CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

1. INTRODUCTION:

The present study --Modernization of College Teachers in a Developing Society: Thailand as a Southeast Asian Case Study-- has been conceived as a contribution to Sociology of Modernization in its concrete and applied sense.

The investigation has thrown light on some attributes of modernization as concretely manifested in the personality traits of the Thai college teachers. This study assumes a large significance as this group of teachers plays a key role in the process of modernization in the developing society like Thailand.

2. SOME CENTRAL FEATURES OF THE STUDY:

This study can be claimed to be distinctive in sociology of modernization in the following respects.

(1) In its scope, it covers the various aspects of personality traits of the respondents. It takes into consideration socio-economic characteristics, commitment to educational modernization as well as commitment to modernization in major spheres.

(2) In the analysis, it covers the values/attitudes and the patterns of behaviour of an intellectual group. It considers the individual personality traits of the
respondents as a major theme. It also reflects the trends of transformation of the social structures in their interrelations.

(3) The study illustrates the utility of considering both sociological and psychological factors in comprehending the complex reality of modernization in the life of the respondents.

(4) From the point of view of methodology, the notable feature of the project is that it brings into focus (i) sex groups; (ii) the academic faculty groups; and (iii) the total group of the college teachers. The various areas of their interrelation have also been highlighted.

3. THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK, CENTRAL THESIS, AND MAIN FINDINGS:

As a matter of fact, there is not one single concept or theoretical formulation or model of modernization. There is no specific theory which explains modernization exhaustively. Our study underscores this point (Chapter I).

Modernization can be conceived from the points of view of various social scientists viz., that of --Economists, Political scientists and Sociologists. Modernization can be envisaged from the perspectives of social system, value system, and personality system. Modernization can also be perceived in at micro- and macro levels of social changes. We accept Wilbert E. Moore's concept of modernization (Chapter I) which proved very useful to
our field. "Such a view is predicted on the assumption that one can describe the general features both 'traditional' and 'advanced' or 'modern' societies and thus treat development as the transformation of the one type into the other."¹

Neil J. Smelser's attempt of formulating the process of modernization in terms of structural differentiation has a representative significance. Norman Long concurs with Smelser when he writes:

For him a developed economy and society is characterized as a highly differentiated structure and underdeveloped one as relatively lacking in differentiation: hence change centres on the process of differentiation itself.²

The term 'differentiation' in the words of Long is "the process by which more specialized and more autonomous social units are established."³

Smelser sees the process of differentiation occurring in different spheres like the economy, the family, the political system and religious institutions.

Besides, a process of integration takes place whereby various differentiated structures are united on a new basis. For example, they move from a pre-modern


²Ibid., pp. 9-10.

³Ibid., p. 10.
political where political integration is closely bound up with kinship status, tribal membership, and control of basic economic resources and mystical sanctions, to a modern type characterized by existence of specialized political parties, pressure groups and a state bureaucracy.\footnote{B.F. Hoselitz, Sociological Aspects of Economic Growth, (New Delhi: Amerind Publishing Co. PVT. LTD., 1975), pp. 30-31; also quoted by him, Sociological Factors in Economic Development, (Chicago: Free Press, 1960).}

Bert F. Hoselitz (1960)\footnote{B.F. Hoselitz, Sociological Aspects of Economic Growth, (New Delhi: Amerind Publishing Co. PVT. LTD., 1975), pp. 30-31; also quoted by him, Sociological Factors in Economic Development, (Chicago: Free Press, 1960).} applies Parsons' pattern variables to study the development process. He argues that the developed societies are characterized by modern behavioural variables as follows: (i) universalism, (ii) achievement orientation, and (iii) functional specificity. Hoselitz epitomizes the change from traditional to a modern society as entailing the eventual modification of the traditional pattern. Hoselitz has also spelled out the traditional variables as particularism, ascription and functional diffuseness.

