Like other Asian under-developed countries, Thailand, with a total of population of some 26 million (in 1960) and a total area of 200,000 sq. miles or twice the size of Great Britain, has come to realize the imperative and urgent need for economic development and has been trying to raise the standard of living of the people. To understand the type of the specific problems which Thailand has to face for accelerating economic growth, it is necessary to carefully study the evolution of the Thai Economy from the beginning of the post-war period to the end of 1950's. For, it is during this period that necessary conditions have been created for the launching of plan economic growth of the Thai Economy.

During the decade following the year 1950, the economy of Thailand has undergone quite a steady change. The output of the economy has advanced far beyond pre-war levels, not only in agriculture, but also in other lines of economic activity. During 1950-1960, Thailand's rate of growth as measured in real terms has been 4 percent per annum. The per capita income, which increased at a rate of 2 percent annually, reach a level of 100 U.S. dollars a year in 1960. Although planned efforts at economic growth were not inaugurated until late 1960, Thailand's growth rate has been quite impressive and well ahead of the rate of population growth. The population of the country is less than 30 million while the national resources, like cultivable land, forests, mineral resources etc., are
abundant in relation to the population. As in other under-developed countries, 88 percent of population live in rural areas and 85 percent of them depend on agriculture.

In this period when other countries in the under-developed areas were reaping the advantages of scientific and economic progress, the Thai Government felt that a process of industrialization was necessary if the economic instability caused by extreme dependence on one major export crop, e.g. rice was to be eliminated. Thailand started its first Six-Year Economic Development Plan in 1961 with a view to speeding up the process of industrialization through the establishment of basic industries in the country.

It is the purpose of this dissertation to present the evolution of Thailand's economy during the period, 1950 to 1960. This is of great importance since a detailed study of the transition of Thailand's economy during the formative period of its history, 1950-1960, is basic to a proper understanding of the significant new developments in Thailand's economy under the first Six-Year Plan, 1961-1966. Needless to state that without a detailed analysis of the growth of the economy prior to 1961, it will not be possible to appreciate the new attempts at planned economic development and to judge the feasibility of the Plan projections made for 1961 to 1966.

This dissertation covers various aspects of Thailand's economic transition both general and sectoral. A comprehensive analysis is
made of the country's productive activities and vital problems and compares them as between the various years. The study of this subject is on the following lines:

In the first part, we provide an account of a general geographical and socio-economic background of Thailand. An understanding of the evolution of Thailand's economy prior to 1950 is, of course, useful for a study of economic changes during the period 1950 to 1960. The second part proceeds to study the changes in Thailand's economy in the same period in various fields, such as the growth of the agricultural sectors, the foundation of industrialization in Thailand, currency and prices, the international trade and the balance of payments, the growth of the national income and per capita incomes, the rate of growth of population, its effects on labour force and employment, the growth of domestic savings, foreign capital - aid, grants and loans. The final part of this dissertation is a brief study of the projections made in the Six-Year Plan, its objectives and policies, the allocation of revenue and expenditure under the Plan. Finally, an appraisal is made of the First Plan with the framework laid during the earlier period (1950-1960) for the successful fulfilment of the Plan and a sum up of the emerging dynamics of Thailand's economy.

In the preparation of this dissertation, full use has been made of the available material on various aspects of the problems.
The statistical sources and data given in the report of the various Thai Government departments, the Central Statistical Office, the Office of the National Economic Development Board, the Customs Department, the Bank of Thailand and the International Organizations were consulted. Needless to say how much I owe my grateful thanks to those organizations and government departments. I am also grateful for the generous assistance and co-operation of private persons, namely Dr. Puey Ungphakorn, Dean of Economic Faculty, the University of Thammasart, Dr. Amnuay Virawan, Economic Advisor to the Office of the Prime Minister of Thailand, Dr. Sanoh Unangkul, Special Grade Economist of the NEDE, and Mr. Paul Siddhiamnuay, the well-known economic writer of Asia, who have kindly rendered me the great help in advising as well as materials. The most and particular person who extended the light of his knowledge and favoured me with his valuable guidance throughout my dissertation is Dr. A.K. Das Gupta who was Head of the International Economic Department of the Indian School of International Studies and also Dr. B.S. Minhas who gave me the benefit of his guidance during Dr. A.K. Das Gupta's absence as Visiting Professor at the Cambridge University, England. Finally, the able assistance of Mr. R.K. Sharma of the same School in the final revision and for useful suggestions on a number of points is gratefully acknowledged.

Some relevant annexes and a brief selected bibliography are attached along with this dissertation.