

tpo_32_passage_2

In the late nineteenth century, political and social changes were occurring rapidly in Siam (now Thailand). The old ruling families were being displaced by an evolving centralized government. These families were pensioned off (given a sum of money to live on) or simply had their revenues taken away or restricted; their sons were enticed away to schools for district officers, later to be posted in some faraway province; and the old patron-client relations that had bound together local societies simply disintegrated. Local rulers could no longer protect their relatives and attendants in legal cases, and with the ending in 1905 of the practice of forcing peasant farmers to work part-time for local rulers, the rulers no longer had a regular base for relations with rural populations. The old local ruling families, then, were severed from their traditional social context. The same situation viewed from the perspective of the rural population is even more complex. According to the government's first census of the rural population, taken in 1905, there were about thirty thousand villages in Siam. This was probably a large increase over the figure even two or three decades earlier, during the late 1800s. It is difficult to imagine it now, but Siam's Central Plain in the late 1800s was nowhere near as densely settled as it is today. There were still forests closely surrounding Bangkok into the last half of the nineteenth century, and even at century's end there were wild elephants and tigers roaming the countryside only twenty or thirty miles away. Much population movement involved the opening up of new lands for rice cultivation. Two things made this possible and encouraged it to happen. First, the opening of the kingdom to the full force of international trade by the Bowring Treaty (1855) rapidly encouraged economic specialization in the growing of rice, mainly to feed the rice-deficient portions of Asia (India and China in particular). The average annual volume of rice exported from Siam grew from under 60 million kilograms per year in the late 1850s to more than 660 million kilograms per year at the turn of the century; and over the same period the average price per kilogram doubled. During the same period, the area planted in rice increased from about 230,000 acres to more than 350,000 acres. This growth was achieved as the result of the collective decisions of thousands of peasant families to expand the amount of land they cultivated, clear and plant new land, or adopt more intensive methods of agriculture. They were able to do so because of our second consideration. They were relatively freer than they had been half a century earlier. Over the course of the Fifth Reign (1868–1910), the ties that bound rural people to the aristocracy and local ruling elites were greatly reduced. Peasants now paid a tax on individuals instead of being required to render labor service to the government. Under these conditions, it made good sense to thousands of peasant families to in effect work full-time at what they had been able to do only part-time previously because of the requirement to work for the government: grow rice for the marketplace. Numerous changes accompanied these developments. The rural population both dispersed and grew, and was probably less homogeneous and more mobile than it had been a generation earlier. The villages became more vulnerable to arbitrary treatment by government bureaucrats as local elites now had less control over them. By the early twentieth century, as government modernization in a sense caught up with what had been happening in the countryside since the 1870s, the government bureaucracy intruded more and more into village life. Provincial police began to appear, along with district officers and cattle registration and land deeds and registration for compulsory military service. Village handicrafts diminished or died out completely as people bought imported consumer goods,

like cloth and tools, instead of making them themselves. More economic variation took shape in rural villages, as some grew prosperous from farming while others did not. As well as can be measured, rural standards of living improved in the Fifth Reign. But the statistical averages mean little when measured against the harsh realities of peasant life.

question 1

According to paragraph 1, the situation for Siam's old ruling families changed in all of the following ways EXCEPT:

- A Their incomes were reduced.
- B Their sons were posted as district officers in distant provinces.
- C They could sell lands that had traditionally belonged to them.
- D They had less control over the rural populations.

question 2

According to paragraph 2, which of the following was true of Siam in 1905?

- A Its urban population began to migrate out of the cities and into the country.
- B Its Central Plain was almost as densely populated as it is today.
- C It was so rural that wild elephants and tigers sometimes roamed Bangkok.
- D It had many more villages than it did in the late 1800s.

question 3

Paragraph 3 mentions all of the following as signs of economic growth in Siam EXCEPT

- A an increase in the price of rice
- B an increase in the amount of rice leaving Siam
- C an increase in the nutritional quality of the rice grown
- D an increase in the amount of land used for rice production

question 4

According to paragraph 3, farming families increased the amount of rice they grew in part by

- A growing varieties of rice that produced greater yields
- B forming collective farms by joining together with other farm families
- C planting rice in areas that had previously remained unplanted
- D hiring laborers to help them tend their fields

question 5

According to paragraph 4, what happened after the government ended the practice of requiring rural people to perform labor for it?

- A Rural people became more closely connected to the aristocracy.
- B Rural people spent more time growing rice for profit.
- C The government began to pay the laborers who grew rice for it.
- D The government introduced a special tax on rice.

question 6

Which of the following best describes the relationship between paragraphs 3 and 4 in the passage?

