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**Authoritarian Institution Building and the Quality of Democracy in Taiwan and Thailand**

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# Authoritarian Institution Building and the Quality of Democracy in Taiwan and Thailand

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## 1. Introduction

How does the quality of an authoritarian regime affect the consolidation of a young democracy? As a young democracy inherits not only problems, but also organizations, institutions, bureaucratic personnel, ideas and in some cases even political leaders, we would expect this effect to be significant. Interestingly, however, the influential "proto-science" of "consolidology" (Schmitter and Karl 1994) has so far paid little attention to this issue. As the next section will show, students of democratic consolidation have devoted most of their energy to examining the tasks regime elites need to fulfill to ensure the survival of a democracy, but have paid comparatively little attention to the historical and contextual factors benefitting democratic consolidation. The little research that does exist closely follows the agenda sketched by Samuel Huntington two decades ago. According to Huntington, the major challenges to democratic consolidation were "(1) how to treat authoritarian officials who had blatantly violated human rights, 'the torturer problem', and (2) how to reduce military involvement in politics and establish a professional pattern of civil-military relations, 'the praetorian problem.' " (Huntington 1991: 209). In addition, he names the danger that people might become disillusioned with democracy if the new rulers were not able to resolve "contextual problems" stemming "from the nature of society, its economy, culture and history" inherited from the authoritarian leadership (Huntington 1991: 209-10). Huntington continues to list a number of factors which he deems likely to benefit democratic consolidation, albeit without going into detail. Among these factors are the existence of a "democratic tradition", economic development, the external environment, the timing of democratization, the nature of the transition process, and how the new regime elites and the general public responded to the inability of the new democratic government to solve the "contextual problems" just mentioned (Huntington 1991: 270-279).

Thus, only the challenges of the "torturer," "praetorian" and "contextual" problems, and the allegedly positive influence of a "democratic tradition" link democratic consolidation to the character of the authoritarian regime. Otherwise, democratic consolidation is seen as mainly depending mainly on factors that have emerged or were created with a regime's transition to democracy. Later contributions to what constitutes and benefits democratic consolidation have closely followed this agenda.

In this contribution, we argue that "consolidology" suffers from a theoretical fallacy: by exclusively focusing on input legitimacy, it neglects two further necessary conditions necessary to make "democracy the only game in town": the creation of output legitimacy, and the im-

provement of throughput-institutions. We further argue that output legitimacy and government effectiveness frequently are not products of democracy, but have their roots in the authoritarian predecessor regime. Counterintuitively, authoritarian consolidation does not necessarily bode ill for democracy, but can even aid democratic consolidation. We illustrate our argument by comparing the institutional, organizational and ideological legacies of Taiwan and Thailand. We argue that the authoritarian consolidation of Taiwan has benefitted the consolidation of its democracy, while the non-consolidation of the Thai autocracy is responsible for its present volatile nature. The cases were chosen for their different outcomes on the dependent variable. In addition, they represent crucial cases in that Taiwan is a least-likely case in the existing literature on democratic consolidation: The lack of pre-authoritarian democratic experiences and a working constitution, its late democratization, its transition from a one-party regime and its "Confucian" political culture should all hinder democratic consolidation (see Huntington 1991: 253-79). Thailand, in contrast, is a most likely case: it has pre-authoritarian democratic experiences, a constitutional history, democratized fairly early in the Third Wave, had a multi-party system and a non-Confucian political culture.

## 2. Authoritarianism and democratic consolidation

There is no agreement on what democratic consolidation is, the processes it entails, and what outcomes it leads to. Rough distinctions can be made between scholarship that regards consolidation as a state in which the survival of a democracy has become very likely, and scholarship that regards consolidation as a process leading to this outcome.

### 2.1. Consolidation as a threshold

An indicator for the first conception often named are Huntington's two-turnover test, i.e. at least two elections which brought the opposition to power. Others see a democracy's survival of a major crisis as a sign that it has become strong enough to persist. Yet others hold that a democracy has become consolidated if both elites and the general population value democracy over autocracy, and attempts to reinstall strongman rule are not a part of the menu of political options. In other words, "democracy has become the only game in town" (Linz/Stepan 1996: 16). The problems with these indicators are obvious: according to Huntington, Thailand would be a consolidated democracy, but Japan would not. As it has proven impossible to define how big a shock must be for democracy to prove its worth, or what parts of the population need to support democracy how fervently and for how long, the other indicators are

equally problematic. Against this background, it sounds almost like a capitulation when Mainwaring, O'Donnell and Valenzuela (1992: 4-5) state that "the qualitative difference between transitional and consolidated regimes is such that the analyst should be able to determine whether specific cases are one or the other."

Even if one accepted this conception of consolidation, the question remains which circumstances are beneficial for rendering democracy "the only game in town". Two main explanations have been given. Early scholars of democratic consolidation held that the regime subtype adopted mattered. Juan Linz, for example, famously argued that presidential designs worsened the survival chances of a democracy (see for example Linz 1990). A second, more fashionable explanation argues that the survival chances of a democracy are dependent on economic growth. According to Przeworski, a democratic breakdown is highly unlikely in countries where annual per capita income approaches 6.000 USD (Przeworski et. al. 1996). While it seems self-evident at first that economic development sustains democracy, David Beetham is right to state that "a positive correlation between economic development (defined aggregatively in terms of GNP per head of population, fuel consumption per head, etc.) and democratization raises as many questions as it answers. Leaving aside the contestability of defining 'development' in such terms, we still face the puzzle of what precisely it is about economic development that helps sustain democracy" (Beetham 1994: 166).

