



University
of Glasgow

Phuntungpoom, Anurat (2021) *The Red-Shirt-sided underground movements in Thai politics: resistant operations towards the Mysterious Land*. PhD thesis.

<https://theses.gla.ac.uk/81990/>

Copyright and moral rights for this work are retained by the author

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge

This work cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

Enlighten: Theses

<https://theses.gla.ac.uk/>
research-enlighten@glasgow.ac.uk

**The Red-Shirt-sided Underground Movements in Thai Politics:
Resistant Operations Towards the Mysterious Land**

Anurat Phuntungpoom

**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology**

**School of Social and Political Sciences
College of Social Sciences
University of Glasgow**

February 2021

Abstract

This thesis studies the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement that began its political role in the Thai political scene beginning with the 2010 repression of the Red-Shirt movement by Thai state. This movement has three main characteristics. Firstly, this underground movement has more radical political ideas than the previous Red-Shirt movement. Secondly, besides Red Shirts supporters, there are other people join this subsequent movement, albeit never participated in Red-Shirt activities but 'sided' with its direction. Finally, this movement used underground methods to avoid being arrested and repressed by the Thai government. The study used the two Marxist ideas - historical materialism and the uneven and combined development (UCD) - and some social movement theories such as Charles Tilly's work to create a conceptual framework. According to this framework and the main data obtained from interviewing activists and collecting online material, the results of this study show, firstly, the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement is one of the results of the development of the capitalist mode of production in Thai society under the conditions of UCD. The main groups in the Thai ruling class which led the transition from a pre-capitalist to a capitalist mode of production in Thai society had been able to retain their power continually, even while facing difficulties and challenges on both domestic and international level. Although this made the Thai ruling class very powerful, the intrinsic expansion of capitalist development and political conditions led to crucial social conflicts and the uprising of mass movements in the late 2000s. The brutal repression by the state caused some dissidents to adopt radical ideas and this eventually formed the underground movement. Second, although the early ideas and actions of the underground movement derived from the previous movements, the dialectic relationships both within the movement and between the movement and other social institutions led to the reproduction of ideas and actions but with differing qualities. Finally, this movement made changes both within the movement and to the impact on external social institutions. Some underground groups could expand their number of followers and arrange activities in Thailand. However, Thai authorities repressed underground groups in many ways including by arrest, and allegedly, by abduction and assassination.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	4
Author's Declaration	6
Chapter 1: Introduction	7
Chapter 2: Different Accounts on Thai Political Economy and the Development of Capitalist System, and Their Relationship to Social Movements	26
Chapter 3: Methods and Methodology	44
Chapter 4: Development of Thai Modern State and Its Interrelationship with the Global Political Economy and the Formations of Social Movements	57
Chapter 5: Emergence of the Red-Shirt-sided Underground Movement	93
Chapter 6: Political Ideas of the Red-Shirt-Sided Underground Activists	136
Chapter 7: Fighting Within and Across State and Cultural Boundaries: Actions and Their Changes	177
Chapter 8: Outcome of the Red-Shirt-sided Underground Movement's Operations	216
Chapter 9: Conclusion	257
Bibliography	269

Acknowledgement

I would like to present my condolences to the families and friends of the underground activists who have disappeared, been arrested, and/or possibly assassinated. I am deeply sorry to hear of the loss of these activists whom I met and interviewed during the data collection for this study. They all knew that what they were doing was a risk to their lives, yet they remained very active in this mobilisation. I respect this attitude greatly and hope they reach their aims in the future.

I would like to thank all the interviewees for trusting me and allowing these conversations to happen, even though we did not know each other before speaking together. These people, including their colleagues, welcomed me warmly as if I were one of their family members.

I am so grateful for all of the support from my supervisors. It is a dream come true to have an opportunity to work with these intellectuals. Neil Davidson's works and political direction have thoroughly influenced my work, showing him to have been a great academic. Neil's advice was always provocative and makes you think more carefully. Neil's death brings a deep sorrow and has robbed me of the opportunity to see how he could have further supported me in my professional endeavours. His contribution to my thesis will remain true and valuable. I also want to thank David Featherstone who supported me from the first day we met at the Gilchrist club through the last process of my study. Dave helped me in all aspects, from summarising the topics to organising regular meet-ups to discuss and develop this work. Without Dave's support, I might not have been able to accomplish the writing of this thesis. I also receive generous support from Andrew Smith, who provided me with very useful and provocative suggestions. He also helped me improve my poor English writing skill to a decent standard. Andy's comprehensive view on research methodology helps improve my thesis's integrity significantly.

My gratitude is also extended to other friends who supported my study near and far. Many thanks to colleagues in the University of Phayao. I also would like to thank Ajarn Giles Ungpakorn and Ajarn Viengrat Nethipo for your recommendation letters and useful advice. Ajarn Giles also provided spiritual support through books, wine, and whisky. He is my endless inspiration always.

I cannot thank my mom enough for her support and thanks also to my brother who took care of her during my absence. Without mom, I would not be able to reach this point.

Finally, although we could not live together in the past decade like other couples, Yui are the best thing in my life, encouraging me to go through all the difficulties. Our talks always provide the solution for every problem we have faced together. No doubt, this thesis is also a part of those moments.

Author's Declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this thesis is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Printed Name: Anurat Phuntungpoom

Signature:

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background and significance of the study

Several months after the severe repression of the Red-Shirt demonstrations in May 2010 by military force, a number of gatherings were arranged to remember the Red-Shirt participants who died in the incident. At these events, many Red Shirts chanted loudly “I Hia Sang Kha, I Hia Ork Pai [The bad man orders to kill, the bad man gets out]” (Patchara95, 2010; Unaldi, 2016, p. 212). Political observers believed this was an accusation aimed at the Thai monarch for ordering the authoritative body of the Thai state to kill members of the Red-Shirt movement. In one seminar on Thai politics held during these events, Somsak Jeamteerasakul (2016b), a prominent academic on Thai monarchs and political history, stated:

If somebody told me beforehand that there would be more than a thousand people chanting as happened a couple of months ago at the Ratchaprasong intersection, I could reply immediately that it could be only in a dream. The message I would like to communicate with the royalists and the people in the royal circle is do not underestimate the people’s perception of alienation, do not underestimate people’s anger. . . . Even myself who saw the incident of October 6 and recognised various types of discontent, I also underestimated the great extent of this anger. . . . On the contrary, they should not overestimate their ability to manage this situation. Do not think that repressing and imprisoning people who break the lèse-majesté law could solve the problem. In my opinion, it has not worked at all.

This marked the beginning of a more radical sentiment around the Red-Shirt supporters. It led to the emergence of the real movement that started to mobilise against the existing Thai regime and social system, proposing an attempt for radical change. These movements are known and labelled by political followers, and themselves, as ‘Khabuankarn Taidin Sue-dang [the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement]’. This name comes from their methods of mobilisation and political alignment. The term ‘underground’ derived from the means the group adopted to avoid the power of the Thai state. Almost all underground activists, for example, spread their anti-Thai-dictatorship message via social

media sites (especially on YouTube and Facebook) under pseudonyms. Alternatively, some of them manage resistance actions from outside Thailand. The term 'Red-Shirt-sided' resulted from the fact that most activists and followers of this movement were substantially involved in the previous activities of the Red-Shirt movement and/or had a close relationship to leading Red-Shirt activists. In some cases, however, they had never had a previous relationship with the Red Shirts, but later came to work closely with them in the context of underground groups (this is discussed in detail below).

The recent political conflict in Thailand started before the 2006 coup when there was discontent over the policies and administration under Thaksin Shinawatra's government. The demonstration managed by the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) paved the way for the 2006 coup that ousted Thaksin Shinawatra from his position. However, the conflict in society did not cease, but instead expanded to become broader and more intense in terms of the number of people involved and the extent of violent actions. In the nearly decade long controversy before the 2014 coup, Thai society had seen a mass polarisation resulting in two main camps. The first of these is the Red Shirts, who generally started out as supporters of Thaksin, his parties and policies. After the 2006 coup, the main purpose of this group was resistance against dictatorship in Thailand. They established The United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD) to fight for greater democracy in Thai society. As a result of this definition of themselves, the Red Shirts are seen as the group whose aim is to abolish the existing political establishment, including the monarchy. The second camp is the Yellow Shirts (most of them are supporters of PAD and PDRC which emerged during the political turmoil in 2013-2014), and is an anti-Thaksin and pro-royalist movement. This group staged many political activities and demonstrations as well, expressing opinions on social media, and fighting the opposition over differing political perspectives.

During this dispute, it seemed that the Red-Shirt side faced harsher treatment, especially at the hands of the state authorities. In terms of violence, although there were a number of deaths and injuries from brutal attacks on demonstrations organised by both sides, the Red Shirts lost more lives than the Yellow shirts.

There were two deaths and more than 400 injured from police repression of the PAD demonstration in 2008. But those could not compare with the increased fatal incidents that the Red-Shirt side sustained during the military crackdown in April and May 2010, which resulted in more than 100 deaths and no fewer than 1,400 wounded. In terms of political outcome, during 2007-2008, two prime ministers and 148 members of the House of Representatives from Thaksin's parties were deposed from their positions by constitutional court judgements. By contrast, after the second judgment to disqualify the second prime minister from Thaksin's party in 2008, the Prachathipat [Democrat Party], a famous party among the Yellow Shirts at the time, was given the chance to form a government for the first time, after having failed since 1997.¹ A similar result happened again after the 2014 coup. This coup was committed by the military junta called the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO). It not only toppled the elected government led by the latest party to be associated with the Thaksin position (Pheu Thai Party (PTP)), but the verdict of the special trial approved by the NCPO also led to the imprisonment of one minister and related persons who were arrested for allegedly committing corruption in a rice subsidy scheme. The effects of the coup resulted in the summoning to military camps of the Red Shirt's leading activists from different regions. In addition to an accusation of violating the security of the state, these activists were usually charged with *lèse-majesté* (this is the generally used term for article 112 of Thai criminal code which forbids anyone from defaming the king, queen, the heir-apparent, and the regent. The penalty is a jail term of between 3 and 15 years (Streckfuss, 2011)).

Consequently, it was unsurprising that there were dissidents who could not tolerate this oppression any longer and attempted to radically change the whole social structure. The supporters of these radical positions, in the early stages, opposed those powerful figures they thought were behind the apparent junta and conservative governments, and especially drew attention to the political intervention of members of the royal family after the 2010 repression. Despite a

¹ However, the Democrat's leader at that time, Chuan Leekphai, won the premier position by parliament vote after the resignation of the former PM, Chawalit Yongchaiyuth, at the beginning of the economic crisis. It was not the Democrat party's victory in elections at all. Its latest winning occurred in the 1992 general election.

widening distance between the leading activists of the mainstream Red-Shirt movements and the initially radical groups amongst the Red Shirts, it seemed that the number of Red Shirts who supported the latter position continually increased. One factor in this situation was the growth of information and communication technology (ICT) that allowed participants to become involved in radical political activities anonymously through social networking services. After the 2014 coup, the underground movement formed more concretely due to a considerable number of Red-Shirt activists fleeing Thailand. Some of them who fled to nearby countries joined previous political exiles and managed resistance activities together. Meanwhile, some activists seeking asylum in European countries and the U.S. gained assistance for both political activities and surviving from Red-Shirts supporters who were also living in those countries. The growth of these protests and criticisms, even though they mainly deploy ideological methods and not physical acts, has concerned Thai political elites considerably. They counter this movement with many measures ranging from an information operation to possible assassination against important activists.

There are very few studies that have examined this contemporary underground movement directly. Most research has focused on the radical discontent towards the existing regime amongst the Red Shirts, ending before the 2014 coup. This has usually focused on ‘the hidden transcripts’ or symbolic resistance against the powerful (Anonymous, 2018), rather than the radical attacks which emerged in the later underground movement. There are some studies which consider the significance of social media in Thai politics, but these tend to emphasise general information about the statistics of social media use (e.g. Nyblade, O’Mahony and Sinpeng (2015)) or the question of censorship and threat from the government (e.g. the work of Schaffar (2016) about the Fascist Vigilante groups on Facebook and Gebhart, Anonymous, Kohno (2017) about the online censorship situation in Thailand). One of the latest dissertations about Thai politics mentions this movement in one phrase as ‘underground radio broadcasts’ (Panuwat, 2019). Hence, this study offers the first sustained assessment of this significant political movement on the basis of empirical research.

Besides the fact that it is a very new and enthusiastic political movement, this thesis chooses to study this Red Shirt underground movement because it is reflective of some particular characteristics of Thai society which are significant for creating a better understanding of that society and of how social movements operate in that context. First, the Thai political situation is marked by an intense monopoly of political and economic power, which is often sufficient to effectively control political participation in public space, and even to purge from that space those who disagree with the authorities. Second, the period described above saw a situation in which some of the ruling ideas were no longer convincing to some groups of people, and they then began to challenge them after significant disputes in Thai society. Thus, it is interesting to examine why some people began to counter this ideological domination. Third, these events took place in a context where new technologies provided tools and methods that facilitated the mobilisation of this underground movement in spreading their ideas and in gaining support in ways that evaded significant intervention and repression by Thai authorities. The tools and methods deployed by the movement were mostly social networking services and communication applications on the internet, which normally protect the privacy of users' information, even from state power. This demonstrates that there were many factors involved in the emergence of the Red Shirt underground movement: the social structure in Thailand, both political and cultural, the continuity of previous contradictions, and the material conditions surrounding activists and participants, which influenced how they lived and ran their political activities. Investigating these factors and their relationships could help to contribute to a greater understanding of social changes in Thailand. In terms of the study of social movements, this research provides information on the distinct character of underground movements using online platforms as the main tool for mobilisation. This could be used to compare with other movements in other countries to find similarities and differences and contribute to a better general understanding.

1.2 Historical sociology, Marxism and social movement theory: A theoretical framework

An important part of the originality of this study is also a result of the particular approach that I am adopting. I framed this study in the tradition of historical sociology. This tradition aims to study the social circumstances in recent times by scrutinising the past and linking components developed in a historical process to the object of the study systematically. The distinct character of this method of study is the explanation of social changes, as in the classic works of Marx, Weber, and the Annales School, which focused on the shift from a pre-modern to modern society. Theda Skocpol indicates this characterisation in her brief definition of historical sociology as “a continuing, ever-renewed tradition of research devoted to understanding the nature and effects of large-scale structures and fundamental processes of change” (1991, p. 4). Although there are varying disciplines developed by many scholars in this tradition (see Delaney & Isin, 2003, pp. 1-6), I employ a classical Marxist approach to study the Red Shirt underground movement in this thesis. In my opinion, the Marxist conception of historical materialism can offer a framework for explaining the relationships of the social aspects in each period and can allow us to explore how internal conflicts cause changes in a mode of production dialectically. From this discipline and approach, the result of this study will be different from other studies about the Red-Shirt movement and the recent conflicts. However, before discussing the Marxist approach, I will provide a brief review of social movement theories.

There are several theories that examine social movements from different perspectives. Collective behaviour approaches focus on the differences between an informal and formal character found in the organisational and institutional behaviours of participants in social movements (Turner & Killian, 1987). Resource Mobilisation Theory (RMT) sees each social movement as a social movement organisation (SMO) that competes with other movements that have close objectives (this cluster is known as social movement industry) in order to turn their goals into reality. So to reach success, social movements have to mobilise resources such as a strong organisation, good leaders, and teamwork, as well as involving themselves in interaction with other organisations (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Political Process Theory (PPT) or Political Opportunity Theory, instead of emphasising organisational resources, views social movements as part of the

political process between power holders and persons who need changes in distribution or exercise of power, as well as mass support to accomplish their goals. Each period would have a specific set of contentions which would lead to a shift in 'the repertoires' of collective action (Tilly, 1984). Framing or frame analysis is an approach that is influenced by a sociological concept of frames which explain how each individual understands society and constructs his/her identity. Those understandings and identities or 'frames' then determine a course of action by people in a society. Social movements also create frames towards their issues before running further actions. Snow and Benford (1988) suggest that there are three core framing tasks carried out by social movements: diagnostic framing (identifying a problem that needs to be corrected); prognostic framing (constructing an idea for a solution and how to achieve that solution); and motivational framing (thinking of reasons for persuading people to join actions - providing a 'rationale for action'). The New Social Movements Theory (NSM), rather than studying 'how' and 'why' social movements take actions, extends the understanding of social movements to a broader social structure. In each society there is an 'overall system of meaning which sets dominant rules in a given society' (Touraine, 1981, p. 77) called historicity. Social movements are organisations that establish collective behaviours to control this historicity. So social movements not only struggle with physical conflicts but also find a way to triumph in struggles over the meaning of identity (Touraine, 1981). Alberto Melucci (1989) therefore argues that social movements are usually active in terms of culture and identity.

These approaches provide useful theoretical ways of understanding social movements which I draw on in examining the characteristics of the Red Shirt underground movement, such as its forms of collective action and organisation, the character of its mobilising of resources, the relationships and interactions between the movement and other political institutions, and the construction of meaning and identity as both means and ends for movements. However, my aim is to explain the position of the Red Shirt underground movement and its relationship with wider social and historical aspects in Thai society. These explanations focus on social movements specifically, rather than a society as a

whole (Krinsky, 2013, pp. 107-108, 116), and therefore are not sufficient for my aim.

According to Marxist historical materialism, a mode of production² is a characteristic in which people in a given society organise the ways of production for surviving and expressing their thoughts and cultures. Those ways and their reproduction construct social relations. A mode of production comprises an economic 'base' and an abstract 'superstructure'. The former consists of the productive forces or forces of production (technologies used for production) and the relations of production (social relations related to a production, especially ownership and a division of labour). The latter comprises abstract aspects of society, such as politics, law, norms and traditions, and political institutions. These components of a mode of production have relationships with the others in a dialectic manner, i.e. changes derived from internal conflict which is caused by a demand in society. Marx and Engels (1845/1978) argued that a human society has to produce to feed its members. However, this production is done under specific material conditions. Evidently, a development of technologies for production has never stopped because of the need to overcome a scarcity of products and maximise productivity. So, this contradiction dialectically establishes a specific character of production. This character creates the specific relations of production in that society. Those relations of production lead to an alteration of existing social organisations in the superstructure. These relationships are a historical process because they are reproduced continually and create a different quality of results, which lead to a transformation of a mode of production.

To understand fully Marx's critical view on social conflicts and changes we need to understand his concept of 'class' which is inseparable from the above conception of a mode of production. In a mode of production, people are categorised into 'classes'. The formation of class within each mode of production depends mainly on the economic base. Each class struggles with others because

² Also appearing as 'a mode of intercourse' or 'a mode of cooperation'.

of its different position and benefits determined by a specific character of the relations of production in accordance with the existing force of production. For example, the main antagonistic classes in the feudal mode of production (in which the main focus of production is the agricultural sector) are landlords (who possess lands and almost all products grown by peasants on their land) and peasants (who possess labour and some farming tools, and then receive some products from the landlords). Meanwhile, capitalists (who possess capital and all products produced by the proletariat) and the proletariat (who have nothing but their own labour to exchange for capitalists' payment (a wage or a salary)) are the main classes in the capitalist period (whose main production is the industrial and service sector). As mentioned above, the differences of each class in the economic base are also present in the superstructure, such as in the form of laws, thoughts, norms, traditions, and political institutions. Because of the advantage of some classes in the economic base, social organisations in the superstructure are deliberately constructed for reinforcing and sustaining that advantage. This is a main reason why one mode of production remains for a long time, even though the force of production has been developed endlessly. Nevertheless, Marx writes, "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" (Marx & Engels, 1848/2002, p.219). That is, a more advanced class could utilise their efficient resources and ability to overthrow a mode of production dominated by an oppressive, outmoded class, such as the bourgeois class, which led a revolution to defeat feudal monarchy in some Europe countries in the second half of the 17th century.

Although Marxism does not provide a direct explanation of social movements, its broad analysis of a society can be brought to examine the position of social movements in a society (Barker et al, 2013, p. 1). An idea of historical materialism can also help to draw out an understanding of dialectic relationships between components of society (Marx, 1859/1978) and the relation of prior movements to following ones. Moreover, the Marxist conception of class provides a critical view towards social movements. Political movements are not identified by the political identity and meaning of actions only, as is usually done by many approaches. They are also investigated in terms of their material conditions to examine a

contradiction of class character in the base and superstructure, especially social movements of oppressed classes or those ‘from below’ (Nilsen & Cox, 2013) which are usually only ‘class in itself’ rather than ‘class for itself’. Accordingly, I apply the Marxist approach as the main approach for my study of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement, particularly in exploring its position and relationships with other social institutions in Thai society.

1.3 Defining ‘the Red Shirt underground movement’

In this study, the unit of analysis is the Red Shirt underground movement. There are three aspects involved in the definition of this movement, namely: what is meant by the designation of ‘Red Shirts’; what is meant by ‘siding’ with Red Shirts; and, finally, the ‘underground’ method.

Firstly, although almost all political observers recognise the existence and role of the Red Shirt movement in general, a common definition has still not been agreed upon. Because of the continually altering situation, the character of Red Shirt participants and their activities has changed over time. It has also been difficult to investigate the real ideologies of the Red Shirts because of a hierarchy in their organisations that have generally hidden the voice of people of a lower status. Accordingly, we can mostly acknowledge its character when their ideas are expressed via political actions. Apichat, Yukti, and Niti (2013) categorised Red Shirts into sub-groups by their political attitudes: the ‘Strong Red’ group comprises people who fully support Thaksin, the idea of anti-aristocracy, the amendment of the 2007 constitution, and the payment of compensation for those who died or were injured during political turmoil. They also advocate the policy of reduction of economic and judicial inequality, and an anti-corruption position. They are clearly against conservatism, nationalism, and the use of monarchical power for political interest. Secondly, the ‘Light Red’ group consists of people who think similarly to the Strong Red group except that they accept some conservative and nationalist ideas. Finally, the ‘Very Light Red’ group are those who want either an improvement of inequality or corruption issues but without any broader political

demands. Based on the above definitions, I use a broad range of the Strong Red group attributes to define the Red Shirts and their movements in a study because this can cover the most related group of people.

Secondly, the unit of analysis of this study is not the Red Shirts as such. Instead, it is the underground activists and their movements, who choose to 'side' with the general aims and actions of the Red Shirts. There is no question that most underground activists and followers support the Red Shirt movement because they previously led and participated in the Red Shirt's activities. Well known underground activists, like Laos1, Choocheep Chevasuth, Choopong Thituan, Wat Walyangkool, and the members of the Faiyen band were all leading activists within the earlier Red Shirt movements. They did not change their political perspectives and objectives very much and still constantly took the side of their Red shirt partners in overground politics.

However, there were additional activists who had never participated in any prior Red Shirt activities but gradually came to play a very significant role in the later underground action. A good example is the academic activists who normally distanced themselves from the Red Shirt movement before the era of underground actions. They, on the one hand, may agree with some arguments of the Red Shirts (such as over issues of inequality and unfair judicial processes) but, on the other hand, criticise others views (e.g. over Thaksin's abuse of power in particular). Thus, they may work with the Red Shirts only on issues where they agree. Where they were involved in this kind of collaboration, I view them as siding with the Red Shirt underground movement and therefore include them in this study. For example, one of the exiled academic activists said that:

Actually, I have not seen that there are any [underground] movements. But, even if there are some [underground] movements, I will not apply to be their member. The reason is that I am still an academic. If I join, especially in an official manner, I might lose my academic credibility. . . . However, I have been involved in the movement. The events in New York, for example, were arranged by the Red Shirts, say, the Red USA. I have joined with Red USA. Although I spoke only my issues and did not mention that I supported the

Red USA, anyone can interpret that, in fact, I supported them because I aligned with them.

One NGO worker who had never worked with the Red Shirts or joined their activities, after deciding to be a political mobiliser in 2010, could not avoid working closely with the existing Red Shirt supporters, even though she disagreed with them on some topics (such as regarding Thaksin). She argued that:

[I] tried to work with Thai people in Europe, say, with the Red Shirts in Europe, to create a united front for requesting the release of political prisoners as well as on the issue of lèse-majesté. However, as someone said, it ended with disputes. They could not all work together because of a different level of objectives and understanding. My position has already reached a campaign of releasing political prisoners and article 112, not the same as the position of UDD or Red Shirts. The Red Shirts in Europe have a close relationship with the organisation in Thailand, so they identified themselves as UDD, Thaksin's loyalists. There would be a big conflict immediately if they mentioned the extrajudicial killing during the war on drugs and the massacre in the southern provinces under Thaksin's government. . . . But, I did not look at them as enemies. We need to work with a mass of people. . . . [However, the Yellow Shirts] are people holding the privilege, riding a tiger, violating human rights, and claiming the prerogative of the monarch to defeat others. These all are unacceptable. Thus, the partners we would like to collaborate are the Red Shirts not the Yellow ones.

These examples show how the activists 'side' with the Red-Shirt movement. They might not have all the above attitudes (as shown in the Strong Red), play a significant role in protests and demonstrations, and wear red clothing, but they offer support, sympathy, and they work with Red Shirt people in the underground activities. I include people with those qualities as the population in my study.

Finally, the term 'underground' movement is normally used to mean the groups of people who aim to resist an invading force, or change the existing regime or social system with unconventional methods and tools in order to avoid direct confrontation with those regimes or systems due to their greater capacity and resource. In this manner, this kind of movement is normally seen as illegal by existing rulers.

This term is used to describe, for example, the liberation movement of the 'underground railroad,' which helped slaves escaping from the south to the north of the U.S. Underground movements, or the more familiar term - 'Resistance movements' - are also generally recognised as the movements in European countries, which were formed to secretly fight against the Nazi army and its domination during the Second World War. There were also clandestinely organised guerrilla movements in the national liberation wars. In several third-world countries, their fighting was part of the Cold War. Conversely, in the imperialist countries, underground movements have often been understood in terms of cultural, rather than physical, forms of resistance. It is often used, then, to describe the countercultural movements, which emerged in many countries like the UK, the U.S., and Australia in the 1960s. These movements wanted to challenge the traditional world views that had been determined, and that controlled the perspective of people for a long time. The movements express several ideas, such as anarchism, socialism, feminism, and anti-war perspectives, and express them via various media and publications such as periodicals, journals, newspapers, websites and social media, music, and performances to challenge the normalised and dominant ideas.

Thus, definitions of the term 'underground' vary from secret forms of physical resistance and operation to cultural disobedience, but share a basic character of 'resisting the established power with alternative methods'. Underground movements in all these forms are still noticeable across the world today. There are some clandestinely separatist movements in countries such as the Philippines, Spain, and in the Middle East, while an underground culture has also been influential as an alternative to the social direction in many countries. Further, we could possibly witness the combination of these forms of 'underground' characters in one state, for instance in the Philippines or Spain. This is reflective of the complicated development of those societies.

In the case of Thailand, there have been several underground movements that secretly prepared and managed actions to overthrow rulers since the early period of the Thai modern state, which was established around the late 19th century.

Most of them failed in the end, such as the rebellion of local lords after the centralisation process under King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) (1853 - 1910), or the rebellion of a group of low-ranking soldiers in the reign of King Vajiravudh (Rama VI) (1881 - 1925). However, some secret movements were able to overthrow formerly powerful rulers (but usually did not maintain their success for very long). Examples include the 1932 revolution which changed the monarchical absolutist regime to a more constitutionalist form, and the Seri Thai [Free Thai] movement which assisted the Allies by constraining the mobilisation and deployment of Japanese troops in Thailand. Last but not least, although the communist movement operated politically and militarily against the Thai government during the late 1950s to 1980s and was another unsuccessful underground movement, its legacies have been influential in shaping social ideologies and actions and in mobilising lower-class people.

In recent times, some Thai people have created countercultural movements such as those around punk and heavy metal music, poetry, and films, while there have also been political underground movements which challenge the power of the Thai state. The separatist movement in the southern provinces is a clear example.

However, the unit of analysis in this thesis is the latest underground movement, which has taken the side of Red-Shirt politics. Almost all activists of this movement are former Red Shirts, although there are a few leading activists who had never had a previous relationship with the Red Shirts. The character of an ‘underground’ movement, namely managing resistance actions against the authorities in secret ways to avoid direct confrontation and being viewed as an illegal movement, were found obviously in this movement.

To elaborate, the activists of this movement have a ‘clandestine’ character in two ways: the methods for managing their actions and their locations. In relation to the former, in common with the trends of underground culture generally, it is likely that the space of battle increasingly moves from a physical to a cultural and abstract one. The Red-Shirt-sided underground movement mainly attacks the

hegemony of the Thai state, rather than trying to fight with the Thai army, as was done by some previous movements. Almost all underground activists and participants utilised advanced communication technologies in the form of social media, running on both PCs and smartphones, as their main tool to spread their ideas and mobilise their supporters. By using this method, they could hide their identity from the surveillance of Thai authorities. The second point is that many activists decided to flee Thailand. From abroad, they started to voice their criticisms and establish campaigns to change the social system in Thailand. These activists also gained many supporters from those who had already lived abroad. This allows them to carry on their activities without the interference of the authority of the Thai state.

Secondly, it should be noted that what the underground movement did is illegal in Thailand. Almost all the activities of this movement have revolved around attacking the legitimacy of ruling ideas in Thai society, and this is enough for Thai authorities to accuse the activists of breaking the *lèse-majesté* law described above. This has been used extensively by the Thai authorities to counter the attack of the underground movement.

A clear difference between this underground movement and the previous ones in Thailand and in other places is a near absence of physical assault, even though there were some claims linking some groups to some actions of this kind. Although there are occasionally physical actions arranged by some underground groups, they mostly take a non-violent stance. Ironically, it was the Thai authorities that violently repressed the underground actions, e.g. the case of the gathering of people in black arranged by the Thai Federation group in 2018.

To sum up this section, this thesis studies the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement, which has two main qualities. Firstly, this movement aligns broadly with the Red Shirts' political directions. The shades of Red Shirts vary and this study is interested in the range of positions adopted across the Red-Shirt movement. Secondly, this movement is characterised by underground activity,

specifically managing secret actions in order to avoid direct fighting with the Thai state, and committing illegal activities for breaking hegemony in Thai society.

1.4 Research questions

Given the background and theoretical perspective above, the research questions which will be investigated in this thesis are:

- a) How did historical development and social contexts in Thailand affect the emergence of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement?*
- b) How did underground activists develop and pursue their political ideas and actions?*
- c) What was the outcome of the actions of the Red-Shirt-sided movement?*

1.5 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into nine chapters. This first chapter has outlined the background of this research, which describes briefly the recent political conflicts in Thailand as one of the major factors in the emergence of the Red Shirt underground movement. It has also explained how this research is significant and the contribution it might provide to the community interested in Thai society and the study of social movements

Chapter 2 will explain the different accounts of the relationships between politics, economy, and development, and how these relationships connect to the social movement in Thailand. There are four schools to be investigated: modernisation

theory, theories of internal colonisation, the concepts of the semi-colony and semi-feudalism, and, finally, historical materialism and the conception of uneven and combined development (UCD). As it is the approach used in this study, it will explain why the Marxist framework is more appropriate than those of other schools.

Chapter 3 will introduce the methods and methodology I used for conducting the research. It will also explain aims, objectives, and research questions which link closely with the background and significance narrated in this introduction chapter. It will describe in detail the main methods - interview, collection of online data, and data analysis - and the use of fieldwork notes. The final part will consider the limitations of this study.

Chapter 4 will explain the historical development of the Thai modern state since the mid-19th century. It will analyse the process of transformation from pre-capitalist to capitalist society based on the concept of UCD. Then it will continue to discuss the development of a capitalist system in Thai society which has interacted dialectically over time with different types of regimes, from the era of absolute monarchy, constitutional monarchy under the power of aristocrats, military dictatorship, and civilian governments. It will consider the dialectic relationship between economic and political aspects and will, also, illustrate the relations these structures had with social movements.

Chapter 5 will explore the emergence of the Red Shirt underground movement. It will explain that this emergence was based on specific conditions in which the Red-Shirt movements were suppressed by the Thai state. It will demonstrate how the radical part of the Red Shirt movement continued their actions until they transformed to an underground movement and appeared on the Thai political scene. It will also disclose the way in which sub groups in this movement developed their political skills and strategies. This chapter will also offer an explanation of why activists and participants in the underground movement joined with each group and selected each location to be their destination, and how these groups

and locations changed over time. It will end with a categorisation of the types of leading activists.

Chapter 6 will describe the different political ideas, namely liberalism, socialism, neoconservative, nationalism, and an apolitical position, which shaped the actions of each group in the underground movement. This chapter will demonstrate that the political ideas of the underground movement were influenced by actions of previous movements and by existing social structures.

Chapter 7 will categorise the activities of the Red Shirt underground movement and describe them in detail. There were two main types of activities: those taking place in the physical and those in the virtual space. Those in the first space required more resources in order to run activities and could lead to the loss of the pseudonymous character because they would meet others face-to-face in those activities. For those in the virtual space, the internet was needed to mobilise and help activists run their movement in an ‘underground’ manner. As in chapter 6, I will attempt to use the conception of historical materialism to examine the relationship between these activities and social structure, highlighting material conditions and how they changed.

Chapter 8 will describe the relationships which shaped the actions of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement which resulted from a two-part relationship. First, I explore relationships among underground activists themselves. Second, I will explore the relationships between the underground groups, wider social actors, and social structures. It will end with an analysis of the destiny of the Red Shirt underground movement in the future.

Chapter 9 is the conclusion. It will sum up the findings of the study and the answers to the research questions, providing an overview of the character of UCD in Thailand and its influence on the social relations and social movements. The chapter will also offer the limitation of this research and suggestions for future

research. It will end with a consideration of the prospects of Thai politics based on my opinion.

Chapter 2

Different Accounts on Thai Political Economy and the Development of a Capitalist System, and Their Relationship with Social Movements

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will consider the different accounts of the political economy of Thailand. Four accounts will be discussed here, namely modernisation theory, the idea of internal colonisation, the concepts of the semi-colony and semi-sakdina society; and, lastly, historical materialism and the idea of uneven and combined development. The objective of this demonstration is to indicate that it is not only a Marxist account that offers a broader view of the social relationships in Thai society, and ways of understanding the transition from pre-capitalist to capitalist society and the later development affecting the character of social movements. The first three accounts also offer a useful framework for understanding the circumstances. However, there are insufficiencies in their explanations. Therefore, I will end by considering the reasons why a Marxist account offers a more comprehensive explanation than those of other three accounts, especially in its critical view on the position of social movements and the way these are situated in conflicts stemming from the broader political economy of Thai society.

2.2 Modernisation theory

This account has been offered by several social theorists since the postwar era and reached a peak in popularity during the Cold War (Baber, 2001). Although each theorist presents different details of the characteristics of a modern society, they have common ideas: the privilege of modernity and the linear path assumed to reach that stage in particular. Jeffrey Alexander (1994) summarises from many theorists' works the character of a modern social system, which is different from a traditional one, and is defined as being: 'individualistic, democratic, capitalist, scientific, secular, and stable, and as dividing work from home in gender specific ways'. Modernisation theorists, in general, argue that if a traditional society can

decrease the pre-modern conditions, (namely preindustrial production, feudalism, non-secular social relations, non-differentiation in the social system), it could transform into a modern society and reach the level of early developed countries. Thus, modernisation is an historical process that turns a pre-modern society into a modern society. The stages and their details are varied according to the views of each social theorist. Talcott Parsons, for example, a well-known sociologist who developed a structural functional approach, describe the modernising process as including industrialisation, democratisation via law, and secularisation and science via education (Alasuutari, 2011). Focusing on the equilibrium of a social system, rather than the conflicts in society, social scientists adhering to the framework of structural functionalism believe that this general view towards the components of society could be used in analyses of most societies. And, being implemented as a government policy, it could resolve the imbalance within social structure between each function, which might occasionally be nonfunctional (Huntington, 1971, p. 308).

This approach focuses on the roles of movements related to the process of modernisation. Theorists in this approach usually see social movements as part of society, which helps to indicate whether the social system is functioning effectively or not. The appearance and role of social movements are clearly noticeable when a society is finding the new equilibrium point following any effective changes to the structure. However, after this situation passes, their role is mainly a functional one, operating with each subsystem and running specific tasks in a way that helps to ensure the stability of society.

Many social scientists explain the change in Thailand based on this account because of the influence of U.S. theorists over Thai academics during the Cold War. Fred Riggs is a good example. Besides his famous concept of a transformation stage from pre-modern to modern society, described in terms of the analogy of prism society, Riggs himself also studied, and offered an explanation of, the specific character of the transformation of Thailand in particular. Chai-anan Samudavanija is a prominent Thai academic who taught and produced many works about the change of Thai society in a modernisation framework. In his famous

book, *The 100 Years of The Reformation of Bureaucratic System - the Evolution of the State and Political Power* (1995), he explains how Thai elites had been attempting to modernise society since the reign of King Chulalongkorn. Chai-anan views social movements, particularly the ones working on the issue of development, as necessary when government cannot establish development in society, efficiently and effectively. The government should collaborate with NGOs or movements which assist and have a close relationship with lower-class people for better effectiveness, but the maintenance of order in the social system should be left with the state institutions (Ibid: pp.173-176).

Although this theory was embraced by many leaders of Third-world countries for designing the policies of development, including those ruling Thailand, the theory itself and the direction of development assumed under its influence have been criticised . In particular, it has been criticised because of the claim of linearity and universality of development and because of its western-centric character. Basically, the results of the processes of modernisation pursued by the leaders of underdeveloped or developing countries appeared in a very diverse manner. But, non-modernised aspects, as defined by this approach, still have existed in these countries and it seems that they have not been easily dissolved. This means that the transformation to modernisation, which included capitalism in general, possibly happened in various ways and need not present in the chronological stages typical of western advanced countries. Some countries like Germany and Japan, for example, developed their capitalism under an autocratic regime and became more democratic societies after WWII, Also, Russia turned into a capitalist society after the collapse of Stalinist socialism.

Moreover, theorists in this school usually assume that managing any social change is and should be done by the powerful or 'from above'. So, changes 'from below' are viewed as unexpected incidents, though most social, but not political, revolutions were initiated by the non-ruling classes. This view derived from seeing the development as a series of sequential stages, which should not be interrupted by any contaminated circumstances. Thus, this theory cannot explain the changes

outside the assumed linearity of development, especially the changes managed by the force of the oppressed classes.

2.3 Internal colonisation

This view is influenced by the Marxist idea of the Asiatic mode of production and a conception of communitarianism. A good example of a theorist of this account is Chattip Nartsupha.³ He sees the important socio-economic roles of villages in Thai society. According to Marx, the villages are basic units of production which belong to villagers equally, with no difference between an agricultural and handicraft production, but which are able to produce sufficiently without a dependence on other bigger units. These characteristics created the conditions of an absence of private ownership, free men, cities, and the bourgeois class.

Based on the conception of the Asiatic mode of production, Chattip (1981) argued that during the era of the feudal system, Thai kings could centralise power and securely control economic resources. This differed from the situation in Europe and Japan where political and economic powers were distributed to the lower lords. This character was long lasting in Siamese/Thai society⁴ and was the main factor in the absence of a bourgeois class. At the same time, parallel with the elite network, the smallest unit of village communities had a strong social bond linking its members, on the one hand, and other villages as a network, on the other. Villagers could survive even without supports from the lordly class. They could grow and harvest enough crops to feed village members and they could also make other items needed for living. For example, they were able to weave clothes and make simple tools for production. Although villagers were occasionally conscripted to fight and work for the king (they also, could instead, sometimes

³ Actually, his thought about the development of capitalism in Thailand can be categorised as the semi-colony and semi-feudalism and even show part of UCD idea. But his thought that emphasises the roles of the village as an important force of Thai economy and its influence on the ideological direction of many social movements and NGOs in the recent time is the reason I sort him into this type.

⁴ Before General Plaek changed the name of country to 'Thailand' in 1939, this country was generally called 'Siam'.

send rare items for exemption from this conscription), they were not dominated directly from the central capital (cited in Somsak, 1982, pp. 16-25).

Such accounts, including Chattip's, significantly influence academics and social activists in the communitarian camp, the alternative to weakened leftists (see detail in chapter 4). They believe that a local, small unit like a village or district could manage and provide basic needs for people without any intervention of the central power. The capital or central government led by a few elites - high ranking bureaucrats, military generals, and monopoly capitalists - has never distributed real benefits to the regional people, but instead consistently appropriated resources and prosperity from local units. Consequently, the desired role of social movements is the strengthening of these local units as an indispensable aspect for social development.

Being influenced by a leftist view, an argument of this account opposes the mainstream direction of development, especially one based on the modernisation theory. This idea has been accepted as a main doctrine by NGOs in Thailand. After the former inspirational organisation CPT faded from the political scene, they worked with local people and communities, in both urban and rural areas, to improve living standards. A large group of them have developed a way to live, as much as possible, without the intervention of state and business. The peak of this trajectory occurred after the 1997 economic crisis, which was viewed by this school's adherents as the result of an excessive level of dependency that people and communities had on the unfaithful state and the greedy capitalists, both domestic and foreign. When the philosophy of 'sufficient economy' offered by King Bhumibol, which is very close to this account's direction, was introduced to the public, it seemed that the possibility for development on this basis was boosted in Thai society. This led to the process of praising unelected political figures in contemporary Thai society - such as the King - who ostensibly valued the subsistence economy and resisted capitalism (see more detail in chapter 4).

This idea tends to argue that the development and changes in Thai society have largely been manipulated ‘from above’ by the ruling class. Due to an influence of the notion of internal colonisation, theorists holding this belief tend to argue for the decisive separation between the oppressed and the oppressing classes because they see the former as having considerably less power. Thus, instead of being an origin of conflict, it seems to this school’s theorists that the oppressed people and their social movements should accept any changes ‘from above’ without resistance as long as there are no negative effects on their space. Resisting the ruling class could provoke an intervention against comfortably living in their confined communities. Thus, this account’s followers implicitly advocate anarchist activism by preventing the influence of state power and a market system on their ideal of a self-autonomous, subsistence community. However, this idea is wrong because there is nothing that can effectively resist the power of a state and capitalist market in the Thai modern society. Although it is correct that regional areas outside Bangkok were semi-colonised to create this state, they have not been left intact but are continuously intertwined within Thai political economy, even though in the form of UCD.

2.4 Semi-colony and semi-sakdina society

The concepts of ‘semi-colonialism and semi-sakdina society’ were originally initiated by the CPT as the tool for legitimising its revolution. They combine two economic systems - the colonial and feudal - together, based on a Marxist-Leninist perspective. In the book entitled *‘Thai: Kueng Mueng Khuen [Thai: the Semi Colonialism]’*, Aran Phromchompoo (the pseudonym of Udom Srisuwan, a member of CPT’s central committee in 1952 and politburo in 1969) explained that since the Bowring Treaty in 1855, Siam had been in a condition of ‘semi-colonialism and semi-sakdina⁵ (or Thai feudalism)’. Due to the first notion, Siam was dominated

⁵ A sakdina system was a tool to identify the hierarchical ranking of social class in Siam since the Ayudhaya era (some argued since Sukhothai era). ‘Sakdi’ or Status was determined by the entitlement to possess ‘Na’ or land. The king was not involved in this stratification because he de jure owned all land and granted these entitlements to others. The most important position, like a viceroy, would have the right to possess land of around 100,000 rai (1 rai = 1600 sq. m.). The ordinary had sakdina around 25 rai. Even slaves, the lowest class of society, also had sakdina as 5 rai. There was a debate about the real possession under sakdina system. The first group believed

by the power of western imperialist countries over its political, economic, and cultural aspects. The result of this situation led to the next process, that of turning Siam's economic system into capitalism. But the ruling class still retained some traditional relations for their own benefit, even though the politico-economic conditions had already changed. This created a situation of 'semi-sakdina'.

This idea was acknowledged among almost all leftists, especially the version produced by one of the most important leftists at the time, Jit Poumisak. Jit was a well-known philologist intellectual and revolutionist. Jit (1998) wrote '*Chom Nha Sakdina Thai [The Real Face of Thai Sakdina]*', one of his famous books, in 1957.⁶

In '*The Real Face*' Jit apparently employed a Marxist approach to explain Thai society, especially the social relations in sakdina or Thai feudal society. In fact, Jit was an adherent of Stalinist's stagist view of history, which proliferated among Thai radicals under the influence of the CPT. He tried to impose the order of social formations - primitive communism, slavery, feudalism, and a capitalist society - on the historical development of Thai society. In the early part of the book, Jit described the concept of sakdina by exemplifying the characteristics of European feudal society as the role model. He mentioned the French revolution several times (Jit Bhumisak, 1998, pp. 51, 67 and 80) when he attempted to explain the decline of sakdina and mentioned the factors in the development of the forces of production drawing from the case of England (Ibid, pp. 51-52).

Jit's main intention in explaining the accumulation in pre-capitalist production was to confirm the development of conditions of 'semi-colonialism and semi-

that this entitlement system was just a nominal arrangement of social status and by no means related to real land possession, particularly if considering geographical matters, land would not be enough to be distributed to everyone in accordance with the entitled sakdina. The second group tended to confirm that real land ownership along with the entitled sakdina, even if it was not precisely accurate in the size of land, should be proportionally correct to existing classes at that time. However, above all, the sakdina system shows the characteristic of a pre-capitalist society in which the surplus products were appropriated by the force of the ruling class over the corvee-labour in various forms such as conscripted labor force or tax in kind etc.

⁶ Similar to other leftist authors at that time, Jit used the pseudonym *Somsamai Srisootphan* as the author of this book.

sakdina' which could continue in later Thai society. This contrasted with some later Thai Marxists like Chattip, who chose to emphasise the idea of the Asiatic mode of production (Somsak, 1982, p. 139), as mentioned above. Jit saw Thai society as dominated by external imperialist countries which had Thai comprador and aristocrat capitalists as representatives in exploiting the Thai people. However, there also were the remnants of the structure of the sakdina system because of the mutual agreement, based on their common interests, between domestic elites and imperialist states. Jit saw this condition as one of 'collective exploitation' in which there were two exploiters that mutually appropriated from both the proletariat and the peasant class. On the one hand, imperialists, with their two representatives - comprador and aristocrat capitalists - attempted to interfere in the internal affairs of the Thai government, such as through promoting the joining of international organisations like the South East Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO) and through shared benefits in monopolised businesses like banking, industries, and commerce by some Thai capitalists. On the other hand, the Thai traditional elites, who had had some remaining advantages from a sakdina system, still obtained their wealth within the agriculture sector, e.g. by renting land and lending money to peasants. Additionally, some part of the old nobility had become comprador capitalists as well. Jit saw Egypt before the revolution in 1952, French Indochina, and the coup attempt in Jordan in 1957 as examples of the same situation of collective exploitation (Ibid, pp. 35-36).

This account of the development of capitalism in Thailand provides very useful information, such as Jit's explanation about how the Thai ruling class adjusted themselves and their agreements with external major states and capitalists. Nevertheless, there are some points which are not historically correct. Although their views about the combination of the conditions of semi-colony and semi-sakdina are partly correct and close to the conception of UCD used in this thesis, they did hesitate to accept that since the period of modernisation Thailand had already been a capitalist system, not a colonised or sakdina system.⁷ This was a

⁷ Before the decline of CPT in the 1980s, the analysis of Thailand's mode of production gradually became a controversial issue and made irreconcilable cleavage among party members. There were two main groups: one side characterised Thailand as a 'capitalist society with semi-colonialism conditions and some part of sakdina'. Another side viewed Thai society as still 'the semi-colony

result of the influence of Stalinism-Maoism⁸ that argued the oppressed classes, peasants in particular, in each underdeveloped country, need to conduct two stages of revolution - national capitalist and socialist revolutions. It proposes that those revolutions could be done in one state and not on an international scale. Therefore, it seemed that this view strategically attempted to sustain the imagined period of feudalism in order to legitimise the involvement of the national peasantry in a revolutionary mission and as the important class who had been involved in a long conflict against the landlord class. Due to this determinism, this model cannot explain the various ways in which each country changed from pre-capitalist modes of production to a capitalist one, and the specific characteristic of the capitalism which had existed in Thailand (Somsak, 2003b).

Accordingly, this school tends to analyse social movements on the basis of a very strict view of class. Each political movement was believed by this approach's thinkers to possess a narrow class consciousness and to take action because of the interest of its own class (see an example of this way of thinking by Jit towards arts in Giles ji Ungpakorn, 2000, pp. 141-154). This over determination dismisses the dialectical perspective which recognises that there are diverse results from the relationships between the material conditions and the individuals in each class. Therefore, theorists who believe this, like those who propose internal colonisation, normally attempt to separate the spaces of social movements of each class. This was a practical separation done by CPT itself. Although its cadres also worked to mobilise the exploited class in urban areas during the early period of their mobilisation, they later seemed to completely turn their back on such areas and focused - since the 1960s - mainly on guerrilla warfare in remote areas (Giles, 2004, p. 241; Somsak Jeamteerasakul, 2003a). But, being widely known, this strategy totally failed. Actually, this is a mistaken view of the real situation shown in Thailand and other countries. Recently, there has been the emergence of various social movements - from movements of conservative elites, like business

and semi-sakdina society with more capitalist character' (Somsak, 2003a). Although there was an attempt to compromise on this split, many members turned their backs on CPT or even surrendered to the authority.

⁸ Besides learning from early leaders of the Thai Communist Party (this name was changed to the Communist party of Thailand in 1952), many high-ranking members and intellectuals of CPT were trained by China during 1970s (Somsak, 2003a, 2003b; Thikarn, 2014)

groups, to that of lower-class people, like organisations of peasants and workers. The actions and ideologies of these movements have reflected the interests of the main class of its members, but have also mixed with those of other classes. Social movements are never just the expression of a single or unified class interest.

Ironically, moreover, whereas this Stalinist-Maoist idea does offer a deterministic view and a strategy towards social change based on class struggle, it offers an opposite to that view as the cross-class alliance. This is a result of a view of semi-colony and semi-sakdina as well as adherence to the idea of a two-stage revolution. Although the interests of the oppressed classes are considered important, it is believed that they could find an ally in the exploiting classes, especially the national bourgeoisie, in order to destroy the old landlord class (in the national capitalist stage, and in order to oppose colonising capitalists), if they cannot do these things by themselves. Then, after the oppressed have become stronger through capitalism, they can manage a socialist revolution themselves. Nevertheless, this plan did not function in the real world. For example, Stalin's order that was intended to get the Communist Party of China to join with the Kuomintang army weakened the revolutionary force rather than empowering them. The Thai Yellow Shirt movement, in which many NGO activists influenced by these ideas can be found, are reflective of extreme nationalist and royalist ideologies rather than leftist ones.

2.5 Marxist's historical materialism and the idea of UCD

There is clearly a common idea reflected in the above approaches. They all mention a mutual existence of old and new social institutions in Thai society, though the explanations vary because of the different ways each approach analyses the situation. I would argue that although they provide useful knowledge and perspectives, their explanations about the relationship between the Thai political economy and social movements are not sufficient to explain Thai society. Firstly, they divide the periods of development in a linear direction and treat some social institutions as fixed to a specific period, as if those institutions have not

affected society in other periods. Secondly, from their division of social components, I think those approaches cannot sufficiently explain the connection between a social structure and actors.

Those insufficiencies result from two things. First, the objects of focus (e.g. social structure, relations, and institutions) and second, a perspective towards social relations and a selected period of study. Though many studies based on modernisation theory are conducted using historical and comparative methods, which have advantageous qualities, they usually overemphasise the balance in social systems under some influential social characters or institutions, such as social differentiation, secularisation, political stability, capitalism, and so on. This leads to a deterministic view towards social changes or social transformation, which is criticised as a western-centric approach because it tends to believe that other paths cannot lead to real development. Although there is an attempt to include more factors in studies using a modernisation approach, the aims of those studies tend to over-emphasise those added aspects (for example, Samuel Huntington focuses on political order and stability). In the case of the approaches focused on internal colonisation and the semi-colony and semi-sakdina society, they partly apply the approach of historical materialism to study social changes in Thailand; however, they also present some deterministic aspects. On the one hand, their explanation of the importance of changes in material conditions and their influence on other social relations is very relevant. On the other hand, this analysis is usually done within limited periods and, in many cases, the studies pass over some historical periods to instead focus their inquiry on following eras linking the mentioned periods as if the intervening time does not exist. This is the case with the works of Jit, which barely pay attention to early modern Thai society and links sakdina to a Thai society after the Cold War.⁹ In other words, they adjust historical facts to fit into their frameworks, as in their attempts to apply the narrative of the stages of modes of production in Europe to the changes in Thai society based on the view of semi-colony and semi-saksina, and their attempts to

⁹ Nevertheless, this fault of Jit's can be excused as he had not yet finished *The Real Face* (Somkiat, 1980). However, there are other works on these approaches that show this skipping character (see the works that have difficulty explaining a development of modes of production in Thailand in Somsak, 1982).

separate the social spaces between local community and the Thai capitalist state in the case of internal colonisation.

In my opinion, the approach of Marxist historical materialism offers a better explanation of the development of society and social movement than these other approaches. First, it can explain why societies at different levels of development have the same mode of production because it does not prioritise the characteristics of some social institutions in the superstructure, as done by modernisation theorists. Instead, it examines a society by considering the economic base and its dialectical relationship with the superstructure. Each society may have its specific path to capitalism and there is no deterministic linear stages, as is offered by a modernisation theory or socialist stagism. Moreover, because it emphasises the importance of the influence of prior conditions, this approach will not exclude any historical periods and social aspects whether or not they were interesting at first consideration. Second, this perspective views social relations in a dialectic way. This means that it regards all social relations and changes created from internal conflicts in a mode of production as a whole. This approach considers that actors, structures, and social relationships in a mode of production are all relevant and includes them in its analysis. According to a view of class struggle, the conflict caused by material conditions dialectically develops into social conflicts, and it is eventually social movements which play an important role in shaping how each class competes with other classes (Barker & Dale, 1997; Krinsky, 2013).

Because of these advantages, I have selected historical materialism for my study of the Red Shirt underground movement rather than the first three approaches. As mentioned, these three accounts tend to argue that Thai modern society, including social movements in each period, have very specific characters, so for them, there is a need to elaborate with a special explanation of each distinct element. This argument is partly correct. It is undeniable that Thailand, and actually every country, has had distinct social relations based on how its production has developed, especially before and during the transformation to capitalism. However, rather than explaining those distinctions separately, we can

examine those differences by using the same basic principle, as I will do, by employing the view of historical materialism. In other words, we can historically examine dialectical relationships and their results within a mode of production without creating very specific terms of characters in Thai society and its social movements, such as the bureaucratic society of modernisation theory, a local-community-based society, and a semi-colony and semi-sakdina society. This form of analysis can explain social movements in Thai society by regarding them as both influential and influenced institutions of a development of production in Thailand, rather than examining them as only part of the social system which helps achieve a balanced or equilibrium status (as offered by modernisation theory), or imported or alienated actors of Thai politics (as offered by an idea of internal colonisation and a semi-colony and semi-sakdina society).

In this thesis, in addition to the general view of historical materialism, the concept of uneven and combined development (UCD), one of the most important developments of historical materialist ideas (Davidson, 2010), is also employed to explain social relations and changes within Thai society. UCD has been significantly covered in the academic community by Justin Rosenberg in his lecture given when he received the Deutscher Memorial Prize in 1994 (Rosenberg, 1996). This makes my approach distinct from other existing accounts. This theory was developed by Leon Trotsky to explain the specific character and development of a backward Russian society as the main factor of the revolution in 1917, and is inseparable from the conception of permanent revolution.

This idea is presented in Trotsky's *History of Russian Revolution* (Trotsky, 1932 /2008). But, Trotsky himself did not return to this idea to elaborate comprehensively. His failure to elaborate his theories fully, including UCD, came from his commitment to building revolutionary movements to oppose the Stalinist regime and this practice did not allow him to develop comprehensive theoretical works (Davidson, 2016, p. 31).

In his central idea, Trotsky demonstrates the conditions that create revolutionary situations, especially the mutual existence of new and old formations. He points out that revolution will happen not from new elements only, but also from the existing things within society. However, a mutual existence has to create critically changed conditions, in order for a revolution to take place:

The point is that society does not change its institutions as need arises, the way a mechanic changes his instruments. On the contrary, society actually takes the institutions which hang upon it as given once and for all. . . . Entirely exceptional conditions, independent of the will of persons and parties, are necessary in order to tear off from discontent the fetters of conservatism, and bring the masses to insurrection. (Trotsky, 1932/2008, p. xvi)

Trotsky argued that pre-revolutionary Russia had a pre-capitalist mode of production and a backward economy. There were several reasons for this backwardness such as the condition of land, weather, and low productive forces. However, it was this 'backwardness' that boosted the power of the exploited classes, the proletariat in particular, whose mission of changing society was accomplished in the revolution in 1917. These conditions were not similar to those of any other countries. The interactive relations between Russia and advanced imperialist societies led to changes in social relations through later developments in which Russia gradually received productive forces and transformed to capitalism. However, in this change it did not mean that backward countries followed the same steps advanced countries did beforehand. A less-developed country like Russia did not need to start at the same point as the advanced countries and could skip 'intermediate stages' to get to a higher level of development in a relatively short time. By contrast, they could choose and adapt the latest achievements from the advanced regions to instantly improve their productivity. Trotsky called this situation "the privilege of historic backwardness":

The privilege of historic backwardness - and such a privilege exists - permits, or rather compels, the adoption of whatever is ready in advance

of any specified date, skipping a whole series of intermediate stages (Trotsky, 1932/2008, p. 4).

However, the ability of backward countries to utilise their privileges were not the same. Some countries might apply technology properly and increase productivity quickly, even to 'catch up and overtake' the formerly advanced countries such as Scotland and Japan (Davidson, 2006). However, most of them could not. It was the existing ruling classes who determined what to receive from the major powers and which areas to develop. As in Russia, western technology was not applied to industrial production only, but also to the military which strengthened the power of ruling class, as Trotsky argued:

The backward nation, moreover, not infrequently debases the achievements borrowed from outside in the process of adapting them to its own more primitive culture. In this, the very process of assimilation acquires a self-contradictory character (Trotsky, 1932/2008, pp. 4-5).

Consequently, the interactive relations between Russia and other countries relocated the unevenness in the international political economy as the unevenness of development in Russia. Those conditions of uneven development led to another character of UCD, that of combined development in which there was the mutual existence of the different stages of development in *one* society. Trotsky described this as 'A combining of the separate steps. An amalgam of archaic with more contemporary forms' (Trotsky, 1932/2008, p. 5). In other words, while Russia imported products and technology to improve its productivity in particular sectors to remain a sovereign state, this development was managed by the ruling class, which adjusted this to benefit itself and collaborated with aspects of the old social structure such as religious, military, and administrative institutions.

Accordingly, the UCD idea is not the same as the concept of uneven development that generally emphasizes on the unevenness of social aspects like a level of development, social inequality and hierarchy, and so on. By contrast, it extends the understanding on how a combination, or 'hybridity', of different social

formation is initiated for more development, particularly during the period that pre-capitalist societies transform to capitalism, as Trotsky offered:

The development of historically backward nations leads necessarily to a peculiar combination of different stages in the historic process. Their development as a whole acquires a planless, complex, combined character (Trotsky, 1932/2008, pp. 4).

This combination affects each society in various ways depending on several factors such as the character of previous modes of production, the international politics, and the classes who lead the transformation of modes of production. Although, according to their dominant role, the combined development seemingly benefits the ruling class at the first place, the intrinsic nature of a capitalist system, like a continued expansion of accumulation, and complexity of combined development could also make changes in other direction, such as the growing power of the ruled classes (especially the working class) that is developed through the previous changes. Moreover, the interrelation between results of early combination and recent situations in the international political economy could make a later effect in a given society. Some scholars call this situation as ‘recombination’ (Peck, 2019, p. 53) or ‘the persistence of combination’ (Davidson, 2017).

We can see the example of these characters of combined development in Trotsky’s analysis of the Russian context before the revolution. At first step uneven development limited the wealth among people, even the possessing classes. Russia lacked not only potential classes to support growth, but also the central area to set up the proper structure for its primary capitalism, such as a craft guild and petty industry. By contrast, trade routes grew increasingly in the border areas. Thus Russian trading, at that time, had a character of semi-colonialism, using the products imported from western countries by Russian traders rather than producing domestically. Consequently, old cities were primarily consumption spaces rather than production ones. Although Russia could utilise its privilege of backwardness to create growth more quickly than western countries’ experiences, it was done by different classes than those in the west. The reformation was not

initiated by the 'Third Estate', and did not begin a challenge towards autocracy. On the contrary, this task was undertaken by other classes such as liberal landlords and aristocrats. For Trotsky this is "one of those combined methods natural to backward countries." (Trotsky, 1932/2008, p. 7)

Because of the influence of foreign capital and investment in Russia, on the one hand, the Russian bourgeoisie were not involved significantly in either economic or political decisions and seemed to possess only 'political isolation and anti-popular character' (Trotsky, 1930, p. 7). On the other hand, the proletariat did not have the same character as shown in the transitional period in western countries. They came from an agricultural basis, not from craft-guilds, and from rural areas not urban ones. They emerged suddenly in a new environment, not gradually evolving as had happened in England. Additionally, they still were related to the old production, in some cases they were semi-proletariat or semi-peasant. However, a process of industrialisation in Russia changed the social structure of Russia tremendously. Consequently, besides the conflicts of European politics and the extensive repressions of autocracy under the Czar, an ability to mobilise a great number of proletariats in each industrial area led to a civil war and then a successful revolution. The significant result of UCD in Russia, argued Trotsky, was 'the soviet,' which was the supportive element of the proletariat revolution and could not be found in other countries:

That the soviets, we may remark here, are not a mere child of the historical backwardness of Russia, but a product of her combined development, is indicated by the fact that the proletariat of the most industrial country, Germany, at the time of its revolutionary high point - 1918 to 1919 - could find no other form of organisation (Trotsky, 1932/2008, pp. 10-11).

These changes, in the form of a revolution, were led by the proletariat class rather than the bourgeoisie, as previously appeared in the advanced capitalist countries. Trotsky explained that the Russian bourgeoisie chose to prioritise their possession under autocracy and did not trust any classes, particularly after the revolution in

1905, when they became 'more conservative and suspicious' (Trotsky, 1932/2008, p. 10).

In conclusion then: the significant usefulness of an idea of UCD for my study is that it provides a critical view towards development in a Thai capitalist state which shares some characters with Russian society before the 1917 revolution as a backward pre-capitalist society. The transitional period of Thailand resulted clearly in an outcome of unevenness. There are many points which are comparable with events occurring during the pre-revolutionary period in Russia, like the adaptation of the Thai ruling class to retain their privileges during changes in both internal and international circumstances, albeit there are some different characteristics of UCD like an extent of unevenness and inequality, and the length of time before major changes.

Chapter 3

Methods and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will explain and discuss the research rationale for how this study was conducted, as well as the methods used to gather and analyse data related to the emergence and character of the Red Shirt underground movements and their relationship with Thai society. There are three main sources of data for this study that were collected by several methods; the primary data is the interviews of leading underground activists; the online data - the videos, posts, and conversations on social media services created by the underground activists; and the documents about Thai politics and economy and the underground movement. The analysis was done in two parts. First, the sources about the development of Thai politics and the economy are examined with qualitative content analysis, and second, the materials produced by the movements themselves are investigated with the critical discourse analysis method. In the last section, I will also reflect on some limitations of the methods employed in my research.

