young, because they have lower participatory resources and skills, are less likely than males or older people to participate in politics (Chalermpol, 1996; Thitiyatorn, 1998; Sompis, 2000; Suchit and Phonsak, 1979; 1983). Furthermore, people living in rural areas, because they are poor and less-educated, are easily mobilized by influential persons and by personal benefit, and for this reason they are the most active groups in electoral activities (Natpong, 1993; Somchai, 1994; Suchit, 1996; Suchit and Phonsak, 1979; 1983; Wittaya, 1998). Based on these conventional premises, there should be unequal distribution of political participation among Thai citizens with different socioeconomic backgrounds.

However, these expectations are confounded by many recent events and especially evidence from progress in several political engagement factors—political interest, knowledge, and efficacy—as presented in previous chapters of this dissertation. In this chapter, I employ the most appropriate and recent survey data (i.e., the ABS 2002 and 2006) regarding Thai citizens' political behavior in general and political participation in particular to examine specifically whether there is a participatory gap among Thai citizens with different gender, age, level of income, level of education, and area of living. With constantly collected information about many political activities, including voting, campaign activities, political contact, and protesting, the ABS allows us to consider political participation and its changing patterns in a broad sense.

With the help of survey data obtained from the ABS, this chapter tested whether (1) females, (2) the young, (3) the poor, (4) the low-educated, and (5) the rural are less likely than males, older people, the better-off, the higher-educated, and the urban to participate in politics. The survey, conducted two times in Thailand (2002 and 2006), also provides us with a great opportunity to examine whether a participatory gap, if it does exist, among different demographic groups has smaller since the overall levels of participation have increased. In the last section, regression models were utilized to test whether these results are strong enough to explain the changing patterns of political participation in Thailand during the past decade. Again, as the previous chapter shows an ebbs-and-flows trend of political engagement for Thai citizens overall, it was concluded that if we need to explain more clearly the changed patterns of political participation among different groups in Thailand, a clear understanding about how political engagement has changed among these groups is unquestionably required.

Socioeconomic Explanations of

Who Participates in Politics

Several decades of empirical research have established socioeconomic status (SES) as a major determinant of political participation (Leighley, 1995; Schlozman, 2002). Differences in political resources, such as educational level, income, and employment patterns, explain a large part of this gap. The central theme in the developed democracies is that higher status individuals, especially the better educated and people with higher incomes, are more likely to participate because they have the *resources* (e.g., money and time) and *skills* (e.g., knowledge and ability to access political information) to manipulate their involvement in politics. Thus, the mainstream explanation of the impact of socioeconomic status on political participation is that it is not socioeconomic status *per se* that stimulates participation, but socioeconomic status as it relates to skills and orientations that directly influence participation (Dalton, 2006).

However, while the positive association between socioeconomic status and political participation seems to obtain across Western democracies, many researchers have made clear that political participation in less or young democracies may have a very different meaning and, thus, very different demographic contours (Schlozman, 2002: 442). For example, in some countries such as South Korea during the 1970s (Kim, Young-Whan Kihl and Doock-Kyou Chung, 1973), and Estonia during the 1980s (Brady and Kaplan 2001), people with higher status (urban residence in the case of South Korea and the better educated in the case of Estonia) were less likely than people with lower status to participate in elections. Furthermore, recent studies have tended to assert that poor citizens in poor countries are not at all less politically active than their richer

counterparts: they *sometimes* participate more and *sometimes* participate less in *some* political activities.[47]

In the case of Thailand, pioneer researchers Suchit Bunbongkarn and Phonsak Phongphaew conducted survey research to examine Thai voters' political behaviors in the 1979 and 1983 House of Representatives elections. Their findings both confirmed and challenged what had been discovered in Western and other developing countries. For example, while they expected in line with many American political behavior studies that people with higher education are more likely to vote than those with lower education (1983), they found, in contrast, that people who have lower income and live in rural area are *more* likely to participate in elections than those who have higher status and live in urban areas (1979). The major explanation for this, according to these scholars, goes in line with the work of Huntington and Nelson (1976) by concluding that the rural, because they are poor and less-educated, are not interested in politics and do not feel efficacious politically and are easily mobilized by influenced persons and personal benefits, thereby being the most active groups in electoral activities.

This dominant view, based on several political-behavior studies conducted by Suchit and Pornsak, influenced various studies that followed, mainly conducted by their graduate students at Chulalongkorn University, which focused on specific electoral districts and/or provinces. Examples of those studies include: Natpong Sukvisit (1993), who studied the reasons why voters voted in District 1, Nakon Ratchasima province;

---

[47]See, for example, Booth and Seligson (2008) for the case of eight Latin American countries (Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, and Columbia), Krishna (2008) for India, and Moehler (2008) for Uganda.

Somchai Tilangkarn (1994), who examined the political behavior and political awareness of voters in Hangdong District, Chiangmai province; Wittaya Suwanmas (1998), who studied the electoral behaviors of citizens in Manorom District, Chainart province; and Chittra Pomchutima (1998), who analyzed the electoral behavior of people in slums. In general, all of these studies confirmed the above conclusion made by Suchit and Pornsak.

Among the demographic and socioeconomic factors used by political behavior scholars to explain political participation in Thailand and several democratic contexts, the most interesting factors for examination include gender, age, level of income, educational level, and rural-urban residence. These variables are used in both bivariate and multivariate analyses in order to answer the main research questions of this chapter: Who actually participates in Thai politics and how much and why has political participation changed among different groups in the past decade?

Participatory Disparities and Changes Among

Different Groups in Thailand, 2002-2006

Participatory disparities among different groups are generally observed with no exception even for an advanced Western democracy. However, the manner in which such disparities have existed is important to be considered. Bivariate analyses of the 2002 and 2006 ABS data are developed in order to see associations between five demographic or socioeconomic factors and political participation, as well as changes in the participatory patterns among different groups in Thailand. The measures of political participation rely on the respondents' self-reports of their involvement in a variety of forms of electoral and government-directed activities. In each table, the proportion of political activism is the

percent of citizens who have been involved in six political activities: (1) voting in previous election;[48] (2) attending election meetings or rallies; (3) showing support for certain political parties or candidates; (4) contacting government officials; (5) contacting high level officials; and (6) taking part in demonstrations, marches, or protests. The self-reported participation rates in each of these six activities for 2002 and 2006, most of which have already been discussed in the previous chapter, are shown in Figure 5.1.

In order to compare the participatory gaps between the least socioeconomically disadvantaged and the others, demographic and socioeconomic factors are measured as dummy variables for (1) gender (*male* and *female*); (2) age (*the young,* 18-25 year olds and *the older*, 26 year olds and above); (3) level of income (*the poor*, those who are in the lowest income category[49]— earned $1 per day or lower in 2002 and earned $1.3 per day or lower in 2006, and *the better-off*, those that earned more than $1 a day in 2002 and earned more than $1.3 a day in 2006); (4) level of education (*the low-educated*, those who have no formal education or who did not complete primary school, and *the higher-*

---

[48]As with all surveys, it should be noted that the percentages for voting in previous elections reported in both 2002 and 2006 ABS were greater than the actual turnout rates. Asked Thai respondents in 2002, the survey question about voting in previous election referred to voting on January 6, 2001, which the actual turnout was 69.8 percent, approximately twenty-five points lower than reported by the survey. For the 2006 survey, this question referred to the House of Representatives election on April 2, 2006, which three major opposition parties boycotted and eventually was declared invalid by the Constitutional Court on May 8, 2006. In that invalidated election, 64.77 percent of Thai eligible voters showed up at the polling stations. This actual turnout rate was nearly 23 percent lower than reported by the 2006 survey.

[49]The 2002 ABS divided the household income of Thai respondents into 5 quintiles, where the lowest was 0-1,000 Baht or 1 USD per day. As the GDP per capita of Thailand increased by approximately 30.3 percent between 2002 and 2006, the lowest income category for this study was calculated to be 0-1,300 Baht or 1.3 USD per day.

Voting in previous election — 94.7 (2002), 87.5 (2006)
Attending election meetings/rallies — 50.6 (2002), 23.7 (2006)
Showing support for parties/candidates — 3.3 (2002), 5.1 (2006)
Contacting government officials — 36.4 (2002), 59.9 (2006)
Contacting high level officials — 12.4 (2002), 10.3 (2006)
Taking part in protest activity — 5.7 (2002), 3.2 (2006)
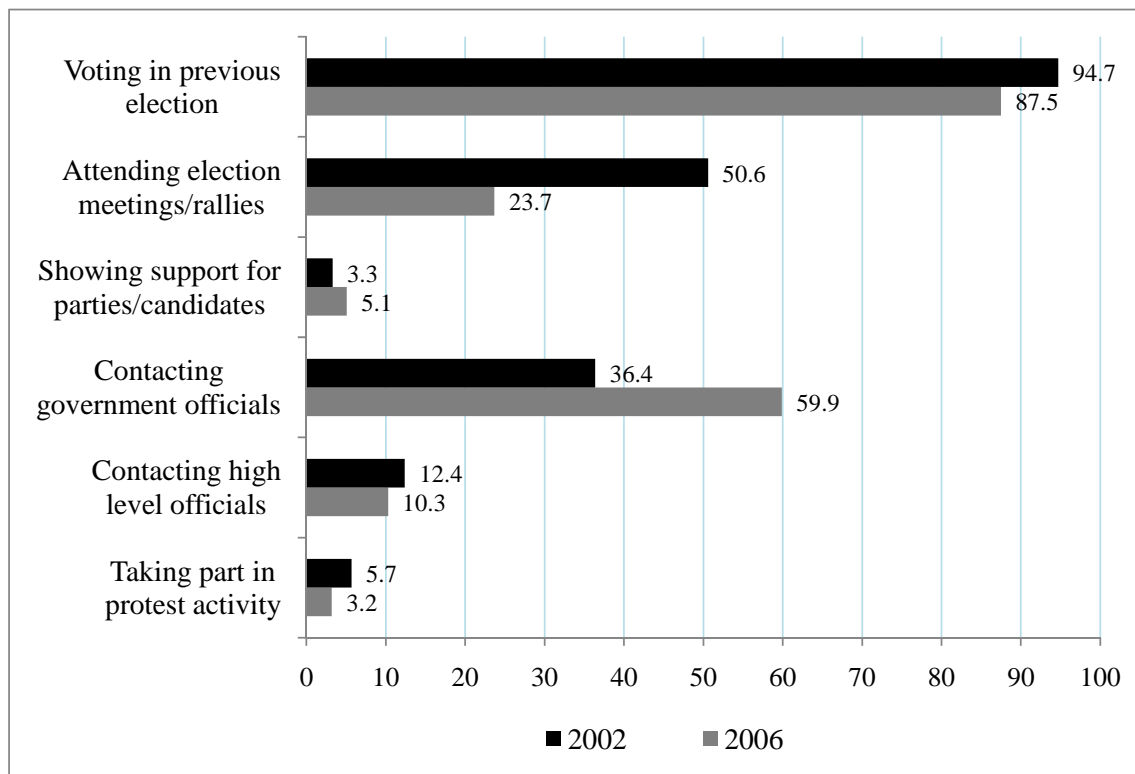
■ 2002   ■ 2006

Source: ABS 2002; 2006

Figure 5.1

Percent of Participation in Six Political Activities, 2002 and 2006

educated, those who completed primary school and higher[50]); and (5) area of living (*the rural*, those who are living in a village or small town, and *urban*, those who are living in the city and a metropolitan area). The proportions of each demographic group are summarized and shown in Table 5.1.

The bivariate analyses of social disparity in participation between these dichotomous groups of people are appropriate for examining whether the least advantaged Thais can participate in politics equally with the rest of the population. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier in this dissertation, the period between 2002 and 2006 in Thailand can be seen as a consolidating time of Thai democracy, beginning when the 1997 Constitution was promulgated and celebrating the first government elected through a new electoral system designed by the Constitution that took power in late February 2001. If political participation is related to the political context, we should see growing trends of political participation among all groups of citizens, and particularly among those who usually participate less in the old context, such as females, the young, and the urban. As a result, a more equal distribution of political participation between different groups should be observed.

Gender Differences in Political Participation

Gender differences appear in many explanations of political participation. The most frequent finding either in established or developing democracies is that men are

---

[50]Since the six-year primary education in Thailand was compulsory until the end of 2002 (after that until now there is nine-year secondary education), people who have not completed Grade 6 are considered to be in the low-educated group.

Table 5.1

Thai Respondents in 2002 and 2006 ABS, Divided by Gender, Age, Level of Income,

Level of Education, and Area of Living (percent)

	2002	2006
	(n = 1,546)	(n = 1,546)
Gender		
Male	48.3	48.3
Female	51.7	51.7
Age		
Young (18-25 year olds)	15.4	14.0
Older (26 year olds and above)	84.6	86.0
Level of income		
Poor (< $1 per day for 2002, < $1.3 per day in 2006)	16.2	14.3
Better-off (>$1 per day for 2002, > $1.3 per day in 2006)	83.8	85.7
Level of education		
Low-educated (< Grade 6)	6.4	4.9
Higher-educated (> Grade 6 and higher)	93.6	95.1
Area of living		
Rural (village/small town residence)	61.9	63.8
Urban (city/metropolitan residence)	38.1	36.2

Source: ABS 2002; 2006

more politically active than women (Campbell et al., 1960; Christy 1987; Burns, Schlozman, and Verba, 2001; Norris, 2002; Desposato and Norrander, 2009). For many recent studies, differences in resources, especially education, income, and employment patterns, explain a large part of this gap (Miller and J. Merrill, 1996; Burns, Schlozman, and Verba, 2001). Nevertheless, with women voting at higher rates than men in the developed world, gender differences have faded or even reversed (e.g., Bean, 1991; Inglehart, 1990; Inglehard and Norris, 2003).

Table 5.2 analyzes the political activism proportions of Thai males and females during 2002 and 2006. The results indicate that males are a little more active than females in participating in political activities, which replicates the patterns we have already seen in many recent studies from Thai scholars (see e.g., Chalermpol Mingmuang, 1996, Thitiyatorn Pongphan, 1998, and Sompis Klaiwong, 2000). It is evident that females were less likely to participate in four of the six political activities than males in 2002.[51] Thai women were less active than men by almost 9 percent in attending campaign meetings or rallies, by more than 10 percent in contacting government officials, by 4.5 percent in contacting officials at a higher level, and by nearly 2 percent in taking part in demonstrations, marches, or protests. However, the gender difference in participation declined, and remained statistically significant, for only one activity—attending campaign meetings or rallies in 2006. This finding confirms that while the participatory gap between Thai males and Thai females still has existed in some political activities, this

---

[51]The proportions of females participating in the other two activities were also lower than those of males, but the difference between them is not statistically significant.

Table 5.2

Differences in Political Activism between Males and Females, 2002-2006 (percent)

Activities	Year	Male	Female	+/-	Sig.
Voting					
Voting in previous election	2002	94.9	94.7	0.2	
	2006	87.5	87.4	0.1	
Campaign					
Attending meeting/rally	2002	55.0	46.4	8.6	***
	2006	25.7	21.8	3.9	*
Showing support to party/candidate	2002	3.9	2.9	1.0	
	2006	5.6	4.6	1.0	
Having participated in at least one	2002	56.1	47.7	8.4	***
campaign activity	2006	27.2	23.6	3.6	
Political Contact					
Contacting high level officials	2002	14.8	10.3	4.5	***
	2006	11.1	9.5	1.6	
Contacting government officials	2002	42.0	31.3	10.7	***
	2006	61.0	58.9	2.1	
Having had at least one political contact	2002	43.9	31.9	12.0	***
	2006	61.8	59.6	2.2	
Protesting					
Taking part in protest activity	2002	6.7	4.8	1.9	*
	2006	3.2	3.1	0.1	
Having participated in at least one	2002	73.6	61.0	12.6	***
activity (excluding voting)	2006	69.3	66.6	2.7	

Source: ABS 2002; 2006

+/- percent difference between females and males
*, **, *** difference between females and males is statistically significant at 0.1, 0.05, and 0.01 levels respectively.

gap has appeared to decline. Moreover, while percent of male participating in at least one political activity declined, this percent increased for females.

The Young and Political Participation

Does the young generation participate less in politics than the older generation? For some scholars, the trend of a decline in young citizens taking part in campaign activities and joining political parties, as has appeared in many countries over the past decades (while remaining stable among older people), mirrors the less attention that the new generation has paid to politics and is a bad sign for the future of our democracy (Putnam, 2000; Niemi and Weisberg, 2001; Blais et al., 2004; Wattenberg, 2008). For many others, this trend is not proof that the young citizens are not active or interested in politics *per se*. Instead, there is evidence that young citizens, aided by the Internet, are matching their older generations in the public expression of their civic voices (Norris, 2002; Zukin et al., 2006; Loader, 2007). Recent studies also indicate that while young citizens are less likely to participate in traditional forms of political activities, they engage heavily in many other forms of civic activities (Vogelgesang and Astin, 2005; Shea and Green, 2007), as well as in single issue movements and networks (Della Porta and Mosca, 2005; Norris, 2002).

Participatory differences between the youngest cohort (i.e., 18-25 years old) of Thai voters and the rest of the electorate partly explains the more active participation in protest activism of the young and the electoral and political contact activities of the elderly. Table 5.3 shows that in 2002, while the young Thais were less likely than the older to participate in several tradition forms of political activities (i.e., by 5.2 percent in

Table 5.3

Differences in Political Activism between the Young and the Older, 2002-2006 (percent)

Activities	Year	Young	Older	+/-	Sig.
Voting					
Voting in previous election	2002	90.3	95.5	-5.2	***
	2006	86.1	87.7	-1.6	
Campaign					
Attending meeting/rally	2002	46.0	51.5	-5.5	
	2006	19.4	24.5	-5.1	
Showing support to party/candidate	2002	3.0	3.4	-0.4	
	2006	4.2	5.3	-1.1	
Having participated in at least one	2002	46.8	52.8	-6.0	*
campaign activity	2006	21.3	26.1	-4.8	
Political Contact					
Contacting high level officials	2002	8.9	13.1	-4.2	*
	2006	10.2	10.1	0.1	
Contacting government officials	2002	35.2	36.9	-1.7	
	2006	56.5	60.4	-3.9	
Having had at least one political	2002	36.7	38.0	-1.3	
	2006	57.9	61.1	-3.2	
Protesting					
Taking part in protest activity	2002	8.9	5.2	3.7	**
	2006	3.2	3.1	0.1	
Having participated in at least one	2002	67.5	67.2	0.3	
activity (excluding voting)	2006	65.3	68.3	-3.0	

Source: ABS 2002; 2006

+/- percent difference between the young and the older

*, **, *** difference between the young and the older is statistically significant at 0.1, 0.05, and 0.01 levels respectively.

voting, by 6 percent for engaging in any one of the two electoral activities, and by 4.2 percent in contacting high level officials), they were more active in protest activism by almost 4 percent than their elder counterparts. Based on the 2002 data, as the overall political participation rates (measured by percent of having participated in at least one of the five political activities) of the young (67.5 percent) and the older (67.2 percent) were almost equal, it is evident that the youngest Thais were not participating in politics less but in a different way than previous generations.

The participatory patterns in which the young are less active than older persons in voting, campaigns, and political contacting activities but are more active in protest activities could be seen in 2006. However, generation disparities in participation for many activities, such as voting, attending campaign meetings/rallies, contacting high level officials, and protesting, have reduced, with the proportions of participation by the older slightly higher than the young (except protest activism). According to the 2006 survey, the proportions of the young and the older taking part in demonstrations and protests seemed to be equal, with the young participating more often than the older by only 0.1 percent. The less diminishing numbers of the older than the young reflect a months-long protesting style used by the Thai protesters since early 2006. Such a style of protestation provides a great opportunity for various groups of people to join the protest events. It is a fact that in the months-long protests, either held by the Yellow Shirts or the Red Shirts, during a week day the majority of the protesters during a day time were seniors, while their young cohorts and mid-aged working citizens joined the protest in the evening. The protests peaked on Friday nights and during the weekends. Moreover, none of the participatory gaps between the young and the older for all six activities was

statistically significant, which indicates no participatory gap in most political activities between the young and the older.

<center>Political Participation of the Poor, the Low-educated, and the Rural</center>

Previous studies in Thailand indicated that rural voters, most of whom have a low level of education and are poor, because they are easily mobilized by local leaders or influential government officials or politicians, are more likely to participate in voting and campaign activities than the better-off (see for example Suchit Bunbongkarn and Pornsak Phongphaew, 1984, Suchit Bunbongkarn, 1996). According to this premise, scholars would expect to see in the case of Thailand more politically active particularly in voting and campaign activities of those who are poor, have a low level of education, and live in rural areas than those who are richer, have a higher degree of education, and live in urban areas. Furthermore, as in many other developing countries/regions, such as India (Byres, 1995; Omvedt, 1993) and in Latin America (Escobar and Alvarez, 1992; Veltmeyer, 1997), the poor in Thailand since the 1990s have tended to be more engaged in unconventional activities such as demonstrations and protests than they were in the past (Prapart Pintobtang, 1997; Parinya Nualpian, 2000; Missingham, 2003). According to the prior studies, a growing trend of protest activism among the poor would be expected.

However, many changes have occurred in Thai politics in the past decade, particularly the opened political-space provided by the 1997 Constitution, the new style of political campaigns, in which practical public policy is the most effective strategy by which to attract voters through a variety of uses of media and advertisement, utilized by PM Thaksin and his Thai Rak Thai Party, and the new roles of high-technology media,

especially those that have been used by the protest leaders (e.g., websites and satellite TV). These changes of political context, in combination, may affect and change the characteristics of individual voters—their perceptions and understanding of democracy, their assessments of political systems, and their political behaviors. My examination of the differences in political activism between the least socioeconomically advantaged groups (the poor, the low-educated, and rural) and their more advantaged counterparts (the better-off, the higher-educated, and the urban) provides findings that both support and challenge the aforementioned scholars' expectations.

Table 5.4 presents information about the participatory disparity in political activities between the poor and better-off Thais in 2002 and 2006. It is evident that in 2002, the poor were more likely to participate in two campaign activities than the affluent. As resource-based theorists generally expect more active in political activity of people with higher income, the poor also reported less active in engaging with political contact activities than the affluent. For 2002, the lower-income Thais were less likely than the better-off to contact government officials or high level officials by nearly 6 percent and little more than 4 percent, respectively. Nevertheless (and surprisingly), the turnout rate and proportions of participation in protest activities of the poor were slightly lower than those of the better-off in 2002, although neither of those participatory differences was statistically significant.

While the participatory patterns between Thai citizens with different levels of income in 2002 seemed not to be much different from what previous Thai scholars have explained, the pattern changed by 2006 in several aspects.

Table 5.4

Differences in Political Activism between the Poor and the Better-off, 2002-2006

(percent)

Activities	Year	Poor	Better-off	+/-	Sig.
Voting					
Voting in previous election	2002	93.2	95.2	-2.0	
	2006	79.2	88.8	-9.6	***
Campaign					
Attending meeting/rally	2002	58.2	49.1	9.1	***
	2006	20.8	24.2	-3.4	
Showing support to party/candidate	2002	6.4	2.7	3.7	***
	2006	3.2	5.4	-2.2	
Having participated in at least one	2002	60.2	50.2	10.0	***
campaign activity	2006	21.7	26.0	-4.3	
Political Contact					
Contacting high level officials	2002	8.8	13.1	-4.3	*
	2006	10.9	10.2	0.7	
Contacting government officials	2002	31.7	37.5	-5.8	*
	2006	62.9	59.4	3.5	
Having had at least one political contact	2002	33.6	38.6	-5.0	
	2006	64.3	60.1	4.2	
Protesting					
Taking part in protest activity	2002	5.6	5.7	-0.1	
	2006	5.0	2.9	2.1	*
Having participated in at least one	2002	72.4	66.2	6.2	**
activity (excluding voting)	2006	71.5	67.3	4.2	

Source: ABS 2002; 2006

+/- percent difference between the poor and the better-off
*, **, *** difference between the poor and the better-off is statistically significant at 0.1, 0.05, and 0.01 levels respectively.

First, it is evident that in 2006, the better-off were more likely than the poor to vote in an election: the better-off reported almost a 10 percent higher voting rate than the poor in the previous election, with participatory differences statistically significant at 0.01.

Secondly, the proportions of better-off reporting participation in campaign activities also were higher than those of the poor in terms of both attending campaign meetings/rallies and showing support for parties/candidates.

Thirdly, in 2006, the poor tended to be more active than the richer in terms of political contacts and protesting activities; only income differences in protest activism were statistically significant.

Finally, though the poor still were more active in overall political activities than the affluent, the income difference in participation was smaller and inconsistent for 2006—the richer Thais participated in at least one of the five political activities (excluding voting) less than the poor by slightly more than 6 percent in 2002, compared to around 4.2 percent in 2006.