S.N. Eisenstadt has well summed up the approach to modernization. He writes:

The process of modernization may take off from tribal groups, from caste societies, from different types of peasant societies, and from societies with different degrees and types of prior urbanization. These groups may vary greatly in the extent to which they have the resources, and abilities, necessary for modernization. They may differ in their capacity to regulate the more complex relationships between different parts of the
society which are attendant on social differentiation and in the extent to which they are willing or able to become integrated into new, wider social frameworks.\textsuperscript{5}

Eisenstadt adds the term 'adaptation' to the concept of differentiation and integration. He emphasizes that the modern or modernizing society possesses as institutional structure which is capable for absorbing changes beyond its own initial premises and dealing with structural dislocations protest movements, and element of disorganization. Again, Eisenstadt reiterates that the mode for handling these problems, will of course vary according to the types of social systems, but firmly based, relatively stable, political structure and ideology seem to be necessary prerequisite. Lastly, Eisenstadt says that modernization signals "the establishment of new, broader political social entities, whose symbols of identity are couched in non-traditional terms and whose institutional frame works cut across narrower parochial units and emphasize more universalistic criteria."\textsuperscript{6}

Although there are conceptual and terminological differences of more or less importance, there appears to


be a large area of agreement which are salient characteristics or operational values of modernity. In this case, Daniel Lerner enumerates the following categories:

... (1) a degree of self-sustaining growth in the economy -- or at least growth sufficient to increase both production and consumption regularly; (2) a measure of public participation in the polity -- or at least democratic representation in defining and choosing policy alternatives; (3) a diffusion of secularizational norms in the culture -- understood approximately in Weberian - Parsons terms; (4) an increment of mobility in the society -- understood a personal freedom of physical, social and psychic movement; (5) a corresponding transformation in the modal personality that equips individuals to function effectively in a social order that operates according to the foregoing characteristics. ... 7

In considering Lerner's ideas, the modal personality is very crucial. It is true to say that the first four characteristics of modern society will not occur if the individual members of the society lack the transformation in modal personality to introduce such characteristics.

"Modernization operates rather through a transformation of institutions (Lerner 1964) that can only be accomplished -- painfully complex process which W.A. Auden considered as 'a change of heart'." 8

The concept of 'the transformation of modal

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personality' propounded by Lerner and 'the change of heart' propounded by Auden are very relevant to the present study. These terms are relevant in the sense that modernization will be genuine through the functional transformation of the social structural institutions compatible with those in a modern society. The focal point of change, the social institutions, in which the personality traits matter most. In the present study, the respondents are 'the role figures' in the higher educational institutions. The personality traits of the respondents are involved in educational as well as in the major institutions viz., social religious and political institutions. These institutions are per se indispensable for the manifestation of the respondents' status and roles.

The analytical framework of this study, despite a variety of concepts of modernization is formed on the genuine transformation of the respondents' personality traits which is reflected in the respondents' commitment to modernization in Thailand.

In the light of analytical framework, the central thesis, together with the other related major findings of the study may now be pinpointed.

(A) The socio-economic characteristics of the respondents have been analysed on the bases of three

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major criteria.

(1) The Nature of Social Aspects of the Academic Community:

As regards the respondents' native place, majority of them has come from the rural areas. The sexwise comparison shows that majority of the female respondents has come from urban families (Chapter III).

As regards the educational background, majority of respondents has come from the families in which the parents had completed either the primary or secondary level of education. Furthermore, the respondents also have their brothers and/or sisters (at least one person in one family) who have completed higher education (Chapter III).

As for fathers' income, the respondents have come from the families which had various levels of incomes. The outstanding point is that the male respondents are from the low income families as compared to the female ones (Chapter III).

Regarding the fathers' occupation, the range of social mobility over two generations of the respondents is high. The upward or vertical mobility is noticed in the case of more than half of the respondents (64.68%). While considering the vertical and horizontal mobilities together, the ascending mobility is remarkably higher (98.41%).

The consideration of the respondents' family status, the majority of them (76.98%) have been married. Most
of the respondents' families are having a small number of children. The respondents' families are mostly self-supporting. The respondents' spouses have got the tertiary job outside their homes. Thus the respondents' families are nuclear which are congenial to the structure of modern society, from the point of view of freedom and mobility.

As regards their religion, nearly all respondents are Buddhists (98.81%). Considering the age of the respondents, 47.62 per cent of them are juniors and 52.38 per cent are seniors. Of all respondents, there are 58.37 per cent male teachers whereas the female ones are 41.27 per cent.

