MODL5305M Research Methods and Dissertation for MAPLIS

Cultural Variations of Democracy: 'Thai-Style Democracy'

Programme of study: MA Professional Language and Intercultural Studies
Year of study: 2012 - 2013
Student ID: ████████
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Word count: 16, 431 words

ABSTRACT

The rise in calls for culturally distinct forms of democracy outside the Anglo-Saxon world has raised serious questions about the universality of democracy and its suitability for every cultural context. Proponents of cultural relativism argue that since democracy is based on Anglo-Saxon cultural experience, it is inherently *alien* to other cultural contexts thereby creating a need for *adjusting* democracy or for *inventing* culturally informed alternatives. This approach, however, is criticised for providing a convenient justification for abusing political power to suppress popular will in the name of culture. The focus of this dissertation is to provide a better understanding of the culture-democracy relationship in the context of Thai politics. The aim of this dissertation is to examine the role culture plays in concepts of democracy in Thailand in relation to how cultural rhetoric may influence popular ideas, perceptions and even expectations of democracy.

The research methods adopted in this dissertation include an extensive analysis of the recurring rhetoric related to democracy discourse in Thailand with a special emphasis on the use of language and prescriptive discourses constructed with the aim to influence popular ideas and perceptions on democracy. For this purpose, this dissertation will analyse a number of original source texts in Thai language along with major academic works that are related to different events in Thai politics and comprise this paper's case studies. The case studies of lèse majesté law, the 2006 coup d'état and the political tensions between the 'Red Shirts' and the 'Yellow Shirts' movements will allow this dissertation to explore the use of TSD rhetoric and how it seeks to influence people's ideas and perceptions on democracy. These events are considered to represent the distinctive features of Thai democracy on the one hand, and an inconsistency with the more liberal models of democracy on the other hand.

The findings from this dissertation aim to provide a better understanding of the role culture plays in concepts of democracy in Thailand by identifying the mechanisms 'Thai-style democracy' rhetoric uses in order influence people's perceptions and ideas on democracy. Through imposition of prescriptive discourses and language control techniques on public discourse, 'Thai-style democracy' rhetoric encourages certain language uses on the one hand, while suppresses other language uses on the other. The language encouragement and suppression are thus identified as the mechanisms through which 'Thai-style democracy' seeks to influence public opinion on democracy. The main conclusions drawn from this dissertation will demonstrate that carefully selected words and culturally underpinned meanings are capable of stirring public opinion towards or away from democracy. This dissertation therefore recommends developing a more comprehensive understanding of culture-democracy relationship through 'culturally-distinct democracy' rhetoric, which allows for a more nuanced evaluation of the role culture plays in concepts of democracy.

CONTENTS

NOTE ON SPELLING AND THE USE OF THAI NAMES AND WORDS

Thai words used throughout this dissertation have been transliterated in most instances according to the provisions developed by the Royal Institute. This excludes the instances of internationally recognised transliterations or traditions developed over the time, in which case the conventional transliteration was maintained. Thai names have been spelled in accordance with the person's own way of transliterating their name, when know. Otherwise, the above mentioned system was adhered to.

INTRODUCTION

The rise in calls for culturally distinct forms of democracy outside the Anglo-Saxon world has raised serious questions about the universality of democracy and its suitability for every cultural context. Proponents of cultural relativism argue that since democracy is based on Anglo-Saxon cultural experience, it is inherently *alien* to other cultural contexts thereby creating a need for *adjusting* democracy or for *inventing* culturally informed alternatives. This approach, however, is criticised for providing a convenient justification for abusing political power to suppress popular will in the name of culture. Discussions on the role culture plays in concepts of democracy thus range from none to an overarching importance being ascribed to culture and the implications this may have on the form and workings of democracy. With the recent wave of democratisation sweeping across the Middle East followed by political instability, the escalation of violence and authoritarian relapses as demonstrated by the recent Egyptian case, it has become increasingly important to try to better understand the culture-democracy relationship regarding how different cultural experience may influence popular ideas, perceptions and even expectations of democracy.

It is the aim of this dissertation to contribute to the academic debate on the culture-democracy relationship by examining the role culture plays in concepts of democracy in Thailand. Thailand has been selected as this dissertation's case study due to its rather well-formulated culturally distinct form of democracy, the so-called 'Thai-style democracy' (hereafter TSD), and its recent revival as a dominant political ideology in twenty-first century Thailand. This paper's research thus aims to find out: *How does 'Thai-style democracy' rhetoric, as a cultural and linguistic tool, seek to influence popular ideas and perceptions of democracy?*. It is this study's hypothesis that TSD influences popular ideas and perceptions of democracy through language encouragement on the one hand, and language suppression on the other. The focus on TSD as a *rhetoric* rather than TSD as a *concept* or *ideology* is based on the assumption that for a concept or ideology to find resonance within the wider public there has to be a deliberate promotion, thereby *rhetoric*, seeking to influence popular opinion. By conceptualising the TSD rhetoric as *a linguistic* and *cultural tool*, this dissertation envisages the use of language control techniques and prescriptive discourses conducive to TSD rhetoric to be a *linguistic tool* and the use of cultural concepts, traditions or rituals to underpin TSD rhetoric to be a *cultural tool*.

The research methods adopted in this dissertation include an extensive analysis of the recurring rhetoric related to democracy discourse in Thailand with a special emphasis on the use of language – namely the word choice and meaning making – and prescriptive discourses constructed with the aim to influence popular ideas and perceptions on democracy. A small number of original Thai language and English language sources has been chosen to constitute this study's primary sources illustrating the cacophony of different democratic ideologies in Thailand. These sources include public speeches, academic articles and political discussions by influential Thai thinkers, whether academic or popular. Therefore, all the ideas and concepts this dissertation works with shall be well known to general Thai-public even though the more

technical terms used throughout this dissertation may be confined to Thai academic circles. Besides the original Thai sources, this dissertation works with a number of secondary sources that comprise major academic works providing this study with background knowledge and a deeper understanding of the various concepts behind TSD. The analysis in the following chapters is focused around three major areas in recent Thai history – the use of lèse majesté law in twenty-first century Thailand, the 2006 coup d'état, and the 'Red Shirts' and 'Yellow Shirts' movements – that comprise this paper's case studies. These case studies will allow this dissertation to explore the use of TSD rhetoric, as a linguistic and cultural tool, seeking to influence people's ideas and perceptions on democracy since they are considered to represent the distinctive features of Thai democracy on the one hand, and an inconsistency with the more liberal models of democracy on the other.