The participatory gap between the low-educated and the higher-educated Thais confirms many studies in the well-established democracies, especially those that claimed the greater politically active of the higher-educated than of the lower educated (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady, 1999; Dalton, 2006). Table 5.5 shows that the low-educated Thais were less likely to vote in the 2006 election than their higher-educated counterparts. The proportions of the low-educated participating in almost all campaign activities were lower than the higher-educated for both 2002 and 2006. But the educational difference in electoral involvement, which was statistically significant only

Table 5.5

Differences in Political Activism between the Low-educated and the Higher-educated

2002-2006 (percent)

Activities	Year	Low-educated	Higher-educated	+/-	Sig.
Voting					
Voting in previous election	2002	93.9	94.9	-1.0	
	2006	80.0	87.7	-7.7	*
Campaign					
Attending meeting/rally	2002	42.4	51.3	-8.9	*
	2006	20.0	23.9	-3.9	
Showing support to party/candidate	2002	4.0	3.3	0.7	
	2006	1.3	5.3	-4.0	
Having participated in at least one	2002	44.4	52.5	-8.1	
campaign activity	2006	21.3	25.6	-4.3	
Political Contact					
Contacting high level officials	2002	6.1	12.9	-6.8	*
	2006	5.3	10.5	-5.2	
Contacting government officials	2002	26.3	37.1	-10.8	**
	2006	48.0	60.5	-12.5	**
Having had at least one political contact	2002	26.3	38.4	-12.1	**
	2006	48.0	61.3	-13.3	**
Protesting					
Taking part in protest activity	2002	6.1	5.7	0.4	
	2006	5.3	3.1	2.2	
Having participated in at least one	2002	58.2	67.8	-9.6	**
activity (excluding voting)	2006	56.0	68.5	-12.5	**

Source: ABS 2002; 2006

+/- percent difference between the low-educated and the higher-educated
*, **, *** difference between the low-educated and the higher-educated is statistically significant at 0.1, 0.05, and 0.01 levels respectively.

for attending campaign meetings/rallies in 2002, tended to be smaller (except for showing support for party/candidate). Participatory differences in political contact activities between the low-educated and the higher-educated were high and tended to increase. Educational disparities in protest activism for both 2002 and 2006 were not statistically significant, and unlike other kinds of political activities, the low-educated reported slightly higher proportions of experience in demonstrations or protests than the higher-educated.

Apart from income and educational differences in political participation, Table 5.6 presents the differences in political activism between the rural and the urban, both confirming and challenging what previous studies in Thailand have suggested about the more politically-active rural in voting and campaign activities. It is evident that for 2002, not only were the rural more likely to vote in the previous election, attend campaign meetings/rallies, and show support for party/candidate, but also they also were more active in terms of political contacts and protest activities than were the urban. In total, the rural in 2002 participated more in at least one of the five political activities (excluding voting) than the urban by more than 13 percent. However, these disparity patterns faded or even reversed in some political activities for 2006.

In 2006, area-of-living differences in voting participation were not statistically significant, with the proportions of rural people voting in elections at 0.2 percent higher than the urban. Moreover (and most surprisingly), the proportions of the urban participating in the two campaign activities were higher than the rural, with the differences between these two groups statistically significant at .01 for participation by showing support for party/candidate.

Table 5.6

Differences in Political Activism between the Rural and the Urban, 2002-2006 (percent)

Activities	Year	Rural	Urban	+/-	Sig.
Voting					
Voting in previous election	2002	95.5	93.4	2.1	*
	2006	87.5	87.3	0.2	
Campaign					
Attending meeting/rally	2002	57.1	40.2	16.9	***
	2006	22.8	25.2	-2.4	
Showing support to party/candidate	2002	4.5	1.4	3.1	***
	2006	3.8	7.5	-3.7	***
Having participated in at least one	2002	58.4	41.2	17.2	***
campaign activity	2006	24.4	27.0	-2.6	
Political Contact					
Contacting high level officials	2002	13.8	10.0	3.8	**
	2006	8.2	13.9	-5.7	***
Contacting government officials	2002	38.9	32.4	6.5	**
	2006	60.5	58.8	1.7	
Having had at least one political contact	2002	39.9	33.8	6.1	**
	2006	61.4	59.5	1.9	
Protesting					
Taking part in protest activity	2002	7.3	3.1	4.2	***
	2006	2.8	3.8	-1.0	
Having participated in at least one	2002	72.2	58.7	13.5	***
activity (excluding voting)	2006	68.2	67.5	0.7	

Source: ABS 2002; 2006

+/- percent difference between the rural and the urban
*, **, *** difference between the rural and the urban was statistically significant at 0.1, 0.05, and 0.01 levels respectively.

The rural still reported more often contacting government officials than the urban, but this gap was not statistically significant. In contrast to the result in 2002, the rural were less likely than urban people by more than 5 percent to contact officials at a high level. The proportion of the rural taken part in protest activities dropped by 4.5 percent compared to 2002, and this percentage was less than the urban group, although this gap was not statistically significant.

According to the above findings, participation gaps between people with different geographic and socioeconomic backgrounds still exist. However, those gaps are small compared to what previous Thai scholars have argued and tended to be not statistically significant for the year 2006. A decline in the demographic and socioeconomic gap in participation between the socioeconomically disadvantaged and the rest of the population during the past decade is convincing evidence of a more equal distribution of political participation among Thais, although the overall participatory gap between the low-educated and the higher-educated still exists and has enlarged. The growing levels of participation among many groups, especially females, also are reasonable results to explain why overall levels of participation in the last decade have expanded.

However, while this is an important result, it leaves many questions untested. For example, why have the levels of participation among different groups changed? Do the participatory disparities among Thai citizens exist only because they have unequal resources and skills stemming from differences in demographic and socioeconomic status? What are the factors that have caused the expanding trend of political participation in Thailand? And more specifically, and perhaps most importantly, because overall political participation and engagement have changed in a consistent trend, are political

engagement factors such as political interest and efficacy good explanations for the changing patterns of participation among different groups? Aiming to offer some preliminary answers to these questions, the next section discusses: (1) what each socioeconomic factor can explain about political participation while controlling for the other variables; (2) whether the causal relationships between each socioeconomic factor and political participation actually exist while controlling for other potentially engagement and mobilization factors; and (3) why we need to understand more clearly the change patterns of political engagement in order to explain the changes in citizens' participatory patterns.

Multivariate Models of Changes in Political Participation

Two regression models of political participation were developed for the present study using the 2002 ABS data. The first model, the socioeconomic model of political participation, was created to test the hypothesis concerning the way in which participation is influenced and the extent to which resources and skills from demographic and socioeconomic status play a role in this influence. The dependent variable, *political participation*, is now measured as an index variable, created from the same set of six political activity questions used in the previous section's bivariate analyses (voting in previous election, attending election meetings or rallies, showing support for certain political parties or candidates, contacting government officials, contacting high level officials, and taking part in demonstrations, marches, or protests). One point was given for each activity in which the respondents reported they had taken part. The political participation index runs from 0 to 6, with positive values indicating a higher level of

political activism; as a result, the ordinary least squares (OLS) model was more appropriate to be applied in the analysis of political activism than the multinomial regression, which was used to predict the probabilities of the different possible outcomes of a categorically distributed dependent variable. Cronbach alpha for this index was 0.41.

Based on prior literature investigating the Thai context, five demographic and socioeconomic variables that measure individual-level resources were included in this model. These variables are: (1) *gender*, a binary 0-1 variable, which takes the value 1 for females and 0 for males; (2) a continuous measure of *age*; (3) a 5-point scale measure of *income*, which takes the value 4 for the highest income category (earn 1,200 USD per month and over) and 0 for the lowest one (earn 30 USD a month), with positive values indicating a higher level of monthly income; (4) a 4-point scale of *education*, which takes the value 3 for having a university degree or higher and 0 for incomplete primary school and lower, with positive values indicating a higher level of education; and (5) a dummy variable for *urban residents*, which takes the value 1 for city/metropolis residents and 0 for village/small town residents. Because the year 2002 was only a year after the first House of Representatives election under the new electoral system designed by the 1997 Constitution, results that were not much different for the conventional premises about political participation in Thailand were expected—more politically active among citizens who were male, elderly, and rural residents.

Model 1 in Table 5.7 shows the associations between three of the five demographic and socioeconomic status variables and political participation. Education is significantly and positively related to political participation, while female and urban residents also were significant but negatively related to participation. From the

Table 5.7

Multivariate Models of Political Participation Index, 2002

	Model 1		Model 2	
	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	Std. Error
Demographic				
Female	-.120***	.053	-.086***	.052
Age	.020	.002	-.003	.002
Income	.009	.027	.008	.027
Education	.128***	.043	.074**	.042
Urban residence	-.217***	.064	-.129***	.063
Political Engagement				
Interest			.088***	.041
Follow news			.061**	.027
Efficacy: participation			.115***	.033
Efficacy: understand			.099***	.034
Mobilization				
Party Attachment			.206***	.033
Group Membership			.102***	.076
N	1,516		1,440	
Adjusted R^2	.055		.165	
F-value	18.612		27.198	
Model-significance	***		.***	

Source: ABS 2002; 2006

*P < 0.1 ** P < 0.05 *** P < 0.01

standardized regression coefficients, among these three demographic and socioeconomic status variables, urban residents had the largest impact on political participation, followed by education and females. As many aforementioned studies in Thailand have concluded, these results suggest that the individuals participating in political activities in Thailand are the rural, the higher-educated, and males. However, R^2 was only 0.055, indicating that a small part of the variation in the political participation index was accounted for by the variables considered in this model. Other independent variables thus need to be considered.

The second multivariate model for the 2002 data was then developed to test whether the demographic and socioeconomic status factors had a powerful effect on political participation. First, a series of political engagement factors that would induce individual citizens to become involved in politics were added into the model, including (1) two separate variables for *political interest*, and (2) two separate variables for *political efficacy*. These variables were measured as follows.

The first *political interest* variable was measured in terms of citizens' self-reports on how much they were interested in politics. The variable ranged from 0 to 10, with positive values indicating a higher level of interest.

The second political interest variable, which was labeled *following news* (about politics), was measured by individuals' response to a 5-points scale question, asking the respondents how often they followed news about politics and the government. The variable ranged from 0, "practically never," to 4, "every day," with positive values indicating more frequency of political news consumption.

Political interest typically is a strong predictor of most types of political activities (Milbrath and Goel 1977; Rahn, 2002; Verba, Nie, and Kim, 1978; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995). Thus, we should expect to see positive coefficients for both of these two political-interest factors.

Two separate political efficacy variables were created using two questions from the ABS:[52] a question on whether the respondents thought: "I think I have the ability to participate in politics," and another question on whether the respondents believed the following: "Sometimes politics and the government seems so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what is going on." For both questions, respondents were asked to place themselves on the following scales: strongly agree (scored 1), agree (scored 2), disagree (scored 3), and strongly disagree (scored 4). This scale was inverted in the analysis for the first question. Political engagement typically facilitates greater participation, so positive coefficients for all of these factors were expected.

The model also controls for other potentially mobilization factors that have been related to political participation—*party attachment* and *group membership*. *Party attachment* variable was constructed based on two questions in the survey: a question asking the respondents whether they think of themselves as close to any particular party; *group membership* variable was a dummy variable for a question asking the respondents: "Are you a member of any organization or formal groups?" A response of "no" to this question was coded 0 and a "yes" was coded 1. Since a vibrant political activism usually

---

[52] The 2002 ABS did not include any other political efficacy question. Using these two questions thus can test only the impact of internal efficacy on political participation of Thai citizens.

depends on vibrant engagement in political and nonpolitical organizations, positive coefficients for both of these two mobilization factors were expected.

When these psychological and mobilization variables were added within the regression analysis, R^2 improved. Female, education, and urban resident factors remained significant, with females and urban residents negatively associated with political participation, while education was positively associated with political participation. Based on the standardized coefficients, urban residents lost their largest-positioned impact on participation in party attachment. Though they did not have the smallest impact on participation, both females and education were in the last three positions. On the other hand, all four political engagements and both mobilization factors were significantly associated with the higher political participation index.

In short, although when controlling for these variables did not eliminate the significance of all demographic and socioeconomic status variables, these results indicate that it was not only the rural-urban dichotomized factor that has a powerful effect on political participation in 2002, but it was also political engagement and other mobilization factors, especially party attachment and group membership, that mattered.

It is now fairly clear who participates in Thai politics, at least in the year 2002. We also learned that Thai citizens participate differently in politics, not only because they have the different resources and skills to do so, but also because they have different psychological mobilization for participation and perhaps are mobilized by being members of social groups to take part in political activities. Nevertheless, this understanding shows very little difference from that found by previous scholars of Thai politics.

In order to examine the change patterns of political participation in greater detail, two regression models of political participation were developed, now using the 2006 ABS data. In doing this, similar types of survey questions were taken from the 2006 ABS to construct the dependent and independent variables, which were measured in the same way as the multivariate analysis for the 2002 data. Like the analysis of 2002, *political participation* for 2006 was an additive index of six political activities: (1) voting in previous election; (2) attending election meetings or rallies; (3) showing support for certain political parties or candidates; (4) contacting government officials; (5) contacting high level officials; and (6) taking part in demonstrations, marches, or protests. One point was given for each act; the scale runs from 0 to 6 (Cronbach alpha = 0.36).

Five demographic and socioeconomic variables were included in both regression models of 2006. These variables are: (1) *gender* (female = 1); (2) *age* (years); (3) *income* (5-point scale (4) *education* (4-point scale); and (5) *urban residence* (city/metropolis residence = 1). Model 2 controls for four political engagements and two mobilization factors—*interest* (a 10-point scale), *follow news* (5-point scale), *efficacy: participation* (4-point scale), *efficacy: understand* (4-point scale), *party attachment* (3-point scale), and *group membership* (yes = 1).

In these multivariate models of participation for the 2006 data, the following was expected: (1) no (or at least, less) association (s) between those demographic and socioeconomic factors that showed a significant effect on participation in the analysis of 2002 and political participation; and (2) significant relationships between all political engagement factors and high political activism.

Model 1 in Table 5.8 shows that two of the three demographic variables that were significantly associated with participation in the analysis of the 2002 data do not matter for 2006. Yet education still matters and has a slightly larger impact on political participation. This result confirms what myriad studies have reported about the positive correlations between education and political participation (Rosenstone and Hansen, 2003; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980).[53] In contrast to Model 1 in the analysis of the 2002 data, associations between demographic and socioeconomic status factors and political participation of age and income, both variables those were not significantly related to political participation for 2006, instead exist.

The causal effects of these variables (age and income) on participation remain significant and positive and had a larger impact on political participation even after controlling for other attitudinal and mobilization factors (Model 2). This result illustrates a fairly different picture of political participation from that explained by the aforementioned scholars in the Thai context, and also from what was learned from the 2002 data. However, and interestingly, it shows quite a similar pattern to that of citizens in the advanced Western democracies: more politically active citizens who are more senior (e.g., Goerres, 2009; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995).

---

[53]For this group of scholars, the positive relationship between education and political participation typically is interpreted to mean that education confers participation-enhancing benefits, rather than having a direct impact on political activism. As Rosenstone and Hansen (2003: 77) have concluded, "education promotes participation in two ways: by giving people knowledge and skills that facilitate participation and by placing people in social networks that inform them about politics and reward political action."

Table 5.8

Multivariate Models of Political Participation Index, 2006

	Model 1		Model 2	
	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	Std. Error
Demographic				
Female	-.039	.053	-.002	.054
Age	.056*	.002	.087***	.002
Income	.170***	.027	.178***	.028
Education	.134***	.043	.116***	.044
Urban residence	-.035	.061	-.013	.061
Political Engagement				
Interest			.130***	.045
Follow News			.061*	.033
Can participate in politics			.112***	.036
Can understand politics			.046*	.042
Mobilization				
Party Attachment			.055**	.037
Group Membership			.063**	.064
N	1,374		1,240	
Adjusted R^2	.054		.121	
F-value	16.581		15.328	
Model-significance	***		***	

Source: ABS 2002; 2006

*P < 0.1 ** P < 0.05 *** P < 0.01

In Model 2, all political engagement factors proved significant and in the direction as expected, although none of them had a larger impact on political participation than income. The standardized regression coefficients for these variables were not very different from those in the same analysis of 2002; all variables had a positive impact on political participation, indicating that the model of political engagement works very well as an explanation of political participation for both contexts. Apart from socioeconomic and political engagement factors, party attachment and group membership were significantly and positively related to political participation, but each participatory impact was smaller compared to the results obtained from the analysis of 2002.

Overall, the results that showed different impacts of demographic and socio-economic variables on the political participation index between the multivariate models of 2002 and of 2006 could possibly be interpreted to mean that political participation among several groups has changed. Placing the years 2002 as the early period of democratic consolidation, we have seen that the participatory patterns among different demographic groups of people in 2002 were not very much different from those that found by prior scholars in the old political contexts of Thailand. The most politically-active groups were almost the same groups as suggested by conventional wisdom, that is, males, the rural, and the higher-educated (according to the socioeconomic model of participation, Model 1). As a result of political change in Thai democracy between 2002 and 2006, we then found, however, that females and the urban do not participate in politics any less than their male counterparts. Moreover, the most politically active group in 2006 was the affluent. These results indicating greater political activity than in the past

of females, the urban, and the affluent challenge what past scholars have concluded about political behavior in Thailand.

While this finding is good evidence that participatory patterns among groups of Thai citizens have changed, many interesting and crucial puzzles for understanding the participation of different groups have not been answered. For example, is this really evidence of increase of participation by females, the urban, and the affluent? Or, is it, rather, decrease of participation by males, the rural, and the poor?

Moreover, since the result was obtained from the multivariate models that consider participation as an index (a combination of several kinds of political actions), it cannot explain: where did the large increases in participation of urban residents and the rich in 2006 (if this is the case) come from? Are most of those changes driven by specific activities, such as voting or protesting? Indeed, we should not expect that a predictor that is significantly associated with one type of political participation will also be significantly related to all, or even other, types of participation (Leighley, 1995: 188; Holzner, 2010: 186). The examination of the factors that foster each kind of political action is thus important and required.

Socioeconomic Status, Political Engagement, Mobilization Factors

and the Four Types of Political Activities

As we have seen from the bivariate analyses in the first section of this chapter, changes in political participation are not uniform across acts, political participation models of the two separate years (2002 and 2006) for voting, campaign activities, political contacting, and protesting were thus developed. The major attempts are: (1) to

test which factors cause each kind of these four activities; (2) and to examine whether (and perhaps how much) such causal relationships are different between the two contexts.

Using logistic regression analysis for the 2002 data, Table 5.9 presents the results of a comparison between socioeconomic, political engagement, and mobilization factors[54] and participation in four different kinds of political acts, each of which is measured as a binary 0-1 variable. *Voting* was measured by voting in the previous election question: coded 1 for response "yes" and 0 for "no." *Campaign activities* was measured by two electoral activism questions, attending election meetings or rallies and showing support for certain political parties or candidates: coded 1 for a response of "yes" to either of these acts and 0 for a response of "no" to neither. *Political contact was* measured by two contacting questions, contacting government officials and contacting high level officials: coded 1 for a response of "yes" to either of these acts and 0 for a response "no" to neither. *Protesting* was measured by the taking part in demonstrations or protests question: coded 1 for a response of "yes" and 0 for "no."

The findings show that when controlling for political engagement and mobilization factors, none of the demographic and socioeconomic factors has an impact on voting in 2002 (Table 5.9). Only one political engagement factor (*can participate in politics*) was positively associated with voting. This indicates that Thai citizens who are

---

[54]These independent variables are the same set of variables used in the regression models of the political participation index, including: five demographic and socioeconomic variables of *gender* (female = 1), *age* (years), *income* (5-points scale), *education* (4-points scale), and *urban residence* (city/metropolis residence = 1); four political engagement variables of *interest* (a 10-point scale), *follow news* (5-point scale), *efficacy: participation* (4-point scale), *efficacy: understand* (4-point scale); and two mobilization variables of *party attachment* (3-point scale), and *group membership* (yes = 1).

Table 5.9

Political Participation Models for Voting, Campaign Activities, Political Contacting, and Protesting, 2002

	Voting			Campaign activities			Political contacting			Protesting		
	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.
Demographic												
Female	.027	.240		-.219	.114	*	-.421	.114	***	-.338	.244	
Age	.006	.009		-.004	.004		-.001	.004		-.022	.010	**
Income	.034	.120		-.124	.059	*	.054	.059		.204	.123	*
Education	-.064	.194		-.148	.094		.412	.094	***	-.147	.201	.
Urban residence	-.343	.288		-.348	.138	**	-.353	.143	**	-.739	.331	**
Political Engagement												
Interest	.112	.186		.309	.091	***	.051	.091		.254	.197	
Follow News	.143	.117		.211	.060	***	.049	.061		-.071	.133	
Can participate in politics	.454	.136	***	.325	.074	***	.072	.074		.183	.161	
Can understand politics	.137	.164		.143	.076	*	.145	.075	*	.607	.139	***
Mobilization												
Party Attachment	.068	.167		.321	.075	***	.435	.073	***	.441	.132	***
Group Membership	.234	.399		.442	.173	**	.351	.164	**	.864	.263	***
Constant	1.10	.651	*	-1.381	.342	***	-1.581	.340	***	-3.488	.716	***
N	1,466			1,466			1,466			1,466		
Nagelkerke R^2	0.042			0.164			.112			.142		
Chi-square	21.253			191.917			125.686			75.134		
Model-significance	**			***			***			***		

Source: ABS 2002

*P < 0.1 ** P < 0.05 *** P < 0.01

more likely to believe that they have the ability to participate in politics, regardless of whatever socioeconomic backgrounds they have, are more likely to vote in a national election. Nagelkerke R^2 was only 0.04, however, indicating that a small proportion of the variance in voting outcome was accounted for by the factors considered in this analysis. One reason might be adapted from what the classic work of Verba, Nie, and Kim (1978: 120) concluded about voting—that it is an "easy" act requiring few resources and motivation—anyone can vote, so that it is difficult to tell whether or not socioeconomic status, political engagement, or institutional affiliation are necessary conditions for voting. Another reason is perhaps the over-reported proportions of voter turnout received by the 2002 survey, which was 94.7 percent compared to only 69.8 percent actual turnout in the 2001 election.

Gender, income, and area of residence were significantly and negatively related to campaign activities, suggesting that Thai respondents who are male, earn a lower level of income, and are rural residents are more likely to participate in at least one campaign activity than the rest of the population. All political engagement and mobilization factors were significant and had a positive impact on campaign activities, confirming that electoral activity depends not only on psychological factors but also on mobilization factors. On the one hand, it is evident that political engagement increases the electoral participation of Thai voters. Thai citizens who are more interested in politics as well as those who feel more efficacious about themselves in terms of participating in and understanding politics are more likely than the average to take part in campaign activities. On the other hand, people who feel close to any particular party and are members of any voluntary groups are more likely to be active in at least one campaign activity than the

rest of the population. While the prior provides evidence that is typically found in many advanced democracies, the latter might be indirect evidence indicating that clientelism continued to structure patterns of electoral participation in Thailand for 2002 (particularly if considering this together with the participatory patterns of different demographic groups which indicate the greater activism of the rural and the lower-income groups).

Although the main purpose of people making political contact and protesting is to have a direct influence on the government personnel's decisions, participatory patterns among different groups in Thailand are quite different. The results show that males and people with a higher level of education are more active than the remainder in political contacting activities. In contrast, the young and people earning a higher income are more likely to take part in demonstrations or protests. It is only the area of residence that is negatively and significantly related to both political contact and protesting, which indicates the greater activism of the rural than the urban in conducting these two political activities.

Political engagement variables do not have very much impact on political contact or protesting: political efficacy (*can understand politics*) was the only one among the four political engagement factors that was positively and significantly related to these two kinds of government-direct activities. Though it does not have a very large impact on political contacting, more confidence in one's ability to understand politics causes Thai citizens to participate more often in contacting and protesting activities.

Party attachment and group membership play a critical role in encouraging people to contact government officials or elected representatives about their personal problems and to engage in protesting: people who feel close to a political party or are members of

at least one social group exhibited more participatory activism than average people who do not feel close to a political party or are members of at least one social group.

In summary, the logistic regression analysis of the 2002 data provides evidence that is very much clearer than what previous scholars have concluded about political participation in Thailand, especially those who claimed less politically activism for females, the young, and for urban residents. It is true, as many of the aforementioned scholars have argued, that Thai citizens who are male, older, and living in the rural areas are more likely than their socioeconomic counterparts to participate in politics.

However, such a causal link is true only in many, but not all, types of political activity. Controlling for political engagement and motivation factors, the above results roughly suggest concerning political participation on the part of different groups in Thailand that: (1) rural Thais were more likely than the urban to participate in three of the four political activities—campaign activities, political contacting, and protesting, whereas there is no participatory difference between them in voting; (2) Thai males were more active than Thai females only in campaign and political contacting activities; (3) while the lower-income Thais were more likely than the better-off to participate in campaign activity, the richer Thais were more active in taking part in protesting; (4) education was not a very good predictor of most of the four activities, except political contacting, which showed that the higher level of education, the more often political contacting was carried out; and (5) whereas younger Thais were more likely than the older to take part in protests, there was no participatory difference between younger and older Thais in the other three activities.