The findings indicate that the social mobility is rather high among the respondents. As regards the occupational status, the mobility over two generations is quite conspicuous. This shows that the social structure has good possibilities for social mobility. Moreover, mobility is also noticeable in respect of native place, in that the majority of the respondents has moved from rural to urban areas. The number of male respondents in this regard is greater than the number of female respondents. The number of the female respondents is indicative of the fact that the women in Thai society have greater opportunities of getting education as well as jobs (Chapter III and Chapter V).

The outstanding point in relation to social
mobility is that this professional community has not been monopolized by any specific group of people. The background of the respondents' families shows that the college teachers come from the families which have different levels of socio-economic statuses. These findings show that the social structures in Thai society is tended to be compatible with those found in modern society.

(2) The Nature of Academic Bureaucratic Profession:

Majority of the respondents hold Master's degree (53.57%). Nearly half of the respondents hold Bachelor's degree (44.05%). A substantial minority (2.38%) of the respondents hold Ph.D. degree. Most of the respondents obtained degrees from the higher educational institutions in Thailand (88.89%). Very few respondents are Assistant Professors and Associated Professors (2.38% and 0.40% respectively). There is no respondent in the position of a professor. Most of the respondents occupy the ranks of the ordinary teachers that are called 'ARCHARN' (Chapter III).

The teachers in the higher educational institutions do not seem in producing any significant academic work (Chapter III and Chapter IV). This indicates that the majority of the respondents are not keenly interested in creatively contributing to the academic field i.e. their subjects of specialization.

(3) Economic Status:
In the case of income, the majority of the respondents have both regular salaries and additional incomes. The incomes are not a factor obstacles in playing the effective role of college teachers. In reality, the economic status of the respondents can be regarded to be on par with that of the middle class bureaucratic elites.

(B) The commitment to educational modernization of the respondents can be described as follows:

**Devotion to the Profession:**

The altruistic values have been expected to be one important individual trait of respondents. The majority of respondents has selected this teaching profession as the first choice, and they have no desire for switching over to other jobs. The respondents perceive that their statuses are rather high. In the case of the respondents' creative contributions vis-a-vis academic works like research and publications, they are quite conscious of the fact that their academic works are below the mark. The findings in this respect show: (i) the continuity of respondents in the teaching profession, (ii) their morale has not been subjected to any financial anxiety, (iii) lack of will and imagination to develop academic works.

The teaching profession being their first choice, the college teachers are devoted to their profession. This indicates the respondents' inclination towards altruistic values on the basis of **serving the society more than getting from the society.**
The Academic Consumption:

The academic consumption of the teachers is a significant factor in a modernizing society. The academic consumption refers to the respondents' zeal to keep abreast of modern developments in knowledge. It demands certain intellectual curiosity. The respondents' zeal for academic consumption indicates that they have it in a certain measure (Chapter I and Chapter IV).

For satisfying intellectual curiosity, the intellectuals are expected to be equipped with (i) the possession of books relating to their subjects of specialization; (ii) the subscription to academic journals; (iii) the money for buying books. The respondents read the academic literature in order to (i) know modern methods/techniques of teaching; (ii) to acquaint themselves with the modern trends of knowledge; (iii) get new ideas; and (iv) cultivate a scientific outlook etc. The zeal in respect of academic consumption shows that the respondents do not play their role just as a ritualistic routine.

Here again, the enthusiasm for the academic literature of male respondents is greater than that of the female ones. However, among the faculty groups, the respondents in the Faculty of Pedagogical Education have a greater enthusiasm for the academic literature than those in the other two faculties.

Development of Academic Works:

Further, the respondents are expected to have a
certain degree of ability and willingness to write books which can import the knowledge from advanced Western sources. Our finding was that only a few of the respondents appear to have written such books. This means that our respondents are not creative in this sphere. It shows lack of orientation and sustained efforts for academic pursuits.

**Ideological Awareness of National Educational Policies:**

In respect of the awareness of the efficacy of education, the respondents should be concerned with the problem of 'national and cultural identity' and the preservation of the Thai tradition in its encounter with modernity. The respondents exhibited this consciousness by making a distinction between Westernization and modernization. In addition, the findings also reveal that the respondents believe in the potential strength of education to accelerate the rate and direction of social change.

As regards the awareness of ideology to use education in the process of social change, the respondents are not acutely aware of the necessity of an overall national educational policy. Majority of the respondents is reluctant to precisely define the term 'ideology', in this context. They thus have an inadequate conception of their academic role in the process of modernization.