3.2 Aims, objectives, and research questions

The study of these movements aims to understand and explain the emergence of the Red Shirt underground movements, and their dialectical relationships with other social aspects in Thailand. I noticed these movements in 2012, two years after the 2010 brutal repression over the Red Shirt protest. From a brief investigation, there was both the continuity and common characters from previous movements, especially the Red-Shirt ones, but with differences in terms of their more radical political ideas and clandestine activities. When I decided to study for a Ph.D., I chose these movements as the topic of my dissertation. Although these movements are just a tiny part, in terms of numbers of people and their impact, on Thai political contradiction, various underground activities staged both virtually and physically show the specific situation in Thailand. Understanding these movements not only increases the extent of knowledge of the movements

themselves, but also creates a comparative understanding of various characters of political movements in a capitalist society from this experience in Thailand.

From my adherence to a tradition of historical materialism, the important thing to be done in a study of social movements is to locate their positions in an historical development of modes of production in such a society and to investigate how dialectical relationships between the movements, and other social aspects are shaped, particularly from influences of the materialist conditions. To understand these, the Marxist approach was used to create a theoretical framework of the study (chapter 2). However, it is not enough to make a comprehensive explanation of social movements because there are too many aspects related to social movements. For example, Donatella Della Porta (2013a) posits her idea about the development of social movements through the relational, constructivist, and emergent aspects. Thus, I incorporated some theories of social movement studies to fulfil the framework, such as some conceptions of resource mobilization theory and political process theory.

Due to the basic perspective above, the research questions directed towards these movements are:

a) How did historical developments and social contexts in Thailand affect the emergence of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement?

b) How did underground activists develop and pursue their political ideas and actions?

c) What was the outcome of the actions of the Red-Shirt-sided movement?

To answer questions a) and b), Trotsky's concept of uneven and combined development (UCD) is used as the main idea to analyse data related to the historical development of capitalism on both an international and domestic level, especially in a developing country like Thailand. The aim of this stage was to

develop an understanding of the establishment of the specific social structure, especially the political power that shapes how a capitalist system runs in such a society. Then I will attempt to explain the relationships between this specific structure of Thai society and the social movements in each period, especially those of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movements, both what they have already done and what trajectory might happen in the future (the question c)). Additionally, the social movement theories and models, e.g. the concepts of the repertoire of actions, and the stage or cycle of operations of movements were applied in analysing and creating an explanation of the characteristics of this underground movement, such as their foundation, relationships between factions and networks, and decline and separation.

3.3 Methods and data analysis

3.3.1 Interviews

An interview method was employed to collect detailed information, namely the personal background of the activists, their political ideas and actions; and their specific experiences as underground activists, or even political exiles. This was the primary data used for analysing the movements. In this study, the semi-structured interview was used. In this type of interview, although there is a list of questions to be used as a guide, based on the direction and aims of the research, the process is flexible enough to allow for other outside conversations (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, pp. 110-111). The researcher could learn unexpected useful information as I found when interviewing the activists about their experiences as political exiles.

In the interview form, there are four sets of questions that are designed to obtain answers to the research questions. First, the questions are about the background of activists - what the activists did before joining the movement, their previous political experiences, the kind of relationships and attitudes they had towards the Red Shirt movement, and their political ideologies. The second set of questions was about how the activists participated in the underground movements,

particularly asking about the timing of, and reasons for, their decision. Third, the questions asked about actions and organisations - what the activists' roles and responsibilities were in their groups and how they changed in each period, how their groups or organisations (e.g. their structures and a division of tasks) were organised and how that changed over time, and what kind of relationships were created between their groups and others. Finally, there were questions about their personal points of view - their experiences as underground activists, mostly in exile, the impact of the underground actions to Thai society, and the future of the political and economic situations in Thailand.

In the initial stage, as a sampling frame, I surveyed the active groups of Red Shirt underground movements, and then, listed the names of the activists, if possible, and the groups. They were chosen because of their distinct roles and regular appearances in the resistant activities, especially those activists who were famous among the Red Shirt supporters. In the cases of anonymous or unfamiliar activists, they were selected as representatives of their groups, as in the case of the How To group and UDD Sweden. According to the first plan, about 39 activists were listed in a sampling frame for interviews. In other words, instead of interviewing only samples of the underground activists, I intended to interview all active activists and groups.

In the next stage, because the activists base their main activities on social media sites, all of them have Facebook accounts which I used as the primary method to send the request for interview letters and to introduce myself. In order for the activists to have confidence in me, I clarified my identity by sending them copies of my ID (a passport, a Thai ID, and a Student ID) as well as the research's Participant Information Sheet, interview form, and consent form. This process started in January 2018.

However, it seemed that, because of the risk to their safety, most activists were normally very cautious about having a conversation about their political roles with a stranger. There were few replies from the activists, especially among the ex-

politicians and elder activists. This was understandable. There were reasons that made the planned first interviews unsuccessful. Firstly, as this study was conducted when the underground activities were actively being run, many activists chose, either to refuse or ignore the request because of the possible risk to their lives. Second, I lacked a previous relationship with almost all underground activists¹⁰ which resulted in refusals to participate in the interviews. Nevertheless, I started to conduct interviews with the underground activists who did accept the request to be interviewed (this began with the activists in Laos). At this point, I started to employ the snowball sampling technique by asking the interviewees to suggest other activists in their circle to be invited as the next participants (Bryman, 2004, pp. 100-101). I also participated in the activities arranged by the underground groups as a means to contact them and invite them to be participants directly.¹¹ With this sampling method, I gained the participation of activists both on the initial list but who had not replied to the request yet and those activists outside the list. I preferred to have a face-to-face interview in order to recognise emotion, as well as to see the environment surrounding the activists. So almost all the interviews were done in this manner and with mutual consent by the participants, except in one case (of France6), and that interview was conducted by phone because of her personal reasons.

To sum up, the interviews for this study were conducted during January 2018 - January 2019, in four countries with 23 interviewees: eight activists in Laos, two activists in Cambodia, five activists in the UK, seven activists in France, and one activist via a phone interview.¹²

3.3.2 Online data

¹⁰ Except Giles who was my supervisor during study for a Master degree in Thailand.

¹¹ I attended the protest to the the UK visit of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha on June 20, 2018 in London and the 4th anniversary of the 2014 coup on May 22, 2018 in Paris.

¹² Although I thought to carry out interviews in other countries like the U.S., I cancelled it because of the sufficient data from the completed interviews indicated by my supervisors.

Due to an attempt to avoid Thai state repercussions, the activities of the underground movements were taking place online or virtually. Thus, observing and collecting online materials - pictures, web pages, videos, podcasts - from social media sites (e.g. YouTube, Facebook), produced by the underground groups was a crucial method in this study. This data could reveal the ideologies of the underground activists and how they mobilise for support. Discourse analysis can also produce an explanation of a dialectic relationship between what the underground movements express and their material conditions.

Nevertheless, in collecting this kind of data I faced some difficulties. Although I started to listen to the early underground activists and groups (the early 2010s) like Banpodj and Kathawut, I did not download their sound clips from file-hosting sites and archive those materials systematically and adequately because at that time, I was not interested in this topic enough, and the cost for storing digital materials was still expensive. However, this problem was partly resolved several years later with the launch of social media sites on which activities and data storage could occur mainly online. This not only helped to secure digital materials produced by the underground activists online, which was continually increasing, but it also encouraged a participatory attitude among novice activists. Nevertheless, this led to another difficulty, as there were too many digital data to be collected and analysed. While even the early generation of the underground movement, such as the Banpodj group could make more than 400 podcasts in only a couple of years, a number of materials produced by later activists were much larger. Faiyen, for example, uploaded videos to its YouTube channels continually from 2016 to 2018. There are more than a thousand videos on their YouTube channels, as well as many posts on their other social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. And this characteristic appeared similarly in many groups of the later activists. To collect and analyse these materials consumes tremendous time and resources.

Nevertheless, I attempted to investigate the digital material of all active underground groups. I recorded the timeline of major events and changes in both the underground and overground world of Thai politics in Microsoft Excel for easier

checking and also for finding relevant materials during those events and times. This process assisted me in investigating and collecting only the important digital materials which were more influenced by or influential in the crucial situations rather than collecting non-relevant materials.

3.3.3 Data analysis

3.3.3.1 Content analysis

Content analysis is a way of analysing ‘both the content and context of the documents’ by identifying themes and focusing on how contents in data are presented in the scope of each theme. Then the researcher attempts to link a result of analysis with outside objects (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 200). I employed this method of analysis to investigate two sets of data. The first were documents about the historical development of Thai politics and economy. I examined how the content of related documents corresponded with the framework of historical materialism and the ideas of UCD. Second, this method analyses the character of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement, such as their methods of mobilisation and cycles of movements. The theories of social movements will be used as the framework for this analysis stage.

3.3.3.2 Discourse analysis

This analysis was used to focus on the discourses produced or expressed by the underground activists in order to understand how they constructed their own social world (Burnham, Gilland Lutz, FGrant, & Layton-Henry, 2008, p. 251). However, rather than emphasising the interpretation of texts, I prefer to bring the critical discourse analysis (Phillips & Hardy, 2002) to reveal the dialectical relationships between the material contexts and ideologies constructed by the underground leading activists in each group.

I separate the themes for analysing data into three main sets that relate to my framework and research questions. The first one is the set of topics related to the economic base of Thai capitalist mode of production, which has developed under the condition of UCD, including the broader social structure and the material conditions surrounding the main activists. For example, the main content in chapter 4 which explains the relationship between changes in the mode of production and social movements in Thailand. Another topic of this theme will appear as the category of economic experiences of activists and followers such as their economic statuses in both Thailand and overseas countries (in the cases of exiled ones) (I write the personal information of main activists throughout chapter 5 and in the late part of chapter 6-8). The second theme is the set of topics about social movement characters demonstrated by the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement. I used some conceptions of the component of social movement to analyse and categorise the data, e.g. Charles Tilly's offer of three elements of social movement: campaign, social movement repertoire, and WUNC display (worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment of each movement) (Tilly, 2004, p.3). The analysis is laid out as the initial formation of underground movement in chapter 5, the political ideas of underground activists in chapter 6, their repertoires of action in chapter 7, and the cycles of protest in chapter 7 and 8. The final theme is the interactive relationships caused by the actions of Red-Shirt-sided underground movement. These relationships occurred among underground activists themselves and between the movement and other social aspects. Although I will insert the category of relationships among underground activists in chapter 5-7, the main chapter that clearly demonstrate this will be in chapter 8, where I stated how the important group like the Organization for Thai Federation competed with other groups for supports. The same chapter will also narrate the responses of other institutions like overground pro-democracy activists, Thai authorities, and media.

The content of each theme emerges and is categorised from the collected data - documents, interview transcripts, and online data. All processes of recording and coding were done manually without computer analysis software. For the interview transcripts, I highlighted the content linked to each theme and coded it into my

notebook. In the case of online data, I marked significant part of underground movement's discourse, actions, and relationship with other institutions besides the timeline of major events in Microsoft Excel mentioned in 3.2.2. Then, I looked for their patterns and recorded the relevant data into the set of topics in my notebook as I did with the interview transcripts. Finally, I attempted to find the connection of this labelled data and categorised them into the three themes by my themes myself.

3.3.4 Fieldwork notes

From the start of this research, I regularly recorded ideas related to this topic and Thai society after reading books and articles, surveying the actions of the underground activists, discussing in the supervision session, and participating in some political events. This activity was done more often after my first fieldwork in Laos and Cambodia, where I recognised the real material conditions where important activists had been living. I can feel the mighty power of the state in a capitalist system that could structurally abuse the freedom of people. Traveling to conduct an interview in the UK and France brought me to a different setting, which provoked me to think much more in a comparative manner.

On the one hand, there are many similarities in the social relations of the capitalist mode of production, such as common commodities in markets, the same technologies in several sectors like communication, class struggles and exploitation, and social inequality, which can be found in all the societies I visited. But, on the other hand, the social arrangements of these societies are varied, even the common things I mentioned above had been shaped in different patterns, such as the people's ability to resist against states and capitalists.

This reminds me of this research which also attempts to unravel these same conditions in Thailand. Particularly, after the deaths of people I met in Laos, I hope that my work might be able, more or less, to be part of creating a better

understanding of the historical development of Thai society and provoke the oppressed to resist the oppressor. This is the best prevention for the next possible series of dehumanising actions in the future.

3.4 Limitation of the study

There were three main limitations of this study. Firstly, there was a small number of documents for some parts of the study - the development in Thailand and the underground movements themselves. For the former, this study was conducted under the historical approach, particularly in chapter 4 about the historical development of the Thai capitalist state, which needed a considerable number of documents to produce the precise arguments. Although I had many texts from Thailand, as well as from other sources (via the advance of technology and academic generosity like the online texts, especially the theses from leading universities in Thailand which are opened to public access and thus analysed in my research), the texts about Thai political and economic history, especially in the Thai language, used in this research might be a bit limited. For the latter, because this is an active movement in contemporary times, there are few documents about them. The main ones were the news and some articles written by some progressive online media, like Prachatai. Thus, the main sources I used to investigate this movement were mainly the primary data produced by the activists themselves.

Secondly, due to the necessity for safety and the different locations of the activists, reaching the underground activists and carrying on the interviews was very difficult. Some completed interviews had insufficient data in some sets of questions, especially concerning the relationships with other underground groups, how they left Thailand, and the process of seeking asylum, which interviewees wanted to conceal. This made the interviews less reliable. Nevertheless, in my opinion, the interviews were conducted with very important underground activists who acted as good representatives for the other activists.

Finally, as mentioned above in the section about online data, there are many digital materials that were not picked for the process of discourse analysis because of the great number of them. From my survey, I think I recognised the core political directions of all active groups in underground politics, as well as their changes after important events.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined and discussed the aims, objectives, and research questions that directed how this research was conducted. Based on the historical materialism approach, this study wants to explain the emergence and characteristics of the Red Shirt underground movements as a result of the long-term development of the Thai capitalist society. Although the characteristics of the movements' compositions - activists and supporters, political ideas, activities, resources, organisations, and networks - were formed in different trajectories depending on the series of contingent situations each group had faced, their inherent characters were created under the influences of previous dialectical conflicts and relationships within material conditions in their societies. The outcome of the political actions created by these movements similarly affected the society in this kind of relationship.

To conduct this research, I chose a multi-method approach - including interviews, and content and discourse analysis of data. The techniques of some methods, particularly in the fieldwork portion, were adapted to be suitable to the altering situations. After receiving many refusals to participate in interviews, I turned from sending the request letter to snowball sampling and directly reaching the activists in political events arranged by the underground groups to gain interviewees. However, there were many limitations in this study because this kind of movement was a very new social phenomenon and still fully active in a clandestine manner during the time I was conducting the research. Thus, there were a limited number of written documents about the activists and their activities, and reaching them to directly collect data was also unlikely to happen. And, as I situated mainly in

Glasgow, Scotland while the research was conducted, the chance to access Thai documents was very limited. Nevertheless, the combination of my earlier following of these movements, daily following of these movements in the couple of years since the beginning of this research in 2016, and the knowledge of theory and research methodology learned during my study could help to compensate for this shortage of resources. I will start my explanation of the historical development of the Thai political economy in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

Development of Thai Modern State and Its Interrelationship with the Global Political Economy and the Formations of Social Movements

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will demonstrate the development of the Thai modern state and its character of UCD, which has shaped later social relationships and institutions. This began with the period of transformation from a pre-capitalist to a capitalist mode of production in Thai society, which was triggered by the interrelationship between Thailand and the international political economy. The Thai ruling class's continued policies of adaptation in order to retain their power amidst tensions amongst imperialist states who were expanding their colonies in the SEA region is the start of the process of UCD in Thailand.

In some areas, the conditions of UCD were destroyed, and the less-developed countries could catch up to the early developed countries, if they had a close relationship e.g. Scotland and England (Davidson, 2006, p. 13). There were factors precipitating those achievements, namely the intensive conflicts in the region, and the previously internal political conflicts, which accelerated the process of development that dialectically affected other social relations in those societies. However, the case in Thailand is different. The conditions of UCD created in the early period of Thai capitalism, and social relations under their influence, remain in Thailand, though it has been impacted by several external circumstances and has continually developed its production for many decades. Therefore, I will argue that the Thai ruling class could not only override the negative impacts initiated by important circumstances, like international conflicts or economic crises, but also instead, were strengthened. This is why they are very powerful in almost all aspects in recent Thai society and this has led to the emergence of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement.

My above argument will gradually be proved with an explanation of the development in Thailand, which are divided into four periods: a period of transformation; a period of a consolidation of the Thai capitalist state amidst the uncertain situations of international and domestic political economy; a period of a neoliberal economy in Thailand and the economic crisis; and a period of the rise of Thaksin and the Thai political crisis. The reasons for a division into these four periods are the distinctively UCD characters of ‘unevenness’ and ‘a combination of new and old relations’ shown in each period.

4.2 The transformation from a Pre-capitalist to a Capitalist System in Thailand

4.2.1 Social relations and class struggle

Bangkok was created as a new modernised and capitalist state around the late 19th century. Before that time it resembled the politico-economic system of the old capital, Ayudhaya. In normal times, the class system was managed under a hereditary lineage basis. The king, among other groups in the ruling class, was theoretically the most powerful lord, above lower members of the royal family and then followed by aristocrats in each rank. This system was also imitated by the cities outside Bangkok. The local lords of these cities needed to pay tribute to the most powerful city, like Bangkok, if they had no kinship with its monarchs or were not situated under the protection of other powerful cities. In those times the boundary of state was not clearly defined, some theorists call this politico-economic system “galactic polity” (Tambiah, 1976) or “mandala” (Woltersm, 1968), in which the power of the king would gradually decrease as much as the distance was from the capital. Nevertheless, in the early Bangkok era, the controlling cities outside Bangkok came more under the high-ranking aristocrats in Bangkok rather than the local lords having the administrative power as they had in the past (Akin, 1984).

In this social system, personal relationships were based on reciprocal benefits between the superior and the inferior, particularly between members of the royal family, lower landlords, and aristocrats. The higher-status class would protect the lower-status classes from any danger to their lives. Meanwhile, the lower classes would provide homage, loyalty, and a work force (Ibid). However, this relationship was not permanent as it might be changed from time to time depending on a strength and an ability of the ruling class to retain their power.

Regarding the labor force, Thai sakdina differed from the feudal system in Europe as lords controlled labor rather than land, i.e. labor was more important than land. Most of the rebellions in ancient Siam derived from conflicts between the king and other lords (both royal and non-royal ones) because of the size of the labor force they had. A majority of the workers in the society were Phrai (the residual were slaves), all of them were forced laborers. They were tattooed on their wrists with the name of their masters and the towns they lived in to prevent them from escaping (ibid, 83). This facilitated controlling and monitoring clusters of laborers both for production and military purposes. Phrai were separated into two types - Phrai luang [working for the king and public service] and Phrai som [working for each lord]. Phrai had to work for between three and six months a year for their lords, and the remainder of the year on their own land (this proportion fluctuated) (Pasuk & Baker, 1997, p. 8).

An economy was mainly based on agricultural production under the control of hierarchical landlords, trading with monarchs and aristocrat-merchants. In the early period of the Chakkri dynasty, the elites could accumulate wealth using the advantage derived from their social status by monopolising trade with foreign merchants. The most important trade was between Siam and China. Rice was the most significant export from Siam, and luxurious and crockery were main import items from China along with copper and silver (Wyatt, 1984, p. 154).

The significant reason for the stabilization of political power and wealth of the Bangkok ruling class was the colonisation of their past enemies, especially the

Burmese kingdoms, which were colonised by the British empire after the war between 1824 - 1885. On the one hand, as Siam had not yet been colonised, this ruling class had less concern for threats from major cities in the same region than from both war enemies and trade competitors. On the other hand, it signaled the risk that Siam could be the next victim of colonisation. Although Siam was not the first area to be affected, this formidable process of capital accumulation and extension unfortunately reached its door. The Bowring Treaty with the British empire in 1855 (followed by similar ones with other western countries) in the reign of King Mongkut (Rama IV) (1804 - 1868) was the most important adjustment for the Thai elites in avoiding defeat in this highly pressured situation.

On the one hand, the result of the treaties eradicated a monopoly in trading and decreased profit for the Siam elites. However, on the other hand, this more liberal tradition considerably boosted the volume of trade between Siam and other countries. The annual total trade value increased from 5.6 million baht in 1850 to around 10 million baht in 1868 (Wyatt, 1984). The economic changes and adaptation of the elites consequently led to an alteration of all aspects of society.

However, the administration remained unchanged. For a long time, the main reason was that King Mongkut did not want to interfere with the benefit gained by the influential elite families, like the 'Bunnag' family, which could cause civil war. Thus, Mongkut managed his power cautiously and changed traditional norms slowly. However, he sought to prepare for his successor to contend with other groups within the ruling class by hiring a foreign consultant to work in the important government bodies, such as the office of foreign affairs, the military, the technical department, and as a tutor to his heir - Prince Chulalongkorn (Kullada, 2004).

According to UCD, this was a condition in which leaders of less developed countries were pressured by the tension of the competition of advanced imperialists to accept more advanced technologies to retain their power. King Mongkut was the first king that recognised this threat and adjusted towards a modernised direction.

He started to change the internal structure and imported some technologies to improve the forces of production to maintain the high status of his family, but this process was done restrictively because the powerful elites were the competitors. So, during the Mongkut reign, there was just a beginning impression of a combined development. However, King Chulalongkorn, who was crowned in 1868, continued his father's mission to construct a more modern Siam in order to avoid being colonised under a more intimidating situation, from the British Empire in the west and the French Empire in the east.

4.2.2 The establishment of the Thai modern capitalist state

The first mission of Chulalongkorn in adjusting the social structure was to lessen the power of the Bunnag family which was consolidated by Srisuriyawong (Choung Bunnag), the regent before Chulalongkorn coronation, and which dominated the Kingdom's administration and trade (Kullada, 2004, pp. 38-39, 58-65; Pasuk Phongpaichit & Baker, 1997, p. 222). Then, despite disagreement with some royal members and old elite, Chulalongkorn ran the process of centralisation of administrative power, starting in 1873 when he established the finance office to unify the collection of tax throughout the country (Chaiyan, 1994, p. 85). He also began to limit the prerogatives of local lords in important cities by sending officials to enforce laws, and particularly to collect revenue in those areas. Chiang Mai, the biggest city in the north, was a good example because of tax benefits from the teak industry in particular, and was under the management of British companies in that area. This measurement was also applied to other regions such as the northeast and the south. Eventually, Chulalongkorn started to establish a nearly modern bureaucratic administration, mainly under the management of his brother Prince Damrong. There were divisions of administrative areas throughout the state, specialisation of government ministries and departments, and personnel training. Nevertheless, the officers in this early bureaucratic system were mostly recruited from the royal family.

In this first Thai absolute monarchy, after the old traditional order was abolished, some members of royal and noble families could not remain in their administrative positions and businesses gradually lost privilege status. Although some of them were still bureaucrats, their positions could not provide them many benefits other than a salary and social reputation. It was the King and his close circles that gained both the administrative power and the economic benefits. This means that the political and economic gap between this ruling class and other classes seemed to widen more and more.

The very important policy that facilitated a capitalist production, which also politically benefited the ruling class, was an abolishment of a forced and unpaid labour system in 1905. Nevertheless, its regulation was not decisive but it was gradually effective. Chulalongkorn had to wait until the influential aristocrats were dead and also, he had to increasingly restrict their capability because radical change possibly could provoke dissent among the main exploiters from the previous era. Instead of increasing wealth for lords, new freemen worked for themselves in a modern society in which money became a crucial commodity. However, ordinary people found that they had another kind of difficulty - taxation. The new social system levied many more types of tax than were used in the past because of a need to invest in the government and to substitute for a lack of main sources of income, such as corvee labors. In other words, the forced labour was not actually abolished, but it was transformed into a type of tax, especially like the 'Head Tax,' which people had to pay if they did not want to work for government.

There were many changes in the economy. Many household products were replaced by commodities in a market. The value of land was increasing gradually. Capitalists, both members of a royal family and private ones, were looking for areas to expand rice paddies, particularly in the Rangsit area.

During that time Chinese people were a very important social group in Siam. The Chinese had been coming to Siam for a long time as paid laborers (Chinese were

not included in the Phrai system), or for other careers such as a tax collector in the King's tax department. After modernisation under Chulalongkorn, the number of Chinese immigrants increased enormously. It was estimated the number of Chinese grew from 230,000 people in 1825 to 300,000 people in 1850, and to 792,000 people in 1910 (Wyatt, 1984, p. 217). They were working in several types of jobs, some as dock workers, some in rice mills, as agricultural laborers, canal diggers, clerks, and as owners of businesses. David Wyatt (Ibid, p. 218) argued that the Chinese in Siam at the time were more familiar with urban life than a rural one because their workplaces were concentrated in this kind of space. The early Chinese generation and their successors assimilated into Siam society quickly and easily. One reason for the huge number of Chinese in Siam was that there was no change of productive forces and methods among Siamese. The role of 'middle man' for the Chinese, especially in tax farming and rice industry, made them the early main bourgeoisie in a Thai society (Elliot, 1978, p. 24).

Relative to the rice-exporting industry, Siamese peasantry preferred to live and work on their ancestral lands, having much less pressure since they were working as low-wage laborers. Furthermore, there was an enormous amount of land to be cleared and transformed into rice paddies, and there was no obvious law of property rights at that time. These situations have subsequently facilitated the origin of uneven development. The ruling class held political power and gained benefit from taxes and owning their businesses. On the one hand, they left the local Siamese surviving by way of the old means of production, but, on the other, they utilised the Chinese immigrants in seeking profits from other production. Rice-exporting production had gradually become the main production of the country and it made a huge profit for the ruling class and for the resources for a later industrial production.

Besides political and economic domination, the ruling class also used religious, educational, and cultural notions to shape the people's way of living and thinking. Prince Vachirayarn, Mongkut's son who acted as the leader of the Siamese Buddhist monks at the time, elevated the status of the Thammayutti sect to be much more influential. Although the Thammayutti sect appeared benign and as

the alternative to a bigger, larger sect, Mahanikai, and the Thai monk's leaders, Sangkharaja, came from both sects. It was obvious that Thammayutti was the particular sect under the royal patronage. Ironically, a strict manner of Thammayutti was adhered to by many monks and their followers, who were the oppressed in the northeastern region, having no mutual interest with the Bangkok ruling class. This denoted one of the early ideological domination of Thai elites.

In education, there was the beginning use of a central curriculum. It meant that the traditional components of the local education system would also be abolished, namely books, indigenous language, both written and spoken, and the role of communities' members in educating their children together.

To sum up, as a result of the processes of development, the early Thai modern capitalist state which was founded by the Siam ruling class monopolised political and administrative power, determined the economic direction, and dominated social culture. These changes gradually characterised the UCD. The condition of unevenness started to appear after investment began to be concentrated in Bangkok and the nearby area, especially with the rice-export industry. Nevertheless, the extent of unevenness was relatively low because the ruling class did not employ advanced technologies for fundamentally developing and changing the production, and instead, gave these tasks to private entrepreneurs. Due to the fact that they focused on rice production and finding potential lands for plantation, it seemed that most laborers were peasants, who likely survived in the same mode of production at that time. Therefore, the character of a combination of old and new objects and social relations still did not occur in a significant way. Although there were riots of workers, the mass of workers were not involved, in particular, the Chinese, and these riots happened mainly in Bangkok. This situation was not like Russia's in which the character of UCD was more intense and led to revolution. However, this character would be changed and would pave the way for a different direction of social relations.

4.3 The relationship between the pressure of uneven situations in the international political economy and internal development during 1910s-1960s

4.3.1 The formation of Thai state and Thainess

During the reign of King Vajiravudh, the ruling class still remained as the political system founded by Chulalongkorn. The vital principle Vajiravudh imposed on the Siam state was an idea of nationalism. This act stemmed from the pressure from both internal and external political challenges. The King was not respected among army officials and was questioned about his ability as an absolute leader. In addition to those internal affairs, the international conflict became critical and nearly exploded as the First World War. Vajiravudh grounded the concept of the three pillars of Siam as comprised of 'Chart, Sasana, Phra Maha Kasat [Nation, Religion and Monarch]'. As he described it, although the nation and religion must remain separate, the monarch has the highest status and has the ability to unite those two pillars together. This set of national values was applied when inventing almost all ruling ideas afterwards.

As I mentioned in the last section, because of the transformation to a modern society done 'from above', if there were a sign of the next changes, it would be initiated by the source of power concentrated in the royal family and state apparatuses. Evidently, there were challenges from those sources, such as a letter from members of the royal family asking Chulalongkorn for a reformation in the mid-1880s (Kullada, 2004, p. 99). A more serious sign of conflict within the ruling class was the unsuccessful rebellion of a group of low-ranking soldiers in 1912. The main reason for this uprising was because the participants were frustrated by the hierarchy within the administration of the army, in which the soldiers from the royal family had some privileges and, hence, violated the organisation's order and effectiveness. This reflected the more intense character of UCD in the powerful part of society, when the inequality in a modern organisation is increasingly combined with the ancient traditions.

Although Vjiravudh attempted changes to some parts of his administration in order to demonstrate his recognition of the value of democracy, this absolutist regime still remained throughout his reign. After the death of Vajiravudh, these difficulties were passed on to the era of his half-brother, King Prajadhipok (Rama VII) (1893 - 1941).

Prajadhipok was crowned as the king during inconvenient situations at both the domestic and international levels. It was during the time of the great recession of the world economy after WWI. Besides severe drought in the country and due to the excessive spending during the last reign, Prajadhipok needed to cut the budget of the government. Moreover, politically, he made several negotiations with the petitions of bureaucrats asking for an administrative reformation. Despite his intention to adjust the relation of power by drafting the constitution, it was not enough to stop 'Khana Rassadon [the People's Party]'. This was the group of young officials, from both civil bureaucracy and the military, who mostly graduated abroad, and who wanted to change the Thai state rule to a more modernised regime. However, we will see the results of their character especially in regards to nationalism, which was created in this early Thai state.

4.3.2 1932 Revolution: political or social revolution?

This revolution itself was the result of the dialectic relationships developed within Thai society. Almost all members of Khana Rassadon were non-royal state officers who were sent to study abroad and were expected to work in an expanding bureaucracy as a substitute for the royal officials, whose numbers were gradually decreasing. Their discontent towards the privilege of the royals and related family members in the state administration was the main rationale for the incident. As I mentioned above, this was why Thailand needed more educated bureaucrats in order to manage the increasing number of complicated issues in the Thai modern state that were the result of the prior development. However, this was not social revolution, but the political revolution 'from above' which was done by part of the ruling class.

Neil Davidson (2012, p. 380) demonstrates the different characters between political and social revolution, as the former changes governmental regimes and overthrows groups of political leaders, while the latter causes the transformation from one mode of production to other ones:

In the capitalist epoch, revolutions are sometimes required to move from one form of capital accumulation to another. . . . but precisely because these all remained within the confines of the capitalist mode of production, they can only be defined as political, no matter how extreme the consequences in this respect might be. . . . Social revolutions are epochal events involving change from one type of society to another and certainly not only changes of government, however violently achieved.

Although there was a left wing in Khana Rassadon, like its civil leaders - Pridi Phanomyong, this revolution barely changed ideological, economic, and cultural aspects. Riggs (1966, p. 148) also reflected that this change was a political revolution, even from a modernisation viewpoint, as “They presented an imposing façade of official constitutionalism, but behind this front, real power passes largely to members of bureaucracy, both military and civilian.” In addition, Pridi decided not to change Thailand to be a republic, so Thai capitalism continued its processes under the existing structure.

Nevertheless, Pridi and later leaders from Khana Rassadon managed a capitalist economic development in a direction of economic nationalism by nationalising some business like the salt and tobacco trades, excluding Chinese from some business and careers, and starting new manufacturing of goods like sugar-milling and rubber goods. The government also attempt to cut the middlemen, mostly the Chinese, out of the main businesses. While Thailand had been able to secure its status as one of the major rice exporters in the world since the late 19th century, Khana Rasson governments established the Thai Rice Company (TRC) and many related companies to replace those of Chinese businessmen. There were also other investments of the government in the businesses of shipping, banking, and insurance by European companies. Thus, unsurprisingly, even though the Khana Rassadon did not involve broad classes in its revolution, there were people

cheering in the road after the accomplishment of the revolutionary mission. There were many signs that several classes, such as some economic nationalists agreed with this change (Suehiro, 1989, pp. 106-107).

4.3.3 Thailand before and after the WWII: the proof of a political revolution

However, the economic nationalist direction changed, particularly after Pridi came back to the country. He had been in exile because his proposal for a socialist economic program failed to be accepted by King Prajadhipok and several Khana Rassadon's members. As a Financial Minister, Pridi found that many institutions were needed for expanding capitalism such as a national bank. He also returned to a direction of liberal economy and started to bring Chinese businessmen to work with the state. Actually, despite the nationalist policies on economic development, profit from prior monopolised business remained concentrated within a few Chinese families. This remained, and possibly to a greater extent, after they worked with Pridi's government on economic development (Pasuk & Baker, 1997, pp. 120-125)

The state-led capitalism under Khana Rassadon developed the forces of production and social relations considerably. There was the beginning of trade unions for workers in each enterprise, albeit still small and scattered. Nevertheless, this development did not create the productivity and the potential power of important classes in a capitalist system, like bourgeoisie and proletariat, which would be free from the existing structure, and could overcome a traditional relationship from the era of absolute monarchy.

As the results of UCD, which had been increasingly stabilised by a 1932 passive revolution, and was uninterrupted, the conflicts among the ruling class revealed themselves after major events, such as WWII and the mysterious death of King

Ananda (Rama VIII) (1925 - 1946).¹³ Consequently, the project of altering an entire society claimed by Khana Rassadon had not reached its goal. Actually, there had been a steady series of attempted revolts beginning only some months after the revolution. There were many conservatives who were exempted or were able to escape from being executed or deported after the revolution. Some of them attempted to rebel, such as in 1933, and then waited for a return to privilege status in Thai society again. This was completed by the military 'Coups Group' led by General Phin Shunhawan, which staged a coup in 1947 (Thak, 2007, p. 32). Field Marshall Por Phibunsongkram (or Phibun in short), who was an important initial member of Khana Rassadon, even decided to join this group and apparently broke political ties with Pridi. This coup was the beginning point of the influence of the military in Thai politics that still exists.

The late 1940s to the late 1950s, were full of power competition among elites, especially within the military. Besides the attempts to stage a coup to return power to exiled Pridi, there was a so-called 'triumvirate', the balancing of power relationships between Phibun, Police General Phao Sriyanond, and Field Marshall Sarit Thanarat. While Phibun sought to maintain his prime minister and being accepted among military officials, he attempted to manage the programs for building a modern Thai nation. This included promoting a particular culture, manners reflecting the 'good' and 'modern' Thainess such as urging people to wear hats when staying outside, introducing western music, food, and beverages to Thais, as well as creating a good relationship with the U.S. as related to an anti-communist mission. In the meantime, Phao increased his influence in the police department and assumed the role of assassinating the opposition of the government, especially the early leftist in Thailand. Similarly, Sarit consolidated his charisma and power in the army and gained benefit from his patronage of businessmen. Although it seemed that Phibun had a closer relationship with both of them, he actually attempted to balance off "the power rivalry between Phao and Sarit" (Thak, 2007, p. 56). The end of this struggle came after Sarit staged a

¹³ Under serious political conflicts, Pridi was accused as a planner of this murder, particularly by a member of the conservative Democrat Party. Although he attempted to fight the 1947 coup group many times, he never won. Pridi went to exile in China and France where he lived until he died.

coup in 1957. One reason for success was the U.S., who chose Sarit and his royalist group rather than Phibun whose was rumored to be restoring his relationship with Pridi (Anderson, 1998, pp. 145-146; Nattaphong, 2013, pp. 335-339).

4.3.4 The development under the dictatorship: the effects of international conflict and the comparable UCD

The era of Sarit could be classified as the beginning of the intensive character of UCD in modern Thai society. As I mentioned in chapter 2, UCD needed to occur once as a pre-capitalist society was transforming to a capitalist society because this is the only way to emerge with a combination of old and new social relations. However, I would say that in similar situations, such as intense international conflict leading to a crucial development in one country, this could create a condition comparable to a real condition in another one. This was the situation that occurred when the Vietnam War intensified. The U.S. provided aid and supervision for development, to Thailand, in exchange for Thailand hosting the main base for the anti-communist mission in the SEA region during the Vietnam War (Anderson, 1998, pp. 139-173). This was a reclassification of external unevenness to an internal one after new modernisation development that had clearly started from the First National Economic Development Plan (1961 - 1965).

Although, there was industrialisation in a greater degree than that of the actual UCD, the productions and areas of rising industries were still chosen by the network of ruling class.¹⁴ However, these groups were not the same ruling class as that of the early Bangkok era. On the contrary, because of its character as the comparable UCD, they were a mix of traditional elites (monarch, high-ranking bureaucrats, and military officials) and modern ones (technocrats and some major capitalists).

¹⁴ This first plan was not agreed among elites and the U.S. officers and did not make many changes in industry. Instead its results particularly focused on building infrastructure and the service sector and prioritized the security purpose rather the economic one (Thak, 2007, pp. 154-155, 168-169).

Moreover, there were the actions which created more links between the old and the new social relations. Sarit revived the traditional ceremonies, particularly relating to the monarch, such as some royal ceremonies that had been abandoned after the 1932 revolution. King Bhumibol (Rama IX) (1927 - 2016), who attended his coronation ceremony in 1946 but choose to live abroad rather than in Thailand after the death of his brother, was promoted by Sarit and, their overwhelmingly best partner, the U.S. These two leading figures of modernised Thailand benefitted from mutual interests in this situation. The junta used the growing legitimacy of the monarch to attack political challengers, such as liberals and communist movements, by accusing them of violating the *lèse-majesté* laws. The king could use this opportunity to restore his reputation after it had deteriorated during a previous decade.

As a result of this process, the close relationship between monarch, military, and businessmen was more secure. Generally, it was seen as having a common interest in their businesses, but this network also made excessive profits even from the traditional ritual that held the monarch as the central symbol (McCargo, 2005). Besides donating to the royal fund for charity directly, some businessmen find ways to create mutual interests with the monarch. Bangkok Bank, for example, gained large benefits from an increasing deposit of temples in the Northeastern provinces where its branches had just been opened because they had previously sponsored the palace-led events of a charity for merit in those provinces (Handley, 2006, pp. 174, 176). In addition, Crow Property Bureau (CPB), which has managed businesses directly owned by the monarch (albeit legally under the supervision of the Minister of Finance), continually received interests from giant businesses such as rents from properties in central Bangkok, Siam Cement, Siam Commercial Bank, and Deves Insurance (Porphant, 2015).

This is a specific character of UCD - “an amalgam of archaic with more contemporary forms” (Trotsky, 1932/2008, p. 5). Although a close relationship within the ruling class had been developed and used for extending their interests in Thai modern capitalism, this relationship partly imitates the patron-clients relationship amongst elites in a pre-modern society. This situation also reminds us

of the way to share power among king and aristocrats within galactic polity in which the king, as the most powerful figure, would seek economic and political benefits from inferior landlords who would return their homage, tributary gifts, and soldiers during wars. Under this personal-rule system, instead of using a rule of law and a merit system, getting close to the King was a most effective method for receiving opportunities in trading or for being appointed to a high-position aristocrat.

However, the recent patron-client relationships were in a combined condition, i.e. it is part of capitalist development in which surplus value is the ultimate goal of an accumulation of capital. That is opposite to an accumulation for consumption by or for war between the ruling classes in the pre-capitalist modes of production. Thus, in the networks of elites - bureaucrats, military officials, and big capitalists - in which each individual had businesses, they sought to find reciprocal benefits, especially support and protection of network's members businesses. Nevertheless, as the most important source of legitimacy, the monarch has to receive the most support by other groups in order to increase their interests in both businesses and social status. This situation gradually increased the power of the monarch, albeit he received criticism as well. Although it seemed that Bhumibol could implicitly signal his demand to other elites to comply with him, Bhumibol himself still did not order the authorities and other elites directly as happened more obviously in the 1990s (Handley, 2006, pp. 269-270; Somsak, 2007a).

4.3.5 The rising tension under the new round of UCD

The concept of UCD also explains the situation of the emerging massive proletariat that had been formed after the development process. According to the above development, the service and industrial sector were concentrated within Bangkok and nearby provinces areas, such as Ayutthaya, Samut Prakarn, and Prathumthani (Porphant, 2017). This development caused a substantial migration of population from underdeveloped rural areas to the industrial urban area. Suburbs were still

used as a producing space for raw materials and food supply to support a more advanced production. Furthermore, they also were havens for those laid off or for unemployed labour, who could live in a subsistence manner while waiting to re-enter the cities again when ready. By contrast, investment was made in Bangkok so it would become the national center in every aspect, namely government bodies, economic investments, financial activities, and cultural spaces. This reflects a character of extreme unevenness (Bello, 1998, pp. 95-96). According to Trotsky's thesis, though a modern economy has constant and rapid growth, it does not mean that it is operated under the modern decision-making unit. With a character of combination, the modern Thai state at that time was still dominated by the traditional patron-client relationships rather than the rule of law and a merit system, as mentioned above. The reproduction of these characteristics has embedded them more deeply into Thai society, and facilitated the conservative ruling class to continuously gain interests. This is argued by Anderson: "This is by no means to suggest that old ruling cliques of generals, bankers, bureaucrats, and royalty do not continue to hold the keys of real political power; rather, that these cliques have found themselves new, and possibly menacing, 'popular allies'" (Anderson, 1998, p. 142).

The results of this extreme polarisation was the first mass uprising 'from below' in October 1973 (Anderson, 1998), one of the most important political demonstrations in Thai history. This uprising ousted the junta leaders from Thailand and led to a process of drafting a new constitution. Moreover, the struggle for more benefits for workers and peasants led by student activists, expanded across the country for a couple of years. However, the Thai ruling class still remained in power, in both politics and the economy. They started to use state apparatuses, creating the counter-progressive groups such as Krating Daeng [Red Gaur], Village Scout, Nawaphon, and so on. This showed that the conflicts were created systematically and directly by the ruling class (Somsak, 2001). The attacks towards the student and worker movements occurred continually. However, it was the U.S. leaving the region in the late 1970s that affected elites tremendously, especially in their fear of a Communist threat, both domestic and foreign. The long period of domination by the ruling class allowed them to control

the most powerful forces, like state apparatuses to defeat the challengers. In Thailand, the counter revolution from above was extremely brutal and violent, the Thammasat Massacre on October 6, 1976 was very clear evidence. This incident showed an intensive attempt by the Thai ruling class to block any progressive pathways of development without their input. This incident ended with the coup just after hours of suppression, and led to a wave of students and people joining guerilla warfare in remote areas with CPT (Somsak, 1993).

The conflicts above demonstrate that the character of the UCD in Thailand positively affected the ruling class. On the one hand, according to Thailand's passive revolution and slow industrialisation, the secure status of the ruling class from the early capitalist period had lasted for a very long time, without radical challenges from the bourgeoisie or proletariat. There had only been conflicts within the groups inside the ruling class. The bourgeoisie notwithstanding, as they were mostly of Chinese decent and aligned with the ruling class, there was an inevitable incompatible contradiction looming when masses of the working class, with less class conscious and strong organisations, became concentrated in cities and seemed likely to change society to a more modernised one, while the major power still supported the ruling class. Although a considerable number of students and workers fought under CPT's leading and its influential ideas would direct their later actions (especially ideas of a semi-colony and semi-sakdina society and internal colonisation explained in chapter 2), they could not create unity among participants and split into many groups after the decline of CPT (Thikan, 2014, Giles, 2003; 2012).

4.4 The dawn of neoliberalism under dictatorship

After the triumph over the leftists in the political crisis in the late 1970s, it seemed that the time for reviving the status of the king and strengthening the elite's networks, as it had been under the era of Sarit, came up again. There was an increase in the penalty for article 112 as the minimum punishment was set to at least 3 years in jail, while there had been none before this amendment. There

was also the heavy and continual massive suppression of the communist movement. However, the character of UCD since the beginning of Thai capitalism still showed its effects in the conflicts among the powerful groups in the ruling class, especially in the military and the monarchy, which had barely changed over many decades in terms of their power and status in Thai society. For example, only one year after the coup in 1979, a new one was launched and it deposed PM Thanin Kraiwichien, who had been supported by the palace. General Kraingsak Chamanand became the country's new executive leader.

4.4.1 Boom and bust: Economic fluctuations, political conflicts, and the economic crisis

Despite the fact that the ruling class eventually found General Prem Tinnasulanond, who had the potential to connect with the elite factions and to make compromises with them, the results of UCD and international situations still ceaselessly affected Thailand's politics and economy. This produced two characters, the first one was more disparity between urban and rural areas. An increasing level of development attracted more mass migration from suburbs to cities. In urban areas a number of proletariats had aggregated densely and probably led the start of any disruptions. In the 1980s, and since the brutal repression of October 1976, and later other repressions towards the leftists, there were no longer serious political gatherings in cities. It might be for this reason the ruling class felt safer from the spectre of the lower class's uprisings, and since they had been overwhelming in this latest short period of democracy. Secondly, there was more concentration of power to elite groups. Military officials, for example, had gotten more shared benefits from their close business groups. Consequently, there were more attempts to stage coups d'état, even though the prime ministers were all appointed by the military leaders of prior coups and were generals of the army. This meant that the military, the main apparatus of the Thai ruling class since the early Thai modern state, had gradually become very powerful and indispensable for the ruling class's domination. Besides the existing apparatuses, under Prem, technocrats had more important roles as the main

mechanism for the policy-making process, as well as for connecting the government to private entrepreneurs.

However, the Thai ruling class could not prevent the influence of international economic circumstances, such as the oil crisis or Plaza Accord, which were both advantageous as well as disadvantageous to the Thai economy. Although the ruling class attempted to balance the benefit to different classes, it could not, at this point, prevent those changes.

After the 1988 general election, Prem refused to accept the Prime Minister position, so it was passed to the leader of the party that received the most votes. This was the first elected PM in 12 years. And again, the new PM, General Chartchai Shunhawan, was a descendant of the so-called elite group - the 'Ratchakroo group' - comprised of the military generals and politicians which had leading roles in staging the coups and had been politically influential since the late 1940s. This demonstrated that a disparity of power and economic inequality in Thailand resulting from the UCD conditions at that time, were continued. The political participation of the exploited gradually became politically important, especially their votes in continual general elections, though they were insufficient in dealing with the power of the ruling class (Surin & McCargo, 1997). In other words, since the movements from below had been continually repressed, they were unable to return the Thai political scene to the same form as it had been in the 1970s. Most Thai people participated in politics individually and occasionally, especially the official political processes, rather than founding and/or joining a permanent organisation. Thus, the Thai ruling class was able to utilise the existing power in all political, cultural, and economic spaces, to secure their privileges while continuing to exploit the lower classes. Nevertheless, to maintain and gain more power and wealth, the ruling class still operated under its patron-client relationship. Thus, the conflict with the ruling class still continued endlessly, in an outlaw method form.

Shortly after Prem's official leaving, the group in power within the ruling class, viewed the newly elected government as a new threat to their secure interests and hegemony, so a coup was launched again in 1991. After toppling Chartchai's government and suspending the constitution, the junta led by General Suchinda Kraprayoon, appointed Anand Punyarachoon, a former diplomatic officer, as the PM on duty. After a new election in the next year, General Suchinda chose to take the PM post himself instead of allowing the duly elected leader from the winning party. Accordingly, there was a demonstration against Suchinda's coup-like act. Although, this demonstration comprised mainly of white-collar workers, reflecting an increased development of class consciousness in the urban working class, its most influential leader was General Chamlong Srimuang, a royalist, a former secretary to Prem, and also a later leader of the Yellow-Shirt movement. Unsurprisingly, the military brutally repressed the protest once again, and this has become known as the 1992 Black May. Rather than intervening before or during the repression, King Bhumibol showed up after people were injured and died. Anand was appointed and again launched policies to favor the liberal capitalist in Thailand, though some of them also directly aided some corporations owned by members of the elite's circle.

Although the crackdown of the demonstration in 1992 was reflective again of the ruling class's ability to politically manipulate the society, the 1991 election and the demonstration itself indicated the growing power of the ruled class. This resulted from a previous development, which had produced an increasing number of working class and improved their productive skills in the contemporary capitalism. However, this went on under the UCD character of Thai society. Anek Laothammatas offered the renowned concept of 'two tales of two democracies' which explains that Thai urban and rural areas have different perspectives towards participation in a democratic regime. The urban area contains much middle class, who understand the principle of representative democracy and know how politicians can be corrupt, so they usually participate in protests against the government. In contrast, workers and peasants working and living in provincially rural areas have not benefited considerably from any official development and can therefore, be easily bought by politicians through vote-buying or other direct

benefits. In other words, winning an election and then forming a government could be guided by the vote of rural people, and then that government could be ousted by a mass protest of the middle class from urban areas (Anek, 1996).

However, the above concept is only partly correct. It was true that most grand demonstrations were done in Bangkok. But it did not solely derive from the class or other qualities of people in different areas. Instead, the character of concentration of power in the Thai state is a reason why people who want to turn their ideas into reality have to protest politicians or bureaucrats in Bangkok. Despite increasing inequality, the differences of the level of recognition of that inequality between people in different areas has been reduced. After a development of many decades, an improved quality of life has provoked people to think more about some restrictions which prevent them from receiving more distribution of the production of the society. This is particularly apparent in communication technology, which is a main tool for society to share their views concerning social problems, even though it is also used for propagandising the ruling ideas. We witnessed an increasing number of social movements in Thailand from 170 in 1990 to 988 in 1994. Furthermore, these movements managed their activities on a long-term basis and many of them extended their objectives beyond just their rights to other issues, like the environment (Praphat, 1998, pp. 34, 35, 39). However, it needs to be recognised that the progressive character of the Thai social movement has still been limited under the influence of CPT, as I mentioned before. Unfortunately, after the economic crisis in 1997, this direction was more intensified.

Although the ruling class's power had been maintained for decades and through many difficulties, it faced a significant challenge with the crisis in 1997. There was chaos throughout the country, namely protests in the central business area in Bangkok, the resignation of the cabinet, a rising rate of unemployed labour, deprecation of the Thai Baht, and so on. Although this capitalist crisis was possibly the beginning of another uprising from below in Thailand, the core elites were able to sustain their superior status. Particularly, the central groups of the ruling class which were bailed out by the government, such as Siam Commercial Bank

(Handley, 2006, p. 416). However, it did not mean they could gain without any loss. The political reformation demanded drafting a new constitution and this request came from both the potential ruling class and the ruled class after the 1992 Black May. For the former, they expected the effectiveness of an expansion of Thai capitalism as an ultimate aim, but they also wanted that reformation done under their supervision. For the latter, they might agree with the first aspects of the former, like more development, but a more important demand was more democracy and more shared benefits. In other words, they both needed to be free from the results of an unevenness in economy, but they still disagreed on the character of a combination in Thai society. While the old powerful elites and some conservatives were uncertain about whether to oppose or accept this proposal, the political tide had already been influential in Thai society at that moment. Although there was some opposition, the majority of Thais voted to approve this new constitution in 1997. And the first government under this constitution has changed Thailand's political scene significantly.

4.4.2 Established power of ruling ideas and its effects towards social movement after the crisis

As mentioned above, the impact of this crisis reduced the strength of the Thai ruling class significantly after having gained interests in the Thai economy with business monopolies and building rents. Due to this and prior incidents, like the negative image of the military in the Black May, it seemed that the ruling class retreated from political intervention and allowed politicians to enjoy politics in parliament and in elections. Nevertheless, the Thai authorities ceaselessly articulated many stories about King Bhumibol and other royal members, the most important source of hegemony, in an effort to keep and strengthen their hegemonic status. Kasien Tejapeera argued that Bhumibol's 'philosophy of sufficient economy' (see below) under the hegemony dominated ideas of development and production and were used to shape the socialist frame against capitalism.

After the financial crisis in 1997, the thoughts of ‘back to sufficient life’ or ‘the answer is at the village’ were growing among social activists (Kengkij & Hewison, 2009), particularly, those under the influence of CPT ideas. They refused the continuity of the capitalist economy. Instead, people could live without commodities from a capitalist market if they could produce the four subsistence items needed for survival - food, clothes, accommodations, and medicines. However, socialism is not their alternate choice because they experienced the collapse of CPT. Subsistence farming began trending throughout the country. This harmonised with Bhumibol’s idea of ‘philosophy of sufficient economy’. Due to his character of ambiguous speaking, he gave no exact meaning of this ‘philosophy’. However, Thai authorities published many books to explain the idea more concretely. Although the application of the idea related to agricultural production, the publisher wrote that it could be utilised in every type of production because of its general character (see more than 20 books about this idea on Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (2019)). Actually, they were right because the concept was too abstract, much like the principle of ‘Kwam Phor Dee [be sufficient],’ every producer normally estimates the number of resources of production and then uses them in the most efficient way. Nevertheless, this principle appears in every place teaching management in Thailand. Handley (2006, pp. 414-418) argued that the philosophy of sufficient economy is nothing more than Bhumibol’s dominant ideas to restrain the consciousness from changes and also to again praise him as the leader of the nation.

This demonstrates the conflicts in the Thai capitalist mode of production, which was about a century old. While it wanted more development of forces of production and productivity, especially, during the coming direction of global neoliberalism, the character of UCD which presents in its superstructure, like the traditional relationships among elites in power, even though reformed many times, still restricted development to an extent. For the ruling class, intervention would be obviously needed if any developments seemed to go beyond their control.

4.5 The rise of Thaksin and the clear characters of Thai combined society

Thaksin is actually a person inside the core group of the ruling class. His background is as a typical elite in Thai society. He is a son of a local bourgeois from the Northern Province, graduated from the Royal Police Cadet Academy, and worked as a police official for many years. He became rich through his businesses, which won contracts with state authorities by the patronage of the network of influential army generals and politicians. Also, his marriage to a daughter of an elite family was arranged under a royal sponsorship. Nevertheless, due to his understanding of a capitalist system, Thaksin was also one of the core elites who saw and responded to how Thailand could develop to be closer to the success of the developed countries, at least those in Asia. Unsurprisingly, it was the characteristics of UCD that needed to be changed and those changes in the era of Thaksin have altered Thai society forever.

4.5.1 A characterisation of Thailand as a combined society and Thaksin's chance

Thaksin's Thai Rak Thai party (TRT) won the election in 2001 under the new constitution and was the most popular party in Thai history. The distinct quality of TRT was the prompt implementation of the policies advertised during the election campaign. Many policies directly benefited the exploited classes in both urban and rural areas such as the Universal Healthcare Scheme and the Village Micro Fund. There were also policies for the bourgeoisie such as the Capital for Small and Middle Enterprises (SMEs) policy. Someone might call them "quasi-Keynesian" (Glassman, 2010) or "dual-track" policies (Pasuk & Baker, 2004). Kevin Hewison (2004) labeled this two-direction policy as "the new social contract". This situation set the stage for a new watershed in Thai society.

The responses of TRT towards the difficulty of the lower classes affected the role of social movements. Some activists decided to work with TRT, but another group

still believing in the CPT's direction of anti-politician, and kept their distance from the political parties (Kengkij & Hewison, 2009a). On the one hand, this situation weakened the role of movements and NGOs which had worked with vulnerable people for a long time (Uchain, 2006, pp. 160-162). On the other, people with less opportunities started to positively reconsider the significance of their votes in an election, which could return to them much more benefit than they had thought. This view spread throughout the country and gradually transformed into a fortress of Thaksin parties for the future.

However, after Thaksin's government started to launch more neoliberal policies such as the privatisation law, the free-trade agreement, and discovering and selling natural resources, many activists, NGOs, and academics in universities, who mostly believed the ideas of communitarian-nationalism, began to form anti-Thaksin groups and alliances. They staged protests in several locations, including in front of the electricity plant in Nonthaburi in opposition to its privatisation (Pye & Schaffar, 2008).

4.5.2 The 2006 coup: the entry into the uncompromised conflict in Thailand

While Thaksin was seen as a danger to Thai society by many social activists, NGOs, and academics because he had already exposed his true nature as a tyrant, who corrupted and collaborated with foreign capitalists, he was also seen as the enemy by the existing elites because he was destroying their entrenched patronage network and replacing it with his more efficient one. Although these two perspectives were based on differing points of view dictated by class interests, their mutual agreement on ruling ideas, monarchism, and nationalism led them to abandon their prior conflicts and instead cooperate to defeat the same enemy.

The array of anti-Thaksin groups and organisations was the evidence of this coordination and culminated in the establishment of the People Alliance for Democracy (PAD), which would later be known as the Yellow-Shirt movement. This

combination of leaders of PAD could not have been imagined in a previous decade. On the one hand, there were the leaders who were royalist elites like Sondhi Limthongkul, a businessman, media tycoon, and ultra-royalist, or Chamlong Srimuang, who I mentioned in the 1992 Black May. On the other hand, some PAD's leaders came from the pro-democratic movements and organisations for the poor workers and peasants. As I said, these people joined the same movement because they were all dominated by the core ruling ideas of monarchism and nationalism, some also had anti-capitalist sympathies. However, for them, it was not normal capitalism. Specific words were coined, 'Thunniyom Saman [the vicious capitalism]' and 'Thaksin's regime' to indicate a bad move made by Thaksin only, but not used for other capitalists (Pye & Schaffar, 2008). This was a result of the influence of CPT as an explanation of a character of Thai society as mentioned previously.

Although there was a combination of contrasting ideas and activists within PAD, the accusations against Thaksin of corruption, and betraying the pillars of the nation, most notably, the monarch, were enough to generate support for PAD. Eventually, demonstrations by PAD and the preparation for the coup by the ruling class elites (Wassana, 2010) paved the way for the coup of September 19, 2006. There are evidences of the collaboration of the power groups in the ruling class to stage this coup, e.g. a meeting arranged by Prem as president of the Privy Council, between General Sonthi Boonyaratgalin, a leader of the coup, King Bhumibol and Queen Sirikit, which occurred on the night of the coup. Moreover, the caretaker prime minister appointed by Sonthi was General Surayuth Chulanond, the former chief commander of the army and a member of the Privy Council at the time. The coup severely destroyed Thaksin's faction. He and his family were investigated due to the corruption issues and part of his assets were appropriated. TRT was later dissolved by a verdict from the constitution court, which was seen as a new apparatus of the ruling class, in case of supposed election fraud.

After the coup in 2006, some of the supporters and politicians of the Thaksin camp, and even the non-Thaksin groups who advocated for a democratic regime,

started to stage protests against the new junta-appointed government. These were held in many places including in front of Siam Paragon shopping mall, Thammasat university, and Sanam Luang [the grand field] besides the Grand Palace (Uchain, 2011). These groups worked together as a loose network, calling themselves Kruekai 19 Kanya Tan Rattapraharn [The Anti-Coup Network of 19 September]. Each group held its own political ideas and presented them independently without a mutual agreement. Subsequently, it was thought to form a central organisation to mobilise more support to abolish the result of 2006 coup. This first organisation was 'Naewruam Prachachon Tan Rattapraharn [the People Alliance Against the Coup]' and, then the name changed to 'Naew Ruem Prachathippatai Khablai Phadejkarn [the Democratic Alliance Against Dictatorship - DAAD]' in 2007. Nevertheless, according to their character of independence, some groups decided not to join DAAD and participated only in the name of the previous network. These were the first anti-coup movements in the past fifteen years and included many experienced activists in its activities. Thus, these movements held enthusiastic protests and offered various political objectives, such as requesting the junta-appointed government be dissolved, and reinstating the 1997 constitution. They also worked to mobilise Thai people to vote 'No' in the referendum for the new constitution. However, after the politicians in Thaksin's camp joined and then, likely controlled, a major part of the movements, it seemed that the groups outside the Thaksin camp gradually left the movement. They de facto ended after Palang Prachachon Party [People Power Party] (PPP), the substituted party of TRT, won the 2007 election under the new constitution, which had been drafted by the junta-appointed committee.

However, the Yellow Shirts did not accept the results from this election. Besides the personal conflict between leaders of PAD and Thaksin, most of PAD supporters still thought the voters in rural areas were bought by politicians (as explained by Anek above), especially by the politicians in the Thaksin camp, and that they had no ability to acknowledge the differences between national and personal interests. There were demonstrations during Samak Suntornvej's government, as well as the seizure of the government house, and Donmueng and Suvarnabhumi

international airports during the period of the government of Somchai Wongsawas, a brother-in-law of Thaksin.¹⁵

Afterwards, the ruling class employed the judicial branch again. The constitutional court judged that PPP were involved in a vote-buying scheme in the 2007 election. This resulted in the main executive body of the party being banned from involvement in any political activities for five years, the same as those of TRT. It meant that Somchai was suddenly ousted as prime minister. Accordingly, the House of Representatives needed to choose the new prime minister. At this point, there was a very controversial incident involving Abhisit Vejjajiva, the leader of the Democratic Party, who visited the military barracks before the majority of the House of Representatives had elected him as the new prime minister, rather than PPP candidate who actually was assured of more votes. There was a clue that a lobbying process was conducted by elites to negotiate with some politicians from Thaksin's camp to promote Abhisit to the office of prime minister instead.

These incidents provoked reactions from Thaksin's supporters and other pro-democracy activists in an effort to reverse these systematically anti-democracy operations from within the establishment. Naew Ruem Prachathippatai Tortan Phadejkarn Hang Chart [United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship - UDD] came to replace UAAD and started to use the color red and the red shirt as the organisation's symbol in opposition to the yellow of PAD. They started to launch rallies and set up local groups in several provinces to express their opinions and ask Abhisit to dissolve the House of Representatives and call for a new election. The final result of this revolt, however, was not any different from similar attempts in the past. There were the brutal suppressions in April 2009 and more bloody ones in May 2010. Nearly one hundred people died and a thousand people were wounded during these events (Human Rights Watch, 2011).

¹⁵ Somchai had to succeed to the position of prime minister because the constitutional court penalized Samak, making him step down after he received a wage as the host of a cooking show on TV

Although this circumstance could have escalated the revolt to a higher level, the surrender of the leaders of UDD hindered the intention of prolonging the demonstration and pushing back some of the Red Shirts. Nearly a year after the suppression, Abhisit dissolved the House and set the date for the next election on July 3, 2011. Of course, the new Thaksin party, Pheu Thai [For Thais] Party - PT, won the election again.

During this time the conflict was expressed in many characters of class struggle and consciousness, the ruling class utilised their ruling ideas and state apparatuses to curb the uprisings because they needed to win this battle or they would lose everything they had enjoyed for decades. Consequently, the People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC), the new organisation of Yellow Shirts substituting for PAD, protested the government of Yingluck Shinnawat, a sister of Thaksin, over similar accusations to those of Thaksin and, not surprisingly, were then overthrown by the military coup in May 2014.