The results that show more political activism of the younger and of people with lower incomes in protest politics and campaign activities, respectively, also indicate that these groups of Thai people were more likely to engage in some activities than the rest of the population, even if they have fewer *resources* (e.g., money) to do so. This argument is debatable, particularly when considering other factors—political engagement and mobilization—which also impact campaign activity.

Based on the results that demonstrate the positive impacts of party attachment and group membership on participation, the more active role in campaign activity of the lower income group can possibly be interpreted, on the one hand, as indirect evidence of the continuing influence of clientelism on political participation. In this sense, people with low income may participate more in campaign activities because they are mobilized, forced, or even paid by influence persons or groups whom they feel close to or have close/personal relations with. However, since all of the political interest and efficacy factors have positive impacts on participation, whether the low income group are paid or forced to join campaign activities, we should expect that they have enough *skills* (e.g., knowledge and ability to access political information) to manipulate their involvement in politics. In this regard, the positive impacts of the mobilization factors on participation can be interpreted rather as causes of individuals' civic orientations—enhancing individuals' attitudes that eventually stimulate participation.

This study also needs to know whether the participatory patterns of different groups in the four key political activities change when the political context changes. As a result, Table 5.10 employs a logistic regression analysis to examine the impact of socioeconomic, political engagement, and mobilization factors on participation in the

Table 5.10

Political Participation Models for Voting, Campaign Activities, Political Contacting, and Protesting, 2006

	Voting			Campaign activities			Political contacting			Protesting		
	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.
Demographic												
Female	.072	.191		.020	.137		.003	.121		-.084	.349	
Age	.012	.007		.012	.005	**	.003	.005		.017	.013	
Income	.222	.105	**	.269	.068	***	.126	.063	**	.288	.157	*
Education	.008	.158		.056	.109		.395	.101	***	-.221	.267	
Urban residence	-.036	.219		-.060	.156		-.275	.138	**	.253	.372	
Political Engagement												
Interest	-.006	.160		.619	.119	***	.058	.100		.219	.286	
Follow News	.223	.109	**	.132	.093		.090	.074		.135	.230	
Can participate in politics	.175	.124		.176	.094	*	.293	.081	***	.166	.229	
Can understand politics	-.341	.146	**	.211	.106	**	.176	.095	*	.164	.257	
Mobilization												
Party Attachment	.117	.146		.070	.090		-.039	.083		.589	.167	***
Group Membership	.729	.272	***	.240	.158		.116	.144		-.566	.466	
Constant	.227	.600	***	-4.556	.490	***	-1.600	.400	***	-6.270	1.205	***
N	1,240			1,240			1,240			1,240		
Nagelkerke R^2	.056			.113			.063			.088		
Chi-square	34.627			99.647			58.530			25.953		
Model-significance	***			***			***			***		

Source: ABS 2006

*P < 0.1 ** P < 0.05 *** P < 0.01

four kinds of political acts of 2006. The results show many different impacts of the three groups of factors on each political action from those of the 2002 models. First of all, while ability to participate in politics is significant and had a positive impact on voting in 2002, such a factor is not significantly related to voting for 2006. The results from the 2006 models show that income, follow news (about politics), ability to understand politics, and group membership, are the four factors that were significantly related to voting. It is evident that people who have a higher level of income, who follow political news more often, who feel less efficacious about understanding what is going on in politics, and who are members of groups/associations were more likely to vote in the 2006 election than the average person.

Secondly, whereas nine of the eleven factors in total for 2002 were significantly associated with campaign activity, only four of them had a significant impact on campaign activism for 2006. Three of those four factors were political engagement factors—political interest, ability to participate in politics, and ability to understand politics. Another factor was income, which indicated the more political activism of the higher income group. Age, which was not significantly related to campaign acts in the 2002 models, is now positively and significantly associated with participation in campaign activity, indicating the more active role of the older generations in 2006.

Thirdly and most surprisingly, the mobilization factors which played a significant role in fostering contacting activism for 2002 had no significant impact on political contacting for 2006. The key stimulus factors for political contact in 2006 include three demographic factors—income, education, and area of residence—which indicates greater energy on the part of people with a higher income, with a higher education, and who live

in a rural area; and two political efficacy factors, which suggest the greater politically activity of people that feel more efficacious in own ability to participate in and understand politics.

Finally, income and party attachment were the only two factors that were significantly related to and had positive impacts on protest activism in 2006. None of the political engagement factors was associated with protesting. These results indicate that people who actively engaged in protest politics in 2006 were more likely to be those who earned a higher income and who felt close to a political party, regardless of how much interest in politics they showed or how politically efficacious they felt. These participatory figures confirm what actually occurred in Thailand in 2006, where the two large groups of citizens, whose majority of one (the PAD) felt relatively close to the opposition party (Democrat Party) and the majority of the other (Thaksin's supporters) felt strongly close to the ruling party (Thai Rak Thai), actively joined the protests. Furthermore, one study about these groups of protesters reveals that while the average income of the Yellow Shirts ($1,000 on average per month) was higher than the Red Shirts ($600 on average per month), those two amounts are much higher than the average income of the Thai population that claimed to be neither Yellow nor Red ($330 on average per month) (Abhichart Sthitniramai, 2010).

In short, what the 2006 political participation models for the four individual activities can tell us clearly about where the large increases in participation of urban residents and the rich in 2006 exactly come from is that people with higher levels of income are more likely than the rest of the population to participate in three of the four political activities—voting, political contacting, and protesting. In addition, even though

there was no result that showed more significant political activity on the part of people who live in more urbanized areas, people who are living in less urbanized communities are more likely than the average to engage in only one type of political activity—political contacting. Area of residence had no impact on participation for voting, campaign activity, or protesting, indicating a more equal distribution of participation between the rural and the urban compared to 2002. Most importantly, various pictures of political participation among groups of Thai citizens between 2002 and 2006, as well as the loss of impact of several political engagement and mobilization factors on individual types of political actions, indicate that the impacts of socioeconomic, engagement and mobilization factors on political participation vary over time: they may impact participation in one context but not necessarily in others. Therefore, those changes in degree or direction of such impacts are influenced by political contexts.

Experiences with Regime Matter

Criticisms of socioeconomic status, political engagement, and motivation models encourage us to pay more attention to institutional and contextual factors, considering participation more broadly as a response to contextual cues and political environment (Holzner, 2010; Kenny, 1992; Leighley, 1990). Table 5.11 modifies the political participation models of 2006 (Table 5.10) by adding two other attitudinal factors that reflect citizens' experiences/satisfaction with the regime—attitude towards the past election and satisfaction with the government (i.e., Thaksin's government). Attitude towards the past election, *fair election*, was measured by the 4-scales question, asking the respondents how they would rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election: 3

Table 5.11

Political Participation Models for Voting, Campaign Activities, Political Contacting, and Protesting, 2006 (Experiences Impacts)

	Voting			Campaign activities			Political contacting			Protesting		
	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.
Demographic												
Female	.197	.227		-.002	.148		.066	.134		-.093	.373	
Age	.009	.009		.012	.006	**	.005	.005		.014	.014	
Income	.207	.123	*	.345	.074	***	.085	.068		.296	.165	*
Education	-.113	.183		.098	.118		.449	.112	***	-.275	.284	
Urban residence	-.082	.258		-.313	.171		-.262	.153	*	.407	.404	
Political Engagement												
Interest	-.031	.192		.636	.130	***	.023	.112		.102	.299	
Follow News	.251	.132	*	.038	.099		.069	.083		.259	.255	
Can participate in politics	.116	.146		.160	.100		.292	.088	***	.268	.246	
Can understand politics	-.239	.171		.216	.113	*	.130	.103		.150	.267	
Mobilization												
Party Attachment	.119	.164		.086	.096		-.051	.089		.566	.176	***
Group Membership	.593	.313	*	.154	.170		.138	.158		-.610	.510	
Experiences with												
Fair election	.443	.121	***	.177	.088	**	.144	.076	*	.281	.217	
Government satisfaction	-.212	.152		.235	.102	**	-.246	.091	***	-.354	.221	
Constant	.286	.786		-5.199	.587	***	-1.320	.483	.006	-6.364	1.386	***
N	1,055			1,055			1,055			1,055		
Nagelkerke R^2	.070			.129			.071			.114		
Chi-square	33.896			99.369			56.592			30.211		
Model-significance	***			***			***			***		

Source: ABS 2006

*P < 0.1 ** P < 0.05 *** P < 0.01

= completely free and fair; 2 = free and fair, but with minor problems; 1 = free and fair, but with major problems; 0 = not free or fair. *Satisfaction with government* was measured by the 4-scales question, asking the respondents how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the Thaksin Shinawatra government: 3 = very satisfied; 2 = somewhat satisfied; 1 = somewhat dissatisfied; 0 = very dissatisfied.

As discussed earlier, the 2006 House of Representatives election held a couple of months before the survey was conducted was an extraordinary event. It was established as the government of Thaksin's response to the pressure forced by the Yellow Shirts' month-long movement, but major opposition parties boycotted. Hence, we might expect that people who tended to rate the election as free and fair should be more likely than those who rated it as not free or fair to participate in voting and campaign activities.

In contrast, opposite patterns would be expected for participation in political contacting and protesting. That is, people who disagree with an election that contains only candidates from the government party and other small (and no name) parties should rate the election as not free or fair, then decline to participate in the election and eventually tend to take part in other forms of political activities, such as political contacting or protest. Like *fair election*, one should expect *satisfaction with government* to have a positive impact on participation in voting and campaign activities. However, because during the 2006 political crisis there were not only the anti-Thaksin protesters but also the movement of his supporters, we would expected that either those who were satisfied or dissatisfied with Thaksin's government should have been more likely to take part in protest activities.

According to Table 5.11, when the two *experience with regime* variables were also included within in the analysis, Nagelkerke R^2 improved considerably for all four models. As expected, *fair election* had a positive impact on voting and campaign activities. However, for the voting model, the ability to understand politics lost its earlier significance, while *income*, *follow news*, and *group membership* retained their significance (but at a .1 level rather than .05. as they were before adding *experience with regime* variables into the model). Satisfied with the government was positively and significantly associated with campaign activities, as expected, but was not significantly related to voting. This result indicates that people who were dissatisfied with Thaksin's government were less likely to join campaign activities than those that were satisfied with the government, but they still went to the polls (possibly to vote against them since the coefficient was minus). This finding confirms what actually occurred in the House of Representatives election on April 2, 2006,[55] in which roughly 65 percent of eligible Thai voters cast ballots: among these voters, approximately 53.3 percent voted for Thaksin's TRT party, less than 1 percent voted for other parties, 12.8 percent cast invalid ballots, and 33 percent cast a "no vote.[56]"

Political contacting is driven by *fair election* and *government satisfaction*, but not in the same direction. That is, while people with more positive experience with elections were more likely than those who had worse experience in contacting officials or

---

[55]This election was finally declared invalid by Thailand's Constitutional Court, which found that the positioning of the voting booths violated voter privacy.

[56]In Thailand, if voters do not find a suitable candidate from those who have stood for election, there is a "no vote" box in the ballot for voters to cast their vote as a vote for none or a no vote.

politicians, people who were satisfied with the government were less active in political contacting than those who were dissatisfied. This result can be understood simply: if citizens view the election as free and fair, they will expect that their voices will be heard by their representatives or officials. At the same time, if the government cannot make people satisfied, the people will contact politicians or officials about their problems quite often until those problems are addressed or solved.

As expected, the protest was not displaced by either *fair election* or *government satisfaction*. The results thus confirm that people who took part in the protests during the late 2005 to early 2006 were on the one hand, those who supported Thaksin—were satisfied with his government and viewed the election that was held without participation by any opposition parties free and fair, and on the other, those who opposed him were dissatisfied with his government and saw the 2006 election as not free or unfair.

In conclusion, even though participation gaps between people with different geographic and socioeconomic backgrounds in Thailand still exist, those gaps according to many findings in this chapter are smaller compared to what has been suggested previously by Thai scholars. Moreover, a trend of a decline in such gaps can be clearly observed during the past decade in Thailand (at least between 2002 and 2006), suggesting a more equal distribution of political participation among some groups of Thai participants—in particular between males and females. As shown in earlier explanations in this chapter, the more equal distribution of political participation among Thai citizens is a consequence of changes in participatory patterns among different groups of Thai citizens, especially of those who are female, affluent, and urban. It was evident that in

2006, gender did not matter for all types of political actions, while rural-urban divided matter only for political contacting.

More precisely, various pictures of political participation among groups of Thai citizens between 2002 and 2006, as well as the loss of impact of several political engagement and mobilization factors on individual types of political actions, indicate that the impacts of socioeconomic, engagement and mobilization factors on political participation vary over time: these factors may impact participation in one context but not necessarily in others. Such changes are driven by several activities (i.e., the more politically active in voting, political contacting, and protesting among people with higher level of income than the rest of population). Such changes also are fostered by various factors, such as socioeconomic status, political engagement, and mobilization, each of which has an impact on political participation, depending in part upon the individual's experience with the regime.

CHAPTER 6

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION:

THE RURAL-URBAN DISPARITY

Differential rates of participation for any subgroup deserve attention, but rural-urban differences are particularly worthy of attention in the case of Thailand. The dominant view is called "a tale of two democracies," which was first introduced by a famous Thai political scientist, the former Democrat Party's House of Representatives member and Mahachon Party's leader for the 2005 election, Anek Laothamatas. According to Anek (1995), the reason democracy failed to be firmly established in Thailand over the past several decades is to be found in the differing views and expectations of the urban middle class (mostly the Bangkok-based citizens) and the poor in the country over democracy, elections, and politicians. That is, for the rural electorate,[57] democracy is valued not as an ideal but as a mechanism to draw greater benefits from the political elite to themselves and their communities. Elections, in rural voters' view, are therefore very much local, not national affairs, dealing with the exchange of votes for benefits of a nonpolicy type. In this respect, the rural electorate does not expect abstract rewards such as laws, policies, or public interest from

---

[57]Anek defines rural electorate simply as Thai populations who reside in villages (in the 1980s almost 70 percent of the workforce were farmers or peasants).

participation in elections.

In contrast, for the educated middle class, democracy is a form of legitimate rule adopted by most civilized nations. For this reason, elections are mechanisms of recruiting honest and capable persons to serve as lawmakers and political executives rather than a process through which voters get parochial and personal benefits. For urban middle-class voters, voting decisions should be made independently of social, cultural, and especially financial obligations. Anek argued that these conflicting perceptions of elections have existed in society and lead instability to democracy in Thailand, in which the rural majority votes to set up a government while the less in number, but louder voice, middle class criticizes and weakens the cabinet, which finally be ended by either its own internal conflict or external military coup.

Many studies, especially before the 1997 Constitution in Thailand was promulgated, provide evidence that asserts Anek's thesis. For example, in his survey research regarding attitudes toward democracy among Bangkok and rural northern Thais, Jim LoGerfo (1996) finds that Bangkokians have more democratic attitudes than their rural northern counterparts: rural northern respondents tended to support a restricted model of democracy such as limited participation for societal groups, restrictions on press freedom, and weak local government, while Bangkok respondents firmly supported provincial governors, favored participatory rights for organized groups, and stood overwhelmingly behind a free press.

Concentrating on participation in elections, Suchit Bunbongkarn (1996) observes that while many expected that people with more education, higher income, and white-collar workers should be more likely to vote than people of lower socioeconomic status

because they tend to be more aware of politics, to know what to do to influence the government, and to have a sense of political efficacy,[58] what had happened in Thailand between the late 1960s and 1990s is that the rate of voter turnout in Bangkok, the most modern and highly-developed city in the country, was the lowest compared to the rest of the country for six of the eight national elections held during that period (Table 6.1).

Based on his previous studies with Pornsak Phongphaew (1984), Suchit argues that voter turnout in the less-developed rural provinces is always high because of the two major "voter mobilization methods" used in rural constituencies by politicians: motivation by establishing a network of canvassers, and vote buying. These methods of voter mobilization are facilitated by the local leaders through a patronage system that is deeply rooted throughout many rural areas. However, these motivation methods, for Suchit, are not effective for the Bangkok voters, who tend to be very independent and view vote-selling as undemocratic behavior. The reason for the low voter turnout rates in Bangkok, for Suchit, is not because Bangkok voters are not at all interested in or aware of politics, but that they are not satisfied with the ways in which democracy works in the nation; for example, they think that politicians are always corrupt but that nothing can be done about this even by participating in elections, which in their opinion, are the instruments by which the ruling elite maintain power that cannot improve anything.

Based on this conventional wisdom, we may conclude that the participatory disparities among different groups in Thailand have existed because Thai citizens have

---

[58]See, for example, Janda, Barry, and Goldman (1987), Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996.

Table 6.1

Voter Turnout in General Elections, 1975-2007

Date	MPs elected	Turnout %	Highest turnout (provinces)	%	Lowest turnout (provinces)	%	Bangkok turnout %
1970s – 1990s							
1/26/75	269	47.17	Phuket	67.88	Pechboon	32.18	33.65
4/4/76	279	43.99	Nakornpanom	63.53	Pechboon	26.64	29.05
4/22/79	301	43.90	Yasotorn	77.11	Bangkok	22.56	22.56
4/18/83	324	50.76	Yasotorn	79.62	Bangkok	32.57	32.57
7/27/86	349	61.43	Chayaphum	85.15	Bangkok	38.13	38.13
7/24/88	359	63.56	Yasotorn	90.42	Samutsongkran	35.92	37.50
3/22/92	360	59.24	Mukdaharn	81.11	Bangkok	42.01	42.01
9/13/92	360	61.59	Mukdaharn	90.43	Bangkok	47.40	47.40
7/2/95	391	62.04	Mukdaharn	83.80	Bangkok	49.82	49.82
11/17/96	393	62.42	Srakaew	87.71	Bangkok	48.97	48.97
Since 1997							
1/6/01	500	69.94	Lumpoon	83.78	Nontaburi	56.09	66.70
2/6/05	500	72.56	Lumpoon	86.56	Nongkai	62.55	72.37
12/23/07	480	74.50	Lumpoon	88.90	Sakonakorn	66.73	69.10

Source: Ministry of Interior (1975-1996); Office of Election Commission (2001-2007)

different attitudes toward politics and democracy. Further, these political attitudinal differences can mostly be explained by differences in the socioeconomic backgrounds among the groups, in particular between the poor and less-educated rural and the higher socioeconomic status urban. On the one hand, these conclusions are confirmed by more recent survey research (e.g., Albritton and Thawilwadee, 2005; 2008). On the other, the changes in the patterns of political behavior among Thai citizens during the past decade indicate evidence that challenges this premise.

Using 2002 ABS data, Albritton and Thawilwadee (2005) confirmed that respondents from Bangkok and rural areas were found to differ significantly in a variety of measures, such as support for democracy, criteria for choosing candidates in elections, and tolerance of corruption. More specifically, residents of Bangkok exhibited the lowest level of democratic support, while rural residents registered the highest. Moreover, according to their analysis, socioeconomic status was negatively associated with both democratic support and participation. Indeed, Bangkok residents were significantly less supportive of democracy than their rural counterparts, even when controlling for level of education and income. This finding, for Albritton and Thawilwadee (2008), confirms what Suchit concluded about the electoral behavior of Thai voters—that people with higher levels of education are more cynical about politics and therefore less likely to participate in the democratic process. It also can be applied to explain the appearance of the 2006 coup as a result of the persistent conflict between the metropole and rural hinterland, which asserts that "Thailand at the turn of the century was truly a tale of two democracies" (p. 136).

From the other point of view, we have learned from the previous chapters that political participation between different groups of Thai citizens, including the rural and the urban, has changed, and many of these changes are driven by political engagement (such as political interest and political efficacy) and other attitudinal and mobilization (such as group/party engagement) rather than solely socioeconomic status factors. In this regard, we would expect to see that even if the Thai rural were poorer and had lower education than the urban Thai, their political interest, knowledge, and efficacy would not be very low and not very much lower than their urban counterparts. Additionally, if these engagement patterns were proven correct, then the conventional explanations that view rural voters as parochial, dealing with the exchange of votes for personal benefits, and easily motivated by patron-client relations and vote buying to participate in political activities must be questioned. That is, if rural Thais did not exhibit a relatively low level of interest in politics, knowledge about their electoral candidates and parties, or political efficacy, their political participation would not solely be a result of motivation by patronage-system agencies (such as local leaders and electoral canvassers) and vote buying as generally described by the literature. Or at least, if beholden to patron-client, they enter relationships for strategic reasons, not as blind actors easily duped and manipulated by patrons.

In addition, information about voter turnout rates in the past decade's three national elections (i.e., 2001, 2005, and 2007) shows that Bangkok voters were not any longer the least participatory groups in the country (Table 6.1). Since 2001, the voter turnout rates in Bangkok increased by more than 10 percent on average compared to those in the 1990s. Moreover, in each year's election, the rate of voter turnout in

Bangkok was less than 3 percent, less than 0.5 percent, and almost 5 percent lower than the voter turnout rate of the whole country in 2001, 2005, and 2007, respectively. These improvements in voter turnout rates in Bangkok eliminated previous arguments suggesting that Bangkok residents were less likely to participate in the electoral process based upon their substantially lower voter turnouts.

Furthermore, if participation in elections by Bangkok voters depends largely on their attitude towards democracy and politics, as the aforementioned scholars have argued, the higher voter turnout rates in Bangkok should be a result of a more positive attitude on the part of Bangkok citizens regarding elections. In terms of political engagement, we would expect to see that urban Thai voters in general, or Bangkok residents in particular, would be highly interested in an election, be well-informed about candidates and political parties, and be politically efficacious in terms of their engagement in politics.

Moreover, as the divide between Red and Yellow supporters in Thai society has existed and much of this divide is rooted in regional (the northern and northeastern Reds versus the southern and Bangkok-based Yellows) and class (the rural Reds versus the urban middle-class Yellows) differences (Ockey, 2009: 316), one might claim that the "tale of two democracies" thesis is the best to explain what is going on in today's Thai politics (Albritton and Thawilwadee, 2005: 136). However, as many studies (e.g., Abhichart Sthitniramai, 2010; Ammar Siamwalla and Somchai Jitsuchon, 2011) have asserted, people who identify themselves being close to either Red or Yellow are socioeconomically mixed. There are many Red supporters who are middle-class, earn a high income, and have a great opportunity for education (many Yellow supporters are

working-class, earn a low income, are less-educated, and come from provincial areas), even though the majority of the Red-shirts are rural residents who have less income and a lower level of education than the majority of the Yellow Shirts, who tend to come from big cities. As a result, what creates the rural-urban difference in political participation is more complicated than simply differences in socioeconomic status (lower-higher levels of education or lower-higher income) or in areas of living (Bangkok-province).

Emerging as anti-Thaksin on the one side and as pro-Thaksin on the other, either Red Shirts or Yellow Shirts have identified themselves with one specific party over the other party—i.e., the Red Shirts with the PPP and the Yellow Shirts with the DP (in the 2007 elections). It would be interesting to examine how attachment to any particular camp (i.e., Red or Yellow) has impacted individuals' participation, including participatory differences between rural and urban residents.

In this chapter, bivariate analysis and multivariate regression were developed to reexamine the dominant premise regarding political attitudes and behaviors of rural and urban Thai voters. First rural-urban differences in political engagement were considered—the set of orientations toward political life that foster activity, including political interest, knowledge, and efficacy—between the Bangkok and provincial Thai electorates.

As shown in Table 6.1, the improvement in voter turnout rates in Bangkok during the past three national elections, considering political engagement differences between rural and urban in a narrow sense (defining urban as Bangkok and rural as provincial residents) presented a good opportunity for this study to compare and discuss the results with what previous scholars have argued concerning attitudes toward politics among

voters in the most developed and modern areas of Bangkok and those in less-developed provinces. By creating bivariate tables from CSES data for all three national election years (2001, 2005, and 2007), the results can explain not only how political engagement is different between provincial and Bangkok citizens but also how political engagement disparity between the two groups has changed across time.

The second part of this chapter's analysis then turns to an explanation of how the changing pictures of rural-urban differences regarding political interest, knowledge, and efficacy can explain patterns of political activism between the rural and urban voters. To explain these patterns, "rural" and "urban" in the broader sense were considered by measuring rural as people who live in small towns or villages, and the urban as those who live in large cities and Bangkok. Focus was also placed on explaining participatory differences between these two groups in three major kinds of political activities (voting, political contacting, and protesting). We have learned much about these participatory patterns from the empirical analyses in previous chapters, but most of those results derived from multivariate models that were developed based on survey data conducted before the 2007 election. In this chapter, multivariate analyses were developed for voting, political contacting, and protesting by rural and urban residents using the 2007 CSES.

This CSES was the best source for this study because it is the only survey conducted in Thailand after the 2006 military coup and the promulgation of the 2007 Constitution; it collected a rich set of information about political participation (voting, political contacting, and protesting activities) and political engagement (interest, knowledge, and efficacy). Several demographic, attitudinal, and mobilization factors that could be used as independent variables in the models were also available. Moreover, the

2007 CSES contains questions that could be applied to constructing Red- and Yellow-supporter variables to be tested in the multivariate models. With these advantages provided by the 2007 CSES,[59] we will learn at the end of this chapter the impacts of not only political engagement factors but also other demographic, attitudinal, mobilization, institutional, and the most interestingly, Red/Yellow attachment factors on each political action between the rural and urban Thai electorates.

