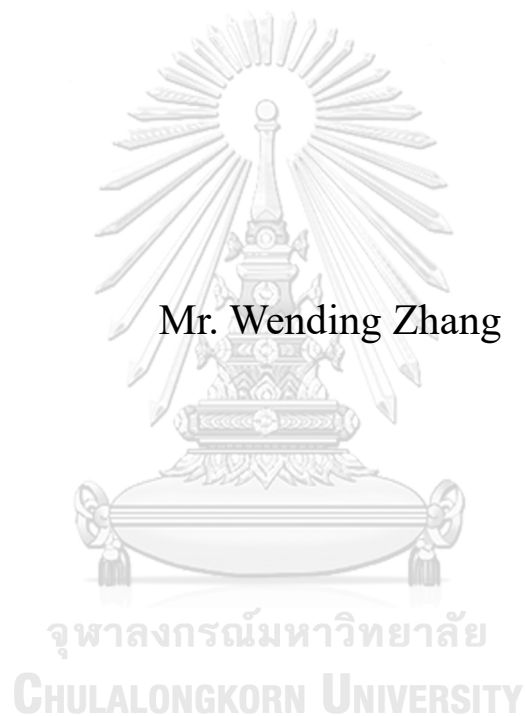


STREET PROTESTS IN THAILAND DURING 2019 TO 2022



A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts in Southeast Asian Studies
(Interdisciplinary Program)
Inter-Department of Southeast Asian Studies
GRADUATE SCHOOL
Chulalongkorn University
Academic Year 2022
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การประท้วงบนท้องถนนในประเทศไทยระหว่างปี2562ถึง2565



วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต
สาขาวิชาเอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้ศึกษา (สหสาขาวิชา) สาขาวิชาเอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้ศึกษา
บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย
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ลิขสิทธิ์ของจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

Thesis Title STREET PROTESTS IN THAILAND
 DURING 2019 TO 2022
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Field of Study Southeast Asian Studies (Interdisciplinary
 Program)
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เจินตั้ง จาง : การประท้วงบนท้องถนนในประเทศไทยระหว่างปี2562ถึง2565.
(STREET PROTESTS IN THAILAND DURING 2019
TO 2022) อ.ที่ปรึกษาหลัก : ชีระ นุชเปี่ยม

การระบาดของโควิด-19 ส่งผลกระทบในทางลบต่อประเทศไทยท่ามกลางการโจมตีที่รุนแรงโดยเฉพาะกลุ่มเยาวชนต่อรัฐบาล พลั้หลักของการประท้วงของเยาวชนไทยทำให้การประท้วงบนท้องถนนในประเทศไทยแตกต่างจากในอดีต บทความนี้นำเสนอปัญหาการวิจัยสองข้อโดยสร้างปัญหาให้กับปรากฏการณ์ที่เกิดขึ้นใหม่นี้ การชุมนุมในประเทศไทยช่วงโควิด-19 ระบาด แตกต่างจากในอดีตอย่างไร? การประท้วงที่ลุกลามใหญ่โตส่งผลอย่างไรต่อประเทศไทยในปัจจุบันและอนาคต? ดังนั้น บทความนี้จึงรวมเอาทฤษฎีของ **Radical Politics, Digital Activism** และ **Contentious Politics** โดยใช้การวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพและการวิจัยเชิงปริมาณ โดยส่วนใหญ่ผ่านการวิเคราะห์เอกสาร การสัมภาษณ์ และแบบสอบถามเพื่อดำเนินการวิจัยเชิงสร้างสรรค์ บทความนี้ระบุว่า การประท้วงของเยาวชนซึ่งเกิดขึ้นในช่วงไม่กี่ปีที่ผ่านมา มีข้อบกพร่อง ซึ่งประกอบด้วย ความแข็งแกร่งของมาตรการตอบโต้การประท้วงของรัฐบาล นำไปสู่กิจกรรมที่ดำเนินต่อไปแต่ไม่ได้ผล โดยมีเงื่อนไขหลายประการที่ก่อให้เกิดการหยุดชะงักรอบใหม่ที่สุดในภาษาไทย ความทันสมัยทางการเมือง บทความนี้พยายามอธิบายวิธีการประท้วงแบบใหม่และมาตรการตอบโต้การประท้วง แสดงให้เห็นผลกระทบของสื่อสังคมออนไลน์ต่อการประท้วงภายใต้การแพร่ระบาด และหวังว่าวิธีนี้จะช่วยเสริมการวิจัยเกี่ยวกับพัฒนาการของการประท้วงบนท้องถนนในประเทศไทย

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สาขาวิชา	เอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้ศึกษา (สหสาขาวิชา)	ลายมือชื่อ นิติติ
ปีการศึกษา	2565 ลายมือชื่อ อ.ที่ปรึกษา หลัก

6488078920 : MAJOR SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES
(INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAM)

KEYWORD Covid-19, Protest, Student Movement, Thai Democracy, Thailand
D: Politics

Wending Zhang : STREET PROTESTS IN THAILAND DURING 2019
TO 2022. Advisor: Assoc. Prof. Theera Nuchpiem, Ph.D.

The Covid-19 pandemic was adversely affecting Thailand amidst strong attacks especially by the youth groups on the government. The main force of Thai youth protests has made street protests in Thailand different from those of the past. By problematizing this emerging phenomenon, this paper proposes to tackle two research questions. *How are the protests in Thailand during the Covid-19 pandemic different from those the past? How does the massive outbreak of protests generate implications for present and future Thailand?* Therefore, this paper combines the theories of Radical Politics, Digital Activism and Contentious Politics, adopts qualitative research and quantitative research, mainly through documentary analysis, interviews and questionnaires to conduct a constructive research. This paper argues that the youth protests which took place in recent years had their shortcomings which, coupled with the strength of the government's counter-measures to protests, led to continued but ineffective activities, with multiple conditions ultimately triggering a new period of deadlock in Thai political modernization. The paper tries to explain new methods of protest and counter-measures to protests, illustrating the impacts of social media on protests under the pandemic, and hoping in this way to enrich research on the development of street protests in Thailand.



Field of Study:	Southeast Asian Studies (Interdisciplinary Program)	Student's Signature
Academic Year:	2022	Advisor's Signature

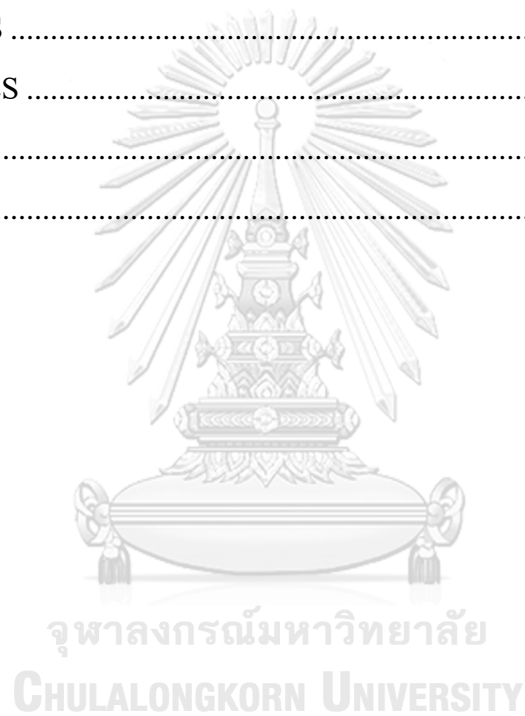
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to thank my advisor Ajarn Theera for his many guidances on this thesis. Both the format and the content of the thesis have given me great help. I am glad that I chose Ajarn Theera as my advisor. Then, I would like to thank Ajarn Amara and Ajarn Saikaew in the organizing committee for their guidance on my thesis defense and subsequent revisions. I know this is very hard, so I would like to express my thanks! Secondly, I would like to thank Khun Kyoza and other teaching assistants of the SEAS project, for their tireless help in defending and uploading my thesis. At the same time, I also want to express my respect and thanks to the Thai students I interviewed and communicated with. It is your help and answers that allowed me to successfully complete the thesis. I believe that the future of Thailand will be better in the hands of the younger generation. Finally, I would like to thank my family, my friends, and my classmates for their help in this paper and my life. grateful!

Wending Zhang

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1. Introduction

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in Thailand had had tremendously adverse impacts on its economy, with large numbers of people losing their jobs and stores closing. Finally, the dissolution of the Future Forward Party by the Constitutional Court directly catalyzed the outbreak of anti-government protests in Thailand. The wave of anti-government protests in Thailand, which began in Bangkok but later spread throughout the country, was unprecedented in their magnitude and novelty and thereby attracted a great deal of attention both internally and externally. In view of the political development in Thailand with the ups and downs of political parties and their struggle, the author considered the Thai protests in recent years to be a highly innovative and valuable area of research. Based on this consideration, for a more comprehensive and thorough analysis, the author therefore chose to set the starting of this research to the year 2019, when the youth protests began in Thailand, to explore specifically the street protests in this country from 2019 to 2022.

This research focuses on the role of Thai students and youth protest groups in the anti-government protests over the past four years and the changes that the younger generation had brought to street protests, which will fill the gap in the scholarly research on student youth-led protests in Thailand in recent years. At the same time, the exploration of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the protesters' "protest" and the government's "counter-measures to protests," which will complement the research on the relationship between the Covid-19 pandemic and the development of street protests in Thailand in recent years.

Based on this, the author proposed two research questions. 1). *How are the protests in Thailand during the Covid-19 pandemic different from those the past?* 2). *How does the massive outbreak of protests generate implications for present and future Thailand?* The hypothesis of this research is that the Covid-19 pandemic led to massive discontent against the government protests in Thailand, and because of the pandemic-induced discontent, the way people gathered and protested had changed. Moreover, the frequent protests resulted in tremendous impacts on Thailand, causing not only a reversal of the young generation's attitude toward the government and the royal family, but also a shift in the strength of political parties. The author proposed to study the process of anti-government protests in Thailand during 2019 to 2022, analyzing how these protests were affected by youth discontent and participation as well as the Covid-19 pandemic, and exploring their impacts and future direction of street protests in Thailand during this time.

The general structure and content of this research paper is shown in the following. After the introduction and literature review, the author focuses on the key concepts and theoretical framework of this research. He then elaborates on the research methodology, which will be followed by the main contents of this research.

In the first chapter of Findings, the author shows the development of the anti-government protests from 2019 to 2022, year by year and month by month, so that the readers can understand the direction of the protests during the four years. In the second chapter, the author analyzes the new changes after the youth-led protests from 2019 to 2022, such as the rapid development of youth groups and the wider uses of social media. Chapter 3 combines the results of interviews and questionnaires to

explore the impacts of the developments and new changes in the protests on Thai society and politics, which help readers and researchers in the field to better understand the recent youth protests in Thailand. The section following the main contents will be the Data Collection and Usage, the author describes the sources of the data in this research and how they were used by the author. This is followed by the Discussion section, which will not only provide a summary and assessment of Thai street politics from 2019 to 2022 and this research from various aspects, but also a forecast of the future impact of the street protests on Thailand. After this, followed by a Suggestions section, which made by the author based on the research, and the final section is the conclusion.

1.1 Literature Review

The literature collected by the author is mainly academic research papers, mostly focusing on street protests and political modernization in Thailand. These academic research papers can be divided into four fields. They are Field 1) Political events or movements in Thai history; Field 2) The development and current issues of Thai political modernization; Field 3) The future develop direction of Thai politics; and Field 4) The dissection of street protests in recent years by academics.

In Field 1, among the research papers on this field has mostly focused military coups, political elections, and street movements. For example, military intervention has been a long-standing feature of Thai politics, which Jiajia Zhou described in her research findings as beginning in the 1930s (Zhou, 2018¹); Jin Xiaodong from Ningbo University also discussed the causes of military intervention in Thailand from a historical and political perspective (Jin, 2018²); and Balapapak Siha, a master's

student at Chulalongkorn University, focused on the analysis of Thailand's 2014 military coup in Thailand (Siha, 2018³). This area of research has resulted mainly in the analysis of the positive and negative effects of military intervention on Thailand's democratization process, which has helped the author understand the link between military coups and the existence of Thai street protests in Thailand's history. Prajak Kongkirati, a scholar at Thammasat University, examined "Money Politics" in the Thaksin era elections (Kongkirati, 2017⁴); Jacob I. Ricks, an assistant professor at Singapore Management University, used the 2019 Thai elections to analyze partisan struggles and conflicts between old and new forces (Ricks, 2019⁵). These studies not only increased author's understanding of the development of party politics in Thailand, but also helped him to analyze the partisan struggle or the conflict between the old and the new forces in street protests in recent years.

Thailand has seen many street movements throughout its history, some of which are typical. For example, the massive student movement that erupted in Bangkok in the 1970s, which was outlined by Elinor Bartak in her book from 1970 to 1976 (Bartak, 1995⁶). The street movements in the early 21st century, which were generated by the intensification of class conflicts, were mainly between the pro-Thaksin Red Shirt camp and the anti-Thaksin camp, Mengyuan Yu, was a master's student at Shanghai Normal University, examined the development of the Red Shirt movement and its impact on Thai society, both positive and negative (Yu, 2019⁷). The results of these two and other scholars on the Thai street movement are contrasted with the author's research on the Thai street movement from 2019 to 2022, which help the author to identify the prominent new changes and impacts of the movement in recent years. However, since many years have passed since the 2014 military coup, the

power contrast between political parties and political developments are different, and the street protests in recent years have shown different characteristics. Such studies on historical political events and movements in Thailand only provide the author with a historical reference or some entry points to view the 2019 to 2022 protests in Thailand, and most of the theories in the research results have developed with the times in this paper lacks applicability.

In Field 2, among the studies on the development and current issues of Thai political modernization, the focus was on the analysis and research of the dilemma of democratic development in Thailand, and scholars differed in their views on the analysis of this area. Jianfeng Wei, from Yunnan University argued that the intervention of the old forces led by the military over the years was the root cause of Thailand's street political movements and chaos, thus causing the country's political modernization dilemma (Wei, 2017⁸); Qilin Ye of Huaqiao University argued that the lack of consensus in party politics has exacerbated class conflicts and led to the military coup and a series of street movements (Ye, 2018⁹). British scholar Daniel H. Unger, in his book *Thai Politics: Between Democracy and Its Discontents*, argued that the money politics of Thaksin's rule exacerbated the class divisions and antagonisms in Thai society, which in turn placed the democratic development in a dilemma (Unger, 2017¹⁰). This was in line with Thai scholar Prajak's description of the impact of Thaksin's rule on Thai politics and society. Such studies on political modernization in Thailand are numerous and unique, and in general they help the author understand the causes and conditions of the Thai street movement and its formation from the perspective of the democratization dilemma. However, the author argued that it would no longer be entirely appropriate to analyze the recent street movements in terms of

the democratic dilemma of class division, because the student-led movement of the last four years was not simply a class confrontation, and both the leaders and the protesters were no longer restricted to the lower classes.

