Thailand
Rice

In 1919, Thailand (or Siam, as it was called at the time, and the country's name was officially changed from Siam to Thailand on June 24, 1939) was an absolute monarchy under the Chakri dynasty, founded by King Rama I in 1782. The King in 1919 was Rama VI (whose given name was Vajiravudh). King Rama VI died suddenly in 1925, leaving the throne to his last surviving brother, Prajadhipok, who became King Rama VII on 26 November, 1925.
In 1932, a combination of military officers and civilian leaders of the Thailand People's Party (TPP) staged a coup which forced Rama VII to agree to end absolute monarchy and to accept a constitutional monarchy (SOLS change). On December 10, 1932 King Rama VII signed Thailand's first constitution and Thailand became a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary form of government. After this point, however, the government in Thailand is seen as "a series of military governments interspersed with brief periods of democracy" (United States Department of State). Although Thailand became a constitutional monarchy, the army began to have a prominent role (Mishra 2010, 106).

The first Prime Minister of this new system of government was Mano (also: Phya Manopakorn Nitithada), one of the leaders of the Thailand People's Party (TPP). He took office on 10 December, 1932. In 1933, following disagreement with the coup leaders and the national assembly, his government was overthrown in a bloodless coup led by military officers, leading to Phahon (also: Phya Phonphayuhasena) being installed as prime minister. Phahon was elected as prime minister on 20 June, 1933. The premiership of Phahon was marked by a struggle between the military and civilian forces for dominance in Thai politics. He stepped down from office on 21 December, 1938, when he dissolved the national assembly and resigned due to the issues over a budget bill which restricted the function of the government (Mishra 2010, 111). Pibul (also: Plaek Pibulsongkram), also from the military wing of the TPP, became prime minister. He took over the post of Minister of Defense as well as commander-in-chief of the army as well. He was the supreme leader of Thailand and his policies went hardly unopposed. Thailand drifted toward military dictatorship by, for example, arresting his political enemies (Mishra 2010, 111).
We code Thailand from 1932 to 1943 (from Mano to Pibul) as a military-personalist hybrid regime. We acknowledge that the TPP was characterized by factionalism during this period: the older "Conservatives" led by Mano and the "Promoters" which was divided into three groups- the senior military faction of Phahon; the junior army and navy faction led by Pibul; and the civilian faction led by Pridi (also: Pridi Phanomyong) (see Wyatt 1984, 247). However, there seem to be evidence to show the strong influence of the military on nearly every issue throughout this period, which finally became consolidated completely under Pibul. Thus, we consider that Mano, Phanon, and Pibul being under the same military-personalist regime and we do not code any SOLS changes under this regime.

Since 8 December, 1941, Imperial Japan launched its attacks on Southeast Asia and the Allied possessions in the region including numerous landings in Thailand. The Thai government agreed to let the Japanese pass through the country and use its military bases. As the war progressed, public dissatisfaction grew against the Pibul's pro-Japanese policies and he was forced to resign as prime minister in 2 August, 1944.

After the resignation of Pibul, the Thai politics was led by the members of Free Thai Movement composed of anti-Japanese elites with considerable support from police as well as army (Mishra 2010, 116). Although several major sources including www.worldstatesmen.org, Lentz (1999), and Mishra (2010) list Khuang Aphaiwong (1 Aug 1944 - 17 Jul 1945), Thawi Bunyaket (31 Aug 1945 - 17 Sep 1945), and Seni Pramoj (17 Sep 1945 - 13 Jan 1946): all of them were the members of Free Thai Movement, as prime ministers during 1945, Archigos (1999) lists Pridi, also a member of Free Thai Movement, as an effective leader of Thailand during this period. Since Pridi directed Free Thai Movement, which engineered the downfall of pro-Japanese Pibul's government in 1944, and Pridi was the real power behind successive civilian governments over the next two years, he should be considered as an effective leader of Thailand as Archigos codes.

Pridi, who had served as minister of finance in Pibul's government but resigned in protest against the government's pro-Japanese policies, was appointed as Regent in 1944 for the boy king Mahidol who was studying in Switzerland. Pridi built up the anti-Japanese Free Thai Movement network in Thailand and established contact with the Allies and the parallel Thai resistance organizations based in Britain and the United States. Pridi retired from the regency when King Mahidol returned in December 1945. He served as a respected advisor to the post-war civilian governments of Tawee Boonyaket and Seni Pramoj. In March 1946, Pridi himself became prime minister.

After the collapse of the Pibul's government in 1944, Pridi quickly gained power over the government. Although Pridi and Pibul had been allies initially, they were no longer allies at that time. Pibul led pro-Japanese policies and he was supported by the military. Pridi led anti-Japanese policies and he formed the partisan resistance army against Japan. GWF code Thailand from 1944 as a personalist regime, which is distinct from the regime began in 1932. Thus, we code a SOLS change with Pridi.