<div style="text-align:center;">Rural-Urban Differences in Political Engagement</div>

Bivariate analyses of CSES data were developed in order to examine rural-urban differences regarding a number of aspects of political engagement (i.e., political interest, knowledge, and efficacy) obtained from Thai respondents in 2001, 2005, and 2007. As mentioned earlier, rural-urban in this bivariate analysis was defined in a narrow sense for comparison purposes. The rural were measured as people living in provincial areas, while the urban were those living in Bangkok. As with what previous studies (Suchit, 1996; Suchit and Pornsak, 1984; LoGerfo, 1996) have explained about their differences in socioeconomic status, these two groups, according to the CSES data, were largely

---

[59]It should be noted here why this dissertation did not used CSES in the previous chapter to explain changes in political participation among different groups of Thai citizens if it was great for explaining participatory differences between rural and urban Thais in 2007. The CSES was conducted three times in Thailand (2001, 2005, and 2007) but collected different information about political participation. In 2001, the survey asked whether the respondents had (1) attended campaign meetings or rallies and (2) showed support to parties and candidates, but did not collect any political contact or protest activism information. For 2005 and 2007, several questions about political contacting and protest activism were added, but electoral activity questions were taken out; the survey in 2005 asked only the question about showing support to parties and candidates, while this question and attending campaign meetings or rallies were both excluded from the 2007 survey.

different in terms of income and levels of education. Indeed, approximately two-thirds of provincial respondents were those earning less than $300 per month, and less than 10 percent of them had some college education. In contrast, roughly three-fourths of Bangkok residents earned $300 a month or more, and nearly one-fourth of them were educated at the university level (Table 6.2). In this sense, when we consider political engagement differences between these groups of people, we should keep in mind that differences between them are rooted not only in the areas where they live but also in the socioeconomic status (i.e., income and education) to which they belong or come with.

The measures of *political interest* rely on the CSES's 11-point scale questions on how interested the respondents were in the election, asking respondents to rate their degree of interest, ranging from not at all interested (0) to very interested (10). *Political knowledge* is measured in terms of knowledge about candidates and political parties. In the survey, the respondents were asked: (1) to name as many candidates in their constituency as possible; (2) to name political parties in their own electoral district; and (3) to match the candidate they named to the party that he/she belonged to. Based on this information, six separate variables were constructed to measure political knowledge: (1) ability to name correctly one candidate; (2) ability to name correctly a second candidate; (3) ability to name correctly one party; (4) ability to name correctly a second party; (5) ability to match correctly a candidate and party; and (6) ability to match correctly a second candidate and party.

Political efficacy is measured by agreement with the statements: (1) "If people like us go to vote, we can change what happens in the future;" (2) "Sometimes I think that I just don't understand politics;" (3) "Government officials really do not care what

Table 6.2

Socioeconomic Differences between Bangkok and Provincial Residents, 2001-2007

	2001		2005		2007	
	Non-Bangkok	Bangkok	Non-Bangkok	Bangkok	Non-Bangkok	Bangkok
Gender						
Male (%)	48.3	53.3	48.6	46.2	47.3	48.0
Female (%)	51.7	46.7	51.4	53.8	52.7	52.0
Age (Average year)	40.4	37.8	46.7	45.2	47.2	42.8
Income						
Less than $300 a month (%)	73.0	21.9	64.8	24.2	64.1	29.5
$300 a month and over (%)	27.0	78.1	35.2	75.8	35.9	70.5
Education						
Without a degree (%)	94.1	78.1	93.6	82.1	91.4	75.0
With a degree (%)	5.9	21.9	6.4	17.9	8.6	25.0

Source: CSES (2001, 2005, 2007)

people like you and me think;" and (4) "Common people like me don't have any influence on what goes on in politics." The scale for each question ranged from 1 to 10. As the voter turnout rates in Bangkok for the 2001, 2005, and 2007 House of Representatives election were higher than in the past and not very much different from the overall voter turnout rates of the whole country, there should be little difference in political engagement between provincial and Bangkok residents.

Table 6.3 presents data about rural-urban differences in political interest, knowledge, and efficacy, as well as the changes of these political engagement patterns among provincial and Bangkok residents across time (2001-2007). A majority of these data partly confirms (but largely challenges) conventional wisdom about rural and urban voters in Thailand in several aspects. First of all, while the aforementioned behavior scholars claimed a lack of attention to politics on the part of the urban Thais because the voter turnout in Bangkok was the lowest in the country for almost elections since the late 1970s (Suchit, 1996), in terms of *political interest*, the data show the rural to have been somewhat more likely than the urban to report being interested in the forthcoming election only for 2001. However, there was no rural-urban difference with respect to being interested in the election for 2005 and 2007 data. This evidence suggests that for the urban, elections do matter. The urban tend to care more than in the past, and not much different to the rural, about elections. In this regard, being interested in elections might be one of the factors that explain the increase in voter turnout rates in Bangkok for the 2001, 2005, and 2007 elections.

Second, with respect to *political knowledge*, the 2001 data replicate some patterns we have already seen in previous studies about the Thais' voting behavior, particularly

Table 6.3

Rural-urban Differences in Political Interest, Knowledge, and Efficacy

	2001		2005		2007	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Political Interest						
Mean for interest in election scale	7.61 ⇔ 6.63		8.06	8.15	7.56	7.40
Political Knowledge						
- Name of one candidate (%)	92.2	90.2	97.5	95.7	83.5 ⇔ 60.7	
- Name of second candidate (%)	75.7 ⇔ 64.8		73.3 ⇔ 85.4		67.3 ⇔ 40.7	
- Name of one party (%)	94.1	98.4	99.2	99.5	87.3 ⇔ 73.2	
- Name of second party (%)	81.2 ⇔ 95.9		83.2 ⇔ 94.6		69.0 ⇔ 47.2	
- Match one candidate and party (%)	88.0	89.3	96.1	94.6	71.0 ⇔ 60.8	
- Match second candidate and party (%)	67.3	63.1	68.3 ⇔ 80.5		53.6 ⇔ 32.4	
Mean number of correct answers	4.98	5.02	5.18 ⇔ 5.50		4.33 ⇔ 3.20	
Political Efficacy						
- Can change what happens in the future if going to vote (mean)	7.39 ⇔ 6.27		7.36 ⇔ 8.18		7.19	7.05
- Government officials care what people like us think (mean)	5.00 ⇔ 3.74		5.29 ⇔ 4.16		5.32	5.44
- Can understand politics (mean)	4.51 ⇔ 5.04		4.63 ⇔ 3.95		4.69	4.77
- Can have an influence on what goes on in politics (mean)	5.33	5.01	5.23 ⇔ 3.80		5.74	5.57
Mean for efficacy scale	5.55 ⇔ 5.02		5.63 ⇔ 5.05		5.73	5.69

Source: CSES (2001, 2005, 2007)

Note: ⇔ difference between the rural (i.e., those who are living outside Bangkok) and the urban (i.e., those who are living in Bangkok) is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

those that viewed that urban voters tended to vote by paying more attention to a political party than to individuals, whereas the rural do not regard their vote to party policies and national interests (Anek, 1995; 1996; Suchit, 1996). As shown in the table, the rural were more likely than the urban to know the name of a second candidate, while the urban were more likely than the rural to recognize the name of a second party for 2001.

However, such a premise was questioned by the findings of 2005, in which the urban were more likely than the rural to know the name of both a second candidate and party. These results could be interpreted as a result of the changes in the ways in which political parties seek support from urban citizens. The success of Thaksin's Thai Rak Thai party in introducing candidates with a new face but with a high profile and that were well known in other segments of business or civil society into the politics after the 2001 election encouraged other parties to pay more attention to the "quality" of their candidates—in terms of good educational background, having successful experience in their past career, and being well-known. It was a fact that in the 2005 election, Bangkok was a battlefield among celebrities who may have wanted to test their popularity in politics, because all parties believed that Bangkok was a nonpartisan area, so the chance to win the election was considered to be wide open for all. With several well-known persons running for elections in Bangkok, it seemed to be easy for Bangkok voters to recognize who was running for election in their district.

Nevertheless, compared to those of the 2001 and 2005, the 2007 data provide a sharp contrasting picture of the rural-urban disparity in political knowledge. As shown in Table 6.3, for 2007, the rural were more likely to provide a correct answer to all six items than the urban, indicating that the rural were not generally unsophisticated—instead they

did know pretty well (and better than the urban in many instances) what their vote choices were. One reason that can be applied to explaining this result was the dissolution of the Thai Rak Thai party eight months after the military coup in September 2006, which led to the five-year ban from the politics of 111 Thai Rak Thai leading politicians. Without those "big name" politicians who typically were candidates on the party list elections and in Bangkok-based districts, Thaksin's new party, the PPP, had to nominate many "no name" candidates to the 2007 elections, especially in Bangkok.

The political conflicts that appeared since 2006 were another reason that discouraged high-profile people from becoming involved in politics as a candidate. Without candidates running who are thought to be of high quality, the attitudes toward elections among Bangkok voters might return to what the aforementioned scholars concluded concerning the perception of urban citizens—politicians are always corrupt and elections are a mechanism that they use to gain power that will be used to protect their personal benefits (Suchit, 1996; Suchit and Pornsak, 1984). This also was the reason why Bangkok respondents tended to offer less support for democracy, which has led some recent studies to conclude that what has been going on in Thai politics after the 2006 coup has confirmed what Anek (1996) explained in his tale of two democracies thesis (Albritton and Thawilwadee 2008). However, these conclusions about attitudes toward democracy and elections among Bangkok voters might not be exactly true if we consider them together with citizens' political efficacy.

Table 6.3 also presents a relatively small rural-urban difference in political efficacy, with the rural having higher average political efficacy scores (although the gap constantly narrows and is not statistically significant in 2007). However, when the four

items in the scale are considered separately, the rural-urban disparity pictures are complex. Using the 2001 efficacy rate as the baseline, two interesting patterns are evident. First, the data show a positive trend of rural citizens' beliefs about their own competence to understand politics, whereas the differences between the rural and the urban in this measure are statistically significant only in 2001, with the rural having a lower average score, and in 2005, in the opposite direction. These findings support recent studies that tend to provide an optimistic portrayal of the rural populace (see, for example, Albritton 2006; Albritton and Thawilwadee, 2008; Chairat 2010; Walker, 2008), and again, contrast with conventional wisdom that usually views the Thai rural as parochial, unsophisticated, and money-focused voters. In addition, the higher levels of beliefs about one's own competence to understand and participate in politics reported by both Bangkok and provincial residents can also be understood as a result of the wide spread of citizen participation in both electoral and non-electoral (i.e., protesting) activities during the past ten years, which encouraged Thai citizens regardless of where they were living to learn more about politics and take more part in political activities thus increasing confidence in their own ability to deal with politics.

Secondly, while previous studies, in particular those conducted before the 1997 constitution reform, such as that of LoGerfo (1996), found that Thai citizens, especially the urban, were not satisfied with political system and government performance, the data presented in this dissertation indicate a growing trend of the perceived responsiveness of the political system to citizens' participation among both the rural and urban populace. And, more specifically, in 2001 and 2005, the rural were more likely than the urban to report believing that government officials do care what ordinary people think. However,

this gap continued to decrease and is not statistically significant in 2007. The higher feeling that government officials do care what ordinary people think among rural voters than among Bangkok residents in 2001 can be understood as a result of Thailand's electoral politics, in which the needs and desires of the majority rural voters have long been of concern by the political elite in order to gain support from them in elections.

Even though conventional, and idealist, scholars might view this relationship as an obstacle for democracy to be developed because it relates to undemocratic behaviors (such as vote buying), exchanging benefits between politicians and rural voters arouses many rural citizens to believe that their voices are heard, at least, through elections. This argument seems to be clearer when considering the high score that the rural reported in believing that people can change what happens in the future if they vote, and this was obviously confirmed by a growing trend of agreements with the statement that government officials do care what ordinary people think among the provincial electorate for 2005 and 2007.

In addition, while a gap between Bangkok and provincial respondents in reporting on the perceived responsiveness of the political system in 2005 still existed, this gap decreased, with a higher increase in the average score reported by Bangkok respondents. This finding can possibly be interpreted as a result of the success of Thaksin's first four-year term (2001-2005) as Prime Minister in establishing a large popular support both nationally and in Bangkok through his populist policies and administrative style (Phasuk and Baker, 2002). It was, perhaps, the first time for the urban middle class to perceive that an elected government can do something beneficial for the country. The landslide victory of Thaksin's Thai Rak Thai party in the 2005 election in Bangkok (and

throughout the country, except in the south, where the Democrat Party has a strong foundation) was good enough to influence the perception of Bangkok voters (and other citizens living in large and modern cities) regarding the responsiveness of the government at that moment.

Also, this positively-perceived responsiveness of the political system among Bangkok respondents in 2005 was expressed through another political efficacy question, the question about the efficacy of individual citizens in changing what happens in future politics if going to vote, which Bangkok respondents were more likely than provincial electorates to agree with. For this reason, it would be naïve to conclude that urban middle class Thais always view elections negatively. In fact, their attitudes depend on what is going on in politics and what the elected representatives actually do for them and the nation. The reverse trend of responses to the same statement in 2007 CSES among Bangkok respondents after Thaksin's era was overthrown by the undemocratic power of the military provided evidence for this argument.

Overall, the above examination has presented a partly similar but largely contrasting picture of rural-urban differences in political attitudes toward politics compared to what has been suggested by previous studies in Thailand. On the one hand, the findings about rural voters' political engagement revealed that even though the provincial Thais are poorer and have a lower level of education than Bangkok residents, they are not less interested in, less informed about, or politically less efficacious about politics than their urban counterparts. Rather, in many cases they reported greater engagement attitudes than the residents of Bangkok. This political engagement figure of provincial voters strongly challenges conventional wisdom, especially that which has

labeled rural voters as ill informed, uninterested, and easily deceived. On the other hand, as other scholars have indicated, the richer and higher-educated Bangkokians have relatively strong awareness of politics: they reported high levels of interest in the elections, especially in 2005, and had great knowledge about political parties and candidates in the 2001 and 2005 elections. However, the ebb and flow of their political engagement indicated that urban Thai citizens' attitudes towards politics are not constantly negative, as preceding scholars have suggested, but depend on various factors, such as political contexts and their experiences with the political system as well.

These changes in political engagement among rural and urban Thais during the past decade lead to many puzzles, in particular, about the changes in political participatory patterns between these two groups of Thai citizens. First, how strong an influence do these three political engagement factors—political interest, knowledge, and efficacy—have on political participation among these two groups when controlling for other potentially demographic, attitudinal, mobilization, and contextual factors. Secondly, because rural Thais exhibited a relatively high level of interest in politics, great knowledge about their electoral candidates and parties, as well as moderate political efficacy, it would be interesting to reexamine whether their political participation is still influenced by motivations of patronage-system agencies (such as local leaders and electoral canvassers) and vote buying, as much previous research has observed.

Thirdly, and related to the second, it would also be worthwhile investigating, in the case of urban Thai citizens, whether patron-client relations and vote-buying factors had no impact on the political behaviors of urban-middle class citizens, as previous scholars obviously believed. Finally, because political engagement among rural and

urban residents varied according to what was going on in politics, and because one critical context that has shaped what Thai people think about and act in politics is the divide of the Red and Yellow in Thai society, we would understand more clearly the political activism patterns of recent rural and urban Thai voters if the factors regarding the division of Red versus Yellow were constructed and taken into account. Indeed, we need to investigate whether political participation among rural and urban Thais is influenced by the political positions they stand for or are attached to. In order to explain these puzzles, the next section develops multivariate regression models of three political activities—voting, political contacting, and protesting—using the 2007 CSES and with a focus on rural-urban differences.

Rural-Urban Differences in Voting, Political Contact, and Protest

This section deals intensively with rural-urban differences in voting, political contact, and protest,[60] aiming at explaining how the changing pictures of rural-urban differences in political interest, knowledge, and efficacy observed in the previous section can explain patterns of political activism between the present rural and urban Thai voters. To explain these patterns, multivariate regression models of voting, political contacting, and protesting for the entire respondents (with rural-urban areas of living included as one of the independent variables) were constructed using 2007 CSES. Then regression models for only rural and urban respondents for each three political action were

---

[60]We might learn more clearly about rural-urban differences in political activity if participating in campaign activities were included. Unfortunately, there is no campaign activities question asked in 2007 CSES.

separately developed in order to examine whether the same factors have a different effect on the political participation of these two groups.

In each model, rural and urban residents were considered in a broad sense, where the rural were measured as people living in small towns or villages, while the urban were those living in large cities and Bangkok. According to this measure, the regression models of only rural respondents containing approximately two-thirds of the total respondents were categorized as rural and the rest (roughly one-third) were categorized as urban. In socioeconomic status terms, the urban were those earning almost double the monthly income (i.e., $523.6 per month) of the rural (i.e., $273.8 per month), and nearly 20 percent of the urban were those having some degree of education, while slightly more than half of the rural had completed primary school or lower.

Voting was measured by a survey question asking the respondents whether they had cast a ballot in the election on December 23, 2007: coded 1 for a response of "yes" and 0 for "no." *Political contact* was measured as the sum of the four contacting questions: (1) contacting government officials; (2) contacting high-level officials; (3) contacting a member of parliament; and (4) contacting local officials, where 1 was given to a response of "yes" to each of these acts and 0 for a response of "no." The scale ranges from 0 to 4 (low to high). *Protesting* was measured by the question asking respondents whether they had taken part in demonstrations or protests during the past three years: coded 1 for a response of "yes" and 0 for "no." Based on these measurement methods, the models for voting and protesting in 2007 were analyzed using logistic regression, and political contacting was analyzed using OLS regression. Table 6.4 presents the participatory differences in each kind of political activity between the rural and the urban in 2007. The

Table 6.4

Participatory Differences between the Rural and the Urban, 2007

	Rural	Urban	Significance
Voting	95.0	91.9	**
Contacting:			
Government officials	55.3	54.7	
High-ranking officials	10.4	16.7	***
Members of Parliament	11.1	12.5	***
Local officials	57.1	40.9	***
Protesting	3.3	6.1	***

Source: CSES 2007

Note: *P < 0.1 ** P < 0.05 *** P < 0.01

results suggest that the rural were more likely than the urban to vote in the 2007 election. The urban, in contrast, were more active than the rural in protest activities. For political contacting activities, while the rural were more likely than the urban to express their problems and concerns to local officials, the urban contacted high-ranking officials and members of Parliament more frequently than the rural. These results thus confirmed that political participation between the rural and urban Thais is different.

In each regression model, the three major political engagement factors (political interest, knowledge, and efficacy) were used as independent variables. The measure of *political interest* relies on the same CSES 11-point scale question used in the bivariate analysis of rural-urban differences in political engagement. The scale for the political interest question ranges from 0 (not at all interested) to 10 (very interested).

Political knowledge was measured as a total score of the six electoral knowledge questions, where 1 was given to each correct answer and 0 to each incorrect response. The score for political knowledge ranges from 0 to 6. Using the four CSES 10-point scale political efficacy questions, *political efficacy* was now measured as a mean score of agreement with the statement, (1) "If people like us go to vote, we can change what happens in the future," and disagreement with the statements: (2) "Sometimes I think that I just don't understand politics;" (3) "Government officials really do not care what people like you and me think;" and (4) "Common people like me don't have any influence on what goes on in politics." Each component has a value that ranges from 1 to 10 (disagree to agree). This value was rescaled to range from 0 (least efficacious) to 9 (most efficacious) before calculating the mean score for the regression analysis. Political engagement typically facilitates greater participation, so positive coefficients for all of

these factors were expected from both the overall respondents and the separate group models.

Despite these political engagement factors, the models controlled for several demographic, attitudinal, mobilization, and contextual variables. Based on prior literature investigating the Thai context, five demographic and socioeconomic variables that measured individual-level resources were included in this model. These variables are: (1) *gender*, a binary 0-1 variable, which takes the value of 1 for females and 0 for males; (2) a continuous measure of *age*; (3) a 5-point scale measure of *income*, which takes the value of 4 for the highest income category (earning 1,300 USD per month and over) and 0 for the lowest one (earning 170 USD a month), with positive values indicating a higher level of monthly income; (4) a 4-point scale of *education*, which takes the value of 3 for having a university degree or higher and 0 for incomplete primary school and lower, with positive values indicating a higher level of education; and (5) a 4-point scale of *urban residents*, which takes the value of 3 for Bangkok residents, 2 for large provincial city residents, 1 for midsized provincial city residents, and 0 for village/small town residents. As with the findings in Chapter 5, these resource-based variables would have only a small effect on voting, an "easy" act requiring few resources and motivation (Verba, Nie, and Kim, 1978: 120), but some of these, such as income and education, should have some impact on political contacting and protesting.

Two other attitudinal factors that reflect citizens' experiences/satisfaction with the regime were also considered. The first factor, *satisfaction with democracy*, measured whether the respondents were very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in Thailand. The scale was inverted in the

analysis so that 0 = "not at all satisfied," 3 = "very satisfied." The second variable is *government performance*, which was constructed as an average score using the eight government performance questions from the CSES survey: How good or bad a job do you think the government [Surayut Chulanon's government] has done over the past 12 months: (1) economics; (2) education; (3) employment; (4) poverty reduction; (5) healthcare; (6) crime; (7) accidents; and (8) environment. Each component has a value that ranges from 1 (very bad) to 4 (very good). This value was rescaled to range from 0 to 3 in the analysis, so the mean score for government performance runs from 0.00 to 3.00.

Because the 2007 House of Representatives election was held after the fourteen-month long military government of Prime Minister Surayut Chulanon, we might have expected to see that people who felt hopeful about democracy would be more active in politics than those who felt hopeless. We would also expect to see similar patterns for the relationship between *government performance* and political participation, especially voting and political contacting. However, for protesting, the direction of its association with government performance should be reversed. That is, people who rated the government as having done a bad job should engage more in protest activities than those who were satisfied with the government's performance in solving the country's problems. More specifically, since the Red Shirts, whose majority are rural residents, organized several protests against the government during the period of the 2006-7 military regimes, a negative relationship between *government performance* and protest would more possibly be found among rural respondents rather than among the urban.

Previous scholars have claimed that rural Thai voters feel obligated to use their votes as repayment to those that have been friendly, helpful or generous in helping them

to cope with daily difficulties while bringing progress and prosperity to their community (Anek, 1995; Suchit 1996). In this regard, the factors that drove rural voters into elections and politics depended largely on the opportunity for them to obtain assistance with their personal problems. However, empirical analysis that asserts this argument is still rare.

Data obtained from the 2007 CSES provide us with an opportunity to test such a premise in at least two aspects: (1) whether the rural Thais—those who view the ability of candidates to solve their personal problems and vote buying as important factors in deciding their vote choices—are more likely to participate in politics than those who do not; and (2) whether that kind of clientelism has no effect on political participation among the urban Thais. In doing this, two clientelism factors were separately created from the survey questions asking Thai respondents: (1) whether "having an ability to solve your personal problems" is very important, important, not very important, or not at all important for you as factors in choosing a candidate; and (2) whether "giving you money or gifts" is very important, important, not very important, or not at all important for you as factors in choosing a candidate. The scale was inverted in the analysis so that 0 was given to "not at all important and" 3 was given to "very important."

Finally, the 2007 CSES was the greatest source for this study because it contains questions that could be applied to constructing several kinds of group mobilization variables, such as membership in civic groups, and Red and Yellow attachments. *Civic membership* was constructed as the sum of the number of civic organizations that people are members of. Those that were available in 2007 CSES include: (1) membership in unions; (2) membership in business or employer associations; (3) membership in farmers associations; and (4) membership in professional associations. The membership in civic

organization index runs from 0 to 4. Questions that helped to categorize voters into Red and Yellow groups were questions that asked: Is there a political party that represents your views well? If yes, another question asked of the respondents was: What is that party? Concerning the political positions that the Red or Yellow supporters take, we can roughly define those identified as PPP as Red-voters, *PPP attachment*, and those identified as DP as Yellow-voters, *DP attachment*. Group engagement typically facilitates greater participation, so positive coefficients for all of these factors were expected, especially for *PPP attachment*, in voting and protesting activities among the rural.

The findings for the joint regression model for voting showed that when controlling for demographic, experiences with regime, clientelism, and mobilization factors, none of the political engagement factors had an impact on voting (Table 6.5). Among all sixteen factors included in the model, it was only *PPP attachment* that had a positive impact on voting. This indicates that people who identified PPP as the political party that represented their view well were more likely than the average population to vote in the 2007 election. However, this factor was the best explanation of greater voting activism only for the rural residents when it was examined in the separating models for rural respondents only and urban respondents only.