Chapter outline

This dissertation is divided into four chapters based on their different thematic orientation. The first chapter – literature review – analyses the major academic works relevant to the topic of this dissertation. This chapter's analysis is mainly focused on identifying the main concepts, establishing the basic definitions and providing some background knowledge necessary for this dissertation's ability to answer its research question. The findings of this chapter will indicate that culture may act as a constraining as well as enabling force, validity of which will be further examined in the ensuing chapters. The second chapter of this dissertation analyses how TSD rhetoric together with the lèse majesté law seek to influence public opinion. The merit of this chapter's analysis resides in uncovering the mechanisms used to influence public opinion, which will be indentified as *language suppression* on the one hand, and *language encouragement* on the other. However, as this chapter also reveals the very same mechanisms of language encouragements and suppression can be used to challenge TSD. This is a very interesting and significant finding not envisaged in the original hypothesis.

The third chapter will seek to advance these findings by analysing the use of TSD rhetoric to influence public opinion in relation to the 2006 coup d'état. This is a very important chapter as the analysis here will demonstrate that the language suppression and encouragement techniques identified in previous chapters were instrumental in delegitimizing Thaksin's government and conceptualising the 2006 coup as a *necessity*. The final, fourth chapter will then proceed to explore the extent to which the TSD rhetoric was able to penetrate and shape public discourses on democracy on the example of 'Red Shirts' and 'Yellow Shirts' movements' respective democratic rhetoric. As this chapter will demonstrate although the TSD rhetoric managed to penetrate – to a greater or a lesser degree – the respective rhetoric of both movements, the way it was used by them considerably differs. Interestingly, this chapter will further validate the findings from the second chapter by demonstrating that TSD rhetoric that penetrated the 'Red Shirts' movement was appropriated to create a reverse current thus directly challenging basic concepts and assumptions behind TSD. These findings are therefore seen as

a validation of the dual role of culture as a constraining and enabling force advanced in the first chapter of this dissertation.

CHAPTER 1

Literature Review

Introduction

Following the paper's introduction this chapter identifies the relevant academic literature published on the topic of this dissertation. The aim of this chapter is to analyse the major academic works and theories related to democracy, its universalist and particularist notions, and the concept of 'Thai-style democracy' with a special emphasis on the underexplored areas of research. The first part of this chapter addresses issues related to defining democracy as a concept. As this section points out establishing a working definition of democracy is essential as this determines which regimes are considered democratic and those which are not. The following part then examines democracy from universalist and particularist perspectives. Due to the limited scope of this study, this section mainly focuses on particularist interpretation of democracy as it occurs in Asia arguing that culture is an important variable, although not the only one, that needs to be considered when talking about democracy in a different cultural context. The final part of this chapter analyses academic literature on 'Thai-style democracy' (hereafter TSD). It is here that the underexplored areas of research are identified and the dissertation's aims are outlined.

Towards a working definition of democracy

Any work on democracy, including this dissertation, encounters an immediate theoretical challenge since democracy lacks an established definition. Academic literature thus offers various definitions of democracy, many of which are largely inconsistent regarding the main features they emphasise. For instance, Weale (2007: 18) defines democracy as a form of government in which

> "important public decisions on questions of law and policy depend, directly or indirectly, upon public opinion formally expressed by citizens of community, the vast bulk of whom have equal political rights."

Yet for Tilly (2007: 13-4), democracy means a set of

> "political relations between the state and its citizens [that] feature broad, equal, protected and mutually binding consultation."

In his quote, Weale (2007: 18) emphasises the importance of public opinion as a defining feature of a democratic regime, while Tilly (2007: 13-4) conceptualises democracy as a process – a consultation between the government and its citizens. These two quotes are illustrative of a general academic divergence regarding democracy and its defining features. Other academics further place emphasis on elections (Van Beuningen 2007: 51; Reilly 2006: 8) or an equal participation and freedom of advocating and formulating policy alternatives (Chan 2002: 40) as defining features of democracy. The choice of democracy definition is thus of a particular

importance as it subsequently determines, which regimes are seen as democratic and those which are not. Since providing a comprehensive definition of democracy is not a purpose of this study, this paper's definition of democracy will be reduced to a number of basic requirements drawn mostly from Weale's (2007) and Chan's (2002) definitions of democracy due to their conceptual clarity and emphasis on other than structural factors (i.e. elections).

Political participation is seen as an essential feature of democracy in most of the academic literature, although some definitions are more inclusive than others. Chan's (2002: 40) requirement of a "participation of all adult members of a society" may, however, be conceptually unfeasible as it would render most countries undemocratic since foreigners, and in some cases prisoners, do not hold the right to participate (Weale 2007: 19-20). Therefore, Weale's (2007: 18) narrower definition of political participation, as the vast majority of citizens with equal political rights, is adopted here as a minimum requirement for a government to be considered democratic. Another important aspect of democracy is a source of a government's decision-making, which provides the government with legitimacy. Weale's (2007) concept of public opinion as a basis for governmental decision-making is preferred here to Tilly's (2007) consultation, which seems to resemble the Athenian *ekklesia*, which would render democracy untenable in contemporary societies where the number of potential participants is much higher than it was in the ancient Athens (Weale 2007: 38).