In Field 3, the studies mainly analyzed the future direction of Thai politics after the reviews of past developments in Thai politics, including the predictions on the future direction of party politics in Thailand and the views on the future development of Thai politics. Researchers from China have made a number of contributions in this field. For example, Fangye Zhou, a research institute from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), analyzes the changes in Thailand's party politics in 2019 and makes predictions about its future trends (Zhou, 2019¹¹). Liyang Feng, was a master's student at Nankai University, said that in terms of power structure, the traditional Thai hierarchy and division of power should be completely got rid of and power sharing among different classes should be realized, which would be a breakthrough to alleviate the deep-rooted conflicts and sharp confrontations between the elite and the grassroots classes (Feng, 2017¹²). Regarding the future outlook of the development of democratic politics in Thailand, Taotao Meng, a Master's student at Shandong Normal University, stated that authoritarian politics will definitely exist in the future, while the future Thailand will be at stage where civil society and rule of law society will develop together (Meng, 2019¹³). These studies are very helpful for the author to understand the history of democratic development in Thailand and the current state of Thai politics, but there is only limited literature linking the popularity of Covid-19 to the protests.

In Field 4, there was the dissection of street protests in recent years in the academia. Such literature collected by the author began with studies of protests in Thailand in recent years. For example, Aim Sinpeng, a scholar at the University of Sydney, showed the use of social media by student movements in recent years by analyzing the relationship between protests organized by Free Youth and Twitter (Sinpeng, 2021¹⁴); Kanokrat Lertchoosakul, a scholar at Chulalongkorn University, focused on the White Ribbon Movement initiated by secondary school students in Thailand in recent years (Lertchoosakul, 2021¹⁵); Duncan McCargo, a British political scientist, critiqued and reflected on this youth movement, starting with the protests initiated by Generation Z (McCargo, 2021¹⁶). The author has also collected academic literature on street protests in other countries, such as European scholars Marco and Maria's book *Street Citizens*, which analyzed the reasons, motivations, and psychology of protesters' participation in protests (Giugni & Grasso, 2019¹⁷); and British researchers Cristiana Olcese, Clare Saunders, and Nikos Tzavidis, who are also from Europe, in *In the streets with a degree: How political generations, educational attainment and student status affect engagement in protest politics*, studied the protesters' degrees into the protests to analyze the impact of degrees on protests (Saunders et al., 2014¹⁸). The author believes that the studies on street protests in recent years are very valuable academic research results, and they are very enlightening for the author to understand the recent street politics in Thailand from a comprehensive perspective. However, the author found that the academic research on the history and groups of the protests in recent years is not complete, and the connection between Covid-19 and the protests and their impact is not studied in detail.

1.2 Theory Framework

The key theories in this research are *Radical Politics* comes from Dr. Jonathan Pugh defined in his study (Pugh, 2009¹⁹), *Digital Activism* comes from research paper by Frank Edwards, Philip N. Howard and Mary Joyce (Frank et al., 2013²⁰), and *Contentious Politics* comes from political sociologist Charles Tilly's research (Tilly, 2015²¹).

In the book *Street Politics*, the researchers narrated that *Radical Politics* is on the rise globally and more individuals are moving from traditional modes of political participation to street protests (Giuni & Grasso, 2019). The author believes that Thailand is no exception, with street protests already taking place in the country since 2019, followed by a rapid increase in protests with students and youth as the main participants, influenced by the political events¹ happened in recent years and Covid-19 pandemic. Since 1932, Thailand has seen numerous street protests and movements. The author argues this historical tradition of a tendency to take dissatisfaction with the government and the system to street protests, fueled by digital political movements catalyzed by social media-based digital activism, eventually evolved in 2020 into a street movement focused on opposition to the Prayuth government and the existing monarchy, mainly in the form of sit-ins, rallies, and marches.

In the street movement this time, protests were too frequent and radical, and were accompanied by numerous acts of violence. The movement did have an impact on the political situation and social order in Thailand, but due to the government's deliberate avoidance of the demands of the protesters and its avoidance of confrontation with them, the protests were held continuously but with little

¹ Political events: For example, the Future Forward Party was disbanded by Constitutional Court of Thailand in 2020.

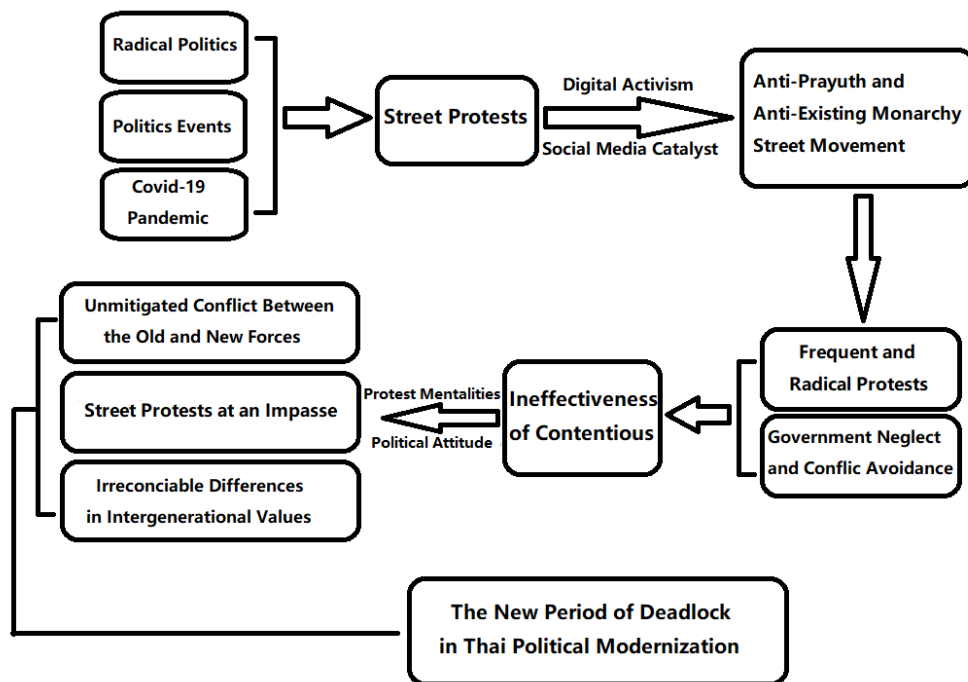
substantive effect. Also, the mentalities of the protesters gradually changed from militancy to depression and disappointment under this situation. A combination of factors eventually led to the decline of the protests since 2022. According Contentious Politics from Charles Tilly, the protesters were at this point barely unable to use protests to involve political events or decisions, and democratization was also could not be promoted to move further by the protests, it meant the Contentious gradually ineffective. However, the street protests in Thailand still cannot be stopped as a result of the unrealized demands of the protesters and the radicalization of the new generation of young protesters.

Ultimately, the author believes that the main cause of street protests in Thailand in recent years has been values divergence and the forces conflict. The values divergence was triggered by the conflict between the youth, who generally embraced Western democratic values, and their royalist elders over the reform of the monarchy. The forces conflict was created by the New Forces led by the Move Forward Party¹ and the Old Forces such as Prayuth and the military, fighting for power. The New Forces are widely supported by the public but still face the threat of military intervention from the Old Forces. Finally, they led street protests in Thailand into an impasse at this stage, where the scale and number of protests have decreased significantly but cannot be stopped, and are occasionally accompanied by violent protests. Meanwhile, values divergence and the forces conflict have continued to influence the development of street protests. With the street protests at an impasse, the irreconcilable differences in intergenerational values, and the unmitigated conflict

¹ Move Forward Party is seen as the successor of Future Forward Party.

between old and new forces, Thailand's politics modernization has reached a deadlock.

Figure 1 The New Period of Deadlock in Thai Political Modernization Framework



Source: Based on the author's research created

This theoretical framework not only can be seen as the author's interpretation and application of the theory of *Radical Politics*, but also the development of the *Contentious Politics* and *Digital Activism* theory. Moreover, it will also be the basis for the author's targeted suggestions for Thai politics and society at this stage.

1.3 Methodology

In sorting out and providing an overview the process of protests and their new changes from 2019 to 2022, the main research method adopted by the author was documentary research. The author collected online a large amount of various literature on the protests in Thailand during the four-year period 2019-2022, including but not limited to academic papers, media reports, government reports, official websites of

protest groups and human rights organizations, and self-published media articles. By analyzing and integrating these materials, the author was able to provide a year-by-year overview of the process of protests in Thailand from 2019-2022, and was able to provide month-by-month statistics on the number, major dates, and themes of protests during the three years from 2020 to 2022. For example, by analyzing academic papers, official accounts of protest organizations and government reports, the author was able to identify new changes in street protests following the student-led protests under the Covid-19 pandemic, thus listing the main youth protest groups, their activities and platforms, changes in the means by which protesters organized protests, as well as the forms of involvement of various forces in the protests; then again, by browsing the websites of human rights organizations, the author was informed of the government's counter-protest measures and the impact.

The author adopted both qualitative and quantitative analyses in studying the Thai people's perceptions of street protests in Thailand from 2019 to 2022 and the impact of those protests on Thailand during the four years. In the study of Thai public's perceptions of street protests in Thailand from 2019 to 2022, the author first used a qualitative method of documentary analysis to obtain public opinion surveys and statistics conducted by official agencies in Thailand to learn about the general public's perceptions of protests, protesters, and their government in recent years. Then, due to the lack of first-hand information and data on youth groups and protesters, the author also relied on collecting data through interviews, questionnaires, and participant observation in the qualitative analysis. The author conducted both

interviews and questionnaires. He went to 5 universities¹ in Bangkok to find students to interview, and if the interviewees were non-protesters, the author would briefly exchange views or conduct interviews with them on various aspects of the recent protests, such as the reasons why they did not participate in the protests, the evaluation of the protesters' behavior, and their reflections on the development of the protests in recent years, in order to obtain the views of the non-protesting youth on the recent protests as well as the extent to which they were affected by those protests. Each interviewer or group of interviewees was interviewed for about 10 minutes and the author recorded the main content of the interview on the cell phone at the end of the interview. If the interviewees were protesters, the author gave them an electronic questionnaire created on Google Form after a brief information question about protests that they had participated in. Ultimately, the author interacted with nearly 500 Thai students in universities, engaging 200 of them in interviews; as for the questionnaire method adopted, in addition to face-to-face distribution to protesters found on university campuses, the author also placed the questionnaire on social media such as Twitter and Facebook, requesting more protesters to fill out the questionnaire on the web, and finally obtained a total of 103 valid questionnaire responses. The author's used of participant observation method was to go to the protest sites and collect information by observing the behavior of the protesters, the flow of the protests, and the atmosphere of the protests.

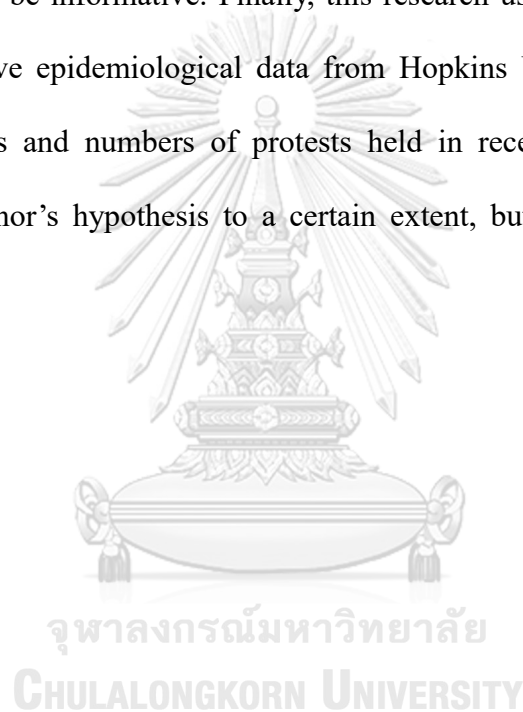
In addition to using qualitative analysis, the author also adopted a quantitative method by studying the impacts of protests on Thailand over a four-year period by

¹ The 5 universities that author went were Thammasat University (Tha Phra Chan Campus), Silpakorn University (Wang Tha Phra Campus), Kasetsart University, Srinakharinwirot University and Chulalongkorn University.

collecting daily new and total confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Thailand since its emergence, and comparing and inferring from the number and circumstances of the protests to confirm the author's hypothesis that the Covid-19 pandemic and the protests in Thailand were related and affected each other.

The author adopted the documentary method to collect information on protests from 2019 to 2022 to ensure that this paper could provide a more complete month-by-month count of the number of protests held in Thailand in the past four years and the main protest themes than the data and information in other extant literature. Also, through the collection and consolidation of literature from various sources, the author was able to present information on the major youth protest groups, not only to provide a more complete list of the youth protest groups that participated in the protests during the four years, but also to differentiate the groups from their platforms to their forms of activities. The documentary method ensured that the information about protests and protest groups is more completely accounted for in this paper. Likewise, in order to explore the real thoughts of the members of the young generation and protesters, the author considered it appropriate and effective to use interviews and questionnaires in the qualitative analysis to avoid research bias as much as possible. 500 respondents were interacted from the Thai student population, covering four groups: high school, undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students. The large number of respondents reflects to some extent the thoughts and opinions of the contemporary Thai non-protesting youth. Members of the younger generation dominated the 2019-2022 protests in Thailand, with Bangkok undergraduates making up the majority of the protesters, so it was reasonable that the author chose to visit to several universities in Bangkok to find protesters and distribute the questionnaire. Moreover, to further

expand the range of respondents to the questionnaire, the author also distributed the questionnaire addresses on social media such as Twitter and Facebook, which could collect responses from protesters outside of Bangkok. Also, the author created this questionnaire with a combination of simple multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions to ensure that the maximum number of protesters were given a platform to express their opinions. The questionnaire yielded 103 valid responses, which the author believed to be informative. Finally, this research used quantitative analysis to collect authoritative epidemiological data from Hopkins University and to visually compare the dates and numbers of protests held in recent years, which not only supported the author's hypothesis to a certain extent, but also provided a stronger objectivity.