## 2.2. Consolidation as a process

While this strand of scholarship has tended to equate consolidation with a high chance of regime persistence, another strand treats democratic consolidation as an independent variable determining persistence. These conceptions tend to regard democratic consolidation as an open-ended process aimed at "establishing the conditions that make the persistence of democracy very likely" (Nohlen 1988: 5). Democratic consolidation is conceptualized as directly following a transition to democracy. Geoffrey Pridham distinguishes between "negative" and "positive" consolidation, the former denoting "the solution of any problems remaining from the transition stage and, in general, the containment or reduction, if not removal, of any serious challenges to democratization. Negative consolidation is achieved when the presence or impact of these anti-system groups or individuals becomes numerically or politically insignificant" (Pridham 2000: 20). In contrast, positive consolidation "involves the inculcation of democratic values at both elite and mass levels, and therefore it requires some remaking of the political culture in a direction that is system-supportive for a new democracy" (ibid.).

Somewhat differently, Andreas Schedler distinguished between five different kinds of democratic consolidation, two of which aimed at preventing a relapse into authoritarianism ('avoiding democratic breakdown', 'avoiding democratic erosion'), and three aimed at improving the quality of a democracy ('completing democracy', 'deepening democracy' and 'organizing democracy') (Schedler 1998). While the former two processes encompass maintaining passive elite support for the existing regime in the absence of a viable alternative, the latter three denote genuine legitimization by elites and the general population alike (see also Tilly 2007 and Svolik 2008 for a valuable suggestion to distinguish conceptually between determinants of consolidation and reasons for breakdowns).

Scholars of democratic consolidation largely agree that democratic consolidation takes place at different levels (called "partial regimes" by Schmitter (1995: 556-8)), and that these partial regimes consolidate at different speeds. Rough agreement also exists as to the nature of these partial regimes. Morlino (1995, p. 575) names democratic structures and procedures, the relationships between the structures or various powers, parties and the party system, interest structures, the relationship between intermediation structures and civil society, and the relationships between intermediation structures and the regime. Based on the work of Linz and Stepan (1996), Merkel (Merkel 1999: 145-169) distinguishes between four connected levels of consolidation: the constitution, an intermediate level (parties and associations), elite behavior, and a 'citizen culture;' or, put more broadly, the institutional structure, modes of participation, and political culture.

As can be seen, there is wide agreement that democratic consolidation takes place in those institutions, organizations and attitudes that are genuine to democracies. As Schedler points out, "it does not make any sense to speak of the 'democratic consolidation' of an authoritarian regime. This sounds trivial. But it is not. It assumes, for instance, that democratic consolidation cannot set in before a democratic transition has been successfully completed" (Schedler 1997). We argue that Schedler's insightful comment lies at the heart of the current problems of comparative studies of the success and breakdown of democratic regimes.

## 2.3. Critique

On the one hand, all young democracies are similar in that the completion of the democratic transition marks a "point zero" from which consolidation commences. The success and failure of democratic consolidation then depends on a number of interdependent relationships: first of all, how adequate are the "arrangements, prudential norms and contingent solutions

that emerged [...] during the uncertain struggles of the transition" (Schmitter 1995: 539) to deal with the "contextual problems" outlined by Huntington? Do these structures and the unique elite constellations allow the refinement of these very structures to better organize political, economic and social life? And will these structures become "reliably known, regularly practiced and habitually accepted by those persons or collectives defined as participants/citizens/subjects of such structures" (ibid.)? The consequence of this conceptualization of democratic consolidation is that each young democracy is faced with a unique set of challenges, and, as the quote by Mainwaring, O'Donnell and Valenzuela above suggests, has to be evaluated in a case-specific manner (see also Nohlen/Tibaut 1996: 200). This makes it nearly impossible to formulate a theory of the determinants of democratic consolidation based on the empirical-analytical comparison of real world cases. Specifically, we have next to no general knowledge about which activities exactly serve to complete, deepen and organize democracy. In addition, the existing research cannot solve the puzzle raised by Beetham: economic development helps democracies survive, but economic development is not a function of the regime type. Thus, one crucial question should be which kinds of democracies are able to stimulate economic growth, and which kinds are not. Relatedly, Linz and Stepan point out the importance of the existence of a state, a functioning bureaucracy and rule of law protecting "individual freedoms and associational life" without, however, making clear if these are preconditions for democratic consolidation (and thus have to be established during transition or even authoritarianism) or parts of the process. Larry Diamond prefers the former view and interprets these conditions in a way that their absence denotes the presence of a "failed state" (Diamond 2006: 94).

## 3. Analytical framework

Our contribution contests the predominant view that democratic consolidation starts at a "point zero" following democratic transition and whose success in hindered or facilitated merely by country-specific, and thus scientifically uncontrollable, conditions. Instead of setting out on the premise that authoritarian and democratic regimes are fundamentally different things, we highlight what they have in common. As Göbel (2010: 2) points out, "many of the challenges democratic and authoritarian rulers face are actually quite similar: both must aim at establishing and upholding universal rules of the game to prevent splits in the leadership, secure society's compliance and gain support if the regime is to become sustainable. This re-

duces the need to apply coercive means". While we agree with Schedler that it makes no sense to speak of democratic consolidation in an authoritarian regime, we hold that it does make sense to speak of 'authoritarian consolidation', and that the degree to which an authoritarian regime has consolidated strongly influences the consolidation chances of a young democracy. In this way, many of the formerly uncontrollable context variables can be fathomed as independent variables affecting democratic consolidation.

## 3.1. Authoritarian Consolidation

Göbel's concept builds on the four levels proposed by Merkel to study democratic consolidation (Merkel 1999: 145-169): the macro-level (the constitution and the bureaucracy), the meso-level (parties and associations), and the micro-levels of elite behavior and political culture. Challenging the implicit assumption underlying "consolidology" that "the public is happy with whatever participatory institutions presented to them as long as these are democratic and enable them to influence policy-making," (Göbel 2010: 7), he argues for a broader conceptual framework that can incorporate performance-related factors as well. On the macro-level, authoritarian consolidation is conceptualized as the build-up of "infrastructural power", i.e. a dense network of institutions organizing government and providing citizens with incentives to behave in certain ways and thereby reduce complexity and improve predictability. Without infrastructural power, policies cannot be implemented, and vital interests of the population not satisfied.