4.5.3 Yellow VS Red Shirts: are they really different from a perspective of class?

We can see that most of the leaders and participants in the Yellow and Red Shirt movements are people from the same classes and backgrounds.¹⁶ Almost all the people of both sides are working class, leaders, and intellectuals and they also have common political experiences and levels of knowledge. The movements' speakers on the stages and important participants are people with the same qualities and experiences as their counterparts. Many of them are old friends who formerly were involved with the political incidents in the 1970s, who are CPT joiners, trade unionists, representatives of the peasant movements, the rich

¹⁶ In the early gatherings of the UDD, many supporters still wore yellow shirts which were sold as the souvenir of the 60th coronation of Bhumibol. The celebration of this event in June 2006 was managed in a very exciting and impressive scene. And the leader of this management was Thaksin.

entrepreneurs, bureaucrats, military officers, and politicians (Kanokrat, 2012). The question is then, why do people fight others who are from their class?

In the development of the Thai society that I have described, the power of the ruling class has been resilient and stable after being interrupted. They have not only had accumulated economic wealth and state apparatuses, but also ruling ideas or hegemony. Moreover, there is no strongly radical group which could lead the oppressed class to build their own movement from below, especially leftists who are the main opposition of the ruling class in a capitalist society. Because of the severe and continual repression by the Thai state, this kind of movement recently disappeared from Thai society, though it was formerly strong. The choice of later movements is an adaption of the leftover ideas and experiences of the previous movements, especially CPT, found to be suitable for more recent situations. Nonetheless, if the oppressed class cannot oppose the influence of ruling ideas, reproduced ceaselessly in a mode of production where they live, it is not surprising that most of them would eventually implicitly accept those ideas and even try to prevent people in their own classes from attacking those same ideas. It does not mean, however, that the oppressed class could not formulate and strengthen their own radical thought and actions. They would likely be created and combined with the ruling ideas, but the proportion would be varied depending on the character of each movement.

For the Thai social activists, instead of criticising the entire exploiting classes and capitalist system for corruption and exploitation, they would rather focus on some scapegoats to be sacrificed. In other words, they determine the issues on whom the blame must specifically rest. This was the ideological impact of CPT towards the perspective of many later social activists in Thailand. There are two characters. First, according to the ideas of a semi-colony and semi-sakdina society and internal colonisation of CPT, capitalism is not seen as a main problem for Thai society. What should the activists do if they want to criticise the negative impacts of capitalism? They have to link the existing capitalist system in Thailand to the negative characters of colony and sakdina, and colonisation or penetration to 'local community' or what Giles Ungpakorn (2007, p. 91) calls 'localist anarchism'.

Thus, for most Thai activists, as long as the domestic capitalists do not exploit the lower classes too much, especially in rural areas, and they do not facilitate an extraction of the national wealth by foreign capitalists, their existence as ‘vicious capitalists’ could be invisible, and they can continue their exploitation without serious resistance. Nevertheless, when the conflict emerges, there is usually a polarisation, and some elites will be exempted from criticism depending on which side the activists give their support. They might choose one of the bad characters, for instance, a national traitor and a sakdina or Jao [a feudal lord], to protest against their capitalist opposition. After that, they might separate capitalism into two types, namely the acceptable and the unacceptable capitalism. Then, they may attack only one part by creating a specific term to describe it, such as the invention of the word ‘thunniyom saman [a vicious capitalism]’, ‘Thaksinomic’, and Ammart [an ancient aristocrat] used to attack specific individuals or problems rather than a mode of production as a whole.

For example, Yellow-Shirt activists (many of whom are NGOs and leaders of trade unions), often label Thaksin as a national traitor because of the many shadowy incidents he has participated in, such as selling shares of his communication company which owns satellites to a Singapore Fund, privatising the biggest state energy enterprise, and instituting some government policies led by his parties, which provide benefits to neighboring countries. The important slogans and signs of PAD or PDRC (see below), are related to the nation, such as the banner of PAD as Koo Chart [Saving the Nation] or the use of the Thai national flag as a central sign in the case of PDRC. Thaksin also is criticised for deceiving and buying Red Shirts who mainly live in rural areas. They may be naïve and vote for him and his policies in exchange for money. Nevertheless, they have rarely criticised the monarch, who actually had dominated the Thai economy to a much greater extent and for much longer than Thaksin, as well as worked closely with the U.S. during the Cold War to shape the future direction of the Thai political economy. When the royalists in PAD introduced an attitude of praise towards the monarch as an indispensable part of the nation, the monarchy network - the most privileged group in the country - was sheltered from any criticism by anyone both inside and outside PAD explicitly.

Although the revised ideas of CPT and the growing popularity of the monarch had influenced the views and actions of some activists and academics, they could not convince all of them. Many activist groups refused to join PAD, and some academics criticised it after discovering its ideologies. Some activists withdrew themselves during the PAD protests. The actions of PAD were temporarily ended after the 2006 coup, though there were some activists and participants in PAD who changed their affiliation from Yellow-Shirt to Red-Shirt people.

Although there were diverse radical ideas among the Red Shirts because they had not been manipulated by more than group of leaders since its initial foundation, it seems that a large part of them, at some point, were gradually influenced under that character. In the beginning, the anti-coup movements' critiques broadly covered many group of the ruling class, namely the military, aristocrats, and even politicians who committed unacceptable corruption, including Thaksin. He was viewed as a businessman who invested his capital in a political election and gained overwhelming profits in return, via the policies which facilitated only the Thaksin clan (see the second footnote in Uchain Chiangsaen, 2011). This led to the strategy of 'Two Denies' which attempted to get rid of both military officers and greedy politicians at the same time, in order to create a more liberal democracy (Somsak, 2007b).

However, the above notion was circulated particularly among intellectuals and leading activists at that time. It was gradually abandoned after UDD stepped in to be the central organisation of the Red-Shirt movement. Along with acting as a counter to Yellow Shirts and their conservative's ideas, another intention of most Red Shirts and UDD was to bring Thaksin back to Thailand. At this point, similar to the Yellow Shirts, rather than accusing various parts of the exploiting class for creating more social inequality and discontinuing the authoritarian regime, the majority of Red Shirts more or less turned to accuse the specific enemy in their view. They began to point to aristocrats, Prem in particular, as the main problem of Thailand. Royal family members would be condemned more and more later on. Similar to the Yellow Shirts, this again reflects the influence of the failure of CPT

resulting in the ineffective establishment of a progressive way of thinking and the creation of a movement of the oppressed ‘from below’ in Thai society.

It indicates that these two movements are the cross-class social movement. The leaders and participants of each side are comprised of people from the same class of its counterpart. The majority of both being the working class. Thus, there are many similar characters of the Yellow and Red Shirt movements, especially during their early years. The distinct characters, however, would show in later timeframes after the process of polarisation started to dominate and utilise the opposition’s character to delineate their clearer ideologies and objectives.

4.6 The characteristics of the contemporary social movements in Thai society compared with the Red Shirt movements

According to the powerful hegemony of the Thai ruling class, it seemed that almost all social movements in Thailand needed to restrain their own political ideologies and agendas from violating that hegemony and the existing power relations in order to keep their projects in a safe place. The radical ideas, like that of CPT, which aim to change the social structure have gradually seemed less attractive to Thai activists and have been adapted to comply with the ruling ideas instead. The tones of nationalism and communitarianism or anarcho-localism have been substituted for the absence of radical ideas. This direction likely dominated the perspective and the trajectory of actions in Thai activism. This process has gradually injected an alienation of power into most social movements in Thailand in the last decades. Accordingly, when recent conflicts become more polarised within society, the character of the alienation is more expressed.

As explained above, the Red-Shirt movements also have this character. Many Red Shirts, for example, worshipped Thaksin and his clan and abandoned criticising the leaders of the Red Shirt organisations like UDD, similarly, as almost all Thais had done with the monarch.

However, the Red Shirt movements are different from previous movements in the past and others in more recent times because they claimed and undertook to do some of the work to change the power structure in Thailand. Actually, they are, in my opinion, the first movement of the masses in Thailand, which directly attacks the political power of the Thai ruling class, especially the monarch (even though the criticism of the monarch is not done unanimously and is seemingly a hidden action).¹⁷ This notion is close to Chairat's analysis as "Perhaps, they are the first real 'mass' movement that Thailand has ever produced" (Chairat, 2013, p. 208). Although some Red-Shirt supporters have alienated their real power, conformed to some sort of ruling ideas, and even protected some class exploiting leaders, in terms of the whole movement there is significantly more critical thinking and a clearer class analysis expressed by the Red-Shirt groups than those of other movements. The continually radical activities, especially the underground ones, have proved this character. While many movements usually did not attempt to criticise the privileged network with which the monarch was involved, Red Shirts did criticise it and even offered a plan for replacement of the state power held by the existing ruling group. Nevertheless, because of a wide range of groups joining together in the Red Shirt movements, the targets of the criticism were varied, ranging from the monarch, the military junta, monopolised capitalists, to conservative supporters like PAD and PDRC. And, the proportions of radical ideas to ruling or conservative ideas is different. These differences, however, do not negate the fact that the Red-Shirt movements are important for the exploited classes like workers and peasants, and they have substantially challenged the power of the long-time ruling class.

Based on the overlap of characteristics in the overground (that I mentioned earlier in this chapter) and the underground Red-Shirt organisation, characteristics of the former have also shown unavoidably in the latter. There were some activists that had already provided specific radical ideals to the Red Shirts. Red Siam led by

¹⁷ All movements in the past that attacked or challenged the Thai ruling class directly were usually established 'from above' and enacted in the early period of the Thai modern state, such as the group of the members of the royal family and aristocrats for reformation in 1884, the rebellions of the low-rank soldier in 1912, the revolution of bureaucrats and military officers in 1932. And the important mass movements in 1973 and 1992, all focused on protesting against some part of the ruling class, the military in particular. They even accepted fully the legitimacy and neutrality of the monarch.

Laos¹, for example, attempted to provide a socialist view, even though its content was orthodox Maoism and the least developed. Nevertheless, when there was more room for political thinking and expressing, the new underground groups could partly overcome these non-progressive political ideas (I will explain this in chapter 5-6).

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I explained the four periods of development in Thailand. This explanation demonstrates how the character of UCD appeared and affected the society differently in each period. I present this explanation based on the view of historical materialism, so the effects of UCD in early Thai capitalism have influenced the social relations of the later period consecutively, even though the directions of subsequent developments might be diverse because of other factors.

What we see here is that the development of a mode of production, a capitalist one in particular, has relationships among social aspects in many levels and spaces as well as occurring historically. The ongoing processes of capitalism, such as competitions among capitalists, accumulation of surplus value, and the dialectical rearrangement of relations of production are a powerful means of directing the way of living for people, no matter if they want to be involved or not in those relationships. However, people can in fact likewise, change those relations. This is the characteristic of dialectical relationships of human society. Particularly, working-class people, who are not only a majority population but also the origin of value of a capitalism system, have the most potential for turning down the power relations in a superstructure.

In Thailand, we can see the power of movement from below, like the uprisings in 1973 and 1992, as well as the most recent Red-Shirt protests. In the meanwhile, as described, the longstanding position in power, both ideological and physical, still significantly restrains the movements from below.

The understanding of these dialectical relationships not only allow us to recognise the previous social changes and the existing status of each class before the emergence of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement, it also helps to comprehend, in my view, the multi-contradiction which happened with the underground movement, i.e. the conditions of UCD of Thai capitalist society, such as inequality and social hierarchy, created the underground movement which attempted to intentionally destroy those conditions. However, we should not forget that almost all underground activists' living still were dominated by those conditions at the same time. This condition could constrain the movement to meet their initial objective in the future. This reminds us that the 1932 revolution and the overthrowing of the absolute monarchy paved the way to a consolidation of power of the more modernised factions within the Thai ruling class, rather than creating a more democratic regime as had been claimed. Apart from its radical component, there was a contradictory characteristic in the case of the underground movement as well. I will demonstrate this in next chapters.

Chapter 5

Emergence of the Red-Shirt-sided Underground Movement

5.1 Introduction

Sydney Tarrow (1993) provides the concept of ‘cycles of protest’ to examine the wave of features of social movements from their initial formation stage to their decline. According to Tarrow, there are five features: Heightened Conflict, Geographical and Sectoral Diffusion, Social Movement Organisations, New Frames of Meaning, and Expanding Repertoires of Contention. While the overground Red-Shirt movement went through these features and has already been established as one institution in Thai society, in this chapter I will explain the first feature of the cycles of protest of the underground Red-Shirt movement which overlapped with those of the overground one. As outlined previously, my general approach to explanation here is based on the viewpoint of historical materialism.

I will demonstrate how the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement surfaced on the Thai political scene. This situation actually continued from the intensity of the conflicts that had accumulated in Thai society as discussed in the last chapter. On the one hand, the conflicts in the Thai capitalist mode of production, in which the power and hegemony of the ruling class had been entrenched for decades, eventually were revealed in the continual disruption led by the class-alliance movement from the 2006 coup and then developed in the Red-Shirt movement. The repression by the ruling class’ state apparatuses led to the conjuncture from which the underground movement emerged and developed their activities against Thai state in unprecedented patterns. On the other hand, these protests and activities also involved people who used their political experiences to shape their activities in the underground movement. But after the initial moment, it was the social context that had dialectical interactions with those underground activists and their groups.

Therefore, I will explain the character of radical activism which developed in the overground Red-Shirt movement first. After that, there is an explanation of the types of activists and participants in the underground movement; these are categorised by their political experiences and knowledge, and their class. Based on this categorisation, we can see the different paths on which each group decided to enter underground politics as well as how they developed further political ideas and actions (which I will explain more in chapter 6 and 7). Then I will explain the period of ‘Heightened Conflict’ that happened during the two waves of the emergence of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement caused by severe repressions of the Thai state, via force of the army, particularly during the bloody repression of 2010 and the 2014 coup. In each wave I will provide information about the interactions between activists and surrounding contexts, and how these changed.

5.2 Growing from the radical edge: the appearance of the early underground in the Red-Shirt movement

As mentioned in the last chapter, an anti-monarchist disposition was gradually generated by the experiences of some Red-Shirt activists and their supporters, both Red Shirts and non-Red Shirts, during their political participation. The most important moment that made many activists begin to think about a radical change, especially towards the palace, was the brutal repression in mid-May 2010. This event led some passive participants of the Red-Shirt movements, and even some who were former Yellow Shirts, to become involved in alternative kinds of political actions. The suppression by special soldiers armed with military-grade weapons made many Red Shirts think that it was only the monarchy who could orchestrate this extraordinary incident (rather than a modest politician like Abhisit, the Prime Minister at that time). Although other actors in Thai politics, like military generals and aristocrats, were likely involved in the authoritarian rule, the monarchy was viewed by most Red Shirts as the most significant influence of an undemocratic regime.

But to explain the political involvement of the monarchy, the activists needed to avoid speaking out directly. In Thailand, as noted, the *lèse-majesté* laws (generally known among Thais as section 112) have been the tool of the ruling class for restraining criticism of authoritarian power given that the Thai monarchy has been positioned as the central hegemonic figure. An opinion expressed on Thai politics cannot necessarily avoid mentioning the role of the monarch, of course. In the past, many political activists who challenged the legitimacy of the ruling class were arrested and jailed following convictions under section 112 (Streckfuss, 2011).

Although many Red Shirts were dissatisfied with the intervention of the palace in Thai politics, they chose to hide this attitude and scarcely displayed it in an obvious manner. Unsurprisingly, mentioning the palace was also restricted on the main stage of UDD. This left the ‘waytee lek [the small stages]’ managed by the more radical activists as the space for the presence of that stance highlighted by indirect forms of expression such as speeches, music, and poems. These activists comprised ex-communists, academics, and leaders of professional groups such as taxi-drivers and musicians. Because of the various perspectives of the activists on these small stages, the contents of the speeches and performances were diverse. There were many codes and aliases used for substituting the names of members of the royal family, especially to satirise and parody them.¹⁸ Although anti-monarchism was famous on these stages, socialist ideas or a strategy of violent fighting were occasionally spoken about as well. One of the important activists of the small stage describes how he spoke (Laos1, 2018):

[I] used the word ‘the theory of the revolution for liberal capitalist democracy’. The target [to be destroyed] is monarchy. The front force is the modernised capitalists which has the supportive force as the people who align with liberal democracy. . . . We did not have a conflict with UDD [‘s leaders]. While they had a restriction on their big stages, I could speak

¹⁸ For example, one song of Faiyen band is named ‘Lom Jao’. ‘Lom’ means ‘overthrowing’ or ‘defeating’ in Thai, ‘Jao’ can define either as ‘monarch’ or ‘Banker in a gambling game’ in Thai. The early part of the song apparently narrates about attempting to overcome the monarch but then reveals in its climax as talking about a card game.

more on my small stages. But it was very risky. They were afraid that I gave them section 112.

Small stages were generally located nearby the UDD main stage, so the audience could move in and out between them. In many cases, speakers or music bands from the small stage might have the opportunity to perform on the main stage to communicate with a larger audience, albeit this would often happen early in the day (around 3 or 4 o'clock) (Faiyen1, 2018). Despite realising their lesser role in the Red-Shirt rallies, they appreciated the chance for freedom of expression in their activities.

Besides the main demonstrations and actions in Bangkok, these radical stages were also managed in the provincial areas. Occasionally, some activists, who had regularly been active on the small stages in Bangkok, went to help organise and perform on those stages, especially in Bangkok's surrounding provinces. In some provinces, gatherings of the Red-Shirt people were undertaken energetically. Some provincial Red-Shirt supporters were viewed as very radical or as extreme groups of the Red-Shirt movement and were led by strong leaders such as the Rak Chaing Mai 51 [Loving Chiang Mai 51] in Chiang Mai and the Chomrom Khon Rak Udon [Loving Udon Club] in Udon thani. The nearby areas of Bangkok were also known as the Red-Shirt zone, e.g. Pratum Thani and Samut Prakan.

The community radio stations were another tool radical activists adopted for mobilisation. This tool was an outcome of the struggles of the oppressed in the past. In last decades, while the ruling class had many communication tools like TV and radio stations (mostly controlled by the military and the government), and newspapers for promoting their ruling ideas, the powerless possessed a more limited reach through books and pamphlets, printed in a few copies and often forbidden (like in the period after the 1973 Thammasat massacre). After the 1992 Black May, as a result of the political reformation, the new 1997 constitution entitled Thais to unprecedented rights, including the right to possess the communication facilities for increasing civic involvement among ordinary people. Whereas there was concern on the part of the authorities that some of these

stations would be used as a political tool, it was unavoidable that some stations would become political spaces. Main supporters of political groups normally owned their own community radio stations, both legally and illegally. Since 2006 community radio had been used by both the Yellow-Shirt and Red-Shirts factions (National Federation of Community Radio Thailand, 2012, p. 14), especially during the crucial political events. This situation reflected a perspective of struggle between the ruling and the ruled class over the media to win hegemony.

UDD's activists in many areas (such as Chiang Mai, Udon Thani, Khonkaen, and Samut Prakan), combined both community radio stations and small stages to propagate their political ideas and promote activities. Besides those direct benefits, these methods were indirectly useful to the Red-Shirt movement as a whole. On the one hand, they could retain the momentum of the rising of Red-Shirt movement in their areas, and on the other, they created a common identity among Red-Shirt supporters. Because of the difficulty of joining the demonstrations in Bangkok, these methods allowed people to participate in the provinces and see projected live broadcasts of protests in Bangkok on a screen. Although this tactic was not new the Red-Shirts' approach was livelier and appealed more to the working class (especially the music, see Mitchell (2011)).

According to the above situation, many underground activists accumulated the skills of mobilisation whilst working in these radical parts of the Red-Shirt movements. Some of them already had experiences from participating in CPT and later political activities, but they also acquired newer skills from the latest movement of the Red Shirts. Some radical followers might be ordinary supporters who also aimed at a more progressive regime but received less noticed in previous actions. Although these activists and supporters had different backgrounds, political experiences, and ideologies, the common aim was the establishment of a democratic regime in Thailand, and this was enough to inspire them to work together. The 'heightened conflicts' at which some leading activists obviously began their underground activities were thus the 2010 repression and the 2014 coup. According to this timeline, it means that the overground and underground

Red-Shirt movements existed at the same time and their people and thoughts overlapped significantly.

5.3 The types of leading activists and their locations

Before my explanation of the emergence of the underground movement, I will explain the types of underground activists as the tool for the following explanation. This categorisation derived from the criteria of the different trajectories in Red-Shirt activism. This is the key factor in determining the categorisations here: it's about identifying four broad patterns or routes in activist work - from involvement in institutional elite politics; from long-standing political activism at a non-elite level; from academic work; and from experience as 'rank and file' members of previous organisations or non-experience in political activism. According to these criteria, I divided the leading activists into former-politician, experienced, academic, and novice activists.

Nevertheless, after the underground activists had conducted their actions for a considerable length of time, other factors became important, particularly the material conditions in the places in which underground activists survived, and the political situations in Thailand. However, from my observation, the criteria of different trajectories in Red-Shirt activism used in this section is still relevant to describe basic characters of activists. This criterion was a result of previous dialectic relationships between activists, and material conditions, as well as the political situations.

5.3.1 Former-politician activists

The first type of activists is 'former-politician activists. These activists were veterans of the Thai official political scene. Their political experience was gained from working in authoritative positions, both as bureaucrats and politicians, in several political periods under either a military-backed or civilian government.

Thus, they had not only knowledge of the legal processes of government administration but also knowledge of cultural and traditional relationships as these exist in Thai politics. Generally, they know how to both compromise with other elite groups like military generals, monopoly capitalists, members of royal family and their representatives, and so on. They also retain a close relationship with lower-class people who could vote for them during an election season. This is reflective of their ambiguous political position, albeit they tend to affiliate with the ruling class with which they associated beforehand. With these abilities, these politicians could retain their high status and gain benefits as long as they did not break those relationships with those allies. As we know, however, some politicians in the Thaksin camp decided to participate in the Red-Shirt movements and this had been seen as a form of anti-monarchist activism. In this sense they had less positive connections with traditional establishments.¹⁹

In underground politics the status and roles of former politicians were still close to their origins in Thai society. They might occasionally appear to give some talks and opinions about what political action should be done and about the political situations in Thailand. They were also named on the committees of some underground organisations to boost the credit of those organisations among supporters. They also retained their skilful function as middlemen between underground activists/groups and the powerful politicians. However, these former-politician activists normally did not involve themselves too much in creating and mobilising protests and activities with the mass of followers. This was usually done by the experienced activists (see below) who had better skill in attracting the lower classes. After a couple of years following the 2014 coup, it

¹⁹ Since the 2010 repression, many politicians who were involved in the Red-Shirt movement gradually reconciled with representatives of the establishment like Prem. This reconciliation occurred more clearly after the 2014 coup in which many former politicians in the Thaksin faction changed to support the junta government and a new party which aimed to remain the power of NCPO after the 2019 election. A good example was Suphorn Attawong or Rambo Isaan who was known as a radical leader of the Red-Shirt movement.

seemed that the role of almost all former-politician activists vanished from the visible activities arranged by underground groups.²⁰

These former politicians normally had a considerably healthy economic status because they had been involved in the powerful and wealthy part of Thailand. Some of them had their own businesses and networks in many sectors. Thus they could live in more comfortable ways than other types of activists. Because of their alignment with Thaksin's clan, they were/have been in the countries in which Thaksin had a property or political connection, especially the U.S. and Cambodia. As one political exile informed me (Laos1, 2018):

The reason that there are exiles in this country [Laos] is because Cambodia has not allowed them to move in. This implies that only the ones who are referred by the big boss [maybe Thaksin] can move to [Cambodia]. . . . You have to be reminded that everything has costs. Those countries cannot support the exiles' costs. As we have lived here, we have paid for ourselves, not the government of this country. . . . Cambodia just protects them only.

5.3.2 Experienced activists

The second type of activists are 'experienced activists' who mostly had a lot of experience setting and managing protests and significantly influenced political directions and thoughts within the circles of social activists. Some activists of this type had constantly participated in political events since the era of the CPT in the 1970s. However, most underground activists' common experiences derived from their attending and leading the activities arranged by the Red-Shirt organisations, which ran both domestically (both the official ones like the UDD and its branches, and the alternative ones like Red Siam and the provincial groups) and abroad (mostly UDD branches in overseas countries like UDD EU and UDD USA).

²⁰ A clearly exceptional one is Sunai who continued producing his video clips on Youtube and posts on Facebook regularly.

Although some of these activists have some similar qualities to the ‘former-politician activists’ (such as experiences and knowledge about politics, especially related to Thai society, and how to remain in a safe position within the power relations), there are several distinctions between them. Only a few experienced activists used to work in official positions. And despite closely working with politicians, these experienced activists had usually arranged political units and movements outside of state authority.

Their main reason for turning to underground politics, which is the opposite of the former-politician activists’ reasons, was to achieve the goal of their political life and continue their fight under conditions of political restriction. As one underground activist argued: “I do not want to be a refugee. I am just a person who has escaped harmfulness and injustice. I just have to adjust myself [in this new place] not to be a refugee for my entire life. . . . It is temporary only.” Or as mentioned by another activist:

Some [Red-Shirt activists] keep silent here so they can live safely here [Laos]. But we flee for fighting, we will not stop. That is it. It takes huge costs like family. What do you think? This happens with every one [of us]. There is hardly a chance to go back home. There is a long way to change the regime This like a trade in which we have already invested.

And one important activist who started his political life in the 1970s revealed his attitude that (France1, 2018):

If you do not continue your fight, it will be better for you to be imprisoned. The lost cannot stop activists from continuing their struggle. It is not the same as a boxer who goes to a party after finishing the final round and then goes back to find the next match again. Politically ideological struggle is a ceaseless activity. Although you lost, a society still goes on. Thus you have to fight again to win. There is slogan derived from Jit [Bhumisak]’s song in the past ‘Fight, lose, Fight Again, lose, Fight Again Until We Win’

According to their ability, these activists could very effectively create provocative messages and mobilise support based on the existing network of the Red Shirts.

They already had old supporters and followers derived from earlier Red-Shirt protests and demonstrations, and these people were a significant population at the beginning of the underground movement.

Almost all activists of this type escaped from Thailand because they faced accusations over their political involvement. In some cases, they were full-time activists in overseas countries, and it seemed that donations became a main resource for their survival. Some earned income from their non-political jobs; however they also received donations from supporters. In the cases of exiles who illegally lived abroad, their struggle for survival was more difficult because they had no legal status which denied them various basic needs such as finding a job, opening a bank account, receiving treatment in a hospital, having a right to move within and across state boundaries and so on.

Those situations linked closely to their alignment with Thaksin and UDD Red-Shirts movement. Although some experienced activists want to go beyond the conservative direction of Thaksin and UDD, their economic situation causes them to limit their criticism of Thaksin's clan since Thaksin has constantly supported exiled Red-Shirt activists. However, when some experienced activists gained other sponsors, they started to criticise Thaksin more openly (like the case of Chucheeep (see chapters 7 and 8)).

5.3.3 Academic activists

The third type are academic activists. Some of these activists used to participate in the actions of the Red Shirts, but there are others that only sympathised with the Red Shirts. Then their intensified actions led to their deciding to involve themselves in the underground world. They were different from the two former types as most of them had previously kept a distance from the Red-Shirt groups, both overground and underground ones. Although they might appear in or express some agreement with some of the Red-Shirt movements' actions, they usually

presented opinions in an academic fashion and attempted to retain a non-biased position in their political analyses. They normally joined activities or programmes run by many groups rather than only one specific group. This credibility meant their political opinions were taken seriously by other activists.

These academics had a salary or a pension from their old workplaces which were enough for them to survive without relying on donations. Some academics were able to find a non-academic job after leaving the country because of the advantage of their citizenship of the country of residence and their educational degree. Some academic activists fought intensely to gain proper pensions from the universities where they used to work and then lived off this money. There is one exceptional case of an academic activist who still remained in an academic career in one university in Japan.

The main reason why this third type maintained a neutral stance was that they did not want to depend too much on the aid of politicians who might distort their opinion towards political circumstances. Nevertheless, because of the identical base of supporters of the Red-Shirt overground and underground, this kind of activist could not avoid getting closer and participating more often in activities arranged by the Red Shirts. Accordingly, they gradually assimilated into a partnership with the Red-Shirt-sided underground group, albeit, from some viewpoints, there were still people who thought they might side with Thaksin's actions.

5.3.4 Novice activists

The fourth type are 'novice activists' who emerged from the audiences and supporters of the leading activists of the three former types above, to become underground activists themselves.

Before taking a role as underground activists, these people had had different political experiences. Some people were serious Red-Shirt supporters who regularly attended the demonstrations, especially ones in their local areas; however they are a small part in the underground movement because they still tended to adhere to the overground politics led by UDD instead. Most of them participated sporadically in or had never engaged with political actions beforehand. Thus, although they might have had general knowledge of Thai politics and history, their ability to run and mobilise movements by themselves was limited. Accordingly, their starting roles in the underground movements were generally as participants, audiences, and supporters in underground activities arranged by leading activists, particularly experienced activists.

Nevertheless, some of them, having eagerness to join this radical movement, employed a more serious level of political participation than just supporting the overground Red-Shirt movements. Instead of being audiences only, these enthusiastic adherents began to create and host their own YouTube channels and Facebook pages. They had learnt how the experienced and academic activists employed these online platforms to mobilise movements, and they created their own direction of action, based on their perceptions and contexts. More accessible IT and their existing networks allowed them to establish their groups and start operations more quickly than had the earlier activists. Nevertheless, although the number of activists in this later type increased rapidly and expressed more diverse social views, their level of intellectual ability, and their political and historical knowledge seemed relatively less than their role models.

These novice activists come from many classes. Because of representing themselves by pseudonyms or avatars in the underground world, it was hard to investigate the classes of these people. However, there were some clues which could be gained from assessing their repertoires of action such as their length of time participating in virtual activities as well as their narratives and linguistic ability. The different classes of these activists were gradually revealed and this caused important changes within the Red-Shirt underground movement (I will demonstrate these changes in chapter 8)

My above categorisation of these leading activists in the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement is created as a tool for explaining the dynamic actions and relationships occurring in these movements. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the criteria (political experiences and knowledge, and ability to manage movements) used in this categorisation cannot separate activists decisively.

There are many activists who are qualified to be in several types. France¹, for instance, who used to be a member of the Thai National Committee of Human Rights, a political official, and a leftist activist since the 1960s, as well as a lecturer at a university in Bangkok. On the one hand, he has very good relationships with and gets help from politicians from many factions. On the other hand, he normally chooses to work with academic and novice activists and participants rather than elites. Thus France¹ could be counted as any type in the first three. Another case is Finland¹ who had worked for an independent labour NGO and as a semi-academic for many years before fully devoting her life to political struggle. Finland¹'s studies and campaigns relative to Thai labour abroad reflects her ability as both an experienced and academic activist simultaneously. In spite of getting asylum in Finland which provided her with good welfare, Finland¹ faced serious and continual problems concerning her cost of living and political activities. Whereas she wanted to retain her political stance by keeping distance from Red-Shirt supporters, a need for support made her establish relationships with several Red-Shirt groups in Europe. Nevertheless, after she joined these activities and developed several personal relationships with members of the Red-Shirt movement, she was viewed negatively by other Red Shirts who condemned her act of fundraising within a social movement. I will consider these special cases, such as France¹ and Finland¹ as they emerge.

5.4 Two waves of the emergence of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement: The different journeys of underground activists

In these two waves we will see the dialectical relationships derived from continual conflicts in the Thai mode of production. Each activist had his/her different

characteristics, of which I briefly categorised, from their positions in that mode of production. Their relationships with the existing social structure will create the new characters which gradually turned to the underground movement.

5.4.1 The first wave (May 2010 - May 2014)

The 2010 bloodshed repression was a milestone in the development of radical ideas. It was not only the cruel killing but also the beginning of a greater consolidation of ruling power. In other words, the Thai ruling class increased the extent to which its state apparatuses could control Thai society effectively again after the junta-appointed government in 2006. At the same time, the Yellow-Shirt movements could not lessen the strength of the alliance of capitalists and exploited classes which wanted modernised social relations. Thai state authorities started to accuse Red-Shirt activists constantly, especially employing the accusation of section 112.

We can see that most activists in the early or ‘first wave’ were experienced and academic activists because they had recognised and been criticising the intervention of the palace and the monopolised power of elites for a considerable time, albeit in an indirect manner in the case of monarch. (Thus, I also include here some activists who went underground slightly prior to the repression but kept continually running the underground methods in this wave as well. These people are: Jakrapob Penkair, Giles, and Chuchee Chevasuth). The Thai authorities were constantly waiting for an opportunity to bring legal process against them. After being summoned by authorities or seeing arrest warrants issued, they directly criticised the power structure of Thai society with statements which infringed on Thai laws, especially section 112, and offered ideas of the alternative regimes and methods to achieve them. Some of these activists, therefore, have had to flee from Thailand to avoid being imprisoned.

For example, Jakrapob was a rare case of the underground former-politician activist in the first wave because the 2010 incident was not a coup which generally focused on politicians. However, Jakrapob had been involved in the Red-Shirt movement since its early steps and spoke continually with both domestic and foreign media. He was a former speaker in the Prime Minister's Office under Thaksin's Government and the Minister to the Prime Minister's Office under Samak's government. Jakrapob was charged under the *lèse-majesté* law for his speech given in FCCT in Thailand in 2007 (iLaw, 2007) and another speech in Los Angeles (iLaw, 2010b). As a main leader of UDD beforehand, after being charged, he gradually retreated from the front row on the stage because his involvement would have created an image of the Red Shirts as an anti-monarchist movement. After hearing about the rumor of possibly being captured, Jakrapob fled from Thailand in April 2009. He claimed that he travelled to many countries after that but the main accommodation was in Cambodia where he has also invested in some business (Spooner, 2013). Jakrapob is still involved in the activities of the underground movements such as giving interviews to many hosts. He also posts his opinions on Thai politics on his Facebook account. Jakrapob would have a significant political role again after the 2014 coup.

Giles is a rare academic activist who emphasises and expresses himself as a Trotskyist-Marxist in Thailand. His Trotskyist ideas unavoidably criticise the Thai elite, including the monarchy. Although Giles was aware of the draconian laws and the need to avoid mentioning the monarchy directly, in the book *The Coup for The Rich* (2007) he criticised the 2006 coup as the result of the specific character of the Thai elite and their long history of exploitation. Giles was charged with section 112 for publishing this book, so he decided to flee Thailand to the UK with his wife before the 2010 incident (Giles, 2010, pp. 191-196). After reaching the UK, Giles regularly expressed his opinions of Thailand under Trotskyist ideas on his blog, Facebook, and YouTube Channel (see also in the next chapter).

Chucheep was an experienced activist. He ran political activities and criticised the monarchy severely before the 2010 repression and still kept on this track even after fleeing Thailand. Chucheep was an ex-communist (aka Comrade 'Somchai')

in the forest unit) who worked in the southern part of the northeast region of Thailand. He has a close relationship with his comrades in TRT party so he evidently supported Thaksin during his first period as a Prime Minister. Chucheep was the leader of ‘Chomrom Pitak Ratthathammanoon [The Club for Protecting Constitution]’, which rallied to pressure the administrative court because it was going to invalidate the result of the election on April 4, 2006, after it had been won by the TRT party. After several unsuccessful attempts to fight in the courts, around mid-2008, Chucheep started to broadcast criticism of the monarchy on some Red-Shirt radio stations. His series ‘Jaokong Kongmha [the owner of Horse stable]’, which describes bad behaviors, corruptions, and the character of democratic obstacles of all the kings in the Chakri dynasty, one by one, is well-known among the anti-monarchist Red Shirts and helped many of them to be ‘Ta-Sawang [eye-opening]’ or ‘enlightened’ (Laos3, 2019). These narratives have been presented on both his blog and YouTube channel, and have since been duplicated and uploaded on many YouTube channels (see details in chapter 7). Chucheep fled Thailand around 2008 after he was alleged to have infringed on section 112 in August (Manager Online, 2008). There was a rumour that he attempted to seek asylum in China, but was arrested and jailed before being helped by some Thai politicians. After staying in Cambodia, Chucheep went to Laos where he was subsequently an important facilitator for other activists fleeing Thailand (HaunT89s, 2019c).

After the brutal repression, many activists who had worked with the Red-Shirt movements, both the main-stream UDD and the smaller stages, had limited choices in dealing with this serious situation, namely hiding themselves, going to a police station if being summoned by Centre for Resolution of Emergency Situation (CRES) or running away to other countries as the most extreme choice. As informed by one academic activist:

[Before the repression] some insiders suggested me to hide in a safe house because there was a plan to shoot people on the [Red-Shirt] stage. It was a message I was informed of, but I did not know whether it was true or not. However, there were people whose faces and names were presented on media and who were actually killed at the site of protest. So the leading

activists started to hide themselves or stay in the central site only. . . . After the repression, most of us were imprisoned and fled from the country. . . . I do not want to be troublesome to people so I hide myself until the suppression was reduced (France6, 2019).

Most of the underground experienced activists chose to flee Thailand because they were the main targets of this purge. For example, Chuphong Theetuan, an experienced activist, is a former labour activist, a pupil of Prasert Subsuntorn, an ex-central committee member of the CPT, and a mastermind of the 1980 amnesty bill for ex-communists launched by Prem's government. Chupong was a speaker on the 'Wittayu Khon Roojai FM87.75' radio station in Nonthaburi and acted as a significant tutor of political knowledge to the Red Shirts, especially regarding the political role of the palace. Chuphong used his radio station to mobilise people and to participate in some rallies such as the rally that went on to pressure some authorities and the anti-Red Shirts news agency 'The Nation' (Khaosod, 2011). Chuphong left Thailand just before the 2014 coup after an arrest warrant was issued (Bangkokbiznews, 2014). He appeared again in late 2010 in the U.S. where he joined the activities of the UDD USA. After that Chuphong was the main speaker of the program 'Mahawittayalai Prachachon [The People's University]' arranged by Piengdin Rakthai (an alias of Sanea Thinsanen) for many years. According to his view that the king had been the main factor in almost all problems in Thai society, Chuphong proposed the idea of establishing a Thai Republic as the only solution. This led people to call him Chuphong Plien Rabob [Chupon who wants to change a regime].

Whereas some activists decided to flee the country to remain in the underground operation, other activists chose to hide themselves in Thailand and spread their radical thoughts clandestinely. Katawut Boonpitak and the spokesperson of the Banpodj group, Husdin Urai-praiwan, were the important activists of this category. However, due to data I have, I categorise these two groups as novice activists because they started their activities after the 2010 repression and it seemed that they had not previously participated in a significant part of the Red-Shirt activities. After they were arrested there was less mention of them among the underground Red-Shirt community, and this was further evidence.

For example, Banpodj was another famous underground speaker among the Red Shirts after the 2010 May incident, although he had never physically joined in any demonstrations and stages of the Red-Shirt group previously. Because of this, he was counted as a novice activist, especially considering how members of the group got arrested. Husdin and his friends began to produce the ‘Banpodj’ podcasts around the late 2010s (France3, 2018). Husdin was born into a rich family but failed in his own businesses (Prachatai, 2015b). He studied and lived abroad when he was young. He had knowledge of history and lived a luxurious lifestyle. He mixed a conspiracy theory of politics and religions with narratives of a fantasy lifestyle as well as a special healthcare formula to attract his audiences. Despite doubts about their correctness, the podcasts of Banpodj group produced more than 400 clips, which had never been done by any underground speakers. After becoming famous among the Red Shirts, Husdin, who gave voice to Banpodj, and his colleagues expanded the staff (from 2 to around 16 people) and sought a way to find an income to feed the programme’s team. They started to sell souvenirs, the products made by some members of the team, and advertisement services. After the 2014 coup, although the network of Banpodj could hide for a while, their commercial activities allowed the police to track their money footprint and finally capture some of them (France3, 2018). Husdin himself was raided on February 28, 2015 and sentenced by the military court to be jailed for 5 years (iLaw, 2015b).

Most underground activists have varying degrees of political experience with the Red-Shirt movement. However, there were also people who did not participate physically in Red Shirt activities but came to support them, as I explained in chapter 1, and who were significant underground figures (as the Banpodj group but in other patterns). These activists had been interested in politics for a long time and usually observed political situations and participated to whatever degree they were available on each occasion.

Finland1, for example, had never participated in the Red-Shirt events, but has now become an important underground activist for the Red Shirts. She might have less political experience but is an expert in labour activism, even at an international level, and has been involved in such work for decades. When she was doing

research about Thai labourers in Finland's berry industry, she wrote the article 'Thammai Tueng Mai Rak Nailuang [Why Don't I Love the King?] (2010) after the 2010 repression. This article meant that she was charged with section 112 and sought asylum status in Finland. Thereafter she started to work as a full-time political activist and worked implicitly together with the Red Shirts.

Another example is Cambodia1, a novice male activist. He used to work as an advertising-film director in Thailand. His main activity was posting his political thoughts on Internet Forums of Fah Diew Kan [Same Sky] and Prachatai websites (Cambodia1, 2018). His case is distinct because it was an early case of a charge under section 112 because of his online action. Shortly after the 2010 repression, he was captured by the police. When he was granted bail, he decided to flee from Thailand. He attempted to apply for asylum in Nepal where the UNHCR was situated. But he returned to Malaysia because there was little hope of receiving refugee status in Nepal. He moved to Cambodia because many activists managed to find asylum in several developed countries from there (Cambodia1, 2018). However, after his applications were sent to around 17 countries and were all refused, he found a way to escape. He made a fake passport and bought a roundtrip ticket from Cambodia to one country in South America, where Cambodians did not need a visa to visit, and flew via London. When he landed in London, he asked for refugee status (Cambodia1, 2018). Although he had never participated in any political protests, he has read many books about politics and history. He was not a good speaker but a very good director (see the details of his documentary films about Thai politics in Chapter 7). He extended his network among the exiled activists and still used his Facebook account to continue his political actions, especially after he reached the UK, albeit he still rarely participated in physical actions.

Alongside the political activities of the Red Shirts in Thailand, there were also the parallel activities arranged by supporters who already lived abroad (mostly in western countries). Some part of these supporters chose to remain with the moderate direction of UDD, but others decided to act underground by criticising the monarchy and aimed to change the Thai regime, e.g. Anek Sanfran (an alias

of Manoon Chaichana), Woodside (an alias of Amnuay Kaewchoompoo) and Piengdin from the U.S., and Arkhom Sydney (an alias of Ong-Art Thanakamolnand) from Australia. These activists gradually created their own local networks to work together. In my opinion, most of them are novice activists because they had less political experience in Thailand. Some participants started their active political life just after the 2010 incident. In other words, they had been previously attracted by the material conditions of where they lived rather than by Thai politics. Moreover, before they could run their activities, they requested advice from experienced activists and invited them to speak on their programs often. Although their online programs were settled, these novice activists still retain the experienced activists as speakers on their channels because these renown activists could increase audiences, e.g. Chupong was a main speaker on Piengdin programs for a couple of years. Nevertheless, this relationship gradually decreased after the experienced activists developed their own channels and the novice activists chose to offer their own political directions.

Besides the well-known activists, we should mention Red-Shirt supporters abroad who were behind many previous activities of the Red-Shirt movement. They have generally been active supporters of Thaksin's parties and wider Red-Shirt movements. They sent money to aid and their representatives to join the activities of UDD in Thailand, as well as arranging their own actions in countries where they had lived, for instance: USA, Sweden, UK, France, and Germany.²¹ Since the emergence of the underground movement, these people supported both the overground and underground movements. However, there is a difference between these supporters and leading activists. The level of these supporters' political enthusiasm depended mostly on situations in Thailand. If there were serious issues in Thailand, they would arrange more meetings. But when there were no special political issues, the number of their members would gradually decrease and they might not hold meetings for a long time. It could be said that most of these participants were not the leading front of these movements. Instead, they normally were good supporters (France4, 2018). This was reflective again by the

²¹ UDD groups in EU countries usually call themselves Nor Por Chor [UDD] EU.

fact that it was the influence of material conditions that directed the lives and the political directions of most participant and followers.

Because of growing IT developments and growing services of social networking, there were an increasing number of Red-Shirt supporters that stepped up to become novice activists. Although activities in this virtual space are quite safe, the novice activists still are the people who have lived abroad rather than those in Thailand. There were both people who decided to hide their identity by participating as pseudonymous speakers only, such as Ning and Sapai Seang Chaobaan (both are aliases), and people who uncovered their faces on their Facebook and YouTube channels, such as Chatwadee 'Rose' Amornpat and Wanpen Sweden (an alias).²²

Because many of these activists joined the movement recently and online, there has been a distance between these underground novice activists and existing Red Shirts and their activities, albeit these activists clearly sympathised with the Red Shirts. However, this situation likely led to a changed attitude by these activists towards the Red-Shirt movement afterwards. This derived from these activists not regularly participating in activities arranged by the Red Shirts, so they had less of a sense of common identity with the Red Shirts. This led to disclosing their perspectives of class and a comparison of their status to criticise other Red Shirts. This kind of conflict is in fact not limited to the relationships among Red Shirts but has occurred among Thais abroad for a long time. It is a contradictory consciousness between the embedded hegemonic or ruling ideas and class consciousness. Whereas Thais who have better lives abroad want other Thais to get the same thing equally, they can also use their better status to attack the opposition, as has been done by Thai elites towards those with inferior status as a result of UCD (I will discuss this topic in the next three chapters in different perspectives).

²² All of these well-known novice activists have lived abroad, namely Ning (Germany), Sapai Seang Chaobaan and Chatwadee 'Rose' Amornpat (the UK), and Wanpen Sweden (Sweden).

Chatwadee was a good example. She was welcome among the Red Shirts after harshly insulting King Bhumibol before the 2014 coup (Sparks, 2014). This Thai-born British citizen gained a new connection with other activists both in Europe and the U.S. after that action. Due to her criticism of the monarchy, Rose was attacked by the royalists several times (Peel, 2014). Chatwadee, however, started to criticise some previous activists and split from the network because she saw the dishonesty and domination that Thaksin had over his Red Shirts followers, and the selfishness and greed of some activists. This kind of conflict and a rearrangement of relationships within the underground faction occurred more often after the coming of the second wave of underground movements (as I will discuss in the later part of the next section and particularly in the next chapter).

5.4.2 The second wave

The second wave began after the 2014 coup. This coup was staged by a group of military and police commanders-in-chiefs who called themselves ‘the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO)’, under the leadership of General Prayuth Chan-o-cha. The NCPO employed an undemocratic force to overthrow nearly a decade of administration of elected governments. This is an important difference between this wave and the first one. After the 2010 repression, Thailand was still ruled under civil governments which were not involved in heavy suppression as was done by the junta government. This situation illustrates what I argued above in that the Thai ruling class would not let a chance to rigidly control Thai society go out of their hands again. Thus, it chose the most extreme way (a coup and a total suppression of the opposition) to create a status quo and restore its domination. This process has continued during the time I am writing this thesis.

Suddenly, after seizing sovereignty, the NCPO started to summon at least 751 activists, politicians, academics, students, writers, journalists, and artists. Most of them were affiliated with Thaksin’s parties and the Red-Shirt movements (Human Rights Watch, 2015a; iLaw, 2015a). Due to the intention of sweeping the opposition away, the NCPO transferred the alleged charges of violation of section

112, and 113-118 (other crimes against the security of the state) or resisting the NCPO's orders, to the jurisdiction of the military court (NCPO, 2014b). The NCPO also increased its power by reinstating the Martial Law Act of 1914 on May 22, 2014, while the interim constitution was enacted on March 31, 2015. This contains section 44 which states that 'where the head of the NCPO is of the opinion that it is necessary for the benefit of reforms in any field, or to strengthen public unity and harmony, or for the prevention, disruption or suppression of any act that undermines public peace and order or national security, the monarchy, national economics or administration of State affairs,' the head of the NCPO is authorised to "issue orders, suspend or act as deemed necessary. . . . Such actions are completely legal and constitutional" (NCPO, 2014a). This was equal to Prayuth becoming the sovereign of the Thai state and allowed him to utilise the existing state apparatuses as the full legal tool of the NCPO. The summoned people who went to report themselves to NCPO were either put on trial before the military court or were taken to the 'attitude adjustment' programme before being released (iLaw, 2015a). There were also the cases of activists being detained and tortured in the military barracks (Human Rights Watch, 2016). There were people who defied the NCPO's order but were eventually arrested. The members of Banpodj group and Katawut, for example, were arrested and sentenced by the military court to be jailed in Bangkok.²³ This harsh violation of human rights by the state, which was mostly conducted under the unaccountable and unpredictable legal process of the military court, pressured many activists to escape from the country, and some of them became underground activists.

It seemed that this situation led to a replacement of the first-wave activists, who might be either exhausted or arrested by officials under the junta's administration. In the second wave there was in fact a rising number of new underground activists who were ready to work with the existing underground

²³ There were also non-underground activists being captured after long hiding. The famous case was Sombat Boon-ngam-anong who was summoned by the NCPO's Order no.3/2014 on May 23, 2014. Sombat refused to comply to the order and hid himself but was finally arrested and brought to the 21st Infantry Regiment in Chonburi province with his colleague on June 5, 2014 (Thairath, 2014) (see other cases in McCargo and Sutawan (2015)).

activists. This occurred in the founding of the Seri Thai [Free Thais] by activists from both waves.

As had happened to the Red-Shirt movements and the first-wave underground groups before, however, the political background, experiences, and direction of the second-wave underground activists were varied and caused conflicts and a separation. These differences between the underground activists would be revealed more clearly after they exiled and started their underground actions.

After the coup, due to severe suppression, almost all underground activists had the common experience of an escape from Thailand. They had to find an alternative route - walking through dense forests on mountains or crossing the Mekong River - to cross the border between Thailand and the neighbouring countries of Laos and Cambodia in particular, without being noticed by the authorities of both states. However, only a few activists achieved the process of seeking asylum in developed countries while others have still remained in the second countries. Besides the intention to fight in the nearby areas of Thailand, the main factors of this situation were the differences in classes and in the ability to seek asylum (see details of the differences below and in Chapter 6 - 7). The conditions of travelling and living as exiles between each class were also very different. Inevitably, these material conditions affected political activities and relationships among underground groups.

I will describe the brief experiences of exile of the underground activists in the second wave, in order to demonstrate the interactions between activists' different trajectories in Red-Shirt activism, the existing relationships with Thaksin and other Red-Shirt groups, and the material contexts.

In this second wave more politicians from Thaksin's camp turned to underground politics than in the first wave because they were direct targets of suppression as Yingluck and several ministers had faced. Renowned underground former-

politician activists were Jarupong Ruengsuwan, a former Minister of Interior and of Transport and Communication as well as a former leader and a former secretary of Pheu Thai, and Sunai Jullapongsathorn, a former member of the House of Representatives.

Due to their knowledge about politics, these men together with Jakrapob were the founding members of Seri Thai Puea Sittimanutsayachon Prachathippatai [The Organisation of Free Thais for Human Rights and Democracy], the most official and renowned organisation among the underground groups (Prachatai, 2014). This ability was found rarely in other types of underground activists. Although experienced activists often seek to establish their organisations, they could not strengthen and mobilise support as was done by the former-politician activists.

Jarupong and Sunai spoke several times on the main stages of UDD protests. After taking refuge in the U.S., they posted comments about Thai politics and anti-dictatorship messages on their Facebook and Seri Thai pages regularly. Sunai (2018) has his own YouTube channel and uploads new videos every week.

Another example is Jom Petchpradap, a famous news reporter who also chose the U.S. for his refuge. Jom was the first reporter who interviewed Thaksin and broadcasted the recording on the public radio after the 2006 coup (Thairath, 2009b). This caused many people to see Jom as a Red Shirt supporter and as siding with Thaksin. After reaching the U.S., Jom created his YouTube program called 'Thai Voice' to which Jom invited many guests, especially underground activists, to be interviewed.

Alternatively, there were some activists who chose Europe for seeking asylum. The biggest cluster was in France, namely France1, Somsak Jeamteerasakul, France2, and France3. According to their experiences and previous activities, they were characterised as academic and experienced activists who had not previously

aligned, or had only slightly aligned, with Thaksin and the UDD. The exceptional case was France6 who had a close relationship with both.

France1, an important experienced activist, is a former member of the National Human Rights Commission. From his regular travels, France1 was well prepared for living abroad, and his long time in Paris studying for a Master degree is a reason why France is his choice (France1, 2018).

Somsak Jeamteerasakul, another important academic activist, is one of the most expert academics on modern Thai history and monarchy. He was charged for a violation of section 112 after publishing criticism of the interview of Princess Chulabhorn about Thai politics (iLaw, 2010c). Before his exile, Somsak was threatened and abused in many ways, e.g. his house was shot at by an anonymous gunman.

France2 is a student and LGBT activist and interested in the political activities of the youth. At the invitation of her older sister, she attended several Red-Shirt demonstrations since her studies in high school. She regularly conducted symbolic activities with her group for resisting aspects of traditional thought such as SOTUS²⁴ and student uniforms. After being summoned by the NCPO, she decided to run away because of concerns about abuse in prison (France2, 2018).

France3, a novice activist, was a co-founder of the Banpodj group. He and his wife helped Husdin research information to make podcasts, duplicating and spreading CDs, and managing commercial items of the group. The officers found them by tracking them through their bank account which had been used for the

²⁴ SOTUS is an acronym for Seniority, Order, Tradition, Unity, and Spirit. The authoritarian orientation by which the senior students in universities dominate behaviours of the new students.

transactions between the Banpodj group and customers. After seeing the arrest of his wife, he decided to flee from Thailand and then to France (France3, 2018).

Like those in the first wave, like Chupong, Finland1, and Cambodia1, most of these exiled activists had the ability to contact authorities of international organisations or the third countries about the process of seeking asylum. They are also able to adapt to the destination countries without major difficulties. France1 had been familiar with Paris and international travel. Somsak previously studied in Australia. France2 was an exchange student, learnt German in his high school and can speak French very fluently. And France3 claimed that he worked with UN in the peace operation in Europe (France3, 2018).

In the mid-2019, after the disappearance of Laos1 and the discovery of the corpses of his two assistants, and the following disappearances of Chucheeep and his two colleagues (see chapter 8), there were new exiles from Laos and Cambodia in France. Some of these people had attempted to seek asylum beforehand, but were not successful; however, most of them had not thought to migrate to Europe. Particularly, France6 who has a close relationship with the Thaksin clan and some UDD leaders, and thought that the connection with Cambodian elites would make her safe:

If they can protect us, they do. But if they cannot protect us anymore, they quit. In the worst-case scenario I will just be deported back to Thailand. That is it. They had provided me with the best thing they can do, what I should do is thank them for their help (France6, 2019).

But due to a rising risk of being killed, she was left with no choice.

France6, an academic and experienced activist, moved from Cambodia to seek asylum in France. She claimed that she decided to stay in Cambodia because she wanted to seriously fight against Thai authoritarian power (France6, 2019). France6 gradually switched her political stance from the Yellow Shirts to the Red

Shirts since the former called for a royally-appointed Prime Minister (Veerayooth Kanchoochat & Hewison, 2016). Before the 2006 coup, she began to recognise the political intervention of the royal family, and this made her fully sympathise with the Red-Shirt movement. She decided to join her first protest in Huahin in 2009 to shame Abhisit in the international conference. France6 constantly helped the activities of the Red Shirts, especially in hosting the community radio station and in coordination with international or foreign offices thereafter. Although France6 went to speak on the UDD main stage occasionally, she normally preferred to attend the small stages, particularly the ones she arranges like ‘Patinya Nha San [The Declaration in front of The Court]’. This stage advocated a campaign to appeal to the criminal court to release or grant bail to political prisoners. Her radical activities increasingly brought a risk to her life. After the assassination of Kamol Duangphasuk (aka Mai Nueng Kor Kunttee) (Post Today, 2014b), an activist who had a very close relationship to France6, she became more cautious about security issues. After the 2014 coup, she exiled herself to Cambodia and used it as the place from which to continually oppose the junta government and spread anti-monarchist ideas (France6, 2019).

Wat Walyanggool, another important experienced activist, was a former student activist who did work on literature. Wat joined CPT after the 1973 massacre. He was a poet whose works reflected social changes and inequality in Thai society. After departure from the forest, Wat created various kind of works including newspapers, fictions, short stories, poetries, articles, and songs. Wat received one of the prominent prizes for writers in Thailand - the Sriburapha - in 2007. In April 2009 Wat and some writers released a statement supporting Thaksin and the Red-Shirt movements. He founded the music band named ‘Thasao’ to perform music and read poetry at Red-Shirt gatherings. When some members could not go to Bangkok with the band, Wat brought new musicians and set up the new band ‘Faiyen [Cold Fire]’. Faiyen’s first performance occurred on the countdown stage in 2011 in front of the Bangkok special prison to encourage political prisoners jailed inside. Although they performed occasionally on the main stage of significant events such as the anniversary fairs of the 1973 massacre in the grand hall of Thammasat University, Thasao, and then Faiyen, preferred to play on the

small stages in Bangkok and several provincial stages. On many occasions, Faiyen rendered their performance on the Red Guard stage, managed by Wuttiiphong, and were also guests on some programs broadcasted on the Red Guard radio station. Wat vanished along with other members of Faiyen after the coup of 2014. Similar to Faiyen's members and France6, he decided to exile in France because of the increasing risk in Laos.

Faiyen's members went to seek asylum in France just after Wat and France6. They lived in Laos for many years, similar to Wat. After the abduction and assassination of underground activists in Laos, Finland1 helped Faiyen's members move to developed countries by spreading the news of disappearances and dead bodies in the Mekong River among important news agencies in western countries. Eventually, in mid-2019, France gave them an opportunity to apply as asylum seekers.

Faiyen1 was an ordinary musician before the establishment of the Red-Shirt movement. However, after being invited by his friend Charit Yonoknakkaphan (aka Yonok Faiyen) to join Thasao band, he started to study more Thai politics. He gradually became a main musician in Thasao. When Thasao no longer existed and Wat faded off to focus on his writing, Faiyen1 and Yonok were co-leaders of Faiyen. Faiyen1 invited new members to the band like Faiyen2, Faiyen3, and, the latest, Faiyen5. All members, except Faiyen3 and Faiyen5, were summoned by the NCPO Order no.5/2014, but no one complied with it. They went to exile in Laos, but not all of them turned to underground fighting. Yonok separated from the band and left the others to continue their actions.

Faiyen2 who was a former student activist. He used to support the Yellow-Shirt movement, but after recognising the direction of a change from above he decided to turn back to PAD and refused both politicians (including Thaksin) and traditional elites. So Faiyen2 took a long time before starting to work with the Red Shirts. In 2009 he also joined the movement for abolishment of section 112. The 2010 repression convinced him to fully aligned with the Red-Shirt movement. Besides

performing with Faiyen, he also joined several symbolic activities (Faiyen2, 2018). Although Faiyen2 crossed to Laos at the same time as France2, his attempts to apply for asylum were, along with other members, all unsuccessful. However, he was finally exiled in France after the disappearance of many activists in Laos.

Faiyen5, the only novice activist of Faiyen, was a phone seller when she was in Thailand. She was not interested in politics and had not previously participated in any political activities. Faiyen5 started to study Thai politics just after the 2014 coup upon noticing the student movement. She gradually acknowledged social inequality, the advantage of elites, serious repressions in the Thai political scene, and the movement of the Red-Shirt people. Although at that time there were no longer any Red-Shirt activities, Faiyen5 participated in some protests arranged by student dissidents. Then Faiyen5 started to post her opinions on social media and discussed politics on Facebook. These activities led her to know the activists in exile including Faiyen's members. Some of Faiyen5's posts could be viewed as breaking *lèse-majesté* laws, so Faiyen1 suggested that she move to Laos if she would like to take actions unrestrictedly. During her trip to Laos for assessing the possibility of exile, Faiyen1 asked her to sing a new song which mocked the junta government. After the Faiyen released this song online the Junta government started to search for its source and singer. This made Faiyen5 decide to remain in exile and fight together with prior activists, although she had less political experience (Faiyen5, 2018). Then she also moved to France with other members.

The departure of Faiyen, the last active group in Laos, made the number of underground activists in the nearby countries of Thailand less than those in western countries. The activists who remained in these countries used the same routes for escaping. Some travelled from Thailand together with the activists who would later move to exile in developed countries. There were many reasons for these different destinies, namely personal choices, a lack of travelling documents,

a shortage of knowledge about seeking asylum abroad, and the decisions of the third countries.²⁵ These are the interactions between activists and social context.

Laos1 is a good example of the activist who wants to ‘gain a firm foothold’ and then continue to ‘fight back’ against the dictator in Thailand. Thus he did not want to move away from the region around Thailand. Additionally, his advancing years, personal sickness, and concerns about the convenience of visitors from Thailand were also reasons why he remained in Laos as his stronghold:

[I] have not thought about exile. I went to Cambodia because I want to stay here [Laos] because of. . . understanding its language. . . . We want to be as close to the country as possible because we want to go back to fight, we are not running away. We are just stepping back for the firmly new fight. Running away means not to go back again. Running away means hiding yourselves like a fugitive. I reveal my face like this, can you call me a fugitive? Whereas I cannot fight in the country, I have to fight from outside. Fighting as a cyber-warrior.

According to his political experiences and intensive determination to create a new society, he was one of the most important activists in the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement. Laos1 started his struggle in the 1960s. He joined CPT and worked in the south of Thailand, and in 1980 he was selected to be its member. Laos1 had been jailed several times for violating the security of state, including under the charge of *lèse-majesté*. He participated in the Red-Shirt movement by an invitation of some leaders of the People’s Television (PTV), an initial group which later developed into UAAD and UDD.

From his long experience in politics, Laos1 disagreed on many actions of UDD such as setting up the process of royal appeal in August 2009 (Thairath, 2009a) to beg Bhumibol to allow Thaksin back to Thailand. Although he was selected to be on one of the first committees of UDD, he decided to found an alternative group, the

²⁵ In some cases, the applicants for asylum superficially participated in the previous political activities. In some cases migrating to developed countries, or even neighbouring countries, is done because of just their personal need and not political reasons (Laos3, 2019).

so-called ‘Dang Siam [Red Siam]’ which mixed some part of a Stalinist view with Laos1’s perspective about Thai politics. Laos1 saw the need of an out-of-parliament movement to fight against dictatorship along with parliamentary politics. Laos1 wanted ‘Red Siam’ to keep a distance from the official Party and even UDD so as to protect those two institutions from any allegations of violating the security of state. Laos1 arranged and spoke on the mobile small stages in many provinces to mobilise people when worked with the CPT. According to this role, Laos1 acquired many co-workers and followers who later would become underground activists and supporters. Nevertheless, this kind of activity also brought Laos1 a charge for his speech in early February 2011 which contained allegedly malicious content defaming the monarchy. Laos1 was sentenced to be imprisoned for 12 years and 6 months but a royal pardon meant that he was released earlier (iLaw, 2012). After being released, Laos1 was still involved with his Red Siam group’s activities as well as that of the community radio stations.

After Wuttiaphong fled from his ‘Red Guard’ radio station in Pratum Thani, it was Laos1 that oversaw this station. Amidst the rumour of a coup in May 2014, Laos1 was attending a demonstration against the rumour of coup at Aksa road, but according to his intelligence network, he disappeared from the protest after being assured about the coup. Without waiting to be summoned or for the next accusation, Laos1 departed for Cambodia and then moved to settle in Laos (Laos1, 2018). Laos1 also joined the Mekong house (see details below) and started to fight since he was in a stable position in Laos. He regularly expresses his opinion as a guest of many programs on underground YouTube channels. He also had his own program, called ‘Patiwat Prathet Thai Kab Laos1 [Let’s conduct Thai Revolution with Laos1]’ which normally had Faiyen 4 as a host. Laos1 was also a member of Seri Thai and had an important role in financially supporting exiled activists in Laos.