It is necessary to note that the majority of academic literature, when discussing democracy, de facto refers to *liberal* democracy due to its ideological preponderance in the West. Chan (2002: ch. 2) provides an important insight into the complexities marrying of these two concepts – liberalism and democracy – may lead to. She defines liberalism in terms of the 'first-generation' liberties, as conceptualised in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Flaherty 2003-2004: 1798), and divides it into an economic, political and civil strand. The merit of Chan's approach is twofold. Firstly, it resides in her ability to analyse the extent to which each strand of liberalism is compatible with the notions of democracy. Secondly, and more importantly for the purpose of this study, this approach demonstrates that a different mix of economic, civil and political liberties is capable of producing different forms of democracy. The way how these three strands of liberties are mixed together is directly dependent on the cultural-historical elements a society holds at a particular moment in time (Chan 2002: 55). Any reference to democracy from this point onwards thus shall be understood as *liberal* democracy, in which political participation is confined to the vast majority of citizens with equal political rights, and where public opinion is a source of governmental decision-making. With this approach in mind, this chapter now turns to examine the universalist and particularist discourse in general and in Asian context in particular.

Is democracy a universal value?

In the post-Cold War world, democracy has been conventionally seen as the most desirable and legitimate form of government (Weale 2007: 1; Chan 2002: 10-1; Sen 1999: 3-4) due to its prosperity-enhancing potential, protection of civil and political rights, and international peace maintenance following the popular belief that democracies do not fight with each other unlike other regime forms (Weale 2007: 52). Stemming from Chan's (2002) analysis of liberal democracy in the previous section, democracy may be seen as a value-loaded concept. These values emphasise political participation and a basic set of political, economic and civil liberties. However, they are neither universally accepted nor equally weighted (Chan 2002: 46). Most critics of democracy as a universal value, therefore, base their arguments on a difference between the Western values and, what could be called, the values of the 'Rest'. Since values are seen as a defining element of culture (Van Beuningen 2007: 54), they have given rise to particularist notions of democracy – a manifestation of *cultural relativism*.

Huntington's (1992-1993) "clash of civilizations" hypothesis, which poses culture at the centre of the future conflicts between different civilisations, is perhaps one of the most influential academic works employing the notions of cultural relativism. Huntington (1992-1993: 27) sees cultural differences as more profoundly irreconcilable than, for instance, economic or political differences arguing that those cultural values (including democracy) that are commonly held as the most important in the West are usually seen as the least important in the non-Western societies. Although heavily criticised for its essentialist notions of culture, it is possible to see some merit in Huntington's approach. Recent historical evidence shows that many newly democratised countries often suffer from general instability and they frequently return to more authoritarian forms of rule. Although not directly affirmative of Huntington's hypothesis of profound and irreconcilable cultural distinctiveness, this seems to demonstrate that democracy may not be "a default condition of human societies" as often popularly anticipated in the Western world (Weale 2007: 5). This argument is at the heart of 'Asian values' discourse that emerged as a response to the promotion of liberal democracy and human rights in Asia and holds that liberal democracy is alien to Asian culture (Connors 2012: 249; Haynes 2001: 87). Values such as hard work, discipline, communitarianism, unity, harmony, consensus, and organic nature of state and society are juxtaposed with Western individualism, opportunism and politics through conflict in order to demonstrate the incompatibility of liberal democracy with Asian culture (Connors 2012: 248, 260-1; Thompson 2001: 156; Haynes 2001: 87).

The academic literature treats 'Asian values' with a considerable mistrust indicating that 'Asian values' is essentially an ideological tool for domestic consumption used by the old elites who seek to maintain their hold on power by all possible means (Connors 2012: 257, 259, 262; Ferrara n.d.: 1-3; Thompson 2001: 157; for a criticism of this approach see Koelble and Lipuma 2008). The source of this academic mistrust may be explained as what Perusek (2007: 832) calls a distorted cultural relativism – an ideological and reactionary use of cultural relativism that is based on highly essentialist, racialist and reified constructions of culture. As Thompson (2001:

158-60) and Connors (2012: 261-2) respectively point out using cultural distinctiveness to argue for economic development without the need to democratise is neither new nor confined to the non-Western countries. Imperial Germany also employed this cultural distinctiveness argument to support its claim that industrial development should not lead to democratisation since democracy is incompatible with German *Kultur* (Thompson 2001: 158-60). This may be seen as a conservative approach to economic modernisation that seeks to retain traditional values in a rapidly changing socio-economic environment. The 'Asian values' discourse is hence conceptualised as a conservative assault on liberalism and liberal form of democracy rather than, in cultural terms, as 'Asia' versus 'the West' (Connors 2012; Thompson 2001: 159). 'Asian values' discourse is thus not aimed at disparaging democracy *per se* but its liberal forms since it is possible to say that democracy exists in Asia though in illiberal forms (Connors 2012: 261; Croissant 2004: 158; Haynes 2001: 87). Illiberal democracies are such democracies that follow the formal democratic procedures, such as elections, yet these are combined with more authoritarian forms of rule (Croissant 2004: 158) and no full commitment to the economic, political and/or civil liberties (Haynes 2001: 87).

Another possible interpretation of the cultural distinctiveness argument advanced in Thompson (2001) and Connors (2012) is that of nationalism. By making a strong distinction between 'us' and 'them', the leaders in Imperial Germany sought to create a specific overarching national identity – *Germanness* – which would supersede domestic regionalism. Same can be said about the 'Asian values' discourse, which Thompson (2001: 159) aptly calls a "reverse 'Orientalism'" as it uses simplified notions of culture to create a hegemonic image of self; the same processes that were once used by the West to create its identity against the East. It is possible to see here what Perusek (2007: 830) meant when he referred to cultural relativism as "a free floating signifier" characterised with only a little consideration to what is done and said in the name of culture. However, this is not to say that cultural relativism as a concept is inherently flawed or completely misguided. Perusek (2007) himself admits the importance of cultural relativism as an important anthropological tool as long as the approach is well balanced. Therefore, he conceptualises culture as a "web of significance", in which the individuals are subjected to enabling but also constraining forces (Perusek 2007: 832-3).