- A Paragraph 4 provides further evidence of the economic growth of Siam discussed in paragraph 3.
- B Paragraph 4 continues the discussion begun in paragraph 3 of farming improvements that led to economic growth.
- C Paragraph 4 examines a particular effect of the Bowring Treaty mentioned in paragraph 3.
- D Paragraph 4 discusses the second of two factors that contributed to the expansion of rice farming mentioned in paragraph 3.

question 7

According to paragraph 5, which of the following was true of Siam's rural people during the Fifth Reign?

- A They were forced to spend most of the profits from rice growing on registrations required by the government.
- B Their lives remained very difficult even though statistics suggest that their quality of life improved.
- C The non-farmers among them were helped by the government more than the farmers among them were.
- D They were more prosperous when they were ruled by local elites than when they were ruled by the more modern government of the Fifth Reign.

question 8

According to paragraph 5, the government bureaucracy intruded in village life by

- A requiring the people to register their cattle and land
- B requiring the people to buy certain kinds of imported goods
- C discouraging the people from making handicrafts and tools
- D encouraging more people to take up farming

question 9

Look at the four squares [] that indicate where the following sentence could be added to the passage.

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relatives and attendants in legal cases, and with the ending in 1905 of the practice of forcing peasant farmers to work part-time for local rulers, the rulers no longer had a regular base for relations with rural populations. The old local ruling families, then, were severed from their traditional social context. The same situation viewed from the perspective of the rural population is even more complex. According to the government's first census of the rural population, taken in 1905, there were about thirty thousand villages in Siam. This was probably a large increase over the figure even two or three decades earlier, during the late 1800s. It is difficult to imagine it now, but Siam's Central Plain in the late 1800s was nowhere near as densely settled as it is today. There were still forests closely surrounding Bangkok into the last half of the nineteenth century, and even at century's end there were wild elephants and tigers roaming the countryside only twenty or thirty miles away. Much population movement involved the opening up of new lands for rice cultivation. Two things made this possible and encouraged it to happen. First, the opening of the kingdom to the full force of international trade by the Bowring Treaty (1855) rapidly encouraged economic specialization in the growing of rice, mainly to feed the rice-deficient portions of Asia (India and China in particular). The average annual volume of rice exported from Siam grew from under 60 million kilograms per year in the late 1850s to more than 660 million kilograms per year at the turn of the century; and over the same period the average price per kilogram doubled. During the same period, the area planted in rice increased from about 230,000 acres to more than 350,000 acres. This growth was achieved as the result of the collective decisions of thousands of peasant families to expand the amount of land they cultivated, clear and plant new land, or adopt more intensive methods of agriculture. [] They were able to do so because of our second consideration. [] They were relatively freer than they had been half a century earlier. [] Over the course of the Fifth Reign (1868–1910), the ties that bound rural people to the aristocracy and local ruling elites were greatly reduced. Peasants now paid a tax on individuals instead of being required to render labor service to the government. [] Under these conditions, it made good sense to thousands of peasant families to in effect work full-time at what they had been able to do only part-time previously because of the requirement to work for the government: grow rice for the marketplace. Numerous changes accompanied these developments. The rural population both dispersed and grew, and was probably less homogeneous and more mobile than it had been a generation earlier. The villages became more vulnerable to arbitrary treatment by government bureaucrats as local elites now had less control over them. By the early twentieth century, as government modernization in a sense caught up with what had been happening in the countryside since the 1870s, the government bureaucracy intruded more and more into village life. Provincial police began to appear, along with district officers and cattle registration and land deeds and registration for compulsory military service. Village handicrafts diminished or died out completely as people bought imported consumer goods, like cloth and tools, instead of making them themselves. More economic variation took shape in rural villages, as some grew prosperous from farming while others did not. As well as can be measured, rural standards of living improved in the Fifth Reign. But the statistical averages mean little when measured against the harsh realities of peasant life.

question 10

Directions: An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the THREE answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. Some sentences do not belong in the summary because they express ideas that are not presented in the passage or are minor ideas in the passage. This question is worth 2 points.

- A. Population movement occurred and rice cultivation intensified because Siam became more actively involved in international trade.
- B. Changes in taxation and the ending of the requirement that people work part-time for the rulers allowed farmers to produce more rice for the marketplace.
- C. Population increases occurred in part because Siam's farmers were able to produce more rice to feed the population.
- D. Land became so valuable that villagers had to pay the government for the land that they worked on.
- E. Although rural living standards may have improved somewhat, prosperity varied from village to village and government bureaucracy played a greater role in village life.
- F. Government modernization in the early twentieth century resulted in the loss of some freedoms that the rural population had gained from the traditional ruling classes.