There were other activists in the nearby countries of Thailand who also were in a difficult situation; however this does not mean that they do or do not want to move to a third country. As mentioned beforehand, decisions about this were shaped by many reasons, especially financial aid, knowledge of migration, and

sponsorship from the third countries. It is noteworthy that reputation and time were other key factors. Most of accomplished applicants for asylum status are well-known activists and completed their process in the very early moments after leaving Thailand. These various reasons have restricted many activists to remaining in these countries for, already, at least half a decade.

The group in Laos used to be the biggest group of Thai activists in exile. They are well-known activists on the alternative or small stages such as Laos1, Chucheeep, Wat, Faiyen band's member, and Ittiphon Sukpaen (aka DJ Sunho or Beer). They rented and lived together in the house near the Mekong River. This house was a first base for later exiles from Thailand. And it was also the base of production of a famous online radio station in the underground world - the 'Thai Rev' station, which directly attacked the hegemony and legitimacy of the monarchy and its networks. Each activist had their own programmes which were broadcasted sequentially nearly 24 hours a day. Although this activity was partially changing the terrain of political struggle in Thai politics and shaking the legitimated status of traditional elites, it also gradually broke the seemingly common ideology of these underground activists.

After living and working together for a while, disagreement increased. The group was split, and each activist started to move out of the house. After that, there were 4 main groups of underground activists in Laos: the group led by Laos1, the group led by Chucheeep, the group of Faiyen, and the group of activists who have preferred to live individually. These four groups, however, had rearranged constantly. For example, there was a period that Faiyen1 and Faiyen5 decided to join Chucheeep's group to set up the Organisation for Thai Federation (OTF). But, after the coming of Wuttiiphong and conflict within OTF, they returned to live and work with other members of Faiyen again (I will discuss the relationship within OTF in Chapter 8). I will briefly describe the experiences of significant activists to demonstrate important differences between them.

Wuttiiphong, an important experienced activist, departed from Thailand to Cambodia and then Hong Kong (ASTV Weekend, 2014). Some sources believed that he returned to the region to Luang Phrabang, Laos PDR. But the confirmed information was that he joined the group led by Chucheeep which was creating a new direction of the OTF. Wuttiiphong had a significant role in mobilisation thanks to his attractive rhetoric. However, his aggressive personality created a tension within the group. Wuttiiphong always threatened and ordered others in the group for his own benefit or satisfaction, even leaders like Chucheeep. Another disagreement was that Wuttiiphong had announced during his program on the OTF channel that he would fight using guerrilla troops which had been trained in some secret places. This method of mobilisation undermined OTF as a non-violent movement. When Chucheeep nevertheless chose to take sides with Wuttiiphong, Faiyen1 and Faiyen5 decided to leave the group's accommodation but still work together. After being widely attacked as a leader of violent movements, by other activists and supporters, Wuttiiphong absented himself from broadcasting for a while until an announcement by Chucheeep that he was abducted on July 27, 2017 and that they could not find any sign of him again.

Actually, Wuttiiphong was not the first abducted activist in Laos. This was Ittiphon Sukpaen who disappeared in June 2016. Ittiphon was a former DJ of the community radio station managed by Rak Chiang Mai 51 group (mentioned above). Ittiphon was more radical after contact with Laos1 and Faiyen on the small stages (Komchadluek, 2016). After the coup of 2014, Ittiphon exiled to Lao and lived in the Mekong house. He worked as a host of many programs on resistance online and on radio such as the parody 'Tieng Tan Chao [Speaking on Behalf of the monarchy]' with Chucheeep, 'Patiwat PrathetKab Laos1 [Let's conduct Thai Revolution with Laos1]' with Laos1, and as a host for 'Cheephajorn Karnmuang [the Pulse of Politics]'. Ittiphon departed from Cambodia meaning to reach another country, but for some reason turned back to Laos. In late June 2016, Ittiphon disappeared from his house. He was believed to have been abducted because of evidence of fighting on the way to his residence.

It is worth noting that there are also some Red-Shirt activists exiled in Laos because of political accusations. In the case of Laos3, after reconsidering the political situation and his family security, he decided not to involve himself in political participation further. He was a novice activist who previously supported the Red-Shirt movement from its beginning because of his admiration for Thaksin. When he learned more about the undemocratic regime in Thailand, he devoted his support more energetically. He could not participate in protesting because, as a single dad, he had to look after his son at that time. Instead he used his computer and internet skills to create one Red-Shirt website which was later famous among the Red Shirts. But these actions brought the turning point of Laos3's life because he was charged with the violation of the section 112. He was alleged to be a webmaster for the UDD group in the U.S. which had published many statements considered to have broken section 112 (iLaw, 2010d). After being imprisoned for more than three years, he devoted himself to working on documenting and raising funds to help political prisoners, particularly in the case of Lèse-majesté. After the 2014 coup, even though Laos3 did not commit any crime against the security of the state, he was summoned by the NCPO to report himself to the Junta officials. He refused to comply and sought exile in Laos. He also joined the Mekong house and enthusiastically helped the others to run the 'Thai Rev' YouTube station. After the disputes between member of house and his family being threatened endlessly by officers, Laos3 publicly announced that he was ceasing all political activities except for the helping of political prisoners and victims. He tried to apply for asylum in many countries but not successfully. When the way for exile in developed countries and going back to his home was shut, he decided to find a full-time job and a safe accommodation to facilitate a permanent life in Laos instead (Laos3, 2019).

Apart from the activists exiled and working in the form of group, there are other activists who were involved in the underground method in a special manner and had distinct characters such as Wing Commander Chanin Klaikluang (aka Phuphan Soo), Attachai Anantmek (aka Dong), Japan1, and Andrew Macgregor Marshall.

Chanin is a very rare case because he was a high-ranking official of the Royal Thai Air Force. He was trained as a conservative and, actually, was part of the ruling class in Thai society. Chanin, however, was interested in politics and admires Thaksin. He sees Thaksin as a potential leader who could develop Thailand in a way which would positively affect his beloved military and monarchy. Chanin had contacted and joined in the activities of the radical Red-Shirts like Wuttiaphong several times (Chaophraya News, 2014). His royalism and military rank could not protect him from the accusation under the *lèse-majesté* law for his posts on Facebook since 2010 (iLaw, 2011). Chanin fled and went into exile in Cambodia and usually offers his idea of the regime by mixing praises of the powerful and smart king and proposing an elected government. In Thailand, the number of military activists of this type is fewer than civilian activists.²⁶

Attachai, an experienced activist, is one of a few activists who still are active in Cambodia. He was a renowned actor before turning to work in politics. Attachai gave speeches on the UDD stage in the big demonstrations in 2009 and 2010 and also on many stages in the provincial areas. After the 2014 coup, Attachai fled the country. However, Attachai is a very cautious activist. He has never revealed his host country and has deliberately picked his co-workers. His main programmes were ‘Cheephajorn Karnmueng [the Pulse of Politics]’, which he previously arranged with the UDD EU, but managed by himself later, and ‘Roothan [Knowing What you are up to do]’.

Besides Giles, Somsak, and France6, Japan1 is another academic who obviously sympathises with the Red-Shirt movement and takes part in underground activity. Japan1 used to work in the Thai Embassy in Singapore before changing to an academic career at the National University of Singapore. Japan1 gradually became

²⁶ Actually, there were military officers who sympathize with the Red-Shirt movement. The case that stepped to the front row and showed a clear support was General Kattiya Sawasdipon, known as Seh Daeng. Kattiya was alleged to be training the troops to fight against Thai military during the demonstration in 2009 - 2010 and he spoke the words ‘the people war’ several times by himself (Post Today, 2010; Seh Daeng, 2018). He also had an important role in training and founding the security system of the 2010 demonstration. This character and his military ability were the main reasons for his assassination on May 13, 2010, only 5 days before the brutal crackdown of the Red-Shirt demonstration.

involved in conflicts in contemporary Thai politics after he saw many aspects of undemocratic rule. Although Japan1 wrote many books which criticised the diplomatic policy of Thaksin's government, he could work with the Red Shirts comfortably, even with Thaksin himself. Japan1 has never announced that he is a Red Shirt, but does not deny that he sides with this political faction. Nor does he deny his personal relationship with some Red-Shirt groups. Despite mostly staying abroad, Japan1 expresses his opinion about the injustice and the absence of law in Thailand on Facebook, in lectures, and in articles in foreign newspapers regularly. After the NCPO launched the coup, Japan1 was on the list of summoned people. He defied the order and moved to a new workplace in Japan. The Japanese government gave Japan1 a passport which allows him to travel everywhere in the world (Japan1, 2018). Japan1 uses this advantage to help in providing knowledge of Thai society to the Red-Shirt people on many continents. As well, he lectures at many universities around the world about Thai politics, and includes much criticism of the monarchy. He also spreads his opinion concerning Thai politics to his Facebook and Instagram account, and on international media. Japan1 is a very unique type of underground activist on the Red-Shirts side. It is rare to find an activist within the Red-Shirt side, or even amongst Thai academics, who could express ideas politically in an academic fashion, very fluently in English, and who has been accepted to speak or write for the media regularly.

Marshall is also not an activist who started to be active politically by participating in the Red-Shirt events. He was a senior correspondent for Reuters, but after the news agency refused to publish his study about Thai politics, Marshall resigned from his job (Ismail, 2014, p. 17). Marshall's important work was comprised of research into cables, decoded and published by Wikileaks, which related to modern Thai politics, and, unsurprisingly, the direct political role of Bhumibol. Marshall fled to live and work in Cambodia for his safety (Nanchanok, 2014) and then went back to his country, Scotland. Due to the similar perspective towards injustice in Thailand, he participated regularly in Red-Shirt and anti-dictatorship events in Europe as well as posting information about Thai politics, such as the death of Bhumibol and the activities of King Vajiralongkorn (Rama X) (1952 - present). In 2016, Marshall's Thai wife, who went to visit her relatives in Thailand,

was detained while the government was investigating Marshall's criticism of Thai kings and the conflicts in royal succession (Ramsey, 2016). Fortunately, she was released and went back to the UK safely (Voice TV, 2016). This reflects the pivotal role of Marshall in Thai politics, especially in the underground world.

Like the novice activists of the first wave, although there were many difficulties which harmed the lives of these underground activists, there are still people who dare to be involved in these activities. Interestingly, most of the people in this most recent round are new participants of the underground virtual world. The interactive activities have attracted a greater audience in underground society than those of the first-wave generation because of political momentum and popularity of social networking.

The interesting result is that many participants turned themselves into owners and leading speakers of these new YouTube channels and Facebook Pages. These activists might have both positive and negative relationships with the activists they used to admire. After the conflict between Faiyen's members and the group of Chucheeep, for example, there was a split of supporters between these two famous groups. And this kind of dynamic within the underground movement happened constantly.

5.5 The historical materialism view on the emergence of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement

Due to the experiences of the underground activists narrated above, there are the appearance of two relationships. First, the Red-Shirt underground movement emerged and was influenced by a social structure that was partly a result of the struggle of previous movements, particularly that of the overground Red-Shirt movements. Due to UCD, we can see the continuation of the form of contradiction between the Thai ruling class and the underground movement in Thai history that used to happen with the left movement in 1970s - 80s and recently with the Red-

Shirt movements. For example, while the protesters and activists have come from very diverse classes and professions and have gathered in an unorganised form, the Thai state apparatuses has been very united and ordered in the suppression of the oppressed class. The ruling class has also used military rather than police power to crack down on the opposition. The ruling ideas, especially support for the monarch, have still been employed for moderating the radical ideas. *Lèse-majesté* has continually been a significant legal tool for imprisoning challengers. And the counter movements have always been created from amongst the oppressed to fight against others from the same class. It is unsurprising that the underground activists also combined their experiences in social movements in the past such as CPT, even PAD, and the Red-Shirt movements, to fight back. Hence similar strategies are used such as using the term ‘comrade’ and ‘sakdina’ of CPT, performing CPT songs and poems on the small stages, and broadcasting radical ideas via community radio stations. Nevertheless, they were not completely alike but were, actually, reproduced for supporting general civil rights. However, since the repression of 2010, the Thai state, under the direction of the ruling elites, has been relentless in its suppression of dissidents and has even purged them out of the country. Accordingly, the underground activists had to find new tools like the internet and social networking for their ideological struggle. The repertoire of contention (Della Porta, 2013b; Tarrow, 1993) depended on when each activist started to participate and how they interacted with the political space. In other words, the existing political perception, knowledge and experiences derived from previous movements, shaped the initial underground roles of each activist.

Second, when the Red-Shirt underground movement started their own actions, the dialectical relationships, both between activists themselves, and activists and a social structure, were the important factor which determined the later actions and their changes. In other words, the characteristics or qualities, namely experiences and knowledge about politics, that of Thailand in particular, and an ability to manage movements, derived from their participation in previous movements, led the ‘early’ actions and how they survived (the conflicts between activists’ capacity and class, and existing material conditions). And, then, it was the outcome of reproduction of those actions and surviving that created the new

characteristics and determined the following actions. We can see this from the examples I have discussed about the different political directions and lives between each type of underground activists. The form of actions, disputes, and regrouping of the underground activists mentioned above were all the result of those dialectical relationships. And this character inside the underground movements has changed constantly alongside the altering situations.

From the perspective of historical materialism, these two relationships are closely connected to each other as part of social relations in a mode of production. Social conflicts lead to a struggle in which each class takes actions and spreads supporting ideas to prevent and maximise its benefits. When the existing political actions and ideas are utilised, they are also reproduced, and from that, a new quality of subsequent ones will appear. This synthesis of characteristics are embedded differently in each activist alongside other characteristics derived from other social aspects such as economic and cultural activities. These characteristics would determine the way in which each person interacts with surrounding things - political, economic, and cultural - and starts the next round of reproduction.

As explained in the last chapter, the results of UCD in Thai capitalist society had created specific characteristics in Thai society, especially an excessive social inequality and a monopoly of power by particular groups in the ruling class. The gap, both within and between classes, in Thai society has been widened consecutively. During some periods of time many Thais, the exploited classes in particular, who recognised this situation fought constantly to protect their benefits. Several distinctive actions and ideas of the previous movements are utilised by the later ones, as is seen by the influence of the CPT over both Red and Yellow Shirt movements. But the outcome of utilising those legacies are not the same as they were originally. Moreover, reproduction establishes new characteristics. There is a use of words or terms from the previous movements that are used in the new one but with different meanings, or even with a mix of left and right ideas in some movements. It depends on the ability of each class and its movement to reproduce and utilise the old tactics in the most effective way. Because of the strength of long-stabilised ruling ideas, many exploited

people did not recognise that sometimes they were protecting the power and interests of the ruling class when they came out to fight for their benefits. While the Yellow shirts have a problem only with a specific part, such as capitalists like Thaksin, and accept the power of the wider ruling class, this is not the case with the Red Shirts.

It was not only better conditions of living, resulting from past developments, that attracted multi-class Thais to join the Red-Shirt movements. It was also an impression of Thaksin's administration that aroused those people to preserve and extend their rights. In other words, although the reasons came from various perspectives, these cross-classes alliances had a common objective of overthrowing the existing social structure. This turns out to be a crucial conflict because it is the first mass movement that has the aim to seize state power. Due to the fact that the ruling ideas are no longer functional, the ruling class needed to employ state apparatuses to continually and brutally repress these movements. This is the condition that facilitated the sudden emergence of the following underground movement.

5.6 Conclusion

The Red-Shirt-sided underground movement, similar to the overground ones in several aspects, was often partly determined by the prior dialectical relationships and material conditions in Thai society, namely the struggle of prior movements, the hierarchical and structural power expressed in several spaces like politics, economy, and culture, the backgrounds and experiences of the participants, and the tools and resources of movements at that time. These factors are developed and have a continual dialectic relationship with each other.

The leaders of UDD were influenced by Thaksin who is a conservative in terms of political ideology and avoids linking himself with anti-monarchist idea. Although some leaders might also have a radical idea, the general actions managed by UDD

were seemingly identical to Thaksin's position. This was the outcome of the reproduction of ruling ideas and physical repression continually reintroduced by the ruling classes for many decades.

However, physically participating in the movement's activities (protests, demonstrations, and political discussions) increased the experiences and skills of participants and consolidated their political thoughts, including the early group of radical Red Shirts, concrete results came from their activities. Their ultimate goal was no longer just a new election for replacing Abhisit's government as was the aim of the moderate UDD and its supporters, but also to challenge the long domination of Thai elites such as the monarchy and its network. But these people were faced with the restriction of the existing structure developed in both the Red-Shirt movements led by UDD, and within broader Thai society.

However, the radical Red Shirts attempted to employ the developed situation of disruption to locate the possible spaces for spreading their ideas alongside the mainstream Red Shirts led by UDD. These were the small stages, community radio stations, semi-seminar events, and some writings which were used in spreading radical ideas. But these actions were unavoidably obstructed by the state apparatuses in the forms of repression and policing. However, these initial steps of radical action were gradually developed. Nevertheless, it was sudden incidents, like the 2010 suppression and the coup of 2014, which marked the beginning of the two waves of emergence of the underground activists which I have outlined in this chapter, during which those radical activists decided to separate from the moderate Red Shirts and mobilise people with their own ideas and tactics.

After the 2010 repression, some activists went into exile in the neighbouring countries to avoid being arrested by Thai officials, and so that they could criticise the elites in power, the palace in particular, without legal restriction. By contrast, there were also other activists who chose to do the same clandestinely in Thailand. After the 2014 coup, the second wave of the underground activists

emerged once again. This not only happened in a moment of heightened conflict, which increased the number of activists in the underground movement, but it was also situated in a time when IT had reached a higher level of development. This advancement in communication provided the underground movement with an effective way and a space for its actions and ideas. The underground activists and followers who previously had limited their expression under the section 112 could utilise social media such as Facebook, YouTube, and other online applications to speak out more freely.²⁷ The underground methods helped to increase interested people to join the movement, and in many cases some prior audiences became very active activists.

On the one hand, when various types of activists and followers became involved in the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement, it gained many benefits. These activists possessed useful skills for generating creative activities such as websites, performing music, and providing knowledge of the history of Thai politics to its followers. But, on the other hand, according to their differences, especially varying political knowledge and ideologies, and differing class interests, they were held together by only a small number of common objectives, namely establishing a more democratic regime in Thailand and reforming section 112. This led to a constant dissolution and regrouping of groups. Actually, these differences might have been less important, if there had been a practical central organisation of the underground movement, like UDD of the overground Red Shirts, to establish mutual agreements among activists, decrease the differences, and sustain the collective actions together. There were many attempts to create this kind of organisation among the underground activists but in the end, all of them failed. This means that there were extensive differences between underground activists and they have potentially increased after the movement's actions dialectically related with other components of the society. The part played by these ideological differences will be discussed in the next chapter.

²⁷ However, for the safety, this activity was still mostly done under their pseudonyms.

Chapter 6

Political Ideas of the Red-Shirt-Sided Underground Activists

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I intend to provide a historical and social analysis of the ideological currents and debates within the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement. This analysis will demonstrate that those ideas and their changes existed as the result of two relationships as described in the last chapter. The first is the previous social conflicts and class struggle which shaped the later social structure, the patterns of activism, and characteristics of the activists. Second, the reproduction of the pattern of movement and characteristics of the activists exists in dialectical relation to the social structure and material conditions, and this led to subsequent changes.

I will explain the diversity of political ideas expressed by underground activists, and the relationship between these ideas and the history of previous movements, class struggle, social relations, and material conditions. Then, I will look at the distinct character of these political ideas and the way of reproducing them in the underground movements. Finally, I will offer my analysis of the ideas behind this reproduction and its results.

The purpose of this chapter is not only to provide an explanation of the relationship between the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement, focusing on its political ideas, and Thai capitalist society, but to also emphasise the important characteristics of this movement, especially its sudden formation and the diversity of activists and their ideas.

6.2 *The political ideas of the underground activists*

6.2.1 *Liberalism*

Liberalism is linked effortlessly to the conceptions of ‘democracy’ or a ‘democratic regime’ and presents a positive meaning in Thai society where many forms of an authoritarian regime have been established by Thai elites. Additionally, in the Thai language, ‘liberal’ is normally translated as ‘seri’ which has the same meaning as the word ‘tai’ which is pronounced ‘Thai’, the name of the country and its major ethnicity. This creates an assumed metaphor that ‘Thais’ are synonymous with free or liberated people. This became an important idea claimed by every type of underground activist because it suggested that those groups were then opposed to anything linked to the recent dictatorship and was easily used to legitimise further political campaigns.

The word ‘seri’ was used in both YouTube and Facebook accounts and program names, such as Seri Thai [Free Thai](Seri Thai, 2018) of Seri Thai Organisation, Kao Soo Seriphab [Stepping to Freedom] by Dong Attachai (Redpower smgermany, 2018), Siang Chak Serichon [The Voice from Freeman] of Faiyen (Yammy Channel Revolution, 2018), and renowned underground activists’ pseudonyms, such as Smith Haek Pheu Seriphab [Smith Hake for Freedom](Smith Haek Pheu Seriphap 1, 2018), and Phupha Seri [Free Mountain](Phupha Seri, 2018).

Conceptions related to liberal thoughts were usually claimed by leading activists as the main principle of their factions.

So for example, the first declaration of Seri Thai states that:

...We will do everything in our power to prevent the re-entrenchment of anti-democratic elements in Thailand, to defend all forms of freedom, to

demand respect in all forms of human rights, and to establish a full democracy as a permanent pillar of Thai society (Seri Thai, 2014).

Similarly, the Thai Alliance for Human Rights (TAHR), led by Piengdin, described itself in one announcement as follows:

‘The Thai Alliance for Human Rights...condemns all forms of violence, undemocratic acts, and violations of the universal human rights in Thailand as a result of its unresolved and worsening political conflicts that began before the 2006 coup d’état. We would like to invite you to consider our statement and join us in pressuring all the rights abusers so that all parties seek open dialogues, adopt non-violent means, respect all universal human rights, and observe all democratic principles. (Thai Alliance for Human Rights, 2012)’

The first declaration of the Organisation for Thai Federation (OTF), led by Chucheeep, mentions that:

The Organisation for Thai Federations (OTF) has been established with firm faith in keeping our heads high as free men and women under the true democratic rule. Thailand shall be governed by the people and free will of the Federated States (Sanamluang2008, 2017).

Nevertheless, in each underground faction, topics around liberalism, such as the history and application of liberal thoughts and thinkers, liberal rights, and the related political regimes and economic systems, were not further studied. Instead, leaders of each faction attempted to link abstract ideas to concrete aspects that appeared in developed countries, in order to show that they were more liberal than Thailand and to treat them as the model which Thai society should imitate. Although there were some people who studied information surrounding liberalism, almost all participants instead chose to follow the accounts provided by those who were most influential, such as their group’s leaders or respected academics. In general, the accounts of liberal ideas offered by the underground activists were used for paving the way to each group’s objective. In the case of the Thai Federation, for example, the restriction of freedom was linked with the political

intervention of the monarchy, implying that the way to diminish this situation is to overthrow the monarch and establish the Thai Federal state:

...The death of the previous King marks the end of an age of deference. Thai people have no other choice but to take back their sovereignty from the superficial and lying Thai constitutional monarchy and urgently establish a federal Thailand for the sake of their liberty, equality, and fraternity. The Thai constitutional monarchy will be immediately and permanently replaced by the Thai federal constitution establishing Federal Thailand with individual states over all the country of Thailand under Thai Nationality as a whole... (Ibid).

6.2.2 Anti-monarchism

Undoubtedly, most of the underground people opposed the political intervention of the Thai monarchy because it was seen as one of the important impediments to democratic development in Thailand. Nevertheless, due to the various backgrounds of activists, the patterns of expression of this idea were diverse.

Almost all early underground activists took time to develop an anti-monarchical stance to some extent. Despite his clear anti-anarchism, for instance, Chucheeep used his distorted voice for a year or so before using his real voice to criticise monarchs. Faiyen's members also mentioned Thai monarchs pseudonymously during the early period of their YouTube programs before directly attacking them at a later point. Meanwhile, some activists who had been consistent with their framework, spoke about the monarch in the same way as in the past, such as Giles. Some moderate activists continued to use 'the royal language' when speaking about the palace, such as Somsak²⁸ and Sunai. By contrast, many novice activists, who had listened to criticism of the monarch before joining the movement, attacked members of the royal family from the start. This position also depended

²⁸ I cannot find the reason presented by Somsak himself. However, Faiyen 2 who has followed the works of Somsak for a long time argued that Somsak wants to attract middle-class royalists to listen to his argument. His offer might be refused if he uses a normal or impolite language as is being done by most anti-monarchists (Faiyen Channel, 2020a).

upon the personality of each monarch, i.e. there are divided attitudes towards Bhumibol and Vajiralongkorn.

Broadly, there were three main groups, divided by their attitudes and the ideal regimes they proposed. The first group is the republican. They had a negative attitude towards almost all aspects of the members of the royal family and their political interventions, even in relation to things which happened in the Thai feudal period. Chucheep was a good example of this type. He narrated the unfavourable biographies and negative issues to do with all Kings in the Chakri dynasty in the well-known series of ‘the Secret Story of the Owner of Horse Stable’. In his YouTube program (his main YouTube channel is Sanamluang2008 (2018)), the most mentioned slogan is ‘Lom Jao Yang Deaw’ [overthrowing monarchs only].²⁹ He argues that various problems in Thailand, both in the past and more recent times, originated with the Thai monarchy.

In the constitution, there is the article that says Thailand is ruled under a democratic regime. In fact, Thailand has never had democracy because the king always approved coups. The monarchy is inherently authoritarian in itself. What is related to the monarch, even entitled in the constitution, it is still all dictatorship. . . . the King not only allows the military to launch coups, but he also supports the constitutional court which legally approved those coups...the verdicts of the courts are really the dictatorship power of the monarch and military (Chucheep, 2019b).

In a more specific case, Chucheep sought to prove the rumour of the alleged involvement of Bhumibol and his family in a drug circle with many videos on YouTube (Chucheep, 2019d, 2019h, 2019k),³⁰ although he admitted he had no

²⁹ For example, ‘Maimee Jao Rao Sabai [No Monarchs, We Will be Better] (2019e)’, ‘Jah Yangrai Koh Mai Aow [No Matter What, We Do Not Accept Them] (2019a)’, ‘Puak Rao Mai Aow Chao Leaw [We Do Not Obey Monarchs Anymore] (2019f)’

³⁰ This rumour is not believed by Chucheep and his Thai Federation supporters only, but most leading activists are convinced as well, such as Piengdin (Piengdin, 2017)

concrete evidence. Despite Chucheep's allegation which needed to be proven, many audiences already believed his argument and kept supporting Chucheep.³¹

Most experienced activists and novice activists have a similar republican tendency such as Giles, Finland1, France6, all Faiyen's members, and Wat. However, their republican position depends on other political ideas like socialism and liberalism.

Second, they were groups of activists who agreed that the political role of monarchs had obstructed the development of democracy in Thai society. However, they offered a moderately reformist opinion on the monarchy and did not decide as to whether the Thai state should be transformed from a kingdom to a republic.

Japan1 explained in an interview that:

I still believe in a constitutional monarchy, if we could have a chance to be same as that of England and Japan. I like it that way. It is a historical legacy. It is not wrong to preserve it, especially if the monarch can prove that they will stay with democracy, walk hand in hand with it. I do not mind. . . . But our problem is that ours is not a constitutional monarchy. Although we say it is, it has never been in reality. Thus how we could expect this situation. If we push forward because the existing one is not working, it could lead to the question of should we go for a republic? Maybe yes! However, this comes because I am upset with a dishonestly conservative regime. It is all fact, not just my opinion. Since the 1932 revolution until now, in which moment did we have a constitutional monarchy? (Japan1, 2018)

In the case of Somsak, although he is one of the most recognised experts on Thai monarchy and is concerned with the excessive political interventions of the monarchy as well as the opinions of other academics towards the monarchs, he

³¹ This information has been reposted many times on YouTube channels both within the OTF network (such as Sahaphantararat Chadjen, 2019; Sahaphantarathai Isaan Tonlang, 2019; Sahaphantarathai Ratsawaddikarn, 2019), and by other underground groups (such as 77LL, 2018; HaunT89s, 2019b; Khunnaphabmai, 2019).

never proposed the overthrowing of the monarch.³² Nevertheless, before deciding on exile, the most significant political action of Somsak on this issue was the proposal of ‘8 solutions for reforming the institution of Thai monarch’ (Khamnoon, 2010). He believed that the implementation of his proposal might convert Thai monarchs into a more modernised institution and help them last longer in the Thai state than if they remained on the same trajectory. After important political changes in Thailand, like the coronation of Vajiralongkorn and the general election in 2019, Somsak slightly adjusted his offer of the seven solutions with the same reasoning. These latter solutions consist of (Prachatai, 2019a):

- 1. Abolition of Article 6 of the 2017 constitution (the King is revered and free from being accused and legally charged), but add the article which grants the power for investigating the king to the parliament*
- 2. Abolition of Section 112 (lèse-majesté) of the Code of Criminal Law*
- 3. Abolition of the Royal Property Management Act 2019, and separating the personal and public property clearly*
- 4. An abolition of the royal administrative units and unnecessary units (the Privy Council), moving other functional units (the royal guards) to be directed under other institutions*
- 5. A cancellation of every donation to monarchy and receiving a donation by claiming royal indulgences*
- 6. A prohibition of the royal prerogative to express a political opinion*
- 7. Abolition of all enforced one-way promotion and education of monarchs*

³² Somsak (2012) once posted on his Facebook account about demolishing the monarchy but in a philosophical manner rather than in reality, as “if you are ‘claiming democracy’ especially in the context of Thailand, it needs to remove Section 112 only.”

The activists who seemed to have this attitude include most former-politician activists, Attachai, and the leaders of UDD Sweden.

Third, although activists in this group acknowledged that the political interventions of the palace abused the democratic principle, they thought that the royal prerogative was a necessary tool for creating a calmer political situation which could be a starting point for real development in Thai society. Some activists, for example, saw that the monarch could help to restrict the most ferocious enemies of democracy like the aristocrats and the military led by General Prem. Laos1 is a very clear example. During the serious illness of King Bhumibol, Laos1 offered a version of the plot of 'Game of Thrones' in Thailand and is known among the underground followers as the 'Star War' theory. He believed that there were several factions in this dispute. Essentially, it was the battle for the throne between two children of Bhumibol, Vajiralongkorn and Sirinthorn, but each needed strong allies.³³ Thus, given this dispute among the elite, in Laos1's opinion, this was the time for politicians and political groups including the Red-Shirt underground supporters to choose the best side to support, for their own political benefit. For Laos1, Vajiralongkorn's side was the most preferable choice:

The last king has the Democrat Party, but not the recent king. He is in fact its opposition. . . . PT is the best for him. I think eventually he will bring Thaksin back and use Thaksin's party to support him. The rumour that Thaksin has aimed to overthrow the monarchy is not correct. Indeed, the monarch toppled Thaksin because Thaksin won his party. . . . The recent king is a simple man. It seems that he will not want to take any responsibilities in the country. Let him appoint a regent, maybe his daughter. That is it, good for all. This will be a non-violent transformation.

³³ Laos1 analysed that Bhumibol left the order to Prem so as to advocate Sirinthorn as the first Queen of Thailand, but this plot was impeded by Vajiralongkorn who, since 1972, had been nominated as the official Crown Prince. While Sirinthorn had both Prem and the Democrat Party as her supporter, Vajiralongkorn had to hold Thaksin, the Red-Shirt people, and UDD as his coalition to level the balance of power. The coup in 2014, at its initial state, was instigated by the Prem's order, argued Laos1, but the military junta led by General Prayuth Jan-Ocha betrayed Prem's Sirinthorn-to-be-the-Queen operation and chose to take Vajiralongkorn side instead. The latest plot before his disappearance, Laos1 believed, was that Vajiralongkorn was very disappointed with the performance of junta government, so he prepared to renegotiate with Thaksin and invite him to be the Prime Minister under Vajiralongkorn as the head of state (Laos1, 2018).

We do not oppose specific persons of the monarchy rather than its regime (Laos1, 2018).

Similarly, some underground activists, such as Chuphong, the Banpodj network, and Wing Commander Chanin, had indicated an optimistic attitude towards Vajiralongkorn as well, though this was rooted in different reasons.

Chucheep, from a position of anti-monarchism, criticised Laos1's 'Star War' theory saying it was just a conspiracy plot and accused it of distracting dissidents from the real goal of throwing the monarch out of Thai society.

I call them the Red Roof³⁴ not the Red Shirts. These people just simply jump to the trend. It is because they do not want to fight in the first place. Just wait for the coming of the king. . . coming alongside Thaksin. The core of this attitude is submission. . . not fighting. The theory of supporting Sia [an alternate name of Vajiralongkorn known by Thais] is owned by a mad man only. . . It is impossible that Thaksin has agreed with Sia. . . On the contrary, Sia has actually blamed Thaksin, never encouraged Thaksin (Chucheep, 2019c).

Ironically, Chucheep's account, which blamed monarchs for almost all problems in Thai society, was as unprovable as the plot of Laos1.

6.2.3 Socialism

Given the influence of CPT and socialist ideas on Thai social movements, it was not surprising that a socialist tendency appeared widely in mobilisations of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement. Such ideas were expressed, for example, in the criticism of the monopoly capitalists in Thailand like the Charoen Pokhaphand Group (CP), Thai Beverage Public Company Limited (Thai Bev), and even King Bhumibol himself. There were also campaigns encouraging greater state

³⁴ The Red Roof is a Thai metaphor for the mental hospital.

welfare and proposing nationalisation of privatised state enterprises like the Petroleum Authority of Thailand (PTT).

However, socialist ideas circulating within the underground movement were varied, depending on political experiences, knowledge, and aims of the activists who expressed them. Even among experienced activists who were previous CPT cadres, involved in both guerrilla warfare in forest and rural areas, and in political education in urban areas, there were different analyses of Thai capitalism and how to overthrow it. Apart from the influence of CPT, there were other leftist tendencies in the underground movement such as the Trotskyist position of Giles.

However, it is noteworthy that, because leftist political activism was seen as the enemy of the state and was suppressed for a long time, there are only a small number of political activists who describe themselves as socialists. The number is smaller in the Red-Shirt underground movement. Many ex-CPT cadres even rejected the practicality of socialist ideas, such as France1 (see the section on apoliticalism). Thus, although mobilising messages of socialist ideas appeared throughout the underground movement, too few activist groups and factions offered any systematic analysis of Thai capitalist society. From my survey, there were only three groups, indeed one group and two persons, who expressed intentionally that they were fighting on the basis of socialist ideas.

Firstly, it is the 'How To' group which comprised many ex- CPT members and their pupils. They provided a range of old fashioned communist ideological positions in their online resources, such as their YouTube, Facebook page (Thun Phuk Khad Sakdina Nue Rat Tee Mee Itthiphon America Krob-ngam, 2017), and the WordPress Blog (Thaistandpoint, 2014). It seemed that 'How To' used Marxism-Leninism as their basic ideology for interpreting the world by picking some aspects of those thoughts to use as its tools, such as the concepts of revolution, capitalism, and class. Its nine Theories for Revolution, for example, states that:

The thoughts of Marx-Engels-Lenin will be used as the heart of analyses and creating theory. . . . The theory of Marxism consists of three main elements, namely philosophy of dialectical materialism and historical materialism, theory of political economy (or theory of Marxist political economy), and Theory of scientific socialism (Ibid).

But, in fact, they drew mostly on the Stalinist and Maoist concepts to guide their analysis of Thai society, such as the concept of stagism for a revolutionary path to socialist society and a class-alliance. Instead of focusing on the mode of production, they attempted to equate some characters of feudalism with capitalism and merged them together to create their conception of Thai society. Accordingly, they viewed Thai society as characterised by a condition called: ‘Thunniyom Phukkhad Sakdina Nue Rat Thee Mee Ittihiphon American Krob-Ngum’ [the monopoly feudal capitalism which is over the state but under the U.S.’s domination]’.

This analysis of Thai society indicates the whole aspects of Thai society, including economy, politics, and social consciousness as well as international relations. They are 1) ‘a monopoly capital’ shows that the Thai economic system has reached the level of monopoly capitalism and at the latest stage as ‘a speculative capital’. This is the main part of Thai capitalism. But ‘a liberal capital’. . . is a minor part which cannot dominate the direction of development in Thailand; 2) ‘feudalism [sakdina in Thai]’ is a form of regime. The word ‘feudal’ in this context means an undemocratic regime. Others might call it an ‘ammartayathippatai [aristocracy]’, rajathippatai [monarchy]’, or ‘somburanaya sitthiraj mai [new absolute monarchy], they are all the same; 3) ‘over the state’ means people’s consciousness is dominated by ‘feudal monopoly capitalist class’. They dominate society, education, arts, culture, and tradition in order to create the condition of ‘over the state’ [...] (Ibid).

By this analysis, they view the national productive classes as having been exploited by the monopoly capitalists in close relationship with the monarchs (who are also monopoly capitalists), and Thai society shares characteristics with the regime of the feudal period. Moreover, this ruling class, argued How To, had worked together with its close ally - the U.S. - since the cold war, to rob Thailand of natural resources such as oil or minerals. In other words, they were confiscating the common interests of the people and distributing most of them to limited

groups inside the network of the monarch and to capitalists from the U.S. or to other imperialists. Accordingly, their main solution was not preparing the lower classes or ‘people’ to conduct a socialist revolution, instead, they wanted to overthrow the monarchy, its network and its foreign alliances beforehand, which could then pave the way for ‘a people’s democratic revolution’ and ‘a socialist revolution’ thereafter.

They used two ideas to describe the path to that destination. First, the concept of ‘socialism in one country’ which was derived from Stalinist-Maoist thought in the CPT. Instead of basing their work on the potential ability of the local proletariat who could unite with others at the international level, the ‘How to’ group mainly emphasised a change in Thailand, but rarely spoke about the same struggle in other contemporary capitalist societies. This led them to use ‘the nation’ or ‘political institutions’ as the main units of analysis in their explanation of the situation of Thai society. Second, and linked to the first, their analysis gradually abandoned the importance of the conception of class. They, for example, usually flatten the categories of peasant and labour together as the lower classes that produced and had been exploited without mentioning their differences in terms of the relations of production.³⁵ Thus they accepted that a class alliance could be possible if it was created to oppose any elite groups or nations which had exploited the productive classes or ‘people’, instead of focusing on the material conflict between capitalist and proletariat via the exploitation of labour and an accumulation of surplus values, as is usual among Marxists.

The second figure with a socialist tendency was Laos1 who was a member of the CPT, and, not surprisingly, shared some socialist concepts derived from the CPT’s Stalinist-Maoist position, as also offered by the ‘How To’ group. However, using the elitist approach for analysis (Bachrach & Baratz, 1962; Korpi, 1985), Laos1 often combined a conspiracy theory with his political accounts. Laos1 proposed

³⁵ In the case of Sapai (Sapai Siengchaobaan, 2019), who was admired and repeated the conceptual framework of How To but without a serious study of socialism, thereby making many more mistakes about Marxist ideas. She, for instance, usually replaced ‘class’ with ‘people’ in her propaganda and explained the conception of dialectic materialism in the adaptive formation spoken by How to, rather than that of the ordinary Marxist one.

that Thai society needed a powerful person who would have both political and economic power to destroy the outmoded relations of feudalism in Thai society. From this position, Laos¹ raised Thaksin as the most appropriate person to complete this task.

World history always presents to us, the transition period from the monarchy era to the capitalist era, everywhere must witness it - a capitalist democratic revolution. . . . While the main obstacle of revolutionary progress that needs to be destroyed is monarchs, its major force is a globalised capital or advanced capital, and the people who prefer liberal democracy. Thus, we call this theory a liberal capitalist democratic revolution that combined a democratic revolution with a liberal revolution. Its basic force is people's democracy, but who could be a capitalist leader of this revolution? . . . I cannot see anyone better than Thaksin . . . but after [this] revolution, this will not build up a socialist society immediately. It is impossible . . . for the new socialist society to be established if the consciousness cannot be improved to match the same level of the advanced force of production developed in a capitalist system. All we need to do is an incremental development of what capitalism has done (Laos¹, 2018).

Finally, Giles is a Trotskyist who is a member of, and influenced by, the Socialist Worker Party (SWP) in the UK and used this school of Marxist thought to explain the history and circumstances of Thailand. Giles argued that:

Before the fall of the Berlin Wall, most people who claimed themselves as Marxists were actually Stalinist leftists including CPT. I used to admire this party, but after studying I found that its direction could not lead to liberating anyone. The clearest example is what Laos and Vietnam have shown to us. Vietnam rulers, for example, are not different from Thai military dictators. They jailed a blogger who criticises the government. Joining SWP makes me realise many perspectives about socialism. Trotskyist is the best way to retain Marx and Engels's direction (Giles, 2018c).

He denied the CPT's Stalinist analysis of Thai society by pointing out that Thai society had already been a capitalist system by the introduction of the Thai elite in the late 19th century. Thus he argued against the idea of the two-stage revolution, using Trotsky's idea of 'the permanent revolution' (Giles, n.d.).

Accordingly, Giles usually reflected on similar situations or problems of capitalism in other societies and mentioned the possibility of an international union of the proletariat, such as with those in Latin America (2018b), Brazil (2018a), Sudan and Algeria (2019a), and around the world (2019c).

Moreover, Giles also used ideas of other Marxists, besides Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky, to create a more fully elaborated explanation of the development of Thai capitalism (e.g. Antonio Gramsci, Rosa Luxemburg, and Tony Cliff). For example:

The rightists of Thai syndicalism are interested in only economic issues but neglect politics. . . . On the contrary, the left syndicalists do not separate political and economic issues as well as the possibility of wanting to overthrow capitalism. However, they are different from the Marxist direction of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Luxemburg, and Gramsci, as they intend not to create a revolutionary party. Instead, their views are that socialism could be established by trade unions. This is the politics of most left syndicalists in Thailand (Giles, 2019b).

Due to this different perspective of analysis, Giles saw that an original cause of political conflict in Thai society was the long-established power of the military and their close relationship with other dominant elites such as the monarch and capitalists. This view contrasted with the Somsak's opinion about the power of Bhumibol. According to Steven Lukes's three dimensions of power (Lukes, 1974), Giles's view emphasises the decision-making power which Bhumibol had and used much less than other groups in the ruling class.

In fact, we are not in the society ruled under 'the monarchy' or 'the (new) absolute monarchy', but we are in the one which has been dominated by the military dictatorship that cooperates with capitalists and the conservative political parties (Giles, 2018d).

By contrast, Somsak's view, partly by applying Gramsci's idea of hegemony, focuses on the control-via-setting-agenda and manipulating/ideological power which might be more difficult to observe but more powerful than the observable forms.

I have never raised the issue of how much power each political actor possesses. Giles starts it. The issue of power is more complicated than you think. Power cannot be counted as one, two, three, and so on. However, if you really want to count it, I offer that the real power that dominates Thailand is the power of the monarchy. You can point the finger at anything in Thai society, including the military, but the only thing you do not dare to tarnish is the palace. . . . My argument is that after the 1980s, it was the first time that there was a unity in Thai society under the hegemony of monarchy. . . . The king transformed from a head of one ruling clique to be a head of the ruling class unprecedentedly. . . . Kasien calls this 'Bhumibol consensus, but I prefer 'mass monarchy' instead. . . . This derives from the end of the separation of two races of people, as Thai and Chinese in Thai society, and the Chinese bourgeoisie stepped to the leading class in Thai society . . . The image of Bhumibol, which might previously be state-organised, was adopted as the substitute national identity and substitute nationalism by these Sino-Thai bourgeoisie (Somsak, 2017).

Giles's reply to Somsak shows his material and structural view towards power relations in Thailand:

In the terms of the power of the monarch, Somsak reflects only abstract idea. I would call it 'a superstitious idea of power'. It offers nothing to apply to reality and democratisation. . . . The unity under the king is just formed among the middle class, not all Thais in other classes. . . . However, the clear weakness of Somsak's idea is the overestimation of its power. If we see it as formidable, how do people produce campaigns to counter this power? This will make movements stop running any activities. Instead, we can bring other political and economic issues as campaigns to mobilise the support of exploited classes. If we do not do this, we cannot create any changes in Thai society (Ibid; seeing Giles's later comment in Giles, 2017).

6.2.4 Neoconservatism

This political idea was expressed by a few activists, especially those staying in the U.S. Nick Ragan and Sukij Sub-Aneksanti, who live in Texas and Chicago respectively, are the main activists employing this idea in their mobilisation. In general, in political terms, they advocate the establishment of democracy and the rights of the individual. In economic terms, they want the least intervention of the state in the market, as well as a low rate of taxation. From the perspective of

international politics, a patriotic mind is presented strongly. They support sending the army to control areas that could turn out to be the origin of an enemy rather than setting a defensive front at the motherland. Additionally, the people influenced by this thought usually resist all forms of socialism and related ideas.

Nick showed his strong neoconservative sentiment during his speaking about Thai people as:

I would like to suggest anyone who regularly asks others the question ‘are you Thai?’ that you should first look at yourself in the mirror. If you look like ‘Jek’ [the defaming word Thai people used for calling the Chinese] in Sampeng [the area where many Chinese people have lived since the early time of Bangkok] and say ‘I am a 100% Thai, Are you Thai as well? [Nick spoke in Chinese accent]’ [laughing]. . . . Do you want me to tell you who Thais are? Thai means free, so Thailand is the land of the free not the slave. That is it. . . . The duty of Thais is loving their Thai identity and freedom, and fighting for these two things. . . . Chinese-looking people like you should not ask anybody how Thai they are. You always praise communist China. . . . Do you know the fact that Mao killed 75 million of his own people? . . . And do you know that, in the past, if anyone were known as a communist, they would be hung in a tree and hit with the chair? I want to say that ‘the only good communist is a dead communist’. . . . I notice many Young Red-Shirt people who prefer to be socialists, communists, or Marxists. But they are all living in free countries. Why do they not move to live in Russia or Beijing? . . . Could these people tell me which country is following Karl Marx’s instruction of a state-controlled production that is succeeding in the end? The countries which adopt the socialist doctrine like China, Russia, Hugo Chavez’s Venezuela, Pol Pot’s Khmer Rouge, and Vietnam are in fact developed because of capitalism. . . . one of civic duties that Thais should do is just voting, that is it. (Nick, 2019)

Despite knowing and occasionally working with some experienced activists, Nick and Sukij run their activities separately from other underground groups. Rather than being influenced by the left ideas and by previous relationships as was the case in most underground groups, this ideological direction is reflective of the extent to which the context considerably determines underground activists’ perception and knowledge of politics, at both a domestic and international level. This particularly applies to novice activists who have stayed abroad for a long time and have had less connection with the Thaksin clan and the Red Shirts.

6.2.5 Anti-Thainess idea

Similar to the concept of anti-monarchism, this position views Thainess as a distinctive quality embedded in Thais that needs to be removed. However, their meaning of Thainess is very subjective, especially from a stereotypical perspective. Activists might refer to structural features, like the infrastructure system or cultural habits, as the common norms of Thai people. Some activists view Thais as having commonly bad habits like being lazy, selfish, and short-sighted. According to this position, these ‘Thai’ things are seen as indicating a less developed or non-modernised character compared to those of advanced countries. Most underground activists who have this idea saw underdevelopment in Thailand, including in even themselves, as the results of these characteristics of Thainess. This sentiment created a serious eagerness to push themselves to better conditions. This idea is usually combined with other ideas like liberalism and socialism for creating criticisms of the reasons and conditions of Thainess, and projecting better things. Nevertheless, a recognition of the differences between Thailand and advanced countries and of the need to remove the alleged inferiority of Thainess varied between different kinds of activists.

While the academic activists presented this idea systematically, the experienced activists tended to launch this sentiment in a more cautious and strategic way because it might affect their popularity. Japan1(2018), for instance, elaborated on his views towards a relationship between the monarch, social inequality, and social hierarchy as follows:

I was born to a Sino-Thai middle-class family. I always have intense ambition in every situation I participated in In the terms of competition, I never lessened my ability to accommodate any others. . . . In school, I usually pinned myself in the first three ranks of the classes, but it was different in the terms of economic status. . . . Although I was not the poorest in school, my family could not provide me some accessories, like a watch as my friends had. I was not a child who forces parents to buy any items by screaming, but I would raise a question as to why I cannot have them. . . . From this point, I started to discover the people in other classes. . . . Even though my social class was ok at that

time, I could recognise that I am inferior to people in the higher class. Thus, there was nothing to say about people in the lower class. . . . To work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was part of my fight because this ministry is full of aristocrats and their descendants. The same question still echoed in my mind. . . . If I was not equal to others in that place in the terms of lineage, I needed to be at the same level as them with my ability. At that time I realised that monarchs are not a good thing anymore. The existence of them makes the class structure still firmly remaining in Thai society.

Chucheep expressed his anti-Thainess towards the general character of Thai activism as:

There are many problems in the potentially revolutionary movement. . . . The leaders are not competent. They repeatedly launch only the old ineffective ways. . . and can be stuck with excessive appreciation of the entertaining part of the movement. They have not taken the missions seriously, but love to have fun. Thais always love amusing things. This moment is nothing but the situation of the Thai revolution. Nevertheless, when you confront the armed enemy, if you choose to dance in front of and on the stage of protest, how do you win the battle? (Chucheep, 2019l).

Among novice activists, especially activists whose main action was cursing or scolding the opposition (known among underground participants as ‘klum dah [the groups of scolding]’), this idea was exhibited more obviously and broadly because most of them were ‘avatars’ of pseudonymous users on social networking, who were less accountable for what they did. Ning, for example, argued that the acceptance of an authoritarian regime, especially the power of monarchs, is a specific character of Thais:

I would like to ask if he is a good king? Indeed, I can see only the parasite of your country and society that has exploited the tax paid by its own stupid people. Is he a good man in your country of buffaloes?³⁶ It is not understandable to me. I can only say that you all are the most stupid type of people. You are buffaloes. You are the toads in a coconut shell.³⁷ You are slaves and serfs who love to stay in the outdated system. . . . Why do

³⁶ In Thai context, a buffalo is a metaphor for stupidity.

³⁷ The Thai proverb ‘the frogs in a coconut shell’ means the people who have limited vision because they lack an opportunity to obtain knowledge and experiences in a wider and more diverse context.

you, the slaves, fear the monarch? . . . Monarchs in advanced countries can be criticised. . . . [However, you cannot do that in] Thailand, a very minor country, which is full of less-opportunity for children. . . and poor aging people. . . Why? Because you are buffaloes. . . . Actually, I do not hate you. . . . To have a good or bad monarch does not affect me because I am a citizen of the other country. I just sympathise with you (Ning, 2019c).

Aphatsara argued that the characters of Thainess appear in Thai people who even moved to live abroad for many years constantly and some degenerated characteristics of Thai society in her view as:

I am always curious about what happens in Thailand because you [Thais] attempt to make a fake story about Thailand that it is a beautiful and good country. Actually, it is good for the rich only, not for others like the poor including you, the wives of foreigners [lived abroad]. After being married to your husbands, you have a better life and you forget the poverty in Thailand and what Thailand really has been. . . . How does the Thai king step up to be the richest monarch in the world? . . . Why has Thailand been a brothel of and the centre of the sex market of the world? Why is Thailand the original place of drugs? . . . You have never raised these questions but only make fake news and gossip, and envy each other. . . . Differently, although people in western countries are also divided into different economic statuses, they have better lives and societies because of the welfare system in homelands. . . . Have you ever raised this kind of question, Thai women abroad? (Aphatsara, 2019a)

Although criticising the status quo is a common activity amongst political activists who want to change the state of things, the appearance of this idea happened more frequently, especially after it seemed that the power of the ruling class would be preserved under the 2017 new constitution and the popularity of underground movement was diminishing.³⁸ In some cases, Thais who had lived and gained citizenship in other countries proudly denounced the Thainess in themselves, though this was possibly from their bitter regret.

³⁸ This is linked significantly to the situation in the overground politics where this idea was also presented by progressive politician and supporters. These people were usually called ‘Puak Chang Chart [the people who hate their own nation]’.

6.2.6 *The trend towards apolitical and anti-factional positions*

These ideas were usually developed and expressed among novice activists who were far behind other groups of activists in terms of knowledge and experience of politics and mobilisation. Due to the period in which they entered the political scene, these people had no close relationship with previous political groups. After their involvement in underground politics over a considerable amount of time and although some underground activists and followers still recognised a general need for a process of democratisation in Thai society, they began to see the intensely polarised political atmosphere, especially between the Red-Shirt and Yellow-Shirt sides. They saw this as a restriction to the overall development and opportunities for the emergence of other alternative factions. According to later conflicts with other activists, some novice activists declared that they had stopped supporting either the Red Shirts or Yellow Shirts, and even suggested that the political adherents should retreat from political activism.

Some participants expressed a more apolitical position when they argued that an end of the polarised politics among Thai people would be impossible and would just lead to an endless succession of elites. The early novice activists of the first wave like Chatwadee, for example, expressed this apolitical character after being unable to find an effective solution for Thai society as:

If you cannot find a better life in Thailand, you need to seek a way to leave a bad country like this Kala land [the coconut-shell land] where leaders have never sympathised with the poor. I am speechless after reading the news narrating that while many Thai people commit suicide because of poverty, military generals use our tax to buy more weapons. If Thais still do not stand up to fight, you need to accept this condition where they will be continually exploited via taxation. The exploiting tax will be sent to benefit the state officials rather than developing a welfare system for all Thais. . . . I do not urge anybody to fight against soldiers and salim [the Red-Shirt opponent] because it depends on the consideration of each man. In addition, I know that the bad experience in the 2010 repression, in which many protesters were shot in the head, has lessened the courage to resist the dictatorship. . . . Thus, as the best I can do, I wish the holy things I have done all my entire life to protect the Thai grassroots people and help

them to finally find a better life for themselves and family. (Chatwadee, 2019d)

The hardship of living abroad also caused several underground activists to decide to lessen their political role in order to focus on finding better conditions for their lives. Jom Petchpradab, for example, announced that he was withdrawing himself from his political action, especially producing political reports on his YouTube channel since the 2014 coup. Jom gave the reason for his withdrawal after the 2019 election as:

In the last 5 years, we attempted to fight in various patterns. It was the time that politicians were absent from a political scene, so, as the people movement, we took on the role of speaking on unsayable topics and the wickedness of the NCPO dictatorship. Nevertheless, after the return of the politicians and political parties of the democratic side, I thought that they would be our representatives as happened before. . . . But it seemed that Pheu Thai Party was not interested in the request from people who want them to fix the social structure. . . . It might consider this, but not from a broader view. This disappointed me. . . . After estimating the overall situation, I view that, in my entire life, Thailand is not the proper place where people can think about and create necessary ideologies to create democracy. Instead, it is full of the useful ideologies for growing the tree of dictatorship in the last century. . . . Fighting for 5 years is enough for me, as I am not in the mid-20s but entering old age. After recognising that I could not witness full democracy in Thailand, I have decided to step back from political action. . . . Nevertheless, if millions of people come together to grow the seed of democracy in Thailand, I might fight with them again. But with the recent conditions, I choose to leave and find the best way to settle in this country [the U.S.] instead. (Jom, 2019)

This direction was not only limited to novice activists. Although many experienced activists still participated in political activities and aimed to establish a more democratic regime in Thailand, they distanced themselves from and decreased their close relationship with the active underground factions considerably in later periods. They also stepped back from the polarised politics and tended to propose a consensus among Thai people. France1, for example, described his opinion towards political ideologies and his decreasing role in the underground and polarised politics:

I used to hold the doctrine of democracy, then communism, but then it seemed that I have no ideology. I just believe that the only reasonable and justified fight in recent times needs to be done in the direction of democracy and human rights. That is it. I do not hold any ideology as in the past. . . . I do not believe in communist socialism anymore. Although some friends still believe, I do not think the ideas of Marx and the socialist regime in any place match with the recent reality. . . . I wrote about this many years before the beginning of the Red and Yellow Shirt conflict. The world has entered the era of non-ideological differences. I get this idea by applying the concept of the End of History of Fukuyama. The recent world has no determining ideologies. There is only the ideology of freedom. Nationalism, socialism, and so on do not have a significant role. Thinking about the new ideology is not from our standpoint, but from staring at our recognition of the actual alteration and development of the world. . . . But let me say about ideology, I would speak about democracy and republic. . . . These two things are the only ideologies that drive my participation in politics. I could not think anything else politically except them. In other words, I have no new ideology (France1, 2018).

6.3 The characteristics of underground activists' political ideas and their dynamic

Having outlined these political ideas used for mobilising in the underground movement, I want to draw attention to two important tendencies of political debate in these contexts: that is, the combination of contradictory political ideas, and the presentation of oversimplified arguments.

6.3.1 The combination of contradictory political ideas

Underground groups and activists did not always propose a single set of coherent ideas, but often drew on a range of ideas to legitimise the direction of their actions. As I mentioned before, political experiences and knowledge derived from the previous movement were the main sources for the characters of the underground activists, especially among former-politician and experienced activists.

To challenge the domination of the ruling class's power, activists combined the preferred ideas and formed a new set of ideas in clear contrasted, and which

offered better possible benefits. Although the essential features of the above ideas maybe contradict with each other, they were adjusted and blended to serve political purposes.

Chucheep, an ex-cadre of CPT, for example, presented his many preferred policies of a socialist character such as social equality and welfare: “we are fighting for the state power. If we get it, we will decentralise that power and found a federal state. Land and resources will be own collectively and equally in each state” (Chucheep, 2019i). However, at the same time, he did not refuse capitalism and even supported giant corporates. Disappointed by the failure of the communist movements, he advocated the advanced technology of production and effective distribution under a market system. Chucheep presented his support to the giant corporations as:

CP [the giant food-production corporation in Thailand] sells fresh chickens. If there is no CP, How do you find chickens to eat? Do you raise them yourselves like Bhumibol tells about the sufficient economy? . . . When you go to the 7-Eleven [a brand of a convenient store owned by CP in Thailand] because you need to eat, if it is closed, what do you do next? Anybody who works in 7-eleven is also Thai. What is its problem? Somebody says it destroys Show Huoi [local shops]. Thus if you do not like 7-eleven, you can go to Show Huoi because no one forces you to shop in 7-Eleven. . . . What thing do you want to prioritise, the benefit of the consumer or Show Huoi? How different is the number of people who work in these two businesses. Many more people work in big companies and all are Thais. If they go bankrupt, the damage will not be concentrated within the owners' families. It can ruin the country. There is no monopoly, in my opinion. There is no restriction of competition (Chucheep, 2019g).

He also accepted the liberal principle of equal rights among humans and supported the decentralisation of power as shown in his Thai Federation campaign.

The How To group and its allies also mixed their socialism with anti-monarchism, while changing the word ‘monarchs’ to other words to suit their main theme as ‘Sapha Si Nam-nguen [the blue assembly]’.

The class who owns the monopoly feudal capital that is over the state but under the U.S.'s domination has a leading role in society. There is a reformation of an administrative system by elites to be able to effectively protect the exploitation. They transfer the national common resources to the ownership of their own class, and in a huge amount that is much increased over those of the previous era. They also change a legal system to transfer the power to control the possessed assets and appoint 'the New Blue Assembly' that will hold power, make policies, plan strategies, and make orders. (Thun Phuk Khad Sakdina Nue Rat Tee Mee Itthiphon America Krob-ngam, 2019)

This is a common character of social movements because leading activists aim to build the largest number of supporters from many different types of participants. This characteristic reflects the complications of a modern capitalist society that creates diverse social aspects based on their level of development (Castree, 2009; Harvey, 2009).

However, a more interesting characteristic is the contradictory combination between more progressive positions and existing ruling ideas or other forms of conservative position. On the one hand, such combinations came from a strategic perspective that saw some benefits in refraining from criticism of some ruling ideas because of a concern to retain audiences or supporters who might still want to preserve either some social institutions or relationships in society. However, on the other hand, this is reflective of the fact that the ruling ideas have dominated even the radical groups of people and have prevented them from creating class-consciousness. Alternatively, such combinations took place because of a concern to protect audiences from being repressed and captured by Thai authorities.

A good example is the different expressions of views over the political intervention of monarchs, a most controversial issue in Thailand. Although almost all underground activists and participants wanted to limit or (more radically) overthrow the power of the monarchs, expressing opinions towards the present monarch were often abandoned or blended with a positive attitude by some activists.

There were some activists demonstrating an acceptance of the indestructibility of the Thai monarch, or, at least, they believed that the monarchy could not be eliminated in the near future. As described above, the case of Laos¹ is a good example. He hopes that the alliance of Vajiralongkorn and Thaksin could dismantle the power of aristocrats and military generals and could thus be acceptable as a strategic step towards the creation of a new era of Thai capitalist society. By contrast, some activists saw benefits in using a compromising direction towards the monarchy. For example, Num Korat spoke on YouTube channel of ‘UDD EU Sweden’ group as:

The way we offered is the way for all Thais for overthrowing aristocrats and NCPO, or military. This is our priority. . . . Though they possess many weapons, we have nothing but only a great number of people. Nevertheless, we were painted as the group aiming to demolish monarchs. I do not know how the end of struggle will look, or whether the monarch will be overthrown or not. My will is that people must have more power than the monarch. The palace has to be under the law the same as it is in England and Japan. . . . The problem is that they [aristocrats and military generals] obstruct people’s fight by claiming the name of the monarch in order to threaten us. The solution is that we should avoid mentioning their names in our activities (Num, 2019)

Although she started her underground role by harshly criticizing the monarch, after changing her position, Chatwadee blamed her opponents within the underground movement on the issue of attacking monarch as:

These activists have criticised only one article of the law code like Section 112. Finally, they got the result of their own actions in having to flee from Laos to France. This shows that they lose in this battle, but they still lie to supporters that they will keep fighting. I am curious about what their fight is. Actually, they just make videos about criticism of the monarch and how to seek asylum, if needed. In fact, they have never told people about the safer choices of resistant activism that will not lead to being captured, and a more effective way that could lead to a class revolution. They just urge Thai people to break Section 112 and repeat that they could bring the accused of lèse-majesté people to abroad, they will in fact be rubbish here. . . . Being clever, Thai people! You should consider seriously that Thailand is your motherland. . . . This is similar to the incident when Thaksin lured people to participate in the demonstrations created for his

own interest where in the end lower-class people were injured or killed without help from Thaksin (Chatwadee, 2019b)

Chanin Klaikluang is a rare example of an underground activist who not only supports the monarch because of a political strategy, but also because of his real admiration for monarchs especially Vajiralongkorn. He never challenges the king's privileged status because he thinks that it is the only institution which could ensure a balanced power among powerful groups in Thai society. Indeed, he admired Vajiralongkorn because of his personality and some parts of his life, rather than for political reasons. Chanin said that Vajiralongkorn was brought up to be a king in a stable situation, which was different from the case of Bhumibol, whose coronation occurred suddenly after the death of his brother amid political turmoil, causing him to generally need to compromise with corrupted aristocrats and generals. Besides admiration for his honourable status, Chanin thought that his training to be a soldier from the time he was a young prince made Vajiralongkorn the most appropriate person to be the king of Thailand. He was powerful enough to resolve the recent political conflicts.