The academic literature also acknowledges the importance that culture and historical development may have in relation to democratisation, its form and its prospects for consolidation. Koelble and Lipuma (2008) argue that different cultural-historical developments cannot yield same outcomes when it comes to democracy despite the existence of democratic institutions. For instance, the 'divide and rule' approach to colonies aimed at institutionalising inequality and 'bringing up' docile subjects rather than outspoken citizens, which was often continued into the postcolonial era, has often been a hindrance for democratisation (Koelble and Lipuma 2008: 10; Croissant 2004: 169). Here, Koelble and Lipuma employ a behaviour approach to politics, which focuses on examining behavioural regularities rather than institutional make-up since institutional change can occur much easier than a change in

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behavioural patterns (Weale 2007: 28-9). The significance of this approach thus lies in its ability to recognise the importance of culturally or historically-induced behaviours, which may outlive the institutional arrangements that gave rise to them as demonstrated by Koelble and Lipuma (2008) in the case of post-imperial countries. With this approach in mind and Perusek's culture as a "web of significance" thesis, the following section will analyse academic literature related to the democratisation in Thailand and the emergence of 'Thai-style democracy' discourse.

Democracy in Thailand: 'Thai-style democracy'

The origins of democratisation in Thailand date back to 1932 – the year when the absolute monarchy was overthrown and Thailand officially became a constitutional monarchy. Despite this head start, when compared with its neighbours that were at the time under the British or French colonial rule, contemporary Thailand is still seen by the majority of academic literature as an illiberal democracy at best. It has all the necessary structural characteristics – elections, political parties, a constitution and parliament – to classify as a democracy, yet it lacks a democratic 'substance' (Case 2007; Croissant 2004: 161-2; Kobkua 2003: ch1). Even the 1997 Constitution, which was considered to be the most democratic constitution to date (now replaced by the 2007 Constitution), would fail to meet Weale's (2007) basic requirement of political participation advanced at the beginning of this chapter since, for instance, having a bachelor's degree was a minimum pre-condition for becoming a member of the House of Representatives or the Senate (Noranit 2006: 21; Croissant 2004: 162). This example thus indicates that Thai democracy lacks a full commitment to political, civil and economic liberties as defined in Chan (2002). This may be a result of a different understanding of *liberalism* in Thailand (Connors 2008: 145).

The understanding of *liberalism* in Thailand can be best explained in terms of what Connors (2008: 145) refers to as *royal liberalism* – an ideology according to which Thai monarchy is a source of liberalism in a struggle against authoritarianism. This is in a stark contrast to the European understanding and experience of *liberalism* as a bourgeoisie struggle against the absolute monarchy. In this view, democracy is seen as a royal gift bestowed on Thai people by the kings from current Chakri dynasty (Handley 2006: 114), which through a selective reading of history gave rise to an imaginary form of democratic self-rule under the benign royal leadership, the so called *democrasubjection* (Connors 2008: 146). Borwornsak's work (n.d.: 3), for instance, is characteristic of this approach when he argues that King Bhumibol acted in accordance with the constitution by refusing to use his royal prerogative to dispose of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra in 2006. However, Borwornsak does not mention the king's indirect intervention which resulted in a cancellation of the April 2006 general elections won by Thaksin (Hewison 2010: 129; Connors 2008: 156-7; Thongchai 2008: 32). This may also be seen as an extra-constitutional act alien to European constitutional monarchies.

The academic literature acknowledges this different position of Thai monarchy vis-à-vis its European counterparts. Whereas the constitutional monarchies of Europe have a largely

symbolic role, the monarchy in Thailand has been actively involved in all aspects of Thai socio-economic and political life (Hewison 1997: 71). As Thongchai (2008: 31, 33) points out the illusion of Thai monarchy being *above* politics, which is repeatedly emphasised by the palace and academics such as Borwornsak (n.d.: 3), is completely misplaced. *Above* in the context of Thai monarchy does not mean beyond – it is an all encompassing space within which everything else falls. Being *above* politics thus essentially means to *oversee*. Due to the existence of the lèse majesté law, however, there is a general lack of domestic as well as foreign literature that would provide a critical analysis into the role monarchy has played in Thai politics. Those academics, who dared to critically write on the topic of Thai monarchy, argue that Thai kingship is not truly committed to democracy as Thai kings have supported democracy only in those instances when it could have benefitted the monarchy (See examples of this in Hewison 2009; Handley 2006: various chapters; Kobkua 2003: 4; Hewison 1997: 58-74). Therefore, it is impossible to talk about Thai democracy without talking about the Thai monarchy, which is a defining difference between the constitutional monarchies in Europe and Thailand.

The monarchy is likewise a central pillar of 'Thai-style democracy' discourse. As General Prem Tinsulanonda, the President of the king's Privy Council, expressed in an interview with Murphy (2006), there is a need for a culture-specific version of democracy, because Thailand is a monarchy in which the king is highly revered and loved by *all* unlike in other countries. However, the academic literature treats TSD discourse largely in terms of Perusek's (2007) distorted cultural relativism. The rule of Field Marshall Sarit Thanarat, who is considered to have laid grounds for the rise of TSD discourse, is often quoted as an example of this distorted cultural relativism. Sarit used cultural relativism to legitimise his 1957 military coup by arguing that 'Western-style democracy' was unsuitable for Thailand (Hewison 2009; Kobkua 2003: 9-15; Ferrara n.d.: 5). His authoritarian alternative – the so-called *despotic paternalism* – was claimed to be in line with Thai culture and society. It was a top-down governance with the king described as a 'father figure', who regularly visits his 'children' – the people – and listens to their grievances (Hewison 2009; Kobkua 2003: 9-12; Ferrara n.d.: 5). Sarit's *despotic paternalism* thus effectively revived the central position of the monarchy that was significantly weakened following the 1932 revolution (Jackson 2010: 32; Hewison 2009; Handley 2006: ch 8; Baker and Pasuk 2005: 178; Kobkua 2003: 13-4; Bowornsak n.d.: 2; Ferrara n.d.: 5-6). More recent example of the similar use of cultural relativism is the 2006 coup d'état, which will be elaborated on in greater length in chapter 3 of this dissertation.