The findings in the models of voting for rural respondents only and urban respondents only provided many challenging explanations of voting activism between rural and urban Thais, although these findings confirmed what previous scholars have suggested about a sharp contrasting reason for the rural versus urban to participate in an

Table 6.5
Factors Affecting Voting, by Rural-Urban Area of Residence (Logit)

	Voting			Rural respondents only			Urban respondents only		
	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.
Political Engagement									
Interest	-.118	.077		-.194	.105	*	.055	.106	
Knowledge	-.190	.438		.325	.533		-1.457	.770	*
Efficacy	.149	.104		.287	.124	**	-.106	.166	
Demographic									
Female	.044	.287		.157	.352		.288	.439	
Age	-.009	.011		-.002	.014		-.041	.015	***
Income	-.115	.122		-.122	.157		-.068	.178	
Education	-.111	.096		-.184	.125		-.032	.124	
Rural residence	.218	.422							
BKK residence	.789	.681							
Experiences with regime									
Satisfaction with democracy	.093	.179		.110	.213		.428	.272	
Government performance	-.221	.266		-.300	.343		.075	.384	
Clientelism									
Personal help	-.037	.164		-.009	.200		-.026	.252	
Vote buying	-.233	.171		-.246	.225		-.230	.228	
Group mobilization									
Group membership	.124	.235		.163	.294		.083	.388	
PPP attachment	1.124	.399	***	1.548	.483	***	.715	.676	
DP attachment	-.116	.326		.118	.409		-.408	.481	
Constant	4.116	1.345	***	3.470	1.573	**	5.602	1.964	***
N	1,380			799			581		
Nagelkerke R^2	.082			.140			.123		
Chi-square	30.862			36.494			21.754		
Model-significance	***			***					

Source: CSES 2007; Note: *P < 0.1 ** P < 0.05 *** P < 0.01

election by going to vote. First of all, unlike the claim of conventional wisdom, neither of the two clientelism variables was significantly related to voting activism among the rural.

Secondly, even though the negative effect of political interest on voting indicated support for the dominant claim that tends to view higher voter turnout rates of the rural as a result of voting among those that lack attention to politics, positive outcomes from rural residents' participation in voting should not be totally ignored since *political efficacy* tended to increase their voter turnout rates. That is, rural voters who feel more efficacious about engaging in politics are more likely to vote than those who feel less efficacious. Moreover, it was evident that *PPP attachment* was positively associated with voting activism among rural residents, indicating more feeling PPP as representative to their view, more energetic the rural tend to be in the election. As a result, it is not exactly true that the rural are easily mobilized by simply patron-client relations and vote buying in terms of participating in voting. Rather, they are mobilized by the party/group that most represents their views and perhaps those that enhance their feeling of political efficacy, regardless whether such a party encourage them to be more interested in the election.

In contrast, for the urban, these three factors (i.e., PPP attachment, political interest, and efficacy) have no significant impact on their voting activism. What tended to decrease voter turnout rates of the urban were *age* and *political knowledge*. Indeed, urban residents who are young and who know less about parties and candidates are more likely to vote in the election than those who are older and who know more about parties and/or candidates. As a result, these findings relatively confirm what conventional research explains about urban voters' voting behaviors—that a lack of attention to politics among the urban is mainly a result of their negative attitudes toward political parties and

politicians. That is, because knowing more about parties and candidates may lead to negative perceptions of political parties and politicians, the urban with greater information about parties and candidates were less likely to cast ballots than those who were less informed. Another result showing that age decreased electoral turnout of the urban also supports these interpretations since the younger generation may know less about parties and candidates, and thus are more likely to show up at the polls than the elderly.

While political engagement had a systematic effect on voting only for the rural respondents, it played a crucial role in fostering the political contacting for citizens overall and especially for the rural. The joint regression model in Table 6.6 shows that all three political engagement factors (political interest, knowledge, and efficacy) had a positive impact on political contacting, with political knowledge having the largest effect compared to all other factors in the model. These results indicated a more active participation in political contacting of the Thai citizens that were more interested in politics (i.e., elections), knew more about their vote choices, and felt firmly efficacious about engaging in politics. These patterns were also replicated in the case of the rural Thais. However, it was only political knowledge that was systematically and positively related to political contacting of the urban.

Demographic factors were also important to explaining the political contact between the rural and the urban. For the overall respondents, it was evident that males, people with higher levels of education, and non-Bangkok residents were more likely than females, those with lower levels of education, and Bangkok residents to contact their elected representatives or government officials.

Table 6.6
Factors Affecting Political Contacting, by Rural-Urban Area of Residence (OLS)

	Political Contacting			Rural respondents only			Urban respondents only		
	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.
Political Engagement									
Interest	.051	.017	***	.061	.022	***	.010	.021	
Knowledge	.919	.096	***	.855	.117	***	.816	.136	***
Efficacy	.055	.024	.**	.070	.027	**	.020	.035	
Demographic									
Female	-.144	.065	**	-.080	.076		-.208	.094	**
Age	.002	.002		.000	.003		.004	.003	
Income	.020	.029		.000	.036		.073	.040	*
Education	.120	.024	***	.151	.030	***	.042	.029	
Urban residence	-.166	.039	***	-.904	.245	***	-.354	.056	***
Experiences with regime									
Satisfaction with Democracy	.030	.044		.007	.052		.213	.066	***
Government performance	.043	.060		.101	.072		-.044	.080	
Clientelism									
Personal help	-.109	.037	***	-.155	.043	***	-.015	.052	
Vote buying	.041	.043		.063	.054		-.101	.054	*
Group mobilization									
Group membership	.000	.045		-.005	.050		.003	.074	
PPP attachment	.033	.073		.064	.086		.039	.110	
DP attachment	.050	.089		.124	.110		-.027	.123	
Constant	-.182	.274		-.281	.327		.578	.390	
N	1,380			799			581		
Adjusted R^2	.168			.204			.141		
F-value	16.604			14.631			7.365		
Model-significance	***			***			***		

Source: CSES 2007; Note: *P < 0.1 ** P < 0.05 *** P < 0.01

However, these three factors affected the political contacting of the rural and the urban differently. That is, gender was significantly related to political contacting only for the urban residents, with a more active role played by urban males than urban females, whereas education increased the political contacting of the rural but had no systematic effect on this activity of the urban. When considering them together with the effect of political engagement, these findings relatively confirmed the general explanations of other democracies concerning a higher level of political activism among people with more resources (e.g., money and time) and skills (e.g., knowledge and ability to access political information). Nevertheless, we should carefully apply these explanations to the case of Thailand, where people living in less-developed areas tend to be more active in political contacting than those living in more modern cities.

As mentioned earlier, the results found in the joint regression model of political contacting indicated that Thai citizens living outside Bangkok are more likely than those living in Bangkok to contact their elected representatives and government officials. Conventional wisdom might explain this finding as a result of the greater engagement in patron-client relations of the less-developed area residents than of those living in more modern areas. However, another finding in this analysis showed that the clientelism factor (i.e., personal help) has a negative rather than positive impact on political contacting for the average population, and particularly for the rural only group, suggesting that people who assign less importance to the patron-client relationship tend to express their daily life problems to elected representatives or government officials. Indeed for the rural, expecting less personal assistance from the candidate they elected increased their political contacting. This makes sense because if people think that they

should not expect personal help from anyone, they should ask a person in the formal political system to help solve their problems.

Finally, the results confirmed what this dissertation found in Chapter 5—that group mobilization has no statistical impact on political contacting, but different pictures from previous chapter's findings appeared in the case of the experiences with the regime factors. More specifically, while political contacting, according to the 2006 model (see Table 5.11 in this dissertation), was influenced by the two experiences with regime factors (i.e., fair election and satisfaction with the government), another set of experiences with regime factors (i.e., satisfaction with democracy and government performance) used in the analysis of this chapter had no systematic effect on the political contact of the overall respondents. Furthermore, the result concerning the impact of the government performance factor in comparison with the effect of government satisfaction in the 2006 model suggested that whether this kind of factor affected political contacting depended upon the people that were in office, i.e., experiences with the Thaksin government among the Thai respondents in 2006 had a negative effect on their political contact, while their experiences with the military government of Surayud had no effect.

However, experiences with regime factors have disparate effects on rural versus urban residents. It was evident that satisfaction with democracy had a positive impact on the political contacting only of the urban residents. In contrast, political contacting of rural residents was driven by government performance. This result suggested that the urban would be more likely to contact politicians and government officers regarding their daily life problems if they were satisfied with the way democracy worked in the country,

while the rural Thais considered more how efficacious the government can respond to their problems.

The factors stimulating Thai citizens to take part in protest activities in 2007 varied. The joint regression model for protesting in Table 6.7 illustrates that political knowledge, income, vote buying, and group membership were the four independent variables having a positive impact on protesting, whereas government performance had a negative effect. These results indicate that people that actively engaged in protest politics in 2007 were more likely to be those that were better-informed about parties and politicians, earned a higher income, viewed vote buying as an important factor in making their voting decision, were members of civic groups, and gave the government a poor performance rating.

Among these factors, only political knowledge was significantly related to and had positive impacts on the protest activism of both the rural and the urban. For other factors, if they were associated with the protesting of one group they were not related to the protesting of the other. This result suggests that the factors facilitating the greater protesting of the rural were sharply different from those that encouraged the urban to join the protests. For the rural, apart from political knowledge, age, satisfaction with democracy, and government performance were three other factors having an effect on their protest activism, with government performance having the largest and negative effect. In contrast, the urban residents who actively engaged in protest politics in 2007 were more likely to be those who were male, earned a higher income, viewed vote buying as an important factor in making their vote choice, and were members of civic groups. These results confirmed what actually occurred in Thailand in 2006-7, where the Red

Table 6.7
Factors Affecting Protesting, by Rural-Urban Area of Residence (Logit)

	Protesting			Rural respondents only			Urban respondents only		
	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.
Political Engagement									
Interest	.017	.085		.020	.124		.071	.116	
Knowledge	1.784	.656	***	2.159	1.012	**	2.299	.825	***
Efficacy	-.142	.119		-.048	.164		-.258	.179	
Demographic									
Female	-.091	.328		.535	.469		-.746	.465	
Age	-.021	.014		-.038	.020	*	.007	.016	
Income	.268	.134	**	.247	.173		.509	.176	***
Education	-.049	.110		-.022	.147		-.132	.130	
Urban residence	-.084	.193		-2.183	1.642		-.522	.264	**
Experiences with regime									
Satisfaction with Democracy	.339	.220		.852	.348	**	.343	.310	
Government performance	-1.043	.298	***	-2.088	.460	***	.026	.385	
Clientelism									
Personal help	.277	.199		.206	.249		.024	.275	
Vote buying	.587	.187	***	.059	.301		.816	.226	***
Group mobilization									
Group membership	.332	.198	*	.074	.284		.588	.268	**
PPP attachment	.052	.407		-.114	.511		.358	.552	
DP attachment	.464	.412		.045	.622		.500	.551	
Constant	-7.685	1.613	***	-11.365	2.472	***	-5.549	2.138	***
N	1,380			799			581		
Nagelkerke R^2	.179			.241			.257		
Chi-square	58.393			48.183			48.788		
Model-significance	***			***			***		

Source: CSES 2007; Note: *P < 0.1 ** P < 0.05 *** P < 0.01

Shirts, whose majority were the rural, emerged to oppose the 2006 military coup; and then the main reason for these groups of people actively join the protests was their bad experiences with the government.

<center>Conclusion</center>

As we have learned from Chapter 4—that political engagement has changed in Thailand during the past decade—this chapter tells us more about this by arguing that changes in political engagement have appeared for both rural and urban Thai citizens in a different pattern. Focusing on the three political engagement variables (political interest, knowledge, and efficacy), this chapter presents mixed patterns of these factors between the two groups. It is evident that political interest and knowledge for both provincial and Bangkok residents have changed in ebb and flow trends, with slightly more provincial than Bangkok residents interested in the elections of 2001 and 2007, and a slightly higher score of knowledge for Bangkok voters in 2001 and 2005. Moreover, even though both Bangkok and provincial electorates reported moderate levels of political efficacy, growing trends in this attitude for both groups were clearly observed. Based on these findings, we may optimistically conclude that attitudes towards politics among rural and urban Thai citizens had changed in a hopeful direction.

The second part of this chapter then focuses on explaining the effects of these changing patterns on political activism (i.e., voting, political contacting, and protesting activities) between rural and urban Thai voters. The findings in this chapter confirm that the factors facilitating greater political participation were relatively different between rural and urban residents, and those differentiations depended on several factors and

varied according to different kinds of activities. Among those factors, political interest and political efficacy played an important role in fostering voting, in particular of the rural. Political knowledge increased political contacting and protesting of both rural and urban residents although it discouraged urban citizens to vote in an election. There was no backward effect of the clientelism factors on rural residents' political actions.

Furthermore, despite other resource-based and mobilization factors, democracy satisfaction tended to increase the political contacting of the urban. In this regard, we might conclude, based on what we have learned from the analyses in this chapter, that political changes in Thailand during the past decade have created new and (more) positive attitudes toward politics and democracy on the part of Thai citizens, regardless whether they are people living in less-developed rural or more modern urban areas. It is hard to conclude as generally described by the literature that rural Thais are less sophisticated and their political actions depend mostly on patron-client ties. Evidence of the greater participation in several modes of political activities among Thai citizens in the past ten years that we have observed in the previous chapters of this dissertation is therefore a sign of democratic progress in Thailand, although many challenges due to undemocratic powers and political conflicts between groups of citizens continue to exist.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Political participation is at the heart of democracy. As many scholars have mentioned, democracy is unthinkable without the ability of citizens to participate freely in the governing process (Dahl 1971; 1989; Verba, Brady, and Schlozman, 1995; Macedo et al., 2005; Dalton, 2006). Yet, not all citizens have participated in politics. In fact, while many citizens are active—they vote or engage in more demanding forms of participation—others are not. Moreover, citizens' political participatory patterns are not constant. They may vary on modes of action, space, and across time.

In countries where democracy has long been established, the erosion of traditional forms of involvement, such as voting and membership in political parties, was accompanied by an expansion of action repertoires, the rise of protest politics, and more individualized forms of action. However, for many countries where democracy is new and unstable, such as Thailand, an opposite trend can be seen in several modes of political activity: more people go to vote and an increasing number of them join political parties and various civic organizations, while protest politics and individualized forms of participation are, at the same time, more common in Thai citizens' lives.

The previous chapters examine changing in patterns of political participation and engagement in Thailand during the past decade (2001-2010). The empirical evidence

indicates that political participation among different groups of Thai citizens has changed toward a mixed trend—increasing or decreasing depended on types of activities and contexts. This chapter summarized the central argument developed throughout the dissertation, highlighted the key findings, and considered the implications for future research of democratic participation in Thailand and perhaps in other developing countries.

The period between 2001 and 2010 was characterized by several changes in Thai politics. This period began with a celebration of political reform under the 1997 Constitution and the emergence of the most popular political leader, Thaksin Shinawatra, and his party, Thai Rak Thai, during the first half of the decade. However, the political conflicts between a group of middle-class protesters and Thaksin's landslide victory elected government occurred in late 2005 and led to the military coup in September 2006. The military government was established with great support of middle class citizens at the beginning, but not Thaksin's supporters, those who formed the United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD), or known later as the Red Shirts, to oppose the military rule.

The new Constitution was drafted with some degree of public participation—the national referendum for eligible voters to vote in favor of or to reject the draft. The draft constitution was accepted by the majority of voters (58 percent) in the national referendum, and promulgated as the 18th Constitution of Thailand since August 20, 2007. Since the new constitution was used, the election was held in December 2007, then the civilian government was established after the election results were approved by the Election Commission, and eventually the military stepped aside. The political conflict

continued to exist because Thaksin's popularity remains still even though he has been in exile. Thai politics during the second half of the decade was in crisis under political contestations between groups of people—the Yellow Shirts, the Red Shirts, and the political elite. In order to understand the changing in patterns of citizen activism in such a momentous decade, this dissertation evaluated the quantity, quality, and equality of political participation and engagement in Thailand, and then explained how and why political participation has changed among groups of Thai citizens, in various modes of political action, and across time during the past decade.

<div align="center">

Changing in Quantity, Quality, and Equality of Political

Participation and Engagement in Thailand

</div>

Advocates of political participation and democratic development claimed that democracy is better if participation is widespread; more people go to vote, get involved with political parties or electoral activities, as well as participate more frequently in an organization or group (Marcedo et al., 2005: 8-10). The longitudinal analysis of political participation in this study showed that changes in quantity of political participation among Thai citizens during the past decade are quite mixed. While overall Thai citizens increasingly have participated in voting, decreasing trends of participation in campaigning and political contacting activities can be observed during some periods— especially when the country faced crisis or undemocratic power intervened in politics. Further, large numbers of them have contacted with government officials quite often in order to express their problems and concerns.

However, the levels of participation in campaigning and contacting actions have tended to decrease since the country experienced the political crisis in 2006. In addition, very few still reported using political parties, NGOs, and mass media as channels of political contacting. In contrast to other forms of political participation, and as a result of the 2006 political crisis, protest activism, which tended to decrease between 2002 and 2005, steadily increased since then. Moreover and importantly, an increasing trend of protest activism since 2006 is questionable whether this is an evidence of democratic progression in Thailand.

Thus, the overall results obtained from this study's longitudinal analysis of political participation do not provide evidence of constant progress in the quantity of political participation in Thailand but instead, suggest that people participate in politics differently depending on types of political activity and on the political environment. In addition, because these changing patterns of political participation accordingly are in line with up-and-down trends of party membership and group engagement, it can possibly conclude that political participation is strongly related to civic engagement and other modes of political involvement (e.g., party and group membership).

However, an increase in the number of Thai citizens going to vote, along with a mixed nature of people engaging in campaigns and nonconventional political activities and joining parties and voluntary groups, alone may not be adequate to conclude that Thailand now has progressive and meaningful political participation. That is, a healthy democracy also needs quality of participation, both in individual and institutional terms. More specifically, to participate in public affairs, citizens should be actively interested in politics, have proper participatory knowledge and skills, and believe in their potential to

bring about change or influence what is going on in politics. This dissertation clearly observed that changing in citizens' level of political interest, knowledge, and efficacy in Thailand during the past decade appears as ebb and flow trends rather than as constant increases. However, there also was evidence indicating that the quality of political participation in Thailand has changed in an optimistic direction.

First, based on results that show large proportions of Thai citizens following news on TV and reporting being interested in elections, political interest among citizens seems to be relatively high. In addition, more than half of Thai voters can correctly name at least two candidates and parties as well as match correctly which party the candidate belongs to, suggesting that Thai voters were not totally thoughtless about their electoral choices while showing up at the poll. Along with a moderate number of Thai citizens who believe in their own competence to understand and participate effectively in politics, improvement, rather than backwardness, in the quality of citizen participation in Thailand could be expected, at least, in the long run, if not in the near future.

The quantity and quality of political participation may be ineffectual if they produce uneven distribution. In this respect, democracy is better if the voices and interests of the people as a whole are concerned. There should be no institutional obstacle that undermines political participation among the disadvantaged, particularly the young, the poor, the less educated, and many racial and ethnic minorities. Influenced by studies in the Western democracies, has been conducted, seeking to find the best answer for the same type of these participatory questions. The dominant view in Thailand's political behavior research has claimed that females and the young, because they have lower

participatory resources and skills, are less likely than males or older people to participate in politics.

Furthermore, people living in rural areas, because they are poor and less-educated, are easily mobilized by influential persons and by personal benefit, and for this reason they are the most active groups in electoral activities. Based on this conventional wisdom, there should be unequal distribution of political participation among Thai citizens with different socioeconomic backgrounds. The examinations on changing in the equality of political participation in this dissertation confirmed that participation gaps between people with different geographic and socioeconomic backgrounds still exist.

However, a trend of a decline in such gaps can be clearly observed during the past decade in Thailand (at least, among some social groups such as between male and female and between in 2002 and in 2006). This decrease in the demographic and socioeconomic gap in participation between the socioeconomically disadvantaged and the rest of the population during the past decade is convincing evidence of a more equal distribution of political participation among Thais, although the overall participatory gap between the low-educated and the higher-educated still exists and has enlarged. The growing levels of participation among many groups, especially females, also are reasonable results to explain why overall levels of participation in the last decade have expanded.

The key findings that suggested optimistic trends of changing in the quantity, quality, and equality of political participation in Thailand's past ten years are important results but leave many questions untested. For example, why have the levels of participation among different groups changed? Do the participatory disparities among Thai citizens exist only because they have unequal resources and skills stemming from

differences in demographic and socioeconomic status? What are the factors that have caused the expanding trend of political participation in Thailand? And more specifically, and perhaps most importantly, because overall political participation and engagement have changed in a consistent trend, are political engagement factors such as political interest and efficacy good explanations for the changing patterns of participation among different groups? Chapter 5 and 6 offered some preliminary answers to these questions. Those answers help to explain how and why political participation and engagement has changed in Thailand during the past decade.

Factors Explaining Changing in Patterns of Political Participation

Research on the factors that may affect people's political participation has been widely conducted by American political scientists, and those studies' models and theories have long been applied and modified by Thai scholars. We could not reject that the previous studies in the case of Thailand have done a very good job in explaining how and why Thai people become involved in politics. Nevertheless, those studies cannot tell us much about how and why participation among Thai citizens has changed across time and context. The main reason is that too much focus was placed on the factors of socioeconomic status and mobilization (which mostly means the influence of clientelism and vote buying). This study does not completely ignore the impacts of such factors on political participation in Thailand but views previous explanations as incomplete.

This study recognizes that political participation is fostered by a variety of characteristics that predispose an individual to becoming politically involved. These political predispositions have changed over time and might be shaped by political

contexts. This dissertation thus proposed a participatory model that included not only socioeconomic status but also various attitudinal and mobilization factors to be tested in several contexts (years) as a more proper way to explain changes in the patterns of political participation in Thailand during the past ten years.

By using improved methods, this study clearly shows that participatory differences among groups of Thai citizens were not solely a consequence of differences in socioeconomic status backgrounds. Rather, there are various psychological, motivational, and contextual factors affecting participatory disparities among social groups. More specifically, this study provided evidence indicating that Thai citizens with more positive attitudes toward politics (being more interested in politics, knowing better about politics, and feeling more efficacious about engaging in politics) were more politically active in various democratic activities than those with more negative attitudes. Further, individual Thais who have close relationships with specific groups/parties tended to participate more in political activities than those who have fewer such relationships or none. The levels of political participation of Thai voters who have had a positive experience with political institutions were systematically greater than those of individuals who have had negative experiences.

Moreover, using time-series data with several controls and considering the impacts of many potential factors on various modes of political actions, this study concluded that socioeconomic, engagement and mobilization factors impact on political participation depending on modes of political activism—voting, campaign activities, political contacting, and protests. According to this study's logistic regression analysis of the 2002 ABS data, it is true, as many of the aforementioned scholars have argued, that

Thai citizens who are male, older, and living in the rural areas are more likely than their socioeconomic counterparts to participate in politics.

However, such a causal link is true only in many, but not all, types of political activity, especially when controlling for political engagement and motivation factors. For example, Thai males are more active than Thai females only in campaign and political contacting activities. Secondly, there is no participatory difference between younger and older Thais in the other three activities, whereas younger Thais are more likely than the older to take part in protests. Thirdly, while the lower-income Thais are more likely than the better-off to participate in campaign activity, the richer Thais are more active in taking part in protesting. Fourthly, education is not a very good predictor of most of the four activities, except political contacting, which shows that the higher level of education, the more often political contacting is carried out. Finally, rural Thais are more likely than the urban to participate in three of the four political activities—campaign activities, political contacting, and protesting, whereas there is no participatory difference between them in voting.

The results that show more politically activism of Thai people having fewer *resources* (e.g., skill or money) such as the younger and the lower income group can possibly be interpreted as indirect evidence of the continuing influence of clientelism on political participation if we consider them together with the results that demonstrate the positive impacts of party attachment and group membership on participation. That is, Thai citizens having fewer *resources* to manipulate participation may participate more in political activities because they are mobilized, forced, or even paid by influence persons or groups whom they feel close to or have close/personal relations with.

However, because all of the political interest and efficacy factors have positive impacts on participation in the same analysis, the positive impacts of the mobilization factors on participation can be interpreted rather as causes of individuals' civic orientations—enhancing individuals' attitudes that eventually stimulate participation. Indeed, whether the younger or the low income group are paid or forced to join political activities, at least, they have enough *skills* (e.g., knowledge and ability to access political information) to manipulate their political participation effective.

In addition, these participatory patterns of different groups in the four key political activities do not constant but change when the political context changes. The results from the logistic regression analysis of the 2006 ABS data showed, for example, that while ability to participate in politics is significant and had a positive impact on voting in 2002, such a factor is not significantly related to voting for 2006. Instead, it is evident that people that have a higher level of income, that follow political news more often, that feel less efficacious about understanding what is going on in politics, and that are members of groups/associations were more likely to vote in the 2006 election than the average person.

Additionally and most surprisingly, the mobilization factors which played a significant role in fostering contacting activism for 2002 had no significant impact on political contacting for 2006. Another interesting finding is that none of the political engagement factors was associated with protesting. Rather, this study's analysis presented that people that actively engaged in protest politics in 2006 were more likely to be those that earned a higher income and that felt close to a political party, regardless as how much interest in politics they showed or how politically efficacious they felt. In

short, various pictures of political participation among groups of Thai citizens between 2002 and 2006, as well as the loss of impact of several political engagement and mobilization factors on individual types of political actions, indicate that the impacts of socioeconomic, engagement and mobilization factors on political participation vary over time: these factors may impact participation in one context but not necessarily in others.