2. An Overview of the Development of Street Protests in Thailand from 2019 to 2022

2.1 Thailand Street Protests in 2019

The anti-government protests in Thailand since the 2014 coup until 2019 were mainly against Prayuth's long tenure as interim prime minister and the impact of the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO)'s on the country. The street protests in 2019 was no exception, but the protests can be divided into two phases: Prior to the announcement of the 2019 election results, the protests were over the lack of democracy and abuse of power by the NCPO led by Prayuth, and the protesters' demands focused on 1) Prayuth and the NCPO to stop their dictatorship, and 2) To push for Thailand's first general election since the 2014 coup as soon as possible²². After the announcement of the 2019 election results and the continuation of Prayuth as Thailand's prime minister, protests erupted because the protesters questioned and were dissatisfied with the way the prime minister was elected, the vote count and the election process, as well as the results. Moreover, in addition to the Red Shirts' protests in the streets as an anti-Prayuth and anti-coup force, there were also some other forces that emerged. For example, during the 2019 general election, Thanathon, the leader of the Future Forward Party, was a strong opponent for Prayuth's faction in this election. The fact that and the members of Future Forward Party were repeatedly accused of²³, or reported for breaking the law²⁴, it was perceived by some members of the Thai public as being suppressed by the Prayuth's faction, which caused discontent among Future Forward Party's supporters and some Thai people, who took to the streets to protest²⁵. Overall, the 2019 protests were in the infancy stage in terms of

number and scale, which could be seen as the beginning of street protests that have gradually taken on scale since the military coup in 2014.

2.2 Thailand Street Protests in 2020

The street protests were coming out at the beginning of 2020. On January 12, 2020, many provinces held the anti-government activity named “จี้จี้จี้” by local political activists, in opposition to the Prime Minister Prayuth and the incumbent government²⁶. On February 21, 2020, Thailand’s Constitutional Court sentenced the Future Forward Party to dissolution, and the verdict triggered a strong reaction in Thai society. Since the Future Forward Party’s supporters are mainly members of the young generation, the anti-Prayuth sentiment was completely ignited in the minds of young Thais. After that, there were numerous protests by Thai youth to protest the dissolution of the Future Forward Party, with students at Chulalongkorn University and Thammasat University leading flash mob protests at many of Thailand’s universities²⁷. The student movement gradually became large. However, the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic not only brought the progressively increasing protests to a temporary halt, but also changed the course of the demands of anti-government protesters and street protests in Thailand to some extent thereafter. The protests were back in May 2020 and when the pandemic was temporarily brought under control and gradually increased after June same year.

One group called Free Youth organized several protests on its own or together with student leaders from universities in Thailand, for example, the highly influential 718 Protest organized at the Democracy Monument in Bangkok²⁸. They named these protests the Free Youth Movement, and put forward *Three Demands*, namely 1)

dissolve the national parliament; 2) stop using privileges to intimidate; 3) stop restricting people's freedom of expression. The *Three Demands* resonated with the younger generation of Thai protesters and was used as a slogan to put pressure on the government in subsequent protests. Free Youth Movement, which has since changed its name to the Free People Movement¹, continued to hold its gatherings in Bangkok and elsewhere. Two of the protesters were Roong (Rainbow) and Penguin, both being Thammasat University students, and also the leading figures in this student-led movement. They gave numerous public speeches, organized rallies, and contributed to anti-government protests on the Internet. They have not only called for the resignation of Prime Minister Prayuth, but have also publicly expressed their discontent with the current monarchy, calling for reform of the current monarchy by abolition of *Section 6 of the 2017 Constitution*² and *Section 112 of the Penal Code*³, among 10 other demands²⁹, to make the King of Thailand a true *Virtual Monarch* with no real power. The two protesters were arrested and taken to court by Thai police on August 15 for their comments, but they prompted more students to join the anti-government and anti-existing monarchy protests. In addition, former core leaders and members of the Future Forward Party also showed up at the march, more and more protesters from other groups took to the streets.

¹ "Free Youth Movement" to "Free People Movement": It was renamed to expand their political base, to be more than just young demonstrators and student activists.

² Section 6 of the 2017 Constitution: No one may sue or prosecute the king.

³ Section 112 of the Penal Code: Whoever, defames, insults, or threatens the King, the Queen, the Heir-apparent or the Regent, shall be punished with imprisonment of three to fifteen years.

After this, a royalist protest group emerged (later called the Royalists¹) and went head-to-head with those youth groups² that demanded reform of the monarchy, with both sides protesting and counter-protesting in the streets from time to time³. In September 2020, the numbers of anti-government protests were not too many, but the protests held this month were well attended and impactful. The organizers of Free People Movement took advantage of the 14th anniversary of the overthrow of the Thaksin government to launch the 919 Rally. The student protesters spread the message of the rally on social media and received responses from many parts of the country, with more than 20,000 people joined the rally at the Thammasat University on the evening of the September 19th. Next day, the protest leader read out the *10 Demands* to the police chief and submitted protesters' demands for reforms to the Prayuth government. Under pressure, the Prime Minister Prayuth finally decided to vote on the proposed constitutional amendments on September 23-24, but near the end of the vote, the deputy leader of the Palang Pracharath Party proposed an emergency motion to postpone the vote on the amendments for 30 days. This caused protest rallies to erupt again.

On October 14, 2020, on the 47th anniversary of the October 1973 Thai Popular Uprising, anti-existing monarchy protesters blocked the royal family's cars after a street confrontation with Royalists, causing the royal motorcade to be evacuated and protected by many police officers, which quickly topped the Thai social media. Two

¹ Royalists: who were opposed to insults to the royal family, and most of the group's members were middle-aged and elderly.

² Those youth groups: Mainly refers to Free Youth and United Front of Thammasat and Demonstration Group.

³ This means that while the youth groups protested against the existing monarchy in the streets, the royalists also staged protests against the youth groups for humiliating the royal family and denigrating the monarchy.

days of protests followed, and the arrest of protest leaders led to large-scale clashes between protesters and police. The government temporarily enforced the Emergency Decree³⁰ on Public Administration in Emergency Situation, B.E. 2548(2055) but was unable to stop the protesters. Most of the BTS stations and MRT stations in the business districts were closed to prevent protesters from moving to other locations to stage rallies, but the protesters spread out in three groups in central Bangkok to continue their protests. In November, anti-government protests continued to take place in Bangkok as several protesters were arrested while the Royalists started taking to the streets to defend the King's right several times³¹. It was not until December 10 of the same year that the number of protests were temporarily decreased after the protest leader of United Front of Thammasat and Demonstration announced that they would stop protest until the next year³².

Table 1 Information on Protests in Thailand from May 2020 to December 2020¹

Month	Number of Protests ²	Main Protests Dates	Main Protests Themes or Purposes
May	8	May 13, 19, 22	Commemorated the 2010 Thai Military Crackdown
June	24	Jun 18, 20, 24	Commemorated Siamese Revolution of 1932
July	55	July 18, 23, 25, 27	Free Youth Movement/ “ไม่ทนเผด็จการ” Anti-Dictatorship Protests

¹ The author regarded May 2020 as the first concentrated outbreak of protests in Thailand after the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic.

² It should be noted that the statistics on the number of protests in this chapter are the author's own statistics combined with data from the Mob Data Thailand website, media reports on protests in 2020-2022, and data from the official websites of human rights organizations, etc. Please refer with caution.

August	66	Aug 1, 2, 7, 8, 10, 14, 21,24	“ไม่ทนเผด็จการ” and other thematic Anti-Dictatorship Protests/ Release of protestor leaders
September	25	Sept 19, 24	Release of protestor leaders/ “19กันยาทางอำนาจคืนราษฎร” and other Anti-Dictatorship Protests
October	200	Oct 8, 9, 13, 14, 17-31	Release of Protestor Leaders/ “ไม่ทนเผด็จการ” and other Anti-Government Protests/ Protest in front of the German Embassy
November	71	Nov 6, 8, 12, 18, 22, 26, 28	Protect the monarchy/ “ไม่ทนเผด็จการ” and other Anti-Government Protests/ Bad Student Protest
December	23	Dec 8, 10, 22	Bad Student Protest/ Calls for Cancel Penal Code Section 112

Source: Combined with data from the Mob Data Thailand website and the author's own data collection

2.3 Thailand Street Politics in 2021

Between December 2020 and early January 2021, protests on the streets of Thailand came to decrease again due to the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, with protesters moving to social media to lash out at Prayuth and the government. After 10 January 2021, the youth groups and other anti-government groups started to hold more protests; the messages of protests were mostly focused on the call to “Cancel Section 112 of the Penal Code,” and to show that they “Disagree with government’s measures of control Covid-19 pandemic,” especially against the use of vaccines provided by the government to members of public. Besides, Bad Student¹ members’ twice protested in front of the Thai Ministry of Education to express their discontent with the Thai education system also impressive. There were not many protests in January, but some protesters were arrested since they fought with the police officers

¹ Bad Student: One of the youth-led protest groups. Members are mostly Thai middle and high school students calling for rights and freedoms within the education system.

during protesting. In early February, the Thai government issued the 3rd edition of the *Ban on Rallies and Gathering* announcement¹, but this did not stop protests, the number of protests in February being nearly as large as those January. Solidarity with Myanmar and the arrested protesters were the main themes and purposes of the protests in this month. In Bangkok, some of the protests were held at the Embassy of Myanmar in Thailand³³ and at the Democracy Monument, including a protest near the residence of Prayuth on February 28, which led to clashes between police and protesters and resulted in many injuries³⁴. In March, the number of protests was continuing to increase, “ไว้ภัยความยุติธรรม” and “ปล่อยเพื่อนเรา” were the main themes of these protests. REDEM² as the main group led some large protests, while the Royalists also took to the street to counter-protests. The Royalists expressed support for the royal family and denounced the alleged riots by anti-existing monarchy protesters that resulted in many injuries. In April and May, the number of protests increased exponentially. The Red Shirts were back on the street³⁵, holding large protests in the name of commemorating 2010 Thai Military Crackdown, while the protest theme named “สิ้นยุคขัง³⁶” was used in many provinces over two months. In June and July, “ไทยไม่ทน” and “หล่อเทียนทำบุญประเทศ” were the more influential protests’ themes in Thailand. Meanwhile, due to the impacts from Covid-19 pandemic, the protests against the government’s measures for controlling pandemic increased, with focus on “Fair Wages,” “Lack of Vaccines” and “Medicare.” In August, despite

¹ Those who violate the provisions of the announcement will face up to two years in prison or a fine not exceeding 40,000 baht or both.

² REDEM: The name is an abbreviation of “Restart Democracy”, it was launched last week as an offshoot of Free Youth. The group is more aggressive and wants Prayut to step down and reform the monarchy, or better yet, create a Thai republic.

another proclamation signed by the Commander-in-Chief of Thailand's three armed forces regarding the *Ban on Rallies and Gathering*, the effect was minimal. Anti-Prayuth protests, especially in the type of car mob were held in several provinces of Thailand. It's worth noting that Thalu Gas, one youth group which preferred protesting in violent ways, came to the stage and created multiple chaos mostly at Din Daeng Intersection mostly. In September and October, except Thalu Gas continued protesting with violent activities³⁷, the dissatisfaction with the no-confidence debate over Prayuth, anniversaries of the 2006 military coup and 1970s Student Movements also led to several large anti-government protests. “ปฏิรูปไม่เท่ากับล้มล้าง” as the influential protest theme led the anti-constitution protests in November, because of the Constitutional Court's ruling against the protest leaders, number of protests remained high in this month. Protests calling for justice continued into December, however, due to the intensification of the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic period and the government's renewed announcement of a *Ban on Rallies and Gathering*, protests in decreasing numbers and on a smaller scale.

Table 2 Information on Protests in Thailand throughout 2021

Month	Number of Protests	Main Protests Dates	Main Protests Themes or Purposes
January	47	Jan 14, 16, 22, 27	Encouraged arrested protesters/ Called for the elimination of Section 112 of the Penal Code/ Protested the government's measures to control the pandemic.
February	73	Feb 1-4, 10, 13, 16, 20, 23	"Save Myanmar"/ Release arrested Protesters/ "คืนอำนาจประชาชน"(Return People's power).
March	86	Mar 6, 8, 9, 11,12, 13, 20, 28, 30	"ไว้อาลัยความยุติธรรม" (Mourning for Justice)/ "ราษฎรเอ๋ย"(People)/ "เดินทะลุฟ้าV2" (Walking Through the Sky).
April	180	Almost the whole month	"สามัคคีประชาชน" and "รำลึก 11 ปีสลายการชุมนุมปช" organized by Red Shirts/ "ยืนหยุดขัง" (Stand Stop Imprison).
May	259	May 10, 22, 23	"ยืนหยุดขัง" (Stand Stop Imprison)/ "เปิดไฟให้ดาว" (Light Up the Stars)/ Protested NCPO Coup 7th Anniversary.
June	125	Jun 24, 26	"ไทยไม่ทน" (Thais Won't Tolerate)/ Line Man called for fair wages/ Commemorated Siamese Revolution of 1932.
July	56	Jul 2, 18, 20, 22, 31	"หล่อเทียนทำบุญประเทศ" (Casting Candles for National Merit)/ Anti-government groups protest Government's measures.
August	100	Aug 1, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 23, 29	Car Mob (Anti-Prayut Protests)/ "ไล่ทรราช" (Chasing the Tyrant)/ Violent Protests by Thalu Gas.
September	141	Sept 2, 5, 7, 11, 19, 25	"ไล่ประยุทธ์" (Chase Prayuth)/ "หยุดราชวงศ์ประยุทธ์" (Stop Prayuth Dynasty)/ Violent Protests by Thalu Gas/ Anniversaries of the 2006 coup.
October	110	Oct 6, 14, 27, 28	6 Oct, 1976 massacre's anniversaries/ Violent Protests by Thalu Gas/ 1973 Thai popular uprising's anniversaries
November	106	Nov 10, 12, 14	"ปฏิรูปไม่เท่ากับล้มล้าง" (Reform isn't overthrow)/ Anti-absolute monarchy protest/ Anti-constitution protests.
December	17	Dec 10, 12, 27	Cancel Section 112 of the Penal Code/ Protested the Judgment of the Constitutional Court

Source: Combined with data from the Mob Data Thailand website and the author's own data collection

2.4 Thailand Street Politics in 2022

The number of protests rose again in January and February 2022, mainly directed at the royal family. The “ไม่รับปริญญา” Movement¹ was also launched in this situation. Besides, the protests calling for solution of rural problems by P-Move also occurred throughout during these two months³⁸. In March, a succession of Thais and foreigners in Thailand gathered at the Russian Embassy and Consulate in Thailand to call for peace through protests. In the same month and the following months until Chatchart was elected governor Bangkok in the second half of May, anti-government protests were held intermittently in Bangkok, with violent clashes between police and protesters and the arrest and imprisonment of some protest leaders and activists. The purposes of protests were to call for “Release protesters,” “Commemorated major political events,” “Anti NPO bill” and so on. After the election of Chatchart, the protests subsided, and the main demand of the protesters besides calling for “Release arrested protesters,” gradually changed their targets to opposition to Prayuth’s continued tenure as prime minister, leading to another no-confidence debate between the opposition and Prayuth and his cabinet³⁹. Although Prayuth and his cabinet members survived the debate, the matter continued to fester, leading to numerous protests until Prayuth was suspended by the Constitutional Court. “Commemorated major political events” was the main purpose of rallies, protesters took the opportunities of these commemorations to protest against the current government during September and October. In November, protests of various scales were held before and during the APEC meeting, mainly against the convening of APEC⁴⁰, the

¹ “ไม่รับปริญญา” Movement: Don’t Accept Degree Movement. A movement launched on Twitter and Facebook by the new graduates of Thammasat University in 2020, close to the graduation ceremony, called on the current new graduates to refuse to attend the graduation ceremony in the auditorium.