The academic literature thus perceives TSD similarly to the 'Asian values' discourse – a conservative critique of liberalism and liberal forms of democracy used as a smokescreen for authoritarian abuse of power (See Connors 2012: 263; Ferrara 2011; Hewison 2009; Ferrara n.d.). None of the academic works, however, examines the actual language of TSD rhetoric and how it seeks to influence popular perceptions and ideas on democracy. Maguire's (2002: 42) article *The Thai Language: A dialect with an army?* remarks on the importance of prescriptive use of language in creating a powerful ideological tool capable of influencing public opinion on

certain issues. For instance, the prescriptive use of language in Thai curriculum sets not only the linguistic norms of a *proper* language use but also *social responsibilities* and *virtues*, such as attributes of *good citizenship*, *Thai identity, family* and *community* (Maguire 2002: 42). Such "imposition of prescriptive discourses [...] perpetuates an unequal dynamic in which [people] are denied the opportunity of evaluation, formulation of opinion, or decision-making", which may constitute a hindrance to democratic development (Maguire 2002: 42). This is an important argument, which may find resonance in relation to TSD rhetoric and its use.

McCargo (2005: 506) in his article *Network monarchy and legitimacy crises in Thailand* formulates a similar argument, when he observes that *network monarchy* – a para-political institution comprising the king and his allies (2005: 501) – has been in control of public discourse in Thailand by imposing "royally ordained and prescribed language to frame, delineate and define issues and problems" (2005: 506). McCargo, however, stops short of formulating a powerful argument as he merely asserts that this language control became an important source of political power through the annual tradition of the king's birthday speech without elaborating at any length as to how this may have been achieved. Therefore, it is the aim of this dissertation to examine how TSD rhetoric seeks to influence popular perceptions and ideas of democracy by working as a *linguistic* and *cultural* tool. By *linguistic* tool this dissertation envisages TSD as imposing prescriptive discourses and using language control techniques, while by a *cultural* tool this paper means TSD rhetoric as embedded in cultural traditions or rituals, such as the above mentioned king's birthday speech. This dissertation thus seeks to complement the academic literature on TSD and thereby contribute to the wider academic discourse on the culture-democracy relationship.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to analyse the major academic works related to the topic of study in the present dissertation. As the analysis demonstrated there is a significant body of academic literature available on democracy, its universalist and particularist interpretations, and the concept of 'Thai-style democracy'. Throughout this chapter, culture has proved to be an important variable that needs to be considered when talking about democracy in different cultural contexts. Although neither the 'Asian-values' discourse nor TSD can be considered as an altruistic expression of cultural relativism, cultural relativism is still an important anthropological tool that may help to expound the particularity of democracy in a different cultural context. This dissertation thus adheres to Perusek's (2007: 832-3) conceptualisation of culture as a "web of significance" characterised with enabling and constraining forces and will use this conceptualisation in the following chapters to analyse TSD rhetoric.

As this chapter further demonstrated, there is a sufficient body of academic literature available of the topic of TSD with most academic works examining the different ideologies behind this concept, their origins and the purpose of TSD. However, none of these academic works addresses TSD from the perspective of language use, which is an important and powerful tool

capable of influencing public opinion. Therefore, it is the aim of this dissertation to analyse how TSD, as a linguistic and cultural tool, seeks to influence people's ideas and perceptions on democracy. The following chapter will therefore analyse how TSD rhetoric reinforced through the existence of lèse majesté law enables certain uses of language while suppresses others.

CHAPTER 2

'Thai-Style Democracy' Rhetoric and Lèse Majesté Law

Introduction

Since its inception in 1900, the lèse majesté law has been conducive to the country's elites in controlling public opinion. Hence, it is of no surprise that the lèse majesté law is seen an essential feature of 'Thai-style democracy'. The aim of this chapter is to analyse the language these two concepts – TSD rhetoric and lèse majesté law – use to influence public opinion. As this chapter will demonstrate, the importance of lèse majesté law in relation to the use of language is twofold. Firstly, its cultural justifications create a fertile ground for dissemination of TSD rhetoric in a form of prescriptive discourses. Secondly, the existence of the lèse majesté law alone is conducive to the language control techniques employed by the country's elite and the network monarchy as the law sanctions only a particular use of language while outlaws the other. The lèse majesté law will be conceptualised as TSD's 'royal guards' working through language encouragement on the one hand, and language suppression on the other, seeking to influence people's perceptions and ideas on democracy. The first part of this chapter contextualises the lèse majesté law within the TSD discourse. The following part examines the cultural justifications of the lèse majesté law and how these are instrumental in framing public opinion through imposition of prescriptive discourses and through language control. The final section examines how TSD works as a cultural tool through the medium of the king's birthday speeches, with the king's speech on the lèse majesté law chosen as the chapter's example.

Lèse majesté law in TSD context

According to Article 2 of the Thai Constitution of 2007, Thailand is *a democracy with the king as the head of state* (Th. *rabop prachathipatai an mi phramahakasat song pen pramuk*). This particular linguistic formulation is of a great semantic importance since it reflects the special position of the monarchy in Thailand vis-à-vis other constitutional monarchies as already outlined in the previous chapter. The choice of a conjunction is particularly important here (Somsak 2006). The preference for the use of '*with'* instead of '*and'* to join the two statements together – *Thailand being a democracy* and *the king being the head of a state* – reveals the intention to make the two concepts inseparable and mutually dependent. This differentiates Thai constitution from the constitutions of other constitutional monarchies such as the United Kingdom or Sweden, in which these two concepts are mutually independent, thereby able to exist irrespective of each other. Accordingly, these countries are democracies *and* the king is the head of state (Somsak 2006). *A democracy with the king as the head of state* is thus presented as a new concept of democracy appropriated to Thai culture by blending Western and Eastern political cultures and is the essence of TSD rhetoric (Somsak 2006). It is in this particular framework within which the lèse majesté law exists and operates.