Ideology may help a social system to achieve greater
integration or greater adaptation. . . ."¹⁰ If this is accepted then the lack of realization of the supreme significance of an educational ideology for change can be considered as a serious lacuna in the personality structure of college teachers.

(C) The commitment to modernization in relation to social, religious and political spheres.

(1) In the social sphere, the respondents have been studied in three respects. (i) Awareness of the important status of women as a value; (ii) consciousness of equality as a value; and (iii) awareness of secular values which have a bearing on modernization.

As regards the awareness of the status of women, the male teachers are reluctant to accord an equal status to women in accordance with the norms of modernity. This is a disturbing finding.

The respondents' consciousness of equality have been studied in more ways than one, (i) the comprehension of equality on the basis of old age, colour as well as complexion and wealth was examined; and (ii) the values/attitudes towards the Leader-Follower system of relationships which is a power source of political inequality in the Thai society. The findings reveal that the respondents, who are in a way of the intellectual elites, have not full consciousness of the genuine meaning of equality of the

people in a civil society. The difference of respondents' personality traits on the bases of sexwise and facultywise are marginally apparent. The findings are important as a reflection of one latent aspects of social inequality in Thailand.

The awareness of secular values is an essential attribute of the individual members of the society in accelerating the process of modernization in the social sphere. The framework of analysis covers two axis of modernity and tradition. They are (i) Affectivity vs Affective neutrality; and (ii) Particularism vs Universalism. The prior axis is concerned with the values which guide the person's action in the manner internalizing the operative norms of modernism. The latter axis involves values which guide the person's action along the generalized principle rather than the group ties, or in other words, the person's action is oriented towards universalism.

The findings indicated that the respondents seen to be working under the conflicting pressure between personal ties and generalized operative norms of modernization. To some extent, the personal ties dominate the generalized operative norms. It appears that the respondents' values of social relationship are superficially compatible with those found in modern society.

On the whole, the evidence relating to attributes of modernization in social sphere manifests that the
respondents' awareness of (i) status of women, (ii)
equality, and (iii) secular values (Affective neutrality
and universalism) has not been as sharp as it should
have been in the case of modernizing society. Indeed,
the respondents' personality traits in relation to
awareness of these aspects in the context of modernization
lease much to be desired. With these traditional personali-
ty traits it would be reasonable to conclude that the
college teachers in our society have to go someway to
lead the people in the process of modernization (Chapter
V). After all too much pre-occupation with traditional
ascriptive status is contrary to modernization of social
relations in terms of achieved status.

(2) In the sphere of religious modernization, the
analysis is done in the context of the study of the
respondents' personality traits relating to: (i) some
aspects of Buddhism which need reforms; and (ii) the
purpose as reflected in the observance of religious
rituals.

It is found that the respondents perform rituals,
but it is not the magical faith in the supernatural
powers that goads them to do so. As regards their atti-
tudes towards changing and/or reinterpreting some aspects
of Buddhism, the respondents are possitively for them.
That is to say, they are aware of the great need of
adjusting the claims of Buddhism with modernization. The
respondents feel that the weakest links in the moderniza-
tion of Buddhism are two: (i) the law of Karma; and (ii)
Nirvana in as much as it is symbolic of renunciation. Unless this is done, sciences and technology will not take roots in the Buddhist soil. Further the respondents also have a certain positive attitude vis-a-vis the education of Buddhist monks. They feel that education should be secularized and the Buddhist monks must be involved in this process.

(3) As regards the investigation of the respondents' attributes of modernization relating to political sphere, the analytical framework touches the personality traits regarding various matters as follows: (i) Response to democracy and democratic values; (ii) reaction to military dictatorial power in polity; (iii) organization of political parties; (iv) function of political elites and (v) the ideology of participating in political activities in a lively manner.

The respondents prefer democratic regime --based on fundamental rights of freedom, liberty and functional equality. Besides, the respondents dislike the quasi-democratic regime under the military power. However, the respondents fail to grasp to the true nature and spirit of a democratic regime in the period of transition. The respondents undoubtedly think that the democratic regime has potentialities of bringing change in the society and in this sense it is a superior system. But they are reluctant to launch a mass movement for winning the fundamental rights of freedom, liberty and economic justice. The respondents seem to cherish certain parochial values
in this respect. They are not able to build a democratic which consists of (i) cognitive orientation, knowledge, accurate or otherwise, of political objects and beliefs; (ii) affective orientation, feelings attachment, involvement, rejections, judgments and opinion about political objects and events.

