

C130202 : MAJOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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VENIKA BOONMAKLEE : THAI FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS THE UNION OF
MYANMAR DURING CHATICHAI CHOONHAVAN (1988-1991). THESIS AVISOR :
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This thesis attempts to make a study on the Thai foreign policy towards the Union of Myanmar during Chatichai Choonhavan (1988-1991). The purpose of this study is to analyze which factors, either the national security and economy or human rights, influenced Thai policy-makers.

The study found that Thai policy-makers during the Chatichai Government were members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Security and the Military. They believed that political situations and human right problems in the Union of Myanmar were internal affairs and the Thais had no rights to interfere. In addition, Thai policy-makers did not want the Myanmar Military Government to see the Thais make this move. So they should not follow world's public opinions which asked every country to isolate and sanction the Union of Myanmar. However, many countries did not really follow the afore-mentioned opinions. They still allowed their private companies to contact the Myanmar Military Government economically. Furthermore, the Thais also believed that the pressures might push the Myanmar Military Government to re-apply policies as previously used during General Ne Win regime.

Moreover, Thai policy-makers hoped that the good and friendly relations might help the Myanmar Military Government cease abusing human rights. The most significant point was that the Thais might be able to solve the acute security problems occurred along the Thai-Myanmar border. Furthermore the Thais might gain economic interests such as external markets and investments, natural resources--forest products and fisheries.

However, one major query on these policies was who really gained the benefits from these outcomes, the Thai public or some specific interest groups -- as most of the capitalists who invested in the Union of Myanmar in one way or another had connections with either political parties or military groups.