One-China principle, and called for participating countries to pay attention to human rights issues in Thailand. During the November 18 protest, large-scale police clashes with the police erupted, and many protesters were injured and arrested. In December, “ยื่นหยุดขัง” again to become the most frequent theme of protests, which number amounted to as 32 times. Protesters’ demands focused on the Bail-in rights of arrested protesters.



Table 3 Information on Protests in Thailand throughout 2022

Month	Number of Protests	Main Protests Dates	Main Protests Themes or Purposes
January	99	Jan 14, 20, 26	Anti-Royal Protests/ Protests to pressure government by P-move.
February	104	Feb 1, 8, 20, 22	“Save บางกอกชย” Protests by P-move/ “ชกเลิก 112” and other Anti-Royal Protests.
March	32	Mar 4, 5, 18, 24;	Protests Russia’s invasion of Ukraine/ Protest by Thalu Gas/ Street polls by Thalu Wang.
April	35	April 10, 13, 15, 22	“ยุติธรรมไม่มี 12 ปีเราไม่ลืม”- Commemorated the 2010 Thai military crackdown/ Protests of solidarity with arrested protesters.
May	52	May 1, 19, 22	Commemorated the NCPO Coup 8th Anniversary/ “NoNPObill” Protest/ Workers’ protests on Labor Day.
June	86	Jun 11, 12, 18, 24	“ราษฎรไถ่กู” (Residents Lai Tu)/ Commemorated Siamese Revolution of 1932/ Protests of solidarity with arrested protesters.
July	94	Jul 11-13, 19-22, 23, 26, 27	Protests against “no confidence debate” results/ Protests of solidarity Myanmar.
August	83	Aug 8, 10, 21, 24, 28, 30	Protests to pressure the legal system/ Anti-Prayuth continue in power Protests.
September	45	Sep 3, 19, 30	Anniversaries of the 2006 coup/ Anti-Prayuth and his cabinet Protests.
October	55	Oct 6, 25	Anniversaries of 6 Oct, 1976 massacre/ Anniversaries of the 2004 Tak Bai Massacre Survivors
November	65	Nov 15-18, 24	Anti-APEC Protests
December	40	Dec 6, 9	“ยืนหยุดขัง” (Stand Stop Imprison)/ Protest of Solidarity Myanmar/ Protests of environmental protection problems.

Source: Combined with data from the Mob Data Thailand website and the author's own data collection

3. Changes on Street Protests in Thailand from 2019 to 2022

3.1 Protests Coming to Be Dominated by Students and Youth

3.1.1 Students Again Became the Main Participants in Street Protests

Since the change to constitutional monarchy in Thailand in 1932, street protests, influenced by history and culture, have continued as a part of Thailand's democratization process to this day. In recent decades, this is particularly evident in the perennial rivalry between the Red Shirts and the Yellow Shirts that emerged after Thaksin's ouster, and the alternating protests. Underlying these street protests are the confrontation between the Thai classes: the Red Shirts are allegedly mainly farmers and the lower classes, while the Yellow Shirts are mainly the urban elite. After the breakout of Covid-19 pandemic, the anti-government protests were mainly led and attended by youth¹, especially high school and undergraduate students. In the history of Thailand, the student movements are not unprecedented, as hundreds of thousands of students gathered on the streets of Bangkok in the October 1973. However, the urban-rural dichotomy was no longer the main conflict that triggered the protests under the Covid-19 pandemic. What's more, the changes and their repercussions sparked by students were once again the main participants in protests in the street protests of 2019-2022, this time unlike in the past.

This trend had been manifested since the dissolution of the Future Forward Party, with students from Thai universities being the first to protest. What began as protests against the Constitutional Court's ruling evolved into demands for the "ouster

¹ The author defines "youth" at here as Generation Z, those born between the mid-to-late 1990s and the early 2010s.

of the Prayuth government” and “reform of the royal family,” among other things, by Thai undergraduate students. Since then, although Royalist groups have taken to the street to organize counter-protests in Thailand, the main street movements have been student-led anti-government protests. Thammasat University students contributed greatly to this movement. Students such as Penguin¹ and Roong² (Rainbow), they are not only the undergraduates from Thammasat University, but also the influential leaders of United Front of Thammasat and Demonstration, and it was through their efforts that large protests were held at Thammasat University, which is considered the birthplace of Thai democracy and has been the site of many anti-government protests, has also attracted more Thai students and youth to join the protests. This set the stage for multiple protest groups to be created, or to emerge and join this wave of street protests later.

3.1.2 Innovation and Growth of Youth Protest Groups



¹ Penguin: Formerly known as Parit Chiwarak, devoted himself to political activism against the military government and the protection of human rights from high school through college. He was later arrested in 2020 and 2021 on charges of sedition.

² Roong: Formerly known as panusaya, she is known for her criticism of the Thai monarchy and has spearheaded calls for major structural changes to the Thai monarchy. Named by BCC as one of the 100 most influential women in the world for 2020.

Table 4 Major Youth Protest Groups in Bangkok from 2019 to 2022

Group Name	New Group (or not)	Main Leaders	Main Activities or Features
The Students Union of Thailand (SUT)	No	Jutatip Sirikhan	Campus flash mob protests in 2020
Bad Student	No	Laponpat Wangpaisit, Benjamaporn “Ploy”	Mostly high school students, demanding reform of the Thai education system
United Front of Thammasat and Demonstration (UFTD)	Yes	Parit (Penguin), Panusaya (Rainbow)	Large-scale student protest rallies such as “8.18” and “9.19”
Free Youth	Yes	Tattep (Ford), Panumas (James)	United UFTD organized most of the protests in Bangkok landmarks 2020-2021
REDEM	Yes	No Main Leader	Expectation of a “Republic”; Multiple “leaderless” protests against the government
Thalu Fah	Yes	No Main Leader	Creative protests, such as wrapping the Democracy Monument in LGBTQ canvas
Thalu Gas	Yes	No Main Leader	Against non-violent protests, often violent at Din Daeng intersection
Draconis Revolution	Yes	No Main Leader	Opposition to the monarchy in the form of events such as “เราอยากรับเสด็จ Greeting Your Majesty”
FreeArts	Yes	“Sina”, “First” and other four members	Support protests with artistic creations ⁴¹
Mok Luang Rim Nam	Yes	“Gate” Sapon Surarithamrong	A youth group dedicated to promoting human rights protection

Source: Author's own statistics of data

The main anti-government protest groups on the streets of Thailand in 2019 were still the Red Shirts and supporters of other opposition parties, with the main demands of the protesters focusing on the “Ouster of Prayut” and “Opposition to the expansion of government power and oppression of the people.” However, these have changed since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. Free Youth and UFTD were

the most influential protest groups initially after the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak, with Free Youth leading the way with its *Three Demands* and UFTD with its *Ten Demands* for monarchy reform. Over time, in addition to the original SUT, UFTD, and Free Youth, the number of protest groups in Thailand has grown⁴², and almost every group has different demands, goals, platforms, and methods.

For example, Free Youth changed its Free Youth Movement name to Free People Movement to show that the group was not just protesting for the youth, but for the wider Thai people, thus attracting more supporters. REDEM, which was later formed by the same group, not only sought to prevent the government's measures for pandemic control, but also aimed to create a democratic group with "No official leader but everyone has a common purpose at all times," and the goal of the protest was further escalated to "The establishment of a Thai republic." Bad Student members are all middle or high school students, they view schools as the "First Dictatorship" imposed by the government on people, and the group's grievances are directed at three levels of authority: 1). Parents; 2). Teachers/ School Administrators; and 3). Political Leaders. Bad Student members were youngest of the protesters, but the power of them was not to be underestimated. Not only did they plan several influential protests, but the top 10 most popular tweets associated with the hashtag #เลิกเรียนแล้วไปกระทรวง (#AfterschoolLetsGototheMinistry) created by the group had each received over 100k views⁴³. Compared with other groups, maybe Thalu Wang and Chicken Feet Revolution did not own too many members, but the method they used to protest, Street Polls, were also attracted a lot of attention in Bangkok. In fact, the protests and youth groups outside of Bangkok are also worth mentioning. Data shows

from 2020 up to the present that there were at least 300 times of protests in Chiang Mai and at least 100 times of protests in Khon Kaen. Groups named Draconis Revolution, ดาวดิน (Earth Stars) and Modindaeng Revolutionary Party as the influential youth groups led most protests.

Thought these groups mentioned above, although there were clashes between the police and protesters during the protests they held, the protest groups basically pursued “Peaceful and Organized” protests, while the Thalu Gas group, which emerged under the influence of the Red Shirts and Car Mob, openly resorted to violent protests and caused a lot of negative impacts in Bangkok. In summary, from 2019 to 2022, not only protesters but also protest groups were in flux as government decisions, pandemics and political shifts unfolded.

3.2 Changes in the Way Protesters Gathered and the Way of Their Communication

Under the Covid-19 pandemic, frustration with government policies and dissatisfaction with national institutions have resulted in the rise of non-institutional political participation in Thailand. The frequency of mass events and irrational online participation has also gradually changed the way protesters gathered and the way of their communication.

3.2.1 The Gradual Illegalization of Protests

Street protests in Thailand has existed for many years since the Siamese revolution of 1932, and in the post-21st century, street protests has centered on protests that erupted from conflicts and political struggles between the Pheu Thai

Party and military groups. This continued until the 2014 coup, when the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) issued a number of policies and laws that caused a steep decline in street protests held in Thailand. For example, the NCPO issued *Decree No.3/2558* in 2015, which banned freedom of assembly¹ and authorized soldiers to summon anyone to testify and detain people for up to seven days, among other things. In the same year, the State enacted *The Public Assembly Act*, which prohibited the holding of multiple assemblies and marches between 6 pm and 6 am. Organizers must give 24 hours' notice of any public assembly, and failure to comply with *The Public Assembly Act* will be considered an illegal assembly. It was not until December 2018 that NCPO issued *Decree No.22/2561*, announcing the lifting of the ban on political activities, including political rallies and support for political activities, but still subject to the provisions of *The Public Assembly Act*⁴⁴. Marches and rallies in early 2019, basically observed the requirements of *The Public Assembly Act*. However, after the 2019 General Election results was published and the disbandment of the Future Forward Party after conviction by the Constitutional Court, the number of protests defined by the government as *Illegal Assemblies* gradually increased. Protesters and protest groups escalated their defiance of the government, from determining their own venues to not reporting rallies to the authorities in advance to holding violent protests, resulting in almost no compliance with *The Public Assembly Act* in 2020 and 2021, this situation that only improved in mid-2022 when Chadchart was elected governor of Bangkok and legal venues were set aside⁴⁵.

3.2.2 *The Wider Use of Social Media and the Changes It Triggered*

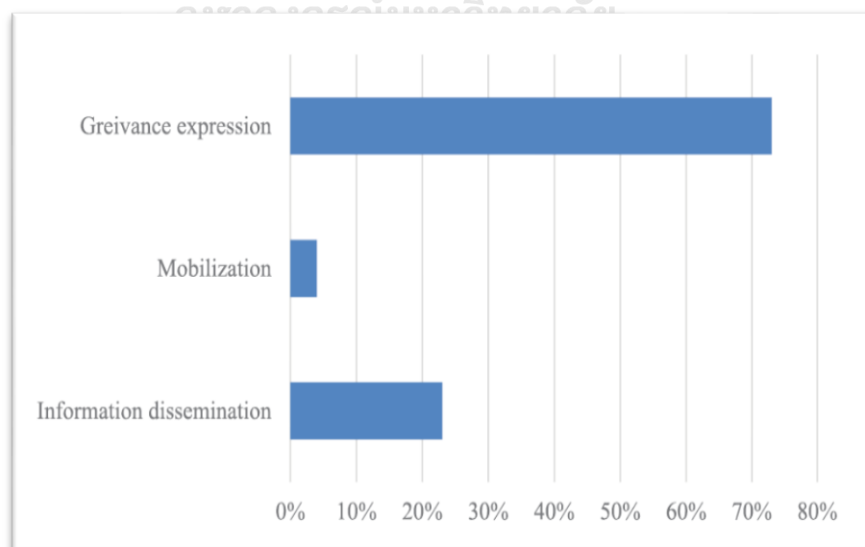
¹ NCPO prohibited political rallies or protests of five or more people.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic broke out in Thailand, there were some powerful protests in history, but those protests were mostly attended by members of the organizers' groups. Those protests were easily disseminated within the same group, allowing most group members to access information, however, with the dissemination of information was almost exclusively within the group. These protests could be generally characterized by the 1). Homogeneity of participating groups; 2). Monotony of information dissemination; and 3). Paucity of protest methods. During the Covid-19 pandemic until nowadays, the use of modern social media has made the protests, especially the anti-government protests much different from those in the past.

First, the use of social media has exponentially expanded the reach of political activists, political groups, and protest rallies. Since Future Forward Party's use of Twitter for political mobilization in the 2019 general election⁴⁶, Twitter has seen an increasing number of young Thai users and a rapid increase in usage for political activism purposes. During the more severe periods of the pandemic or when offline protests were not held, youth protests groups and individuals used social media to mobilize people, express their dissatisfaction with the state system and spread their political views and ideas online, such as the representative characters Penguin and Roong have done. When the situation improved and offline protests could be held, youth protests groups and leaders used social media to post information about upcoming protests. For example, Free Youth called for a protest under the Democracy Monument in Bangkok the next day on social media on July 17, 2020, and thousands of people showed up for the rally the next day and 8 million people watched the rally via live webcast. After that, the subsequent Free Youth Movement, which was also launched by Free Youth, facilitated a dozen large-scale anti-government protests,

attracting hundreds of thousands of participants between July and December 2020. Moreover, their Twitter-based social media campaign was even more successful, with their hashtag garnering millions of engagements on multiple occasions and the hashtag *#FreeYouth* (*#เยาวชนปลดแอก*) becoming the second most frequently used hashtag on Twitter in Thailand in 2020¹. This also triggered a series of chain reactions, these Twitter hashtags, such as *#FreeYouth*, *#ThaluWang* (*#ทะเลตุ้ม*), *#Sunflower* (*#ตะวันบาน*) and so on, named after protest groups or protest leaders, have been widely used to show solidarity with arrested protesters and to pressure the government. Individuals or organizations that used these Twitter hashtags were able to gain widespread attention on social media. In summary, the use of social media by protesters and protest groups expanded the spread of relevant information and put constant pressure on the government's credibility. This did not only increase the efficiency and impact of the protests, but also attracted more anti-government groups and teams to join.