Regarding the respondents' personality traits vis-a-vis political parties, they once again fail to grasp the full implications of an enlightened party -system. They seem to be excessively concerned with the personality of the party leader. They ignore the role of masses holding that the ascribed status or prestige of the political party leader is the most important feature in their view. These reflect the strong legacies of the pre-industrial traditional society.

The formation of political elites is another important factor of modernization in political sphere. It is the only way in which the regime will continue to be populist. From our findings in this respect, it can be said that the respondents have not fully understood the working process of the formation of the political elites. More than half of them are not interested in this matter. The substantial number of the respondents (30.16 %) favour the formation of political elites only on the basis of achieved status. The minority (15.87 %) of the respondents say that the political elites should have two mixed attributes, viz., (i) the achieved status and (ii)
the leader-follower ties based obedience. These findings reveal that respondents' elitism has its roots in the tradition bound pre-industrial society.

Regarding participation in political activities, the analysis deals with the question of respondents' ideology. It reveals that the majority of respondents do not have any clearcut ideology of participating in political activities. They consider political activities as nothing but the arena of the politicians' intrigues for seizing the political power. The majority of the respondents is interested neither in the political policies nor in the membership of the political parties. The respondents prefer to keep themselves aloof from any political strength. This shows rather painfully the de-politicization of an important segment of educated people.

The difference of the personality traits between the male and the female respondents can be indicated thus:

(1) Regarding the academic role performance, the male teachers have produced more academic works than the female ones. However, this difference is just marginal (Chapter IV).

(2) Regarding the awareness of the value of status of women, the female teachers are more conscious than the male teachers. The female teachers feel that the status of women should receive proper consideration in the society (Chapter V.)
These two differences between the personality traits of the male and the female college teachers are not, however, significant when we consider the data in all respects.

Hence, we can say that the sex difference among the intellectuals does not constitute an important variable.

Another consideration is that of the personality traits of the college teachers on the basis of their subjects of specialization. We find the difference in the respect of their academic role performance. The respondents in the Faculty of Pedagogical Education apply modern methods/techniques of teaching to a larger extent than those in the other two faculties.

Again, the intellectuals in the Faculty of Pedagogical Education have produced the academic works on a larger scale than those in the other two faculties. However, the frequency of production of academic works on the whole is not so substantial (Chapter IV).

From the findings of the college teachers' personality traits in all respects in this study, we may record one point. It is that the existing personality traits of this group are not potent enough to make them effective change agents of a modernizing society. With this kind of personality pattern it is difficult to say whether they would be able to initiate the process of modernization.
To sum up, our main findings in this regard are:

(1) The personality traits of college teachers are not very congenial for modernization in three spheres, viz., educational, social and political. The findings reveal that the college teachers are somewhat committed to modernization only in one sphere and that is the religious one.

(2) Sex and subjects of specialization do not seem to be significant variables in this process.

(3) With such personality background, the college teachers are not still eminently qualified to play the role as change agents for a modernizing society.

4. THE STUDY IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF MODERNIZING PROCESS:

Basically, this work has not incorporated in it the investigation of the whole process of modernization in Thailand.

The respondents --the college teachers-- constitute a group of change agents in the society. So it was expected that their personality structure will have some bearing on various aspects of modernization. It was further anticipated that their role will have a decisive impact upon the qualities of their students. The process of modernization proceeds from the centre to the periphery. The intellectuals or elites must generate some forces which reach the common people at the periphery. By and large we do not see any such process.
5. **SOME LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FURTHER STUDY:**

This work is concerned with the attributes of modernization of the group of intellectuals in terms of their **personality traits**. It is therefore a qualitative rather than a quantitative inquiry. And obviously qualitative studies have some limitations. We may now indicate them.

(i) The questionnaire and interview as the research tools have their own limitations. They are too well-known to elaborate.

(ii) There is a variety of meanings of modernization which impose some indirect limitations.

(iii) Modernization is a transitional process in which the conclusions have to be considered as provisional.

With all these limitations, it is hoped that this sociological study of a developing society like Thailand have a very suggestible significance in the over-all context of modernization and its various manifestation in the Third World societies.