

THE INFLUENCE OF GERMAN THINKERS ON SOCIAL AND POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to clarify the root of modern social and political movements in Thailand, tracing back to the political structural change in 1932 A.D. The impact of that change, the influences and outcomes of the '*unfinished mission*' has brought Thai society to on-going crises until present. Selected theoretical discourses on social and political movements are coined to support the focal point that, most prominent social movements in Thailand indicate varieties of political activities which cannot be assigned neither to one group, one grievance, one cause, nor one theory and ideology. The current movements in our modern world are far more complex than one has ever thought. It marks '*a significant change in Thai society and politics*' during the past decades since the World War II. A brief summary of theoretical debates on social movements which has developed since the 1960s and the clash of 'Ideas' are described via European ideological contest and Thai controversial politics. The main feature of recent popular movements in Thailand is analysed together with the appraisal for *Karl Marx, the greatest German social thinker who changed the world*, whose influence has empowered the social and political movements in Thailand ever since. In the Thai contested social space, *Jitr Bhumisakd* – one among the most prominent Thai radical elites, was undoubtedly strongly influenced by *Karl Marx and his theory*. Within such controversy of Thai social and political movements, *Jitr Bhumisakd* is a myth, a semiotic sign – in Derrida's word, with *la différance*. He has become the most outstanding *mythologie* of the Thai revolutionary course, whose academic and political contributions are not at dawn, and still functioning in current social and political arena. Even among those of *binary oppositions* – the so-called *yellow-shirts* and *red-shirts*, *Jitr Bhumisakd* has represented dynamically and dialectically, the yearned spirits for '*social change*', of dualistic antagonists in all state-of-art performances in every political movement.

Keywords: German social thinkers-Karl Marx, influences, social and political movements, Thai social thinker-Jitr Bhumisakd, semiotic sign, myth, la difference, binary oppositions

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