Figure 2 Motivations for using *#เยาวชนปลดแอก* (*#FreeYouth*)



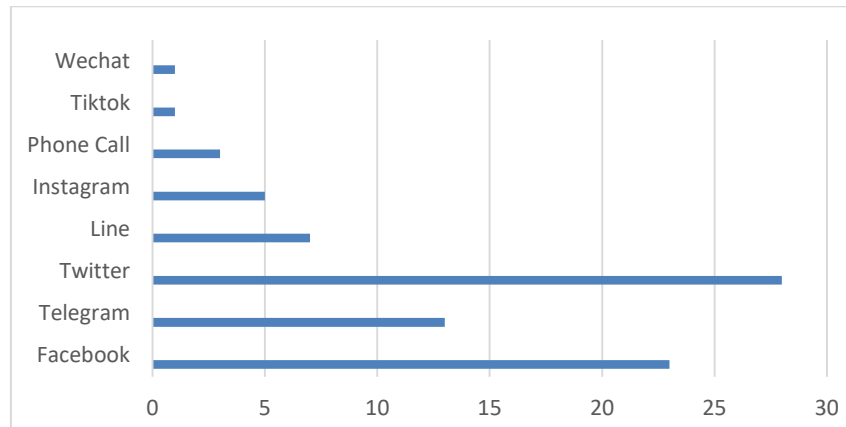
¹ To date, Free Youth has nearly 2.4 million followers on Facebook and Twitter.

Note: Aim Sinpeng. (2021) Hashtag activism: social media and the #FreeYouth protests in Thailand.

Secondly, social media has made the organization of protests more flexible and convenient, while also ensuring the safety of participants to a certain extent. In addition to posting information about the rally in advance, social activists in Thailand also used social media to vote to make decisions. The Free Youth Movement Facebook page, for example, asked supporters in a post on a given day, “Should we stop the protest?” The “care” emoji was sent in support of stopping the protest, while the “wowo” emoji was sent in support of continuing the protest, with the “wowo” emoji being the most popular, Free Youth Group decided to continue the protest. As protests continued to be held and protest leaders were arrested and jailed one after another, protesters gradually discovered that after posting information about protest rallies on social media, the police would also be ready to stop the protests in advance based on the online previews of the rallies. Therefore, to ensure the smooth running of protests, protest groups have increasingly adopted the Leaderless Protest¹ format, in addition to using Twitter, which has more privacy than Facebook, to post information. Moreover, instead of posting advance information a week or a day in advance, protest groups or leaders use the encrypted instant messaging application Telegram to implement strategies through groups. For example, when deciding “Where the protest should take place,” the location of the rally was usually announced in the group 15 minutes in advance, and participants followed the message closely and got to the rally site as soon as they received it. Also, the group kept the location of the police updated to avoid conflicts and protect the participants.

¹ Leaderless Protest: This means there is no clear leader in the group, so that the leader would not be arrested in advance by the police and prevent the protest from taking place.

Figure 3 The use of social media (Methods) for communication within the protest groups



Source: Author's statistics of data from online questionnaires to protesters

3.3 Changes in Government's Counter-Measures to The Protests

Apart from the change in the way protesters organized protests and ensured the smooth running of rallies and marches was changed since the outbreak, it is worth noting that the Thai government and police had also changed their measures to stop the protesters from organizing protests to holding protests smoothly. The more familiar counter-measures to the protests have been the use of social networking software by the Thai police to obtain information about marches and rallies, so that they can arrest organizers or planners in advance or deploy police and set up roadblocks to stop protesters from moving. A deeper and more noteworthy change was the government's use of "Pandemic Prevention and Control" as an excuse to restrict protests. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ratified by Thailand in 1996, stated that "International human rights law protects the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly," but Thai authorities have since enforced strict censorship and restricted public discussion of human rights, political reform, and the role of the monarchy in society. In addition to the *Decree No.3/2558*

issued by the NCPO and *The Public Assembly Act* of 2015, since the 2014 military coup, the Thai government has prosecuted hundreds of activists and dissidents peacefully expressing their views on serious criminal charges such as sedition, computer-related crimes, and *lese majesté* (insulting the monarchy) in an effort to restrict gatherings and protests.

Violation of the Emergency Decree on Public Administration in Emergency Situation, B.E. 2548 (2005) is punishable by up to two years in prison and/or a fine of up to 40,000 baht. As the Covid-19 pandemic spread and protests continued, on October 15, 2020, the Thai government declared an imposition *Severe State of Emergency* and forcibly dispersed hundreds of protesters outside the Prime Minister's Office in Bangkok. The invocation of the state of emergency, which went into effect at 4 a.m. local time, banned gatherings of five or more people and gave the Thai government and police broad powers to prevent people from entering any area they designated and to arrest individuals without charge and detain them in unofficial places of detention. The order also prohibited "The publication of news, other media and electronic messages containing information that may cause fear or deliberate distortion of information, misunderstanding affecting national security or peace and order."⁴⁷ International news stories about Thailand, such as the BBC World Service, were blocked on the country's main cable network, True Visions. The Thai government also pressured satellite service providers to block broadcasts on Voice TV, which was widely known for its criticism of the government, and discussions of political issues in parliament have been suspended. On October 22, the Thai government lifted the *Severe State of Emergency* but extended the *State of Emergency Decree*. By the time the *State of Emergency Decree* was completely lifted on

September 30, 2022, the Thai government had extended this Decree 19 times⁴⁸. According to the Thai Lawyers for Human Rights (TLHR), at least 900 anti-government protesters were charged under the *State of Emergency Decree* between May and August 31, 2020, and in August 2021 alone, TLHR reported that Thai authorities arrested at least 260 people, including 70 children, for their involvement in anti-government protests. In addition, at least 115 people, including 31 children, were reportedly injured during the anti-government protests in August 2021⁴⁹. Related to this, court rulings have gradually changed following the arrests of protesters in an effort to limit the organization of protests. For example, in August 2020, protesters were largely released from jail or granted bail after their arrest, however, since late 2021, more influential protest leaders such as Penguin, Roong and Sophon have been repeatedly denied bail after their arrests, and some of them have been required to wear electronic monitoring bracelets and set curfews after being released on bail.

3.4 Changes in the Forces Involved and Their Approach to Political Struggle

The street protests in Thailand during 2019 to 2022 saw the emergence of familiar slogans and tightly organized systems, as well as a wider use of social media, as seen in protests in Hong Kong and elsewhere during the color revolutions. While it is undeniable that Thai protesters should be spontaneously learning from other regions and countries, it is also undeniable that the online virtual community Milk Tea Alliance has guided and assisted Thai protesters to varying degrees on several occasions⁵⁰. After the Future Forward Party was ordered dissolved, the U.S. Embassy in Thailand publicly commented, saying that “The decision to dissolve political parties could disenfranchise these voters” and that the Thai Constitutional Court’s

action “is a setback for Thailand’s political pluralism.” Later, photos of private meetings between protest leaders and U.S. officials were released on social media, and the president of the Chulalongkorn University Student Union was in contact with Hong Kong anti-government movement leader Joshua Wong. In addition, the Bangkok Post previously revealed that Thai Lawyers for Human Rights had received funding from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). What’s more, according to the NED’s official website⁵¹, the NED was sponsoring the projects in 2019, 2020, and 2021 with the following objectives: 1). Freedom of Association, 2). Human Rights, 3). Political Process, 4). Freedom of Information, 5). Democratic Ideas and Values, 6). Rule of Law, etc. Those being funded are NGOs and the media in Thailand, such as *Rocket Media Lab*, *Punch Up World Co. Community Educational Media*, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), *ENLAWTHAI Foundation*, Thailand Human Rights Lawyers Association and so on. These organizations or media have received grants ranging from tens of thousands of dollars to hundreds of thousands of dollars. Most of the funded organizations and media have expressed varying degrees of support for the protests and protesters in Thailand.

Back domestically in Thailand, the relationship between political power blocs since the end of the last century and the beginning of this century has also largely influenced the simplicity of mass anti-government protests in Thailand, interspersed with battles between various interest groups, as was more evident in Thai street protests after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. Although Thaksin is out of the country, he has used the new live-streaming platform *Clubhouse* to express support for young students and comment on the current situations in Thailand, attacking the current prime minister Prayut and government while campaigning for the Pheu Thai

Party and his daughter's candidacy for prime minister. In addition, despite the disbanding of the Future Forward Party, former party leader Thanathorn was still keenly involved in political activities, appearing in street protests, and using YouTube and other youth-friendly platforms for political propaganda. As a result of the street protests and online opinions, Prayuth and key government officials have tried to clarify and counter the situation, and the Yellow Shirts have held several counter-protests in the city center against the protests' denigration of the government and the royal family. The Prayuth group, Thaksin's group and the new democratic forces led by Thanathorn were constantly battling, trying to turn the protests and counter-protests in the streets into a chessboard for political struggle and to turn anti-government protesters and royalists into pawns in their respective struggles.

4. Implications of Street Protests in Thailand from 2019 to 2022

4.1 "Illegal Assemblies" Affected Public Health Security and Social Order

As mentioned above, protests after 2019 became progressively illegal, and these protests, defined as "illegal assemblies" by the Thai government, were often accompanied by large gatherings of people or violent incidents, thus impacting public health security and normal social order in Thailand first.

In terms of public health security, from December 2020 to March 1, 2021, the number of confirmed cases of the Covid-19 in Thailand has increased to more than 22,000 and continued to grow daily. The massive and dense protests were undoubtedly a major driver of the resurgence of the outbreak in Thailand. In early May 2021, more than 70,000 cases were confirmed in Thailand, and most of the leaders of youth protests groups were infected, while the protests were still ongoing.

By early August, more than 600,000 cases had been confirmed in Thailand. The pandemic gradually spiraled out of control, while protests continued to gather in large crowds, and by August 20, the cumulative number of confirmed cases exceeded 1 million. Protests continued and accelerated the spread of the pandemic, especially in Bangkok, with a cumulative total of 2 million cases of Covid-19 by mid-November 2021. Although the number of protests decreased after the entry of the Omicron variant into Thailand, the daily number of confirmed cases increased dramatically due to the highly infectious nature of the Omicron variant.

Table 5 *Confirmed Cases of Covid-19 in Thailand from Mar 2020 to Dec 2022*

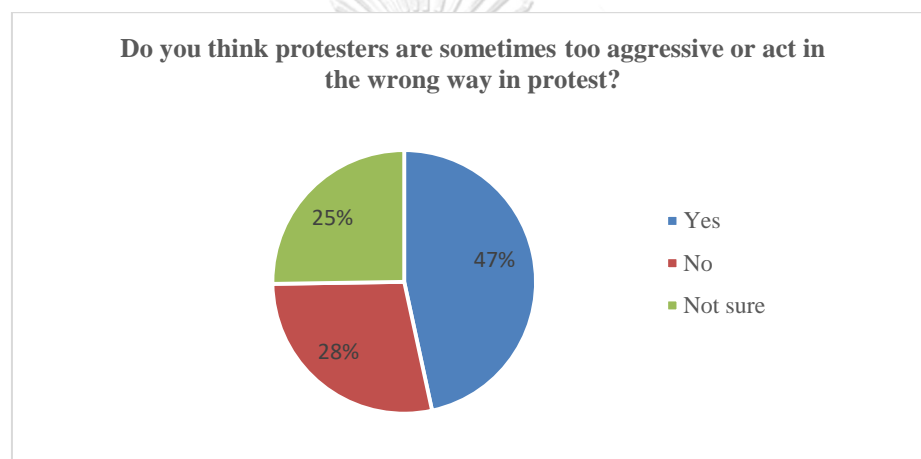
Data	Daily New Cases	Total Confirmed Cases
1 / 3 / 2020	0	42
1 / 6 / 2020	1	3082
1 / 9 / 2020	5	3417
1 / 12 / 2020	10	4008
1 / 3 / 2021	28	26031
1 / 6 / 2021	2230	162022
1 / 9 / 2021	14802	1219531
1 / 12 / 2021	4886	2120758
1 / 3 / 2022	20420	2912347
1 / 6 / 2022	4563	4455020
1 / 9 / 2022	2046	4654969
1 / 12 / 2022	0	4707244

Source: Author's statistics of data based on <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/region/thailand>

In terms of social order, it was clearly that when protests occurred in Bangkok, small protests attracted passersby to stop and take photos and videos, or to watch and join the protests from close range, while large-scale protests could result in hundreds

or thousands of people gathering, and if these protests take place on the roadside or at public buildings in Bangkok, such as the Victory Monument and Democracy Monument, they will undoubtedly cause traffic congestion on the road, or making it even impassable. In order to stop the protests, the police will sometimes close the roads. This makes the roads in Bangkok, which are already full of motor vehicles, even more congested.

Figure 4 Statistics on whether protesters considered the protest radical or not



Source: Author's statistics of data from online questionnaires to protesters

In addition to affecting traffic order, the more radical protests and marches were often accompanied by confrontations between protesters and police, resulting in minor injuries from pushing and shoving, or more serious injuries from the use of tear gas, rubber bullets, and high-pressure water cannons, resulting in broken bones, serious injuries, or even death, making it impossible to guarantee personal safety during protests. According to the results of the author's questionnaire (figure 3), even for the protestors interviewed, 47% of the respondents said that protests were sometimes too radical or used the wrong type of protests, 25% were unsure about this, and the remaining 28% said that they didn't feel that way. Din Daeng district filed a

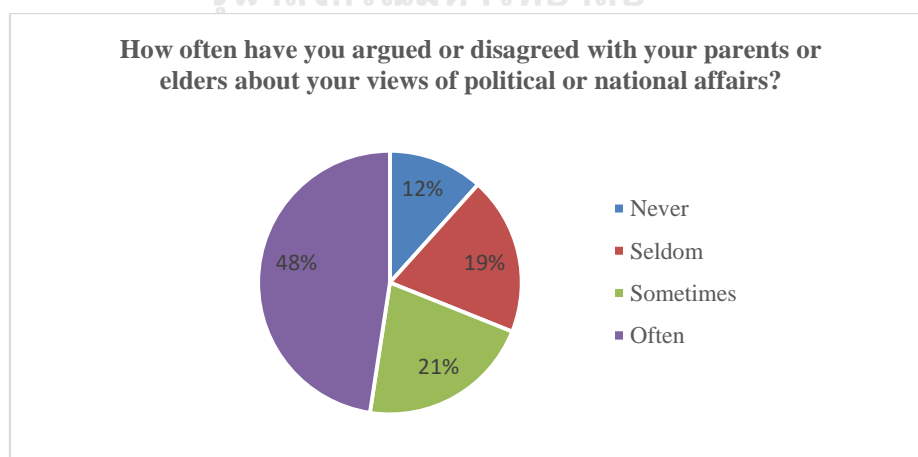
police complaint against the radical group of protest groups called Thalu Gas after members of Thalu Gas clashed with riot police in Din Daeng almost every night for the past several weeks. One resident said “the Thalu Gas protests are more like terrorism than a call for democracy, as the situation in the area has become worse than before.” The resident also added that “some residents have also been attacked by Thalu Gas members.”⁵² According to Mob Data Thailand’s analysis of protest trends in Thailand, it is foreseeable that in the future, if the demands of anti-government protesters are not accommodated, some of them will turn to violent protests like those of the Thalu Gas, and violent protests or incidents will occur more frequently, threatening public safety and social order in Thailand.