The last two coups have ruined the country for longer than a decade because we have had the old corrupted aristocrats and military officials. They have abused our country in many ways, like taking high salaries paid by ordinary taxpayers, receiving bribes, granting business licenses to few business families and so on. . . . We have just gotten the new king. . . . He [Vajiralongkorn] is the king who is the hope of all people in the nation as the saviour who will abolish the wicked system of a military dictatorship that has acted as a parasite on the monarch for a long time. I love the monarchs and want them lasting as the protector of people. Even though my status is likely as an invisible man and in a poorer condition than anyone who graduated from the military academy, including the king, I still love my idol - king Rama X the bad boy (Chanin, 2019).

Another distinctive position that combines the contradictory position on the monarchy issue was selecting to support specific monarchs. Whereas many underground participants refused the legitimacy of the Chakkri dynasty (Rama I - X), they presented allegiance to King Taksin who was killed by Rama I. Besides the nearly similar name of Thaksin, many underground Red Shirts saw these two leaders as having been committed to many of the same tasks. Thus Taksin's

restoration of the independence of Thai people after the collapse of Ayuddha by the Burmese force could be compared to Thaksin's repaying IMF's loan before the due time. They also linked the suppression of King Taksin and Thaksin by Rama I and Rama IX, the traitors and opportunists whose dynasty and kingdom had been the origin of almost all problems in Thailand. As, Chucheeep argued:

King Taksin's background was as an ordinary person from a merchant family but who did not own a satellite business like Thaksin. He was just a local merchant, but, in my view, he is the best king in Thai history. In my opinion, Thailand would not be able to exist nowadays without Taksin. . . . But his era ended by the envy of sakdina people ³⁹. . . . The behaviour of this king [Bhumibol] is the same. . . he ordered to kill his challengers. . . . Recently, the new allegation against challengers is created. . . . The latest one is a wicked capitalist (HaunT89s, 2019a).

Besides the issues of the contradiction between anti-monarchist and monarchist ideas, there were also others instances of ideological contradiction such as between liberal and illiberal ideas, and liberal and nationalist ideas.

Michael Connors (2003; 2007) coins the term “democrasubjection” to explain how Thai liberalism developed. Democracy, and liberalism, was a hegemonic project manipulated by Thai elites to confine the oppressed. On the one hand, elites let the general concept of liberalism and democracy do their work, but, on the other hand, when ordinary people started to generate their own ‘liberal thoughts’, the hegemonic version was brought to suppress it again, particularly suggesting that a condition of ‘self-rule’ and development would be increased if the proper citizenship appeared in the political community. This explanation, which is close to my explanation of the influence of UCD, helps to understand why liberalism from below failed in Thai society.

Many activists and their audiences, actually many Thais, have only a basic understanding of liberal thought. Although it was helpful for these people to

³⁹ Rama I was a descendant of an aristocrat family from Ayuddha era.

recognise a contradiction between the liberal democratic regime and opposing ones, the liberal ideas themselves were not explained competently enough to lead the underground people to effectively challenge the ruling ideas and social hierarchy was embedded for a long time in Thai society. For example, although most underground activists talked frequently about how liberal they were in a rigid society, they rarely mentioned the reason why Thailand needed to be a more liberal society (such as the nature and basic rights of humans) which are normally defended by serious liberals. In a practical manner, while they supported any activities and protests to gain more rights, they did not hesitate to attack any weaknesses of their opponents even though those attacks might violate the rights they had just claimed to protect.

Although most activist's ultimate aims were political rights such as the right to vote, freedom of speech and expression, and fair trial, it seems that the attitude towards other civil rights might not be included in their priorities. In live broadcast programs and online social networks they still condemned people, even other underground participants, on account of their appearance, race, religion, profession, and gender instead of on account of their actual or rational mistakes. This tendency was more intense when activists were attacking those they opposed. King Bhumibol, thus, was usually called 'I-Board [the bad blind man]'.⁴⁰ Princess Sirinthorn, Bhumibol's second daughter, was known as 'Tom Kha Thang', which means a tomboy woman whose has a wide space between her legs, derived from her unmarried status and physical appearance. Thus Chucheeep said ". . . her nickname is Sirinthorn, the real name is Chang Nam [Walrus], and the other name is Kha Thang . . . (Chucheeep, 2018a)." However, this kind of language was rarely used by former-politician and academic activists.

Among novice activists, the principle of liberal ideas, such as the dignity of and equality among human beings, was less evident than among other types of activists. When they had a debate over political direction, disagreements could

⁴⁰ There are other names for caricaturing Bhumibol as Ben-Hur (who is believed by Banpodj to be blind same as Bhumibol), Sod Bud (which can be twisted to Sud Bord that means the wicked blind in Thai (listening an example in Banpodj (2018b))).

extend to personal issues and lead to harsh condemnation and discrimination against the opposition. For example, the YouTube channels of the group of Ning⁴¹ frequently used discriminatory words and phrases like ‘Karee’ [prostitutes], ‘Mangda’ [a pimp], ‘I Lao’ [a Lao descendant], and ‘Tood lakkapet or Viparit’ [an abnormally transgender person] to attack people with whom they disagreed. Besides the Ning group’s YouTube channels, there were other activists who also used the exact same tone of voice such as Chatwadee (2019c), Sapai (2019), and Aphatsara (2019c).⁴² Chatwadee, for example, looked down upon an exiled woman who comes from the lower class, and women who work as a sex workers:

When I see your pictures, I know immediately that you look so very excited because you are a low-class people from a countryside who have never visited overseas countries. I never had contempt for lower class or grassroots people . . . but you, who are part of this class, are so lazy. You have never tried to find a job! . . . Not like me because I am a working woman. Many people praise me, especially westerners because most Thai women work as masseuses, but it is not a traditional massage, it is a happy-ending [sexual] massage. . . . I never do that. I am a mom of two daughters. I am an educated person who got a Bachelor’s degree from Thailand. My family is in the upper class. I will not defame the reputation of Thai people abroad. . . . I have enough morality (Chatwadee, 2019a)

Although this was the typical style of contradictory dialogue, it seemed that it was hindering the mobilisation of a more progressive consciousness. Some activists such as Ning attempted to hide this behaviour by acting in this way only on separate channels, decreasing rude conversation and emphasising political topics in her main channel. However, most activists continue this kind of action constantly. Ning asserted that ‘when you want to scold anyone, you have to find his/her weakness. . . . I do not care about people’s opinions. . . . I created this channel for talking about and cursing anyone I want’ (Ning, 2019a). Although some activists usually used personal attacks as just an act of ridicule or as a means of

⁴¹ When I am writing this thesis, their recent channels are Ning (2019e) and Smith Haek Pheu Seriphap 11 (2019).

⁴² This is not surprising because they were all old friends and share some characteristics such as Thai wives of European husbands, even though they separated after having disagreements.

discriminating against a specific person, this kind of language appeared broadly among underground novice activists.

In the worst case, some disputes led to endangering participant's lives because their personal information, such as pictures, real names, and addresses, was revealed on social networking services by other underground activists. This risked them being captured by the state officials, especially for breaching the *lèse-majesté* law.⁴³ Additionally, there was a creation of fake news and scandal stories used for degrading opponents. This action might extend to the people outside the underground political space.

Another ideological contradiction related to the notion of a nation was the expression of anti-Thainess. As explained above, most Thais, including underground people, have a common perception of Thainess, which has been created through historical storytelling, political symbols, and a revival of selected cultural performance and linguistic activities. Consequently, most Thai people possess more or less a nationalist inclination, especially during political and economic disruption. Accordingly, although there was an anti-Thainess idea influencing the underground community, the nationalist attitude appeared suddenly just when they really needed to contrast their political stances with those of others, i.e. there was a contradictory assertion of national identity in many underground activists.

Thus when some activists insulted their opponents with nationalist or racist words, such as calling people who are Lao descendants by disparaging words like *Bak Siew* [the rustics from the northeast] or *I Lao* [the ridiculous word for calling the Lao descendants], it reflected that they accepted and adhered to, either consciously

⁴³ For example, listening to the apology of an activist named Mae Maew to another one named Thongtham for her threat to reveal his face in Mae Maew (2018), seeing the Facebook account created for exposing personal information of participants who opposed the Ning group in Mata Fahsai (2019), viewing Ning's attempt to point to the action of breaking *lèse-majesté* of Lee, her rival, in Ning (2019f), her sending one of her colleagues to visit Aphatsara's son and reveal his poor life for bluffing Aphatsara in Ning (2019d), and another one to take photos and videos of Aphatsara's house in Sweden in Ning

or not, the prioritised status of the established Thainess, rather than the more radical ideas they claimed to endorse.

This characteristic reveals a shortage of serious discussion on the ideological formation in each underground group which was usually overlooked by most activists themselves. It was an academic who is seriously interested in political movements, like Somsak, who mentioned this incompetency in the Red-Shirt underground movement. He argued that most Red-Shirt people, both underground and overground, were actually not different from their opponents (e.g. the Yellow-Shirt people) because they believed strongly in some ideologies without enough deliberate consideration. For example, some Red Shirts trust everything done by Thaksin and his government without careful scrutiny. Likewise, some of the Yellow Shirts also believe that monarchs have had made only good things for Thai society (Somsak, 2015; see also in Somsak, 2017).

6.3.2 Oversimplified arguments in underground political contexts

What was done in political programs on YouTube and posts on Facebook pages was very useful for educating people politically, but it could not improve the capacity of the movements when the activists needed more critical ideas to increase their competence against the oppositions. I will elucidate below the limitations of the underground activism in studying and presenting the political ideas of liberalism and socialism.

Many activists did not comprehensively investigate the knowledge related to liberalism such as the historical application of liberal thoughts, thinkers, liberal rights, and related political regimes and economic systems. Instead, they just mentioned abstract conceptions like ‘democracy’, ‘liberal’, ‘freedom’, and so on, and linked them with the positive outcomes shown in liberal societies, especially developed European countries, the U.S., and Japan, as the model that Thai society should imitate. Although there were some people who could study models such as

liberalism on their own, most participants chose to follow credible activists instead.

Some academic activists also could not provide the knowledge to create a critical explanation towards political situations. France6, for example, used to teach in the faculty of Arts in one of the leading universities in Thailand. Instead of studying and producing her own version of a liberal idea, France6 frequently adopts the opinions of experienced activists whilst streaming the live programmes on her YouTube channel - Media Force (2018) and Bamboo Network (2018). Consequently, she was criticised by Somsak, who has more knowledge of philosophy, politics, and Thai history, about her inability to correct any mistakes expressed by leading activists such as blaming the monarch without concrete evidence (Somsak, 2018a).⁴⁴

Banpodj was a good example of an activist who used the wrong information to form a political narrative. Hasdin Urai-praiwan who spoke as Banpodj had no university degree, but his experience from living abroad, knowledge of politics and foreign languages, and support from his network encouraged him to attempt to explain and project political proposals in an academic fashion. His explanation, however, was wrong in both the theoretical framework and historical facts. For example, the Banpodj's Archive no.8 (2018a) below shows those mistakes in its chronicle of British history:

'...There was one person named John Locke who was brilliant enough to back to 'The Magna Charta', written in 800 years ago (John Locke stayed in the same 300 years equaled to James [this is his additional sentence and I am not sure what he means]), and wrote the new one called 'The Magna Carta'. Then, John Locke introduced the Magna Carta to MPs and Senators and called people of the entire country to consider this new law. It was the gathering of the democratic power of English people to establish the

⁴⁴ However, when I interviewed France6, she accepted her lesser ability in social science and history, comparing it with other academics who studied on these topics directly. It seemed that France6 wants to improve her ability, so she merges her study of politics and her recent reading project for the blind together as reading the books of the radical ideas and social changes on her YouTube channels (France6, 2019). Nevertheless, this confirms that she has a low level of political knowledge.

Upper and Lower assemblies to make a judgment in the case of James II, the king of England. James II needed to avoid the verdict of being beheaded, so he sought asylum in France where he died. England had no king, so what should they do? James had a son-of-law named Willem, not William. We call him Willem the Orange, the prince of Holland at that time. He was crowned to be the King of England as known as King William the Orange. Afterward, the English monarch had never been strong anymore because there was an example of the uprising of all entire people of the country and using the Magna Carta to destroy the monarch's power. Then, monarch accepted democracy and let people be the country's supremacy body. . . . You can see that the surrender of the monarch is not easy at all.'

This attempt of novice activists to study political history and philosophy, and elaborate the outcome is very useful for the activists themselves and their followers. However, these attempts were not done consistently and, similar to other underground groups, ended with general narratives about Thai politics and elites. Besides these kinds of continuing mistakes, he also presented a conspiracy theory version of world politics, which he saw as dominated by a few secret groups such as the Bilderberg organisation, the Rothschild family, the Rockefellers, and the Freemasonry.

The How To group that advocated socialism also showed wrong information in their presentation in relation to both theory and historical facts. In the first theory of their '9 Theories for Revolutions', the How To group mentioned 'Tristdee Latthi Marx-Engels-Lenin [Theories of Marx-Engels-Lenin]' which contains quite confusing and oversimplified explanations, as well as incorrect detail about the thoughts of these thinkers. For example, when they explain 'The Philosophy of dialectic materialism and historical materialism', they refer to the scope of analysis as "the universe, world, society, and how humans living together in society. Thus they comprise the largest of knowledge" (THAISTANDPOINT, 2014), rather than a conception of dialectic and a mode of production. Moreover, their definition of these conceptions is simply provided but not precisely explained:

The Philosophy of dialectic materialism and historical materialism was derived from science and depended on science and technology. It means that no matter, if in the past or in the future, science and technology will

create any advance innovation, and human society will change and be more complicated at any level. We still can explain and grasp the law of change. . We are at the status called 'learning to change the world' rather than 'learning to live with the world'. When using this set of thoughts to analyse the struggle of the Red-Shirt people in Thai society, we would like to put it under the topic of 'the class struggle' as the main theme (Ibid).

When they describe the characteristics of a mode of production, they mention only the forces of production and the relations of production. They mention superstructure in their second theory. And when they explain the economic base, they instead provide a summary of the categories of capital that Marx outlined in *Capital*.

The theory of political economy emphasises the explanation of 'the capitalist mode of production' in the two main topics as first, the force of production, and, second, the relations of production. . . . 'The economic relations' are comprised of 4 systems: the relations of production, the relations of exchange, the relations of trading, finance, and banking, and the relations of consumption (Ibid).

6.3.3 *The causes of the nature of underground political ideas*

These two characteristics - the combination of contradictory political ideas and the oversimplified arguments in underground political ideas - originated in three main causes related to the specific Thai capitalist mode of production: the influence of a socio-cultural hierarchy; the different classes and locations of the underground activists and participants; and a lack of radically competent intellectuals.

First, a socio-cultural hierarchy, which is one of the preserved social relations under UCD, influences most Thais materially and ideologically. Instead of more modernised criteria like meritocracy or the principle of the rule of law, the traditional hierarchy honours the superior position and its circle related to the three ruling ideas of the Thai nation (nation, religion, and monarch), and is widely used for evaluating the value of people. Although economic status is another

factor in making an assessment, having wealth in Thai society cannot be separated from these social relations because accumulation is also facilitated by the socio-cultural status. In this structure, ability is less important than connections with the powerful, the age hierarchy or seniority is another factor used for determining the status of people, i.e. there is much lower opportunity for social mobility for the young in a given situation. Respecting the older is an important norm in Thai culture, even though it could be voided by the rule of the social-status hierarchy when the young have a higher status than the old. In addition, the oppressed classes, who have to negotiate with many oppressors, are more sensitive to these social relations than the powerful.

Unsurprisingly, even among underground people with radical ideas, the influence of these norms is still evident in their way of thinking, i.e. because of their inferior status in Thai society, many underground activists and participants who are from the lower classes have been very responsive to this way of thinking. Thus, rather than beginning to study and discuss radical ideas through political actions, under the influence of the socio-cultural hierarchy, they were very likely to reproduce the forms of that hierarchy instead. Due to being afraid of offending the well-known or older activists, many activists avoid objecting to, or disapproving their ideas. In the case where there was an attempt to refute the ideological and strategic offers of these privileged activists, it was done secretly or indirectly. For example, participants opened a new chat room on social networking services where they could criticise the famous or aged activists without being noticed. This condition obstructed the development of newer or more complicated political ideas appropriate to the more recent situation, rather than those offered by a few prestigious activists. Additionally, this condition could implicitly reproduce the influence of the ruling ideas in the underground people. For example, in spite of a lack of clear evidence, many underground leaders and supporters permitted Laos¹ to explain his Star War theory for many years without significant objection. The case of Chuchep is similar: he put the blame on Bhumibol repeatedly until these stories turned into the truth for some supporters.

Secondly, and related to the first point, the classes and locations of activists and participants affected the means of creating and expressing underground political ideas. Although it is hard to know the class of people participating in underground politics, on the basis of reading and observing the underground media, my opinion is that the working class comprises the main part of the underground movement while other classes (e.g. capitalists and peasants) form a smaller part.

The working-class people have been faced with economic difficulty and have been exploited their entire lives. However, after they decided to fight against the state, they were not just exploited, they were injured, killed, or exiled. Accordingly, when there are no strong leaders and well-managed organisations (such as the Red-Shirt movement based on the support of Thaksin's network), it seems that some working-class people choose to remain in the safe place rather than ally themselves with the bourgeoisie again. Moreover, the need for survival in Thai society could make them likely to accept the influence of the ruling ideas. Therefore, working-class people in Thailand are unlikely to learn more widely about politics and related history. This differs from the situation of the ruling class and its intellectuals who are situated in the more proper position for investment in this section, especially the professionals and state authorities related to education and social analysis such as technocrats and intelligence units. Thus, they have the ability to create political ideas from rational concepts and arguments to explain the opposing ideas simpler than the working-class people who are normally not in the same position. When the fact is that the main participants, supporters, and some activists are from the working class. It is not surprising that there are ideological contradictions in the underground movements and combinations of progressive and conservative ideas as well as a tendency to absolutely trust the group's leaders.

The social locations of underground activists also tend to shape their ideological expression. Due to the influence of material conditions upon the direction of ideology, activists and followers in different material conditions, with different careers and welfare systems for example, seemingly had different ideologies. In particular, a good example is the Thai people who have emigrated to live abroad,

especially to developed countries. While the more democratic context encourages these people to be interested in Thai politics, it does not mean that they can leave the domination of ruling ideas and norms embedded in their perception. On the one hand, the appearance of contradictions of ideas might not be different from underground activists and participants in Thailand because of their similar experiences and knowledge of Thai politics. However, on the other hand, because Thai people certainly view Thailand as a less developed country, being able to live in the more developed countries can itself transform social statuses in ways that make people abroad look more superior than people in Thailand (I will discuss this topic again in the next chapter).

Third, there is a lack of a significant body of radical and competent intellectuals. As mentioned above, intellectuals have an ability to find comprehensive ideas that might reduce the co-existence of contradictory ideas. They also defend the political ideas of factions against critiques from either counterparts or opponents, as well as improve the ideas so they are more rational and provide strength in the mobilising function. Nevertheless, this is not limited to the Red-Shirt-sided underground only. Although there have been many intellectuals in Thai society, most of them have not been interested in politics, especially of a radical kind. One reason for this was the failure of CPT, as a part of the international communist movement, to establish a socialist state in Thailand. Thus, the lessons and intellectual effects of the operations of CPT were learned and applied by each cadre and adherent, specifically and individually, instead of being more widely distributed throughout Thai society (Kanokrat, 2012; Thikarn, 2014). Additionally, the growing hegemonic status of Bhumibol after the fall of CPT gradually obstructed the expansion of a socialist understanding (Somsak, 2017). Another important reason is the concentration of political power in limited groups, especially the military generals, as noted in the last chapter. This has partly weakened and disconnected the stream of fighting ‘from below’ of the exploited classes in Thailand. Although the political activists, including the underground ones, could learn many things from the previous veterans, it seemed that the old experiences were forgotten.

Based on these two characteristics and their causes, we can suggest that the ideology of Thais was the complicated result of UCD in Thai society. When the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement reintroduced the more radical ideas to provoke political enthusiasm, they had difficulties in countering the ruling ideas long deployed in Thai society. This situation ended with the combination of contradictory ideas because the underground movement did not have enough intellectuals who could challenge the hegemony of the existing ruling ideas obviously and thoroughly. In other words, the effect of the political ideas of the underground activists were not comprehensive enough to contradict the consciousness which came from being oppressed.

6.3.4 The simply opposite couples of political strategies and directions

Daniel Bell (2000, p. 293), however, argues that “social movement can rouse people when it can do three things: simplify ideas, establish a claim to truth, and, in the union of the two, demand a commitment to action”. We could see that the ideas introduced by each underground group were applied practically to the political space, albeit they were reduced to the simple opposite couples of political strategies and directions.

1) Accepting/ Not accepting politicians into movements

Besides the personal affection for Thaksin, the people who accepted politicians to join their groups were generally influenced by liberalism, which offers the supportive concept of rights and freedom. On the contrary, the activists and participants who rejected working with politicians were usually affected by the idea of Stalinist-Maoism and nationalism that views politicians as selfish people who might obstruct the resistance, as well as betray the mass by helping the capitalist class or foreigners.

2) Overthrowing/ Preserving the monarchs as the head of state

Underground activists and participants who support the project of overthrowing the monarchy were usually the radical groups of each ideology - liberalism, socialism, neoconservatism, and, of course, anti-monarchism. Whereas the activists who either want to retain the monarch as the head of state or leave this selection to the people in the country were the conservative part of each ideology.

3) Revolution/ Reformation

Similar to the second couple, some radical groups of each ideology want to change Thailand into their ideal societies by the method of revolution, albeit this needs many resources and risks activists' lives. By contrast, more moderate ones prefer a more gradual change via the process of reformation.

These idealistic types of political strategies and directions were also mixed across their own couples. For example, in the early period of his underground role, Chuchep accepted working with Thaksin's network in order to overthrow the king of Thailand by the revolutionary method. Because of an intellectual shortage in the underground, instead of having a serious discussion about political ideas, the underground people tend to label their factions and other people, including those in overground politics, with these directions.

6.4 Conclusion

There were various political ideas offered by the underground activists during their mobilisations. We can see this complexity as a consequence of the historical continuity of the dialectic relations in Thailand between structural development in the past, on the one hand, and the specific form of class struggle in the country, on the other. As Marx said 'Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past (Marx, 1852/1978, p. 595).' In this respect, the underground activists, like those in other

social movements, were not responsible for all of the situations in which they found themselves, or for the thoughts and strategies employed in the fighting. On the contrary, they had developed their competence in managing political life within the contexts created by previous historical development, and by gradually absorbed ideas generated by the activists at that time. However, they had to adjust or improve the lessons from the former movements as well as introduce new ideas to create more practical mobilisations in the changing circumstances with which they had to deal.

The main political ideas offered by the underground activists were famous among radical movements everywhere like liberalism, socialism, and anti-monarchism. Nevertheless, due to the specific social conditions in Thailand, there were other ideas used for supporting the main ideas such as the expression of anti-Thainess. Some activists who lived abroad brought some well-known political ideas into their host countries to mobilise the audience, such as the ideas of neoconservatism expressed by Nick and Sukij who live in the U.S. Other tendencies, like apoliticalism and the preference for anti-factional politics, were gradually developed and presented by many novice activists as a response to disillusioning experiences in underground politics as well as disappointment at the failure to change Thai society.

The formation and presentation of these ideas were different among various types of underground activists. While the former-politicians and experienced activists might focus on utilising them in a more strategic way, the academic activists presented them cautiously to make their view precise and neutral. By contrast, the novice activists presented political ideas the most freely among the different types of activists.

There are two main characteristics of these presented ideas. The first is a combination of contradictory positions. Normally, the underground activists might mix varied political ideas for many purposes such as trying to gain more supporters who favour different political directions. Nevertheless, the combination might be

formed by blending contradictory ideas, such as in the mix between liberal and illiberal ideas, liberalism and monarchism, and the idea of anti-Thainess and nationalism. The second is a tendency towards oversimplified arguments in underground political ideas. The underground activists usually mentioned only simple concepts of each idea rather than forming and providing their ideas in detail, as might be done generally by serious activists. Due to this characteristic, it was not only a weak starting point for developing the underground factions to be more rational in their political acts, but also could not prolong their existence because they had no the consistent principle to hold and lead the members.

The causes of these characteristics are the influence of a socio-cultural hierarchy, the different classes and locations of the underground activists and participants, and a lack of radical intellectuals. On the one hand, these causes are part of the result of UCD in Thailand - the remaining social relations, class structure, and the lack of radical intellectuals - which negatively affected the development of the Red-Shirt underground movement. Nevertheless, on the other hand, they could not stop the process of developing political actions but created a distinct character such as entering the movement of Thai people abroad.

Although it seems the underground movement has been run in an incompetent manner, political movements have their own ways. The underground people elaborated their own perception of political ideology in the form of opposite couples, e.g. accepting and not accepting politicians to work with their factions, and held it as their compass for further political activities. I will explain the link between these ideological characters and the political activities of the Red-Shirt underground movement in the next chapter.

Chapter 7

Fighting Within and Across State and Cultural Boundaries: Actions and Their Changes

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will explain the actions of Red-Shirt-sided underground movement. This explanation helps to further understand the dialectic relationships between two main social aspects - the experiences of the previous movements and the existing social relations - and the movement. This chapter will also present again the diversity of groups and activists in the underground movement.

In Chapter 5 and 6 I have explained the ideological influences of experiences in the pivotal movements of the 1970s, 1990s, and, particularly, the Red-Shirts movement over the political ideas and characters of the underground movements. Rather than describing the influence of the previous movement, I will focus on the recent social relations surrounding the activists. Transforming idea to action requires many resources and interactions with other social institutions. Accordingly, this chapter will only slightly focus on the social relations. However, I would argue that this develops further themes articulated in chapter 6.

Because of UCD, distinctive characteristics, such as a monopolised political power, economic inequality, social hierarchy, and so on affected how the underground movement developed strategies for mobilising resources and taking actions. For example, the powerful Thai state forbade their actions in Thailand. In addition, many people who lived abroad also joined and supported the activities of the movement. Thus, the context of those societies also affected these people's actions. Accordingly, the patterns of actions and their changes were very broad. I divided them into two categories, physical and virtual, based on the methods used by the underground activists in restrictive and precarious situations.

After describing the actions in those two spaces, according to a dialectic relationship both within the movement and between activists and material conditions, I will demonstrate how those actions later changed, particularly revealing the differences of underground activists and participants and the internal conflicts of the movement.

7.2 The physical and virtual actions

I categorise the underground actions into two main categories - physical actions and virtual actions. The actions of these two methods of a given social movement in a stabilised society may be done together continuously in the same place, e.g. recording a video of a seminar, and then uploading it on YouTube. Activists may then invite participants to join these activities or they can create new activities in the same place. However, a politically illegal and/or clandestine movement could not sustain those actions, including the Thai Red-Shirt-sided one, because they risked the lives of leaders and participants. This basic restriction on the existing social relations led to an alternative pattern of action.

Generally, physical actions against the Thai state and ruling class needed more resources to conduct their work, e.g. spaces for holding activities, funding, workers and supporters, than the virtual actions. The safety issue also concerned activists because Thai authorities might capture them and abduct them at any time, e.g. arresting activists in Thailand, as occurred with the Banpodj network and Kathawut or the abducting of Ittiphon and Wutti Phong in neighbouring countries. Delivering these kinds of actions was safer abroad, except in neighbouring countries. Thus, there were several physical actions like seminars and small protests across Europe and the U.S.

The virtual actions need less material resources to perform because of the advances in communication technology, a recent outcome of the development of capitalism (Fuchs & Mosco, 2016). Technology gives people who have fewer

resources and limitations on space and time access to political communications. The virtual world gave access to existing data and information which activists could utilise in pursuit of their political aims. In terms of a clandestine operation, activists could hide their real identity whilst taking actions in this non-material safe space world.

Instead of being contradictory, these two methods complement each other. While the actions in the virtual world were not difficult to manage, their character as an abstract component might be complicated and less attractive amongst the participant, particularly the elderly, who were more familiar with the physical arrangement. Conversely, physical actions could arouse a collective emotion of unity and encourage enthusiasm via face-to-face communication amongst activists and supporters. However, setting up such actions could not be done conveniently and consumed plenty of resources. Thus each method could conceal the weakness of the other, if they were managed continually and in a similar direction.

7.3 Physical activities

7.3.1 Recording and spreading podcasts

This activity was linked to the virtual world and happened when the accessibility of the internet in Thailand was limited (during the early period of the first wave). After the underground speakers finished their daily or weekly programs they duplicated audio files of the programs onto CDs and spread them throughout their network of followers (France3, 2018). However, this method of proliferating radical content risked their being captured by Thai security officials, as happened to the Banpodj group. When the internet service in Thailand improved in speed and accessibility, uploading podcasts onto file-hosting and social media websites was more favoured among the underground factions (see detail in the virtual action).

7.3.2 Seminars, lectures, meetings, and demonstrations

As mentioned in Chapter 5, there were existing networks of the Red-Shirt supporters in several countries. After underground activists were exiled and started their activities in those countries, some of their supporters aided and joined them. These supporters created local groups to manage further activities, e.g. meetings for political discussion and protests against the junta government, since there was no risk in their countries of residence. They usually gathered in Thai restaurants owned by Red-Shirt sympathisers. After a meal, they would discuss the political circumstances, consider an opportunity to participate in other events in their region, and send support to activists whom the group wanted to assist (UK3, 2018). These local groups of supporters gradually developed their connection with counterparts in other countries and formed ‘a loose network’. UK3, one of leading supporters in the UK, narrated her participation in these actions as:

In fact, political groups of Thai people living abroad have had a loose relationship. It is a gathering of people who share some general ideas that Thailand has been going in the wrong direction of development, people are painted as criminals and so on. People in the same political direction would arrange a meeting. This happened very often after the 2010 repression at Ratchaprasong intersection. . . . There were protests against the military, coups, and the unlawful trial of Yingluck. Actually, how our groups work could not be considered ‘organised’ but, more correctly, as ‘cooperative’. We have our online chatting group for asking members about their available date. Then we assigned each one a function, like finding a location and buying necessary stationery. Meetings and seminars occasionally happened here [her house] or in restaurants. Luckily, I have friends who own restaurants. We sometimes reserved the whole restaurant on a Sunday afternoon to run our activities. . . . After the meal and chatting, the seminars would start. Speakers [she mentioned France¹, Giles, and Japan¹] would speak on the topics we asked, e.g. the second anniversary of the 2014 coup. A session of Q&A was the next, and ended with a coffee and tea time (UK3, 2018).

One of the important supporters in Paris described the same experience:

We saw our Red-Shirt brothers and sisters being killed, we were very upset. . . . We founded a club of Red Shirts here [Paris], then May [an important Red-Shirt supporter living in Germany] joined us because she noticed the posts of our protests on Facebook. After she joined, our network grew more and more. After forming our club, we elected a secretary and designed its structure. We also set a membership fee of . . . 25 Euro per one member. There were more than 100 members at that time. When there were good chances to set up protests, we arranged them. . . . We asked the participants in each event for support of food, like 5 or 10 Euro, and then we had meals together after the protests ended. . . . Sometimes we had to hire a coach to transport us to protests in other countries. Participants were happy to pay that cost. . . . When we went to Germany, we asked each participant for 200 Euro, and 100 Euro for the event in Belgium. This price excluded meals, which they needed to pay for themselves. (France4, 2018).

When the anniversaries of the most important political incidents, like the 1932 revolution or the 2006 coup, were approaching, the leading supporter groups might arrange to mark the events of those years (as shown in UK3's experience). The notification and invitation to these events were sent to other supporter groups in other countries in Europe or in other states in the case of the U.S. These events⁴⁵ comprised academic seminars about those events and rallies against the dictatorship in Thailand. Once the seminars ended, there were parties among attendants and participants. In other cases, there might be meetings during visits of leading activists or politicians from the Thaksin camp from other countries or continents, albeit this kind of event tended to extend invitations to familiar groups only.

Another activity was public lectures. Giles, Marshall, Somsak, and Japan1 usually gave lectures about Thai politics in the seminars or the meetings arranged by groups of Red-Shirt supporters. Given his educational background and his career during his exile, Japan1 was an exceptional case. He has been invited frequently to lecture or teach short courses related to the politics and international relations

⁴⁵ For example, the seminar on the topic 'Military and the Referendum [of 2017 constitution] in Bonn, Germany on June 18, 2016; the seminar on 'The Decade After Overthrowing Thaksin' on September 19, 2016 at Sciences Po, Paris, and another one in Paris on the same date on the topic 'The Decade After the 2006 Coup'; the 2017 seminar on 'The 85th Anniversary of 24 June 1932 Revolution' in Cologne, Germany; and the seminar on 'The 4th anniversary of the 2014 coup' on May 22, 2018 in Paris.

of the Southeast Asian countries, especially Thailand, at several universities in the U.S. and Europe.⁴⁶ In the case of Giles, although he did not continue his academic career after exile in the UK, he had occasional opportunities to talk about Thai politics, such as in February 2009 at The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) on the topic ‘Thai Censorship’ (Soasmedia, 2017).

However, the regularity of these events would depend upon external social relations, especially the political situation in Thailand. When politics reached a critical period, such as after the 2014 coup, and during the processes of referendum or election, the meeting and activities would be managed regularly and there would be many participants. After these events passed, the attendance rate at meetings and seminars decreased.⁴⁷ Because of fears of being arrested if they returned to Thailand, or because of the safety issue to their relatives at home, many supporters chose to limit themselves from openly participating in radical political actions. Disputes among the participants were also another reason for a decline in the movements’ activities. Besides a difference of political opinion, there were personal and financial issues that broke relationships (I will discuss this issue below).

7.3.3 Founding the resistant organisations

In addition to occasional meetings and seminars, there were attempts to found a permanent organisation as the representative of underground factions such as Phakee Thai Pheu Sittimanusayachon [Thai Alliance for Human Rights (TAHR)], Seri Thai Pheu Sittimanusayachon Lae prachathippatai [the Organisation of Free Thais

⁴⁶ He also had a chance to discuss Thai politics with famous academics, such as Noam Chomsky. He presented on YouTube as well.

⁴⁷ UK3 (2018) said that her groups in the UK arranged local meetings once or twice a month, and a grand meeting at least once a year during a critical situation. The rate could be decreased to a couple of local meetings and zero grand meeting per year. France4 (2018) described the same situation in Paris as ‘In the early period [just after the 2010 repression] there were so many people participating in our gathering, but, after it seemed that the activities could help nothing, the number of participants in each activity continually decreased’

for Human Rights and Democracy] or Seri Thai in short. These two organisations affected the later emergence of other related organisations.

The founding of TAHR was initiated by the Red-Shirt supporters in the U.S or UDD USA. These people had followed political situations in Thailand since the coup in 2006. They had witnessed the continual loss of the Red-Shirt side since the demonstrations in 2009-2010. Thus, instead of only funding protests and demonstrations, they wanted a long-term organisation which could protect the human rights of Thais, particularly that of the opposition to the established power and Thai government. In the U.S. this attempt was accomplished in June 2012 when, by the dedication of several people in California and Washington DC, TAHR was officially registered with the State of California with Piengdin as the director and Anek as the chairman of its board (Thai Alliance for Human Rights, 2012). TAHR applied for membership of several International human rights organisations such as Amnesty International and joined the conferences of international organisation such as the International Criminal Court (ICC). TAHR also sent letters to both Thai and international leaders about the cases of human rights abuses against Thai people (Dr.Piengdin Rakthai Official, 2019).

While TAHR was created by novice activists and their followers abroad, the founders of Seri Thai seemed confined to former-politicians and experienced activists in exile like Jaruphong, Jakrapob, Sunai, and Laos¹. It was suddenly set up just after the 2014 coup. Thus its direction seemed more political than TAHR, even though their leaders had a close relationship, because many former politicians moved to exile in the U.S. Due to the leaders' creditability, Seri Thai drew many activists from those who had already been exiled or were in the process of exiling after the coup, to work to oppose the junta together.

In the initial stages, Seri Thai received a positive response among Red-Shirt supporters both underground and overground. Some Red Shirts founded a group of Seri Thai followers - 'Naew Ruam Khabuankarn Seri Thai Totan Phadejkarn Hang Chart [the National Movement of followers of the Seri Thai Against Dictatorship

(NSD)]’ - as an organisation of people who wanted to counter the latest coup and authoritarianism in Thailand per the direction of Seri Thai. There was support from the Red-Shirt group across the world, such as UDD EU which hosted the first congress of the Seri Thai branch in Denmark in July 2014 (Post Today, 2014a; Thai E News, 2014b). A subsequent meeting of some local groups of Red Shirts in European countries and NSD on November 23, 2014 in Denmark led to the establishment of ‘the Assembly of Thai people for Human Right and Democracy (ATHD)’ which aimed to act as the central organisation of members of the anti - Thai military dictatorship network and support the activities of the Seri Thai and other organisations which promote democratisation in Thailand (Nor Por Chor EU, 2014). They also prepared to support Red-Shirt activists who seeking asylum in European countries (Thai E News, 2014a). There were also the big conferences of ATHD in 2015 and 2016 in Las Vegas, U.S. led by the U.S. leaders of TAHR and Seri Thai. Many local groups of Red Shirts participated in these conferences, from the U.S., European countries, Japan, Australia, and Canada. Renowned underground activists like Laos1, Chuphong, and Arkhom phoned into the conference as well. Besides the discussion about political situations in Thailand and its administration and structure, ATHD’s main activity was lobbying governments of developed countries to pressure the Thai junta to return democracy to Thais as soon as possible (Thai E News, 2015, 2016).

However, these organisations could not represent the ordinary followers and they were unable to create political encouragement or a great level of follower participation. There were two main reasons for this situation. Over time, the situation of these organisations was no different from the network of local groups of Red Shirts mentioned above. They lost some of their old followers but at the same time, acquired a few new faces. That is to say, fewer activists still run and administer Facebook and YouTube outlets associated with these organisations. In addition, it seemed that there was a split between former-politician and novice activists, particularly because of the compromising position of the former. The Seri Thai’s Facebook page, for instance, posted regularly in the first years of its

establishment but gradually became less active.⁴⁸ The Facebook pages of NSD (2020b) and ATHD (2020a) have, however, remained active.

7.3.4 Publishing books

Despite not being produced for underground politics directly, writers who were mostly academic activists, garnered knowledge from writing books that could be used for their activities and could increase their intellectual credibility. Nevertheless, this activity was solely limited to academic activists.

After fleeing to the UK, Giles published only one book online - *Thailand's Crisis and the Fight for Democracy* (2010) - which was financially aided by some Red-Shirt groups in Europe. The main reason was that he no longer worked in an academic context. His book explained the contemporary conflict between the Red and Yellow shirt movements and its real causes. Giles also wrote about his experiences in exile, comprising the early period of his arrival in the U.K. and when he learned of an accusation of *lèse-majesté*. By contrast, Japan1 is a champion for the movement because he still works as a full-time academic in Japan. He has written not only about Thai politics but also, with his expertise on International relations and Southeast-Asian politics, about the politics of and relationships among Southeast-Asian countries. He was also editor and co-editor of several books related to Thai politics. Marshall also published his famous book about the conflicts within the elites over the royal succession - *A Kingdom in Crisis: Thailand's Struggle for Democracy in the Twenty-First Century* (2014). Finland1 published two books. Due to her experience as a labour activist, the first book explains the importance of Thai labourers and their capacity in production. However, they have been exploited constantly. The second book is about her attitude on sexuality, which severely contrasts with the dominant idea in Thailand.

⁴⁸ During the writing of this thesis, the latest post was done on March 25, 2017.

7.3.5 Music and films

Besides other professions, there are also the artists in the underground movement, including musicians, writers, and filmmakers. The Faiyen band is a distinctive one because they have continued their music production and political activities concurrently while other artists usually withdrew from any political actions after fleeing Thailand. This is the same as what the Red-Shirt artists in Thailand who did not choose the underground path, did. Faiyen produces songs in many styles - rock, pop, and luk thung [Thai country music]. Their contents are related to Thai politics (see all songs of Faiyen in Faiyen, 2019). Some songs talked about encouraging people to fight for democracy and other songs narrated the stories of activists who sacrificed themselves for democracy. Many songs of Faiyen satirise the ruling class, especially the monarch, and the lèse-majesté law or Section 112. Besides the monarch, the songs also criticise the political intervention of the military. They also showed their understanding about the common destiny of oppressed people in other parts of the world by arranging their own version of *the International* and *Do You Hear the People Sing*. *Seang Dao Hang Sattha* [Starlight of the Faith] written by Jit Bhumisak (an ex-communist whom I mentioned in chapter 2) was also rearranged as well. Faiyen¹ gave an interview indicating that they would continue producing more songs in varied styles because they saw a shortage of cultural resources for the ordinary people's movements (Faiyen¹, 2018).

Cambodia¹ is also an outstanding artist in the underground movements. He was a well-known advertising film director in Thailand. After escaping from Thailand in 2010, Cambodia¹ created a documentary film which depicts the pressure filled situation of one important political fighter who stood against the military after the 2006 coup. It raised questions about how he would have viewed the political changes that took place after his death, especially concerning the incident of the 2010 repression. Although the film was screened in several places, especially in Southeast Asia, Cambodia¹ himself could only attend the events held in Cambodia because he had no legal travelling documents at the time (Cambodia¹, 2018). During writing of this thesis, Cambodia¹ was producing another documentary

which describes the lives of the political exiles who were living in various part of the world, and their reasons for being in exile. Cambodia¹ said that he was not a man who could speak for an hour to present his ideas, so he wanted to use his skill in filming to make people aware of the critical situation in Thailand (Ibid).

7.3.6 The (myth of) guerrilla action against the Thai state

Generally, activists did not choose violent actions to resist the Thai state for several reasons. Almost all underground activists realised the difficulty in forming a guerrilla troop, as it was illegal in their host countries. Activists were also concerned about the possibility of being vilified and viewed as terrorist groups which could then jeopardise their permission for residence. In terms of economic conditions, the activists had no resources for their own survival, let alone to create a military unit. More importantly, evidence relating to violence could reduce their future chances of asylum or residential status overseas. Furthermore, the strategic issue was also a consideration. Violent means could shatter the liberal and non-violent ideologies that activists had promoted and also could impact acceptance from their followers. These factors caused activists to avoid involving themselves in any activities possibly linked to violent methods.

Nevertheless, although they normally denied it, some underground activists were still accused of being linked to armed groups that had prepared, and occasionally committed violent acts for political purposes. Anek, for example, was suspected by Thai authorities of being involved in the bombing inside the Criminal Court in Bangkok in 2015 (Isaranews, 2015; Tnews, 2016). In addition, Laos¹ was linked to the bombing in the northern part of the south of Thailand in mid-August 2016. Thai officials believed that this incident might have been managed by his group - Daeng Siam [Red Siam], a main part of Phak Patiwat Phea Prachathippatai [Revolution Party of Democracy] which was established in 2015 with the aim of overthrowing the existing regime in Thailand (Bangkokbiznews, 2016).

However, some activists talked explicitly about their will to manage violent methods. This might be based on a strategic plan that detailed specific activists would risk losing their status in their host countries, in exchange for more resources from fanatic supporters if the mobilisation succeeded. For example, while Wuttiiphong, who had already allegedly connected with many armed groups, was still involved in OTF, he spoke several times about a guerrilla unit that was training in many secret spots, both in Thailand and in neighbouring countries. He also boasted about a project of a satellite TV that could expand to include a wider range of his group's follower. Before the court's judgment of Wuttiiphong's assistant, who was found with a number of weapon (Isaranews, 2017), he instigated people to fight back:

He was tortured by them. . . .I got the information that the court will sentence him to the highest penalty because he supports me. It can also intimidate other supporters. . . . I feel guilty for being unable to help him, but I think a person who fights for democracy like him could pass it. . . . They threaten people who financially support us. They hope we might gradually die. They want to interrupt our broadcasting. . . . Let do it! Bad Guy! Before you have no chance and before you lose your last breath. Our comrades have already prepared knives, spades, guns, hand-bomb, and other instruments to fight with you. . . . As Sanamluang [Chucheep] said, you should mobilise and make an appointment time within your group and wait for our signal to fight together (Wuttiiphong, 2019).

Among underground activities, Wuttiiphong and Chucheep were the only two leading activists who asked people to use physical violence to oppose the existing regime.⁴⁹ Although the actions they persuaded followers to commit did not include an assassination or attacking anybody, they were enough to be viewed as violence. They used their YouTube channel to mobilise their audiences to sabotage the Bhumibol cremation ceremony in October 2018 by throwing human excrement at the ceremony parade by hand or with an unmanned aerial vehicle (a drone). They also praised their followers who burned decorated arches set up in mostly local and district administrative units. These arches generally portrayed the pictures of

⁴⁹ Although Wuttiiphong and Chucheep urged their supporters to fight the Thai elites violently once, they did not clarify the method of violence. After Somsak (2016) suddenly criticised them, they excused themselves, saying it was only a metaphor for mobilising and encouraging people to seriously battle the ruling class (Hongsamud Mahawittayalai Prachachon Official, 2019).

King Bhumibol and Queen Sirikitt (I will discuss this case again in Chapter 8). In another case, some participants of Chuchep's movement painted or wrote sarcastic and critical comments about the royal family in toilets and other public spaces. Unsurprisingly, Chuchep supported these actions, agitated other participants do the same thing, and called it a brave action (I will discuss on this issue again in chapter 8).

7.4 *Virtual-World Battle*

7.4.1 *Websites, web-board or Internet Forum, and internet radio stations*

During the first wave of the underground movement, underground activists rarely owned their websites because of a lack of resources, both money and men to act as webmasters. Two exceptional cases were www.norporchorusa.com of Nor Por Chor USA (UDD USA)⁵⁰ and abc.norporchoreu.com of UDD EU Sweden, which raised sufficient funds for building and retaining their websites.⁵¹

Some scholars categorise blogs as social networking sites (Della Porta & Mattoni, 2015). However, due to the fact that a blog can be used as a website, rather than creating interactive activities among underground participants, I categorise it alongside websites. A blog or weblog, was a more favoured choice of the underground activists because it was cost-free and convenient to create. Activists could post political news, articles, and the URL of their podcasts for downloading. Normally, each group of the first-wave underground movement had a blog for their faction (like redusala.blogspot.com of UDD USA). The enthusiastic underground activists also had their own blogs, e.g. Giles has turnleftthai.wordpress.com, uglytruththailand.wordpress.com, and thaimarxistdocuments.wordpress.com. In the case of Somsak, there are three blogs (somsakwork.blogspot.com,

⁵⁰ With the similar group of supporters in the U.S., there was also a website of Thai Alliance for Human Rights - tahr-global.org.

⁵¹ Although there were Red-Shirt websites before the second wave, created by the webmasters in Thailand, their contents were not violating Thai law and depended on support provided by the activists from abroad (Laos3, 2019).

somsakj.blogspot.com, and somsakcoup.blogspot. com) which collect his opinions and articles (however, there is no information stating if he made these blogs himself). One anonymous activist from Canada used the blog of thaipoliticalprisoners.wordpress.com which provides information about people whose lives have been affected by the dictatorial regime in Thailand. But the most well-known blog of this kind was sanamluang2008.blogspot.com which was owned by Chucheeep. In this blog, he provided articles criticising the political role of and exploitation by Thai monarchs and their networks from the beginning of the Bangkok era (around the late 18th century).

Before the birth of social media websites and applications on phones, like Facebook and YouTube, some underground activists used web-boards or internet forums (also called a discussion board) as some of the main methods for political mobilisation (e.g. for political discussion, debate, and offering strategies or solutions). Although web-boards normally lacked an attractive User Interface (UI) and connectivity with other platforms, as was possible later on social-media sites, the discussion on web-boards was more comprehensively presented and administrated. Instead of the ‘quick come and go’ characteristic of the posts and comments in later platforms,⁵² people could track dialogues on each topic in a more deliberative manner. The most famous web-boards among the radical participants were Faa Diew Kan [Same Sky] and Prachatai web-boards.⁵³ Another favourite web-board was internetfreedom.us owned by Richard Saisomorn, a Lao immigrant in the U.S., who supported democratic movements in both Thailand and Laos. Although the ‘internetforum.us’ was closed, there is the creation of the new ‘ifreethai.com’ web-board. Due to the utility of this platform, many later underground activists have developed their ideas and discussed politically in this

⁵² On the contrary, the conversation on Facebook and Line was run too fast to manage. They were designed to show the updated conversation promptly so the conversations could not be managed and traced back easily for either administrators and readers.

⁵³ Although Pantip is another famous web-board for political fanatics to chat in, and its political sub-web-board ‘Rajdumnern’, Pantip is monitored by its webmasters more closely and restrictively because it is created for general use not a political one. Pantip is the most well-known web-board in Thailand but it is not created for a social or political purpose in particular but for a variety of interests among general users.

forum, such as Somsak and Cambodia1 (2018). Cambodia1 mentioned his participation in web-boards, which led him facing political accusation:

In reading this issue since I was young, when the political crisis started, I reviewed my own knowledge and began to organise this jigsaw until realising what was going on. Then, I went to exchange opinions on many web-boards. I stayed on Pantip until I was blocked by its administrator. After moving to Prachahai, I was afraid of causing a problem for Jeeranuch, the web owner, so I moved again to Faa Diew Kan web-board where I was reported for breaking Section 112 (Cambodia1, 2018).

Nevertheless, besides being closed down by the Thai authorities,⁵⁴ the coming of new social media platforms resulted in the declining popularity of web-board engagement.

Before the period of streaming on social network sites, like the renowned YouTube or Facebook, some underground activists who had knowledge of ICT, streamed podcasts via broadcasting software which supported internet radio at that time such as Windows Media Player, QuickTime, RealPlayer, and Winamp (usually embedded in those activists's websites). However, the contents broadcast on internet radio at that time were usually limited to the old broadcasting programs of the UDD satellite TV channel shown in Thailand or the podcasts of famous activists who had close relationships to the owner of websites, like Woodside of UDD USA, only.

Some activists including the Banpodj network and Katawut usually used files hosting websites, especially www.4shared.com and www.mediafire.com, to store their podcasts and post the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) or web address of

⁵⁴ Thai police and the Ministry of ICT suspended a service of Faa Diew Kan website in January 2008 (Prachatai, 2008). Although Faa Diew Kan was separated from the main website and continued its services (Prachatai, 2009), there was an attempt to investigate and arrest its users for breaking the lèse-majesté law and Computer-related Crime Act in April 2011 (Prachatai, 2011). Prachatai web-board was closed during the political turmoil in April 2010 by an order of the Centre for Resolution of Emergency Situation (CRES). CRES used the administration of the country in a state of emergency decree to accuse the web-board of harming a security of state with the topics showing on the web-board (iLaw, 2010a).

those clips on the preferred blogs or web-boards for their followers to download. Some of the podcasts, however, might also be reproduced in the form of a CD and spread among interested Red-Shirt people (as mentioned above). Some podcasts that did not violate the Lèse-majesté law would be re-broadcast by Red-Shirt community radio stations. This method was completely abandoned after the coming of social media websites that provided not only a streaming function but also a method to store media at the same time.

7.4.2 Social media and virtual community

The above internet radio on websites, web-boards, or internet forums, and blogs that radically discussed Thai politics were gradually accessed by the Red-Shirt followers. However, during that time the software and hardware used for building a virtual community were limited and not integrated. The activists normally communicated via a few choices of software like Microsoft's Skype on PC, which was previously designed for private communication rather than publicly interactive communication. The activists either live streamed their conversations on their website (though few activists could do this at that time) or recorded them and played it later. Normally, they uploaded them as files onto the file hosting website and posted its link for followers to download later. Thus, this did not allow audiences of the programs on internet radio or podcasts to spontaneously participate and give their opinions. Due to the desire to provide an opportunity for participation, some websites' webmasters added a chat box code on their website while playing the conversation of activists from Skype separately. In the case of podcasts, if audiences wanted to discuss further, they had to sign into some web-boards for continuing debates. Moreover, this early virtual community of the underground groups existed only in countries where ICT had already been advanced at that time, like the U.S. and European countries. The scarcity of material facilities allowed the existence of only a small community and few participants from Thailand.

This behaviour changed after the development of new technology. Although making conversation still employed more than one software application, the underground activists and participants managed it more conveniently with new hardware, like a smartphone and tablet, rather than only a PC. These devices could easily access a variety of operating systems and applications by using a system of registering accounts to automatically join conversations in each application. Furthermore, the advance of technology also provided useful functions for allowing conversations to be had in a much more accessible and versatile way, such as an integrated chat box on any videos or a sharing option between applications (for example, after users finish viewing a YouTube video, they can share that video to their Facebook accounts from a YouTube application without opening a Facebook application).

Devices and applications, especially in some mobile phones, have been developed continually in several areas, such as UI which allows users to understand how to command their devices and utilise them more quickly and effectively. There were many applications available for customers. In Thailand Facebook, YouTube, and Line have been the most favourite social media and social networking services. In 2019 Facebook ranked first in social media among internet users in Thailand at a reported 93%. YouTube was the second most used social media at a reported 91%. Line was the third at 84% (Kemp & Moey, 2019). Undoubtedly, the growing popularity in Thai society of these platforms was the main reason for the underground activists choosing them as the core tool for running intellectual activities. In other words, the underground movement seemingly interacted with Thai society using a similar technology at the same pace. The Banpodj group, for example, which was using the web-board called 'Internet Freedom' as the main place to politically communicate amongst followers, switched to Facebook as the main base of action on the accounts named Banpodj Thailand Clips (2016), BP Thailand The Wall (2016), and Ilya Banpodj (2016).

The specific functionality and popularity of each social networking sites/applications directed how the activists selected and utilised them. YouTube was the activists' first choice for hosting their propagating videos because of its

specialty on video uploading and streaming. However, it wasn't until the second wave of the underground movement, after the 2014 coup, when YouTube was used in a more substantial manner with enough competent activists and technological resources. As mentioned in chapter 5, a precarious situation developed after the coup which led to a number of activists fleeing Thailand. They saw the potential of YouTube and how it could prolong their political activities in remote areas without risking the physical contact that might cause their arrest. Some of them, who had already had the experience of speaking on a stage or hosting community radio stations, continued their political actions by launching programs on YouTube once they were settled in their host countries (as in the example in Chapter 5).⁵⁵

Faiyen1 described his experience of this starting action:

At that time Sanamluang [Chucheep] had already done the narrative clips of the Thai monarchs. I thought that we should make the anti-monarchist program in a more attractive way. So we created it like the dialogue between members of the royal family and a host called 'Thieng Tan Chao [Speaking on Behalf of the Monarch]' program. . . its tone is a parody of the palace. This made us very funny. Nevertheless, it reached the saturation point. We, then, created live programs on each channel hosted by our colleagues. Guests of these programs were also circulated amongst ourselves.

Nevertheless, because of the different level of technology, while the activists in SEA region had just started their actions via online communication, some activists in developed countries had already settled on this form of political mobilisation. Piengdin who lived in the U.S., for example, launched a first video of his political critique on YouTube in March 2012 (Thai People's Revolutionary University for Democracy (TPRUD), 2019).

⁵⁵ In Laos it was not until 2015 that their first central channel of active activists - Thai Rev Station - could continuously upload videos.

According to the number of media, we can say that YouTube is the most favourite social-networking website/application for displaying and live streaming videos of the Red-Shirt underground movement.

Besides YouTube, the other popular social media platforms were Facebook and Line. Although Facebook's users can upload and live stream video in the same way as YouTube, it is normally used for the purpose of communication via the Timeline Feed function and personal chatting 'Messenger'. Due to its popularity among Thais, Facebook has the potential for quick spread with its easy accessibility. Thus underground activists normally used Facebook to express their attitude towards recent important incidents in each period, especially criticising the authoritarian manner of the junta government or the monarch. Japan1 said that he also used his posts on Facebook (i.e. those related to traveling, eating food, and well-being) to demonstrate that the undemocratic power in Thailand could not restrict him from having a good life abroad: "I would like to show NCPO that my life has been going on very normally. I have proved that I can still travel to anywhere I want. I also have had a good job." (Japan1, 2018). Somsak's posts on Facebook were the most followed posts among the leading activists because they were full of empirical evidence and academic analysis of the actions of the palace, as well as with Somsak's ability to debate rationally with opposing comments.⁵⁶ Giles also used his Facebook account to promote articles and his blogs. In some perspectives, Facebook was likely used to replace websites and blogs, which were more difficult to manage and were less attractive. The underground factions, e.g. Thai Federation and How To group, also used their Facebook accounts to spread their specifically ideological content to followers.

Line, developed in Japan by a subsidiary of a South Korean corporation, was also a popular choice for Thai people as an online communication platform especially on mobile phones (it is also available on PC, but is less favoured there). There are many reasons Line is popular among the underground people. First, many

⁵⁶ Somsak's comments on other people's Facebook posts also attracted Facebook's users. With his wide range of knowledge, he appeared in several categories of Facebook pages, though the main intention of Somsak was to correct the myth about the Thai monarch and political history posted by some owners of Facebook pages or accounts.

underground people believe that Line provides more privacy than Facebook after there were arrests of a number of Facebook users linked to the state security crime.⁵⁷ Second, there are a variety of tools for administrators to manage their chat groups, such as adding coding to monitor conversations automatically, especially when there were many groups deleting content after their members' conflicts. Almost all underground factions used Line groups for communicating with each other by typing in a group's chat room, using video or voice meeting, and posting information and news for other group members. Most of activists streamed their live conversation in their Line groups on YouTube (mostly just voice meetings).

This showed an ability of activists and followers to select the most effective technology to serve their objectives. On the one hand, they could keep the secret parts of their conversations behind the privacy feature provided by the Line application. But, on the other hand, they could utilise the powerful server of YouTube for live streaming. Underground activists could also let audiences phone into their live program in order to create an immediate two-way communication. From my survey, this method was initially used by the Thai Rev channel of the early activists exiling in Laos. However, this method reached its peak during the mobilisation of OTF in mid-2017 and was one of the factors that made OTF the biggest group in the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement.

The increasing communication through these social networking services produced a virtual world as the significant space for the underground movement. After a couple of years following the second wave, the dynamic of the virtual world of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement developed to an incredible level. Although the concepts discussed in this virtual world were initially derived from the participants' perception of the real world, they did not exist passively but

⁵⁷ There were different cases which made many people think that using Facebook was unreliable and unsafe. There was a case of hacking Facebook's account for the purpose of a legal violation which led to a capture of the real owner (Prachatai, 2015a). The negative attitude towards Facebook also came from Facebook accepting the request from the Thai authority to close some pages that violated the security laws (Teeranai, 2016). Consequently, some people believed that there was a possibility that the Facebook Corporation might send some personal data to the Thai government, although this allegation was rejected by Facebook (Salinee, 2016).

were being reproduced and projected out alongside the dialectic learning process within the underground movement. Normally, the participants in this virtual world attempted to understand the ideological directions of the main groups or the distinct ideas and opinions offered by important activists, especially experienced and academic ones, such as the Star War plot of Laos¹, the OTF of Chucheeep, and Somsak's academic-style criticism. In other words, the political issues in the real world were brought to the virtual world for unlimited discussion because of the character of non-legal-restriction. This situation gradually created another set of power relation. The prevailing ideas in the virtual world started to dominate this online community. For example, several underground activists realigned and/or moved to new groups after critical incidents in a virtual space, such as an announcement of new agendas of some leading activists or online conflicts among leading activists. Furthermore, the continual emergence, regrouping, and appearance of new faces significantly increased both a political competition among underground groups, and a diversity of political directions in virtual world.

For instance, in late 2016, Chucheeep, Wuttiiphong, Wat, Sayam, Krisna, Comrade Padet, Faiyen1, and Faiyen2 decided to set up OTF together and created its YouTube channels⁵⁸ to mobilise followers and resources. The intent was to establish a Thai Federal state because of the excessive centralisation of administrative authority dominated by elites. This campaign succeeded in significantly increasing the audiences for their channels as well as the amount of donations, albeit these leaders did not arrange any physical activities. However, the conflict within the group caused a division of the group's members in the late 2017.⁵⁹ While Faiyen1 and Faiyen5 returned to other Faiyen's members, Chucheeep still worked with residual activists on his new channel, Sanamluang20082008

⁵⁸ Technically, Faiyen1 and Faiyen5 turned their own channels - Faiyen (2017) and Yammy Revolution (2017) - to be the main channels of OTF.

⁵⁹ Faiyen1 and Faiyen5 revealed afterwards that this conflict caused by Wuttiiphong excessively dominating the organisation, even by physical violation. In addition, although Chucheeep was also abused by Wuttiiphong, he still aligned with him rather than Faiyen1 and Faiyen5. So they decided to split from the group (HaunT89s, 2019d).

(2018b). The result of this conflict was an irrevocable split of supporters into two factions.

In 2018, the OTF of Chucheep still remained as the major underground group and, importantly, attracted some previous supporters of Faiyen to join its faction. Then some supporters of Faiyen set up their group called 'Power Ranger' and joined the Line chat rooms of several underground groups to convince those groups' members to stand against OTF. Finally, they gathered in the Line chat room, Tang Khon Tang Kid [Different people, Different Ideas], led by Ning. Although Ning had her own YouTube channels, one of her followers, Smith Haek (an alias), created new channels on which the conversation of their Line chat room was live-streamed and uploaded. These new channels produced a new mode of presentation for underground movements.

The conversations were not set in too serious an atmosphere but instead involved informal talking on a wide range of interests among the group's members. The topics of conversation were not limited only to politics, though it was still the main topic, but included sex, gender, religion, living in overseas countries, and so on. They also traced back to the development of underground movements, especially the origin of the Thai Federation, and conflicts among Thai women married to men in developed countries who were very important supporters of the Red-Shirt movement. If members of the Thang Khon Tang Kid group found that other underground factions or activists were following a direction that could harm the democratic movement (in their perception), especially in the underground world, they did not hesitate to criticise those actions straightforwardly and harshly, even if their critique concentrated on personal issues rather than adopting an impersonal style. Participating as avatars, their discussions normally contained impolite words and meant that they had to create other channels, one by one, once the previous channels were reported to and restricted by YouTube.⁶⁰ Smith broadcasted online approximately 6-7 hours per day, the longest average

⁶⁰ The recent one, when I was writing this thesis, was Smith Haek Phea Seriphap 13 (Smith Haek Pheu Seriphap 13, 2020b). From this characteristic of Tang Khon Tang Kid group, other Line groups generally called its group and channels as 'Chong Da [the channel of scolding]'.

video on YouTube among the underground factions. Although many participants left the group after internal conflicts, there was the regular arrival of new and re-joining participants, meaning that it still remained as one of the very active Line groups in the underground movement during 2016-2019. The varieties of topics of discussion; the different characters, backgrounds, and knowledge of participants; the need to learn politics as ordinary people; an ability to study the development and history of their movement; and the eagerness to participate in contemporary politics, presented as hour long broadcasting made this and related Line groups very interesting movements in the underground virtual space.⁶¹ Although there were many channels created at the same time as Smith's Channels, they did not have the same kind of distinctive character. Tang Khon Tang Kid lead by Ning was also involved significantly in the campaign helping Faiyen's members escape from Laos to seek asylum in France.