Article 8 of Thai Constitution of 2007 recognises a *special status* of the king by stating that the person of the king is inviolable and he cannot be sued. The lèse majesté law is seen as a mechanism to protect the king's *special status*. It is, however, not unique to Thai culture. As Borwornsak (2009a) points out constitutional monarchies in Europe also have legal mechanisms protecting the special status of the head of state. Yet, these legal mechanisms in European constitutional monarchies are seen as remnants of absolutist past. Here, the lèse

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majesté law is largely dormant as it was superseded with democratic values, such as freedom of speech and principles of equality (Streckfuss 2010: 110). These democratic values are not completely unlimited (Borwornsak 2009a; Weale 2007: 181-4). Many democracies limit the freedom of speech, for instance, to exclude racial hatred or to protect other moral and ethical values by outlawing, for example, child pornography (Weale 2007: 182-3). Since democracy and democratic values are not universally accepted (see previous chapter), there is no general agreement as to what shall constitute the limits to democratic freedoms. This leaves space for the use of cultural relativism. In Thailand, the use of the lèse majesté law is thus justified as a 'cultural' expression of the limits to democratic freedoms in general, and the freedom of speech in particular (Bowornsak 2009a). Yet, as this chapter will demonstrate the lèse majesté law, rather than being this 'cultural' expression of limits on democratic freedoms, is a powerful tool used to enforce and safeguard prescriptive discourses and language imposed by TSD rhetoric through language encouragement, on the one hand, and language suppression, on the other.

Lèse majesté law: TSD's 'royal guards'

Article 112 of Thai Criminal Code (1956, own translation) holds that "whoever defames, insults or has malicious intentions towards the king, the queen, the heir apparent or the regent shall be punished with incarceration from three to fifteen years." This is in stark contrast with a defamation of the members of a state bureaucracy (Article 136), judges and the court of law (Article 198), in which case the maximum prison sentence is seven years, or a defamation of ordinary citizens (Articles 326, 333, 393) with a maximum two-year prison sentence. The degree of inequality institutionalised in these laws is highly contradictory to the language used in the 2007 Constitution, which is granting equality to all people and protecting them from negative discrimination (Streckfuss 2010: 108).

Defending the lèse majesté law, Borwornsak (2009b) argues that the Thai Criminal Code reflects existing social hierarchisation based on Buddhist principles of morality and a special relationship between the king and his people. Indeed, few commentators whether foreign or Thai would deny the existence of a complex social hierarchy that permeates every aspect of Thai social life. The elaborate system of personal pronoun usage in Thai language differentiated through gender, age, social status and relationship between the interlocutors and a separate system of royal language (Handley 2006: 150-1; Connors 2003: 131) are perhaps the most explicit manifestations of this social hierarchisation – an example of culture acting as a constraining force (Perusek 2007: 832-3). Borwornsak (2009b) makes use of this constraining capacity of culture when he defines King Bhumibol in the language of Buddhism as *thammaracha* or righteous king, who rules in accordance with the moral examples set by Buddha and the principles of Buddhist moral law (Th. *thamma*) (Jackson 2010: 35). Through this use of language, Borwornsak encourages the public to see the king as the highest moral authority that is *always right* – thus *naturally* beyond criticism – offering a cultural justification for the lèse majesté law's harsh treatment of criticising the king.

Yet, Borwornsak's justification does not stop here. Unlike in European constitutional monarchies, where the monarch is fairly detached from the people, there is believed to be a unique relationship between King Bhumibol and Thai people that can be described as a father (Th. *pho*) – children (Th. *luk*) relationship characterised with *love* (Th. *khwam rak*), *connection* (Th. *khwam phuk phan*) and *worship* (Th. *kwam thoet thun*) (Bowornsak 2009b). Here, Borwornsak clearly echoes Sarit's ideas of paternalistic despotism (see previous chapter) creating a strong cultural rationale for the existence of lèse majesté law that is seen as protecting this unique king-people relationship. As already outlined in the previous chapter, Thai curriculum is penetrated with prescriptive discourses, many of which prescribe *proper* behaviour in relation to one's family (Macguire 2002: 42). From very early age Thai children are thus taught to have an utmost respect for their parents (Mulder 2000: 59). By framing king Bhumibol with this *pho-luk* terminology, Borwornsak makes use of the existing prescriptive discourses amalgamating the criticism of the king with a criticism of one's father. Hence, every *proper* Thai knows that criticising *the father/father-king* is culturally and morally *inappropriate* (Bowornsak 2009b). Borwornsak's use of language and the associated prescriptive discourses thus sanctions the public to use language of respect and praise in relation to the king, while at the same time it outlaws the use of any derogatory language answerable to the lèse majesté law on the grounds of the king's supreme morality and his *father-like* status.

The extent to which the network monarchy – Borwornsak and the like – succeeded in controlling public discourse through the imposition of these prescriptive discourses and the language inherent in them may be seen on the example of an acceptance speech delivered by a Thai film director, Phongphat Wachirabanchong, at the 2010 Royal Thai Film Awards Ceremony. As Phongphat conveys:

> "The father is a pillar of the house. […] If there is someone angry [...] and then quarrels with father, hates the father, criticises the father, thinks to drive the father out from the house – I will go to say to these people that if they hate the father, [if they] do not love the father anymore: leave from here! Because this is *the father's* house, because this is *the father's* land." (Of Phongphat at Rangwan Nattarat 2010 – own translation)

The way in which the audience received these words is most indicative of how deeply these concepts of the *father-king* are engrained in Thai public consciousness. As soon as the audience realised that Phongphat was not talking about his own father but rather about *the nation's father*, King Bhumibol, the audience was swept with strong emotions – many people in the audience, including the male members, were deeply moved having tears in their eyes. Phongphat's speech received a strong applause and a long standing ovation, which may be seen as a sign of the audience's approval of Phongphat's words (Of Phongphat at Rangwan Nattarat 2010). Therefore, it is possible to say that Phongphat's speech and the audience's reaction epitomise the power these prescriptive discourses have in penetrating public opinion.