GWF classify Thailand from 1944 to 1947 as a personalist regime. Pridi was technically a civilian leader, and a member of the Khana-Rassadorn (People's Party, KR). During his spell, Pridi initially held the title of Regent and served as Prime Minister for about 5 months. Many times he had no official position. Thus, we list him as the de-facto ruler of Thailand. Pridi created a constitution, and for a time it appeared that Thailand was progressing towards a democratic, civilian government (Wyatt 2003, 252). By the middle of 1946, Pridi came under attack by the media and members of the Democratic Party as a result of economic downturn and his handling of the investigation into King Ananda's death and repression of those who criticized his investigation (Chaloemtiarana 2007, 24). There were suspicions that he was responsible for the king's death. Embattled Pridi then resigned in August citing health problems and handed power to Rear Admiral Thamrong who became PM (Chaloemtiarana 2007, 19). Mishra (2010, 118) described Thamrong as one of Pridi's "followers". Ferrara (2015, 128) explains that by 1946, Pridi "was the head of an electoral/parliamentary coalition that included two main groupings that supported Pridi in parliament. The first was the Phak Sahachip (Cooperative Party), regionally based in the northern, northeastern and southern regions that were poor and favored more progressive and populist policies. The second was the Constitutional Front (Naeo Ratthathanmanum), which was based in the Central Region and Lower North, and had the support of mid-level bureaucrats. The Constitutional Front was the more moderate and liberal

component of Pridi's coalition. Thamrong was a leader of this wing and can thus be considered pro-Pridi. Geddes et al. also code the Pridi personalist regime as continuing until 1947 and thus include Thamrong as part of the same regime. We code no SOLS change between Pridi and Thamrong.

The murder of King Ananda and the ensuing political scandal eventually resulted in a military coup, led by Pibul on 8 November 1947. As GWF code a transition from a personalist state to a military-personalist one and Pridi and Pibul also had different personalist allies, we code this as a major SOLS change. Pibul initially appointed Khuang Aphaiwong as Prime Minister, but then assumed the position himself when it appeared that Khuang and his supporters in the National Assembly were drafting a constitution that would limit the power of the military (Wyatt 2003, 255).

Pibul remained in power until 1957, when he was overthrown in a bloodless military coup led by his deputy minister of defense, Major-General Sarit Thanarat (no SOLS change). Sarit then installed an "interim cabinet" under Phote Sarasin (a Thai diplomat who was the secretary-general of SEATO), with the goal of conducting elections (Baker and Phongpaichit 2009, 148). However, Phote's party (the Revolutionary Party, or the party of the military, RP) fared poorly in the elections of December 1957, and he refused to take office as Prime Minister (Suwannathat-Pian 2003, 252). Instead, the role was assumed by his deputy, General Thanom Kittikachorn. Given the fact that Phote Sarasin was a member of the military's party, we do not code his assumption of office as major SOLS change. However, since GWF codes two separate military/personalist regimes during the period of 1948 to 1973 (one for 1948-1957 and the other for 1958-1973), we code the second military/personalist regime beginning with Phote Sarasin. This is a minor SOLS change. (While some sources consider him interim, by our rules he is not interim, since he was part of the military/personalist regime GWF code.)
Upon improvement of his health, Sarit returned to Bangkok in 1958, and on 20 October, took power in a bloodless coup, abolishing the constitution and declaring martial law. In 1963, Sarit died, and was replaced by his deputy General Thanom Kittikachorn.

In 1968, much like his predecessors, Thanom issued a new constitution that provided for a bicameral legislature. Elections in 1969 produced a majority for the RP, and Thanom continued as Prime Minister (Thailand is classified as being under military rule until 1973). In 1971, Thanom dissolved Parliament, banned political parties, and restored military dominance over the government (Wyatt 2003, 287). However, public discontent with this action led to increasing student demonstrations, which involved up to 500,000 people by mid-1973. When other members of the military refused to send troops against the civilians, Thanom was forced to resign and leave the country on 14 October 1973.

On 15 October 1973, King Bhumibol appointed Sanya as an interim prime minister to write a new constitution, after which elections were held in 1975. The elections did not provide a clear mandate and parliament was extremely fragmented. Under these conditions, Seni of the Democrat Party formed a minority government that fell within a month. According to the Library of Congress, "Seni Pramoj, whose Democrat Party was the largest in the right-wing bloc, formed a shaky government that could depend on only 91 of the 269 votes in the House of Representatives." It is very hard to identify which parties were in government but the Social Agrarian Party seems to have been part of the coalition (NYT 2/4/1975). Seni was thereafter

succeeded by his brother Kukrit from a rival party, the right wing Social Action Party, who led a coalition of no less than 16 parties. Again, we are having trouble identifying the coalition members. Seeing that Sanya's interim government governed a little more than 17 months, but less than 18 months, the transition to his government was not coded as a SOLS change. Seni's short rule was coded as a SOLS change 30, whereas Kukrit's more permanent government was coded as a SOLS change (Library of Congress 2010). This is an ABC scenario.

