

Patiphat Varapothipathana 2014: Governing Power Structure during the Reign of King Rama III (1824-1851). Master of Arts (Political Science), Major Field: Political Science, Department of Political Science and Public Administration. Thesis Advisor: Associate Professor Somkiat Wanthana, Ph.D. 179 pages.

The purpose of this research was to study the governing power structure during the Reign of King Rama III (1824-1851) by analyzing Chotmai Luang Udomsombat (Dispatches of Luang Udomsombat), in order to understand how concretely the governing power of the centre operated over its surrounding cities.

The research found out that the governing power structure of the kingdom followed the conception of Rachathirat (Suzerainty). The king had power over all the rulers of the cities in the kingdom. This governing power structure was surviving under the networks of patron-client relationship and mutual interests among different levels of the ruling strata of the kingdom.

King Rama III, according to Dispatches of Luang Udomsombat, was the apex of the governing power structure, appointing all important positions in the kingdom. His considerations must be carried out by all concerned courtiers and officials. However, in reality, the effectiveness of this governing power structure depended on three major attributes: 1) access of information; 2) knowledge and understanding of the statecraft; and 3) cooperation of the lesser rulers. Power of the king was demonstrated in two areas: 1) to uphold peace and order and 2) to appoint persons into proper positions, with appropriate mutual interests of the realm.

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