The power of Phongphat's speech, however, does not only reside in *the father* metaphor alone – it goes beyond it. Phongphat's use of the *house* metaphor, which initiated the audience's applause, is also significant here. In Thai language, the word for house – *ban* – is also used as a part of a compound word – *chat banmueang* – meaning a nation-state (Mulder 2000: 111). This *house* metaphor is particularly interesting when Phongphat talks about "the father [who] is a pillar of the house" (Of Phongphat at Rangwan Nattarat 2010), thus implicitly referring to the king as *being a pillar of the nation*. The importance of this metaphor becomes even more profound, when this line of Phongphat's speech is interpreted considering the political turmoil prior to and during 2010, which will be closely elaborated on in chapter 4 of this dissertation. In the light of great social disunity with anti-monarchical sentiments being increasingly present among some segments of Thai society (Giles 2009: 86-7), it is possible to interpret this line in Phongphat's speech as an implicit warning based on the following reasoning: if a house cannot exist without its pillar then the nation cannot exist without its king. From there it is possible to conclude that the message of Phongphat's speech was that *without the king there is no nation* (Mulder 2000: 111).

Phongphat's speech can be seen as a product of yet another TSD prescriptive discourse – a discourse of Thai nationalism, which is formulated as a triadic *nation-religion-monarchy* ideology prominently featuring in TSD rhetoric (Connors 2003; Mulder 2000). Although each of the above-mentioned components is said to be a defining principle of Thai national identity, there is an unequal, rather hierarchical relationship between them: n*ation* and *religion* are subordinate to the all-encompassing *king* because their existence is seen as directly dependent on the existence of the *king* (Mulder 2000: 110-2). As Mulder explains (2000: 110-2), Thai nationalism attributes the creation of a nation-state to the Thai kingship and religion is seen as always belonging under the royal patronage. The king thus effectively becomes "the nation personified" (Hewison 1997: 61). This is very much in line with the prescriptive discourse of *royal liberalism*, as introduced in the previous chapter, in which Thai kings are attributed with bringing democracy to Thailand.

Having elaborated on these prescriptive discourses, it becomes rather clear that the monarchy is at the centre of TSD rhetoric. TSD rhetoric thus prescribes the love of the monarchy in general and the love of King Bhumibol in particular as essential features of being Thai. In other words, not loving the king is un-Thai. Following the words of General Prem Tinsulanonda, every *normal* Thai loves the king (Murphy 2006). This use of language by General Prem is largely enabled due to the existence of the lèse majesté law, which makes it almost impossible to publicly dissent from this prescriptive maxim of *all Thais love the king* without being faced with a legal reprisal. The lèse majesté law thus encourages the language that is in line with TSD rhetoric and its prescriptive discourses while at the same time it suppresses the use of language that could contradict them. Hence, it is possible to conceptualise the role of the lèse majesté law as metaphorical 'royal guards' protecting the prescriptive discourses and ideologies imposed by TSD rhetoric resulting in what Streckfuss (2010: 106) aptly calls as Thailand's "chronicle of

silence: the things never said, the articles never written, the thoughts perhaps never even imagined".

Yet, in the prescribed logic of TSD rhetoric, the existence of lèse majesté law is seen to prove the people's love for the king (Streckfuss 2010: 117) because hurting the king also means hurting Thai society, Thai culture and Thai morals (Bowornsak 2009b). Bowornsak (2009b) attempts to demonstrate the *genuineness* of the people's love by saying that Thais have kept the lèse majesté law despite King Bhumibol's 2005 birthday speech in which he called upon the people to openly criticise him. However, as the next section will demonstrate, King Bhumibol's speeches are neither clear-cut nor easy to interpret in relation to what the he *really thinks*. With the lèse majesté law in place, it is impossible to verify whether Borwornsak's argument – the law being a reflection of *genuine* love Thai people have for their king – is at least partially justifiable. As Somsak (Top choth 2013) explains:

> "If someone says that they love the king (Th. *chao*) or they hate the king (Th. *chao*), these [claims] have no meaning because in real practice [...] if someone hates the king (Th. *chao*) they cannot say it [...] the person who says that breaks the law [...] in the opposite meaning [...] a person who says that they love the king (Th. *chao*) - it is also meaningless [...]. In circumstances when we are forced that we can only speak in certain way, it is completely meaningless [...] because there is no freedom to speak both ways equally." (own translation)

Here, Somsak points out that the '*all Thais love the king'* maxim of TSD rhetoric is completely meaningless due to the existence of the lèse majesté law. It is impossible to find out how many people *truly* love the king as loving the king is the only possible answer under the lèse majesté. Somsak thus believes that this makes the monarchy appear undemocratic and every time a lèse majesté charge is made it only reinforces the monarchy's undemocratic nature. This is a very interesting interpretation of the lèse majesté law as it holds that lèse majesté does not *protect* but *harms* the monarchy (Top chot 2013).

Yet, Somsak's argument is also interesting from the semantic point of view due to the selection of the word *chao* to refer to the king instead of the more explicit *phramahakasat* (En. king). In Thai language, the word *chao* has many different meanings, for instance *master*, *chief*, *owner* or *a people of royal descent* (Terwiel 1982: 46). This allows Somsak to implicitly challenge the suppressive nature of the lèse majesté law and TSD prescriptive discourses because by definition, Somsak is not referring to the king *per se* but *the people of royal descent*. Since *the people of royal descent* are not included in Article 112, the use of *chao* theoretically enables Somsak, and the like-minded, to articulate an implicit criticism of those protected under the auspices of the lèse majesté law without being charged by it. This is an example of culture as an enabling force, thereby indicating that the same forces – such as language control – that helped to impose TSD rhetoric on public discourse may be employed, in reverse, to challenge it.