First, this entails the ability to maintain a presence of the state in the whole of its territory (Soifer/vom Hau 2008: 222). Intimately related to this is, second, organizational coherence. This applies to functioning channels of communication between central and local governments, but also encompasses the existence of rules and mechanisms for elite-level power sharing and leadership turnover. A third important element is the quality of the bureaucracy. These structures are necessary for extracting and redistributing resources, which is another crucial element facilitating regime stability. Finally, the dense regulation of social life by means of laws and regulations can well serve to keep a non-democracy in power even without excessively relying on coercion.

As for the meso-level, authoritarian regimes naturally will not strive to build up a competitive, institutionalized party system, a highly diverse civil society and an autonomous media sector. However, a dense state apparatus with a wide reach can serve to link state and society by other means than parties and pluralist associations, as Evans (1992, 1995) has shown in

his discussion of the 'embeddedness' of the developmental state. Evans has shown the importance of government and social elites being connected by personal networks knit in elite academies, but more inclusive embeddedness could be imagined, for example by means of semi-competitive elections (see Schedler 2006), corporatist mass organizations, and complaint mechanisms. Embeddedness not only facilitates the implementation of government policies, but also feeds the preferences and grievances of different social groups back into the policy-making process (Evans 1992, 1995; Mann 1984). This in turn enables the government to react adequately to such demands and thereby increase its legitimacy (Mann 1984: 111 and 133).

On the micro level, finally, "discursive power" denotes the capacity of the state to create legitimacy by dispersing ready-made assessments of regime performance dispersed through education and propaganda. It encompasses the means to change (or at least influence) the cognitive filters through which strategic environments are interpreted (Hay 2001, see also Chong/Druckman 2007). Such power derives from capabilities in the form of a coherent and consistent official ideology or the ability to create authoritative, yet compelling narratives of crucial events.

### 3.1. Authoritarian Consolidation and Democratic Consolidation

We argue that many of the parameters regarded as beneficial for democratic consolidation, i.e. The absence of a "torturer-" and "praetorian problem", economic growth, a pacted transition and a high level of socio-economic development are direct results from authoritarian consolidation. In addition, authoritarian consolidation enabled the regime to tackle many of the "contextual problems" mentioned by Huntington. As Terry Lynn Karl and Philippe Schmitter (1991) imply, the general public in young democracies frequently expects more from the transition than can be delivered. Democratization no doubt significantly affects the input dimension of political rule, but frequently people expect that government efficiency and the quality of outputs would also be improved. This, as we know, democracy cannot deliver per se. Thus, input legitimacy alone is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for democratic consolidation. Quite unfairly, the legitimacy of young democracies hinges on factors that are not functions of democratization. Put in another way, government efficiency and output performance are the result of structures that are independent of regime type, but they are nevertheless instrumental for democratic consolidation. In this way, authoritarian consolidation can positively affect democratic consolidation, while authoritarian stagnation or even deconsoli-

dation frequently lead to popular disenchantment if the new democracy is unable to solve the "contextual problems" mentioned by Huntington. The capacities built up during authoritarianism ironically became instrumental for making democracy "the only game in town" in Taiwan, as they enabled the regime to efficiently process social demands and create output legitimacy, thus adding to the overall legitimacy of democratic government. Such conditions were largely absent in Thailand, which, we argue, accounts for the volatile nature of politics there. Furthermore, the Taiwanese case shows that previous experiences in democracy and the timing need not necessarily matter.

## 4. Authoritarian and democratic consolidation in Taiwan

The following sections examine the authoritarian consolidation of the Republic of China on Taiwan and illustrate how rule by coercion was gradually replaced by rule by organization. The building up of infrastructural capacities began immediately after the island was returned to the Republic of China by Japan in 1945, who had been the colonial master of Taiwan since 1895. While the Taiwanese initially welcomed their return to the motherland, the KMT government's excessive use of despotic power quickly soured the relations between the Taiwanese and the "Mainlanders."

### 4.1 Despotic power

On February 28, 1947, KMT forces violently suppressed a public protest by Taiwanese unhappy with their new government, resulting in the death of thousands. This incident cemented the sub-ethnic cleavage between the native "Taiwanese" and the "Mainlanders," who settled in Taiwan after the island had been returned to the Republic of China. The situation became even more tense after Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek lost the civil war against the forces of the Chinese Communists, fled China and established an exile government on Taiwan. Along with Chiang came two million refugees, many of which soldiers, politicians, bureaucrats and technicians. Chiang exclusively used mainlanders to staff important positions in government, military, bureaucracy and education sector. In effect, a government representing 20 percent of the population dominated a resentful 80 percent majority. Given that the KMT government had little infrastructural power at their disposal, they initially quelled dissent by political terror disguised as an anti-communist movement, About 3.000 persons were executed, and 8.000-10.000 persons imprisoned  (see Meyer 1996). This period of "white terror" ended in 1954, and it is no coincidence that this was when Chiang Kai-shek had begun to consolidate

his autocracy by taking over and reforming the provincial bureaucracy and, perhaps more important, overhauling the KMT. Martial Law and "Temporary Provisions in the Period of Mobilization against Communist Rebellion", both announced in 1948, as well as some other draconian laws continued to remain in place until at least the late 1980s and enabled the regime to use violence to discourage regime opposition and to disregard the Constitution (see Chao/Myers: Chapter 2). These regulations were enforced with the help of a number of police and security organs. Nevertheless, the increased infrastructural capacities were used to stabilize the government, develop the economy and improve social services. In addition, increased infrastructural power also provided a channel between the regime and social and economic elites, and even the general public. This made it possible to co-opt potential opposition, react to grievances, prevent crises and implement policies in line with popular preferences. The fact that a government representing a minority was able to rule Taiwan for decades testifies to the success of authoritarian consolidation in creating legitimacy, as does the fact that the first democratic national elections left the KMT in power.