4.2 Traditional Values and Regulations are Strongly Challenged by Youth

The royal family has always been supreme and unassailable in Thailand, but in the protests that broke out under the pandemic, protesters not only demanded that the current government step down, but also demanded that the existing monarchy be reformed. One protest after another has strongly impacted the notion of “Royal Supremacy” in the minds of young Thais, and this notion of impact is close to covering the entire royal family. The image of the King Rama IX, who is still highly beloved by the majority of Thais, including the younger generation, has been “degraded” in recent years. According to the author’s interactions with the interviewees, in addition to protests calling for reform of the monarchy, comments and articles on the Internet questioning the monarchy and the monarch himself have also been appearing. This change in perception has also led to antagonism between young Thais and those of the elder generations, as most older Thais respect the royal

family from generation to generation in the family and would never allow any member of the royal family to be insulted. As a result, the confrontation between the young Thai generation and the older ones in terms of thinking and behavior has evolved into a serious family conflict in recent years. Some young Thais have said on social media that they have had arguments with their parents and even been kicked out of their homes because of their perverse attitudes toward the monarchy. According to the author's survey results, 80% of respondents (both protesters and non-protesters) often or sometimes discuss political or national current affairs with their parents or elders, but these discussions are often accompanied by differences of opinion. Figure 4 shows that nearly 70% of the protestors interviewed indicated that they often or sometimes disagreed or argued with their parents or elders about their views on politics and national affairs. And according to interviews, the 95% of these differences between respondents and their parents or elders focus on the views of the royal family.

Figure 5 Statistics on the frequency of arguments between respondents and their parents or elders



Source: Author's statistics of data from online questionnaires to protesters

Secondly, the young generation's questioning and breaking of traditional attitudes is also evident in the field of education; in the first episode of the first season of the Thai drama "Hormones" broadcast in 2015, a high school student launched a "No School Uniform" campaign in defiance of the school's motto, and the next day, several students responded. A similar "No School Uniform" campaign has been borrowed by the Bad Student group in recent years since 2020 as one of their demonstrations. They wanted to be able to dress according to their gender. At the same time, other traditional high school rules regarding grooming, and even respect for teachers, were seen as old-fashioned dogmas by some of the youth, and they chose not to comply with them. As the Bad Student group's protests spread, the Ministry of Education eventually responded in late 2020 by suggesting that schools could have one day a week as a day for not wearing uniforms, and later the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC) said that at least a school tag or badge would be required to identify students if they did not wear uniforms. Reports indicate that norms regarding grooming have been relaxed in recent years by the Ministry of Education in both newly promulgated and revised norms. In interviews with students, the author also learned that, to date, Thai secondary schools have largely eliminated strict restrictions on normal hair and makeup, and in some secondary schools, students can choose to wear their hair and school uniforms according to their self-identified gender. In addition, as youth groups have been calling for more "gender equality" on campus in recent years and promoting protests on related topics, Thai universities such as Thammasat University and Khon Kaen University have announced that students can dress according to their self-identified gender⁵³. After the frequent protests in recent years, the mindset of the young generation has been stimulated and

changed from the government state down to the school education. In the further future, the protests led by the youth and for the rights of the young generation will not stop. In this case, more of Thailand's old traditions and systems will be challenged and even changed by students and youth.

4.3 The Attack on Government Stability and the Rise of Democratic Forces

In October 2020, an online poll of Thais surveyed more than 5,000 Thai youth aged 19-22 across Thailand. The results showed that 62% of respondents believed that the "Reason for the recent increase in political protests" was the protesters' dissatisfaction with the Prime Minister's administration; on the question "What would you like to say to the Thai government about the political protests?", 72% of the respondents hope that the government will demand a solution as soon as possible, while 60% of the respondents hope that the government will not use violence against the protesters; In the question "What do you think will calm down the protest", 57% of the respondents think the government should sincerely solve the problems raised by the protesters. Summarizing the results of the web survey, there is no doubt that the protests have hit the incumbent Prime Minister Prayuth and his government team the hardest.

In addition to the pressure from external protesters, the stability of the government has been shaken by several political incidents under the pandemic, such as in the middle of 2020, there was a large-scale personnel change in the cabinet of the Prayut government, that was identified as infighting in the Palang Pracharath

Party¹. On February 1, 2021, the Myanmar military launched a coup. After the incident, the comments of Prayuth and Deputy-Prime Minister Prawit undoubtedly irritated the democrats in Thailand, which unanimously believed that the Prayut government and the Myanmar military were actually on the same side. By the end of 2021, there were rumors of a rift between Prayuth and Prawit². Thamanat³, who was the secretary general of the Palang Pracharath Party, was rumored to have been instructed by Prawit to lobby the small and medium-sized parties to vote against Prime Minister Prayuth during the no-confidence debate launched by the opposition parties against Prayuth and his cabinet. The action was analyzed by some political commentators as a move by Thamanat to seek promotion or even to expect a change of prime minister⁵⁴. However, whether this is true or not, the power struggle in the Prayuth cabinet and the many public revelations of problems within the government are evidence that the military faction ties were no longer as strong as they had been before. The internal struggle and anti-government protests, coupled with the uncontrolled pandemic, put the government in an “internal and external crisis.”

The opposition and pro-democracy forces, led by the Pheu Thai Party, also took the opportunity to strengthen their power. This was evident in the 2022 Bangkok

¹ Palang Pracharath Party: A military-civilian political party in Thailand founded in 2018 by Chuan Chuchan and Suchart Jantarachotikul. It pushed Prayut as prime minister and formed a coalition government in the 2019 Thai general election, gaining 249 senators. Prawit Wongsuwan, seen as the mastermind of the 2014 coup and military government regime, serves as the party's current leader. After the Future Forward Party was dissolved, it became the number one political party in Thailand.

² At that time, Prawit's subordinates plotted to overthrow Prayut, which was later defeated by Prayut. Later, it was rumored that Prawit wanted to replace Prayut as Prime Minister of Thailand.

³ Thamanat: Formerly known as Thamanat Prompow, he came from the Thai Rak Thai Party and was seen as a political "fixer" for the military government after the 2014 coup, serving as a key force in helping Bayu form a 17-party government coalition in the 2019 election. Later joined Bayu's cabinet but has had a lot of bad press.

gubernatorial election, where Chadchart¹, an independent candidate and former transport minister under Yingluck's government, won more than 1.3 million votes to become the governor of Bangkok, breaking the record for the highest number of votes ever for a Bangkok governor⁵⁵. Wiroj² also received more than 240,000 votes. In addition, the Pheu Thai Party took the lead in the elections for the 13th Bangkok Metropolitan Council, with 19 seats, while the Move Forward Party³ came in second, with 14 seats. It is worth mentioning that Aswin, independent candidate and former Bangkok governor, received only 200,000 votes; Suchatvee, a pro-royal Democrat Party candidate, received more than 240,000 votes, and the Democrat Party won only 9 seats in the Bangkok Metropolitan Council election. It can be said that the Bangkok election was a major victory for the democratic forces, and to a certain extent it reflected the strengthening of the democratic and progressive forces in Thailand and the weakening of the military government and old guard forces.

In July 2022, a four-day debate on the no-confidence motion surrounding Prayuth and his cabinet members took place, which officially ended with all 11 cabinet ministers passing the vote. But on the last day of the no-confidence motion debate, July 23, academics and civil society organizations from four universities and four digital TV channels joined forces to organize a project called "Voice of the

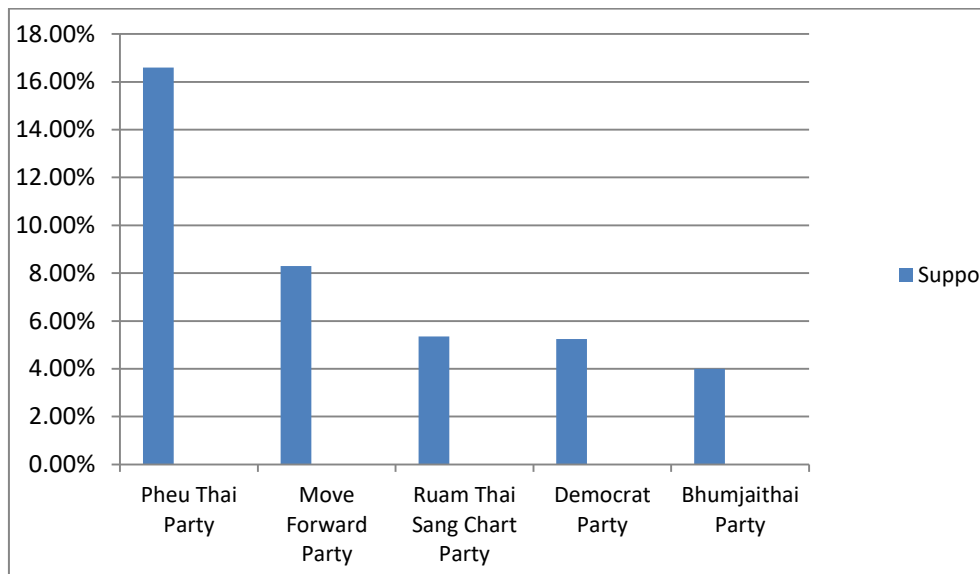
¹ Chadchart: Formerly known as Chadchart Sittipunt, a Thai politician who served as Minister of Transport in 2012 and was arrested and detained after the coup in 2014. Running as an independent candidate for Bangkok mayor this time, but still seen as a force for the Pheu Thai Party.

² Wiroj: Formerly known as Wiroj Lakkhanaadisorn, a Thai politician who is the Move Forward Party candidate in the 2022 Bangkok gubernatorial election and a former party-list member of Thai house of representatives. He is best known as the "Council Star" for his fierce, heated debate.

³ Move Forward Party: Founded in 2014, it is a social democratic and progressive political party in Thailand that opposes the military government. After several name changes, it is now seen as the successor to Future Forward Party, which was disbanded in 2020.

People” to allow Thai people to vote on the 11 cabinet members via a cell phone platform, which was held in parallel with the vote on the no-confidence motion debate at Parliament House. The vote was held in parallel with the debate on the motion at the Parliament building. A total of 520,000 people, including 510,000 Thais participated in the parallel vote. The results show that about 97% of those who participated in this voting program gave a vote of no confidence to the cabinet members⁵⁶. A month later, Prayuth was suspended by the Constitutional Court on August 24, 2022, amid controversy over whether the prime minister had been in power for eight years or not. Following a month of his suspended premiership, Prayuth was reinstated as prime minister by the Constitutional Court and could rule until March 2023. Although Prayuth was reinstated as Thailand’s prime minister, internal struggles in the cabinet, uninterrupted anti-government protests, and the impact of the three-year Covid-19 pandemic on Thailand’s economy and society left Prayut’s government in an internal and external situation. This is evident in the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) of Thailand poll. On December 25, 2022, NIDA’s organized an annual public opinion survey on the support of political figures of the year. The respondents covered different levels of education, occupation, and income. In response to the question “Who do you want to support as Prime Minister today?”, 34% of the respondents answered “Paetongtarn, daughter of Thaksin,” in second place was Prime Minister Prayuth with 14.05% support.

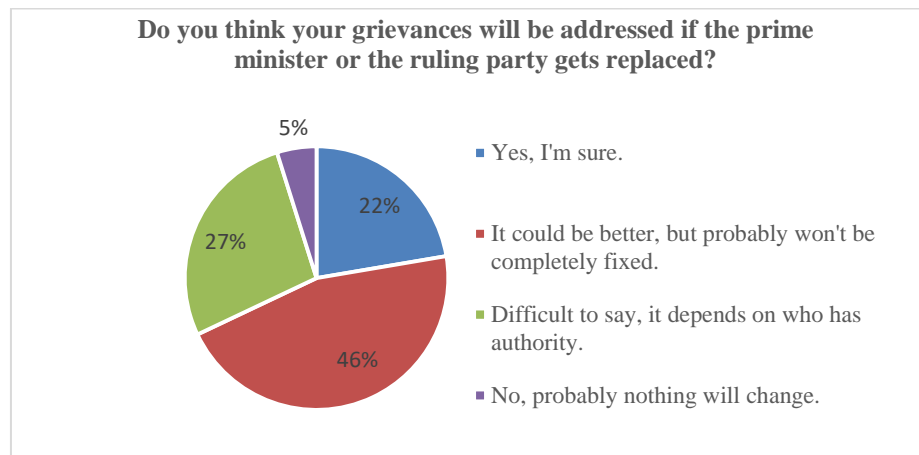
Figure 6 Statistics on the popularity of political parties in Dec 2022



Source: Author's production based on NIDA polling data in December 2022

The poll also showed that the most popular party among voters was the Pheu Thai Party with 16.6% support, followed by Move Forward Party with 8.3%, Ruam Thai Sang Chart Party (which Prime Minister Prayut announced he would officially join) with 5.35% support, Democrat Party with 5.25% support, and Bhumjaithai Party with 4% support. In another statistic, the support rate of Thaksin's daughter Paetongtarn increased from 12.53% in the first survey to 25.28% in the second, 21.60% in the third and up to 34% in the fourth, while that of Prime Minister Prayut decreased from 12.67% to 11.68% and 10.12% in the first survey and increased to 14.05% in the fourth.

Figure 7 Statistics on Satisfaction with the Prime Minister and the Ruling Party



Source: Author's statistics of data from online questionnaires to protesters

Cabinet power struggles and anti-government protests in recent years have led to a decline in support for parties representing the military, while support for parties popular with students and youth and their candidates were both higher. Figure 6 shows that 22% of the respondents answered positively to the question “Do you think your grievances will be addressed if the prime minister or the ruling party gets replaced?”, 46% said that their grievances will be addressed in some ways but not completely, and the remaining 5% answered negatively. Combined with the results of the Bangkok gubernatorial and council elections in mid-2022, it can be inferred that the balance of power would change due to the balance of power held by each party, which would affect the political direction of Thailand to some extent.