The differential rates of participation for any subgroup deserve attention, but rural-urban differences are particularly worthy of attention in the case of Thailand. This study investigates rural-urban differences with respect to the diverse set of predispositions that shape individual's motivation and propensity to take part in politics. It finds that the attitudes toward politics between rural and urban Thai citizens were neither constantly negative nor positive, and were not easy to explain solely based on each group's differences in socioeconomic status or area of living, as preceding scholars have suggested.

This study obviously show that even though the provincial Thais were poorer and had lower level of education than Bangkok residents, they were not less interested in, less informed about, and politically less efficacious to engage in politics than their Bangkok counterparts. Moreover, in many cases they reported greater engagement attitudes than the metropolis citizens. This political engagement figure of provincial voters firmly challenges conventional wisdoms especially those that has labeled rural voters as ill informed, uninterested, and easily deceived.

On the other hand, as with what other scholars indicated, the richer and higher-educated Bangkokians have relatively strong awareness of politics: they reported high levels of interested in the elections, especially in 2005, and had great knowledge about

political parties and candidates in 2001 and 2005 elections. However, the ebb and flow of their political engagement indicated that urban Thai citizens' attitudes towards politics are not constantly negative as preceding scholars had suggested but depend on various factors such as political contexts and their experiences with the political system as well. These findings are convincingly enough for this dissertation to conclude that attitudes towards politics among rural and urban Thai citizens have changed in a favorable direction, although many challenges due to undemocratic powers (i.e., military) and political conflicts between groups of Thai citizens continue to exist.

Implications for Understanding the Political Activism of Citizens in the Transitional Democracy of Thailand

Although the literature regarding political participation in Thailand has been growing and has become diversified during the past twenty years, there are still many areas which require considerable attention. As this study discussed earlier, the conceptualization of political participation has developed from a very narrow sense of electoral participation (e.g., voting and participating in campaign activities) to a broader view that includes several forms of nonelectoral participation, such as contacting public officials and working with others to solve community problems. Several studies in American and comparative politics also have incorporated unconventional participation—protests, demonstrations, and political violence—into their inquiry.

However, most Thai literature has defined political participation as participation in electoral activities, especially voting and campaign activities. There are few empirical studies on political contacting and protests. Defining political participation in a broad

sense by including four key activities—voting, campaigning, political contacting, and protesting, this study demonstrated a clearer picture than previous research on political participation in Thai democracy. In order to explain more precisely political participation of Thai citizens, this dissertation suggests future research to deal more intensively with both conventional and unconventional activities. This dissertation also suggests Thai democratic reformists consider a variety of political actions before enacting any citizenship empowerment program to Thai citizens.

This dissertation provided answers not only to questions about the extent to which Thai citizens participate in a set of political activities, but also questions relating to what particular type of political acts they engage in more often, with whom, how much, and why. However, because the modes of political participation are dynamic—in the sense that outdated action may not match citizens' way of life any more while new forms of political action emerge every day—it is worthwhile studying other modes of political action that have existed and will tend to be widespread in the near future; empirical data concerning such actions, however, are rare or unavailable, such as participation by using social media to influence the decisions of government personnel.

Thus, future research in the Thai case needs to collect more data regarding these kinds of activity. At the same time, democratic reformists should take such new forms of political action into account, by providing political spaces for citizens to express their needs and opinions. Because this dissertation indicated the development of political activism is closely related to a vibrancy of civic engagement and party attachment, empowering robust and pluralistic civil society and designing a responsive political party

are possible ways to help political participation of citizens in transitional society like Thailand more meaningful and progress.

In addition, even though this study uncovered a number of important and interesting connections between political participation and a variety of potential factors, especially political engagement (i.e., political interest, knowledge, and efficacy), socioeconomic status, clientelism, group mobilization, and experience with regime factors, one could expand this study's explanations by constructing alternative empirical indicators based on the Thai political context, especially indicators relating to patron-client relations and vote-buying. Indeed, further research may benefit from collecting new data that are more proper than those that were used in this dissertation to invent patron-client relations and vote-buying factors as truly institutional factors rather than as kinds of attitudinal factors (opinions toward patron-client relations and vote-buying), as this dissertation has done under the limitation of data availability. Future study might also collect more data and redefine this study's measurement of Red- and Yellow-supporters (i.e., feeling close to one particular party that was supported by Red Shirt or Yellow Shirt movements) by emphasizing Thai voters based on a differentiation of their political positions/ideologies (e.g., Red-shirts/Yellow-shirts, Liberalist/Royalist, and so on).

Furthermore, the empirical analyses in this dissertation may benefit from getting empirical data for more years, even though this study's theoretical arguments and findings ought not to be sample-dependent. For example, one might apply the participatory models developed in this study to examinations that employ more recent survey data, especially those that will be released after the 2011 House of Representatives election in Thailand (i.e., July 3, 2011).

Last but not least, though the answers derived from the Thai case, according to this study, provided a clearer understanding of the relationships among individual-level factors (particularly socioeconomic and psychological factors), motivation (group engagement), political contexts, and various forms of political participation across time, future study could produce interesting and useful insights for both academics and policymakers by adopting improved approaches of those used in this dissertation to other developing countries, where political changes and reforms have dramatically occurred during the past decades as well.

<div align="center">Final Words</div>

Thailand went through a near-death experience last May 2010. The period since then has not been consolidated, as political conflicts among several groups of political leaders have continued, even though many situations have changed, in particular the split into several groups within Yellow-Shirt supporters due to disagreements on the Thai-Cambodian border problems and the direction for their future movement, while the Red Shirts are growing and moving beyond the issues of Thaksin to issues of political equality and justice. Many roadmaps (or blueprints) for new political reform have been proposed by several groups of reformists and scholars, but wide concern about the return of the military still exist—even in a period when a new election is coming (July 3, 2011). This dissertation presented evidence confirming that these on-going phenomena are not simply political conflicts among people at the top of the pyramid, but are a result of the political awakening of Thai citizens, both rural and urban.

In order to make democracy in Thailand healthier, this dissertation encourages the political elite and future reformers to recognize that Thai citizens, whether they are poor and living in less-developed areas, are more politically sophisticated and active than they thought or understood. Thai citizens are well-informed, politically interested, and not easily deceived. As a result, investments in political reform by emphasizing only initiating laws and regulations aimed at preventing the bad effects of patron-client relations and vote-buying are useless. Using nondemocratic tools (e.g., military coups) to solve political problems is out-of-date, unacceptable, and rather leads to worse situations. Instead, with a great number of wakeful Thai citizens, this is the time for designing and building efficiency and responsive democratic institutions by listening more carefully and with respectful to all voices.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY DATA AND SAMPLE DESIGNS

About the Surveys

Survey data analyzed in this dissertation were collected by the Asian Barometer Project—ABS (2005-2008) and the Comparative Study of Electoral System—CSES MODULE 1, 2, and 3. The Asian Barometer Project was co-directed by Professors Fu Hu and Yun-han Chu and received major funding support from Taiwan's Ministry of Education, Academia Sinica and National Taiwan University. CSES MODULE 1, 2, and 3 are based on work supported by the National Science Foundation (www.nsf.gov), the University of Michigan, and the many organizations that fund election studies by CSES collaborators. All of these surveys conducted in Thailand with a great coordination of King Prajadhipok's Institute (KPI), a leading national academic institute that aims to develop consolidated and peaceful democracy in the country. The author appreciates the assistance in providing data by the institutes and individuals aforementioned.

The views expressed herein are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the funding organizations. This appendix describes sample designs and methods used in the field surveys of the ABS and CSES in Thailand.

ABS Surveys in Thailand

Each year survey (i.e., 2002, 2006) conducted in Thailand by ABS is designed as below.

Asian Barometer: Thailand 2002

The sampling plan for the study consisted of two-stage cluster sampling, plus systematic sampling of the final populations. The stages are:

1) Systematic random sampling of 50 legislative constituencies from the 400 in the nation. This produces the following distribution of constituencies by region:

Central and Eastern Regions (including Bangkok)—16 constituencies

Northern Region—10 constituencies

Northeastern Region—17 constituencies

Southern Region—7 constituencies

2) Systematic random sampling of 100 voting units across the clusters of legislative constituencies produces the following distribution by region:

Central and Eastern Regions (including Bangkok)—28 voting units

Northern Region—22 voting units

Northeastern Region—38 voting units

Southern Region—12 voting units

3) Systematic random sampling of respondents from across these voting units produces an N of 1,546 and the following distribution by region:

Central and Eastern Regions (including Bangkok)—538 respondents

Northern Region—297 respondents

Northeastern Region—514 respondents

Southern Region—197 respondents

If selected respondents are unavailable, substitutes of the same gender were obtained from names on either side of the chosen respondent on the voting list. This procedure yield an N of 1,546 respondents.

After translating the questionnaire into Thai, teams of interviewers visited each of the selected respondents who completed the questionnaire provided by the coordinators of the project. Each survey team coordinates with a regional supervisor and other assistants from the particular region.

Asian Barometer: Thailand 2006

The sampling process for the survey consisted of a two-stage cluster sampling, plus a systematic sampling of the final population. The stages included:

1) A systematic sample of 50 legislative districts drawn from the 400 districts of the Thai Parliament. Region Numbers of Election Constituencies include:

North—9 constituencies

Northeast—17 constituencies

South—7 constituencies

Central and East—12 constituencies

Bangkok—5 constituencies

2) The second stage of clusters consisted of 100 voting units (precincts) obtained by a systematic sample from across the fifty legislative districts. Region Voting units include:

North—19 voting units

Northeast—40 voting units

South—11 voting units

Central and East—22 voting units

Bangkok—8 voting units

3) The third stage consists of systematically sampling roughly 1,500 individuals from across the 100 voting lists. Region Numbers (persons) include:

North—252 respondents

Northeast—514 respondents

South—193 respondents

Central and East—403 respondents

Bangkok—184 respondents

Roughly 1,500 respondents were drawn from a population of 43,261. Because the "skip interval" exceeded 28.84, a more conservative approach using 28 as the interval yielded 1,546 respondents. If a selected respondent was unavailable, a substitute of the same gender and age was obtained by selecting a name from either side of the chosen respondent on the voting list. This procedure yielded an n-value of 1,546 respondents.

After translating the questionnaire into Thai, teams of interviewers visited each of the selected respondents who completed the questionnaire provided by the coordinators of the project. Each survey team coordinates with a regional supervisor and other assistants from the particular region. According to the schedule plan, the researchers simultaneously began to interview the respondents on April 3, 2006, and data collection was completed on April 18, 2006.

CSES Surveys in Thailand

Each year survey (i.e., 2001, 2005, 2007) conducted in Thailand by CSES is designed as below.

2001 Thai Election Study

The sample for the 2001 Thai election study is composed of 1,081 respondents from a sample of 1,250. Respondents were interviewed as a panel both pre-election and post-election (House of Representatives elections, January 6, 2001). Questions were asked verbally, in the language or dialect spoken in the home. The sample was drawn in the following manner:

1) Stratification by region. This included: a. North - 4 provinces; b. Northeast - 3 provinces; c. Central - 3 provinces; d. Bangkok; e. South - 5 provinces. Each region was to produce 250 respondents.

2) Cluster sampling within regions by systematic sampling of polling units. Each region sampled 50 polling units.

3) Systematic sampling of eligible voters across the polling units in each region.

4) These data allow statistical analysis comparing regions. However, in order to generalize across all respondents, the data may be weighted by populations of the province to reflect the relative populations of the provinces. The WEIGHT variable is designated in the data set.

2005 Thai Election Study

The sample for the 2005 Thai election study is composed of 2,000 respondents. The sample was drawn relying on a three-stage probability sample. This sampling method based upon clusters of legislative districts, then of voting units (precincts), followed by a systematic sampling of voters in the selected voting units. The sample included 50 of 400 legislative districts, 100 voting units from across the 50 legislative districts, and systematic sampling of respondents across the 100 voting units. Respondents were interviewed as a panel both pre-election and post-election (House of Representatives elections, February 6, 2005). Questions were asked verbally, in the language or dialect spoken in the home.

2007 Thai Election Study

The sample selection procedures for the 2007 Thai election survey rely on a three-stage probability sample. This sampling method based upon clusters of legislative districts, then of voting units (precincts), followed by a systematic sampling of voters in the selected voting units. The sample included 50 of 145 legislative districts, 100 voting units from across the 50 legislative districts, and systematic sampling of respondents across the 100 voting units. Roughly 2,000 respondents were drawn, because the "skip interval". Therefore, the sample for the 2007 Thai election study is composed of 2,006 respondents (included an over-sample of roughly 500 respondents from Bangkok).[61] Respondents were interviewed as a panel both pre-election and post-election (House of

---

[61] These over-sample respondents were weighted as a corrected proportion of the Thai sample; so that the total number of sample in the analysis is 1,683.

Representatives elections, December 23, 2007). Questions were asked verbally, in the language or dialect spoken in the home.

APPENDIX B

VARIABLES USED IN THE ANALYSES

Table B.1

Variables Used in Quantity of Political Participation Study

Indicators	Measure	Type	Source	Method
Voting				
- Voter turnout	% Vote turnout	Existing statistic	Election Commission (over time)	Graph / longitude analysis
Campaign activities				
- Attending election meeting or rally, and	% of "yes" respond to survey question: Do you attend election meeting or rally?	Secondary survey data	ABS (2002; 2006); CSES (2001; 2005); King Prajadhipok's Institute (2007).	Graph / longitude analysis
- Showing support to certain political parties or candidates	% of "yes" respond to survey question: Did you do anything else to help or show your support for a party or candidate running in the election?	Secondary survey data	ABS (2002; 2006); CSES (2001; 2005); King Prajadhipok's Institute (2007).	Graph / longitude analysis
Political contacting				
- Contacting officials	% of "yes" respond to survey question: In the past three (3) years, have you NEVER, ONCE, or MORE THAN ONCE done the following because of personal, family, or neighborhood problems, or problems with government officials and policies? – Any government official	Secondary survey data	ABS (2002; 2006)	Graph / longitude analysis
	% of "yes" respond to survey question: For each one I read, please just tell me whether you have done it in the last 12 months, or not? – Government officials.	Secondary survey data	CSES (2005; 2007)	Graph / longitude analysis

Table B.1 (continued)

Indicators	Measure	Type	Source	Method
- Contacting contacted elected representatives	% of "yes" respond to survey question: In the past three (3) years, have you NEVER, ONCE, or MORE THAN ONCE done the following because of personal, family, or neighborhood problems, or problems with government officials and policies? – elected representatives at national level	Secondary survey data	ABS (2002; 2006)	Graph / longitude analysis
	% of "yes" respond to survey question: For each one I read, please just tell me whether you have done it in the last 12 months, or not? —elected representatives at national level.	Secondary survey data	CSES (2005; 2007)	Graph / longitude analysis
Protest activism				
- Protesting	% of "yes" respond to survey question: If you had contacts in the past three (3) years, because of personal, family, or neighborhood problems, or problems with government officials and policies, Did you do this alone or with others?—demonstration, strike, sit-in	Secondary survey data	ABS (2002; 2006)	Graph / longitude analysis
	% of "yes" respond to survey question: For each one I read, please just tell me whether you have done it in the last 12 months, or not? —taken part in demonstration, march, or protest	Secondary survey data	CSES (2005; 2007)	Graph / longitude analysis

Table B.2

Variables Used in Quality of Political Participation Study

Indicators	Measure	Type	Source	Method
Political interest				
- Interested in the election	Mean of political interest scale (out of 10): How interested are you in the election?	Secondary survey data	CSES (2001; 2005; 2007)	Graph / longitude analysis
- Attention to the news media (TV)	% of "3-5 a week" or "every day" respond to survey question: how often you have watched news report on TV during the past seven days?	Existing statistic	National Statistic Bureau (2001-2007)	Graph / longitude analysis
- Attention to the news media (radio)	% of "3-5 a week" or "every day" respond to survey question: how often you have listened news report on radio during the past seven days?	Existing statistic	National Statistic Bureau 2001-2007)	Graph / longitude analysis
- Attention to the news media (newspaper)	% of "3-5 a week" or "every day" respond to survey question: how often you have read newspaper during the past seven days?	Existing statistic	National Statistic Bureau (2001-2007)	Graph / longitude analysis
Political knowledge				
- Name of candidate	% of respondents who can identify at least two names of candidate in their constituency	Secondary survey data	CSES (2001; 2005; 2007)	Graph / longitude analysis

Table B.2 (continued)

Indicators	Measure	Type	Source	Method
- Name of political party	% of respondents who can identify at least 2 parties sending candidate in the election, and	Secondary survey data	CSES (2001; 2005; 2007)	Graph / longitude analysis
- Match candidate and party	% of respondents who can match correctly candidate and party they belong to.	Secondary survey data	CSES (2001; 2005; 2007)	Graph / longitude analysis
Political efficacy - Internal Efficacy	% of "6-10" rate for the 10-points scale question: Do you agree with the following statement—If people like us go to vote, we can change what happen in the future	Secondary survey data	CSES (2001; 2005; 2007)	Graph / longitude analysis
	% of "6-10" rate for the 10-points scale question: Do you agree with the following statement—Sometimes I think that I just don't understand politics.	Secondary survey data	CSES (2001; 2005; 2007)	Graph / longitude analysis

Table B.2 (continued)

Indicators	Measure	Type	Source	Method
- External Efficacy	% of "6-10" rate for the 10-points scale question: Do you agree with the following statement—Government officials really do not care what people like you and me think	Secondary survey data	CSES (2001; 2005; 2007)	Graph / longitude analysis
	% of "6-10" rate for the 10-points scale question: Do you agree with the following statement—Common people like me don't have any influence on what go on in politics	Secondary survey data	CSES (2001; 2005; 2007)	Graph / longitude analysis

Table B.3

Variables Used in Equality of Political Participation Study

Indicators	Measure/ description	Coding
1. Dependent Variables:	Political participation	
Voting		
- Voting	Responses to survey question: Did you cast a ballot in the election?	0 = no 1 = yes
Campaign activities		
- Attending election meeting or rally, and	Responses to survey question: Do you attend election meeting or rally?	0 = no 1 = yes
- Showing support to certain political parties or candidates	Responses to survey question: Did you do anything else to help or show your support for a party or candidate running in the election?	0 = no 1 = yes
Political contacting		
- Contacting officials	Responses to survey question: In the past three 3 years, have you done the following because of personal, family, or neighborhood problems, or problems with government officials and policies?—Any government official	0 = no 1 = yes
- Contacting contacted elected representatives	Responses to survey question: In the past three 3 years, have you done the following because of personal, family, or neighborhood problems, or problems with government officials and policies?—National elected representatives	0 = no 1 = yes

Table B.3 (continued)

Indicators	Measure/ description	Coding
Protest activism		
- Protesting	Responses to survey question: If you had contacts in the past three (3) years, because of personal, family, or neighborhood problems, or problems with government officials and policies, Did you do this alone or with others?—demonstration, strike, sit-in	0 = no 1 = yes
2. Independent variables:		
Gender	Respondent's gender	0 = Male 1 = Female
Age	Respondent's age	0 = 18-25 years old 1 = 26 years old and over
Income	Average household's earn during the last 6 months:	0 = the poor ($1 per day or lower in 2002 and earn $1.3 per day or lower in 2006) 1 = the better-off
Education	Respondent's educational level	0 = no formal education and incomplete primary education 1 = Completed primary education and higher
Urban / rural resident	Respondent's area of living	0 = village/small town 1 = large city/metropolitan

Source: ABS (2002; 2006)
Note: Method used in the study is bivariate table.

Table B.4

Variables Used in Multivariate Models of Political Participation Index

Indicators	Measure/ description	Coding
1. Dependent Variables:		
Political participation index	Sum of six political activities:	0-6
2. Independent variables:		
Demographic		
Gender	Respondent's gender	0-1: 0 = Male; 1 = Female
Age	Respondent's age	18-highest
Income	Average household's earn during the last 6 months	0-4: 0 = the lowest income category (earn 30 USD a month); 4 = the highest income category (earn 1,200 USD per month and over)
Education	Respondent's educational level	0-3: 0 = incomplete primary school and lower; 3 = having some university degree and higher
Urban / rural resident	Respondent's area of living	0-1: 0 = village/small town; 1 = large city/metropolitan
Political Engagement		
Interest	Responses to survey question: How much interested you are in the politics.	0-10: 0 = not at all interested; 10 = very much interested

Table B.4 (continued)

Indicators	Measure/ description	Coding
Efficacy: participation	Responses to survey question: Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree with the following statement - "I think I have the ability to participate in politics"	0-3: 0 = strongly disagree; 3 = strongly agree [Note: Original question used 1-4 scales: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree. The scale was convert and coded as above in the analysis]
Efficacy: understand	Responses to survey question: Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree with the following statement - "Sometimes politics and government seems so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what is going on"	0-3: 0 = strongly agree; 3 = strongly disagree [Note: Original question used 1-4 scales: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree. The scale was coded as above in the analysis]
Mobilization		
Party Attachment	Responses to survey question: Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular party? If yes, another question asked the respondents how much close they feel.	0-3: 0 = feel not close to any party; 3 = feel very much close to some party
Group Membership	Responses to survey question: "Are you a member of any organization or formal groups?"	0-1: 0 = no; 1 = yes

Source: ABS (2002; 2006)
Note: Method used in the study is multivariate regression.

Table B.5

Variables Used in Multivariate Models of Voting, Campaign Activities,
Political Contacting, and Protesting

Indicators	Measure/ description	Coding
1. Dependent Variables (for each model):		
1.1 Voting		
- Voting	Responses to survey question: Did you cast a ballot in the election?	0-1: 0 = no; 1 = yes
1.2 Campaign activities		
- Attending election meeting or rally	Responses to survey question: Do you attend election meeting or rally?	0-1: 0 = no for both; 1 = yes for either one
- Showing support to certain political parties or candidates	Responses to survey question: Did you do anything else to help or show your support for a party or candidate running in the election?	
1.3 Political contacting		
- Contacting officials - Contacting officials at higher level	Responses to survey question: In the past three 3 years, have you done the following because of personal, family, or neighborhood problems, or problems with government officials and policies? – Any government official – Officials at higher level	0-1: 0 = no for both; 1 = yes for either one

Table B.5 (continued)

Indicators	Measure/ description	Coding
1.4 Protest activism		
- Protesting	Responses to survey question: If you had contacts in the past three (3) years, because of personal, family, or neighborhood problems, or problems with government officials and policies, Did you do this alone or with others?—demonstration, strike, sit-in	0-1: 0 = no; 1 = yes
2. Independent variables:		
Demographic		
Gender (Female)	Respondent's gender	0-1: 0 = Male; 1 = Female
Age	Respondent's age	18-highest
Income	Average household's earn during the last 6 months	0-4: 0 = the lowest income category (earn 30 USD a month); 4 = the highest income category (earn 1,200 USD per month and over)
Education	Respondent's educational level	0-3: 0 = incomplete primary school and lower; 3 = having some university degree and higher
Urban / rural resident	Respondent's area of living	0-1: 0 = village/small town; 1 = large city/metropolitan
Political Engagement		
Interest	Responses to survey question: How much interested you are in the politics.	0-10: 0 = not at all interested; 10 = very much interested

Table B.5 (continued)

Indicators	Measure/ description	Coding
Follow news	Responses to survey question: how often they follow news about politics and government	0-4: 0 = never; 4 = always
Efficacy: participation	Responses to survey question: Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree with the following statement - "I think I have the ability to participate in politics"	0-3: 0 = strongly disagree; 3 = strongly agree [Note: Original question used 1-4 scales: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree. The scale was convert and coded as above in the analysis]
Efficacy: understand	Responses to survey question: Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree with the following statement - "Sometimes politics and government seems so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what is going on"	0-3: 0 = strongly agree; 3 = strongly disagree [Note: Original question used 1-4 scales: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree. The scale was coded as above in the analysis]
Mobilization Party Attachment	Responses to survey question: Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular party? If yes, another question asked the respondents how much close they feel.	0-3: 0 = feel not close to any party; 3 = feel very much close to some party

Table B.5 (continued)

Indicators	Measure/ description	Coding
Group Membership	Responses to survey question: "Are you a member of any organization or formal groups?"	0-1: 0 = no; 1 = yes
Experiences with Regime		
Fair election	Responses to survey question:	0-3: 0 = not free or fair; 3 = completely free and fair
Government satisfaction	Responses to survey question:	0-3: 0 = very dissatisfied; 3 = very satisfied

Source: ABS (2002; 2006)
Note: Method used in the study is logistic regression.