## 4. 2. Infrastructural power

Three important cornerstones of authoritarian consolidation in Taiwan were the reorganization of the KMT, the government structure, and the bureaucracy.

*Government and bureaucracy.* As for government and bureaucracy, the new provincial leadership inherited the structures created by the Japanese imperial government. Given the lack of skilled personnel on the Chinese side, a great number of Japanese bureaucrats were initially able to keep their positions. Soon, however, the Nationalist government in Nanjing ordered their replacement by bureaucrats of Chinese nationality (Meyer 2004: 278-92). According to Michael Meyer, their replacements were skilled, but not experienced, which might be one reason for the inflation that hit Taiwan in 1947. The situation changed dramatically in 1949 when the central government, the bureaucratic apparatus and even parliament were imported whole-sale into Taiwan. We have not been able to locate any sources regarding the quality "imported" bureaucracy, but two issues are worth mentioning. As Gunter Schubert has pointed out, "given that bloated bureaucracies are a palpable characteristic of many developing countries, it is striking that the average growth rate of Taiwan's public service was a moderate 2.67 percent, which is not much different from the average growth in Western industrialized countries" (Schubert 1994, 81). The main reason for this is that the recruitment of bureaucrats was strictly regulated - both in terms of numbers and the quality of the re-

cruited. Starting from 1950, the government carried out annual civil service examinations, which "provided the aspirants in society with a regular route to social and economic mobility and also infused the bureaucracy with new blood" (Liu 1985, 11). These examinations were specialized and standardized, conducted by the Examination Yuan, a government organ specially established for this purpose, and had to be undergone by all civil servants. Higher-level bureaucrats had to pass additional examinations (Tien 1989, 121). In addition, the administration was frequently reformed. In 1958, an *ad hoc* Committee for Administrative Reform was formed under the Presidential Office to "help construct a more modern administrative system, through which the authoritarian regime could enhance its ability to control every aspect of Taiwanese society" (Wang/Shih 2010) and, one should add, steer economic development. Reforms that year and in 1966, 1967, and 1969 were implemented to improve administrative procedures, the civil service, and management (ibid.). In addition, skillful economic planning by well-educated technocrats in the Ministries of Finance, Economic Affairs, the Central Bank and the Council for Economic Planning and Development significantly contributed to the sustained economic growth Taiwan enjoyed since the 1950s - along with equal distribution and social welfare perhaps the most important component of output legitimacy (Meyer 2004).

***Party reform.*** An equally, if not more important component part of authoritarian consolidation in Taiwan was the reform on the KMT. Having learned from his defeat on the Mainland, Chiang Kai-shek used well the chance of a fresh start in Taiwan (Chao/Myers 1998, Dickson 1993). As he attributed the setback of the Nationalist regime to the weakness of the KMT's organization, the reform of the KMT was the most important item of his political agenda (Dickson 1993: 58). As in economic planning, the task of reforming the KMT was put into the hands of a select few. Less than 50 loyal, highly educated and progressive individuals, all in high government positions, made up the newly formed Central Reform Committee (CRC) who, aided by an Advisory Committee of 25 persons, was tasked with rebuilding the KMT (Chao/Myers 1998: 25-26). As Bruce Dickson has shown, Chiang's fervent hate of Communism did not prevent him from studying closely his nemesis and emulating many of its structures and methods (Dickson 1993: 63). The gentry, traditionally hostile to technocratic government and a potential opponent to Chiang's reform plans, was removed by means of a land reform, just like in China, albeit with American assistance and without the loss in human life. In addition, Chiang took great care to prevent the re-emergence of factionalism. The reformed KMT was often characterized as a "quasi-Leninist" Party, because it resembled so-

cialist parties in its organization, its integration with government structures and mass organizations, and its emphasis on cadre training and -indoctrination.

As the CCP, the KMT became organized both along territorial and functional lines. The National Party Congress elected the Central Committee (CC), which in turn selected a Standing Committee and a Party Chairman. Under the CC, a range of specialized committees was responsible for party organization, cultural affairs, society affairs, youth affairs, mainland affairs, overseas affairs, women's issues, and training. A policy committee formulated policies approved by the CC and relayed them to the relevant government organs (Hood 1997: 26). Functionally, the CC oversaw party headquarters for overseas Chinese, for national and local government, and for occupations. Territorially, county, city and district organizations helped implement party policies. They were subdivided into branches and cells (Hood 1997: 26). In effect, each KMT member belonged to one of about thirty thousands Party cells, the lowest functional unit in the KMT. In the cities, these cells were located in the workplace, whereas in rural areas they were organized along territorial lines (Dickson 1993: 63). The cells met regularly and were responsible not only for carrying out policies and orders, but also to recruit, educate, supervise and assist members, identify political talent, and investigate society (Dickson 1993: 70). A Discipline commission oversaw regular investigations against the violation of Party rules, and Political Conciliation Groups settled conflicts between Party and government organs (Dickson 1993: 67). Cadres were trained and indoctrinated in specialized institutes (Dickson 1993: 78). Importantly, organizing and supervising the armed forces by means of party cells and a political commissioner system gave the KMT tight control over the military and forestalled the putsches that were so frequent in other authoritarian states.

As can be seen, a political organization with formidable infrastructural power was created: the reorganization of the KMT improved the territorial reach of the state, recruited the best and brightest to formulate economic and social development policies, made sure that central government policies translated into political action, and supervised and organized society (see below). This enabled the KMT to improve the economy, reform local government (see below), subsidize primary education and establish a comprehensive public security system (Chao/Myers 1998: 43), which are all cornerstones of output legitimacy. Accordingly, Chao and Myers celebrate these policies as having "removed the barriers that had blocked individuals from enriching themselves, educating themselves, and elevating their social status and power…to unleash Taiwan's human energy. It was this new energy that made possible the

evolution of a new economic, political, and ideological market process that transformed Taiwan's society" (Chao/Myers 1998: 42).