This overall situation revealed that the underground movement partly represented Thai people who wanted to freely express their opinion about their society, whether that could affect Thai politics or not. The virtual world, which was made possible by the development of ICT, was an important domain facilitating the emergence and extension of the political underground movement among the Red-Shirt supporters in conjunction with their activities in the real world.

The above underground activities operating in two spaces - virtual and physical - had three main functions: 1) propagating ideologies against the existing ruling ideas; 2) creating space for political discussion and networking as an alternative to the very restrictive possibilities in Thailand; 3) mobilising resources for supporting the underground factions as well as other political movements in Thai politics. However, after running activities for a considerable time and although underground activism could create and extend the alternative political space for some Thais alongside the changes of Thai overground politics, it seemed that there was no opportunity for these movements to become an effective political movement. In other words, the political issues proposed by underground factions

⁶¹ Even Somsak, who had chosen to join any conversation on YouTube channel, spoke many times in Smith's channels.

such as echoing anti-monarchist ideas, limiting the political interventions of the military, paving the way for a social revolution, and establishing a Thai federal state could not be regarded relevantly in main stream politics. As described above, attempts to found permanent organisations failed one by one and revealed some defects within movements. I will discuss this character in the next section.

7.5 Changes over times: Development and conflicts

7.5.1 The loose and tight networks: the cycles of protest of the underground movements

As was discussed in Chapters 5-6 and the early part of this chapter, we can see the obvious differences among leading activists and participants, namely their ideologies, political experiences, classes, and how they are involved in resistant actions. These differences had been ignored by most activists because of the assumption of the movement's harmony. They thought that most individuals and groups in the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement were continuing the struggle for democracy and fighting against elites in a similar, or at least not too different, direction. Additionally, as I showed in the last chapter, the inconsistency in their political ideas also lessened their willingness to investigate other groups' ideas and directions. This made most underground groups overlook the differences and possible conflicts, in order to move forward to accomplish those goals to which the overground movements could not reach.

Moreover, as mentioned above, the underground groups came together in the form of a loose network to oppose the Thai establishment. Emerging from the Red-Shirt movement, almost all leading activists knew each other and had previously worked together for years. Supporters also recognised leading activists even if they were heading other groups. Consequently, sympathy and support was distributed across these groups, particularly during the initial period of the underground movements.

As long as these shared characteristics were strongly held by each underground group, this loose network was securely sustained.

However, as time passed, differences among underground members were visible after tiny splits opened within each group. The groups with strong leaders could enact compromise among followers, consolidate their organisations, and gradually grow beyond other groups. Accordingly, a gap between underground groups increasingly widened. In other words, although a loose network was apparently going on, some underground groups had more strength, and that did not equal advancement of the overall underground movement. At this point, the existence of small groups could be ruined quickly. Instead of being weakened by threats outside of the underground movement, other groups turned to attacking their old friends.

While the loose network became increasingly disconnected, much tighter relationships were built from within each group, especially as in the case of OTF above. From my observation, the number of audiences who still listened to varied underground channels was relatively fewer than it had been during the early days of the movement. On the contrary, the followers chose to support only the specific groups whose political critiques and strategies were closest to their preferred ones. The process of this polarisation between underground groups resulted from the dynamic of development and contextual interrelation of, and conflicts within, underground movements (I will discuss this topic in detail in the next chapter).

7.5.2 The characteristic of remaining active activists

After the strengthening of some factions and the change in relationship among underground groups, it seemed that the previously common attitudes shared among activists and followers were gradually abandoned. Moreover, their collective identity as Red Shirts was also lessened, while other characteristics were revealed and open to criticism. Although the renowned activists from the

early period like Chuphong, Chuchee, and Laos¹ were criticised to a greater extent, they certainly sustained their leading roles in the underground community. Nevertheless, their directions and objectives swung back and forth several times, as I mentioned in the last chapter.

Chuphong, for example, saw the monarchy as the institution which needed to be overthrown. Although he hardly mentioned this aim, he instead hinted at a possibility of the change ‘from above’ after the death of Bhumibol. In his opinion, cooperation between the people and the elites could resolve the longer-than-a-decade conflict because of the more modernised and rational traits shown in Vajiralongkorn’s personality. A less aggressive tone towards the monarch also appeared in the speeches of Banpodj and Laos¹; however, many activists like the Faiyen band, France⁶, and OTF insisted firmly on their stances as strong republicans.

The two main causes of these changes were the low engagement or apolitical position of people towards Thai politics, and the emergence of new followers, who developed an alternative way to engage with politics.

These causes resulted from an authoritarian regime deeply embedded in Thai society. As explained in Chapter 4, the results of UCD gave decades of advantage to specific groups in the Thai ruling class to control the direction of development of the Thai capitalist society via their representative like military-led governments. In terms of superstructure, they almost forcibly socialised the ruling ideas in order to consolidate their hegemony. Most experienced activists were under the ruling of those military-led governments. They were trained to oppose this form of authoritarian regime by the tactics and methods favoured in their time, especially those that learned from CPT. On the one hand, they were very useful for fighting against later dictatorship governments, which were not all that different from the previous ones. However, on the other hand, these experienced activists could not find a more effective way to fight back beyond their old ways. The first cause emerged from this situation. As many veteran activists gradually

reduced their political roles. However, as the second cause of change, there were a rising number of novice activists and followers, who also wanted to be involved in radical politics but were determined to find a different solution. This involvement grew among followers because of the advancement of ICT, which facilitated this eagerness and influenced the behaviours of these people.

The second cause is more interesting. As mentioned above, the main format of the programmes to which these novice activists participated was mainly a live phone-in. This method once drove OTF to become a very famous group in the underground world. Instead of only listening to radical speakers video by video as happened in the early period of social-networking services, new audiences utilised advanced technology to articulate their identities and to take part in movements with a diversity of perspectives on social issues, not just politics. This method would increase the popularity of YouTube Channels if their speakers had an ability to arouse people to passionately participate. This continual discussion could quickly increase awareness of unity amongst participants around a particular topic. In some cases, although leaders of the main group were absent (e.g. the case of Chuchep and other leaders of OTF), these new channels, managed by these novice activists, still continued in the same vein as if being led by the absent leader.

Nevertheless, these passionate actions in a virtual world could disappear rapidly if the mobilisation did not lead to a concrete action in the real world. The actions of some of the remaining groups were likely developed to be something other than a radical change in society. In other words, although a large part of the online conversations of many underground groups was still political, there were increasing appearances of different topics, namely a remedy to the failure to overthrow the dictator; preparing members to be more practical and reasonable in their political life in a real world; and just a daily chatting among friends. Although some discussions raised critical questions about the effectiveness of ideologies and strategies employed by the underground activists, these questions were not answered systematically nor used as a re-assessment of underground movements on the whole (I will discuss this situation again in the next chapter).

This situation reflects again, a characteristic of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement as I mentioned in the last chapter. It was a contradictory consciousness of underground activists and participants regarding what they should do to change Thai society and what they really could do for this mission being only a tiny part of a movement. In other words, on many occasions, participants who were influenced by the conditions of living, and by the ruling ideas in Thai society, could not move beyond just repeating the same repertoire of underground actions, such as rudely blaming the monarch and speaking about an unrealistic ideal regime on their YouTube channel. This did not harm the status quo, and in a worse case, meant abandoning progressive action in order to conduct only a ‘war of curse words’ against the same side. I will explain this situation below.

7.5.3 Personal vs public Interest: The influence of material conditions

It is the Marxist view that emphasises the relationship between people’s material conditions and their political and cultural dispositions. Gramsci argues that there is a ‘contradictory consciousness’ of people about the exploiting mode of production. Although the exploited class recognises the exploitation committed by the exploiting class, most of them still restrict themselves from radical resistance against the oppressing regime, as Gramsci argued:

The active man-in-the-mass has a practical activity, but has no clear theoretical consciousness of his practical activity, which nonetheless involves understanding the world in so far as it transforms it. His theoretical consciousness can indeed be historically in opposition to his activity. One might almost say that he has two theoretical consciousnesses: one which is implicit in his activity and which in reality unites him with all his fellow workers in the practical transformation of the real world; and one, superficially explicit or verbal, which he has inherited from the past and uncritically absorbed (Gramsci, 1999, p. 641)

This comes about not only because of the direct regulation in the relations of production but there is also hegemony, which makes lower-class people conform to the exploitation and domination of the ruling class (Ibid, 145).

Most of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement's participants or supporters possessed, more or less, this contradictory consciousness. They had not only been dominated in the Thai capitalist state, in which the ruling class had securely monopolised the control of the investments of giant capitalists and state apparatuses, but most of them also had no experiences with or any lesson about a radical movement beforehand. This resulted in an inability to counter the ruling class's ruling ideas or hegemony with a more radical idea that could be created involving a class movement within a capitalist society. However, there was also a more complicated situation to be investigated.

Many Thais had migrated to live outside Thailand for decades. When these people lived in Thailand, they had been influenced by the ruling ideas, such as the national values of 'Nation, Religion, and Monarch', and had also been faced with economic difficulties. After they settled in more advanced countries their attitudes towards social relations were gradually affected by the contexts of more democratic environments. It spurred some people, more or less, to join progressive movements to resist the monopolising power of the ruling class and its hegemony. One participant who lived in the UK for decades had no interest in Thai politics. However, when she saw the news of the 2010 repression, she started to research and compare Thailand with the structure in the UK eventually participating in a group of Red-Shirt supporters:

I had known nothing about Thai politics. When Yellow Shirts came out, I also did not know them. . . . I had to go back to study about them and what they want. . . . Here, we see a government as the authoritative body elected by people, so there is no coup of a government. We also had military here, but it does not commit a coup like Thailand. I am curious why Thailand is so weird (UK3, 2018).

However, this comes from their spontaneous desire to liberate their compatriots from terrible lives and promote more development in Thailand in their early political life. The influential hegemony of Thai ruling ideas still excluded most of these people, including later underground novice activists and followers, from developing class consciousness. In other words, participation in political

movements does not free these people from the prevailing material condition and some persistent consequences of the ruling ideas.

This character suggests Edward Said's method of 'contrapuntal' reading (Said, 2000) which examines both the colonising and the colonised narratives in literature, in order to find the abandoned from the text but is important in terms of meaning. Said viewed the status of 'contrapuntal' as the result of inequality between metropolitan and colony, especially in the literature works where there is a combination of ways of viewing the reality produced under the power of imperialism. He said "Partly because of empire, all cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogenous, extraordinarily differentiated, and unmonolithic" (Said, 1993, p. XXV). However, the more powerful coloniser might hide the existence of the colonised in its literature so the readers need to think contrapuntally to avoid misinterpretation. Said also viewed the contrapuntal condition of exiled people that have internal contradiction inside themselves, as well from the influence of the notions of nationalism. This condition appears among people who have to flee from their home countries and who usually run political activities more eagerly, however, their activities implicitly still show a link to their nation. Influences of nationalism that socialises via political, economic and cultural spaces, and discourses dominated the way in which they present. Although they have left home-bases and struggled for change, their past experiences under nationalist forces made them lonely or insecure in the way they exist as exiles (Said, 2000).

Contrapuntal view could help to explain a shift of view of underground participants abroad. On the one hand, they offer challenging ideas against the ruling ideas of Thainess and they fight for the equality of rights. This brings the abandoned elements from the elites' colonising (and later monopolising) process back to the oppressed such as themselves. On the other hand, some are still under the influence of the ruling ideas and they express opinions based on those ideas, like a socio-cultural hierarchy.

These characters crucially affect the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement because its main supporters are Thai women who married western men and moved to live in their advanced countries (these women are called ‘Mia Farang’ in Thai).⁶² In addition, some of them are also novice activists. On the one hand, social inequality and a low level of development in Thailand resulting from uneven development was a main driving force for these women to migrate to and reside in more developed countries, particularly via marriage migration (Mix & Piper, 2003; Plambech, 2009). Due to this dimension, some of them who suffered from this inequality want to eliminate it from Thai society. On the other hand, in several cases, this inequality combined with the ruling ideas, still ideologically influenced them and they generally utilised this as a tool for attacking their Thai opposition, especially people in the same class as themselves.

There are socio-economic differences among these women. They have both low and high education levels as well as upper and lower economic statuses in their family in Thailand. However, most of these women came from poor families (such as the case of Sweden see Webster & Haandrikman, 2014). They made marriage-migration to developed countries because they want to have a better life (some want to leave a sexual career e.g. the cases in Germany see Mix and Piper (2003)). Some women need to send financial remittance to families in Thailand because they believe the norm that woman has a duty to support her family (Panitee, 2008; Sunanta, 2013). Some wives might have a good married life but others fail to find a kind husband or get a well-paid job in their countries of residence. Some of the latter might return to work in the sex industry (Rattana, 2008, p. 95) or to re-marry. These differences make the social relationships among Thai women abroad very paradoxical. Patinee (2009, p. 121) calls this situation in her study of Thai women in the Netherlands as ‘we are similar, but we are different’ and characterised as:

. . . . when the women made Thai friends, they discovered that some friends share only such joyful occasions as having Thai food or an outing together, but they cannot count on these friends in need. Gossip and jealousy sometimes occur among friends. After years of living in the

⁶² Mia means wife, and Farang means white people.

Netherlands, the women had found out that sharing the same country of origin and language is not a guarantee that female expatriates will share the same interests and will become a good friend

Besides gossip about the ranking of economic status of Thais in their circles, there are also groups that gamble and borrow money, which in many cases, ends with cheating. After disputes, they would compare economic status, lives, and careers in the past to that of their opponent in order to reveal weaknesses and rudely insult them. Sometimes the discovered personal information was used particularly for the purpose of scolding. This formed social clusters based on how each group of Thai women dealt with a verbal insult and discrimination. This is how some women diminish their own suffering and preserve the myth, for both themselves and others, that Thai women have a better life abroad. Some women avoided having or had carefully contact with Thai people; by contrast, others often socialise with other Thais. However, Thai women abroad choose to make friends with others from the same class to avoid these problems later (Ibid, 122).

This kind of relationship, which is an influence of material conditions, also happened with the underground people who lived abroad. But it seemed that it occurred in a greater extent depending on the political issue. They could overlook their differences of class and background when they decided to join the movement because of focusing more on a political objective. Nevertheless, their later disputes certainly caused the critical separation, dissolution, and regrouping of members in the underground groups. In general, disputes, of both personal and political issues, among members in each group could lead to betrayal of their old friends' trust by revealing scandal or shameful information to the friends in the new group. This could then ignite verbal attacks on old friends.

As mentioned before, if the political situation was intense, disagreements within the movement would be concealed under a more urgent interest. But, after that time passed, any hidden problems could surface in almost all parts of each group. Although disputes over some personal issues like appearance or brand names of possessions seemed pointless, it actually reflected a dimension of the

development in Thai society and the domination of the way of thinking of many Thais. Particularly, in the case of the Red-Shirt-sided underground groups, which are short of intellectual and ideological principles that could help to rationally minimise personal issues by a theorised concept of public interest. This ruined the creditability of many activists, and several times, caused the dissolution and separation of underground groups.

For example, Aphatsara Tengblad (also known as Wanpen Sweden in the underground world) was a good example of this circumstance. She came from a poor family in one province of central Thailand. She lacked educational opportunity and only graduated from primary school because she had to help her family by working. While growing up, she went to work in Singapore where she met her Swedish husband.⁶³ She was married and resided with him in Dubai and Sweden consecutively. Aphatsara started her underground actions by uploading video of her criticism of the Thai monarch, the authoritarian regime, and social inequality on her YouTube channels.⁶⁴ She had a distinctive style of speaking, excessive support of Thaksin, and regularly inserted aspects of her life to show-off her better life and riches to influence the Red Shirts' opponents, such as the Yellow Shirts and Multi-Colours faction. She wanted to oppose the notion that slandered the Red Shirts as poor and devoid of economic opportunity until they were bought as a political tool by Thaksin. Aphatsara also rudely insulted her opponents as being stupid and unable to notice decades of exploitation and domination by the Thai elites.

On the one hand, Aphatsara was admired for these actions by some Red Shirts, who praised her as a leading activist who dared to show a real face in the underground struggle. On the other hand, she became one of the main targets of disdain amongst Yellow Shirts and royalists. But, instead of focusing on her argument about social inequality and Thai politics, they used methods similar to

⁶³ There was a rumour from her oppositions that Aphatsara worked as prostitute in Singapore. This rumour was predictably transformed into an abuse towards her.

⁶⁴ Aphatsara has had many channels, such as Aphatsara Tengblad (2019c, 2019d, 2019e)

hers. They claimed to have researched her old career and life to find the weak points and they used that to criticise her individual behaviour.

Aphatsara was insulted and threatened by supporters of the Yellow-Shirt movement and royalists several times, such as when one group of royalists visited her house in 2016 (Clip Doo Pluen, 2018). She had disputes with groups of Thai wives and women in several countries in Europe, including Germany and Sweden, as well as from in Thailand.⁶⁵ Although Aphatsara usually selected contemporary topics related to inequalities in Thai society to comment about on her channel, she still bragged about her wealth and luxurious items, and continued to look down on the economic status of her opposition. Almost all of the conflict centred on questions such as whom was richer and had achieved a better life abroad and what difficulties did the opposition face when living in Thailand.⁶⁶

When there were shifts in the political direction of some underground activists and groups, particularly the position towards Thaksin (one of the simple opposite couples noted in the last chapter), Aphatsara would also be targeted by her former allies. Chatwadee (began to criticise Thaksin around August 2014) started to criticise Aphatsara's boasting in mid-2015, though they had known each other online as anti-monarchist comrades. Ning, who had previously backed and supported Aphatsara during the conflict with Chatwadee, began to swing towards blaming her in early 2019 and this mission was the Ning group's main action⁶⁷ going forward.

Nevertheless, there was a difference in the disputes related to Aphatsara between Yellow-Shirt and Red-Shirt factions. Although the format of condemning Aphatsara conducted by Chatwadee and Ning was mostly similar to the Yellow Shirts' approach (as mainly attacking personal appearance and socio-economic status),

⁶⁵ Insulting groups might be comprised of mixed members from many regions.

⁶⁶ However, the most favourite question among Thai wives in conflicts is who really worked as a sex worker in the past?

⁶⁷ Smith Hake's channels were set up for blaming the opponents and especially for making conversation among members of Ning's group. It separated from Ning's main channel that emphasised an informative political content.

the original cause of the conflict was the disagreement over a political strategy. In the case of Chatwadee, the dispute started when Aphatsara criticised Chatwadee's claim that Thaksin had no real intention of fighting for the lower classes but rather he wanted their votes during election seasons, buying and luring them to his demonstrations.

In the case of Ning, the dispute was generated after the corpses of Laos1's assistants were found but Laos1 had disappeared. Ning vigorously refused the explanation offered by the 'insiders' of the underground movements that said Laos1 was escorted to a safer place or on the way to a third country. She started to harshly criticise any activists who subscribed to these plots "I have never believed people who say Laos1 has been fine and safe. . . . I absolutely disagree with the idea to stop discovering where he is. . . . they have done nothing about this case except to keep their mouths shut (Ning, 2019b)"

Although Aphatsara had agreed with this standpoint of Ning, she was irritated with this harsh action and started to signal her disagreement. Aphatsara extended the conflict by condemning other activists close to Laos1, who were also exiling in Laos, especially other members of the Faiyen, who also denied and rudely blamed the insider's account of the disappearance of Laos1. Aphatsara claimed that these activists had not paid respect to elder activists and she labelled them as lazy activists because their survival in Laos had not depended on working but instead on supporters' donation (Aphatsara, 2019b). Ning was one of the main activists who had fundraised from supporters in Europe to aid this activist group in Laos. Thus, Aphatsara's acts infuriated Ning because she believed the activists in exile who had stayed in a vulnerable situation with no identity documents could not work or even move comfortably in the host country. Since this dispute, they have extended the conflict to many issues, such as socio-economic status, past lives in Thailand, appearances, and sexual behaviours, of some people related to the opposition. These two figures remained in conflict with each other, though they were of identical class and had the same ideas.

We can see this kind of personal conflict spread throughout the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement. It might start with substantial issues regarding the movement's strategies and ideologies. However, when there was no process for the participants to discuss and come to a mutual agreement, clearly and rationally, the conflict generally extended to personal issues. These disputes consistently obstructed the development of the movement's organisation, especially labelling almost all activists who fundraised or accepted money from supporters as the beggars or scammers of the underground movement. Almost all activists were accused by counterparts from other groups. This situation might be ignored by, and not harm, the accredited activists or activists who could clearly clarify their activities (most of them were the former-politician, experienced, and academic activists).⁶⁸ However, due to being new to political movements, novice activists and followers could be drawn into this endless scolding war. In this battle, they would select the most abusive words they could find, and even produce hoaxes, to verbally attack their opponents. The most terrible act was the revealing of faces, addresses, and biographies of the targets, which then risked them being charged with *lèse-majesté* or other criminal charges by the Thai state.⁶⁹ From a couple of interviews, I learned that this situation obstructed the opportunity for the establishment of new organisations and tended to bring down the existing ones.

Although this characteristic could be found in other social movements in many places (Corrigall-Brown, 2011, pp. 46-47), the issues used for attacking the other side were uniquely based on the social inequality and the strength of the ruling class's power and hegemony resulting from UCD in Thailand. Sunanta (2013, p. 185) argued, "the manipulation of the concepts, 'tradition' and 'modernity,' support the urban elite's continued domination over the rural countryside". This manipulation identifies these women as immoral and commodified persons because of their career and because they left families. Many women attempt to

⁶⁸ Giles, Somsak, France1, Japan1, France2, Chuphong, Chucheeep, and Laos1 are all attacked with personal issues by novice activists, particularly Chatwadee, Sapai, and Aphatsara for many years, but they did not respond to those critics seriously.

⁶⁹ For example, Chatwadee claimed that Ning had been charged for *lèse-majesté* and could not enter Thailand because of her report to the Thai authority.

escape from that view by remitting money to their families or, mentally, criticising others who are similar to themselves.

According to my interview, and in observing news of protests, the social perspective of these women, as main supporters of the underground movement, is indispensable for achieving political mobilisation and action. In the case of Aphatsara, although the capacity and suggestion of experienced activists could partly influence these supporters, they actually have been able to reproduce a political direction in their own way. Particularly, relationships within the virtual world would expand unlimitedly and, likewise, produce a good effect for even the experienced activists. I will explain this impact again in the next chapter.

7.6 Conclusion

The actions of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement were shaped by the prior contradictory relationships in Thai capitalist society. The elite and its ruling ideas were viewed as the enemy that needed to be criticised and demolished, based on several political ideas, as mentioned in the last chapter. The leading underground activists utilised their knowledge and experiences derived from learning from, or even joining, prior movements to mobilise support for their own underground activism.

Nevertheless, their resistance was situated in the different social relations from those of the previous movement. The dialectical relationships, both between the underground movement and social relations, and between underground activists themselves, directed the specific character of actions.

Because of the restriction set by the Thai government, Thai people face difficulty in expressing political opinions. The underground activists who want to overcome this situation need to employ alternative methods. The physical actions, e.g. gathering in discussing groups, protests, and seminars, were used to spread their

political ideas. These types of actions had more restrictions than the virtual ones, such as needing more resources and needing a space where Thai authority could not enforce its legal power. Thus, we normally saw these actions in overseas countries where there are a considerable number of Red-Shirt supporters who could support these progressive activities. Alongside the physical actions, the developed ICT, which aimed to be used as a tool for expanding the accumulation of capital, was deployed in this resistance because it helps activists to run their actions in a safer manner and with lower resources than when using physical actions. Accordingly, opening the space for unlimitedly political discussions and producing online mobilising programs on social-networking sites, especially YouTube, was the main virtual action that became indispensable for the underground movement.

We can see that these two kinds of actions complemented each other. The virtual actions could be implemented and used to exchange information related to Thai politics among interested people without restriction. Meanwhile, physical actions have a positive side, encouraging the participants in a more effective way, and extending the network of groups for further gathering like a network of activities' participants in Europe, and making the public, both domestic and international level, recognising their existence.

Running actions in these two spaces is dialectically related to the social context surrounding activists and their groups. The virtual actions employed advanced ICT and a great number of users of social media in an era of commodity and data consuming, in order to disseminate their political objectives. Physical actions would not occur if there were only the exiled activists. They needed Thai people living abroad as their main supporters. Those individuals shared a central reason for going to live and work outside Thailand and that was the low development in Thailand. However, these situations gradually saw a set of new dialectic relationships. The differences in living standards, political knowledge and experience, and ideology of the underground activists and participants, which are a result of their classes in the societies in which they lived, gradually created disagreement within the underground movement.

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the Red-Shirt-Sided underground movement began without a clear political ideology shared by activists and participants, but was formed as a loose network of people from different backgrounds. After working together for a while, their differences caused constant disputes in the underground circle. The virtual and physical actions that used to help the underground groups in criticising the illegitimacy of the authoritarian regime in Thailand, were redirected to attack old colleagues, because of the shift of political directions and relationships in each group. Novice activists in particular, who participated less and had less experience in the prior movements, even within the underground movement, took different actions. It was the characteristic of oversimplifying political ideas rather than grounding their own political direction. They instead looked to some leading activists as role models of their factions, and they started to blame other activists for their wrong strategies or abilities to operate political actions, such as the adherent followers of Chucheep and his OFT.

It seemed that when the formal Thai politics began their process, such as after the 2011 and 2019 elections, the recognition of and participation in the underground actions decreased. And the alternative actions, like blaming and scolding amongst underground groups, even on personal issues, gradually became more active than the directly political actions. Nevertheless, this contradiction reflected the specific characteristic of Thai society as a result of UCD, which the ruling class has used to retain their power, both physical and ideological, through several periods. Thus, nowadays it still considerably restrains the movement from below, including the Red-Shirt-sided underground movements. I will explain this and the result of a near-decade of fighting in the underground movements in the next chapter.

Chapter 8

Outcome of the Red-Shirt-sided Underground Movement's Operations

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will demonstrate the results of actions taken by the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement. These actions and their reproduction constructed the position of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement in Thai politics. Because this political position was gradually influential, its actions did not affect only the relationships between underground activists and groups but also the external social relations and institutions. Accordingly, there were later changes resulting from the dialectical interactions between underground participants who arranged those actions and between the underground movement and other social institutions. Nevertheless, those interactions occurred under the influence of aspects of the Thai capitalist mode of production. This chapter will show that the underground movement was both a result and cause of dialectically social relations in Thai society.

According to the above conditions, I will categorise the result of the underground actions into two parts. The first is their effect on the relationships among underground activists and groups. The second is the impact on, and response from, the external social institutions, particularly the Thai authorities.

For the first result, I will illustrate the effect of underground actions on the relationships between the Organisation for Thai Federation (OTF) and other groups. I chose OTF to be a representative of underground groups because OTF is significant and the largest group. Investigating its dialectical relationships with other groups and aspects could help in understanding the broad outcome of underground actions within the underground movement. For the second result, I will explain how underground actions affect external social institutions, namely other overground movements, media, and Thai government. Each institution has

a different response to the underground movement from a slight recognition to possible assassination of underground activists.

I will end this chapter with my view towards the possibility that this movement surfaced in overground politics.

8.2 The Thai federation VS the Thai republic campaign

There are two main objectives that have dominated the political direction in the underground movement. The first one was the foundation of the ‘Satharanarat Thai [Thai republic state]’, which, actually, was initiated amongst radical Red Shirts even before the beginning of the underground movement. The second one was the establishment of the ‘Sahaphantarathai [Thai federal state]’. This objective was mentioned after the second wave and was adopted as the main goal of one group that became known as the ‘Ongkarn Sahaphantarathai [the Organisation for Thai Federation (OTF)]’, partly mentioned in previous chapters. While a desire for the first objective was shared broadly among almost all underground groups, the second one was strongly held by only particular groups in OTF’s network. This division of underground groups seemed important to the underground movement as a whole because it affected the unity and capacity of mobilisation.

Partly, OTF’s endorsement of the Thai federal state was seemingly a strategic mobilisation to compete with the project of the Thai republic. Nevertheless, the rationale of mobilisation was created based on the unevenness, both material and abstract, which is a result of UCD in Thailand. Particularly, the monopoly of economic and political power of the Thai ruling class has caused the centralisation of administrative power, giant monopoly corporations, ineffective wealth distribution and welfare system, and so on. Although these characteristics were broadly known among political activists, it was Chuchee, the leader of OTF, who could use them as a good resource for his mobilisation in an underground way.

8.2.1 The proposal to establish Thai Federation

As demonstrated in chapter 5-7, Chueeep was one of most important underground activists. He was an early activist who was significantly informed about palace background and anti-monarchist ideas. Due to the achievement of this action, Chueeep gained a considerable number of supporters, even though he was exiled abroad. Nevertheless, after he founded the additional element that could help to differentiate his ideal regime and the existing authoritarian state in Thailand, he altered his political direction and set up his new group which spread new narratives and announced a potential for accomplishing this objective. That element was a conception of a Thai federation and how to establish it in Thailand. Chueeep proposed various advantages of a Thai federal state, namely decreasing the centralisation of power of the elites in Bangkok, increasing the power and rights of people in remote areas by a decentralisation to states, reducing the possibility of a coup by having a less powerful Bangkok, more distribution of development and wealth where before it had been concentrated in Bangkok and so on. The special intention of OTF was, after overthrowing the Thai monarch and his network, Thai federalists would confiscate the assets of elites and then distribute them to the people. Nevertheless, OTF's members would receive that distribution as the first group (Chueeep, 2019e).

In RMT's view (McCarthy & Zald, 1977, 2001), a Social Movement Organisation (SMO) is an organisation that has a set of target goals, which are reflected from mobilised demand for social change or Social Movements (SMs), and attempts to mobilise support. The gathering of SMO into a broader unit as Social Movement Industry (SMI), which selects some SMOs to be part of it, and helps with mobilisation to a greater extent. Accordingly, saying, in this case SMI's target is establishing a more democratic regime in Thailand using the underground method. The OTF is one of the SMOs that competes with others, like advocacy groups of the Thai republic, in this SMI. OTF, as a SMO, attempts to find a way to gain support from SMs' supporters using several strategies, e.g. a differentiating strategy for goal accomplishment, making a target goal more attractive,

advertisements, narrowing goals and strategies in a more competitive situation, and so on. These are what Chucheeep did with his OTF.

Additionally, the view of PPT (Tilly, 2001) is also useful to examine this rising of OTF. Political opportunity structure (a set of political conditions that variously affects social movements' activity (Tilly, 1977)) during that time is a chance for underground groups to offer the strategy of an underground method for changing Thai society due to a royal interregnum after the death of Bhumibol (October 13, 2016). Before this incident, underground activists set up meetings, seminars, and organisations (as described in the last chapter) to discuss Thai politics, especially what should be done after the death of Bhumibol (he stayed in a hospital for years with serious illnesses), whom they viewed as the main plotter of political machination in Thailand. Thus when his death actually happened, enthusiasm to launch alternative activities increased, particularly after seeing many actions forcing people to mourn for his death. Moreover, it was the time just after the referendum to approve the new constitution (August 7, 2016), which meant the time of NCPO in a sovereign body had nearly ended. During that time serious discussions among former-politician and experienced activists occurred under Seri Thai's management.⁷⁰ However, there were conflicts that led to the separation of those activists. They emphasised their individual fighting, including Chucheeep. This, again, demonstrates the close relationship between the underground movement and Thai society.

This direction emerged around mid-2017 when Chucheeep, two of Faiyen's members (Faiyen1 and Faiyen5), Krissana Tapthai (aka Comrade Lued), Siam Teerawut (aka Khaoneaw-Mamuong), and Wuttiiphong formed OTF and worked on

⁷⁰ Many renowned activists (known within the underground community as the round table knights) joined this discussion for years, e.g. Chucheeep, Chuphong, Laos1, France1, Arkhom, Piengdin, Anek, France6, and so on. After the conflict, Arkhom and Chupong even made a video to directly criticise Chucheeep and Laos1 (Arkorn Sydney & Chuphong Theetuan, 2018).

this project together, especially on their YouTube channels (Thai Federation, Yammy Revolution, and Faiyen)⁷¹.

Besides setting the Thai federation as the ultimate goal, according to the simple opposite couples of political strategies and directions which I summarised in Chapter 6, OTF's leaders decided to make their position clear to differentiate themselves from other groups. They repeatedly announced that they do not accept politicians into OTF, endorse overthrowing the monarch, or use a revolutionary approach instead of a reformative one. The two latter stances are commonplace among many underground groups. However, the first stance is a remarkable direction because most Red-Shirt-sided underground activists quite favour Thaksin, especially the many activists who advocate for the Thai republic stance, like France⁶.

Although Chucheeep himself previously substantially supported Thaksin, after launching a Thai Federation campaign for a while, he switched his position to oppose conventional politics and politicians, especially Thaksin. He raised the issue of a good relationship between Thaksin and the palace and projected that it was one of the main obstacles to establishing democracy (Chucheeep, 2019j). He also pointed to the differences between status and wealth of politicians and UDD leaders, and ordinary participants who participated in the same Red-Shirt demonstrations but had gotten a different outcome after the 2011 election. While many of the former groups were appointed to governmental and political positions under the Pheu Thai-led government, many of the latter received nothing in return and, even worse, some were either jailed or forced to flee the country because of criminal accusations (Ibid).

In terms of the Federation, OTF publicly presented their ideal regime and no underground groups had ever done this before. It drafted the constitution of the

⁷¹ After a dispute inside OTF and disappearance of Wuttiiphong, although Faiyen1 and Faiyen5 separated themselves from OTF and, then, went back to join other Faiyen's members, Chucheeep still continued his campaign with the remaining members (Siam, Young Blood, and Wat (only short time)) on his own channel - Sanamluang20082008 and alliance's channel.

prospective federal system in April 2018 (Sanamluang2008, 2017). This proposal divided Thailand into 10 states.⁷² Along with the constitution and states, OTF created the vertical three-stripes flag, of which the middle red band was two times wider than the side bands, which were coloured in white to become the flag of the expected Thai federal state. The Mask of Zorro on a horse, had been personally favoured by Chucheep, as the faction's logo.

In terms of communication, the online mobilising ability of leaders is one of the keys factor of OTF's success, e.g. projecting a concrete destination, enthusiastic energy on YouTube channels, the skill of persuasive speaking during the phone-in section, that of Chucheep in particular, and convincing supporters by composing entertaining narratives with some historical and economic facts. OTF effectively utilised the advanced technology of ICT to mobilise supporters, even better than the activists in developed countries who had accessed this technology earlier. In some aspects, close to the UCD character, Chucheep and his team who lived in risky spots in less developed countries could gain great support because they used simple language in their communications with the mass of lower class and they presented interesting topics.

Those strategies made 'Establishing the Thai federation only' campaign very popular among audiences in the underground community. The number of followers gradually increased and made OTF the biggest group within the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement during late-2017 and in early 2019. Its objectives attracted audiences and also caused some intellectuals to work with Chucheep as new speakers on his channel. Chucheep, for example, got the Three Musketeers team, who researched and presented weak points of the Thai state in order to

⁷² However, OTF's map were quite weird because the boundaries of states were designated based on some boundaries of existing provinces, demarcated by the authority of Thai state to which they were opposing, without asking for opinion or votes from their followers who was claimed to have more benefits beforehand. Briefly, the 10 states in OTF's ideal federal state are State 1 (the provinces in the central Thailand), State 2 (the provinces in the eastern Thailand), State 3 (the provinces in the lower northeastern Thailand), State 4 (the provinces in the upper northeastern Thailand), State 5 (the provinces in the upper northern Thailand), State 6 (the provinces in the lower northern Thailand), State 7 (the province in the western Thailand), State 8 (the provinces in the upper southern Thailand), State 9 (the provinces in the lower southern Thailand), and State 10 is Bangkok (Gundam UST, 2018).

display the superiority of a federal state. Meanwhile, for the conspiracy part, Chuchep got Thida LA, who presented gossip and reported inappropriate behaviours of members of the royal family. OTF had also gained increasing financial support since their initial date. Until mid-2018, ideologies, strategies, fund-raising, and actions of OTF were a trending topic discussed widely within the underground community.

8.2.2 The result of OTF's mobilisation and activities

Due to the competition with other underground groups, Chuchep chose to leave the loose network of underground groups, which he viewed as too weak to run an effective movement, and instead to create his stronger network to lead the fight. This gradually deteriorated what had been a positive relationship between OTF and other underground activists and groups that were continually forming from the beginning of the Red-Shirt movement in the late 2000s.

Surprisingly, however, the first cleavage started inside OTF itself as if OTF was SMI and its members were SMOs. It emerged from a conflict over the management and direction of OTF's leaders, especially after the increasing role of Wuttiiphong. Faiyen¹ and Faiyen⁵ decided to leave the faction and return to the other Faiyen members because they disagreed with the more violent method and exaggerate advertisement offered by Wuttiiphong and Chuchep (HaunT89s, 2019d). Chuchep encouraged his supporters to conduct missions that risked them being arrested for breaking the law of state security. In September 2018, for instance, at least 6 participants who managed project of spread of the black T-shirt attached with Thai Federation's flag were arrested by military officers (Thai Lawyers for Human Rights, 2019). Nevertheless, Chuchep still urged followers to attend a so-called D-Day campaign on December 5, 2018 (Bhumibol's date of birth) and to wear OTF's T-Shirt. They would gather in several places in Bangkok to announce the objectives of OTF (Chuchep Chevasuth, 2019i). Unsurprisingly, at least 34 participants were arrested for participating in that event. (Thai Lawyers for Human Rights, 2020).

This leader's over-confidence and carelessness gradually increased the distance between OTF and other underground factions.

The arrest of OTF supporters also caused the departure of OTF's supportive groups. For example, a group of Sukij and Mae Maew. After those incidents, Sukij criticised Chucheeep's hasty decision and irresponsible manner which caused the arrest of his followers. He also criticised the possibility that more violent means might be employed in the future. This made these two activists renounce their advocacy of OTF's method and found their own group called the Federal Republic of Thailand Alliance (FRTA) (Maew Zaa, 2018). The new group still showed the remaining influence of the Thai Federation by keeping the same goal of a Thai federal state, while employing alternative methods to those of Chucheeep.

For the relationships with other underground groups, the rising of OTF was likely a watershed for the underground political direction. At the time, it seemed like underground followers were urged to decide which side they supported. Particularly, after the split of two of Faiyen's members, which caused serious conflict between them and Chucheeep's supporters (as mentioned in the section of social media and virtual community in the last chapter). The term 'sahaphan [a federalist]' was created in the underground world to identify supporters of OTF. On the one hand, due to the large number of supporters of OTF, the word 'sahaphan' was generally accepted by both supporters and non-supporters of OTF. On the other hand, 'non-sahaphan' or 'satharanarat [a republican]' was not quite used among underground participants because everyone recognised that almost all of them were anti-monarchists. In other word, this reflected how distinctive the position of OTF was at that time.

Besides the violent direction and irresponsibility of leaders, the conception of a federal state is problematic as well, albeit it was a main destination of OTF. To advocate a complicated objective like establishing a new federal state needs knowledge of comparative government and political systems. Nevertheless, it

seemed that OTF, both leader and followers, had relatively limited understanding of these topics.

Chucleep made several mistakes regarding the idea of a federal system because of a lack of knowledge of political systems. The biggest problem for OTF's leading activists was their argument that a federal state is not of the same form as a republic. In fact, these two forms of state are categorised by different qualifications and can exist together in one state as a federal republic like Germany and the U.S. This was OTF leading activists speaking of half-truth. They might know some part of a federal state and speak only the facts that gave them an advantage. Chucleep, for example, once said,

I would like to ask you between a federal and a republic state, which one is a more democracy state, decentralising more power to local areas, distributing more budget and wealth to marginalised people. . . . Germany is a federal state. Australia is a federal state. Many countries are not official federal states, but they are de facto. . . . everyone knows this (Chucleep, 2018a).

An academic activist like Somsak criticised Chucleep's narrative of a federation:

Just the words 'Thai Federation' cannot be deployed as your group's slogan because a federal state can also be a kingdom like Malaysia and UAE. While you claim to be fighting for a federation, you might possibly be fighting for a kingdom. Therefore, if you actually want to overthrow the monarch, speaking only 'Thai Federation' is not valid. . . . When you want to change the form of state, you have to discuss with people who study this topic throughout the country. However, I can expect that they will laugh at your state. . . . You say that if some states are ready to liberate themselves, they can do so immediately. How crazy you are. The Thai government will send the army to repress those attempts suddenly. Moreover, the international community will not recognise that separated territory as long as the sovereign government still exists. . . . You say that if a Thai federation is established, the economy of each state will be better. It is not true. Conversely, it will get worse. . . . In the modern economy everything is connected together. When something is separated, it needs to gradually negotiate agreements with all stakeholders. However, if a separated thing is a state, international negotiation will be more

complicated and could take decades for all settlements. Do you think this could make a better economy overnight? (Somsak, 2018b)

These political tactics, which made the passionate followers think that a federal state and a republic were incompatible, generated many problems afterwards. First, it caused confusion when explaining political reality, as there were many federal states that had monarchs as heads of states. Second, after being criticised about this theoretical fault, rather than correcting their information, they instead emphasised the ultimate aim - founding a Thai federal state - to conceal their insufficient information. Chuchep spoke many times after facing continual criticism about 'Thai Federation only' to the exclusion of other approaches out of the interest of his followers. Preferring 'ends' rather than 'means' like this led to the cult of personality, especially around Chuchep himself. Finally, these mistakes decreased the reliability of OTF's network in the opinions of outsiders, like Somsak above. Persistently insisting on his mistake on political knowledge created less opportunity for OTF to enter into a theoretical discussion with other underground activists in a respectful manner and with sincerity. Although there were rarely political activities between OTF network and other groups after Faiyen1 and Faiyen5 withdrew from the faction, this circumstance seemingly closed off any possibility of reconciliation between the Thai Federation group and other underground factions forever.

This situation demonstrated one of the important weaknesses of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement. It was a small number of intellectuals who possessed the abilities for considerable understanding of Thai society, who had good reasoning in analyses of surrounding situations, and who remained credible in their activism when competing with other groups. Although any factions could acquire resources to run their activities, a deficiency of intellectual resources in their management could undermine all their actions from the beginning. Further, this also affected the underground movement as a whole. As mentioned above, there was a cult of personality around leaders in each group. Thus, instead of relying on rational investigation and study, most information in political discussions was based on the storytelling of factions' leaders as if it were in the

oral tradition of education from ancient times. Due to the fact that this mobilisation usually was done in the leaders' favor, there was hardly a democratic process for a discussion of the topics of political ideologies, strategies, and activities, or for finding agreement through those discussions which could lead to mutual works and developing more effective actions. This circumstance, in addition to the differences of activist and participants, led to a disintegration in the underground movement. Each group or network likely runs political actions individually more and more. Unsurprisingly, after OTF leaders, Chucheeep, Krissana, Siam disappeared in May 2019 (see details in the section of disappearance of activists below), a loose network of the underground groups tended to be more fragile, even within the residual OTF sub-group. It is unlikely that there might be a new strong underground network in the near future to substitute for a broken Thai Federation network. On the contrary, it left only a diffuse existence of underground factions as would be seen in the future.

8.2.3 Would Thai Federation wither away after the disappearance of its leaders?

After those disappearances, some followers became novice activists. They created their channels to both rerun the old videos from Chucheeep's channel and to generate their own programs based on the direction left by Chucheeep. In addition, the majority of followers remained in the OTF network.

It seemed that the organisational management designed by Chucheeep was effective enough to be able to retain its followers even without leaders. However, it was in fact the personal ability of Chucheeep and his close colleagues, their mobilising tactic, and a cult of their personality that initiated trustfulness and loyalty among followers. Although Chucheeep partly provided political knowledge and history to his followers during OTF's mobilisation, these followers could not develop that material and produce their own constructive narratives. The quality of later mobilisation and media produced by these OTF's novice activists could not nearly compare to those of Chucheeep and his team.

Actually, the parts of conspiracy and rumours about the monarchy, royal family, and the elites were much more utilised as a main source for mobilisation. This principle, unsurprisingly, led to a conflict among groups in OTF's network, and many cases were related to financial support (see one example in Koo Mah Klai Koo Mai Klua Mung (2020)). The leaders of each group competed to be the authentic inheritor of Chuecheep and offered their new conspiracies extending from the plots left by Chuecheep. One of new plots provided by the biggest faction of OTF narrated that its leaders had already contacted Donald Trump, the President of the U.S., and asked for help for Thais to overthrow the monarchy. The U.S. troops will cooperate with military-led government, under General Prayuth, to eradicate all elites (members of the royal family, monopoly capitalists, military officers, and so on, see this trajectory since late April 2020 on Nong May (2020)). Besides conspiracy plots, OTF's followers, who mostly lived abroad, disputed with each other the same as participants in other groups. Disputes were especially common amongst Thai women, as explained in the last chapter.

In my assessment, the Thai Federation network still had quite a large number of supporters in the underground movement. However, the number of supporters did not increase but gradually declined. Nevertheless, other underground groups, which were once defeated by OTF in terms of numbers of supporters and amount of aid, seemingly too exhausted to rise up as well. This was not only a consequence of political incidents, such as the first general election in March 2019, which distracted political enthusiasm from underground politics, but also of the cult of personality created around leaders of each faction and the personalisation of politics which increased the level of fragmentation within the underground movements.

As mentioned in the last chapter, the coming of social networking services influenced the behaviours of users because of the variety of utilities and choices of media content. Instead of limiting themselves to a few channels of media, as in the past, people could select any attractive sources which satisfied them, via an internet access. Due to this circumstance, people were liberated from

monopolised media and tended to personalise their own way in media exposure and online communication. As internet communication was the main tool of the movement, this characteristic also affected the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement.

Despite starting to appear before the decline of OTF, personalisation of politics in the underground community presented more evidently after the disappearance of OTF's leaders (around mid-2019). This was caused by two main reasons. First, most underground groups wanted to compete with OTF. More supporters and aids gained by OTF led to more attempts by other groups to find better objectives. If overcoming OTF's position and objective were achieved, other groups like ones of Ning and Laos¹ could gain more support in return. This linked to the second reason - the coming of new direction. The duration of underground activism was comparatively long (close to a decade from the first wave). Its actions and interactions had been considerably reproduced and institutionalised. In Tarrow's view of the cycles of protest (1993), the underground movement reached the cycles of protest in which the previous repertoires of contention and relationships between underground activists were being assessed by the new frames to investigate their achievements. During this time, we witnessed a replacement of the leading activists of each group with new ones (i.e. the experienced activists were generally replaced with the novice activists), and a highly dynamic regrouping of existing leading activists. According to the more personalised character of political participation, supporters chose to join underground groups more individually. For example, many experienced activists withdrew from the meeting of 'the Compass of Thailand program' arranged by Seri Thai and emphasised working on their own YouTube channel like Chuphong and Laos¹. Due to the characteristic of a cult of leader and personalisation of politics, most underground groups chose to remain within narrow confines and avoided co-working with others who had different ideologies and strategies. Thus, even the loose networks of underground groups, which had been built from the beginning period, started to decline drastically. Moreover, in many cases, underground groups' activities changed from focusing on political issues to disputes between groups' leaders and members, especially Thai wives in overseas countries (as

explained in the last chapter). For example, the dispute among novice activists that gathered in Ning's Line group. They later separated to create their own Line groups and started 'a scolding war' with each other.

To sum up, the Thai Federation network led by OTF has distinctive characteristics by which it can defeat other groups. OTF's followers might call this the clan of republicans, during late 2017 and early 2019. Nevertheless, many characteristics of OTF's network and other groups were identical. Almost all leading activists and supporters of these groups were involved in the earlier Red-Shirts movements and, then, remained in protests in the form of the underground movement. The qualification of four types of activists - former-politician, experienced, academic, and novice activists - appeared in these two camps similarly. Accordingly, after the disappearance of OTF's leaders, the conditions of the remaining active underground groups on both sides were not so different.

What I have illustrated above presents the actions of OTF, a representative of fairly successful groups, and its relationship to other groups. Their processing occurred under the influence of social relations of Thai society. The rise and decline of OTF was related closely to the result of UCD in Thailand, especially the unevenness in Thailand and the limited intellectual competency of the Thai social movement. Nevertheless, there was also the recent surrounding context that affected the underground movement. Besides the changes in the Thai political situation, like the stepping down of the junta government and the 2019 election, there was intentional arrangement to disturb the underground movement by repression from Thai authorities. The investigation of a relationship between the movement and its actions and surrounding social conditions, not only shows a recognition of the adaptation of the underground movement to changes around itself, it also reveals the extent to which external institutions were interested in the role and existence of these movement in Thai politics, particularly those of political exiles. I will explain this in the next section.

8.3 Recognition of the existence and activities of the underground movement among other overground pro-democratic activists

Most of Red Shirts knew of the existence and actions of the underground movement, especially via communication by social networking services, but few activists in democratic movements in more open political spaces in Thailand recognised and valued its political roles. Even though they might recognise renowned experienced and academic activists, who used to have distinguished roles in Red-Shirt demonstrations or previous movements beforehand, these activists in overground politics had not followed and only known superficially about the political ideas and activities of this alternative movement.

One way to recognise this deficit in knowledge about underground movements is to look at the Facebook account of Somsak because he had stayed in a central position surrounded by various types of political activists. Because of his reputation, there were usually many replies from political activists. These replies showed that many well-known activists in open politics had not known much about this alternative movement. One post on which Somsak expressed his criticism of underground groups' videos, especially OTF's ones, relating to their unreliable information was replied to by Nuttaa Mahattana, a famous activist who had fought against the junta government and called for the election:

'I think you pay too much attention to them. I have never seen them beforehand. . . . I have no idea where these channels of these groups and their followers are, so I have never met them. I guess that they are a subset of this [democratic] side, but might be considerably a substantial subset. . . . If we compare these people with salim [the multi-color people], I think these Taidin [underground] groups have more of a niche character rather than salim, to be fair' (Nuttaa, 2018) .

Nutta also replied to another comment within her reply as "Never met and never listened to them at all (ibid)". This reflected not only overground activists' ignorance of the underground world but also again shows the disintegrating character of Thai pro-democratic movement.

Another example that showed little concern about the existence of the movement was the limited response to the campaign of ‘Save Faiyen’. It was launched by Finland¹ in order to help some members of the Faiyen band to move from Laos and seek asylum in a third country, because they were at risk of being killed or abducted as had already happened with several other activists like Laos¹ and Chucheeep. This campaign was recognised immediately and crucially within the underground community, from both a positive and negative perspective. But it seemed that this campaign was less noticed by many political activists in Thailand. Although it was in the spotlight using the hashtag - #SaveFaiyen - and was created and retweeted in Twitters, the news only connected with the people who were already following Thai radical politics.

As time passed, it seemed that only the overground people who provided legal assistance, like lawyers, for the politically accused, recognised the existence of underground activists. Nevertheless, they only roughly knew about underground ideas and activities. For example, a lawyer assisted Katawut in court, after his arrest in 2014, described in his blog:

I had not known him before. . . and never followed this kind of his activity as well. . . . After searching ‘Katawut Nai Naemak’ in Google, there are more than a hundred results. Most of them are YouTube videos. . . . They are podcasts, no picture. The voice of this political analyst is plain but confident and prudent (Groomgrim, 2014).

In my opinion, the overground activists, under a concretely physical restriction, created a typical activism from which to direct their activity. Generally, the existence as an identifiable activist is a more proper and accountable form, rather than using an avatar or pseudonym, that was seen as a bit pointless. During a dispute between two underground groups, Praves Prapanukul, a former prisoner of section 112 and a lawyer for some renowned political prisoners, was asked by one side to make a reconciliation between these two groups. Praves (2019b) requested a condition “They have to reveal themselves first, the same as I have done.” After the leaders of the opposite side refused to comply, which is indeed

the rule of pseudonymous users in the virtual world, Praves suddenly discredited them:

. . . . They seem proud to be avatars because it facilitates them to broadly scold others for their pleasure. This is how they cover themselves. . . . It is actually a mask. . . . If they are real men, they should uncover themselves. . . . Using pseudonym is in fact a behaviour of a coward who can do nothing but only bark. (Praves, 2019a).

We can see that while underground participants closely followed Thai overground politics, few pro-democratic activists saw the mobilisation of the underground activists, even though they were very important partners in pursuing democracy. Ironically, it was the establishment side that kept an eye on this underground movement carefully and continually.

8.4 Reflections on media

Thai media used to have a significant role in the process of political reformation in several periods, such as during the 1992 Black May. In addition, there was the polarisation of media during Red-Yellow shirts contradiction (McCargo, 2017). However, after the 2006 coup most media seemingly sided with the ruling class more and more (Sinpeng & Hemtanon, 2019). Consequently, Thai traditional media, like newspaper, TV, and radio, recognised the underground movement as under the influence of the domination of the ruling class.

The issues related to the underground movement had been deliberately reported by only few news agencies from the pro-democratic side. Prachatai.com, for example, was an online news agency presenting the most articles and news of the underground movement in a positive way, in both Thai and English. News agencies on the conservative side, such as Manager, Nations, Bangkok Biz, Kom Chad Luek, Naewna, and Thai Post, published much more negative reports of this movement as did most TV and radio stations owned and controlled by big capitalists,

governmental bodies, and the military. Due to prioritising the stability of the Thai state, they saw this ‘Khabuankarn Daeng Taidin [the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement]’ or ‘Daeng Liphai [Red Shirts in exile] as enemies to the security of the Thai state and existing regime, so the objectives of their reports warned Thai authorities to get rid of the groups, thereby encouraging a pessimistic view towards underground groups among Thais. For example;

‘Typical activities of Daeng Taidin [underground Red Shirts]’ are influenced by a reckless idea of the extreme Red-Shirts group. They believe in the way of ‘pressing enemies with military operation’ that was embedded in its members for a long time during the fighting against aristocracy. . . . There are more than ten groups in this ‘Daeng Taidin’ way. It is believed that the violent situation will be more intense in the future (Bangkokbiznews, 2015).

Another irony related to the media focusing on the underground movement was that a number of articles and reports linked to the movement presented by the overseas news agencies equaled or even was greater than, those of Thai correspondents. Indeed, international media had an important role in reflecting on political situations in Thailand, where most media have been dominated by the elites (McCargo, 2003). Due to the disappearances of well-known activists, Laos1, Chuchee, and their followers, while most Thai news reporters mostly offered partial facts and a negative view towards these people, the famous news corporations and agencies across the world reported these incidents more deliberately. They provided not only the facts of the events but a historical background, interviews, opinions, and analyses of these dissidents’ destiny. This same situation happened again between May and August 2019, which was the difficult time for Faiyen’s members to leave Laos as soon as possible after the former disappearances.⁷³ Their stories were spread via these news corporations from many parts of the world and this could be one of reasons which convinced the French authority to grant them a special travelling document for seeking asylum in France in late August 2019. After the arrival of Faiyen’s members in

⁷³ For example, FT (Reed & Inagaki, 2019), AFP (AFP, 2019), Reuters (Panu & Patpicha, 2019), BBC (BBC, 2019), Guardian (Ellis-Petersen, 2019), Telegraph (Smith, 2019), Al Jazeera (Hay, 2019), AP (Preeyapa & Kawewit, 2019), VOA (Zsombor, 2019), Washington Post (Caryl, 2019), New York Times (Pavin, 2019), DW (Emmy, 2019), ABC (Cochrane, 2019), and so on.

France, the reports still retained a similar tone. While a number of overseas press celebrated the safe condition of these dissidents, many Thai news corporations still attacked their ideas and found any source to continually discredit Faiyen and other underground groups' political roles, especially reporting on disputes with other underground factions over the donation issue (Komchadluek, 2020). This incident reflects that ruling ideas did not only appear via the body of state authority, but also was exercised throughout other part of social institutions including the press and media or 'civil society' in the Gramscian terms (Gramsci, 1999, p. 371) as well. Although the existence of the Red-Shirts-sided underground movements was recognised, they were mainly examined from a dominating perspective as the extended problem of the Red-Shirt movement that had not been completely abolished. Thus, because of an influence of media over a large part of Thai people, it is one of reasons there is a reduced chance for this movement to be a major force for change on the Thai political scene.

8.5 Responses from Thai government

The mobilisations and information of this movement were not only perceived within the movement itself, but they were also recognised by their rivals like the Thai government and military officials. Like the viewpoint of the conservative media, Thai authorities, as state apparatuses, saw this movement as potential groups that would undermine the stability of the Thai state.

Many underground people believed that there have been counter-actions manoeuvred by Thai government. First, Thai authorities assigned their agents to infiltrate the social-networking communities in order to monitor their activities in each period. They also conducted an information operation (IO) to create misleading news and disputes, including in the underground virtual community.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ In the debate before the Vote of No Confidence in February 2020 one MP of Future Forward Party argued that some documents of the army showed a detailed setting of the group of IO officers who were ordered to track and disrupt social networking sites. However, these MPs focused on well-known Facebook pages rather than the underground one (Thairath, 2020). Nevertheless, I think these officers have kept an eye on both overground and underground action in the virtual space in the same time.

One of main activists in Banpodj group, for example, gave an interview where he commented that the group received 100,000 baht from some secret agent for switching its direction from attacking Vajiralongkorn to supporting him instead (from the interview of France3 (2018)). The information of the existence of underground groups collected by the IO agents was reported occasionally by a government speaker, particularly during the time under the junta government (Thailand E-Government, 2018; Thansettakij, 2016).

Second, Thai authorities, the army in particular, filed lawsuits against political activists, including underground activists.⁷⁵ After the second wave of underground movements, NCPO used special laws like its orders to summon and capture the opposition. As mentioned before, the Banpodj group and Kathawut were the early arrested activists. Furthermore, the military court was appointed to try the case of state security instead of using the ordinary court. The defendants were usually accused of breaking Section 112 (*lèse-majesté*) and 116 (attempting to or supporting people to change a form of state and regime) of the criminal code (Human Rights Watch, 2015b). The accused people were normally refused bail by the military court because they might run away from the possibility of being jailed for quite a long time. This incident and later intensive tracking impelled other radical activists to exile and continue their political actions abroad.

Thai authorities kept an eye on this movement and waited calmly for surfacing of actions in Thai territory. In May 2017, police captured a group of people that were accused of committing arson of arches decorated with the pictures of Thai monarchs in Khonkaen province. These people (all are youths) arranged this act after listening to the programs of OTF (The Office of Public Prosecution of Phon District, 2018; Tnews, 2019). In the same period, in June 2017, there was an arrest made of the plotter of a bomb in the Phra Mongkut hospital on May 22, 2017. This plotter, Wattana Phummares, was also reported to have had a link with OTF because there was evidence of his voice in one program hosted by Wuttiiphong and

⁷⁵ The main army officer who filed more than a thousand cases of violation of NCPO orders and criminal law to police was the director of the Army's Office of Judge Advocate, 'Colonel Burin Thongraphai' (his rank at that time) (Komchadluek, 2019).

Chucheep (Thairath, 2017; Tnews, 2017). In addition, in the latest case, there were arrests of Thai Federation followers who were involved in the campaign of the black t-shirt of OTF. Chucheep encouraged his followers to wear black clothes with the Thai Federation flag attached and to gather on important days of the monarch, such as the birthdays of Bhumibol, to present their discontent with the power of the monarch (Chucheep, 2019l). However, this ended with additional arrests of participants (at least 17 persons) who either went to the protests or worked in the production and distribution of black T-Shirts. Surprisingly, one participant who had already registered to be a political asylum seeker with UNHCR in Malaysia was sent back for trial in Thailand (Prachatai, 2019b).

Third, Thai authorities legally ordered the Internet Service Providers (ISP) to block access to the URL of many websites which the Red-Shirt movement, both overground and underground, used to run their radical political activities such as YouTube.com, Blogspot.com, and websites of famous web-boards like prachathai.com and sameskybooks.com. Wikileaks (2020) claimed that until 2008 this censorship blocked more than 1,200 websites, 860 YouTube videos, and more than one hundred URL of web-boards, even though some of them were not linked directly to political issues. In April 2017, the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society urged Thais to stop following, contacting, and sharing the content provided by the three underground influencers - Somsak, Japan1, and Marshall. Violating this suggestion might cause a crime under the Computer Crime Act of 2007 (Prachatai, 2017).

Fourth, there was a claim that the Thai government made agreements with neighbouring countries for extradition of their political fugitives, even if in an inappropriate manner according to international law (Quinley, 2019). In mainland Southeast Asia, no countries are ruled by fully democratic regimes. On many occasions, as with Red-Shirt-sided underground activists, political dissidents, and fugitives seek refuge in neighbouring countries. Extradition could happen legally if both countries recognize the same law of committed crimes and the treaty of extradition. Normally, political disagreement is not included in the treaty. Nevertheless, a government may accuse dissidents of other offenses, such as Thai

government used the accusation of illegal migration for sending political dissents back to Laos in 2004 (Prachatai, 2016). Before his disappearance, the Thai government also asked Laos to repatriate Wuttiiphong back to Thailand with an accusation of other criminal crimes (Komchadluek, 2017).

However, this does not mean that extradition was done comfortably. Lao and Cambodian governments, in my opinion, implicitly dislike the Thai government because of Thailand's role in the Cold War and its image as their exploiter. This is why Thai dissidents have secretly been helped to exile in these countries for a long time. However, exchanging targeted people is possible if Lao and Cambodian leaders need necessary assistance from the Thai government. They might make a mutual agreement for trading their political rivals or exchanging for other benefits. There was the extradition of a Cambodian dissident by Thai authorities for which the Thai government expected the same action from the Cambodian government (Parameswaran, 2018). Thai authorities also, both pressured and provided incentive to the Laos governments, where most underground dissidents had gone to exile (Manager, 2018; Voice TV, 2018). However, this kind extradition is managed openly and is different from a secret abduction and assassination, which I will discuss below.

These responses from the Thai state illustrate that the underground movement's political roles influenced Thai society. Whereas the condition of their lives was precarious during political struggles that might limit the effects of their activities in Thailand, in civil society they were considerably important as the main movement that has undermined the ruling ideas and hegemony dominating Thailand for many decades. To oppose the movement, on the one hand, the Thai state used the existence of them as a vital reason for consolidating hegemonic ideas of national security and retaining its authoritarian decrees over Thai society, particularly during the era of junta government. On the other hand, the Thai ruling class employed its stronger power and state apparatuses in a political society to physically repress activities and limit an expansion of the underground movements. However, physical suppression was ineffective because underground activists exiled abroad. In the extremely, the Thai ruling class even used their

power and state apparatuses to commit extraterritorial repression, as I will discuss in the next section.

8.6 Enforced disappearances of underground activists

In my opinion and in some claims by Faiyen's members ⁷⁶ it was Thai authorities that sent an assassination team to several countries, Laos in particular, to hire some local people to secretly abduct (and possibly kill) victims. This action could not happen in other countries without the backing from some state bodies. Moreover, there is no reason for ordinary people crossing borders to kill unfamiliar people in other countries. Many underground people, Laos¹ in particular, believed that the Thai authorities hired some Red-Shirt guards or participants as a decoy to lure the active underground activists out of their safe places for the assassination team: "This is why I have to live separately here. It was the Red Shirts working for National Security Council that killed Sunho [Ittiphon]. They were disguised as guards in demonstrations for long time" (Laos¹, 2018). In other words, the offenders used their trusted position to harm underground dissidents.