1976 was yet another tumultuous and transitional year for Thai politics, ending in the return of military dictatorship. The year first saw the dissolution of Kukrit's coalition, due to increasing pressures from the military in April, following Kukrit's attempt to press charges of corruption against military officers. (Darling 1977; US Library of Congress 2010) The April elections were won by Seni, who returned to power for another short rule of less than 6 months before he was disposed; the start of Seni's second period is coded as a SOLS change. (Darling 1977) In October, following increasing tensions between students and (paramilitary) police forces, the military, under the leadership of Admiral Sangad Chaloryu, took over and installed Thanin several days later. However, due to his overt violence in dealing with students, the military removed Thanin from office, leaving Sangad in power for a few weeks before installing General Kriangsak Chomanand in October 1977 (Darling 1977, 1978, Library of Congress 2010). Sangad's interim government that took over in the evening of 6 October is the entry of a new period of military rule in Thailand and is therefore coded as a SOLS change, later changes in the leadership of the military regime, such as the entry of General Kriangsak were not coded as SOLS changes.

Kriangsak promised elections in 1979, but when his government party did not do well in the elections, he was forced from power by the commander-in-chief of the Army, General Prem Tinsulanonda. Prem was in power until 1988, when his coalition in the National Assembly collapsed and he was replaced by Chatichai Choonhavan, also a General, but a member of the Thai Nation Party (CT) (SOLS change). At this point, GWF no longer code Thailand as a military/personalist regime, but the country is also not coded as a democracy. Choonhavan is a member of the military, but his government was democratically elected (United States Department of State). However, his political rivals (and the military) seized power in February 1991 and installed an interim Prime Minister, Anand Panyarachun, who was not affiliated with a party but is considered by Geddes as party of the military regime, meaning that in 1991 there is a SOLS change to a military regime. Panyarachun held power until March 1992, when elections were held. After the elections, a military coup led by General Suchina Kraprayoon took power (SOLS change only at entry Panyarachun), and held it for one year, as mass demonstrations and violence broke out throughout the country (Geddes codes Thailand in 1992 as being a military regime).

After the King intervened, Suchinda resigned, and elections were held in September 1992. The PP, led by Chuan Leekpai, won the elections (SOLS change). Leekpai led a coalition government of composed of his party, the New Aspiration Party (NAP), Palang Dharma Solidarity parties (PD), the Social Action Party (SAP), and Solidarity (Sol) (Murray 1996, ISAS 1994). In 1993 Leekpai exchanged the SAP for Seritham (Choo 1993) (minor SOLS change). Moreover, after New Aspiration left the government in the first week of December in 1994, Chart Pattana (CP) joined the government coalition on 13 December, which was coded as

another Minor SOLS change (Siew Hua 1994, Hui Yin 1994). His government was characterized by arguments over the structure of a new constitution (Wyatt 2003, 306), and when elections were held in 1995, his government lost (SOLS change). The winner, Banharn Silpa-acha and his party, the CT, was only in power for one year; Silpa-Archa headed a seven-party coalition in which the major coalition parties were the Chart Thai Party, the New Aspiration Party, the Palang Dharma, the Social Action party (SA), the Nam Thai (NT), the Prachakorn Thai Party (PT), and the Muan Chon (MC). He was succeeded by Chawalit Yongchaiyudh, a member of the New Aspirations Party (PKWM) (SOLS change). Note that the Prachakorn Thai Party shortly left the coalition in June 1996, but returned within two weeks (Tunsarawuth 1996a, 1996b). Two months later on August 15, the Palang Dharma left the coalition (minor SOLS change), but the remaining six-party Barharn coalition would retain its majority in parliament (Tunsarawuth 1996). Chawlit's government came to power in the middle of an economic crisis, and though it was able to draft a new constitution, it was not able to hold power for long.

In November 1997, Chuan Leekpai once again became Prime Minister after Chawlit resigned (SOLS change). Chun Leekpai headed an eight-party coalition consisting of his Democrat Party (PP), the Chat Thai (CT), Solidarity, Palang Dharma (PD), Thai, Social Action (SAP), Seritham, and dissidents from the Prachakor Thai Party (PT) (Tang 1997, Department of State 2011, Punyaratabandhu 1998, 1999). On 30 September in 1998, the Chart Pattana Party (CPP) entered the coalition and on July 10 1999, the SAP left the coalition; both are minor SOLS changes (Tunsarawuth 1996, "Thai government" 1999).