### 4.3 Embeddedness

*Party cells.* The dense network of Party cells was of course one major component of the regime's embeddedness. As Dickson points out, "a new task of Party work was the investigation of society, an important feedback mechanism the KMT had ignored in the past. During the reorganization period, all Party cells were given the responsibility to conduct social investigations. They were to pay attention to the implementation of Party policies and the popular response to them, understand local economic and social conditions, and look for evidence of illegal organizations or Communist activity….Party members were also directed to get the names and details of the most admirable people in an area, presumably for recruitment purposes, and also those of the most dissatisfied people, for possible surveillance" (Dickson 78-79). However, it was not the KMT alone that connected the political centre with various constituency groups. For example, the regime's tight control over economic policies, the financial sector, major industrial conglomerates and its monopoly on vital resources prevented challenges by business elites, the more as state-led development in Taiwan was very successful. Also strict laws prohibited government officials from collusion with the financial sector (Wade 1988). In addition, a hierarchical system of industrial associations and trade unions with compulsory membership gave the KMT further control over important business leaders as well as workers. Naturally, some of the small-and-medium sized enterprises in the countryside escaped this kind of control, but their access to land and capital was severely restricted. This made sure that they did not expand unduly.

*Local elections.* Most important for the embeddedness of the KMT regime was perhaps its approach to local government. By means of the skillful combination of organization, monetary resources, and *divide et impera* politics, the KMT was successful in incorporating some of its harshest critics into its regime. The three main components of this strategy were the social component of local society being organized along factional lines, the political mechanism of semi-competitive local elections, and the organizational component of agricultural associations and local party membership. Except for by-elections to replace deceased legislators, no general elections for national parliament were held in Taiwan before 1991. At the local (county and township) level, however, leaders and assemblymen were chosen by means of semi-competitive elections almost immediately after Taiwan returned to the Republic of Chi-

na. The forming of opposition parties was not allowed, but candidates could run as independents. Getting elected at the local level was not very attractive in terms of political power, because local government was in firm grip of the party state. Political office, however, granted access to local monopoly and oligopoly rights and "money machines" like the credit departments of the fishermen's associations *(yuhui)* and the farmer's associations *(nonghui)* (Chen/Chu 1992: 89-90). In addition, political protection of semi-legal or illegal projects such as brothels, gambling dens and karaoke bars guaranteed the power-holders further resources.

***Local factions.*** As for social organization, it is necessary to understand that Taiwan's local political forces were organized in "factions", local-level clientelist networks bound by ties of blood, kinship, and marriage, but also by interpersonal relationships. (Chen 1995: 16-18). Most of Taiwan's counties and townships have two, some three local factions, whose main raison d'être is to compete for spoils by means of said elections. In order to be successful in these elections, one usually had to be nominated by the KMT, who had the organizational means to coordinate votes and candidates, the financial means to co-finance the costly electoral campaigns, and the coercive means to deter non-authorized candidates from running. As a consequence, candidates of the various local factions competed for nomination by the KMT, and local alliances against the KMT were highly unlikely unless the KMT disregarded the factions by filing its own candidates. This was backed up by the rigorous enforcement of a policy that forbade factions to conclude alliances beyond the county (Bosco 1994: 122). These factions mobilized not only their own members, but large parts of society through a network of vote brokers serving as a link between the candidate and the voters (Rigger 1994: 167-172 and 94-98). Thus, the KMT incorporated local elites basically by trading money for support via local-level elections, and society at large was also mobilized under the organizational roof of the KMT.

***Rural organization.*** In addition, rural organizations such as the water conservancy associations *(shuilihui),* which provided vital services to the peasants, served as vehicles of support mobilization in rural Taiwan. The representatives and workers of the *shuilihui* were greatly respected by the peasants and found it thus easy to mobilize support for KMT candidates. Of course, they commanded sticks as well: a lack of support could be sanctioned by a selective withdrawal of services (Interview with a former county-level *shuilihui* head, Taiwan, October 2010). It should be pointed out, however, that although all these organizations were able to exert coercive power, they chiefly relied on generating legitimacy by providing tangible out-

puts. It should also be pointed out that these organizations were not one-way channels, as they also served to relay preferences and grievances back to the political centre. The fact that these channels have survived democratization and continue to exist even today illustrates that they not only made the authoritarian government more responsive, but that their availability during and even after the transition to democracy aided democratic consolidation.

## 4.4 Discursive power

Franz Schurmann defines "organizational ideologies" as "a systematic set of ideas with action consequences serving the purpose of creating and using organization" (Schurmann, 1968: 18). He points out that "the link between idea and action may be direct and indirect", meaning that some ideas are formulated to produce "immediate action", while others aim to "shape the thinking of people" (Schurmann, 1968: 21). To account for these important differences, he calls the former subcategory "practical", the latter "pure" ideology (Schurmann, 1968: 21). This distinction is important for understanding the role of ideology in the authoritarian and democratic consolidation of the KMT regime. We argue that party members were mainly indoctrinated with pure ideology, while the general public was mainly mobilized by appealing to their "practical" concerns. Chao and Myers characterize the KMT as a "political sect" (Chao/Myers 1998: 33-40). The sect's pure ideology, however, was not absolute in the sense that it offered a utopian image of a perfect world. Rather, it was relational in the sense that it portrayed the KMT as an organization on a historical mission to save China and the World from Communism. The fact that this ideology was not particularly attractive to the Taiwanese members of the KMT and became outright absurd as the CCP consolidated its power on the Mainland and the international community withdrew its diplomatic support for the Republic of China might have contributed to the push for democracy since the 1970s. The KMT had not been able to build up much discursive power during its authoritarian rule, which aided democratization and facilitated democratic consolidation. The KMT of course tried to persuade the general public to support its historical mission, but being aware that the Taiwanese were not likely to support this mission, the KMT increasingly relied on pragmatism in its political communication with the masses. The fact that "hands-on" values such as economic growth and social equity were propagated to rally for support made the political culture of the Taiwanese quite compatible with democracy. The Taiwanese experience shows that while an increase of infrastructural power during authoritarianism is beneficial for democratic consolidation, an increase of discursive power is not.