According to accessible information, five activists vanished in Laos and three in Vietnam. The first case was Ittiphon who lost contact with other activists in June 2016. The second case was Wutti Phong whom witnesses claim was kidnapped in late July 2017. Then, Laos¹ and his two assistants disappeared from their house around mid-December 2018. Before this incident, all active activist in Laos were warned to find a safe place to stay silent during the Prayuth's visit to Laos (Manager, 2018).

One member of Faiyen recalled on his Facebook page "on December 12, the date of their abduction, we actually had an appointment to go fishing together. However, it was postponed because [Lao] officials notified us to evacuate from

⁷⁶ Faiyen's members presented the documents they claimed were issued by Thai authorities to BBC reporter. They showed names, ID cards, the warrants of arrest, and a location of Faiyen's residence (BBC Thai, 2019).

our area” (Faiyen2, 2020). There was a rumour that just before Laos1 and his assistants moved out, some of his followers, who were paid by an assassin, went to visit them to mislead them into unsafe conditions, and then tip off the team of assassins (Faiyen Channel, 2020b). In January 2019, three bodies were found floating in and on the shore of the Mekong River near Nakhon Phanom, Thailand. One of these corpses vanished without a trace. They were wrapped in fabric sacks and tied with rope. Their stomachs were cut and filled with cement. The faces of the remaining two bodies were discovered to have been hit until they were unrecognisable. However, the DNA test of the others proved that they were two assistants of Laos1. Thus, most people thought that the missing corpse was indeed Laos1 (Thai PBS, 2019).

In spite of very cautious living, the important activists still disappeared. It was Chuchee, Siam, and Krissana, the leading activists of OTF. Piengdin revealed their disappearance on May 8, 2019 on his YouTube channel. He claimed that they were detained by the immigration office of Vietnam because they used counterfeit travelling documents (fake Indonesian passports) and were waiting to be deported back to Thailand (Piengdin Rakthai, 2019). But no one knows their fate and it is still unknown what happened to them. Although their relatives asked for related documents from both Vietnam and Thai authorities, there was no clear answer. These latest disappearances frightened the Faiyen band members immediately because they were the last active group of political exiles in Laos. Faiyen5 revealed that there were threatening messages sent to her phone and a group of strangers confronted and asked them to surrender to Thai police (BBC Thai, 2019; Ellis-Petersen, 2019). This incident led to the ‘#SaveFaiyen’ campaign which ultimately ended in success (I will discuss about this topic again below).

On July 8, 2019, Japan1 was assaulted in his home in Kyoto, Japan, by an invader in black. He and his partner were sprayed with some chemical solution in the early morning, but it just slightly irritated their skin. The man was able to run away after the attack. The case is under investigation by Japanese police (Reed & Inagaki, 2019; The Japan Times, 2019). If this was done under the order of the Thai state, it means that repression is unlikely limited to nearby countries that

are relatively weaker than Thailand. By contrast, it could also be managed in advanced countries far from Thailand.

These incidents reflect again, the great difference between the power of the Thai state and the Red-Shirt underground movements. They are far from the traditional resistant movements in the past, like CPT, who had very limited resources to fight against Thai state. However, their resistance activities against the ruling ideas, like the Trilogy of Thainess and social hierarchy, haunted the Thai ruling class ceaselessly, especially from the safe place of a virtual space. From the view of historical materialism, on the one hand, Thai society has developed to the extent to which the ruling class has securely dominated both political and economic aspects. On the other hand, the ideological sources of that power, which were created in the past and were very complicated, have gradually lost their ability of ideological domination in a recent Thai society. Conversely, they obstruct the development of a Thai capitalist mode of production as a whole. So the Thai ruling class likely decided to compensate for its deficit of ideology with a more hostile suppression instead. The question is will it be possible for any political movements including the Red-Shirt-sided underground movements to use their ideological strength to overthrow the establishment in the near future?

8.7 Possibility for surfacing in the overground world

The strongest underground movement that aimed to change the regime in Thai political history was CPT. It penetrated and expanded its influence in many parts of Thai society using various methods and activities during the 1950s to the early 80s. Despite its collapse in the end, its cadres worked closely with and mobilised, both the working class in urban areas and peasants in rural areas, created young communists in several communities, and, more extremely, fought in a civil war against the Thai government. The question is can the most recent underground movement in Thai society do the same thing as the previous ones?

I will use the existing situations (both relationships within the underground movement and external responses) and influences of other social structures to explain the possible impact on the political status and trajectory of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement in Thai society.

Almost all former-politician, experienced, and academic activists have been exiled abroad. They can only arrange physical activities abroad and mobilise followers in Thailand to convert their political ideas into reality. Unfortunately, it seemed that those actions had no practical impact.

Similar to my above explanation, the influence of the early struggles ⁷⁷ and material conditions were very crucial factors.

For the first notion, as mentioned in previous chapters, the Red-Shirt and later underground movements were developed, formed by, and still remain in, very diversely ideological directions. Each activist strongly subscribed to their accumulated experiences and knowledge from their previous underground activities. In addition, according to the fact that they have only worked together in the form of a loose network, the underground activists have rarely had serious discussions or formed a collective agreement over political ideas and objectives. Although that agreement might cause an ideological shift and separation, each new group knows they are actually distinct direction from the others. For example, there was an attempt to manage those activities with the Seri Thai, but participants in the discussions did not take it seriously. When Laos1 insisted on his plot of 'Star War' and the strategy of compromising with Vajiralongkorn (see Chapter 5), rather than criticising him to his face, most experienced activists choose to leave the Seri Thai organisation and criticise him behind his back. Chuchep, as I explained, offered a new objective of establishing the Thai Federation. It gained him many supporters, but due to creating an oversimplified

⁷⁷ For me, it is close to UCD. The transitional path to a new relation or action is a very crucial thing because the early characteristics of that relation or action could determine the following relations and actions as long as there is not a major change.

idea, it could not compete with the more rational critiques. Without its leaders, as mentioned above, OTF seems unable to continue any concretely political activities thus far.

After that, almost all former-politician, and some of the experienced and academic activists chose to distance themselves from the network of underground groups due to either retreating from politics or only leading their own groups. Consequently, the size of the underground groups has gradually gotten smaller because leaders have tended to focus on specific points of their groups rather than being united with mutual commitment. These varied and uncertain goals also reduce the opportunity to mobilise support. Under this circumstance, it seems that an opportunity to carry on effective political campaigns is unlikely to happen.

For example, as argued in the early part of this chapter, OTF and its network has the largest followers and the clearest political objective within the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement. It could mobilise and manage the most recognised physical activity in Thai territory among underground groups. Nevertheless, OTF and its followers did not receive considerable support from other underground groups, even though some participants were arrested by police. Actually, it was worse as other activists said that OTF's followers got what they deserved because they chose to participate themselves.

Secondly, the material conditions and social relations in the country of residence have impeded the capacity of remaining exile activists. Almost all activists having recently arrived in their host countries were usually enthusiastic about arranging anti-dictatorship activities, as described in Chapter 5 and the last chapter. In a more recent case, for example, only one week after Faiyen's arrival in France, they organized their first protest, with support from Finland¹ and her followers. They protested, at the Place de la Republique in Paris, against the dictatorship and the monarchy and they included a remembrance of their colleagues from Laos who had disappeared and/or died. Faiyen and Finland¹ led the same gathering once more on the October 6, 2019, to remember the 1976 Thammasat massacre

and again to pay respect to their disappeared friends in Laos, as well as protest against the dictatorship in Thailand. Finland1 announced that she and Faiyen were prepared to work together, at a higher level, to arouse Thai people's sentiment to oppose the power of the monarchy and the junta in Thailand using various means of communication, namely websites, internet radio, and social media (ACT4DEM Actions for Democracy, 2019b).

Nevertheless, although the media, as claimed by Finland1, were really more developed afterwards, it gained an uncertain popularity that came from external incidents rather than the activities of Finland1 or Faiyen. For example, the five videos on Act4Dem Channel, before arrival of Faiyen, were viewed 5.1k, 18k, 5.5k, 60k, and 1.6k times, respectively. The video that got the highest views is about the death threats of Faiyen in Laos. This situation was likely the same after Faiyen's arrival, as 2k, 15k, 47k, 140k, and 9.1k views consecutively were logged. The highest viewed video was about the gossip of Vajiralongkorn's oppression of his concubine while the video of her good lecture about Thai political exiles got lowest number of views. After that, this situation remained in a similar pattern (ACT4DEM Actions for Democracy, 2019a). The most viewed video related to the personality of Vajiralongkorn, like the video about the issue of his adultery that hit 391k views. Moreover, Finland1 and Faiyen's members still produced most YouTube videos separately rather than in the form of a group or organisation. Actually, it was not until early March 2020 when Faiyen started to upload and stream videos regularly on YouTube again, but not with the participation of all members and often arranged as used to be done in Laos.⁷⁸ This situation reflects one of the reasons that obstruct underground activists from continuing political actions. It is the material conditions, especially when trying to survive in the new country.

⁷⁸ Faiyen1 was the main host of Channel's programs like 'Faiyen Phob Prachachon [Faiyen Meets the People]' and 'Serichon Variety [A Variety Talk of Freeman]'. Faiyen2 joined him occasionally as a host of the former program. Faiyen5 had his own program 'Royal Gossip'. Faiyen4 waited until the end of March to host her famous program 'Perd Phone Khone Padedkarn [Phoning in to overthrow the Dictatorship]' again but seemingly stopped this activity in April 2020.

As partly mentioned in Chapter 6, the early exile activists gradually reduced their political involvement and paid more attention to their lives and careers in their host countries. This situation also happened later in exile with Faiyen's members as well. They needed to complete paper work for their application for refugee status as well as study French, and search for a job (Faiyen Channel, 2020c, 2020d).

Besides the issues of finding jobs, there were some other concerns for specific activists. The elderly activists, some of them were Octobrists - the student activists in 1970s such as Wisa Khanthub, France1, and Somsak, have had some slight difficulties in adapting to new societies after having to exile at an older age. Particularly, with health conditions that were of a considerable concern.⁷⁹ These conditions forced these veterans to gradually limit their political action. The last political events they participated in together occurred in the seminars about Thai politics in Germany and France in 2016. Although some aged activists, like Giles and France1, still have actively been involved in protests at the time I am writing this thesis,⁸⁰ it is not wrong to say that they are the last active group of senior activists participating in the underground physical actions. In the case of activists who have apparently been very active in political issues all the time, e.g. Japan1 and France2, their lives have been under the influence of material conditions as well. Japan1 and France2 have in fact decreased their participation in the underground activities. They might participate in events when informed by coordinators in advance based on their schedule of work and study (in the case of France2, who gets funding for studying for a master's degree). Japan1 relatively decreased his lectures to provide for personal meetings of some Red-Shirt groups (Japan1, 2018).

⁷⁹ Wisa has had underlying health condition since the beginning of his exile. France1's health also has had some bad conditions (Thairath, 2018). Around August 2019 Somsak had a stroke which made him absent from political activities for months.

⁸⁰ Giles participated in the protest against Prayuth during his visiting to the UK in June 2018; however, he has regularly been involved in SWP activities in his city. France1 joined the performance and protests arranged by many groups in Europe, including those of Faiyen in late-2018 and the Red Shirts in Europe in early-2020 (see below).

However, another type of activist like the novice one, in my opinion, is the important component for developing radical ideas towards Thai politics. Although most of them have had less political experiences and knowledge, they possess the potential for radical political activism.

Firstly, these activists in each group learned and interacted politically with the experienced and academic activists for a considerable time, and they developed progressively in order to carry out their underground activities on their own. Those lessons caused them to generally renounce the authoritarian regime. In addition, it seemed that they could replace the senior and veteran activists, even though they had different qualities and directions. There were both, the groups of novice activists who strictly followed the plan designed by their inspiring activists such as Chucheeep for later OTF's novice activists, and other activists who might still have had contact with renowned activists but acted politically on their own directions, such as some activists who used to follow Faiyen and Ning.

Secondly, novice activists and participants were generally younger than the experienced and academic activists. They have lived in and been affected by the more modernised sets of social relations and the sources of the ruling ideas. For example, they are less affectionate and have less reverence towards monarchs than the elderly. They have worked in more a modernised environment rather than in a patronage system. Moreover, their questions towards undemocratic conditions in Thai society are created from differing perspectives, such as a rational-choice perspective or an urban-management view. In addition, some novice activists have lived abroad. Although many of them are the same age or slightly younger than, the experienced activists and they recognise the influences of the ruling ideas, the more modernised and liberal social relations in the countries they lived for decades have enabled them to counter those influences more progressively. Some novice activists have criticised the ideas of Thainess and attempted to purge Thainess from their identity (as I partly mentioned in the late section of the last chapter).

The activities of these activists differ from those of the experienced and academic activists as well. Although they do not arrange physical activities, namely seminars, lectures, protests and so on, without guidance from the experienced activists, they reflect the character of the movement 'from below'. In my opinion, this derives from them starting, on their own, a political project from a foundation, such as from philosophical thought. In some groups, the least political knowledge and experience was paradoxically positive for them in learning the issue of power relations in a society from a beginning stage. In their programs on YouTube, they bring the news and related topics both political and non-political to begin discussions though most topics in their programmes have been about the conflicts within underground movement. Some discussion signified very interesting political issues that have already been broadly debated, such as what is democracy, and what are more important things for ordinary people between democracy and prosperity, and so on.

Another competency of these novice activists is their versatile character. Most of them have had an identity in the underground virtual space as avatars or pseudonyms. It means that they can freely express political ideas and positions, anti-monarchism in particular, in online discussions, and physically join political activities in public politics safely. These pseudonymous activists can both stay in Thailand and travel between Thailand and other countries without being detected by Thai authorities. Famous underground activists did not possess this quality. Their political involvements are observed closely by many parties, including Thai authorities, Red or Yellow shirt activists and supporters, and even non-partisan followers. The thoughtless actions of well-known activists could create negative effects, as well as put them in danger of being captured, so normally they are very deliberate in their considerations before taking any actions. By contrast, this caution does not apply to the unnoticed novice activists. As they stay at the intersection of underground and overground politics, they can support movements from both spaces as well as having the ability to link these two areas in specific cases. For example, there was the case of a group of novice activists called 'Khon Nok Kala [the men outside a coconut shell]' that managed the fundraising campaign for one witness of the 2010 repression. Similarly, Ning's group

fundraised from its followers for the #SaveFaiyen campaign. In the exceptional case, particularly in Europe, with the suggestion of experienced activists, novice activists who used to act as the behind-the-scene supporters (a mix of participants and non-participants in the virtual activity) staged their own demonstrations. These included the set of protests against the performance of Prayuth's government and the dissolution of Future Forward party in early 2020 across European countries, namely the 'Ving Lai Loong [the Running Against the [Bad] Uncle]' protest in Berlin, Germany (in January), the 'Ving Lai Han [the Running Against the Geese]' protest in London, the UK (in January), and the 'Ving Lai Kwam Ayuth-titham [the Running against Injustice]' protest in Paris, France (in February).⁸¹

From the situation above, we can see another quality of these novice activists. Both the relatively young people in Thailand and the well-established Thais living abroad, have likely had the capacity to volunteer for political campaigns, including those of underground movements. Many experienced activists in exile have occasionally received financial support from groups of these novice activists. After having YouTube channels, many novice activists have helped other Red-Shirt activists who face difficulty in their lives.

Nevertheless, although these novice activists show their potential quality and ability to continue radically political ideas, their competency as political activists, especially in the underground area, is in question.

First, as I described in Chapter 5, many experienced activists, especially non-academic ones, have only a basic understanding about constructing their political activism for mobilisation and challenging Thai ruling class. However, most novice activists are less skilled and have fewer abilities than their role models. Only a few novice activists have good knowledge in history and society. Although they attempted to establish their own understanding of society, it seemed to happen

⁸¹ These events were linked closely with the role-model 'Ving lai Loong' event initiated in Bangkok.

in an irregular manner and on the bias from an alignment in conflicts between underground groups.

Second, material conditions still influenced these activists. Linking to the first notion above, many political issues in debate, such as what a real democracy is, how to create a more democratic regime, and how to run political movements without deceiving supporters, were usually mixed with personal conflicts. In each conflict the novice activist with less class consciousness, used the advantages in their real lives and Thai social hierarchy to defame and discriminate against the opposition. Instead of separating political ideas and personal dispute, they focused on discovering very personal issues of their opposition, like information about family background and members, physical appearances, and shameful stories in the past, and then revealed them to the public via social media, especially among Thai women live abroad as I explained in the last chapter.

For example, after Smith Haek supported Ning for a couple of years, she argued with Ning and separated from her in late 2019 because of the inconsistency of how Ning manipulated her group. After that, Smith Haek also discovered that Ning had possibly stolen donations to the #SaveFaiyen campaign, because some donations were sent to Faiyen through Ning. This was one of the big conflicts in the underground community because these two activists have been among the most active activists in the virtual world (they have almost daily live-streamed on their YouTube channels since 2016) and created influentially ideological directions together, such as harshly criticising royalists, attacking OTF direction, advocating the #SaveFaiten campaign, continuing the character of scolding (as I explained in Chapter 6 and 7), and so on. This conflict caused a significant reshuffle of activists and raised a new ideological direction of two groups. Smith Haek, and some participants from Ning's group, joined with Aphatsara and Chatwadee to criticise Ning, especially on the issues of fraudulent fundraising and cheating in underground groups. Meanwhile, Ning criticised the counter-democratic-movement position of Aphatsara and Chatwadee, and later Smith Haek. In this dispute, due to the fact that they were old friends, they revealed personal information as much as possible on their YouTube channels. Their speech severely

slandered the opposition. One conversation between Smith Haek and other speakers on her channel presented in a discriminatory perspective:

Mahavet: I wonder why Ning did have to go to Pattaya?

Smith Haek: She needed to sell herself because her family is very poor. She wanted to be rich as well. It also came from the attitude of women from the northeast and northern regions. They voluntarily did like Ning. When they saw women in the neighbourhood had foreign husbands and became richer, they wanted to be like those people. It is easier than working as a peasant. . . . (Smith Haek, 2020)

And another one:

Mahavate: the ordinary conversations of my group are based on what you cannot think about, Ning. If we talk about General Motor, do you think you can join us, a Khmer? [Ning is believed that be descended from Cambodian people]. . . . I suggest you, a Khmer and a coffee seller [one of Ning's colleagues], should not compare yourself with Nop [a member of Smith Haek group]. People who are not able to study in a high school, like you, have no qualities to be compared with Nop. . . . [Ning], you are just a Khmer who graduated from a primary school only. . . . You could in fact be only dust under my feet (Mahavate, 2020).

From Ning's side, she continued to emphasise her attack on Aphatsara's exaggerated boast of her overseas life and her poor life in Thailand. In April 2020 one of her supporters who live near Aphatsara placed a video recording device in her house in Sweden and then uploaded the videos to his YouTube (Carp Upstream, 2020). Ning praised that supporter and threatened Aphatsara that she and other supporters would visit Aphatsara's house someday (Ning, 2020a). Ning also repeated the failure of a previously married life of Chatwadee as well as racially denouncing a recent partner who is a black man. She also started to criticise a group of Smith Haek as being jealous of her group which had a more political role and got close to experienced activists, especially Faiyen and Finland¹.

These people actually are similar to salim [the opposition of Red Shirts]. They always make pointless stories. . . . If you listen to those stories, you can feel how deluded they are. . . . However, if we speak the truth, they will not tolerate it. . . . They will respond by slandering us. Robot [Ning means Smith, because of her distorted voice] and Saggy [Ning means Chatwadee, because of her shape] like salim because of never telling the truth. . . . How is the progress of the investigation for Smith's accusation of my cheating on #SaveFaiyen campaign? It seems to be withering away. . . . Similarly, Uneven-Lips [Ning means Aphatsara, because of her mouth shape] who claim that I stole one and a half million from a donor. Has she been able to find that donor yet? (Ning, 2020b)

In extreme cases, this went far beyond mere gossip to passing real information to some avatar of Thai security authorities. Chatwadee confirmed this action she herself did:

. . . I accepted that I passed your [her opponents at that time] information. . . . Ning accused me that I, Rose, send personal information to military officers to sue people with Section 112. That is correct. I accept that (Chatwadee, 2020b).

Personalisation and individualisation coming with social networking have created a worse situation because each underground group gradually created a cult of personality around their leaders and fortified a boundary against other groups.

Eventually, from the initial personal conflict with Ning, it changed to a more political direction. Members of Smith Haek group started to oppose most pro-democratic activities because they are, in the group's view, the way for fraudulent fundraising, similar to those done by the Ning group. This disposition was fully supported by Aphatsara and Chatwadee who had advocated it before the Ning-Smith Hake conflict. The Smith Haek group extended their criticism to attack Red-Shirt groups, both underground and overground, and most pro-democratic movements. The exiles who work as full political activists and survive with the support from followers and sponsors, like Faiyen members (actually, Smith Haek's old online friends) and Finland1, were attacked more severely. The activists who fundraise for political activities and survival were labeled with the contempt as

‘Khorthan prachathippatai [the beggars of a pro-democratic circle]’. Chatwadee argued that:

These overseas parasites are liars. They usually use the word ‘democracy’ to deceive people into donating. They claim that they are fighters, but I have never seen anyone of them facing military boots and bullets. Just sitting and talking should not be called fighting. I and Sapai do the same thing these people do. However, we have never asked for support. You have a brain, hands, and feet like me, why do you not go to work? No one blames you if you used your own money in political campaigns. When there are people who criticise this behavior, you accuse them of being IO officers. How shameful and deceitful you are! (Chatwadee, 2020a).

They also used the opinions of some renowned activists, like Arkhom Sydney, to support their position and ridicule the activists supported by Ning group.

Uncle Arkhom helped these beggars [she meant Finland¹, Laos¹, Chuchep, and Faiyen’s members] many times. . . . Arkhom is a good, hi-class man. He has a good knowledge about the monarch because he was in a circle of police and military officers when he was in Thailand. He is in a different class than Laos¹. . . . He is a hi-class, rich, and well-educated person. . . . He is also an Australian citizen, not the same as the exiled beggars in Laos (Ibid).

Surprisingly, they even accepted and legitimised the existing elites, ruling ideas, and regime to point out that pro-democratic movements have wrongly assessed their enemy. This leads to the Smith Haek group’s conclusion that pro-democratic movements are not only ‘Puak Klang Prachathippatai [the mad mass movements for democracy]’ (Smith Haek Phea Seriphap 12, 2020b), but they also deceive people into donating money to them and mislead people to fight a formidable enemy (This is an apolitical idea mentioned in Chapter 6). Thus, the terrible results will fall to the people (the main channel in constructing this position is Smith Haek Pheu Seriphap 12 (2019)). Meanwhile, Ning continued the political actions of her group, albeit she was more cautious in accepting new members. She remained supportive of some experienced activists and protected them by attacking members of Smith Haek group (see on Ning (2019e)). In other words,

this is an attempt of one group of novice activists to deploy an apolitical disposition to politically compete with its opposition, an actively political group.

Consequently, we can see a disintegration leading the novice activists. This obstructs the process of broadly mobilising people who are actually the same class. Although it was initiated and managed by a personal bias, it gradually generates a concrete political direction that reflects the different classes and statuses of participants in material conditions. This demonstrates that the powerful hierarchy of power, class structure, and ruling ideas deeply affects Thai people, especially establishing their contradictory consciousness.

Third, despite the novice activists' versatility in political participation, their stronghold has been a space in the virtual world, social networking in particular. They like to take an invisible role, rather than as obvious participants in physical activities.

In some groups like Smith Hake's, the thinking is that the excessive performance and participation in demonstrations and protests for democracy by the underground people with radical ideology, during the era of elected government, would obstruct development of real potential movements. In other words, some of them have no confidence that the underground movement can make any significant changes in Thai politics. Rather, reformation might be a proper way for creating democracy in Thailand. One conversation on Smith Haek's YouTube channel shows this character:

Smith Hake: The way of propagating ideas is very crucial. By forcing people to believe in the same idea, they will fail at the end. Actually, the democratic manias should step out of this task, if they cannot improve how to convince people. . . . The people who destroy democratic movements are not Aphatsara or Chatwadee but the democratic zombies themselves.

Mahavate: Yes, I agree with you. The Red Shirt whom you call democratic zombies from the 2010 repression makes the situation worse. We should

clearly separate these people from the recent movement of students (Smith Haek Phea Seriphap 12, 2020a).

In my opinion, besides having less knowledge for face-to-face discussions, as I mentioned before, there are two other main reasons. First, as noted beforehand as well, discussing tradition has not been a character of the underground movement, nor, actually in almost all Thai social gatherings. Public discussion could lead to severe personal conflicts among Thais because of a highly complicated social hierarchy. As shown above, even online conflicts could risk participants' lives, thus, it rarely happens in the real world. The second reason is the class and consciousness of Thai people. Most novice activists have a healthy economic status and well-being. Moreover, they have had fewer experiences in protests and rallies. It means that most of them are not related to any previous movement physically, ideologically, and historically, not even to the Red-Shirt movements. They tend to view political participation stereotypically. According to the formidable power of the Thai state, for example, they view actions in the virtual space as the safest choice for their lives and assets, rather than taking a risk in fighting for people who are unfamiliar and low-class. Also, they don't want to physically work with unreliable people like Ning.

Salims [the opposition of Red Shirts] are in fact nice, well-educated people. They understand what I post on my Facebook and click like for me. Their mind is better than that of Red Shirts, I can tell you. Because they are the middle class whose lives have not been exploited. Actually, I used to be Salim, I know that they love making merit, studying, and expecting a good future. But, from engaging with Red Shirts, I discover that they are greedy, the same as Ning. They are money hungry and want to be powerful but they attempt to do nothing. . . . low-class people are not concerned about what is going on around them (Chatwadee, 2020c).

From the above situations, it seems that other than former-politician activists, many experienced and academic activists have been reducing their political roles and novice activists are finding their own political trajectory in an unorganised manner. Accordingly, it is unlikely that the underground movement can do more than just act as political groups arranging activities, but only in safe places like a virtual space or/and outside Thailand. This cycle of movement has actually been

the situation experienced by several anti-government movements throughout the globe. Nevertheless, in my opinion, the novice activists are only in the early stages of their political lives. Many questions asked by these activists are quite crucial for consolidating a democratic movement; albeit, some attitudes might completely ruin the movement as well. The dialectical relationships between several parts, namely among activists themselves, the underground movement and Thai social structure, and activists and material conditions, could construct a positive development for their class consciousness and political skills. However, it will happen only if they ceaselessly continue their political activities.

8.8 Conclusion

In previous chapters, I argued that the actions of Red-Shirt-sided underground movement are the result of the previous struggles and the existing social relations. In this chapter I have demonstrated that those relations still remain influential. The underground movement emerged as another social institution and dialectally interacted with those relations and other social aspects.

Some activists utilised their experiences and knowledge of society and management of social movement to defeat other groups to gain more support and increase mobilisation. Chuceep and his OTF were prominent activists of this strategy. The emergence of OTF significantly changed relationships between groups in the underground movement as well as arousing new followers in a radical political direction. Nevertheless, this rising of OTF did not result from the ability of its leaders only, but also from the convergence of social aspects and temporal factors at that time, such as the death of King Bhumibol, the retreat of former-politician activists, Wuttiiphong joining the group, more participation of audiences via advanced ICT, and so on. This might be analysed by the resource mobilisation theory or political process theory as OTF had a more effective ability to manage mobilisation than other groups. They also did this in the proper time during the uncertainty in Thailand. However, the social aspects in societies in which OTF activists and supporters had lived, interacted with each other broadly and

dynamically. By analysing social movements with a cross-sectional approach, we can see only some sides of this change. In my opinion, this convergence was the result of an historical development of dialectical relationships that exist throughout societies and have been ready for a revelation. For example, the death of Bhumibol is important in Thai society because he was a crucial person in the process of creating the Thai modern state from the time of conditions of UCD in the late 1960s. His influence and power extended to many aspects such as the tendency of development, the security policy, the meaning of Thai nation, business networks, and so on. Some part of this even influenced some underground activists such as Chuchep, who needed to flee to join with CPT during the early stage of consolidation of power of Bhumibol. However, influences related to Bhumibol still existed and made Chuchep struggle to overcome them again in recent times. Additionally, the decline of OTF also partly resulted from the influence of changes in the Cold War period. Many Thai women sought to avoid a difficult life in agricultural production. They went to cities to work in entertainment and sex services, and that led to marriage to foreign husbands and migration to developed western countries. The several pressures, as explain in the last chapter, material conditions in particular, shape some specific characters of these women. The disputes among them crucially affected the decline of recent underground movements, including OTF.

These dialectical relationships between the underground movement's actions and social relations also affected the response of externally social institutions. As a result of UCD, the monopolised power, both economic and political, of the Thai ruling class has certainly prevented alternative or challenging political ideas and groups from developing. If they want to have a space and organise actions in Thai society, they need to either adapt their contrasting ideas to comply with the ruling ideas or move their clan to a confined space where the power of the ruling class and state could least penetrate (as communitarianist offers to escape from the influence of internal colonisation). Those gradually become the general character of Thai social movements. In spite of arranging several activities, the underground movement was responded negatively under that the atmosphere of alienation of mass uprising and individualisation of movements towards. There was the

ignorance among many activists and media towards the underground movement. There are less attempts to prevent both legal and brutal repressions manipulated by Thai authorities.

When the cycle of protests comes to the point that the movement needs to shift direction to raise the new mobilisation, it seems that the novice activists, who relate to recent Thai society more than any other types of underground activist, could be the leaders of that shift. Whereas some of their characteristics, such as their abilities to manage the IT section of mobilisation and a variety of perspectives towards a political movement, are advanced and have resulted from developments in Thailand, they paradoxically combine many conservative notions throughout their progressive character and express them inconsistently. In addition, it seems that the alienation of the collective mass movement obviously dominates this kind of underground activist.

Nevertheless, though radical change in Thailand is in doubt, the convergence of potential factors possibly coming together in the proper path and time and could cause an unexpected change. Marx (1852/1978, p. 594) argued, “Hegel remarks somewhere that all great world-historic facts and personages appear, so to speak, twice. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce”. The failures of repeated mobilisations of anti-monarchy sentiment in the past, seemed like just lifting a couple of stones in order to move a mountain, while confirming the indestructible status of the monarchy as a main hegemonic figure of Thai capitalist state. However, during the last stage of writing this thesis, there are signs of potential change of the status of Thai monarchy. I am not surprised that it is a result of the dialectical relations in Thai society. However, I feel excited and sad at the same time because it partially stems from actions of the underground movement and one more life of a political exile. I will mention some part of this in the next chapter.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

During the early days of the lockdown policy for the Coronavirus pandemic, the active underground activists still ran their activities in virtual space to comply with the rigid lockdown measure. There are Facebook groups which have the ending word as ‘marketplace’ and are normally used for trading items amongst members. Ridiculously, some political adherents named their groups in an effort to attract those from the opposition to be members, and then would go on to deride them. Japan1 created the group, ‘Royalist Marketplace (2020)’, in April which has become famous (607k members as I am writing) and they use it to humiliate both the royal family and the royalists. This group gradually became the new virtual stronghold of anti-monarchist dissidents. On the other side of the world, there is the first-ever collaboration between Finland1 and PixelHELPER Organisation, the non-profit foundation which focuses on art-work performances “for Human Rights against Oppression and for freedom of expression” from Germany (PixelHELPER, 2020). PixelHELPER’s staff went to the Grand Hotel Sonnenbichl in the German city of Garmisch-Partenkirchen where King Vajiralongkorn lived ⁸² and used the hotel’s building as a screen to project a picture with critical captions of the King such as: ‘why does Thailand need a king who lives in Germany’ and ‘Abolishing Monarchy’. This activity started in May, and other similar ones followed.

Surprisingly, on June 4, 2020, there was news of the abduction of Wanchalerm Saksatsit, a Thai political exile, in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. This incident was not similar to the previous disappearances of underground activists because it occurred in the capital of Cambodia in the daytime, and significantly, was partly recorded by CCTV. ⁸³ Wanchalerm had not explicitly involved himself in underground actions as Laos1 or Chucheeep had. Therefore, it was unlikely that Thai authorities would attack him. Nevertheless, Marshall (2020) claimed that this

⁸² One reason the King’s stay attracted people was that it was believed that there were at least 20 concubines and an entourage living with him in this hotel. This privilege during a lockdown policy made the representatives from the Green party bring this issue to the government of Bavaria (Cachia, 2020).

⁸³ Albeit not seeing the abduction but only the abducting team’s van (Prachatai, 2020).

was a revenge from Vachiralongkorn for the activities of PixelHELPER and Finland1. This provoked the #SaveWanchalerm hashtag among pro-democratic users on social networking sites (Royalist Marketplace was one of the main spaces for this campaign), and his family asked for help from pro-democratic MPs. There were also protests in front of the Cambodian embassy in Bangkok, asking the Cambodian government to open an investigation (Khaosod, 2020). Nevertheless, novice activists like Chatwadee, Aphatsara, and Smith Haek still criticised these activists and their actions, particularly on the issue of fundraising. They even blamed Finland1 and PixelHELPER, arguing that, due to their activities, they indirectly abducted and killed Wanchalerm (Smith Haek Pheu Seriphap 13, 2020a).

Both of these events reflect the conjuncture of social relations occurring in multi-space and multinational communications that were related to the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement. We can see its dynamic and development between the early period, in which activists had limited tools and rarely linked to other pro-democratic groups, and the recent situation, in which the underground groups have more tools and partly penetrate the space of the ruling ideas and power of the Thai ruling class. These interesting characteristics were what lead me to study this movement in the first place.

This thesis analyses the Red-Shirts-sided underground movements that began its political actions after the 2010 repression of the previous Red-Shirt movement by the Thai state. After the defeat in open politics, some pro-Red-Shirt activists chose to radically escalate their political direction. They aimed to resist and overthrow the existing regime, and almost all the activities of this movement were illegal in Thailand. Moreover, most activists involved have been exiled and have taken their political activities abroad. Nevertheless, rather than utilising a violent method to accomplish its objective as has been done by many other underground movements (Della Porta, 1995), activists have deployed online communication as a main tool to spread their radical ideas and mobilise support. Meanwhile, they have also arranged physical activities in the overseas countries where they have lived. These interesting characteristics of this underground movement lead to the three main questions of this thesis:

1) How did a historical development and the social contexts in Thailand affect the emergence of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement?

2) How did underground activists develop and pursue their political ideas and actions?

3) What was the outcome of the actions of Red-Shirt-sided movements?

To answer these questions, I have drawn upon the approach of historical sociology to direct the investigation. Marxism's conception of historical materialism and Trotsky's conception of uneven and combined development (UCD) are also brought to create the conceptual framework to analyse this underground movement. UCD helped to indicate that in a capitalist system the different characteristics of social aspects, other than economy, do not mean that the capitalist social relations are not working. There is a need to investigate the transitional period and later process of a capitalist development to understand a given society. Moreover, I have also used some social movement theories to explain its characteristics as one of social movements, such as how each faction managed its organisation to compete with others to gain as many supporters as possible.

For methodology, besides literature in the form of books, journals, and news reports, the main data for explaining the emergence and activities of the underground movement were interviews and online data. I travelled to conduct face-to-face interviews with activists and supporters in four countries: Laos, Cambodia, the UK, and France. This enabled me to develop a sense of the relationships among underground activists and followers that are partly written about in this thesis, particularly the disputes that were mostly initiated by novice activists.

9.1 Research Findings

1) How did a historical development and the social contexts in Thailand affect the emergence of the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement?

The Red-Shirt-sided underground movement was the result of, as well as part of, the conflicts inside the Thai capitalist mode of production. The movement and its activists and followers are not alienated from Thai society, conversely, they substantially reflect the condition of Thai society. We could not understand this answer without considering the development of capitalism in Thailand since its emergence.

The transformation from a pre-capitalist to a capitalist mode of production in Siam/Thailand was managed by the Thai ruling class at that time. As I argued in chapter 4, this change was not initiated by internal conflicts but by the influence of the tensions between major powers in the late 18th to the early 19th century over the competition for colonising this region. This situation pressured the Thai ruling class to use their power to import and adjust external achievements in order to sustain both the sovereignty of Siam/Thailand and their leading position in the region.

This is reflective of the condition in which the international unevenness of development influenced and led to form the unevenness in Thai society under the control of the Thai ruling class. The dialectical relationships in both domestic and international levels at this moment shaped the later social structure and the direction of development very significantly. In many countries, especially western countries, the UCD started when the ruling class introduced more advanced technology to improve the specific section of production. This increased the extent of the domestically material conflicts and led to major changes, such as revolutions, civil wars, and great uprisings by the disadvantaged or oppressed classes. However, this differed from the circumstance in Thailand. During the

establishment of the early modern capitalist state, the advanced industrialisation and a capitalist system were developed slower than had happened in western countries. Thus, there had been few radical changes of social relations, especially to the structure of class under the Thai absolute monarchy that was stabilised around the early 20th century.

This came from a substantial change which occurred in political relations or institutions rather than from economic factors. One of important reasons is that the Thai ruling class no longer needed to be concerned by external intimidation. In addition, when the Thai ruling class made agreements with the major powers concerning Thai sovereignty, it was much easier for the groups of elites to consolidate the internal security of the state. Consequently, the main bodies of state power, like the monarchy, bureaucracy, and military, could continually accumulate powers. The early changes emerged from the conflict in the political part of society rather than in the economic one. A large part of the history of Thai modern politics is a story of conflicts within the ruling class. Disputes within the circle of the monarch, bureaucrats, and military officers have been the basic composition of all major political circumstances.

This creates a combination between new social relations and institutions (which are used for modernising society) and the old relations and institutions (which are properties of the ruling classes who directed the transformation to capitalism). The more this character dominates Thai society, the more the ruling class gains in strength.

The most important incident was the Cold War. The major powers of the First World, like the U.S., did not only invest capital and create economic opportunities in Thailand but also strengthened the Thai army and monarchy for serve its own political objectives in the Southeast Asian region. The existing relationships and ruling groups could not only prolong their power and positions, but they also gained new benefits from the more advanced and modernised business brought by

the U.S., their super-power ally. The situation in this period intensified and enlarges the existing character of UCD in Thailand.

Although there have been continual conflicts among elite groups as well as uncertainty in the international political economy, the powerful clans in the Thai ruling class have been able to remain in power for decades. They also adapted their composition by bringing more politicians and monopoly capitalists to be part of the ruling class.

One of the alternative ways to resist against the elite-monopolised structure is the underground method. The aim of the method is to change Thailand to a more democratic and equal society using radical methods such as a revolution or mass uprising. The underground activists and participants are the radical part of the Red-Shirt people because they are the most damaged by the repressions of the Thai state, here called the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement.

2) How did underground activists develop and pursue their political ideas and actions?

The Red-Shirt-sided underground movement, while close to other movements, inherited its initial direction from the political direction of previous influential movements and also from the characteristics of each leading activist, and the social relations within which the activist lived.

As described in Chapter 5, I have categorised underground activists into four main types: namely former-politician activists, experienced activists, academic activists, and novice activists. These activists have different political and social backgrounds, experiences, and knowledge as well as different reasons for joining the movement. These differences relate to how and when they interacted with the development in Thai society. The leading activists and followers in each group gradually generated different ideas from those of other groups.

To expand their range of mobilisation, underground activists generated a combination of political ideas, even including contradictory ones such as liberalism and socialism. The activists developed oversimplified political ideas by creating their own version of political ideas, without investigating their meanings and history. These characteristics derived from three main factors which are the result of UCD on the Thai capitalist state. They are a socio-cultural hierarchy, the influence of classes and locations of activists and participants, and a lack of a significant body of radical and competent intellectuals. Eventually, underground activists implicitly created the simple opposite couples of political strategies and directions to guide their position, and criticised other groups on this basis. Issues such as accepting/not accepting politicians into movements, overthrowing/preserving the monarch as the head of state, and revolution/reformation became important dividing lines.

As described in chapter 7, the activities of underground activists were also the result of an interaction between their ideas and their material conditions. There were activities in two main spaces - virtual and physical. The physical activities were managed in various forms to arouse the collective emotion and agreement among supporters, particularly in overseas countries where Thai sovereignty cannot reach. They were recording and spreading podcasts of radical ideas; arranging seminars, lectures, meetings, protests, and demonstrations; founding the resistant organisations; publishing books; producing music and films; and talking about creating a guerrilla unit to directly fight against the Thai government. The virtual activists learned to utilise the advanced, popular communication of the time, like internet communication and mobile devices to gain an advantage for their operation and avoid repression by the Thai state. They created websites, web boards or internet forums, and internet radio stations to spread anti-monarchist ideas and opposition to dictators in Thailand. They also exchanged and discussed politics in a virtual community, on several platforms of social networking services such as Facebook, YouTube, and Line.

The activities in two spaces had different advantages and disadvantages. The virtual actions are easy, cheap and safe, but, as long-distance activities, they

cannot mobilise people emotionally and passionately to join and support the movement. Conversely, the physical activities can convince people to participate in more committed terms, although managing them depends on many factors, namely an allowance by authorities, aid and resources, and competent leading activists.

3) What was the outcome of actions of Red-Shirt-sided movements?

The underground movement has been able to sustain radical political ideas in the Thai political space, especially among political adherents who have tended to support social changes. There are both previous Red Shirts and the new audiences following the virtual activities, YouTube programs in particular. This role created two impacts: changing relationships within underground groups and responses from external social institutions.

In the competition of mobilisation among underground groups, the most successful underground group, which could combine activities in two spaces, mobilising support and arranging activities in the Thai territory, was the Organisation of Thai Federation (OTF). Because it had a clearer political objective and direction than other underground groups and due to the mobilising ability of its leaders, the OTF had the most supporters within underground politics. Their success gradually deteriorated because of OTF's unreliable ideas, a cult of leaders' personalities, and the arrest of many participants of OTF. The disappearance of OTF's de facto leader led to its decline. As stated in chapter 8, despite the fact that the novice activists of OTF still remain involved, its mobilisation has been worse than that of their leaders in terms of knowledge and reliability.

Although the Red-Shirt-sided underground movement has not politically influenced activists in the overground space, their influence over some radically political followers has been significant enough to attract Thai security authorities and media. There were, in my assessment, some units secretly crossing the border

between Thailand and neighbouring countries to abduct, harm, or kill underground activists and at least eight activists did die. The media, the conservative side in particular, reported the actions of the underground movement regularly because most of them sided with or are owned by Thai elites.

On the one hand, the pro Red-Shirt underground movement has not been able to mobilise support and affect Thai politics to an extent which would allow its participants to make a significant change in Thailand. Yet, the underground movement has accumulated a large number of radically political activists and followers and has carried out the longest stretch of radical political activities in Thai politics in recent times. Some novice activists and participants learned a lot from more experienced activists as well as from other novice activists through their mutual activities. They have useful skills such as IT and communication and stay in locations which are close to the power centre. These qualities demonstrate the potential of the novice activists, who could lead the change in Thai society in an unprecedented but suitable manner and with more equitable future social relations, especially if they coordinate with other movements in Thailand.

9.2 suggestions for further research

For anybody who is interested in this movement, besides correcting my possible mistakes and investigating a more recent situation, I think that there are many points that could be the subject of further study.

First, the language used in the underground mobilisation is very interesting because it reflects some sides of social hierarchy in Thai society. There are attempts to dismantle that structure by using the vernacular of ordinary people to disdain the privileged, especially that of the royal family's members. Furthermore, the capacity of local languages to arouse people to struggle against the domination of Bangkok is also very impressive.

Second, the life of Thai women married to western men is another interesting issue. These women are the most significant supporters in Thai politics, no matter which side they support. Studying their political role will contribute useful information for the knowledge of Thai politics, especially about the relationship between Thai people living abroad and social changes in Thailand. It could possibly add more understanding about the relationship between gender, material conditions, and political roles.

Lastly, it would be useful to study the interaction between political groups in the virtual world in a broader sense other than the existing studies about the use of internet and social media in political activism. Examples of the existing studies include the violation of rights and the internet surveillance of Thai state (Gebhart et al., 2017); the estimated number of people who participate politically via social media in specific events or periods (Nyblade et al., 2015); and languages used in social media for political purposes (Anonymous, 2018), and so on.

9.3 Prospects for Thai politics

The internal conflicts of capitalist social relations in Thailand have been expressed in the form of dichotomies in several aspects throughout society. There are the mutual existences of the rich and the poor living in the same area in Bangkok (Unaldi, 2016). There is the gigantic and powerful bureaucratic system which is very clumsy, ineffective, and works with a discriminating attitude. Thailand has been the leading exporter of rice and other crops for many decades, yet there are overwhelming number of poor peasants. The rank of Thailand's military strength is not less than the 35th strongest in the world (depending on the indicators for ranking), but the Thai military is actually not effective and is full of corruption. The worst thing is that it has experienced continual political interventions since the 1932 revolution. These forms of centralisation and decentralisation are partly similar to the tributary system in the past.

Last but not least, Thailand has the richest monarch in the world (Forbes, 2011; Montlake, 2012), but at the same time its wealth inequality is the highest in the world (Lindsay, 2019) and the situation has been continually degrading (Yang, Wang, Hansl, Zaidi, & Milne, 2020). These are the ways uneven and combined development has affected the trajectories of Thai capitalism.

That socialist ideas are hardly mentioned as one of the solutions of the complicated problems in Thai society is a specific problematic situation for me. The long, intense repression of socialist movements by the Thai government and the failure of CPT is one of reasons for this absence. As I mentioned in Chapters 4 and 5, the moderate idea of communitarianism, which is likely the compromising agreement between ruling class and social activists, is a preferred choice for some activists who want to withdraw from the domination of the ruling class. Rather than communitarian ideas, many Thai intellectuals opt for the conception and method of postmodernism to explain Thai society. Although it provides a useful explanation of how discourses construct meaning and manipulate a way of thinking of people, its overemphasis on the superstructure possibly leads to the dismissing of the totality of the mode of production. Moreover, people in this disposition tend to indirectly support the communitarianism direction, such as idea of establishing a network of local communities and the hope that people would have better lives after distancing themselves from the state and capitalism, and constructing their new perception in a more peaceful atmosphere.

Bringing back the socialist ideas, especially historical materialism, to form other alternative social direction is very important because they investigate both the material and abstract part of society in a dialectically historical perspective. This broad, historical, and comparative method can provide comprehensive explanations of society. And, for me, the very important character of socialist thought is critical thinking and debating. In my experience in Thai academic circles, socialist ideas and critical thinking are usually presented by academics who either are, or used to be, leftist, albeit based on different thoughts. The emergence of new academics who have started to criticise the works of renowned

academics who are reserved and avoid debate, effects the increasing involvement of more practical actions in political activism.

The class consciousness would rarely be formed in a single way as E.P. Thompson (1963/1980, p. 430) once argued, 'no ideology is wholly absorbed by its adherents: it breaks down in practice in a thousand ways under the criticism of impulse and experience'. That implies people do not characterise class consciousness in every action consistently, but they would gradually be shaped under the changes of relationships between people and surrounding material conditions. To reinforce this process, the organisation of intellectuals is needed. The intellectuals of this kind of organisation, though having divergent approaches to leftist politics, could prevent the working class from being used to create political conflict within the same class (the obvious evidence is the clash between Red and Yellow Shirts), due to the delusion created by ruling ideas, rather than real struggle against their opposite classes.

Bibliography

- 77LL. (2018, July 8). 77LL Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMvyCE2WBKFZpwsnkjK_ImA
- ACT4DEM Actions for Democracy. (2019a, November 10). ACT4DEM Actions for Democracy Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCY42HUOkFQkutuo44HFDMQ>
- ACT4DEM Actions for Democracy. (2019b, November 10). Concert Faiyen Lae Sahai Tee Paris 6 Tulakhom 2562 - Karn Pluk Radom Kwaa Pikad Sai Tee Rao Tong Totarn [The Faiyen and Friends Concert in Paris, October 6, 2019 - the Rightist Mobilisation Against the Left Which We Need to Oppose]. [Video file] Retrieved from
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdSkcv-00Gc>
- AFP. (2019, August 3). Thai Dissident Band in Laos Flees to France for Political Asylum. *France24*. Retrieved from
<https://www.france24.com/en/20190803-thai-dissident-band-laos-flee-france-political-asylum>
- Akin Rabibhadana. (1984). *The Thai Society in The Early Bangkok Period 1782 - 1873*. Bangkok: Thammasat University Press. (in Thai)
- Alasuutari, P. (2011). Modernization as a Tacit Concept used in Governance. *Political Power*, 4(2), 217-235.
- Alexander, J. (1994). Modern, Anti, Post, and Neo: How Social Theories Have Tried to Understand the 'New World' of 'Our Time'. *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, 23(3), 165-197.
- Anderson, B. (1998). 'Withdrawal Symptoms: Social and Cultural Aspects of the October 6 Coup' in *The spectre of comparisons: nationalism, Southeast Asia and the world*. London: Verso.

Anonymous. (2018). Anti-Royalism in Thailand Since 2006: Ideological Shifts and Resistance. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 48(3), 363-394.

Aphatsara Tengblad. (2019a, April 10). 15/10/2561 PahPen Lao Rueng Khon Thai Duai Kan Nai Tang Prates Jom Dootook Khon Thai Kan-eng Jer Mah Yer [15/10/2018 Aunty Pen Narrates About Thais in Abroad Usually Disdain Each Other: I Faces It All the Time]. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwPybr_9uzE

Aphatsara Tengblad. (2019b, November 15). 23-3-2562 Pah Wanpen KabWansao Sabai Live Sod Roh E-Pah Ning Pling Dood Lued Fai Prachathippatai Tah Feepak [23-3-2019 Aunt Wanpen and Relaxing Saturday, Streaming for Waiting Ning - a Leech of the Democractic Side]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZXT9Eue2XYA>

Aphatsara Tengblad. (2019c, November 10). AAA Stella V2 Wanpen Sweden Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoZORNXi3Cj3TPdVbnn7uMw>

Aphatsara Tengblad. (2019d, November 10). AAA Stella Wanpen Sweden Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkdeHDJxczqlOwPT_gK8cpA

Aphatsara Tengblad. (2019e, November 10). Wanpen Freesom Voice Khon Koei Chon Channel [Wanpen Freesom Voice, The ex-poor Channel]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2SkzSS7AM13GGwFM012aBQ/videos>

Apichat Satitniramai, Yukti Mooddavichit, & Niti Pawakkhaphan (Eds.). (2013). *Tobtuan Bhumithat Karnmuang Thai* [Re-examing the political landscape of Thailand]. Bangkok: Institution of Public Policy, Chiang Mai University. (in Thai)

- Arkorn Sydney, & Chuphong Theetuan. (2018, November 10). Laasud! Lung Arkorn Sydney - Ajarn Chuphong 'Song Thao Prab Marn!' March 3, 2018 [The Latest News!! Uncle Arkorn and Master Chuphong Theetuan 'Two Old Men Volunteer to Defeat Devils!' March 3, 2018]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2C3aQCozmO1awCfemos0Eg>
- ASTV Weekend. (2014). Sayob Daeng Hardcore Samorpoom Laksi: Kohtee VS Hero Popcorn [Beating The Hardcore Red Shirts at Laksi Battlefield: Kohtee VS Popcorn Hero]. *ASTV Weekend*, 5(227).
- Baber, Z. (2001). Modernisation theory and the Cold War. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 31(1), 71-85.
- Bachrach, P., & Baratz, M. S. (1962). Two Faces of Power. *The American Political Science Review*, 56(4), 947-952.
- Bamboo Network. (2018, December 24). Bamboo Network Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from www.youtube.com/channel/UCq5xldvLe1zScz45z-2rmjA
- Bangkokbiznews. (2014). Dangnok Kab DJ Nokkhok [Reds in Abroad and Extremist DJ]. *Bangkokbiznews*. Retrieved from <https://www.bangkokbiznews.com/blog/detail/574693>(in Thai)
- Bangkokbiznews. (2015). Sarelub 'Dab Taidin' Hardcore Tid Kabdak Yuthakarn 'Daeng Sorn Daeng' [Discovering 'How to End Red-Shirt Underground', the Hardcore ones is Trapped in the Strategy of 'Reds overlaps Reds']. *Bangkokbiznews*. Retrieved from <https://www.bangkokbiznews.com/news/detail/640364>(in Thai)
- Bangkokbiznews. (2016). Phai Pen Phai! Pha Ongkorn Lub 'Nor Por Por' Bueng Luek 17 Phoo Tonghaa [Who You Are! The Secret Organisation 'Nor Por Por' Background of 17 Suspects]. *Bangkokbiznews*. Retrieved from <https://www.bangkokbiznews.com/news/detail/713591>(in Thai)

- Banpodj. (2018a, June 20). Banpodj 08. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQEa0ZSAJRo>
- Banpodj. (2018b, June 20). Banpodj 269 Pao Nok Khao Chon Tai Kha Trok Phroh Chon Trok [Blowing until die in the Lane Because no way to go]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l5NYtttJtHs>
- Banpodj Thailand Clips . (2016). Facebook Page of Banpodj Thailand Clips. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/BanpodjThailandClips/> (in Thai)
- Barker, C., Cox, L., Krinsky, J., & Nilsen, A. G. (2013). 'Marxism and Social Movements: An Introduction' in C. Barker, L. Cox, J. Krinsky, & A. G. Nilsen (Eds.), *Marxism and Social Movements*. Leiden: Brill.
- Barker, C., & Dale, G. (1997). *Class Will Out? Some Remarks on Social Movements in Europe*. Paper presented at the The European Sociological Association, University of Essex.
- BBC. (2019, January 22). Mutilated Thai bodies on Mekong shore are activist's aides. *BBC*. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-46965839>
- BBC Thai. (2019). Phuliphai Thang Karnmueng : Khon Hen Tang Rue Phuak Nak Phandin [The Political Exile : the People with Different Ideas or National Traitors]. *BBC Thai*. Retrieved from https://www.bbc.com/thai/extra/Y0IB3TQXys/thai_exiles (in Thai)
- Bell, D. (2000). *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties* New York: Harvard University Press.
- Bello, W. (1998). *A Siam Tragedy: Development and Disintegration in Modern Thailand*. London: Zed Books.

- BP Thailand - The Wall . (2016). Facebook Page of BP Thailand - The Wall
Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/BP-Thailand-The-Wall-169441553167941/>
- Bryman, A. (2004). *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Burnham, P., Gilland Lutz, K., FGrant, W., & Layton-Henry, Z. (2008). *Research Methods in Politics* (the second edition ed.). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cachia, A. (2020). Thai king takes his harem for a ride. *Daily Mail*. Retrieved from <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8360945/Thai-monarch-20-strong-female-entourage-spotted-cycling-near-German-hotel.html>
- Cambodia1. (2018, June 24) *personal communication*.
- Carp Upstream. (2020, May 20). Carp Upstream Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5PR5H-AuI5HY7h2QhNavZA>
- Caryl, C. (2019, August 3). Another Post contributor is under attack – this time from Thailand. *Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/08/03/another-post-contributor-is-under-attack-this-time-thailand/>
- Castree, N. (2009). The Spatio-temporality of Capitalism. *Time & Society*, 18(1), 26-61.
- Chai-anand Samudavanija. (1995). *100 Pee Hang Karnpatiroop RabobRajkarn-Wiwatanakarn Khong Amnajrath Lae Amnaj Thang Karnmuang* [The 100 Years of The Reformation of Bureaucratic System - the Evolution of the State and Political Power]. Bangkok: Institution of Policy Study. (in Thai)
- Chairat Charoensin-o-larn. (2013). 'Redrawing Thai Political Space: The Red Shirt Movement' in T. Bunnell, D. Parthasarathy, & E. C. Thompson (Eds.), *Cleavage, Connection and Conflict in Rural, Urban and Contemporary Asia*. New York: Springer.

- Chaiyan Rajchagool. (1994). *The Rise and Fall of the Thai Absolute Monarchy*. Bangkok: White Lotus.
- Chanin Klayklung. (2019). If you are not stupid. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/bemysself1234/posts/2122647374462037> (in Thai)
- Chaophraya News. (2014). Plod Fapha Taharn Arkaj Chanin Klaikluang Sairai Sthaban [Discharging the Air Force Official Chanin Klaikluang who Defames the Monarchy]. *Chaophraya News*. Retrieved from <http://www.chaoprayanews.com/2014/05/27/242784/> (in Thai)
- Chattip Nartsupha. (1981). *Sethasart Kab Prawattisart Thai* [Economy and Thai History]. Bangkok: Sangsan. (in Thai)
- Chatwadee Amornphat. (2019a, October 28). Fak Tueng Phuying Thai Hee Wai Lok Chai Phuchai Chak Case Khong Ee Yammoy Wong Faidab Liphai Dai Maa Farangset Thing Pua Kae I Chor Tolae [Leaving Message for Thai Women From the Case of Yammoy of Faiyen who run away From old Husband after Exile in France]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NefkcQTxERM>
- Chatwadee Amornphat. (2019b, October 4). I Leephai Tee Khao Ror Sib Sai Kor Kor Nor Pan Jackkrayarn Tae Mai Phud Rueng Ai Jaran Pueed Song Nuad Kuwei Nai Paris [The Exiles who Keep Saying Only the News of King Rama X's the Naked Cycling, But Speak Nothing About Jaran's Brothel in Paris]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPPyelUiJEE>
- Chatwadee Amornphat. (2019c, November 10). Lovely Seal Rose London Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2C3aQCozmO1awCfemos0Eg>
- Chatwadee Amornphat. (2019d, October 24). Malta Kue Thangluek Nueng Khong Khonthai Thee Yak Maa Tham-ngan Tangprates [Malta is Another Choice

for Thais who Want to Work Abroad]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4n70ml4qq8>

Chatwadee Amornphat. (2020a, Jun 19). #ACT4Money Pheu Prachatippatai [#ACT4Money For Democracy]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zIKVPJ-3ZiQ>

Chatwadee Amornphat. (2020b, May 4). Gang Kai He Nha Phee Karee Khorthan Tham Khabuankarn Prachathippatai Sia Koo Chee Pao Ow Raichue Song Taharn Mod Sajai Dee Mee Arai Rue Plao? [The Gang of Ugly Whores and Beggars Ruins Democratic Movement - I Sent Your Names to Military Officers, It's Funny. Do You Have Any Problem?]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNu8T21PnYA>

Chatwadee Amornphat. (2020c, May 18). #Prachatippaphakkorn Suedaeng Phakkorn Prachachon Phakkorn Soojing Phakkorn - Rose, Tang Archiva Lao Buenglang [#Pausing Democracy, Pausing Red Shirts, Pausing People, Pausing Real Fighting - Rose, Tang Archiva and Behind the Scene [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAgUQuVjHzl>

Chuchee Chevasuth. (2018a, January 24). Mee Panha Prukha Lung Ton: Chad Lae Chai Mai Lolea [If You Have Problem, Let Ask the Uncle, Episode: Clear and Correct, Not Hesitating]. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GR5_WviWiT0

Chuchee Chevasuth. (2018b, July 6). sanamluang20082008 Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/user/sanamluang2008>

Chuchee Chevasuth. (2019a, June 28). Jah Yangrai Koh Mai Aow [No Matter What, We do not Accept Them]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHSZ9ky25ro>

Chuchee Chevasuth. (2019b, June 28). Khon Thai Choke Rai Jing Jing [Thai People are Absolutely Unlucky]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IjqAxNna0AM>

- Chuchee Chevasuth. (2019c, May 20). Khonthai Maihai Thamrai Phorluang [Thais Stop Others From Hurt King]. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kEhdjcC_lDo
- Chuchee Chevasuth. (2019d, July 9). Maharaja Ya-septid [The Great King of Drugs]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o4LQELUPz4M>
- Chuchee Chevasuth. (2019e, June 28). Maimee Jao Rao Sabai [No Monarchs, We will be Better]. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0r_RaqVwNL4
- Chuchee Chevasuth. (2019f, June 28). Puak Rao Mai Aow Jao Leaw [We do not Obey Monarchs Anymore]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LXG2zj1ZhXo>
- Chuchee Chevasuth. (2019g, June 8). Sahapantharat Thai Perd Jai Prachachon - Thun Chart Mai U-bart Thao Thun Maew [Opening Your Mind With Thai Federation - National Capital is Better Than Thanksin's Capital]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6C5jO7m8Xk4>
- Chuchee Chevasuth. (2019h, October 8). Sahaphantarathai Kab Thida LA - Krachak Nha Raja Fin [the Thai Federation and Revealing the Opium King]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kne0lAnfWhM>
- Chuchee Chevasuth. (2019i, February 2). Sahaphantharatthai Kab Sam Taharnsue Ton: Sahaphantarath Chad Pang [Thai Federation and Three Musqueteer, Episode: The Federation is so Clear]. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKd0wy_9etk
- Chuchee Chevasuth. (2019j, August 2). Sahaphantharatthai Pueb Jai Prachachon Ton:Pak Pheu Thui Lui Tua Tid [Opening People's Mind with Thai Federation, Episode: Bad Pheuthai Party]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KDJLTpxl6R0>

- Chuchee Chevasuth. (2019k, July 8). Tamnan Karn Songya [the Legend of Drugs Smugling]. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Lx6lWw62nw
- Chuchee Chevasuth. (2019l, August 25). Tong Pen That Talod Pai Tha Mai Soo [Being Slaved Forever if Abandoning Fighting]. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqtmB6_5hLc
- Clip Doo Pluen. (2018, March 11). Ruam Glum Hah Wanpen Thurngtee Lob Nai Hong Mai Ork Maa [Compilation of Visiting Wanpen House but she did not Turn up]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1L8lBC9KH0>
- Cochrane, L. (2019, May 22). Thai Dissidents Living in Exile Fear for Their Lives after a String of Disappearances and Murders. *ABC*. Retrieved from <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-23/fears-for-thai-band-and-missing-activists-after-bodies-found/11137196>
- Connors, M. (2003). *Democracy and National Identity in Thailand*. London: Routledge Curzon.
- Connors, M. K. (2007). Article of Faith: The Failure of Royal Liberalism in Thailand. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 38(1), 143-165.
- Corrigall-Brown, C. (2011). *Patterns of Protest: Trajectories of Participation in Social Movements*. California: Stanford University Press.
- Davidson, N. (2006). 'From Uneven to Combined Development' in H. Radice & B. Dunn (Eds.), *100 Years of Permanent Revolution: Results and Prospects*. London: Pluto Press.
- Davidson, N. (2010). 'From Deflected Permanent Revolution to the Law of Uneven and Combined Development'. *International Socialism*(128). Retrieved from <https://isj.org.uk/from-deflected-permanent-revolution-to-the-law-of-uneven-and-combined-development/>

- Davidson, N. (2012). *How Revolutionary Were the Bourgeois Revolutions?* Chicago: Haymarket Books.
- Davidson, N. (2016). 'The Conditions for the Emergence of Uneven and Combined Development' in A. Anievas & K. Matin (Eds.), *Historical Sociology and World History: Uneven and Combined Development over the Longue Durée*. London: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Davidson, N. (2017). Uneven and Combined Development: Modernity, Modernism, Revolution (4): Continuities and Changes. Retrieved from <https://www.marxists.org/history/etol/writers/davidson/2017/02/modmodrev4.html>
- Delaney, G., & Isin, E. F. (Eds.). (2003). *Handbook of Historical Sociology*. London: Sage.
- Della Porta, D. (1995). *Social Movements, Political Violence and the State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Della Porta, D. (2013a). *Clandestine Political Violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Della Porta, D. (2013b). 'Repertoires of Contention' in D. Snow, B. Klandermans, & D. McAdam (Eds.), *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social & Political Movements*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.
- Dr.Piengdin Rakthai Official. (2019, February 15). Rai-ngan Phon Karnpatipattangan Phakhi Thai Phea Sitthimanutsayachon 3 Kumphaphan 2019 [The Report of Actions of Thai Alliance for Human Rights, February 3, 2019]. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgaDhOVNMOinQygc9R5R_jQ/videos
- Elliot, A. (1978). 'The Socio-Economic Formation of Modern Thailand' in A. Turtin, J. Fast, & M. Caldwell (Eds.), *Thailand: Roots of Conflict*. Nottingham: Spokesman.