Table B.6

Variables Used in Multivariate Models of Voting, Political Contacting, and
Protesting by Area of Residence (Rural-Urban)

Indicators	Measure/ description	Coding
1. Dependent Variables (for each model):		
1.1 Voting	Responses to survey question: Did you cast a ballot in the current election (December 23, 2007)?	0-1: 0 = no; 1 = yes
1.2 Political contacting	Responses to survey question: During the past 12 months, have you done the following because of personal, family, or neighborhood problems, or problems with government officials and policies? – Any government official – Officials at higher level – Member of parliament – Local officials	0-4: 0 = contacted to none; 1 = contacted to 1; contacted to 2; 3 = contacted to 3; and 4 = contacted to 4.
1.4 Protest activism	Responses to survey question: Did you do this alone or with others? — demonstration, strike, sit-in	0-1: 0 = no; 1 = yes
2. Independent variables:		
Political Engagement Interest	Responses to survey question: How much interested you are in the forthcoming election (December 23, 2007).	0-10: 0 = not at all interested; 10 = very much interested

Table B.6 (continued)

Indicators	Measure/ description	Coding
Knowledge	Knowledge score: (1) ability to name correctly of one candidate (2) ability to name correctly of second candidate; (3) ability to name correctly of one party; (4) ability to name correctly of second party; (5) ability to match correctly one candidate and party; and (6) ability to match correctly second candidate and party.	0-6 [Note: 0 = incorrect, 1 = correct for each component]
Efficacy	Mean score of agreement with the statements: (1) "If people like us go to vote, we can change what happens in the future;" (2) "Sometimes I think that I just don't understand politics;" (3) "Government officials really do not care what people like you and me think;" and (4) "Common people like me don't have any influence on what go on in politics."	0-9: 0 = strongly disagree; 10 = strongly agree [Note: Original question used 1-10 scales: 1 = strongly disagree, 10 = strongly agree. This scale was recoded to range from 0 (least efficacious) to 9 (strongest efficacious) in the analysis]

Table B.6 (continued)

Indicators	Measure/ description	Coding
Demographic		
Gender (Female)	Respondent's gender	0-1: 0 = Male; 1 = Female
Age	Respondent's age	18-highest
Income	Average household's earn during the last 6 months	0-4: 0 = the lowest income category (earn 170 USD a month); 4 = the highest income category (earn 1,300 USD per month and over)
Education	Respondent's educational level	0-3: 0 = incomplete primary school and lower; 3 = having some university degree and higher
Urban residence	Respondent's area of living	0-4: 0 = village/small town; 1 = midsized provincial city residents; 2 = large provincial city residents; 3 = Bangkok residents
Experiences with regime		
Satisfaction with democracy	Responses to a question asking whether the respondent is very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in Thailand	0-3: 0 = not at all satisfied, 3 = very satisfied [Note: Original question used 1-4 scales: 1 = very satisfied, 4 = not at all satisfied. This scale was converted to range as above in the analysis]

Table B.6 (continued)

Indicators	Measure/ description	Coding
Government performance	Mean score of responses to following questions: How good or bad a job do you think the government has done over the past: (1) economy; (2) education; (3) employment; (4) poverty reduction; (5) health care; (6) crime; (7) accidents; and (8) environment	0-3 [Note: 0 = very bad, 3 = very good for each component]
Clientelism		
Personal benefit	Factors use in deciding candidate: having an ability to solve your personal problems	0-3: 0 = not at all important, 1 = very important
Vote-buying	Factors use in deciding candidate: giving you a money	0-3: 0 = not at all important, 1 = very important
Mobilization		
Group Membership	Civic organization index: (1) union membership (2) business or employer's association membership (3) farmer's association membership (4) professional association membership	0-4 [Note: 0 = no, 1 = yes for each component]
PPP attachment	Responses to survey question: Is there a political party that represents your view? If yes, another question asked the respondents: what is that party? [PPP]	0-1: 0 = none or others, 1 = PPP
DP attachment	Responses to survey question: Is there a political party that represents your view? If yes, another question asked the respondents: what is that party? [DP]	0-1: 0 = none or others, 1 = DP

Source: CSES (2007)

Note: Methods used in the study consist of logistic regression for voting and protesting and linear regression for politic

REFERENCES

Abhichart Naksook. 1993. *Phrutikam kanluaktang khong prachchon nai phuenti khet Meanburi* [Voting behavior of Meanburi citizens]. M.A. thesis, Ramkhamhaeng University.

Abhichart Sthitniramai. 2010. "Who Are the Red Shirts and Why Have They Come Out?" *Matichon*, 20 July 2010. http://www.matichon.co.th/news_detail.php?newsid=1279607815&grpid=01&catid=(http://www.matichon.co.th/news_detail.php?newsid=1279607815&grpid=01&catid=) Accessed on April 23, 2011.

Abramson, Paul R., and John H. Aldrich. 1982. "The Decline of Electoral Participation in America." *American Political Science Review* 76 (3): 502-521.

Akarawit Khankaew. 1996. *Nakthurakit phumipak kap kanmeesuanruam thang kanmueang: suksa Khonkhan* [Regional businessmen and political participation: Khonkhan province case study]. M.A. thesis, Thamasat University.

Albritton, Robert B. 2006. Thailand in 2005: The Struggle for Democratic Consolidation, *Asian Survey*, 46: 140-7.

Albritton, Robert B., and Thawilwadee Bureekul. 2005. "Developing Democratic Elections under a New Constitution in Thailand." In *Understanding Modern East Asian Politics*, ed. Christian Schafferer. New York: Nova Science Publishers.

Albritton, Robert B., and Thawilwadee Bureekul. 2008. "Developing Democracy under a New Constitution in Thailand." In *How East Asians View Democracy*, ed. Yun-Han Chu et al. New York: Columbia University Press.

Almond, Gabriel, and Sidney Verba. 1989. *The Civic Culture*: *Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publication.

Ammar Siamwalla. 1997. "Can a Developing Democracy Manage Its Macroeconomy? The Case of Thailand," *TDRI Quarterly Review* 12 (4): 3-10.

Ammar Siamwalla and Somchai Jitsuchon. 2011. "The Socio-Economic Bases of the Red-Yellow Divide: A Statistical Analysis." In *Bangkok, May 2010: Perspectives on a Divided Thailand*, ed. Michael J. Montesano, Pavin Chachavalpongpun, and Aekapol Chongvilaivan. Singapore: institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS).

Anek Laothamatas. 1995. *Song Nakara Prachathiptai* [A Tale of Two Democracies]. Bangkok: Torch Press.

Anek Laothamatas. 1996. "A Tale of Two Democracies: Conflicting Perceptions of Elections and Democracy in Thailand." In The Politics of Elections in Southeast Asia, ed. R.H. Taylor. Washington, D.C.: Cambridge University Press.

Ansolabehere, Stephen, Shanto Iyengar, Adam Simon, and Nicholas Valentino. 1994. "Does Attack Advertising Demobilize the Electorate?" *American Political Science Review* 88 (4): 829-838.

Anyarat Chattharakul. 2007. "Networks of Vote-Canvassers in Thai Elections: Informal Power and Money Politics," PhD Thesis, University of Leeds.

Arghiros, Daniel. 2001. *Democracy, Development and Decentralization in Provincial Thailand*. Richmond, Surrey: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies.

Askew, Marc. 2008. *Performing Political Identity: The Democrat Party in Southern Thailand*. Chiang Mai, Thailand: Silkworm Books.

Askew, Marc. 2010. "Confrontation and Crisis in Thailand, 2008-2010." In *Legitimacy Crisis in Thailand*, ed. Marc Askew. Bangkok: King Prajadhipok's Institute.

Bartels, Larry M. 1996. "Uninformed Votes: Information Effects in Presidential Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 40 (1): 194-230.

Bartels, Larry M. 2000. "Partisanship and Voting Behavior, 1952-1996." *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (1): 35-50.

Bartels, Larry M. 2003. "Democracy with Attitudes." In *Electoral Democracy*, ed. Michael MacKuen and George Rabinowitz. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Baum, Matthew A. 2002. "Sex, Lies, and War: How Soft News Brings Foreign Policy to the Inattentive Public." *American Political Science Review* 96 (1): 91-109.

Bean, Clive S. 1991. "Gender and Political Participation in Australia." *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 26: 276-293.

Beech, Hannah. "Thailand's Political Crisis Becomes a Global One." In *Times*, 26 November 2008, <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1862366, 00.html?xid=rss-topstories> Accessed December 5, 2008.

Bell, Thomas. 2008. "Protesters Force Thai PM Abhisit Vejjajiva to Move Maiden Speech." *The Telegraph*, December 30. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/thailand/4023652/Protesters-force-Thai-PM-Abhisit-Vejjajiva-to-move-maiden-speech.html> Accessed June 13, 2011.

Berg-Schlosser, D., and N. Kersting. 2003. *Poverty and Democracy: Self-help and Political Participation in Third World Cities*. New York: Zed Books.

Berinsky, Adam. 2005. "The Perverse Consequences of Electoral Reform in the United States." *American Politics Research* 33 (4): 471-491.

Berman, Sheri. 1997. "Civil Society and Political Institutionalization." *American Behavioral Scientist*, 40 (5): 62-74.

Blais, A., E. Gidengil and N. Nevitte. 2004. "Where Does Turnout Decline Come From?" *European Journal of Political Research* 43 (2): 221–36.

Bobo, Lawrence, and Franklin D. Gilliam. 1990. "Race, Sociopolitical Participation, and Black Empowerment." *American Political Science Review* 84 (2): 377-93.

Boechel, R. 1928. *Voting and Non-Voting in Elections*. Washington D.C.: Editorial Research Reports.

Bookhoree Yeema and Narin Sompong. 2002. *Kwamkluenhwai thang sangkhom nai khrabuankan luaktang lae patchai nai kantatsinchai luaktang samachik wuthisapha changwat Pattani* [Movement and voting-decision factors in 2000 Senate election of Pattani]. In *Phrutikam kanluaktang lae patchai nai kantatsinchai luaktang samachik wuthisapha 2543* [Voting behavior and voting-decision factors in 2000 Senate election], ed. Stithorn Thananithichot. Nonthaburi, Thailand: King Prajadhipok's Institute.

Booth, John, and Mitchell A. Seligson. 2008. "Inequality and Democracy in Latin America: Individual and Contextual Effects of Wealth on Political Participation." In *Poverty, Participation, and Democracy: A Global Perspective*, ed. Anirudh Krishna. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Bowornsak Uwanno. 2003. *Papruam khong ratthathamanun lae ratthathamanun haeng ratchanachak thai putthasakarat 2540* [Overview of the Constitution and Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2540]. Bangkok: King Prajadhipok's Institute.

Borwornsak Uwanno, and Wayne D. Burns. 1998. "The Thai Constitution of 1997: Sources and Process." *University of British Columbia Law Review* 32 (2): 227-47.

Brady, Henry E. 1999. "Political Participation." In *Measures of Political Attitudes*, eds. John P. Robinson, Phillip R. Shaver, and Lawrence S Wrightsman. San Diego: Academic Press.

Bratton, Michael. 2008. "Poor People and Democratic Citizenship in Africa." In *Poverty, Participation, and Democracy: A Global Perspective*, ed. Anirudh Krishna. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Bristow, Michael. 2009. Thai red-shirts abandon protest. *BBC News*, April 14, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7997686.stm.> Accessed 14 April 2009.

Burns, Nancy, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Sidney Verba. 2001. *The Private Roots of Public Action: Gender, Equality, and Political Participation*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Bünte, Marco, and Andreas Ufen. 2009. "The New Order and Its Legacy: Reflection on Democratization in Indonesia." In *Democratization in Post-Suharto Indonesia*, ed. Marco Bünte and Andreas Ufen. New York: Routledge.

Byres, Terence J. 1995. "Preface." In *New Farmers' Movements in India*, ed. Tom Brass. London: Frank Cass.

Callahan, William A. 1998. *Imagining Democracy: Reading "The Events of May" in Thailand*. London: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Callahan, William A. 2005. "Social Capital and Corruption: The Anti-Politics of Reform in Thailand." *Perspectives on Politics* 3 (3): 495-508.

Camp, Roderic Ai. 2009. "Democracy Redux? Mexico's Voters and the 2006 Presidential Race." In *Consolidating Mexico's Democracy: The 2006 Presidential Campaign in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Jorge I. Domínguez, Chappell H. Lawson, and Alejandro Moreno. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Campbell, David E., and Christina Wolbrecht. 2006. "See Jane Run: Women Politicians as Role Models for Adolescents." *Journal of Politics*, 68 (2): 233-47.

Carthew, Alastair. 2010. Thaksin's Twitter Revolution: How the Red Shirts Protests Increase the Use of Social Media in Thailand. In *Social Media and Politics: Online Social Networking and Political Communication in Asia*, ed. Philip Behnke. Singapore: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

Case, William F. 1996. "Can the 'Halfway House' Stand? Semidemocracy and Elite Theory in Three Southeast Asian Countries." *Comparative Politics* 28 (4): 437-464.

Chai-anan Samudavanija. 1989. "Thailand: A Stable Semi-Democracy." In *Democracy in Developing Countries, Volume III: Asia*, ed. Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Chairat Charoensin-o-larn. 2010. "Thailand in 2009: Unusual Politics Becomes Usual." *Southeast Asian Affairs* (2010): 302-331.

Chalermpol Mingmuang. 1996. *Kanmeesuanruam thang kanmueang khong prachachon nai kanmueang thongthin: suksa sukhaphiban nai Nonthaburi* [Popular Participation in Local Government at Sanitary District Level in Thailand: A Comparative Study of Sanitary in Nonthaburi Province]. M.A. Thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

Chambers, Paul. 2009. "Superfluous, Mischievous or Emancipating? Thailand's Evolving Senate Today." *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 28 (3): 3-80.

Chansak Thawil. 1991. *Kansue-khai khanen siang luaktang: suksa kan luaktang tuapai 27 Karakadakom 2529 nai Tambon Sangbadan Amphoe Somdej Changwat Karasin* [Vote buying-selling: the 1986 House election of Karasin]. M.A. thesis, Thamasat University.

Charinya Charoensuksai. 1996. *Kanperdrub khormun khaosan thang kanmueang, watthanatham thang kanmueang kap kanpaichaisit ougsiang khong yaovachon nai Krungthep, 2538* [Media exposure on politics, political culture, and the voting behavior of the youth in Bangkok, 1995]. M.A. thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

Chatree Pinengam. 2001. *Khanakhammakan kanluektang: suksa khobkhet amnat nai kan mai prakat raprong raichue phusamak rabluaktang tee dairap khanaen yu nai kan tee dairap luaktang hai pen samachik wuthisapha* [Election Commission: electoral approval authority]. M.A. thesis, Dhurakij Pundit University.

Chittra Pomchutima. 1998. *Phrutikam kan luaktang khong prachachon nai chumchon airaud nai Krungthep* [Electoral behavior of people in slum in Bangkok]. Bangkok: The Secretariat of the House of Representatives.

Christie, Carol. 1987. *Sex Differences in Political Participation*. New York: Praeger.

Chu, Yun-Han, Andrew Nathan, and Doh Chull Shin. 2008 "Introduction: Comparative Perspectives on Democratic Legitimacy in East Asia." In *How East Asians View Democracy*, ed. Yun-Han Chu et al. New York: Columbia University Press.

Citrin, Jack, and Benjamin Highton. 2002. *How Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration Shape the California Electorate*. San Francisco: Public Policy Institute of California.

Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand of B.E. 2540.

Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand of B.E. 2550.

Converse, Philip E. 1964. ''The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics.'' In *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. David E. Apter. New York: Free Press.

Conway, M. Margaret. 1981. "Political Participation in Midterm Congressional Elections: Attitudinal and Social Characteristics during the 1970s." *American Politics Quarterly* 9: 221-44.

Cox, Eva. 2002. "Making the Lucky Country." In *Democracies in Flux the Evolution of Social Capital in Contemporary Society*, ed. Robert D. Putnam. New York: Oxford University Press.

Craig, Stephen C., Richard G. Niemi, and Glenn E. Silver. 1990. "Political Efficacy and Trust: A Report on the NES Pilot Study Items." *Political Behavior* 12 (3): 289–314.

Crispin, Shawn W. 2008. "More Turmoil in Beleaguered Bangkok." *Asia Times*, November 25. <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/JK25Ae01.html> Accessed December 11, 2010.

Croissant, Aurel, and Paul Chambers. 2010. "Unravelling Intra-Party Democracy in Thailand," *Asian Journal of Political Science* 18 (2): 195-223.

"DAAD Scents Military Role, Slams 'Coup in Disguise'." *The Nation*, December 8, 2008. <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/home/DAAD-scents-military-role-slams-coup-in-disguise--30090401.html> Accessed June 13, 2011.

Dacha Jaiya. 1989. *Phrutikam kanlong khanaen siang luaktang khong prachachon kab kanpattana thang kanmueang khong Thai: suksa kanluaktang samachik saphaphuthan ratsadon tan tamnang tee wang khet 1 Amphoe Muang Khonkhan* [Voting behavior of Khonkhan people in the 1986 By-election]. M.A. thesis, Thamasat University.

Dahl, Robert A. 1971. *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Dalton, Russell J. 2000. "Citizen Attitudes and Political Behavior." *Comparative Political Studies* 33 (6/7): 912-940.

Dalton, Russell J. 2006. *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Della Porta, Donatella, and Lorenzo Mosca. 2005. "Global-net for Global Movements? A Network of Networks for a Movement of Movements," *Journal of Public Policy* 25 (1): 165-90.

Delli Carpini, Michael X., and Scott Keeter. 1996. *What Americans Know about Politics and Why It Matters*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Diamond, Larry J., and Morlino, Leonardo. 2004. "An Overview." *Journal of Democracy* 15 (4): 20-31.

Desposato, Scott, and Barbara Norrander. 2009. "The Gender Gap in Latin America: Contextual and Individual Influences on Gender and Political Participation." *British Journal of Political Science* 39: 141-162.

Edie, Carlene J. 1991. *Democracy by Default: Dependency and Clientelism in Jamaica*. Boulder, CO: L. Rienner.

Escobar, Arturo, and Sonia E. Alvarez. 1992. *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Finkel, Steven E. 1985. "Reciprocal Effects of Participation and Political Efficacy: A Panel Analysis." *American Journal of' Political Science* 29 (4): 891-913.

Fox, Jonathan. 1994. "The Difficult Transition from Clientelism to Citizenship: Lessons from Mexico." *World Politics* 46 (2):151–184.

Fuller, Thomas. 2009. "Thailand Cancels Summit after Protests." *New York Times*, April 11, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/12/world/asia/12thai.html?scp=2&sq=Thai%20Protest%20Blocks%20Summit%20Meeting&st=cse.> Accessed 14 April 2009.

Goerres, Achim. 2009. *The Political Participation of Older People in Europe: The Graying of Our Democra*cies. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Girling, John. 1981. *Thailand: Society and Politics*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Greenstein, Fred I. 1960. "The Benevolent Leader: Children's Images of Political Authority." *American Political Science Review* 54 (4): 934-943.

Hansen, Susan B. 1997. "Talking about Politics: Gender and Contextual Effects on Political Discourse." *Journal of Politics* 59: 73-103.

Hewison, Kevin. 1997. *Political Change in Thailand: Democracy and Participation*. London; New York: Routledge.

Hewison, Kevin. 1999. "Political Space in Southeast Asia: 'Asian-style' and Other Democracies." *Democratization,* 6 (1): 224-45.

Hewison, Kevin. 2008. "Thailand after the 'Good' Coup." Paper presented at the 10th International Conference on Thai Studies, Thammasat University, 9-11 January 2008.

Hirsch, Philip, and Carol Warren. 1998. *The Politics of Environment in Southeast Asia*. New York: Routledge.

Holzner, Claudio A. 2010. *Poverty of Democracy: Institutional Roots of Political Participation in Mexico*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Huntington, Samuel P. 1968. *Political Order in Changing Societies*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Huntington, Samuel P. 1981. *American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press.

Huntington, Samuel P. 1991. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Huntington, Samuel P., and Joan M. Nelson. 1976. *No Easy Choice: Political Participation in Developing Countries*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Inglehart Ronald. 1990. *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Inglehart, Ronald, and Paul R. Abramson. 1994. "Economic Security and Value Change." *American Political Science Review* 88 (2): 336-354.

Inglehart, Ronald, and Pippa Norris 2000. The Developmental Theory of the Gender Gap: Women's and Men's Voting Behavior in Global Perspective. *International Political Science Review* 21: 441-463.

"Interview with Sondhi Limthongkul." 2009. *The Nation*, May 2. <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/2009/05/02/politics/politics_30101823.php> Accessed June 13, 2011.

Iyengar, Shanto, Mark D. Peters, and Donald Kinder. 1982. "Experimental Demonstrations of the 'Not-So-Minimal' Consequences of Television News Programs." *American Political Science Review* 76 (4): 848-858.

Janda, Kenneth, Jeffrey M. Barry, and Jerry Goldman. 1987. *The Challenge of Democracy*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Jennings, M. Kent, and Richard G. Niemi. 1968. "The Transmission of Political Values from Parent to Child." *American Political Science Review* 62 (1): 169-184.

Jittipon Ponpriksa. 1993. *Itthiphon khong kanrubru hatkan tang kanmueang tee mee phon tor Phrutikam kanlong khanaen siang* [Perceptions of Political Event and Voting Behavior]. M.A. thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

Johnston, Tim. 2009. Thai State of Emergency Sparks More Unrest. *Washington Post*, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/ content/article/ 2009/04/12 /AR2009041200314.html.> Accessed 14 April 2009.

Juthathip Chayangkura. 1998. *Itthiphon khong kankhosana thang kanmueang tor tassanakhati lae kanlongkhanaen siang khong phumeesit luaktang* [Influences of political advertising on voters' attitude and behavior]. M.A. thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

Kahn, Kim Fredkin, and Patrick I. Kenny. 1999. *The Spectacle of US Senate Elections*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Kapstein, Ethan B., and Nathan Converse. 2008. *The Fate of Young Democracies*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kelly, David, and Anthony Reid. 1998. *Asian Freedoms: The Idea of Freedom in East and Southeast Asia*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kenny, Christopher B. 1992. "Political Participation and Effects from the Social Environment" *American Journal of Political Science* 36 (1): 59-67.

Kheangkai Chongalarn. 1993. *Phunam kap kanmeesuanruam thang kanmueang khong chumchon* [Community Leaders and Political Participation Within the community]. M.A. thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

Kinder, Donald. 2003. "Belief Systems After Converse." In *Electoral Democracy*, eds. Michael MacKuen and George Rabinowitz. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

King Prajadhipok's Institute. 2001. *Botrean jak kanluaktang samachik wuthisapha 2543* [Lesson Learned from the 2000 senate election]. Nonthaburi, Thailand: King Prajadhipok's Institute.

King Prajadhipok's Institute. 2007. *Monitoring the Pulse of the Nation: Indicators of Democratization and Good Governance in Thailand 2005-2007*, Nonthaburi, Thailand: King Prajadhipok's Institute.

King, Daniel E., and Jim LoGerfo. 1996. "Thailand: Toward Democratic Stability." *Journal of Democracy* 7 (1): 102-17.

Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian. 2003. *Kings, Country and Constitutions: Thailand's Political Development, 1932-2000*. New York: RoutledgeCurzon.

Krishna, Anirudh. 2008. "Do Poor People Care Less for Democracy? Testing Individual-Level Assumptions with Individual-Level Data from India." In *Poverty, Participation, and Democracy: A Global Perspective*, ed. Anirudh Krishna. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kuklinski, James H., and Norman Hurley. 1994. "On Hearing and Interpreting Political Messages: A Cautionary Tale of Citizen Cue-Taking." *Journal of Politics* 56 (3): 739-751.

Käng, Dredge Byung'chu. 2011. Queer Media Loci in Bangkok: Paradise Lost and Found in Translation. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 17 (1): 169-191.

Lau, Richard R., David J. Anderson, and David P. Redlawsk. 2008. ''An Exploration of Correct Voting in Recent U.S. Presidential Elections.'' *American Journal of Political Science* 52 (April): 395–411.

Leighley, Jan E. 1990. "Social interaction and Contextual influences on Political Participation." *American Politics Quarterly* 18: 459-75.

Leighley, Jan E. 1995. "Attitudes, Opportunities and Incentives: A Review Essay on Political Participation." *Political Research Quarterly* 48 (1): 181-209.

Leighley, Jan E., and Arnold Vedlitz. 1999. "Race, Ethnicity and Political Participation: Competing Models and Contrasting Explanations." *Journal of Politics* 61 (November): 1092-1114.

Lien, Pei-te. 1994. "Ethnicity and Political Participation: A Comparison between Asian and Mexican Americans." *Political Behavior* 16 (June): 237-264.

Likhit Dhiravegin. 2007. *Wiwatanakan kanmueang kanpokong Thai* [Evolution of Thai Politics and Government], 10th edition. Bangkok: Thammasat University Press.

Linz, Juan J., and Alfred Stepan. 1996. *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.

Lipset, Samuel M. 1959. "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy." *American Political Science Review* 53 (1): 69-105.

Lipset, Samuel M. 1994. "The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited." *American Sociological Review* 59 (1): 1–22.

Loader, Brian D. 2007. *Young Citizens in the Digital Age: Political Engagement, Young People and New Media*. New York: Routledge.

