

Thesis Title	The 1946 Constitution Drafting Process and Its Consequences
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ABSTRACT

In 1932, Thai political system was changed from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional regime of government. Over the past 50 years under this regime, A constitutions were rewritten many times. Sometime, by means of coup d'etat, many of new constitutions were drafted solely for the political purposes of the political groups in command who wanted to consolidate their power.

After the end of world war II civilian leaders came to power for a brief period. They thought it was the time for Thailand to have a new constitution which should be more democratic than the one used since 1932. This new constitution deserves a close study because it was the first Thai constitution contained features considered most democratic. Therefore it is of considerable acadamic interest to study this constitution from the point of view of political conflict especially between the military group and civilian group. In particular, it is interesting to know how it was possible that under the prevailing condition at that time a really democratic constitution could be successfully drafted and accepted. Therefore this thesis concentrates on study the political behavior of Thai political

leaders in terms of political conflict between the aristocrats who were conservative and the progressives who were inclined toward full democracy as well as between the military and civilian leaders. The conflict between these groups was the situation before the rewriting of the 1946 constitution.

As a matter of the new constitution was written by civilian factions who wanted to eliminate military group from political power. Because this action was contrary to existing political realities in which the military was still a powerful group and consciousness of democratic values were still weak among the people. Democracy was possible only in theory even though the new constitution had the best motives. In view of the prevailing political condition, no single political groups could obtain the necessary popular support to form a real political base. Therefore the coup d'etat led by the military to overthrow this constitution followed in a few years after its use

The failure of the civilian government after the second world war was the failure that could happen to any government at any times, particularly where some political leaders lacked sincerity and democratic ideologies, and used the constitution for political purpose and for self-interest. Besides, they did not attempt to guide the people to appreciate democratic government and democratic values by providing the people with means of political participation so that the people might realize

the values of rights, duties and liberty. Such political participation could contribute to the stability of constitution regime and make it more difficult for the military group to stage a coup d'etat.