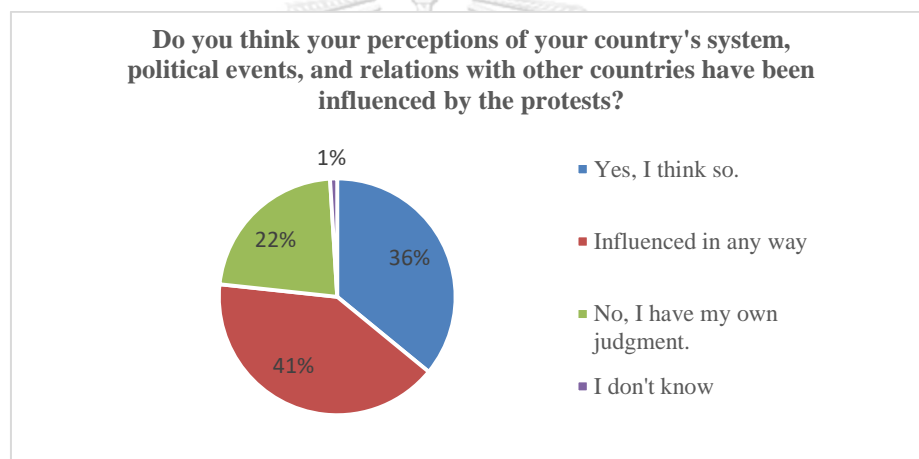
4.4 Influenced on the Public's Perceptions of Political Affairs

Protests in recent years have not only been limited to protests against the Thai government or political events, but have also been related to other countries and international affairs, which to some extent have affected the public's perception and impression of the countries and international relations involved in the protests. For

example, after the 2021 coup in Myanmar, some Myanmar nationals in Thailand held few protests in Bangkok to express their protest against the Myanmar military government and show their solidarity with internal democrats, which were fostered by several domestic and foreign media outlets, tying the leaders of the Myanmar military government and Prime Minister Prayuth together and portraying both as obstructionists of the democratic process and adherents of authoritarianism. In January 2022, one year after the 2021 coup, the Bangkok Art and Culture Center (BACC) held a month-long art exhibition titled “Defiant Art: A Year of Resistance to the Myanmar Coup in Images,” in solidarity with democracy in Myanmar. In the illustrations of the exhibition, there is no shortage of artists who put China, Myanmar, and Thailand together to create art that makes people think that China and Thailand are behind the coup and the military government in Myanmar. In fact, anti-China activists and organizations in Hong Kong and Taiwan have been providing solidarity and assistance to the Thai protesters for years. In addition to guiding the Thai protesters in organizing protests and maneuvering with the police, anti-China activists in Hong Kong and Taiwan have questioned and rejected China’s “One China” policy both online and in Thailand after the mass protests in Thailand in 2020, such as the protest in Bangkok on 3 June 2020 to commemorate “Tiananmen Square Protest” and another one on 1 Oct 2020 to against China’s National Day. This has largely influenced Thais to believe that the Chinese government is in complete opposition to democracy and human rights, and has deepened the negative influence of the Chinese and the Chinese government in the minds of some Thai people, thus amplifying the impact of protests such as the one that erupted around the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center during the 2022 APEC conference. In addition, some protests in

solidarity with Ukraine and against Russia and Putin have also taken place in front of the Russian Embassy in Bangkok, influenced by the Russia-Ukraine war. All these protests, to some extent, guided or influenced Thais (especially those who followed or directly participated in the protests), shaping, or changing their perceptions of international affairs and international relations. As Figure 7 shows, that almost 80% of the respondents said that their views on national systems, political events and interstate relations were affected by the protests, while only 22% denied it.

Figure 8 Statistics on the Extent to How Protesters Were Affected by Protests



Source: Author's statistics of data from online questionnaires to protesters

Once people have developed inherent negative impressions of the countries involved as a result of these influences, they will be persistent and difficult to be changed. In the coming period or for a long time, it may cause some Thai people to translate such negative impressions into actual actions, such as denigrating or acting disrespectfully toward tourists and people of that country online or even in reality. As a result, it may also indirectly affect Thailand's economic and trade relations, international relations and the conduct of international affairs and cooperation with other countries.

5. Discussion

5.1 Data Collection and Usage

In this research, the first type of data collected by the author comes from the announcements issued by the Thai government authorities, the statistics of confirmed cases in Thailand since the emergence of Covid-19 from Johns Hopkins University⁵⁷, and the opinion polls and statistics from authoritative research institutes in Thailand, which contain a large amount of official data. For example, in the announcements issued by the government and authorities in response to the protests, the author was able to learn not only when and where the protests were held, but also how the protests developed and whether there were any casualties. This helped the author to get a more comprehensive overview of the protests from 2019 to 2022, as well as new changes in the protests and their impact on public order and social security in Thailand. In the statistics of Covid-19 confirmed cases, the author obtained data from official agencies on the number of new cases and the total number of confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Thailand on the same day, which provided authoritative data to support the author's search for the link that exists between the Covid-19 outbreak and the protests. Finally, public opinion polls, such as those released by authoritative Thai survey organizations, for example, the National Institute of Development Administration⁵⁸, helped the author to learn about the Thai people's views on the protests and the various political parties at different times, etc., which provided great support and assistance to the author in completing his research on the changes and impacts of the protests in recent years. Overall, such data undoubtedly increased the

authority of the authors' research and enhanced the accuracy and reliability of the conclusions.

The second type of data collected by the author was from news reports, media commentaries, self-published articles, official social media accounts of protest groups, and private statistical websites on the Internet. The data collected in this type lacked some authority compared to survey results from authoritative institutions and official announcements, but they did not lose their accuracy because they came from the Internet, and they were helpful to the author's research. For example, first, the author combined the *Mob Data Thailand* website⁵⁹ and news reports led by *Bangkok Post* and *Prachatai* media to get a more complete statistics of the number of protests, the time and the topics of the protests in Thailand in the past four years. Second, the author learned different perspectives on the protests in Thailand through the self-published articles from various countries. However, the author collected many Chinese language self-publishers' work, which is the shortcoming. Third, from the information of official social media accounts of the protest groups, such as Free Youth⁶⁰ and Draconis Revolution⁶¹, gave the author more insight into the group structure and goals of the Thai youth protest groups. Fourth, the political analysis of some researchers provides ideas and inspiration for the author to look at the relationship between demonstrations and political events in Thailand, for example, researchers from the University of Sydney, Chulalongkorn University and the University of Nottingham have commented and analyzed the street protests in Thailand in 2020 in a BBC interview⁶²; Jeremy Tan from JS Held Asia Intelligence has analyzed the political challenges after 2022⁶³; Thitinan, a professor at the Faculty of Political Science of Chulalongkorn University, published a current commentary

and outlook on the 2023 elections⁶⁴, among others. It can be said that the information and data obtained from such unofficial literature enriches and completes the author's research, and they help a lot in enhancing the readability of the paper.

5.2 Brief Summary of the Results

The results showed that street protests in Thailand during 2019 to 2022, although mixed with partisan struggles and guided by foreign forces, consists mainly of spontaneous anti-government, anti-Prayuth protests by youth. The emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic catalyzed student protests, which at the same time were transformed in many ways as the pandemic developed and youth took the lead, resulting in both the way protesters organized protests and the way the government counter-measures to protests were unique and different from the past.

Several influential anti-government youth leaders and youth groups have emerged from the frequent protests. They were demanding not only the stepping down of the Prime Minister Prayuth's resignation but also political restructuring and reform of the state system, but also the reform of the existing monarchy. This has had significant implications for the present of Thai politics and society. While fighting for their rights and against the old system, the youth were in conflict with the Prayuth government, and the gap between them on the one hand, and those of the older generations and the old system on the other, was deepening. The bourgeois democratic forces were revived by the youth protests, but Prayuth and his colleagues were also faced with conflict by power struggle within his own faction, Thailand's future political and social development would also be affected as a result.

5.3 Future Implications of Street Politics During 2019 To 2022

In the author's opinion, the change in power of the political parties will first affect the next prime ministerial election, from which the Move Forward Party and Pheu Thai Party are expected to emerge as the next prime minister, due to the great public support they have received, if a candidate from them is elected prime minister but unable to reconcile class conflicts, protests by groups, such as middle class and royalists are likely to break out, or even another coup. If a candidate from the old faction¹ is elected prime minister, the anti-government and anti-royal protests are expected to reach a climax again. Also, as the demands of the protesters remain unanswered, there would be more violent protests following the example of Thalu Gas, endangering social order and public safety. In addition, as youth values of the royal family and the nation have changed dramatically, the protests led by the youth for the rights will not stop in the future, more of Thailand old traditions and systems will be challenged and even changed. Finally, as public's views on international events and affairs were affected by the protests, it is likely that someone will have a negative impression of the countries involved in the protests, which may indirectly affect Thailand's trade relations and cooperation in international affairs in the future.

5.4 Answers to Research Questions and Corroboration of Hypotheses

The massive protests that have been growing in Thailand in recent years actually began in 2020. However, to gain a broader perspective and present the development and changes in the protests more clearly, the author opted to start his study of the protests in Thailand in 2019. The first research question for the street protests in Thailand during 2019 to 2022 was, *how are the protests in Thailand during*

¹ Old faction: Based on the combined views of the young protesters, the "old faction" could be considered to be members of the military or Prayuth's faction.

the Covid-19 pandemic different from the those in the past? This question was asked because the author first observed the youth taking to the street of Thailand as the main force. Although there have been large student movements in Bangkok since the 1970s, the student pro-democracy movement since 2020, catalyzed by the pandemic and aided by social media, has reached a level not seen before. As the research around this question deepens, the author did find other changes in the Thai protests during 2019 to 2022, such as changes in the way in which protesters gathered themselves, the increasing involvement of different political forces in this student-led democracy movement and so on.

After understanding the general situation of the protests during 2019 to 2022 in Thailand, the author considered that the numerous protests in the past 4 years must have had implications for Thailand society or certain groups of people. The author then posed another research question, *how does the massive outbreak of protests generate implications for present and future Thailand?* Following this research question, and after collecting data and interviewing nearly 500 Thai students, the author has identified various existing and future implications of the protests in Thailand during 2019 to 2022 on the pandemic, people's values, and the political scene. In addition, the author envisaged that the protesters as the direct initiators of, and participants in, the protests were in turn influenced by the protests they had given rise to. Therefore, the author chose to create a questionnaire to be distributed to the protesters to explore the perceptions of the protesters and the implications of the protests for them.

Through this research, the author found that the street protests in Thailand during 2019 to 2022 is different from the previous ones and has wider implications for Thailand than the author and other people expected. The author also tried to confirm the hypothesis about the relationship between the pandemic and the protests in Thailand in recent years through the research results, and to contribute to the research on the political process and development of Thailand under the pandemic. However, the author ultimately found that the hypothesis of this study is still insufficient by collecting and analyzing the data. Because in fact, anti-government protesters in recent years have a long-standing dissatisfaction with the Prayuth government, and the decline in citizens' quality of life caused by the Covid-19 pandemic was only part of what drove the protesters to the streets, rather than a direct cause of it. In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic did lead to some changes in protesters' behavior in terms of gathering and protesting, but it was more the development and use of social media that played a key role. The author argues that his shortcomings in the hypothesized part of this study were due to the initial inadequacy of data and information collection. However, through the research, the author not only discovered his shortcomings, but also was able to gain a more in-depth understanding of the street protests in Thailand in recent years, which is the most important. Therefore, the author expected that the research will not only help readers to have a better and clearer understanding and knowledge of the protests in Thailand from 2019 to 2022, but also magnify the hidden effects to help the academic community to grasp the future direction of Thai politics to a certain extent.

5.5 Theoretical Development

In the theoretical aspect, the key theories first utilized in this research are Radical Politics from Jonathan Pugh and Digital Activism from Frank Edwards and his research team, which the author believes have been evident in the recent years Thai protests. For example, the initial emergence of the protests since 2019, and the radical slogans and behaviors used by the protesters in these protests by youth protesters, had been influenced in some way by the growth of Radical Politics globally in recent years. And these incipient protests have been catalyzed by the influence of Digital Activism generated by social media, culminating in the formation of large-scale street protests. In this way, the author considers this research on street politics in Thailand from 2019 to 2022 as a development of the theories of Radical Politics and Digital Activism by using protests in Thailand as an example.

The author also develops the theory of Contentious Politics to some extent in this research. Charles's theory about the relationship between Contentious Politics and democratization is highly relevant to the research of Thailand's democratization process, and the connection between the multiple Thai street movements and Thai democratization corroborates Charles's theory. However, this has changed in recent years: Prime Minister Prayuth, who legally assumed the role of Thailand's Prime Minister through the election in 2019. Though he was still perceived as representing the military, the regime was uniquely stable because his government came to power through the electoral process as was further reinforced by subsequent party political reforms.

When the Prayuth government holding strong power and at the same time chose to ignore the protests and protesters' demands, it would have been very expensive and

unlikely for the people to achieve further democratization through Contentious based on the Charles's theory. In addition, the many militant and frequent protests have reduced the pressure they exert on the government, and the king's prestige has declined due to the challenges of recent years, including demands for reform of the monarchy. The king was also unable to act as a third-party mediator to promote democratization when the military-backed regime could ensure that no vicious bloodshed event¹ occurred. These factors rendered Charles's Contentious theory ineffective and unable to promote substantive development of democratization in Thailand. The author combines the theories of Radical Politics, Digital Activism and Contentious Politics with the current realities of Thailand, develops these theories to a certain extent, and produces The New Period of Deadlock in Thai Political Modernization Framework, which provides a partial guide to the research on social movements and political modernization in Thailand in recent years.

5.6 Contributions and Shortcomings

In addition to exploring the theories, the author's current study also contributed other new information. The first is the refinement of the development of protests in Thailand from 2019-2022, describing not only the more important events and dates of the protests that occurred during the four-year period, but also the approximate number of protests by month by year and the main themes of the protests held during that month. This not only provides readers and other researchers with an overview of the protests in Thailand over the four-year period, but also provides a more detailed understanding of the main objectives of the protests and their changes at each stage,

¹ Vicious bloodshed event: for example, October 1973 Thai Popular Uprising or 2010 Thai military crackdown.

allowing people to better grasp the dynamics and direction of the protests in Thailand during the period 2019-2022.

Second, the author has subdivided the protests into groups. Most people only suppose that young students created a number of pro-democracy and anti-authoritarian protest groups during the four-year period, but as the author's research progressed, the author found that there were differences among the protest groups created by young students, each with its own agenda or goals, whether or not it had a clear leader, which led the author to think that youth protest groups could not be lumped together. Thus, after sorting out the history of the protests in recent years, the author has analyzed the goals of the groups (e.g., the United Front for Law and Government advocates reforming the monarchy, REDEM wants to establish a Thai republic), the structure of the groups (with or without leaders), the forms of the protests (e.g., FreeArts uses art to express the protests, Thalu Wang uses street polls), the philosophy of the protests (e.g., Thalu Gas prefers violent resistance), to distinguish and analyze the protest groups in terms of the following aspects. The author expected to provide readers with clearer ideas and better perceptions of youth and youth groups in the 2019-2022 street protests by compiling and merging and analyzing their own data.