## 5. Authoritarian and democratic consolidation in Thailand

The following sections are focusing its attention on the authoritarian consolidation by examining the political development in Thailand from 1932 to 1980s. Seventy-eight years after the 1932 Revolution, its fundamental promises and premises have not yet been fulfilled. The country's plentiful Constitutions and elected parliaments have been short-lived and military coups are institutionalized. Even today, jurists, politicians, academics, and military officers argue about the real meaning of democracy and elaborating over the most appropriate system of governance of Thailand. The complex process of democratic consolidation is often used as an excuse to keep functions and structures belonging to an authoritarian regime. The authoritarian consolidation of political power in Thailand is evident even until today.

### 5.1 Infrastructure power – authoritarian consolidation driven by a bureaucratic elite

The bureaucracy holds an important role in the political development of Thailand and the authoritarian consolidation (Shor 1960, Riggs 1966, Painter 2004: 377). The first political party in Thailand, the People's Party, was development by bureaucrats. The party comprised only of people in civil service or in military duty. Among the prominent members were Pridi Banomyong, the leader of the civilian faction and the young military officer, Plaek Phibulsongkram (here after namned Phibun), the leader of the military faction. It is worth noting that these people received their higher education abroad and did not come from prestigious families. Their move to end the absolute monarchy by a coup d'état on June 24, 1932 initiated the development of a strong and autonomous bureaucracy. A Constitution was promulgated and the king became nothing but the figurehead of the state, without any real administrative power. Ironically, a common view was that this was a final outcome of an attempt to consolidate power initiated by the monarchy itself who understood the need for a democratic consolidation (Chaloemtiarana 1979: xix–xxi and Riggs 1966: 94–97).

The ruling circle seized power in order to modernize the country and reached for new ideas to justify its actions (Morell & Samudavanija 1982: 4-5). A Constitution expressed in western liberal rhetoric focused on the need for elections, a parliament, and democracy. However, the written Constitution promulgated on 10 December 1932 allowed the People's Party to appoint half of the members of the parliament to ensure the party's control over the elected members (Samudhavanija 1987: 43). The idea of popular sovereignty articulated in a constitution has rarely been executed in practice as the military men and their allies wanted a justi-

fication of power that sound modern. Since 1932 seventeen constitutions have been developed and abandoned during each shift of power (McCargo 1998: 5-6).

This first phase of Thai politics was a struggle of power between three political groups representing different parts of the bureaucracy. First, liberal and socialist politicians led by Pridi Banomyong; the second group consisted of more conservative and royalist Members of Parliament led by Khuang Aphiwong; and the third group consisted of the military. The 1946 Constitution allowed political parties to operate thus forming of new parties took place and military officers were prohibited from holding political posts. The main opposition to the group under Pridi Banomyong came from Khuang Aphiwong's Democrat Party (the oldest still operating political party). On June 9, 1946 King Ananda was found shoot to death in his bed. He was succeeded by his brother Bhumibol who is the world's longest serving head of state. Pridi Banomyong was accused of being involved in the regicide thus losing most of his political influence. This event together with economic difficulties and corruption among civil servants and politicians associated with the government created problems to legitimize the democratic consolidation and gave the military an excuse to intervene and staged a coup on November 1947. The king's apparatus was again restored but under the guidance and protection of the military. However, the actual power of the king was limited in practice by the Privy Council, which was controlled by the army. The significant struggle for power between, but also within, the military, the monarchy and the bureaucracy is an important feature of the authoritarian consolidation in Thailand. Decisions to act for example by staging a coup was not always based on a threat from society or another elite group but also made based on threats from within in its own group. This fragmentation of power is of special importance within the military where a power struggle between the army, navy and the police are evident (Bowornwathana 2011: 35).

Another important feature influencing the fragmentation of power is the military men's loyalty to their graduating class. Military officers graduate from Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy and coup leaders are likely to appoint his classmates to key positions in the government (Samudavanija 1982:7). Within the civil part of the bureaucracy individual performance was based on loyalty to seniors. Patron-client networks influenced job placements and advancement. These networks also became the basis for more informal behaviors such bride taking, office buying and relationship to political campaigns.

A second important feature of the authoritarian consolidation is the decisive strategy was to establish a close state relationship with the US. The growing influence of the US, laid the ground for the unique characteristics of the authoritarian period. The flow of foreign financial resources, the inclination to a free market and the emergence of technocrats were, more or less, the products of Phibun's successful foreign policy at the beginning of this period.

With the support of the US, the regimes focused its attention on economic development in order to legitimize its existences. Organisational inefficiency would render doubtful the success of all development efforts. Bureaucratic appointments were traditionally based on patron - client relationships rather than competence. Hence, there was no need for the bureaucracy to improve its performance and productivity (Riggs 1966: 334). In fact, the bureaucracy as an interest group attempted to monopolise the state apparatus by aborting other formal political forces, e.g. political parties and the national assembly. Establishment of a centralised planning agency and reforms in public finance together with administrative reform were given high priority. This gave importance to the restoration and formation of a new bureaucratic elite. Among the special features of the new bureaucratic elite were skilled technocrats with independence and integrity. They could derive their bargaining power from the Washington agencies such as the World Bank, which strongly supported the new type of policymakers, the technocratic elite. Table 1 illustrates the focus on expansion of the bureaucracy during authoritarian consolidation.