This time, Chuan Leekpai was able to remain in office until 2001. In the elections of that year, the wealthy businessman Thaksin Shinawatra created a party named Thai Rak Thai (Thai Love Thai, TRT), and won an overwhelming majority, leading him to become Prime Minister (SOLS change). Following the elections, the NAP, which entered into a coalition with Thaksin's TRT and the Chat Thai (CT). In January 2002 the TRT merged with the NAP –hereafter TRT and on March 5, the CCP entered the coalition (minor SOLS change), leaving again on November 8, 2003 (minor SOLS – the Nation 2002, 2003). Shinawatra's administration was marked by accusations of anti-democratic actions (United States Department of State). Despite this, he was reelected in 2005 with Thailand's first ever single-party outright electoral victory (minor SOLS change February 6, 2005-Phongsutthirak 2005). After the elections, allegations of corruption surfaced against Thaksin, who called snap elections in 2006. However, the main opposition parties boycotted these elections, and the results were annulled. On 19 September 2006, before new elections could be held, the military seized power. Sonthi Boonyaratkalin, the leader of the coup, assumed the position of the Chairman of the Council for Democratic Reform, which he held until 1 October, a period of two weeks (SOLSchange, as this represents the year- long change to military rule that Geddes coded). The coup leaders then installed the nonpartisan Surayad Chulanont as Prime Minister (not a SOLS change, as the military was still in control).

According to Geddes, the military regime ended in 2007 and new elections under a new constitution were won by the Pro-Thaksin People's Power Party (PPP). Leader Samak Sundaravej subsequently formed a coalition comprised of Chart Thai, Pue Paendin (For the Motherland -- PP), Matchimathippatai (Neutral Democratic Party), Ruamjai- thai Chartpattana (Thais United National Development Party), and Pra-charaj (State's Citizens) and became Prime Minister in January 29 2008 (Department of State 2011, worldstatesmen.org). This is a SOLS

change. Both Samak Sundaravej and his direct PPP successor Somchai Wongsawat (no SOLS change) were forced out of office by court rulings, which ultimately led to the dissolution of the PPP. Chaovarat Chanweerakul briefly formed an interim government (worldstatesmen.org). This is not a SOLS change. Upon new elections in December of 2008, the Democratic Party (PP) under the leadership of Abhisit Vejjajiva managed to take over from the PPP's replacement party Pue Thai (PT), because of defections within PT and its coalition (Department of State 2011, worldstatesmen.org, Mishra 2010). The governing coalition for Abhisit Vejjajiva was composed of the PP, TP, CTP, Bhumjaithai, Pue Pandin, Ruamjaithai Chartpattana (Al Jazeera 2011). The governing coalition for Yingluck Shinawatra was composed of the PTP, CTP, Palung Chon, Puea Pandin, Mahachon (BBC News 2011).

In May 2014, Yingluck Shinawatra was ordered to step down from prime minister after being found guilty of abusing her power (Hodal 2014). Niwattumrong Boonsongpaisan took over as acting prime minister. Boonsongpaisan refused to resign amid pressure from senators and protestors that called for political reforms (Doksone 2014). Only a few weeks after Boonsongpaisan took power, the military took power in a coup, and in August, General Prayuth Chan-ocha was named prime minister (BBC News 2011a; BBC News 2011b). Elections were promised but kept being delayed. Elections were finally held in 2019, with Chan-ocha being elected (BBC News 2019). Thailand becomes a non-democracy in 2014, so we rely on the predesignated successor rule to determine SOLS changes. The transition from Shinawatra to Boonsongpaisan is not coded as a SOLS change because Boonsongpaisan is considered an interim leader. The transition from Boonsongpaisan to Chan-ocha is coded as a SOLS change because Chan-ocha was not a designated successor of Shinawatra and took power in a military coup.

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Pre-1945 coded by Naoko Matsumura (Rice) on 06/29/2011
Post-1945 coded by Meera Krishnan (Rice) on 06/19/2010
Pre-1945 edited by Ashley Leeds (Rice) on 03/20/2012
Pre-1945 updated by Naoko Matsumura 06/20/2012
Post-1945 revised by Eelco van der Maat (Vanderbilt) on 10/10/11

Post-1945 revised by Ashley Leeds (Rice) on 2/27/12
Post-1945 updated by Naoko Matsumura (Rice) on 6/5/12
Post-1945 updated by Naoko Matsumura (Rice) on 6/13/12
Post-1945 updated by Matt DiLorenzo (Vanderbilt) on 07/30/2012
Combined by Matt DiLorenzo (Vanderbilt) on 06/19/2013
Edited by Andrew Wood (Rice) 05/24/2014
Edited by Ashley Leeds 8/5/2014
Revised by Michaela Mattes 9/4/2015
Revised by Michaela Mattes 11/11/2015
Edited by Kristin Bryant to include information about 2009-2018 period coded by Alex Pugh on 08/08/2020