Third, the author linked the Covid-19 pandemic to the protests. When trying to analyze the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the street protests in Thailand in recent years, one may only see the Covid-19 pandemic as what triggered some of the protesters to take to the streets in recent years, but at the same time, the Covid-19 pandemic also became the reason for the authorities to prevent the protests from

taking place in response to the protests - The “prevention and control of the pandemic” and the strict control of crowd gathering by decree are new and different. In addition, when social media such as Twitter and Facebook became mainstream tools for protesters to express their political views and disseminate information about rallies this year due to the pandemic, the authorities also used social media to carry out the counter-measures to protests.

Fourth, the author found that different countries have different views on protests. Information on different opinions on protests in different countries actually has different perspectives and options. If one reads only the data and information from mainland China, it is not really clear that the protests in Thailand in recent years have actually involved not only anti-Thai government and Thai political events, but also countries such as Myanmar, Russia and China. The impact of these protests in other countries on the perceptions of the Thai people cannot be ignored. Likewise, if the author reads only the reports from Thai or Western media about the protests in Thailand, the author can only see the good cause of the protesters for democracy and human rights, but not the partisan struggle and foreign support behind some of the protests and some of the protesters. By reading multiple sources and news reports, the author was able to get a more objective view of the recent protests in Thailand from multiple perspectives.

Finally, the author’s interviews and questionnaires were distributed to the protesters at universities in Bangkok. Through these interviews and questionnaires, the author expected to gain a clearer understanding of Thai students’ perceptions and opinions about the protests, to better understand the motivations of the protesters for

starting or participating in the protests, and to understand the real impact of the protests on Thai students. Although some of the results did not meet the author's expectations, many new perspectives emerged from the young protesters' real opinions. For example, the young Thai protesters consider themselves to be politically liberal in order to change the political status quo and the country's institutions, but due to the country's situation, their knowledge of themselves and their lack of ability, the youth groups were unable to refine their demands and advance them step by step. Overly aggressive demands and protests have not only failed to make progress in a short period of time, but have also created enemies from other groups. In the long run, the protests have had some impact, but they have not changed the political status quo or the country's institutions in any meaningful way, and as the government maintains its cold shoulder approach to the protests, the activism of the protesters gradually turns to frustration and depression, and the protests are reduced in size and scale. The author received 103 responses to this questionnaire, and the final results of the questionnaire were representative of the majority of protesters' thoughts and opinions, which are a useful reference and help the author to better understand the impact of the protests on Thailand in the coming period.

Certainly, there are some shortcomings in this paper. First, the data on the 2019-2022 protests is incomplete, as it is not possible to fully confirm exactly how many protests took place in the country each month, nor is it possible to fully count the youth groups that joined the protests in recent years. The author can only gather data from various websites and media outlets to find out the approximate number of protests and the more influential groups, but this did not have much impact on the

author's overview of the protests' progress and development over the four-year period.

Second, the questionnaire was distributed in a relatively homogeneous area, because the author's location in Bangkok did not make it easy to get responses from student youths across the country, so the questionnaire was basically filled out by undergraduate students in Bangkok. However, since the 2019-2022 protests were mainly attended by Thai youth, and undergraduate students in Bangkok were the majority, the author was able to obtain the views of the majority of the protesters on the protests, the protest groups, and the authorities from the questionnaire results to some extent.

Third, the author did not conduct more in-depth interviews and research with young students who did not participate in the protests, and did not obtain more information about the views and evaluations of other communities on the 2019-2022 protests. This is because when the author did the study, the focus was on presenting the ideas of the protesters for readers and academics, so the author did not show much about the views and evaluations of other communities on the recent protests. However, the author believes that readers can still get a clear picture of what the protesters really think and how the protests have affected them.

Through the study, the author expects to provide some ideas for the next phase of feasible research. In exploring the problem of why the protests have failed to make substantial progress, some tentative conclusions may be reached, as follows:

First, it is possible to study the differences of opinion between the protesters and the leaders of the protests, so as to explore the reasons for the failure of the protests. Second, if conditions are available, it is possible to study the support and opposition of foreign forces behind the protests in Thailand, how these forces have supported and opposed the protests, and whether their support and opposition have changed or influenced the process of the protests at this stage, and to reveal from the side how the development of street protests in Thailand has been affected by international relations. Third, the social media, such as Twitter, played a significant role in the protests in Thailand from 2019 to 2022, but the function of social media in spreading information about similar mass events is not only prominent in Thailand. The author therefore suggests that this can be extended by examining social media and using Twitter as an example to compare street protests in Thailand and other countries and find similarities and differences in the protests, and to explore the influence of media on the development and outcome of mass events such as protests.

6. Suggestions and Conclusion

6.1 Suggestions

From the author's Findings chapters, it was clear that the values of the Thai of younger generations had been changed by the impact of the recent protests. Based on the current situation, it is still unknown whether Pita will be able to form a coalition government with other parties and serve as prime minister in the future, although the Move Forward Party led by Pita gained a significant advantage in forming the new government as a result of the election in 2023. Therefore, it is basically impossible for the youth protesters who support the democratic forces led by the Move Forward

Party to stop their protests until they believe their demands and goals have been achieved. Moreover, if protesters' demands go unanswered for a long time or not at all, individual angry protesters may follow the violent form of the Thalu Gas protests, which will lead to more violent incidents and may result in casualties among protesters, police officers or innocent people. Under such circumstances, the author will mainly make suggestions for the government and protesters and protest groups to try to alleviate the current deadlock based on the created framework of the New Period of Deadlock in Thai Political Modernization.

6.1.1 Government

Through observation of the street protests in recent years, it can be seen that the protesters had strong opinions about Prime Minister Prayuth and the current government, and many protests had repeatedly included demands for “Prayuth to step down” or “dissolution of the cabinet.” The reason for this was that the protesters believed that Prayuth and his government were not protecting people's legitimate rights and interests. For example, first, the policies and measures introduced by the Prime Minister Prayuth and the current government led to a decline in the economy and the quality of life of the people. Second, protesters believed that Prime Minister Prayuth and the Palang Pracharath Party behind him have prevented other parties from participating in politics through a series of improper means. From this, in the author's opinion, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Thai economy was enormous and the recovery process is highly important at this stage. Therefore, for the candidate from any faction to become the next prime minister or lead the new

government, the most important measure should be taking care of the interests of many sides or forces.

It will be crucial for people to realize that the new government is making a difference in their lives. In addition, the government must understand the reasons for the protesters' protests and ensure their legitimate rights; use restraint in the process of maintaining stability, especially not to use violence to cause casualties or use special methods to stop the protests. The use of violence will only intensify the conflict between the two sides and make the protests increase rather than decrease.

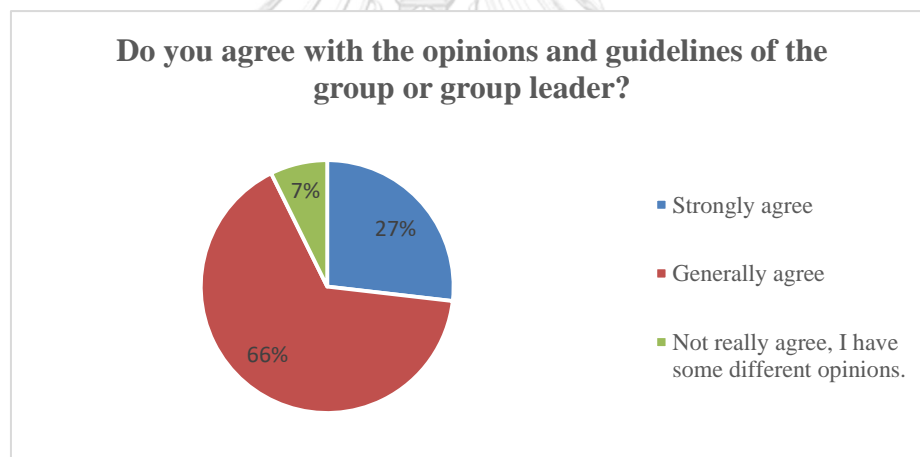
Finally, those in power and the ruling parties should use legal and legitimate means to engage in political participation, as unwarranted means of political struggle will only inflame public anger and cause protests every time. Even if they use their authority to achieve the desired results, they will lose the hearts and minds of the people, which will lead to a lot of resistance to the subsequent administration and policy implementation.

6.1.2 *Protesters and Protest Groups*

Within the limits of the law, protesters and protest groups have a legitimate right to hold or participate in protests, and should not be unduly interfered with or even prevented by the government and police. However, due to the catalyst of the Covid-19 pandemic and the continuous evolution of protests in recent years, not all participants of street protests are able to maintain their sanity, and thus violent protest behaviors have emerged, with some protesters vandalizing and burning in the streets, seriously disturbing the social order, and endangering public safety. The excessive

behavior also led to clashes between protesters and police during the protests, which led to an increase in casualties. In fact, the author argues that these excesses were not entirely conducive to achieving the protesters' goals, and that the use of violence as a means of protest was used by the authorities as a justification for arresting and stopping the protesters. Therefore, protesters and protest groups should keep their protests moderate and do their best to fight for their rights within the limits of the law, but ensure that they do not affect public safety and order, and in particular refuse to follow the example of violent protests such as those organized by the Thalu Gas group.

Figure 9 Statistics on the extent to which protesters identified with the group or leader



Source: Author's statistics of data from online questionnaires to protesters

In addition, the author believes that protesters and protest groups will be better served by unifying their agendas and working together to develop viable ways and means of maximizing the benefits of protest, rather than spreading out their efforts and even creating more hostile forces within their own groups. For example, when the author asked in the questionnaire whether you agree with the opinions and guidelines of the protest group you joined in or the leaders of your group, 66% of the

respondents said they generally agree with them, while only 27% strongly agree with them, and 7% of the respondents said they do not fully agree with them. Additionally, some radical protesters have always claimed to oppose the existing monarchy and demanded reform, but the monarchy has existed in Thailand for hundreds of years and is deeply rooted in the minds of the middle-aged and elderly in particular, making the royalists a force to be reckoned with. If protesters or groups do not unify their platforms or devise reasonable means of protest, they will be pressured by many forces to achieve their goals and will eventually be dismantled or unable to “make their voices heard.”

Finally, the author maintains that protesters must remain true to themselves and engage in political participation in a legitimate manner, and not oppose the government for the sake of opposing it, thereby ignoring the achievements of the Prayuth government in terms of social stability and national diplomacy. In the pursuit of democracy and freedom, protesters should have their own conviction to participate in political activities instead of blindly following other political parties or groups, which will not only fail to improve the society and the country but will most likely become a tool for political parties to fight.

6.1.3 All Sides: Compromise and Concessions

Throughout Thai history, the further development of democracy has required persistent popular struggle, but at the same time, compromise has always been a part of Thailand’s democratic development. Ultimately, politics is a game of compromise. When protesters fight for their legitimate rights and put forward more realistic demands, the government should respond positively and even make concessions to the

satisfaction of the protesters. In recent years, the influence of foreign powers on Thai politics has been present and has not shown any tendency to diminish. Whether it is the demand of some anti-government protesters for support from democratic forces in Europe and the United States, or the government's own demand for other countries to sanction or hinder the protesters, neither side should bring in outside forces to intervene in its own politics. If external forces interfere too much, the balance of internal political forces will be disrupted, which will not only reduce the simplicity of protesters' protests, but also make the current deadlock in Thai political modernization not improve or even worsen, and Thai society may fall into chaos.

There should be more healthy political competition between political parties in Thailand, whether between these powerful parties, such as the Phai Thai Party and the Palang Pracharath Party, or other parties, to avoid using protesters or the public as a tool for their own benefit. Respect the choices of Thai citizens rather than inducing, pressuring, or coercing them through improper means to achieve political goals.

Finally, all sides, including protesters, political parties, and the government, should remain calm and restrained; only mutual compromise and concessions can stabilize Thai society and give it a chance to move further along the road to democratization.

6.2 Conclusion

By reviewing the process of protests in Thailand in recent years and listing the major youth protest groups, together with a survey of youth students in Bangkok, this research not only attempted to explore the connection between the Covid-19 pandemic and Thailand's street protests from 2019 to 2022, but also demonstrated the

new changes that the youth generation has brought to Thailand's street politics in the past four years, as well as its profound implications for Thai politics and the country's present and future.

The author hypothesized a link between the pandemic and the protests. By comparing the number of protests with the number of new cases of Covid-19, the author found that the pandemic catalyzed the outbreak of the protests and that the protests increased the spread of the pandemic. This association was not difficult to find and easy to prove, however, the author's hypothesis has not been proven as protests due to discontent with the government have existed in Thailand for many years. Moreover, compared to pandemic, which was only one of the triggers for Thai street protests in recent years, social media had played a more important role in street politics during 2019 to 2022, such as facilitating the emergence of protests, changing the way of the protesters gathered and communicated with each other. Though the author's hypothesis has not proven, in exploring the link between the pandemic and street protests, the author also discovered another one important link to the pandemic, which was that the government used "Covid-19 Prevention and Control" to restrict protests, which completed the author's research.

In addition, after compiling the results of the questionnaire survey, the author found that some of the responses did not match the author's expectations. This is mainly due to the author's preconceptions and having own assumptions in advance when setting up the individual questions in the questionnaire. However, in the good way was that the questionnaire proved that the author did get the real thoughts of the young protesters about the protests, the government and the country, which was a

great help to the research of this paper. Based on the results of the author's survey, the next step of the study could be to extend the question to examine the reasons for the "lack of progress" of the frequent and large-scale protests in recent years. Moreover, by examining the agendas and goals of protest groups or key protest leaders, it is possible to compare not only the student movement of the 1970s, but also to explore the sources and orientations of the new generation of Thai youth and their impact on street protests in Thailand.

This research showed the results through various type of data such as cases of the Covid-19 pandemic, protest statistics, and government reports. Also, the author enriched the study of the "New Changes" in Thailand's street protests from 2019 to 2022 with a subdivision of the objectives and characteristics of each group after listing them. At the same time, in addition to the analysis of party politics and social perceptions, the author also visualized the real thoughts of the protesters in the form of questionnaires, which completed the study of the impact of street politics in Thailand during 2019 to 2022.

In conclusion, this paper argued that street protests in Thailand during 2019 to 2022 mainly centered on the streets of Bangkok from 2020 to 2022, where the protests were largely dominated by students and influenced by the young generation's thought and behavior patterns, with the profound implications of the protests being profound for current and future Thailand. However, the limitations of the protests were obvious, which not only led to frequent protests without substantial progress at all, but also brought the deadlock in Thai political modernization to a new period combined with multiple factors. At this new period, Thailand's democratic forces had

been revived and the expansion of the old forces had been temporarily curbed. Factional battles and power struggles will continue to take place in this land, while compromises and concessions from all sides will enable Thailand's democratization to move further.



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