**Table 1. Expansion of the Thai Bureaucracy, 1933 - 1979**

| Year | Number of Ministries | Number of Departments | Number of Divisions |
|------|------|------|------|
| 1933 | 7 | 45 | 143 |
| 1941 | 10 | 49 | 317 |
| 1957 | 12 | 90 | 550 |
| 1969 | 12 | 113 | 827 |
| 1979 | 13 | 131 | 1264 |

Source: Morrel & Samuda -vanija (1982)

The financial aid from the Washington agencies gave the technocrats support as a basic assumption was that bureaucracy was central to the policymaking process. In addition, they gained their legitimacy from the top ruling elite who knew that economic expansion meant an increase in their own stakes (Siamwalla 1997b: 69). Lastly, technocrats earned public respect through institution building and strong support from the King. Nevertheless, the relationship

between the top bureaucratic elites and the technocratic elites was more of an alliance than a hierarchical order. Siamwalla (1997a: Box 1) even stated that Dr Puey Ungphakorn, the most prominent among the technocratic elite and Governor of Bank of Thailand, was among the three most influential men during the period of 1950–1970. Dr Puey Ungphakorn showed that the technocratic elites had a significant impact on the government's policy decisions, in addition, he was a relatively close friend of the ruling dictators. The technocrats were scattered among several: the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB), the Fiscal Policy Office (FPO), the Bank of Thailand (BOT) and the Budget Bureau.

After the economic development during the 1950s and 1960s Thailand succeeded in accumulating the necessary economic infrastructure focusing on expansion of the underdeveloped road network, increasing the area of irrigated land and capacity of electronic generation. These developments were unique only to the period between 1950 and 1973, during which the Thai economy underwent the rapid transition into a modern capitalist economy under authoritarian regime.

## 5.2 Despotic power

The use of despotic power happened as a consequence to conflicts arising from the emergence of new social groups placing new demands on the state that the regime is unable to meet to demands for in society during the period after 1973. The government and the monarchy's main concern during those uncertain years were to prevent the rise of communism. Most notably, it warned of the dangers of Chinese-Vietnamese-Khmer communism. Its most crucial task was to win over the middle classes and the peasant masses. This was vital in view of the challenge posed to the state by the emergence of radical student and peasant organizations. During the early 1970s conservative elites and groups within the military became concerned with the prospect of an indefinite power monopoly by the military rulers. However, despite the rapid economic growth the technocratic elite failed to improve the economic conditions of the rural poor (Sivarak 1973: 52–53). The regime began to unravel in October 1973 when the National Students Centre of Thailand (NSCT) organized protests against despotic rule. The students demanded the termination of military rule and insisted upon the adoption of a democratic constitution. In short, they called for the fulfillment of the ideals of the 1932 Revolution. The mobilization of society by elites and counter elites gave rise to a highly polarized political environment.

**Table 2.  Casualties from Armed Clashes between Government Forces and Communist Insurgents (1966-1973)**

| Year | Casualties to Government Forces | Casualties to Communist Insurgents |
|---|---|---|
| 1966 | 47 | 97 |
| 1967 | 68 | 192 |
| 1968 | 142 | 141 |
| 1969 | 158 | 109 |
| 1970 | 167 | 95 |
| 1971 | 285 | 190 |
| 1972 | 592 | 369 |
| 1973 | 358 | 255 |
| Total | 1817 | 1448 |

Source: Adopted from Morrel & Samudavanija (1982)

The situation became worse in 1976 when the King granted an exiled dictator Thanom whom had arrived from his exile, now a Buddhist monk, royal refuge. On the other hand, however, student activists demanded his immediate expulsion. The students organized a protest at Thammasat University. It was alleged that the students were communists or communist dupes, and some of the top leaders were Marxists. A forceful repression of the student demonstration took place in October 1976 and the military backed government was installed. This political polarization, coupled with sporadic violence, provided the military another opportunity to intervene in the political system. Many student radicals and their allies fled to the jungle after the 1976 Thammasat massacres to fight an insurgent against the military. The use of violence to oppress the communist insurgent is illustrated in Table 2 and shows the violent methods that were used during this period.

## 5.3 Embeddedness and Diffusion of Power

*Peasants.* As Manarungsan's (2000: 193–194) and Ingram's (1971: 216-218) studies of the economic development during 1850 to 1973 illustrate, Thailand was dominated by small-scale rice farming with expansion of cultivated land as main method to raise household income. Peasants were mostly in-between subsistence and commercialization with little influence over economic and political matters thus playing no part in the power struggles between the bureaucracy and the monarch. By neglecting the majority of the population consisting of peasants serves as a major constraint in creating sustainable public polices for development

and democratic consolidation. The situation during this phase did not reflect a struggle against class exploitation, but struggle for power within the ruling circle itself. The peasantry, in Thai politics, was an object, not a subject of politics. What handicapped the growth of civil society in Thailand was the fear for communism. Any public mobilisation of civil society was labelled as communist activity by the government. Political parties emerged during 1973-76 and governments were formed after elections with coalitions of military, bureaucratic elite and political parties were common. The military leaders who took over the government in 1977 reached a compromise with the dissidents. This caused many activists to leave the Communist Party of Thailand and militant anti-government movements. From the events of the 1970s, the administration learned that rural poverty can be a potent cause of political instability.

*Monarchy.* The democratic interlude began when the King appointed a National Convention to function as an interim governing assembly in 1973. In 1974, a new constitution was adopted by the interim National Assembly, and an election contested by 42 parties was held a year later. Short after the election the global oil crisis hurt the Thai economy. The economic recession precipitated a drop in foreign investment and capital outflow. Conservative royalists, the military, bureaucratic elite and business elites blamed student radicals, labor unions, peasants, and democratic politics for the economic downturn. With the military sidelined and discredited, the monarchy was forced to become in active political player in the political arena.

During the authoritarian regimes, the King and Queen toured the country widely to touch base with the peasants thus creating legitimacy for the regimes. The King also worked closely with the bureaucracy and the armed forces, and made effective use of military owned media. It promoted Thai culture, and endeavored to eliminate foreign communist influences in the remote located provinces. The important relationship between the King, military and the civil bureaucracy has created and consolidated a powerful network with no control from the popular sovereignty. The King has acted through his advisors in the Privy Council and by using public media as during his televised birthday speeches. The King has often given views on shown actual political events and his view on western political ideas giving importance to constitutionalism has not always been positive and declared that although the 1991 constitution was "not ... fully adequate", it could always be amended later on (Hewison 1997: 68-73). The King is protected against any physical or defamatory threats from the public through a lèse majesté law.