Lodge, Milton, and Ruth Hamill. 1986. "A Partisan Schema for Political Information Processing." *American Political Science Review* 80 (2): 505-519.

LoGerfo, Jim. 1996. "Attitudes toward Democracy among Bangkok and Rural Northern Thais." *Asian Survey* 36 (9): 904-23.

Lupia, Arthur. 1994. "Shortcuts versus Encyclopedias: Information and Voting Behavior in California Insurance Reform Elections." *American Political Science Review* 88 (1): 63-76.

Luskin, Robert C. 1990. "Explaining Political Sophistication." *Political Behavior* 12: 331-336.

Magaloni, Beatriz. 2006. *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and its Demise in Mexico.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Macedo, Stephen et al. 2005. *Democracy at Risk: How Political Choices Undermine Citizen Participation, and What We Can Do About It*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Madsen, Douglas. 1987. "Political Self-Efficacy Tested." *American Political Science Review* 81 (2): 571–581.

Martz, John D. 1997. *The Politics of Clientelism: Democracy & the State in Columbia.* New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers.

Maravall, José María. 1995. "The Myth of the Authoritarian Advantage." In *Economic Reform and Democracy*, eds. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

McCann, James A. 1998. "The Changing Mexican Electorate: Political Interest, Expertise, and Party Support in the 1980s and 1990s." In *Governing Mexico: Political Parties and Elections*, ed. Monica Serrano. London: Institute of Latin American Studies.

McCann, Jame A. and Chappell Lawson. 2003. "An Electorate Adrift? Public Opinion and the Quality of Democracy in Mexico." *Latin American Research Review* 38 (3): 60-81.

McCann, Jame A. and Chappell Lawson. 2006. "Presidential Campaign and Knowledge Gap in Three Transitional Democracies." *Political Research Quarterly* 59 (1): 13-22.

McCargo, Duncan. 2002. *Reforming Thai Politics*. Copenhagen: NIAS.

McCargo, Duncan. 2008. "Thailand: State of Anxiety." *Southeast Asian Affairs* 2008: 332-356.

McVey, Ruth. 2000. "Of Greed and Violence, and Other Signs of Progress." In Ruth McVey, ed., *Money & Power in Provincial Thailand*, Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press.

Merriam, Charles E., and Harold F. Gosnell. 1924. *Non-Voting*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Milbrath, Lester W. 1965. *Political Participation: How and Why Do People Get Involved in Politics?* Chicago: Rand McNally.

Miller, Arthur H., Edie Goldenberg, and Lutz Erbring. 1979. "Typeset Politics: Impact of Newspapers on Public Confidence." *American Political Science Review* 73: 67–84.

Milner, Henry. 2002. *Civic Literacy: How Informed Citizens Make Democracy Work.* Hanover, NH: University Press of New England.

Miller, Joanne M., and Jon A. Krosnick. 2000. "News Media Impact on the Ingredients of Presidential Evaluations: Politically Knowledgeable Citizens Are Guided by a Trusted Source." *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (2): 301-315.

Miller, Joanne M., and Wendy Rahn. 2002. "Identity-Based Feelings, Beliefs and Actions: How Being Influences Doing." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Society of Political Psychology, Berlin, Germany.

Miller, Warren Edward, and J. Merrill Shanks. 1996. *The New American Voter*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Missingham, Bruce D. 2000. *The Assembly of the Poor in Thailand: From Local Struggles to National Protest Movement*. Ph.D. dissertation, Australian National University.

Missingham, Bruce D. 2003. *The Assembly of the Poor in Thailand: From Local Struggles to National Protest Movement*. Chiang Mai, Thailand: Silkworm Books.

Moehler, Devra C. 2008. *Distrusting Democrats: Outcomes of Participatory Constitution Making*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Morell, David, and Chai-anan Samudavanija. 1981. *Political Conflict in Thailand: Reform, Reaction, Revolution*. Cambridge, MA: Oelgeschlager, Gunn & Hain.

Murray, David. 1996. The 1995 National Elections in Thailand: A Step Backward for Democracy?" *Asian Survey* 36 (4): 361-375.

Mydans, Seth. 2008. "Thai Parliament Picks New Premier." *New York Times*, December 14. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/16/world/asia/16thailand.html> Accessed April 13, 2009.

Mydans, Seth, and Mark McDonald. 2009. Thousands Rally Against Thai Leader. *New York Times*, April 8. <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/09/world/asia/09thai. html?scp=1&sq=Thousands%20Rally%20Against%20Thai%20Leader&st=cse.> Accessed April 14, 2009.

Mydans, Seth, and Thomas Fuller. 2010. Thai Court Seizes $1.4 Billion From Ex-Premier. *New York Times*, February 26. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/27/ world/asia/27thai.html.> Accessed April 29, 2010.

Niemi, Richard G., Stephen C. Craig, and Franco Mattei. 1991. "Measuring Internal Political Efficacy in the 1988 National Election Study." *American Political Science Review* 85 (December): 1407–1413.

Naruepon Sethsuwan. 1990. *Botbat kansamruat prachamati nai thana khaosan kanmueang: suksa kanluaktang phuva Krungthep, 7 Makarakom 2533* [The roles of public opinion polls as political information: the study of Bangkok governor election, 7 January 1990]. M.A. thesis, Thamasat University.

Natpong Sukvisit. 1993. *Hetphon khong kan luaktang: suksa kanluaktang nai khet 1 Nakon Ratchasima* [Voting rationale: a case study of the first constituency, Nakon Ratchasima]. M.A. thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

Natthawuth Jinagool. 1995. *Khrongsang amnat lae rabop uppatham nai chonabot Thai: suksa Ban Ta Amphoe Bangban Nakhon Phra Nakhon Si Ayuthaya* [Power structure and patronage system : A case study in Ta Village Bangban Distric Phra Nakhon Si Ayuthaya Province]. M.A. thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

Neher, Clark D. 1988. Thailand in 1987: Semi-Successful Semi-Democracy. *Asian Survey* 28 (2): 192-201.

Nelson, Michael H. 2009. "Thailand's PAD Tries a "New Politics Party." *New Mandala*, July 7. <http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/newmandala/2009/07/07/thailands-pad-tries-a-new-politics-party/.> Accessed April 29, 2010.

Nie, Norman H., Jane Junn, and Kenneth Stehlik-Barry. 1996. *Education and Democratic Citizenship in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Nie, Norman H., G. Bingham Powell, Jr. and Kenneth Prewitt. 1969. "Social Structure and Political Participation: Developmental Relations, Parts I." *American Political Science Review*, 63 (3): 361-78.

Niemi, Richard, and Herbert Weisberg. 2001. "The Study of Voting and Elections." In *Controversies in Voting Behavior*, eds. Richard Niemi and Herbert Weisberg. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Neuman, Lawrence W. 2000. *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, 4th edition. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Nilubol Chai-onnom. 2000. *Kanperdrub khormun khaosan thang kanmueang lae kanmee suanruam thang kanmueang khong prachachon nai Krungthep* [Political information exposure and participation in political activities of people in Bangkok]. M.A. thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

Nophakhun Limsamarnphun. 2009. "A Few Pointers for the Reds." *The Nation*, April 11. <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/home/-A-few-pointers-for-the-reds-30100249.html> Accessed June 13, 2011.

Nopparat Tawee. 1993. *Yutthasat kanronnarong hasiang luaktang: suksa kanchai sappayakon tee samkhan nai kanhasiang luaktang samachik sapha changwat amphoe Muang Samut Sakhon* [A campaign strategy : a case study of the use of major resources in elections compaign for provincial councilors elections in Amphoe Muang Changwat Samut Sakhon]. M.A. thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

Norris, Pippa. 1996. "Does Television Erode Social Capital? A Reply to Putnam." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 29 (3): 474-80.

Norris, Pippa. 2002. *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Norris, Pippa. 2007. "Political Activism: New Challenges, New Opportunities." In *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, eds. Carles Boix and Susan Stokes. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Norris, Pippa. 2008. *Driving Democracy: Do Power-Sharing Institution Work?* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Nostitz, Nick. 2010. "Bangkok or Bust, Part 1." *New Mandala*, March 25. <http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/newmandala/2010/03/25/bangkok-or-bust-part-1/> Accessed June 13, 2011.

Ockey, James. 2004. *Making Democracy: Leadership, Class, Gender, and Political Participation in Thailand.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Ockey, James. 2009. Thailand in 2008: Democracy and Street Politics. *Southeast Asian Affairs* 2009: 315-333.

O'Donnell, Guillermo A. 1972. *Modernization and Bureaucratic-authoritarianism: Studies in South American Politics.* Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California.

Omvedt, Gail. 1993. *Reinventing Revolution: New Social Movements in South Asia.* New York: Routledge.

Page, Benjamin I., and Robert Y. Shapiro. 1983. "Effects of Public Opinion on Policy." *American Political Science Review* 77 (1): 175-190.

Paithoon Boonwat. 1995. *Kanjudtang ongkhon phue sanupsanun kanluaktang hai pen pai duay khuam borisut yuthitham* [The establishment of official organization for free and fair electoral arrangement]. Bangkok: Thailand Research Fund.

Parinya Nualpian. 2000. *Kanmeesuanruam thang kanmueang khong khabuankan chaona: suksa samatcha khon chon* [Peasant Movements Political Participation: A case Study of Assembly of the Poor]. M.A. Thesis, Ramkhamhaeng University.

Pasuk Phongpaichit et al. 2002. *Withi chiwit witi su: khabuankan prachachon ruam samai* [Ways of Life, Means of Struggle: Contemporary Popular Movements], Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books.

Pasuk Phongpaichit, and Chris Baker. 2004. *Thaksin: The Business of Politics in Thailand*, Chiang Mai, Thailand: Silkworm Books.

Pasuk Phongpaichit, and Sungsidh Piriyarangsan. 1996. *Corruption and Democracy in Thailand*, Bangkok: Silkworm Books.

Patcharodom Limpisatien. 2000. *Krabuankan khudkhan kanluaktang samachik saphaphuthan ratsadon lae samachik wutthisapha* [Process of objection elections of the House of Representatives and the Senate]. M.A. thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

Pharr, Susan J., and Robert D. Putnam. 2000 *Disaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Phitha Thawornkul. 1994. *Itthiphon khong kanrubru phon kansamruat prachamati tee mee tor kanpheanphang tassanakhati khong phumeesit luaktang nai kanchaisit longkhanaen siang luaktang: suksa phumeesit luaktang nai khet Krungthep* [The influence of opinion poll on voting attitudinal change of the general election voters: a case study of Bangkok voters]. M.A. thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

Pichai Ratanadirok Na Phuket. 1990. *Khrongsang amnat lae phunam nai chonabot Thai* [Power structure and elite in rural Thai villages: a case study of two villages]. M.A. thesis, National Institute of Development Administration.

Pollock, Phillip H. 1983. "The Participatory Consequences of Internal and External Efficacy." *Western Political Quarterly* 36 (3): 400-409.

Poowin Bunyavejchewin. 2010. "Internet Politics: Internet as a Political Tool in Thailand." *Canadian Social Science* 6 (3): 67-72.

Popkin, Samuel L., and Michael A. Dimock. 1999. "Political Knowledge and Citizen Competence." In *Citizen Competence and Democratic Institutions*, ed. Stephen L. Elkin and Karol Edward Soltan. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Powell, Sian, and Richard Lloyd Parry. 2009. Thailand's Yellow Shirt Leader Sondhi Limthongkul Survives Assassination Attempt. *The Times*, April 18. <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/article6109804.ece.> Accessed April 19, 2009.

Prapart Pintobtang. 1997. *Kanmueang khong khabuankan singwadlom nai sangkhom Thai* [The Politics of Grassroots Environmental Movements in Thai Society]. M.A. Thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

Praphat Pintoptaeng. 1998. *Kanmuang bon thong thanon: 99 wan prawatisat kan doen khabuan chumnum prathuang nai sangkhom thai* [Politics on the Street: 99 Days of the Assembly of the Poor], The Centre for Research and Production of Textbooks, Krik University, Bangkok.

Przeworski, Adam et al. 2000. *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Material Well-being in the World, 1950-1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Putnam, Robert D. 1995. "Tuning In, Tuning Out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 27 (4): 664-83.

Putnam, Robert D. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Putnam, Robert D. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Putzel, James. 1997. "Democratization in Southeast Asia." In *Democratisation*, eds. David Potter et al. London: Polity Press.

Putzel, James. 1999. "The Survival of an Imperfect Democracy in the Philippines." *Democratization* 6 (1): 198-223.

Radcliff, Benjamin, and Ed Wingenbach. 2000. "Preference Aggregation, Functional Pathologies, and Democracy: A Social Choice Defense of Participatory Democracy." *Journal of Politics* 62 (4): 977-98.

"Reuters Journalist Killed in Bangkok Protests." 2010. *Reuters*, April 4. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/04/10/us-thailand-protests-reuters-idUSTRE6391OO20100410> Accessed April 15, 2011.

Rothstien, Bo. 2002. "Social Capital in the Social Democratic State." In *Democracies in Flux the Evolution of Social Capital in Contemporary Society*, ed. Robert Putnam, New York: Oxford University Press.

Rosenstone, Steven J., and John Mark Hansen. 2003. *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*. New York: Longman.

Rosenstone, Steven J., and Raymond E. Wolfinger (1978). "The Effect of Registration Laws on Voter Turnout," *American Political Science Review*, 72 (1): 22-45.

Rudolph, Thomas J., Amy Gangl, and Daniel Stevens. 2000. "The Effects of Efficacy and Emotions on Campaign Involvement. *The Journal of Politics* 62 (4): 1189-1197.

Rungsan Thanapornphan. 1993. *Anijalaksana khong kanmueang Thai: sethasatwikhao waduay kanmueang* [Unstable of Thai politics: an analysis of political economy]. Bangkok: Manager.

"Samak out of Thai Leadership Race." 2008. *BBC NEWS*, September 12. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7612271.stm> Accessed December 10, 2010.

Scarrow, Susan E., and Burcu Gezgor. 2010. "Declining Memberships, Changing Members? European Political Party Members in a New Era." *Party Politics* 16 (6): 823-43.

Schaffer, Christian. 2009. "The Parliamentary Election in Thailand, December 2007." *Electoral Studies* 28 (1): 167-73.

Schlozman, Kay L. 2002. "Citizen Participation in America: What Do We Know? Why Do We Care?" In *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*, eds. Ira Katznelson and Helen V. Milner. New York: Norton.

Schlozman, Kay L., Sidney Verba, and Henry E. Brady. 1999. "Civic Engagement and the Equality Problem." In *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*, eds. Theda Skocpol and Morris P. Fiorina. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Scott, C. James. 1972. "Patron-Client Politics and Political Change in Southeast Asia." *American Political Science Review* 66 (1): 91-113.

Schumpeter, Joseph A. 1942. *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*. London: George Allen & Unwin.

Sears, David O., and Nicholas A. Valentino. 1997. "Politics Matters: Political Events as Catalysts for Pre-adult Socialization." *American Political Science Review* 91 (1): 45-65.

Shaffer, Stephen D. 1981. "A Multivariate Explanation of Decreasing Turnout in Presidential Elections, 1960-1976." *American Journal of Political Science* 25 (1): 68-95.

Shea, Daniel M., and John Clifford. 2007. "The Turned-Off Generation: Fact and Fiction?" In *Fountain of Youth*, ed. Daniel M. Shea and John Clifford Green. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Shin, Doh C., and Chong-min Park. 2005. "Social Capital and Democratic Citizenship: The Case of South Korea." *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 6 (1): 63-85.

Sidel, John T. 2004. "Bossism and Democracy in the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia: Towards an Alternative Framework for the Study of 'Local' Strongmen." In *Politicising Democracy: The New Local Politics and Democratization*, eds. John Harriss, Kristin Stokke, and Olle Törnquist. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Skocpol, Theda. 2003. *Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Smith, Graham. 2009. *Democratic Innovations: Designing Institutions for Citizen Participation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sombat Chantornvong. 2002. "The 1997 Constitution and the Politics of Electoral Reform." In *Reforming Thai Politics,* ed. Duncan McCargo. Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies.

Somchai Tilangkarn. 1994. *Phrutikam kan ougsiang luaktang kap chitsamneuk thang kanmueang khong khon Chiang Mai nai kanluaktang 13 Kanyayon 2535* [Voting behavior and political awareness of voters in 13 September 1992 House election of Hangdong District, Chiangmai province]. M.A. thesis, Chiang Mai University.

Sombat Thamrongthanyawong. 2010. "The Backgrounds, Political Culture and Political Participation of Thai Youth Leaders." *NIDA Development Journal* 50 (4): 77-98. Sombat Chantornvong (1993) *Leuktang wikit: panha lae tang ok* [The Crisis of an Election: Problems and Solutions], Bangkok: Kopfai.

Sompis Klaiwong. 2000. *Bhatjai tee mee phon tor kanmeesuanruam thang kanmueang khong phumeesit luektang ayu 18 thung 20 pee* [Factors Affecting Political Participation among 18 to 20 Years-Old Voters]. M.A. Thesis, Ramkhamhaeng University.

Stokes, Susan C. 1995. *Cultures in Conflict: Social Movements and the State in Peru.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Stokes, Susan C. 2007. "Political Clientelism." In *Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, eds. Carles Boix and Susan C. Stokes. New York: Oxford University Press.

Suchit Bunbongkarn. 1986. *Kanchai ngob praman nai kan ronnarong ha siang luaktang lae kan luaktang* [Budget Uses in Electoral Campaigns and Election], Bangkok: Social Science Association of Thailand.

Suchit Bunbongkarn. 1996. "Election and Democratization in Thailand." In *The Politics of Elections in Southeast Asia*, ed. R.H. Taylor. Washington, D.C.: Cambridge University Press.

Suchit Bunbongkarn. 1999. "Thailand's Successful Reforms," *Journal of Democracy*, 10 (4): 54-68.

Suchit Bunbongkarn and Phonsak Phongphaeo. 1979. *Phrutikam kanlong khanaen siang luaktang khong khon Thai: Suksa karn luaktang samachik sapha phuthan rassadorn 2522* [Voting Behaviour of the Thai People: House of Representatives Election 1979], Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press.

Suchit Bunbongkarn and Phonsak Phongphaeo. 1984. *Phrutikam kanlong khanaen siang luaktang khong khon Thai* [Voting Behaviour of the Thai People], Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University.

Sunee Treethanakorn. 2002. *Kwamkluenhwai thang sangkhom nai khrabuankan luaktang lae patchai nai kantatsinchai luaktang samachik wuthisapha Krungthep* [Movement and voting-decision factors in 2000 Senate election of Bangkok]. In *Phrutikam kanluaktang lae patchai nai kantatsinchai luaktang samachik wuthisapha 2543* [Voting behavior and voting-decision factors in 2000 Senate election], ed. Stithorn Thananithichot. Nonthaburi, Thailand: King Prajadhipok's Institute.

Surin Maisrikrod and Duncan McCargo. 1997. "Electoral Politics: Commercialisation and Exclusion." in *Political Change in Thailand: Democracy and Participation*, ed. Kevin Hewison. New York: Routledge.

Suvat Siripokaphirom. 1997. *Itthiphon khong phunam chumchon tor kanmeesuanruam khong prachachon: suksa phunam chumchon nai khat tesaban Hua Hin* [The influence of community leader on people participation: a case study of Hua-Hin Municipality]. M.A. thesis, Chulalongkorn University.

Thanong Khanthong. 2009. "The Monarchy and the People Depend on Each Other." *The Nation*, April 24. <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/2009/04/24/opinion/opinion_30101171.php> Accessed December 11, 2010.

Tharoor, Ishaan. 2010. Top 10 World News Stories. *Time*, December 9. <http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,2035319_2035311_2035675,00.html.> Accessed December 10, 2010.

"Thai Faction Rejects PM Nominee." 2008. *BBC NEWS*, 15 September. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7615950.stm> Accessed December 10, 2010.

"Thai Parliament Picks New PM." 2008. *CNN World*, December 15. "Thai Protesters Bathe PM's Home in Blood." 2010. *CBSNews*, April 7. <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2010/03/17/world/main6306767.shtml> Accessed June 13, 2011.

"Thailand Protests: Crackdown Against Redshirts - As It Happened." 2009. *The Guardian*, May 19. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/blog/2010/may/19/thailand-crackdown-redshirts> Accessed April 15, 2011.

"Thailand: Revolution in Red and Yellow." 2009. *The Guardian*, April 14. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/apr/14/leader-thailand-political-crisis> Accessed December 11, 2010.

Thitinan Pongsudhirak. 2006. "Thaksin's Political Zenith and Nadir." In *Southeast Asian Affairs 2006*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 285-302.

Thitinan Pongsudhirak. 2008. "Thailand Since the Coup." *Journal of Democracy* 19 (4): 140-153.

Thitiyatorn Pongphan. 1998. *Bhatjai tee mee phon tor kanmeesuanruam thang kanmueang khong phu ying Bangkhen* [Factors Affecting Political Participation of Thai Women in Bangkhen District], M.A. Thesis, Kasetsart University.

Tingsten, Herbert. 1937. *Political Behaviour*. London: King and Son.

Tossapol Sompong. 2002. *Kwamkluenhwai thang sangkhom nai khrabuankan luaktang lae patchai nai kantatsinchai luaktang samachik wuthisapha changwat Sakon Nakorn* [Movement and voting-decision factors in 2000 Senate election of Sakon Nakorn]. In *Phrutikam kanluaktang lae patchai nai kantatsinchai luaktang samachik wuthisapha 2543* [Voting behavior and voting-decision factors in 2000 Senate election], ed. Stithorn Thananithichot. Nonthaburi, Thailand: King Prajadhipok's Institute.

Tossapol Sompong. 2003. *Krabuankan luaktang lae patchai nai kantadsinchai luaktang samachik saphaphuthan ratsadon changwat Sakon Nakorn* [Electoral process and voting-decision factors in 2001 House election of Sakon Nakorn]. In *Krabuankan luaktang lae patchai nai kantadsinchai luaktang samachik saphaphuthan ratsadon 2544* [Electoral process and voting-decision factors in 2001 House election], ed. Stithorn Thananithichot. Nonthaburi, Thailand: King Prajadhipok's Institute.

Tossapol Sungkasup. 2003. *Khabuankan hasiang luaktang samachik sapha phuthan ratsadon: suksa nai khet luaktang khong nai Tossapol Sungkasup changwat Leoi, 2524-2544* [Rally and campaign in the House of Representatives Election of Leoi provice since 1981 to 2001, Tossapol Sungkasup's constituency case study]. Individual Research Report submitted to the King Prajadhipok's Institute.

Veltmeyer, Henry. 1997. "New Social Movements in Latin America: The Dynamics of Class and Identity." *Journal of Peasant Studies* 25 (1): 139-169.

Verba, Sidney, and Norman H. Nie. 1972. *Participation in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Verba, Sidney, Bashiruddin Ahmed, and Anil Bhatt. 1971. *Caste, Race, and Politics: A Comparative Study of India and the United States*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Verba, Sidney, Henry Brady, and Kay Lehman Schlozman. 1995. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Verba, Sidney, Norman H. Nie, and Jae-On Kim. 1971. *Modes of Democratic Participation: A Cross-National Comparison*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publication.

Verba, Sidney, Norman Nie, and Jae-On Kim. 1978. *Participation and Political Equality: A Seven-Nation Comparison*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Vogelgesang, Lori J., and Alexander W. Astin. 2005. *Post-college Civic Engagement among Graduates*. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute UCLA, HERI Research Report No.2.

Walker, Andrew. 2008. "The Rural Constitution and the Everyday Politics of Elections in Northern Thailand." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 38 (1): 84-105.

Wattenberg, Martin P. 2008. *Is Voting for Young People? With a Postscript on Citizen Engagement*. New York: Pearson Longman.

Webber, Douglas. 2006. "A Consolidated Patrimonial Democracy? Democratization in Post-Suharto Indonesia." *Democratization* 13 (3): 396-420.

Weldon, Steven. 2006. "Downsize My Polity? The Impact of Size on Party Membership and Member Activism." *Party Politics* 12 (4): 467-81.

Wittaya Suwanmas. 1998. *Phrutikam kanlong khanaen siang luaktang samachik saphaphutan ratsadon khong prachachon nai khet Amphoe Manorom Changwat Chainart* [Voting behaviors of citizens in Manorom District, Chainart province]. M.A. thesis, Kasem Pundit University.

Wolfinger, Raymond E., and Steven J. Rosenstone. 1980. *Who Votes?* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Wuthnow, Robert. 2002. "Bridging the Privileged and the Marginalized." In *Democracies in Flux the Evolution of Social Capital in Contemporary Society*, ed. Robert D. Putnam. New York: Oxford University Press.

Wyatt, David K. 2003. *Thailand: A Short History*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Zakaria, Fareed. 1997. "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy." *Foreign Affairs* 76 (6): 22-43.

Zukin, Cliff, Scott Keeter, Mollz Andolina, Krista Jenkins, and Michael X. Delli Carpini. 2006. *A New Engagement?: Political Participation, Civic Life, and the Changing American Citizen*. New York: Oxford University Press.