Ellis-Petersen, H. (2019). Murder on the Mekong: why exiled Thai dissidents are abducted and killed. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/17/thailand-dissidents-murder-mekong-election>

Emmy Sasipornkarn. (2019, August 12). Exiled Thai Activists Fear for Their Lives in Southeast Asia. *DW*. Retrieved from <https://www.dw.com/en/exiled-thai-activists-fear-for-their-lives-in-southeast-asia/a-49993115>

Faiyen1. (2018, January 28) *Personal Communication*.

Faiyen2. (2018, January 28) *Personal Communication*.

Faiyen2. (2020). Rairæk Tee Thuk Oomkha . . . [The First Abducted Activist . . .] Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=2604136656338688> (in Thai)

Faiyen5. (2018, January 28) *Personal Communication*.

Faiyen. (2019, January 6). Faiyen: Pod Pleng Patiwat Prachathippatai [Faiyen: the Democratic Revolution Songs]. [Songs] Retrieved from <https://faiyen.bandcamp.com/>

Faiyen Channel. (2017, August 20). Faiyen Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/user/trirong2507>

Faiyen Channel. (2020a, May 8). Faiyen Pob Prachachon in Paris #14 [Faiyen Meets People in Paris #14]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tf44rd9BGs>

Faiyen Channel. (2020b, May 5). #Ruenglao Karnleephai - Teema Khong Naewkid #Sahaphantarattai [The Story of Exiling - the Background of Idea of Thai Federation]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j2WAV2jcgO0>

Faiyen Channel. (2020c, March 8). Serichon Variety #1 / 07 - 03 - 2020 [A Variety of The Free Men #1 / 07 - 03 - 2020]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=24VPGhTPwfl>

Faiyen Channel. (2020d, March 8). Thaktai Sawasdee Rao Klub Maa Laew [Hello, We Come Back]. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZzeB2_-E-Hg

Finland1. (2018, June 26) *Personal Communication*.

France1. (2018, May 24) *Personal Communication*.

France2. (2018, May 23) *Personal Communication*.

France3. (2018, May 24) *Personal Communication*.

France4. (2018, May 24) *Personal Communication*.

France6. (2019, January 5) *Personal Communication*..

Fuchs, C., & Mosco, V. (2016). 'Introduction: Marx is Back - The Importance of Marxist Theory and Research for Critical Communication Studies Today' in C. Fuchs & V. Mosco (Eds.), *Marx in the Age of Digital Capitalism*. Leiden: Brill.

Gebhart, G., Anonumous, & Kohno, T. (2017). *Internet Censorship in Thailand: User Practices and Potential Threats*. Paper presented at the 2017 IEEE European Symposium on Security and Privacy (EuroS&P), Paris.

Giles Ji Ungpakorn. (2003). 'A Marxist History of Political Change in Thailand' in Giles Ji Ungpakorn (Ed.), *Radicalising Thailand: New Political Perspectives*. Bangkok: Institute of Asian Studies.

Giles Ji Ungpakorn. (2004). 'Moradok Samkonniyomthai Kab Karntorsue Patchuban [The Legacy of Socialism and the Recent Struggle]' in Giles Ji Ungpakorn & Numnual Yapparaj (Eds.), *Ruefuen Karntorsue Saikao Soo*

Saimaithai [Reviving Struggle: Thai Old Left to New Left]: WDpress. (in Thai)

Giles Ji Ungpakorn. (2007). *A Coup For the Rich: Thailand's Political Crisis*. Bangkok: Workers Democracy Publishing.

Giles Ji Ungpakorn. (2010). *Thailand's Crisis and the Fight for Democracy*. Retrieved from http://www.academia.edu/22324119/Thailand_s_Crisis_and_the_Fight_for_Democracy

Giles Ji Ungpakorn. (2017). 2475 Karn Patiwat Thee Yang Mai Samred? Soo Rabob Somburanaya-Sittiraj? Kehtok Khor Toktiang Thee German [Incompleted the 1932 Revolution? Go to be the Absolute Monarchy? Collection of Debates From Germany]. Retrieved from [https://turnleftthai.wordpress.com/2017/07/02\(in Thai\)](https://turnleftthai.wordpress.com/2017/07/02(in%20Thai))

Giles Ji Ungpakorn. (2018a). Brazil Meu Fai Sai Haklak Khonjon Fai Kwaha Mak Sau O-kad [Brazil: When the Left Cheats the Poors, the Right will Take a Chance]. Retrieved from [https://turnleftthai.wordpress.com/2018/12/09\(in Thai\)](https://turnleftthai.wordpress.com/2018/12/09(in%20Thai))

Giles Ji Ungpakorn. (2018b). Essays on Latin America: Brazil, Venezuela, Cuba and so on. Retrieved from <https://www.academia.edu/37462507>

Giles Ji Ungpakorn. (2018c, February 26) *Personal Communication*.

Giles Ji Ungpakorn. (2018d). Sahai Thong Jaemsri lae Karnmuang Naew Latthi 'Stalinist-Maoist' Khong Pho Khor Thor [Comrade Thong Jaemsri and the Stalinist-Maoist Politics of CPT] Retrieved from [https://turnleftthai.wordpress.com/2019/07/21\(in Thai\)](https://turnleftthai.wordpress.com/2019/07/21(in%20Thai))

Giles Ji Ungpakorn. (2019a). Bodrean Samkan Chak Karn Patiwat Nai Sudan Kab Algeria [The Most Important Lesson from the Revolution in Sudan and

Algeria]. Retrieved from

<https://turnleftthai.wordpress.com/2019/05/26/> (in Thai)

Giles Ji Ungpakorn. (2019b). Panha Lathi Sahaphab Nai Khabuankarn Rang-nganthai [Problems of Syndicalism in Thai Labor Movements]. Retrieved from <https://turnleftthai.wordpress.com/2019/04/21/> (in Thai)

Giles Ji Ungpakorn. (2019c). Rao Reanroo Arai Dai Bang Chak Karn Lookhua Khong Muanchon Tua Loke [What do We Learn from the Mass Uprising Around the World]. Retrieved from <https://turnleftthai.wordpress.com/2019/11/10/> (in Thai)

Giles Ji Ungpakorn. (n.d.). Naew Kwamkid Khong Leon Trotsky [the Thoughts of Leon Trotsky]. Retrieved from <https://www.academia.edu/37720705/> (in Thai)

Giles ji Ungpakorn (Ed.) (2000). *Karnmuang Thai Nai Latthi Marx [Thai Politics in Marxism]*. Bangkok: Socialist Workers Book Club. (in Thai)

Gramsci, A. (1999). *Selections From the Prison Notebook of Antonio gramsci*. London: ElecBook.

Groomgrim. (2014). 'Nai Naemak' Eek Sak 5 Pi Na Kathawut ['You are a Brilliant': It is about 5 Years for Kathawut]. Retrieved from <https://blogazine.pub/blogs/groomgrim/post/5176> (in Thai)

Gundam UST. (2018, August 23). Gundam UST Channel,. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCT1AUt2baZdfBTME6mq392w/about>

Handley, P. (2006). *The King Never Smiles: A Biography of Thailand's Bhumibol Adulyadej*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Harvey, D. (2009). *The Limits to Capital*. London: Verso.

- HaunT89s. (2019a, August 15). 6 Mesa Tobtan Boonkoon Duaikarn 'Praharn Ohrachaotak" Doi Lung Sanamluang Acharn Whan [6 April, Payback with 'Killing Taksin' by Lung Sanamluang and Master Whan. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XF8GY_9Xkwc
- HaunT89s. (2019b, July 8). HaunT89s Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/user/OleOle69me>
- HaunT89s . (2019c, March 15). Puedphei Kwamlab Kha Nong Fong Nai Khai Puen Kai Tua Hai Thaksin? Chuchee/ Sukij/ Sahaphan/ Kohtee [The Secret Revealing: Killing Brother, Screwing Boss, Selling Friend, and Selling myself for Thanksin? Answering to Chuchee/ Sukij/ Sahaphan/ Kohtee]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T1ElK7R-RBg>
- HaunT89s . (2019d, May 23). Yammy Khandaeng Perdok Kohtee Khaifun Luanglok Peebkhon Lung Sanamluang Aug 13, 2017 [Yammy Khandaeng Discovers That Kohtee Create a Daydream and Strangle Uncle Sanamluang, Aug 13, 2017]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gbSv7Vl145c>
- Hay, W. (2019, May 13). Thailand: Disappeared Activists Forced Home from Vietnam. *Al Jazeera*. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/thailand-disappeared-activists-forced-home-vietnam-190513143246497.html>
- Hewison, K. (2004). Crafting Thailand's New Social Contract. *The Pacific Review*, 17(4), 503-522.
- Hongsamud Mahawittayalai Prachachon Official. (2019, November 10). Meu Luangtah Choophong Sorn Muay Dr. Rathasart Somsak Jeam [When Choophong the Master Teach PhD in Political Science - Dr.Somsak Jeam]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2C3aQCozmO1awCfemos0Eg>

- Human Rights Watch. (2011). *Descent into Chaos Thailand's 2010 Red Shirt Protests and the Government Crackdown*. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/report/2011/05/03/descent-chaos/thailands-2010-red-shirt-protests-and-government-crackdown#>
- Human Rights Watch. (2015a). *Thailand: Deepening Repression One Year After Coup*. Retrieved from <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5568354f4.html>
- Human Rights Watch. (2015b). Thailand: UPR Submission 2015 - HRW's Submission to the Human Rights Council. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/09/21/thailand-upr-submission-2015>
- Human Rights Watch. (2016). *Thailand: Event of 2016*. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/thailand>
- Huntington, S. (1971). The Change to Change: Modernisation, Development, and Politics. *Comparative Politics*, 3(3), 283-322.
- Icarus Bp. (2016). Facebook Page of Icarus Bp. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/Icarus-Bp-733075746766509/> (in Thai)
- iLaw. (2007). Jakrapob Penkair (The Speech at FCCT). Retrieved March 20, 2019 <https://freedom.ilaw.or.th/th/case/317> (in Thai)
- iLaw. (2010a). The Case of Closing Prachatai Website. Retrieved May 21, 2019 <https://freedom.ilaw.or.th/th/case/116> (in Thai)
- iLaw. (2010b). Jakrapob Penkair (The Speech in The US). Retrieved March 20, 2019 <https://freedom.ilaw.or.th/th/case/90> (in Thai)
- iLaw. (2010c). Somsak Jeamteerasakul. Retrieved March 23, 2019 <https://freedom.ilaw.or.th/th/case/141> (in Thai)
- iLaw. (2010d). Thanthawut: UDD USA. Retrieved March 25, 2019 <https://freedom.ilaw.or.th/th/case/19> (in Thai)

- iLaw. (2011, March 24). The Official of Royal Thai Air Force posted on Facebook. Retrieved from <https://freedom.ilaw.or.th/th/case/179>(in Thai)
- iLaw. (2012). Surachai Saedan, (The Case under The investigation of Wangthonglang Police Station). Retrieved from <https://freedom.ilaw.or.th/th/case/50>(in Thai)
- iLaw. (2015a). *364 days after the coup: Report on the situation of freedom of expression in Thailand*. Retrieved from <https://freedom.ilaw.or.th/en/reportthaicoup2014/364-days-after-coup-report-situation-freedom-expression-thailand>(in Thai)
- iLaw. (2015b). Banpodj Network. Retrieved March 21, 2019 <https://freedom.ilaw.or.th/th/case/670>(in Thai)
- Isaranews. (2015). 'Anek Sanfran' Jang Kham Lok! Pad Maimee Suan Kiewkhong Hed Raburd San-Aya ['Anek Sanfran Explains From Abroad! Not Involve in the Criminal Court Bomb]. *Isaranews*. Retrieved from https://www.isranews.org/isranews-news/37219-news02_37219.html(in Thai)
- Isaranews. (2017, March 20). Plik Thurakij 'Teerachai' Kruekhai 'Kohtee' Chaokhongrabmao [Revealing a Business of 'Theerachai' of 'Kohtee' Network as a Construction Company]. *Isaranews*. Retrieved from <https://www.isranews.org/isranews-scoop/54834-2017-03-20-03-24-35.html>(in Thai)
- Ismail, B. (2014). *Thailand: The Effect of The 2014 Coup D'etat to Mass Media*. Retrieved from https://rsf.org/sites/default/files/rapport_thailande_th-2.pdf
- Japan1. (2018, April 4) *Personal Communication*.
- Jit Bhumisak. (1998). *Chom Nha Sakdina Thai* [The Real Face of Thai feudalism]. Bangkok: Sripanya Books. (in Thai)

- Jom Petchpradab. (2019, November 20). Khui Ka Jom Petchpradab Lae Jom Faiyen Proh Arai Khon Jom Petchpradab Tueng Kab Thodjai Yom Phae Laew Rue? [Talking With Job Petchpradab and Jon Faiyen - Why Does Jom Petchpradab Leave the Movements? Does He Give up?]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CV8Nq05zCsM>
- Kanokrat Lertchoosakul. (2012). *The Rise of the Octobrists: Power and Conflict among Former Left Wing Student Activists in Contemporary Thai Politics*. (Doctor of Philosophy), London School of Economics and Political Science, London.
- Kemp, S., & Moey, S. (2019). Digital 2019 Spotlight: Ecommerce in Thailand. Retrieved from <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2019-ecommerce-in-thailand?rq=thailand>
- Kengkij Kittirianglarp, & Hewison, K. (2009). Social movements and political opposition in contemporary Thailand. *The Pacific Review*, 22(4).
- Khamnoon Sittisaman. (2010, February 21,). Khor Saner 8 Khor Khong 'Somsak Jeamteerasakul' ! [The 8 Solutions of 'Somsak Jeamteerasakul' !]. *Manager Online*,. Retrieved from <https://mgronline.com/daily/detail/9530000024868>(in Thai)
- Khaosod. (2011). Buenglang Wittayu Chumchon-Khon Rak Thaksin [Behind the Scene of the Community Radio of Loving Thaksin People]. Retrieved from <http://oknation.nationtv.tv/blog/vconsult1978/2008/12/09/entry-2>(in Thai)
- Khaosod. (2020). Pratuang Nha Sathantud Kampucha Wanchalerm Haitua Laiwan Rath Mai leawlae [The Protests in Front of the Cambodia Embassy - After Days of Wanchalerm's Disappearance, the State Has Done Nothing]. Retrieved from https://www.khaosod.co.th/breaking-news/news_4277110(in Thai)

- Khunnaphabmai. (2019, July 9). Khunnaphabmai Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCC2p0Pg01ShhYXx6Ao_kpfA
- Komchadluek. (2016). Chatagam 'Daeng Nhee Tai' [The Destination of 'Red Shirts Run Away from Killed']. *Komchadluek*. Retrieved from <http://www.komchadluek.net/news/scoop/232412>(in Thai)
- Komchadluek. (2017, March 26). Daeng Taidin Nai Lao Puan Thaloh Kan-eng [The Underground Red Shirts in Laos Disputes with Each Other]. *Komchadluek*. Retrieved from <https://www.komchadluek.net/news/people/267554>(in Thai)
- Komchadluek. (2020, April 10, 2020). Plin Sai 'Faiyen' Leephai Ngab Ngern Borichak [Exploring 'Faiyen' - Pretending for Donation]. *Komchadluek*. Retrieved from <https://www.komchadluek.net/news/scoop/426898>(in Thai)
- Koo Mah Klai Koo Mai Klua Mung . (2020, May 10). Raikarn Sod (Piset) 02 May 63@12:00 Cheek Nhakak Nakrob Sahaphan Jad Raikarn Lork Nguen Phufang [Live Program (Special) May 02, 20@12.00pm, Breaking the Mask of OTF Warriors - Cheating Audiences' Money] [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-rR_AG7hrU
- Korpi, W. (1985). Power Resources Approach vs. Action and Conflict: On Causal and Intentional Explanations in the Study of Power *Sociological Theory*, 3(2), 31-45.
- Krinsky, J. (2013). 'Marxism and the Politics of Possibility: Beyond Academic Boundaries' in C. Barker, L. Cox, J. Krinsky, & A. G. Nilsen (Eds.), *Marxism and Social Movements*. Leiden: Brill.
- Kullada Kesboonchoo Mead. (2004). *The Rise and Decline of Thai Absolutism*. London: Routledge Curzon.
- Laos1. (2018, January 25) *Personal Communication*.

Laos3. (2019, January 13) *Personal Communication*.

Anek Laothammatas. (1996). 'A Tale of Two Democracies: Conflicting Perceptions of Elections and Democracy in Thailand' in *The Politics of Elections in Southeast Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lukes, S. (1974). *Power: A Radical View*. London: MacMillan Press.

Mae Maew . (2018, August 15). Mae Maew Yomrab Kab Sing Thee Pidplad (Korranee Khoo Perb Nha Sahai Thongtham) March 4 [Mae Maew Apologises to Her Mistake (the Case of Threatening Reveal the Picture of Comrade Thongtham), March 4]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w32BTHPtMkc>

Maew Zaa . (2018, November 21). Prakad 'Naew Ruam Sahaphan Satharanarat' Doi Sukij Sub-Aneksanti - Puth 19-09-2018 [The Annoucement of 'The Federal Republic of Thailand Alliance' By Sukij Sub-Aneksanti - Wendesday 19-09-2018]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=biJ4mMxvmRU>

Mahavate. (2020, March 21, 2020). Phone - Dao, Thongtham, Jomyuth - Withikarn Tee Ning Chai Thamlai Neawruam Tee Jah Purdpoei Karnkong Chorchon Khodkong Khong Tua-eng [Phoning-in of Dao, Thongtham, Jomyuth - The way Ning Uses for Destroying Allies who Reveal Her Cheating and Deceit]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/kziUgffAlw0>

Manager. (2018). Nayok Yuen Lao Prom Puded Sakraj Mai Kwamsanphan Soo Kwammankhong Mangkhang Yangyuen [The Prim Minister Visits Laos for Opening the New Era of Relationships - Secure, Wealthy, and Sustainable]. *Manager*. Retrieved from <https://mgronline.com/politics/detail/9610000123788>(in Thai)

Manager Online. (2008). Anumat Maijab 'Cheep Choochai' Khonsanit 'Thaksin' Min Buangsoong! [The Warrant of Arrest of Thaksin's Confidant Granted!]

'Cheep Choochai' Defaming The Privilege]. *Manager Online*. Retrieved from <https://mgronline.com/crime/detail/9510000098955>(in Thai)

Marshall, A. M. (2014). *A kingdom in crisis : Thailand's struggle for democracy in the twenty-first century*. London: Zed Books.

Marshall, A. M. (2020). TG933 From Paris on June 1. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/zenjournalist/status/1270723745414385672>

Marx, K. (1852/1978). 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte' in R. Tucker (Ed.), *The Marx-Engels Reader*. New York: W W Norton & Company.

Marx, K. (1859/1978). 'Preface to a Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy' in R. Tucker (Ed.), *The Marx-Engels Reader*. New York: W W Norton & Company.

Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1845/1978). 'German Ideology' in R. Tucker (Ed.), *The Marx-Engels Reader*. New York: W W Norton & Company.

Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1848/2002). *The Communist Manifesto*. London: Penguin.

Mata Fahsai. (2019). Mata Fahsai Facebook. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=640709966427264&id=100014647997033(in Thai)

McCargo, D. (2003). *Media and Politics in Pacific Asia*. London: Routledge Curzon.

McCargo, D. (2005). Network Monarchy and legitimacy crises in Thailand. *The Pacific Review* vol. 18 No.4, 499-519.

McCargo, D. (2017). New Media, New Partisanship: Divided Virtual Politics In and Beyond Thailand. *International Journal of Communication*, 11, 4138-4157. doi:10.1080/09512740500338937

- McCargo, D., & Sutawan Chanprasert. (2015). *Freedom of Expression in Thailand During 2014*. Paper presented at the Justice for Free Expression in 2014, Global Freedom of Expression Conference, Columbia University.
<https://globalfreedomofexpression.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/McCargo-Freedom-of-Expression-Thailand-2014.2.pdf>
- McCarthy, J., & Zald, M. (1977). Resource Mobilisation and Social Movements: A Partial Theory. *American Journal of Sociology*, 82.
- McCarthy, J., & Zald, M. (2001). Resource Mobilisation Theory: Vigorous or Outmoded? In J. H. Turner (Ed.), *Handbook of Sociological Theory*. New York: Springer.
- Media Force. (2018, December 24). Media Force Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMPPAM3FO-n4cyWE80nbvsg>
- Melucci, A. (1989). *Nomads of the Present*. London: Hutchinson Radius.
- Mitchell, J. (2011). Red and yellow songs: a historical analysis of the use of music by the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD) and the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) in Thailand. *South East Asia Research*, 19(3), 457-494.
- Mix, P. R., & Piper, N. (2003). 'Does Marriage "Liberate" Women from Sex Work?-Thai Women in Germany' in N. Piper & M. Roces (Eds.), *Wife or Worker? Asian Women and Migration*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Nanchanok Wongsamuth. (2014). Meeting Resistance:The Hard Road of Opposition in Exile. *Bangkok Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.bangkokpost.com/news/investigation/415363/meeting-resistance-the-hard-road-of-opposition-in-exile>

- National Federation of Community Radio Thailand. (2012). *Nueng Toswat WittayuChoomchon Thai* [The First Decade of Thai Community Radio]. Bangkok: National Federation of Community Radio, Thailand. (in Thai)
- Nattaphong Jaijing. (2013). 'Phra Barmi Pokklao Tai Ngao Insee: Phan Songkram Jittawittaya American kab Karn Sang Sathabaan Kasat Hai Pen 'Sanyaluk' Hang Chat [His Majesty's Power Under the Eagle: Amerian Planning of the Psychologist War and the Creation of the Monarch Institution as National 'Symbol']' in *Khor Fun Fai Nai Fun Un Lue Chue: Kwam Klunwai Lhong Khabuan Karn Patipak Patiwat Siam (1932-1957)* [To Dream the Incredible Dream: the Mobility of the Siam Counter-Revolution Movements (1932-1957)]. Bangkok: Fah Diew Kan. (in Thai)
- NCPO. (2014a). The 2014 Interim Constitution. *Royal Thai Government Gazette*, 131(55A), 1. (in Thai)
- NCPO. (2014b). NCPO's Order no.37/2014: The Alleagtions Under The Jurisdiction of The Military Court. *Royal Thai Government Gazette*, 131(92D), 3. (in Thai)
- Nick Ragan. (2019, January 13). Khonthai Kue Arai ?? [Who is Thais ??]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=27DUVfklJrA>
- Nilsen, A. G., & Cox, L. (2013). What Would a Marxist Theory of Social Movements Look Like? In S. Budgen, S. Edwards, M. v. d. Linden, & P. Thomas (Eds.), *Marxism and Social Movements*. Leiden: Brill.
- Ning. (2019a, November 7). Karn Raksa Matratarn Nai Hong Line - Kui Pai Sod Sod Nai Hong 12.11.2019 [A Standard in Line Chatting Room - Live Discussion 12.11.2019]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybWpfdly8H8>
- Ning. (2019b, February 16). Klua Maetae Karn Haekpak Pood Kwamjing Koh Sai Hua pai klai Sonteen Loei Kha 31.1.2019 [If You Fear to Speak the Truth,

You Should Get Out Right Now. 31.1.2019]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7w-bCcfkMY>

Ning. (2019c, May 13). Pah Ning DK Kratueb Here ! Koo Pen Khon Thai Koo Mai Rak Phor Mung Man Jah Nak Hua Mae Mung Trong Nai Wa? March 10, 2017 [Aunt Ning DK Kicks Lizards! I am Thais, but I do not Love Your Father. Does Your Mother has any Problem? March 101, 2017]. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIK1_EmpOJI

Ning. (2019d, November 23). Pai Teaw Nakornprathom Dake Taohoo-thod Bon Bon Pai Hua 21.11.2019 [Let's go to Nakhonprathom to Eat Fried Tofu - Continually Blaming 21.11.2019]. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_FBHWyGeSw

Ning. (2019e, November 7). Rai Sara Pakmha Pai Wan Wan [No Serious Content, Just Blaming Everyday] Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOFIsKtx52itLZzmboVw45g>

Ning. (2019f, October 16). Tieng Kab Salim Kae Seng Lakthan Yan Ngao Nha Ei Beaw Ruang Koo Klau Salim Rerun Kratueb Salim 22 08 2019 [Debate With Salim in a Boring Day - the Evidence Against the Unshaped Mouth Woman Claiming That I fear Salim 22 08 2019]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64UiWB4yY5w>

Ning. (2020a, June 1). #Chaelaek Wanpen Sweden Biew Ruai Plom Din Rao Don Kratueb 31.05.2020 [#Unfolding Wanpen Sweden - Uneven-Lips and Fake Richer is Shaken After Being Trampled]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZMWF5gtVyGQ>

Ning. (2020b, June 18). E-Ngo 2020 Yaek Mai Ok Clip Nai Jing Clip Nai Plom 18.06.2020 [The Stupid who cannot separate the Real Clip from the Fake one 18.06.2020]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M84gWCO4F4Y>

- Nong May. (2020, May 6). Nong May Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRW3YOFY9ciz5T6P2zmgF0Q>
- Nor Por Chor EU. (2014). Thalangarn Chabab Tee 1 'Samatcha Prachachonthai Pheu Sitthimanudsayachon Lae Prachathippatai' [The First Declaration of 'Assembly of Thai people for Human Right and Democracy'. Retrieved from <http://abc.norporchoreu.com/?p=1478>(in Thai)
- Num Korat. (2019, August 24). 18 April 60 - Raikarn Phukla Prachathippatai Phobkab Khoon Num Korat Lae Khoon Khon Isaan [18 April 2017 - The Democratic Braves - Meeting with Num Korat and Khon Isaan]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eWu8Clf7N-Q>
- Nuttaa Mahattana. (2018, March 15). A comment to the Facebook Post of Somsak Jeamteerasakul on July 18, 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/somsakjeam/posts/1729392933780645>(in Thai)
- Nyblade, B., O'Mahony, A., & Sinpeng, A. (2015). Social Media Data and the Dynamics of Thai Protests. *Asian Journal of Social Science*, 43(5), 545.
- Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council. (2019). The Books of Sufficient Economy. Retrieved from https://www.nesdc.go.th/ewt_w3c/main.php?filename=sufficient_economy
- Panitee Suksomboon. (2008). Remittances and 'Social Remittances': Their Impact on Livelihoods of Thai Women in the Netherlands and Non-migrants in Thailand. *Gender, Technology and Development*, 12(3), 461-482.
- Panitee Suksomboon. (2009). *Thai Migrant Women in the Netherlands: Cross-Cultural Marriages and Families*. (Doctor of Philosophy), Leiden University, Leiden.

- Panu Wongcha-um, & Patpicha Tanakasempipat. (2019, May 24, 2019). Thai exiles in fear after murders and disappearances. *Reuters*. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-thailand-rights-exiles-insight/thai-exiles-in-fear-after-murders-and-disappearances-idUSKCN1SU0DV>
- Panuwat Panduprasert. (2019). *The Military and Democratic Backsliding in Thailand*. (The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy), University of Leeds,
- Parameswaran, P. (2018). What's in the Thailand-Cambodia Foreign Fugitive Deal? *The Diplomat*. Retrieved from <https://thediplomat.com/2018/03/whats-in-the-thailand-cambodia-foreign-fugitive-deal/>
- Pasuk Phongpaichit, & Baker, C. (1997). *Thailand: Economy and Politics*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.
- Pavin Chachavalpongpun. (2019, October 14). The Case of Thailand's Disappearing Dissidents. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/14/opinion/thailand-dissidents-disappearance-murder.html>
- Peck, J. (2019). 'Combination' in The Antipode Editorial Collective. (2019). *Keywords in Radical Geography: Antipode at 50*. New Jersey: Wiley Blackwell.
- Peel, M. (2014). *Financial Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.ft.com/content/05e101fa-2f2b-11e4-a054-00144feabdc0>
- Phillips, N., & Hardy, C. (Eds.). (2002). *Discourse Analysis: Investigating Processes of Social Construction*. London: Sage.
- Phupha Seri. (2018). Phupha Seri Facebook. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/phouphaaseree/> (in Thai)

- Piengdin Rakthai. (2017, July 9). Rajawong Thai Kab Khabuankarn Kaa Ya-sebtid [The Thai Royal Family and Drugs Trading Cartel]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ohUmL5WCow>
- Piengdin Rakthai. (2019, May 9). Duan! Loong Sanamluang + 2 Rai Took Song Tua Klab Thai Laew (Thalangarn Doi Phakhee Thai Pue Sitthimanudsayachon) [Urgently! Uncle Sanamluang + 2 people have sent back to Thailand (the Announcement of the Thai Alliance for Human Rights)]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTvGUZC6rEU>
- PixelHELPER. (2020). A Rebellion Builds on Hope & Art. Retrieved from <https://pixelhelper.org/en/#section-ueberuns>
- Plambech, S. (2009). From Thailand with Love: Transnational Marriage Migration in the Global Care Economy. *Wagadu Volume 5: Anti-Trafficking, Human Rights, and Social Justice*, 5, 32-48.
- Porphant Ouyyanont. (2015). *Crown Property Bureau in Thailand and Its Role in Political Economy*. ISEAS Publishing: Singapore.
- Porphant Ouyyanont. (2017). *Regional Economic History of Thailand*. Singapore: ISEAS Publishing.
- Post Today. (2010, February 5). Tang Kongthab Prachachon Game Shing Karnnam Suedaeng [Establishing the People Army: the Game for Leading Red Shirts]. *Post Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.posttoday.com/politic/analysis/8511> (in Thai)
- Post Today. (2014a, July 13). Jaruphong Vo Khonthai Nai Demark Perd Prachoom Seri Thai [Jaruphong Boasts about Thais in Denmark launching the Seri Thai Congress]. *Post Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.posttoday.com/politic/news/306395> (in Thai)
- Post Today. (2014b). Perd Poom 'Mai Nueng Kor.Kuntee' Kawee Rassadorn Khong Kon Suedang [Revealing 'Mai Nueng Kor Kuntee' - The People Poet of the

Red Shirts]. *Post Today*. Retrieved from
<https://www.posttoday.com/politic/report/290907>(in Thai)

Prachatai. (2008, January 5). Pid Website Faa Diew Kan Aang Min (Eek Laew) [Closing Faa Diew Kan Website, Accused for Lèse-majesté]. *Prachatai*. Retrieved from <https://prachatai.com/journal/2008/01/15357>(in Thai)

Prachatai. (2009, May 9). 'Faa Diew Kan' Prakad Yak Webboard Ok Jak Web Samnakpim ['Faa Diew Kan' Announces Split of Webboard and Publisher Website apart]. *Prachatai*. Retrieved from
<https://prachatai.com/journal/2009/06/24594>(in Thai)

Prachatai. (2011, April 27). Kongprab Kae Roi Kwa 50 Raichue Phulen Webboard Faa Diew Kan Reak Bor-Kor Faa Diew Kan hai Pak Kham [Police Tracks 50 Users of Faa Diew Kan Webboard and Summons Editors] *Prachatai*. Retrieved from <https://prachatai.com/journal/2017/04/71016>(in Thai)

Prachatai. (2014). Tang 'Seri Thai' 2557 Tan Rattapraharn Fuen Prachatippatai - Jarupong Nang Lekhatikarn [Founding 'Seri Thai' 2014 against a Coup and Recovering Democracy - Jurupong Is Secretary]. *Prachatai*. Retrieved from <https://prachatai.com/journal/2014/06/54204>(in Thai)

Prachatai. (2015a, February 16). iLaw Phei Sathanakarn 112 Tuen Chat FB - Email Mai Plodphai Eek Torpai [iLaw Reveals the Situation of Code 112, Warning That Chatting on Facebook and Email not Secusre Anymore]. *Prachatai Online*,. Retrieved from
<https://prachatai.com/journal/2015/02/57954>(in Thai)

Prachatai. (2015b, March 25). Sae 16 Persons of 'The Banpodj Network' jak Clip Soo Ruenjam Lae Santaharn [Revealing the 16 Persons of 'The Banpodj Network': From Sharing Clips to Being Jailed by A Military Court's Verdicts]. *Prachatai Online*. Retrieved from
<https://prachatai.com/journal/2015/03/58562>(in Thai)

- Prachatai. (2016, October 29). Pom Song Phurai Khamdan 'Bor Kor Tangprathet The Nation' Tuean Phuleepai Tangkarnmueng Yah Pueng Wangjai [The issue of Extradition - 'The International Editor of the Nation' Warns the Political Exiles do not Rely Anyone]. *Prachatai*. Retrieved from <https://prachatai.com/journal/2016/10/68570>(in Thai)
- Prachatai. (2017). Sang Prachachon Ngod Tidam Peiprae Post 'Somsak - Pavin - Andrew' She Share Pid PorRoBor Com [Ordering People to Stop Following Contacting Spreading the Post of 'Somsak - Pavin - Andrew' Which Violate The Computer Act]. *Prachatai*. Retrieved from <https://prachatai.com/journal/2017/04/71016>(in Thai)
- Prachatai. (2019a, July 29). Somsak Jeam Saner 7 khor patiroop Sathabaan Kasat [Somsak Jeam Offers the 7 Solutions for Reforming Monarchs]. *Prachatai Online*,. Retrieved from <https://prachatai.com/journal/2019/07/83630>(in Thai)
- Prachatai. (2019b, May 10). Tamruad Malay Jabb Jumlei Kadee Sue Sahaphantarathai Sonf Kong Prab Rawang Raw Satana Phuliphai Chak UNHCR [Malay Police Sent Back the Defendant in the Case of Thai Federation T-Shirts to Thai Police During Waiting for a Asylum Seeker Status From UNHCR]. *Prachatai Online*,. Retrieved from <https://prachatai.com/journal/2019/05/82416>(in Thai)
- Prachatai. (2020). Purd Phab-Clip Wongjornpid Rod Kor Hed Un 'Wanchalerm' Prom Phutongsongsai Koei Sakodroi Tam [Revealing the Pics and CCTV Clips of a Van in 'Wanchalerm's Abduction' and the Pics of Surveilling Team]. *Prachatai*. Retrieved from <https://prachatai.com/journal/2020/06/87974>(in Thai)
- Praphat Pintoptaeng. (1998). *Kanmuang bon thong thanon: 99 wan prawatisat kan doen khabuan chumnum prathuang nai sangkhom thai* [Politics on the Street: 99 Days of the Assembly of the Poor]. The Centre for Research and Production of Textbooks, Krik University: Bangkok. (in Thai)

- Praves Prapanukul . (2019a, December 15). Mahavate Kab Smith Reak Tua-eng Wa Serichon Tae... [Mahavate and Smith Call Themselves as Freeman but ...]. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/Prawais/posts/2662815083777262> (in Thai)
- Praves Prapanukul . (2019b, December 15). Tha Krai Tidtam Fang Raikarn Wittayu Khong Khon Sue-daeng ... [If You Follow the Online Radio of Red Shirts...]. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/Prawais/posts/2662771660448271> (in Thai)
- Preeyapa Khunsong, & Kaweewit Kaewjinda. (2019, May 13). Thai exile's parents seek information on his disappearance. *AP*. Retrieved from <https://apnews.com/663d116390be4391acb6cdd54a78850a>
- Quinley, C. (2019, July 7). No Where to Hide. *Southeast Asia Globe*. Retrieved from <https://southeastasiaglobe.com/nowhere-to-hide>
- Ramsey, A. (2016). Wife of anti-monarchist British journalist detained in Thailand. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/22/andrew-macgregor-marshall-anti-monarchist-thailand-wife-detained>
- Rattana Jongwilaiwan. (2008). *Thai Women and Marriage in Singapore*. (Master of Social Science), the National University of Singapore, Singapore.
- Redpower smgermany. (2018, November 17). Kao Soo Seriphab by Dong Attachai Anantamek 03.0215. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OsPYcTtJfTA>
- Reed, J., & Inagaki, K. (2019, August 2). Japanese Police Probe Attack on Thai Dissident: Assault on Prominent Critic Follows Disappearance or Killing of Other Exiles. *Financial Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.ft.com/content/5b82d1a6-b4fa-11e9-8cb2-799a3a8cf37b>

- Riggs, F. W. (1966). *Thailand: The Modernization of Bureaucratic Polity*. Honolulu: East-West Center Press.
- Ritchie, J. & Lewis, J. (Eds.). (2003). *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. London: Sage.
- Royalist Marketplace. (2020). Royalist Marketplace Group. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/groups/160302545298190/> (in Thai)
- Sahaphantararat Chadjen. (2019, July 8). Sahaphantararat Chadjen Channel,. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1P4c5jwYRml8BklJlbH0rw>
- Sahaphantarathai Isaan Tonlang . (2019, July 6). Sahaphantarathai Tonlang Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UClBeAg3OP7Eh77XZCCMyfCw>
- Sahaphantarathai Ratsawaddikarn. (2019, July 6). Sahaphantarathai Ratsawaddikarn Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXiCgQ9pNgeRk0L5zDrNBEQ>
- Said, E. W. (1993). *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Said, E. W. (2000). *Reflexion on Exile and Other Essays*: Granta.
- Salinee Tintumrong. (2016). Facebook Samnak-nganyai Yuenyan Mai Koei Hai Khormoon Dai Dai Kab Rattabanthai [The Headquarter of Facebook Claims Never Sending any Data to Thai Government]. Retrieved from <https://www.beartai.com/news/itnews/97117>
- Sanamluang2008. (2017). The Organisation For Thai Federation. Retrieved from <http://sanamluang2008.blogspot.com/> (in Thai)
- Sanamluang2008. (2018, October 25). Sanamluang2008 Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/user/sanamluang2008>

- Sapai Siengchaobaan. (2019, November 10). Sieng Chaobaan V2 Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqQzqeAVnRWKBZCQnvcRehg>
- Schaffar, W. (2016). New Social Media and Politics in Thailand: The Emergence of Fascist Vigilante Groups on Facebook. *Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, 9(2), 215-234.
- Seh Daeng. (2018, March 3). Seh Daeng VS Kongthab Bok (01) 14-01-53 [Seh Daeng VS Army (01) 14-01-53. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4DdbcEFyQLc>
- Seri Thai. (2014). The First Declaration. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/FreeThaiOfficial1/posts/1487145574855810>(in Thai)
- Seri Thai. (2018). Seri Thai Facebook. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/FreeThaiOfficial1/> (in Thai)
- Sinpeng, A., & Hemtanon, W. (2019). 'Change and Continuity in the Politics of the Media after the Coup' in M. Montesano, T. Chong, & M. Heng (Eds.), *After the Coup: The National Council for Peace and Order Era and the Future of Thailand*. Singapore: ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute.
- Skocpol, T. (Ed.) (1991). *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith Haek. (2020, March 21). Khon Kohok Dai Samer Tae Tualek Lakthan Mai Koei Kohok - Phone Thongthan Dao Haek Nina Yai Aoi [Man Can Lie But the Number Never Lie - Phoning in of Thongtham, Dao, Haek, Nina, Yai, and Aoi]. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9KIX_WrtgtE
- Smith Haek Phea Seriphap 12. (2020a, Jun 20). #Kancha Channel #Zombies Prachatippatai Thoi Ok Pai Tuh [#Channel of Marihuanna #Democratic

Zombies Should Step Out]. [Video file] Retrieved from
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xm0TjrjSVJs>

Smith Haek Phea Seriphap 12. (2020b, Jun 19). Save Wanchalerm Klang Prachatippatai Khard Sti Palang Muanchon Jomplom [Democratic Mania, Madness, and Fake Mass Power]. [Video file] Retrieved from
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xm0TjrjSVJs>

Smith Haek Pheu Seriphap 1. (2018, November 15). Smith Haek Phea Seriphap 1 Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgaDhOVNMOinQvgc9R5R_jQ/videos

Smith Haek Pheu Seriphap 11. (2019, November 20). Smith Haek Phea Seriphap 11 Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiYtSHITDd-JK0AnP-ilpCg>

Smith Haek Pheu Seriphap 12. (2019, December 21). Smith Haek Phea Seriphap 12 Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG8lPXj5c1k078gQCWM021w>

Smith Haek Pheu Seriphap 13. (2020a, January 9). (Save Wanchalerm) Klang Prachatippatai Khadsati Palangmuanchon Jomplom [(Save Wanchalerm) Democratic Mania, Madness, Faked Mass Power]. Retrieved from
<https://www.youtu.be./Xm0TjrjSVJs>

Smith Haek Pheu Seriphap 13. (2020b, January 4). Smith Haek Phea Seriphap 13 Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCr8_hjSgtYzZZZjLvlpnx4A

Smith, N. (2019, January 24). Gruesome Laos Deaths of Thai Activists Sends Chill Through Dissident Community in Exile. *Telegraph*. Retrieved from
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/01/24/gruesome-laos-deaths-thai-activists-sends-chill-dissident-community/>

- Snow, D., & Benford, R. (1988). Ideology, Frame Resonance and Participant Mobilisation. *International Social Movement Research*, 1, 197-217.
- Soasmedia. (2017, November 15). Giles Ungpakorn talk pt1: introduction. [Video file] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgaDhOVNMOinQygc9R5R_jQ/videos
- Somkiat Wantana. (1980). Withi Suksa Sangkomthai Khong Jit Bhumisak [The Way of Studying Thai Society of Jit Bhumisak]. 10, 7, 1-13. (in Thai)
- Somsak Jeamteerasakul. (1982). Sangkhom Thai Jak Sakdina Soo Thunniyom [From Feudalism to Capitalism of Thai Society]. *Thammasat University Journal*, 11(2), 62-164. (in Thai)
- Somsak Jeamteerasakul. (1993). *The Communist Movement in Thailand*. (Doctor of Philosophy), Monash University,
- Somsak Jeamteerasakul. (2001). *Prawatsat Thi Puengsang* [The Newly Invented History]. Bangkok: 6 Tula Ramluek. (in Thai)
- Somsak Jeamteerasakul. (2003a). Prawat Phor Khor Thor Chabab Phor Khor Thor (1) [History of CPT by CPT (1)]. *Pha Diew Kan*, 1(1). (in Thai)
- Somsak Jeamteerasakul. (2003b). Prawat Phor Khor Thor Chabab Phor Khor Thor (2) [History of CPT by CPT (2)]. *Pha Diew Kan*, 1(2). (in Thai)
- Somsak Jeamteerasakul. (2007a, May 23). Khor Sanur Waduai Mass Monarchy Rue Sathaban Kasat Mualchon : Chabab Nang Tuayang [The Argument of Mass Monarchy : the Trailer]. Retrieved from <http://hello-siam.blogspot.com/2007/11/mass-monarchy.html> (in Thai)
- Somsak Jeamteerasakul. (2007b). 'Nakvichakarn Activist 'Song Mai Aow' ['Two-Denies' Academic Activist]' in *Rattapraharn 19 Kanya* [The 19 Sep Coup]. Bangkok: Fah Diew Kan (in Thai)

- Somsak Jeamteerasakul . (2012, May 15). Khor Yok Ma San San...[To Speak in Short...]. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/somsakjeam/posts/275009062552380>(in Thai)
- Somsak Jeamteerasakul. (2015, March 5). Klum Khon Tee Reak War Sue Luang Cheer Jao Kab Sue Daeng Cheer Thaksin ... [The Two Masses of The Royalist Yellow Shirts and The Red Shirts who Love Thaksin ...] Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/somsakjeam/posts/900739753312638>(in Thai)
- Somsak Jeamteerasakul. (2016, April 5). Puak Kosok Taidin. . . [The Underground Speakers. . .]. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/somsakjeam/posts/1083754685011143>(in Thai)
- Somsak Jeamteerasakul. (2017, October 20). Speech on the 85 anniversary of 1932 revolution. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sogq9WwwmoQ>
- Somsak Jeamteerasakul. (2018a, June 3). Ajan Jeam Yang Ajarn France6 . . . [Master Jeam Opposes Master France6 . . .]. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=khKCGmKtYnA>
- Somsak Jeamteerasakul. (2018b, May 12). Faiyen Puded Phone Khon Padetkarn #11-12-2017. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lJ344w-EKYc>
- Sparks, J. (2014). Lèse-majesté: Those who Dare Defy the King of Thailand. Retrieved from <https://www.channel4.com/news/lese-majeste-defy-king-thailand>
- Spooner, A. (2013). Exclusive: Interview with exiled Thai dissident - Jakrapob Penkair. Retrieved from

<http://asiaprovocateur.blogspot.com/2013/11/exclusive-interview-with-exiled-thai.html>

Streckfuss, D. (2011). *Truth on Trial in Thailand: Defamation, Treason, and Lèse-Majesté*. London: Routledge.

Suehiro, A. (1989). *Capital Development in Thailand 1855-1985*. Tokyo: Centre for East Asia Cultural Studies.

Sunai Jullapongsathorn. (2018, November 6). Sunai Fanclub Channel. [Video file]
Retrieved from
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVJksx3LCHbpvDGt7EpHLhg>

Sunanta Sirijit. (2013). 'Gendered Nation and Classed Modernity: The Perceptions of Mia Farang (Foreigners'Wives) in Thai Society' in T. Bunnell, D. Parthasarathy, & E. C. Thompson (Eds.), *Cleavage, Connection and Conflict in Rural, Urban and Contemporary Asia*. New York: Springer.

Surin Maisrirod, & McCargo, D. (1997). 'Electoral politics: Commercialisation and exclusion' in K. Hewison (Ed.), *Political Change in Thailand: Democracy and Participation*. London: Routledge.

Tambiah, S. J. (1976). *World Conqueror and World Renouncer : A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand against a Historical Background*. . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tarrow, S. (1993). Cycles of Collective Action: Between Moments of Madness and the Repertoire of Contention. *Social Science History*, 17(2), 281-307.

Teeranai Charuvastra . (2016). Facebook Blocks Thailand From Page Satiring Monarchy. Retrieved from
<http://www.khaosodenglish.com/politics/2016/05/05/1462426398/> (in Thai)

Thai Alliance for Human Rights. (2012). Help! Thailand at the Risk of Becoming a Failed State with Civil War. Retrieved from https://tahr-global.org/?page_id=21804(in Thai)

Thai E News. (2014a). Pragad Kringkarn Samatch Prachachonthai Pheu Sittimanudsayachon Lae Prachathippatai 'Baaan Lang Tee Song Khong Phee-Nong' Lang Pakping Khong Lao Naksoo Pheu Prachatippatai [The Annoucement of Assembly of Thai people for Human Right and Democracy 'The Second Home of Brothers and Sisters', the Haven of the Fighters for Thai Democracy] Retrieved from https://thaienews.blogspot.com/2014/12/blog-post_73.html(in Thai)

Thai E News. (2014b). Thalangkarn Seri Thai Denmark [The Declaration of the Seri Thai of Denmark]. Retrieved from https://thaienews.blogspot.com/2014/08/blog-post_47.html(in Thai)

Thai E News. (2015). Rai-ngan Karnprachum Samatcha Prachachon Pheu Sitthimanudsayachon Lae Prachathippatai Krungtee 1 Las Vegas, Nevada. Sep, 6 2015 Kwam Samred Hang Prawattisart [The Report of the First Conference of Assembly of Thai people for Human Right and Democracy in Las Vegas, Nevada. Sep 6, 2015: The Historical Success]. Retrieved from <https://thaienews.blogspot.com/2015/09/1-las-vegas-nevada-sep-6-2015.html>(in Thai)

Thai E News. (2016). Phab Banyakad Ngan Prachumsammana Samatcha Prachachon Pheu Prachathippatai Krungtee 2 Las Vegas, Nevada Saharat America 21 May 2559 [The Picture of The Second Conference of Assembly of Thai people for Human Right and Democracy in Las Vegas, Nevada, The US on May 21, 2016]. Retrieved from <https://thaienews.blogspot.com/2016/05/2-las-vegas-nevada-21-2559-0500-22-2559.html>(in Thai)

Thai Lawyers for Human Rights. (2019). 1 Pee Kwamklunwai Kadee 'Sahaphantarathai Damnurd Kadee Yangnoi 20 Khon Nai 11 Kadee [The First Anniversary of the Cases of 'Thai Federation' - At Least 20

Participants are Sued from 11 Cases] Retrieved from
<https://www.tlhr2014.com/?p=13896>(in Thai)

Thai Lawyers for Human Rights. (2020). Yokfong Mor 116 Chamloei Sahaphatharattai Sai Suedam Pai Central Ram-intra Sarn Chi Mai Thamhai Prachachon Lamerd Kodmai [Dismissing Defendant of Section 116, Court Judges that Wearing Black T-Shirt at the Central Ram-intra Owing to not Legal Violation]. Retrieved from <https://www.tlhr2014.com/?p=16687>(in Thai)

Thai PBS. (2019, October 10). Phunlayaa 'Laos1' Rong Phorbor Terror Reng Tiddam Kadee Sunhai [Laos1's Wife Requests the Police Commander to Speed Proceed his Case]. *Thai PBS*. Retrieved from <https://news.thaipbs.or.th/content/285075>(in Thai)

Thai People's Revolutionary University for Democracy (TPRUD) . (2019, March 12). Why Must be the People? Part 1: 3/14/2012. [Video file] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BteNKvF0W9A>(in Thai)

Thailand E-Government. (2018). Kosok Rattabarn Cheejang Khortedjing Korraneek Lok Online Share Khao Hai Rai Nayok...[The Government Speaker Reports about Online Slandering Prime Minister...]. Retrieved from <https://www.egov.go.th/th/content/10301/5633/> (in Thai)

Thairath. (2009a). Daeng Khui Sathiti Mai Ruen Saen Ruam Pon 17 Singhakhom [Reds Brag The New Record of A Hundred Thousand People on August 17]. Retrieved from <https://www.thairath.co.th/content/24611>(in Thai)

Thairath. (2009b, September 8). Yued Ok Rabhiph Phone-in 'Jom' La Or Sor Mor Thor Pad Khorha Plukrao [Accepting his Guilty about Phone-in 'Jom' Quits MCOT But Deny an Instigating Allegation]. *Thairath*. Retrieved from <https://www.thairath.co.th/content/31578>(in Thai)

Thairath. (2014). Ruab 'Borkor Lai Jood' Kha Baanpak Chonburi Chaotua 'FB' Korn Jak 'Phom Ton Jab Leaw' ['Borkor Lai Jood' Arrested at the House in

Chonburi, Facebooking 'I am Captured' Before Taken]. *Thairath*. Retrieved from <https://www.thairath.co.th/content/427601> (in Thai)

Thairath. (2017, August 18). Sor Mor Chor Yan Tamtid Khao 'Kohtee' Nee Khao Khmen Prom Kayai Phon Yong Bum 'Phra Mongkut' [National Security Council Follows the News of 'Kohtee' that Running to Cambodia Linked to Bombing at 'Phra Mongkut Hospital']. *Thairath*. Retrieved from <https://www.thairath.co.th/news/politic/979400> (in Thai)

Thairath. (2018, November 18). Bodrien Sorn Krai? Dr.Aphiwan Leephai Tai Tangdan Soo Wisa Khanthub Puainak Suk Germany [Who Should Learn This Lesson? Dr.Aphiwan, who die During Exiling, to Wisa Khanthub, who Sick Severely in Germany] *Thairath*. Retrieved from <https://www.thairath.co.th/news/politic/1397826> (in Thai)

Thairath. (2020, February 26). #RooThanIO Phung Tid Trend Lang 'Viroj' chae Rattabarn Atja YueBuenglang Kabuankarn IO [#KnowingIO Catch up a Trendy After 'Viroj' Reveals That Government could be Behind IO Clan]. *Thairath*. Retrieved from <https://www.thairath.co.th/news/society/1780573> (in Thai)

Thaistandpoint. (2014). THAISTANDPOINT: Thailand political data and perspective,. Retrieved from <https://thaistandpoint.wordpress.com/> (in Thai)

Thak Chaloemtiarana. (2007). *Thailand: The Politics of Despotic Paternalism*. New York: Southeast Asia Program Publications.

Thansettakij. (2016, November 8). Kosok Ratthabarn Jang Patithin Pee 60 Tee Poeipae Nai Social Media Mai Pen Kwamjing [The Government Speaker Inform that the Rumor on Social Media of the 2017 Calendar is not True]. *Thansettakij*. Retrieved from <https://www.thansettakij.com/content/107678> (in Thai)

- The Japan Times. (2019, August 6). Campaign against Thai dissidents reaches Japan. *The Japan Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2019/08/06/editorials/campaign-thai-dissidents-reaches-japan/#.XurZVs9KiUl>
- The National Movement of followers of the Seri Thai Against Dictatorship . (2020a). ATHD Facebook. Retrieved from [https://www.facebook.com/allianceNSD2\(in Thai\)](https://www.facebook.com/allianceNSD2(in Thai))
- The National Movement of followers of the Seri Thai Against Dictatorship. (2020b). NSD Facebook. Retrieved from [https://www.facebook.com/allianceNSD\(in Thai\)](https://www.facebook.com/allianceNSD(in Thai))
- The Office of Public Prosecution of Phon District. (2018). The Criminal Case no.83/2560. Retrieved from [http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:wbq4ynMqLKEJ:www.phon.go.go.th/joomla/index.php/2017-10-17-02-43-52/9-uncategorised/110-692-60+&cd=5&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=uk\(in Thai\)](http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:wbq4ynMqLKEJ:www.phon.go.go.th/joomla/index.php/2017-10-17-02-43-52/9-uncategorised/110-692-60+&cd=5&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=uk(in Thai))
- Thikan Srinara. (2012). *Kwamkid Thang Karnmuang Khong "Panyachon Fai Khan" Phai Lang Karntoktam Khong Krasae Kwamkid Sangkhomniyom Nai Prathetthai BE2524-2534* [The Political Thoughts of the Opposition Intellectuals After the Declination of Socialist Ideology in Thailand, 1981-1991]. (Doctor of Philosophy Program in History), Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok. (in Thai)
- Thikarn Srinara. (2014). *Kwamkadyang Thang Kwamkid Nai Khabuankarn Communist Thai Rawang 2519 -2525* [The Ideological Conflicts in the Communist Movement in Thailand Between 1946-1982]. (MA in History), Thammasat University, (in Thai)
- Thompson, E. P. (1963/1980). *The Making of the English Working Class*. London: Pengiun Books.

- Thun Phuk Khad Sakdina Nue Rat Tee Mee Itthiphon America Krob-ngam. (2017). Thun Phuk Khad Sakdina Nue Rat Tee Mee Itthiphon America Krob-ngam [The Monopoly Feudal Capitalism under the US's Domination] page. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/absolute.monarchy.th/> (in Thai)
- Thun Phuk Khad Sakdina Nue Rat Tee Mee Itthiphon America Krob-ngam. (2019). Banyai Phap 1/2562 [Describing the Picture 1/2019]. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/absolute.monarchy.th/posts/3261858823855256> (in Thai)
- Tilly, C. (1977). *From Mobilisation to Revolution*. Michigan: Center for Research on Social Organisation, University of Michigan.
- Tilly, C. (1984). 'Social movements and national politics' in C. Bright & S. Harding (Eds.), *Statemaking and Social Movements: Essays in History and Theory*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Tilly, C. (2001). 'Historical Analysis of Political Processes' in J. H. Turner (Ed.), *Handbook of Sociological Theory*. New York: Springer.
- Tnews. (2016). Grashark Tua Glab Maa Hai Dai !!! 'Anek Sanfran-Piengdin' Yang Maiyud Klunwai Jer Lakthan Toknha Chad Minmei Stabaan [Bring Them Back !!! 'Anek-Piengdin' Still Active, Find a Clear Evidence of Lèse-majesté. *Tnews*. Retrieved from <https://www.tnews.co.th/headshot/214057/%E0%B8%81%E0%B8%A3%E0%B8%B0%E0%B8%8A%E0%B8%B2%E0%B8%81%E0%B8%95%E0%B8%B1%E0%B8%A7%E0%B8%81%E0%B8%A5%E0%B8%B1%E0%B8%9A%E0%B8%A1%E0%B8%B2%E0%B9%83%E0%B8%AB%E0%B9%89%E0%B9%84%E0%B8%94%E0%B9%89-!!!-%E0%B9%80%E0%B8%AD%E0%B8%99%E0%B8%81-%E0%B8%8B%E0%B8%B2%E0%B8%99%E0%B8%9F%E0%B8%A3%E0%B8%B2%E0%B8%99--%E0%B9%80%E0%B8%9E%E0%B8%B5%E0%B8%A2%E0%B8%87%E0%B8%94%E0%B8%B4%E0%B8%99-%E0%B8%A2%E0%B8%B1%E0%B8%87%E0%B9%84%E0%B8%A1%E0%B9%88%E0%B8>

%AB%E0%B8%A2%E0%B8%B8%E0%B8%94%E0%B9%80%E0%B8%84%E0%B8%A5%E0
 %B8%B7%E0%B9%88%E0%B8%AD%E0%B8%99%E0%B9%84%E0%B8%AB%E0%B8%A
 7-
 %E0%B9%80%E0%B8%88%E0%B8%AD%E0%B8%AB%E0%B8%A5%E0%B8%B1%E0%B
 8%81%E0%B8%90%E0%B8%B2%E0%B8%99%E0%B8%95%E0%B8%AD%E0%B8%81%E
 0%B8%AB%E0%B8%99%E0%B9%89%E0%B8%B2-
 %E0%B8%8A%E0%B8%B1%E0%B8%94%E0%B9%86-
 %E0%B8%AB%E0%B8%A1%E0%B8%B4%E0%B9%88%E0%B8%99%E0%B9%80%E0%B8
 %AB%E0%B8%A1%E0%B9%88-
 %E0%B8%AA%E0%B8%96%E0%B8%B2%E0%B8%9A%E0%B8%B1%E0%B8%99--(in
 Thai)

Tnews. (2017). 'Sonthiyarn' Funthong Mue Raburd 'Wattana' Maichai Mahpah
 Diewdai Tae kue Nueng Nai Khabuankarn Patiwat Tee Tongkarn Plien
 Prathet Pen 'Sahaphantharat' [Bomber "Wattana" not the lonely wolf, but
 one of the revolution movement that want change country to be
 "Federation"]. Retrieved from
<http://www.tnews.co.th/contents/330802> (in Thai)

Tnews. (2019, January 18). Eakachai Sadlae! Lung Sanamluang Rai Rabpidchob
 Yu Khon Sai Sue Sahaphantarathai - Phao Sum-chalermphrakiet Tham
 Tidcook Huato 12 Pee [Eakachai Blames Sanamluang for his
 Irresponsibility, After Provoking People to Wear Black T-Shirt and Burn
 Decorated Archs Make Them be Jailed]. *Tnews*. Retrieved from
<https://www.tnews.co.th/politic/490564> (in Thai)

Touraine, A. (1981). *The Voice and the Eye. An Analysis of Social Movements*.
 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Trotsky, L. (1930). *The History of the Russian Revolution* in C. Rusell (Series
 Ed.), Vol. 1. Retrieved from
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/works/download/hrr-vol1.pdf>

Trotsky, L. (1932/2008). *The History of the Russian Revolution* (M. Eastman,
 Trans.). Chicago: Haymarket Books.

- Turner, R. H., & Killian, L. M. (1987). *Collective Behaviour* New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Uchain Chiangsaen. (2006). 10 Pee Samatcha Khonchon: Bodrian Bang Prakan' [10 years of the Assembly of the Poor: some lessons]. *Faa Diew Kaan*, 5(2), 148-180. (in Thai)
- Uchain Chiangsaen. (2011). Kruekhai 19 Kanya Tan Rattapraharn [The 19 Sep: Anti-Coup Network] Retrieved from http://wiki.kpi.ac.th/index.php?title=เครือข่าย_19_กันยา_ต้านรัฐประหาร (in Thai)
- UK3. (2018, January 30) *personal communication*.
- Unaldi, S. (2016). *Working Towards the Monarchy: the Politics of Space in Downtown Bangkok*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Veerayooth Kanchoochat, & Hewison, K. (2016). Introduction: Understanding Thailand's Politics. *Contemporary Asia*, 46(3), 371-387.
- Voice TV. (2016). 'Andrew' Khobkhun Tamruadthai Ploi Phanraya ['Andrew' thanks Thai Police for Releasing His Wife]. Retrieved from <https://www.voicetv.co.th/read/391785>
- Voice TV. (2018, September 11). 'Prayuth' - 'Pravit' Chee 'Sahaphantarathai' Khaokhai Kabod - Reng Prasarn 'Lao' Tam Jabkum ['Prayuth' - 'Pravit' Points that 'Thai Federation' is Rebellion - Rush to Cooperate with Laos to Raid]. *Voice TV*. Retrieved from <https://voicetv.co.th/read/B1GUKgSu7>
- Wassana Nanuam. (2010). *Lab Luang Prang Patiwat Prasatsai* [Secret, Tricky, and Camouflaged: The Sand Castle Revolution]. Bangkok: Matichon.
- Webster, N., & Haandrikman, K. (2014). *Thai Women in Sweden: Victims or Participants?* Retrieved from Stockholm:

Wikileaks. (2020). Thailand official MICT censorship list, 20 Dec 2008. Retrieved from
https://wikileaks.org/wiki/Thailand_official_MICT_censorship_list,_20_Dec_2008

Woltersm, O. W. (1968). Ayudhya and the Rearward Part of the World. *Royal Asiatic Society*, 3(4), 166-178.

Wuttiiphong Kochthammakhun. (2019, October 10). Soo Pheu Sahaphantarattai by Kohtee (Sahai Mah-noi [Fighting for Thai Federation by Kohtee (Comrade Mah-noi)]). [Video file] Retrieved from
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kemmnosGVqm>

Wyatt, D. K. (1984). *Thailand: A Short History*. Michigan: Yale University Press.

Yammy Channel Revolution. (2017, August 17). Yammy Channel Revolution Channel. [Video file] Retrieved from
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChP3a3ywhrPsvGe8lmGlSDw>

Yammy Channel Revolution. (2018, December 17). Sieng Chak Serichon kab Khoon Burapha Mai Phae #04 [The Voice From the Free Man and Burapha Mai Phae #04]. [Video file] Retrieved from
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OsPYcTtJfTA>

Zsombor, P. (2019, May 20). Latest Deportation, Disappearances Rattle Thai Dissident Diaspora. *VOA*. Retrieved from <https://www.voanews.com/east-asia-pacific/latest-deportation-disappearances-rattle-thai-dissident-diaspora>