*The Cabinet.* Table 3 illustrates the changing patterns of the occupation of cabinet members. Interesting to note is that the elected governments of Seni, Kukrit and Seni's second term as premier during the period of 1973-1976 started the development of introducing businessmen to be cabinet members. Elections were dominated by money and political parties increasingly represented business interest. During the 1980s, Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda, who used to be the military commander of the northeast region, a strong base of the CPT, put eradication of rural poverty, earlier neglected by the administration, at the top of the agenda. The political change was influenced by the interaction between the government and the private sector taking place at the political area thus providing opportunities for business interest to influence policymaking (Hewison 1997). The Sino-Thai business groups were earlier excluded from direct access to the political area (Suehiro 1989).

**Table 3.  Occupational distribution of Thai Cabinet Members (1963-1988)**

| Head of Government | Total Cabinet members | Bureaucrat or others | Businessman |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sarit | 14 | 14 | 0 |
| Thanom I | 18 | 17 | 1 |
| Thanom II | 25 | 24 | 1 |
| Thanom III | 28 | 25 | 3 |
| Sanya I | 28 | 24 | 4 |
| Sanya II | 31 | 28 | 3 |
| Seni | 30 | 22 | 8 |
| Kukrit | 27 | 11 | 16 |
| Seni | 31 | 20 | 11 |
| Thanin | 17 | 15 | 2 |
| Kriangsak I | 33 | 31 | 2 |
| Kriangsak II | 43 | 34 | 9 |
| Kriangsak III | 38 | 33 | 5 |
| Prem I | 37 | 20 | 17 |
| Prem II | 40 | 28 | 12 |
| Prem III | 41 | 24 | 17 |
| Prem IV | 44 | 23 | 21 |
| Prem V | 45 | 14 | 31 |

Source: Adopted from Suriyamongkol (1988)

The heritage from the authoritarian consolidation with institutional arrangements to give the centralised and autonomous bureaucracy power also over institutions under political control decreased the role of political parties. At the end of the 1970s, bureaucrats of the NESDB

started planning for a reform of the administration of rural development. Policymaking became more of a distributive game involving larger parts of the country, thus providing a diffusion of power not only spatially but also to other groups of society that were earlier excluded from influencing politics. Local and regional political bosses delivered blocs of votes to the larger national parties in exchange for rewards such as public investments or favourable licences (Painter 2004: 377).

## 5.4 Discursive power

The history from 1973 and 1976 show that elected governments with politicians articulating political programs have been seen as a threat to the triangulation of power between the elites; the monarchy, military and the autonomous bureaucracy. The military men who staged coups where not attached to the Western ideology of the constitution. Instead, the elite propagated the nationalist ideology based on the Nation, Religion, and the King, all of which could only be protected by the military (Chaloemtiarana 1979: 31–32). The role of ideology has been not played an important role for authoritarian and democratic consolidation in Thailand. The bureaucracy have expected politicians to be interested in passing laws and not to engaged in mass mobilization and articulation of political ideologies.

Reasons for the decision to stage a coup were corruption among government officials and politicians together with a communist threat to national security. According to Terwield (1983:327) the background to the first coup in 1932 was found in the government decision to cut expenditures according to its expected shrinking revenue as a consequence to the global economic crisis in the 1920s (Ingram 1971: 184). The budget for defence dropped by one-third and the civil parts of the bureaucracy was put under severe pressure to fire civil servants. The most critical fiscal measure was the introduction of the tax on income, thus directly affecting the civil servants livelihood (Samudhavanija 1987: 29). The military regimes in power from 1958 to 1973 differed from the earlier and later military rule in many aspects. The coup leader held all the major posts of the state - prime minister, supreme commander, army commander, minister of national development and head of police. Their regimes maintained stability and order through a combination of techniques: popular participation in elections was prohibited together with political parties, dominance and censorship of media, cooptation of intellectuals and suppression of potential opponents. Military regimes after 1973 have ruled by based patron-client relationships providing more distribution of powerful positions in society.

## 6. Conclusion

The present study has focused its attention on the period of authoritarian consolidation by comparing Taiwan and Thailand. The capacities built up during authoritarianism became instrumental for making democracy "the only game in town" in Taiwan, as they enabled the regime to efficiently process social demands and create output legitimacy, thus adding to the overall legitimacy of democratic government. In Taiwan increased infrastructural capacities in terms of an effective and skilled bureaucracy were used to stabilize the government, develop the economy and improve social services. In addition, increased infrastructural power also provided a channel between the regime and social and economic elites, and even the general public. The analysis of Taiwan highlights the importance of political organization with formidable infrastructural power, the reorganization of the KMT improving the territorial reach of the state. This development enabled the KMT to improve the economy, reform local government, subsidize primary education and establish a comprehensive public security system thus creating output legitimacy.

The analysis of Thailand illustrates less effectiveness in creating legitimacy for a democratic government providing a more volatile political development. The significant struggle for power between, but also within, the military, the monarchy and the bureaucracy is an important feature of the authoritarian consolidation in Thailand. Decisions to act for example by staging a coup was not always based on a threat from society or another elite group but also made based on threats from within in its own group. This fragmentation of power and the development of networks acting outside the constitution provide constraints for the political area to develop, consolidate and implement reforms and new policies. Therefore, politicians are strongly dependent, and sometimes in the hands of the bureaucracy when it comes to create legacy in order to act. It is found that organizational inefficiency within the bureaucracy hindered the efficiency of the government reforms in educations and rural development introduced during the 1960s to 1980s. Bureaucratic appointments were traditionally based on patron - client relationships rather than competence. Hence, there was no need for the bureaucracy to improve its performance and productivity thus low incentive to create output legitimacy for elected politicians.

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