The power of king's speech

The tradition of King Bhumibol's annual birthday speech given on December 4th, a night before his birthday, aptly demonstrates how TSD rhetoric operates as a linguistic and cultural tool reinforced through the omnipresent threat of lèse majesté law. Unlike in other constitutional monarchies, such as the United Kingdom where the monarch's speeches are prepared by the cabinet and have largely symbolic values, King Bhumibol's speeches are far from being symbolic as he prepares his speeches himself without being subjected to any form of governmental control or censorship. The content of King Bhumibol's speeches is thus completely arbitrary. Hence it is of no surprise that ideas conducive to TSD often feature in his speeches (Hewison 1997: 68). It is not only the content that makes the king's speeches powerful to the extent that they are capable of influencing people's perceptions and ideas on democracy. The particular way in which the king chooses the words and linguistic tools for his speeches is as important as the content itself since it creates a fertile ground for language control and imposition of prescriptive discourses. The king's 2005 birthday speech is a good example to demonstrate this.

As already outlined above, Borwornsak (2009b) argued that keeping the lèse majesté law despite the king's call upon the people to openly criticise him proves how much Thai people love their king. However, the king's words are not as clear-cut as Borwornsak holds them to be when he says:

> "Actually [we] want to let [them] to criticise [us] because whatever we (Th. *rao*) do, [we] have to know that they (Th. *khao*) agree or disagree." (Bhumibol Adulyadej 2005, own translation – personal pronouns inserted in brackets are indicative of what the author believes, based on the overall meaning and the context, are the closest ones to the meaning the king possibly wanted to convey)

As this sentence shows, King Bhumibol's rare use of personal pronouns, especially the first person pronoun (Handley 2006: 178), makes his words sound rather ambiguous as it is impossible to say with a complete certainty who he means when he refers to "them" – is it general public? the royalist and palace supporters? or even the potential critics of the monarchy? – or whether he really *wants* to be criticised as there is no personal pronoun used that would make it completely clear if it is *the king* who wants criticism or *someone else*. From a linguistic perspective, such a rare personal pronoun usage is grammatically compatible with a 'correct' Thai language use, yet the degree to which this is employed by the king opens his speeches to various interpretations. For instance, this is how the same sentence appeared in two Thai English-language newspapers respectively:

> "[...] actually I want them to criticise because whatever I do, I want to know that people agree or disagree." (The Nation 2005a)

> "As a matter of fact there should be criticism, because when we do something we want to know if people agree or disagree." (Translated by Bangkok Post in BBC Worldwide Monitoring 2005)

It is possible to see on these two translations, how much meaning can be taken or added to the king's words due to their ambiguous nature. Both newspaper translations can thus be said to

have added some extra meaning to the king's words when they translated the word *khao* (En. they), in the original, as *people*. The translation by The Nation (2005a) further makes the king sound much more explicit when it translates "I want them to criticise" when compared to the less concrete "there should be criticism" as translated in Bangkok Post (BBC Worldwide Monitoring 2005). Although these are rather subtle differences from the linguistic point of view, the semantic variation is considerable. This ambiguity, which sanctions a great degree of semantic engineering, thus enabled The Nation (2005b) to refer to the king's speech as an ode to democracy while Borwornsak (2009b) sees it as the king's move against the use of lèse majesté law. However, nowhere in the speech did King Bhumibol call the lèse majesté law undemocratic or say that sending people to jail based on charges under Article 112 is inherently wrong. Indeed, it is impossible to discern what the king *really* thinks about the existence and the use of Article 112 from his speech when he says:

> "Foreigners [...] say that in Thailand [if] the king is insulted, [people] go to prison. Actually [they] ought to go to prison but because foreigners say like that, then don't let [them] go [to prison]... there is no one who dares to send people, who insult the king, to jail because the king is in trouble... because they [foreigners] say that the king is not a good person."

and

> "Actually, the king has never said let's send [them] to prison." (Both quotes Bhumibol Adulyadej 2005, own translation)

The first quote seems to indicated that King Bhumibol may implicitly agree with the prison sentence under the lèse majesté law when he says that people "ought to go to prison" for insulting the king. The second statement, due to its inherent ambiguity, may be interpreted in two completely contradictory ways: first, the king "has never said" and *never wanted* to send people to jail *or* second, the king "has never said" to send people to jail but he thinks *it is right*. As these two quotes demonstrate, the way in which King Bhumibol speaks makes it impossible to discern his true thoughts on the use and existence of the lèse majesté law – a perfect opportunity for semantic engineering to adjust the meaning for the needs of TSD as seen on the above-mentioned interpretations by Borwornsak and The Nation. It is possible to argue that the king's deliberate play with ambiguity (Handley 2006: 178) is an attempt to present himself as being truly above politics or, perhaps, as a secret approval of TSD with its language control techniques and prescriptive discourses.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to demonstrate how TSD rhetoric and the lèse majesté law use language to influence public opinion. As this chapter demonstrated, the lèse majesté law is an important component of TSD playing the metaphorical 'royal guards' since it encourages the use of language sanctioned by TSD and suppresses the language contradictory to TSD rhetoric. This is achieved mainly on two grounds. Firstly, the use of cultural relativism to justify the use

of lèse majesté law creates a fertile ground to disseminate TSD rhetoric in a form of prescriptive discourses as seen on the example of the *father-king* maxim and its ample occurrence in Phongphat's acceptance speech. Secondly, the existence of the lèse majesté law is conducive to the language control techniques employed by the network monarchy as demonstrated on the example of the *all Thais love the king* maxim or the king's birthday speeches. Under the lèse majesté law both deviations – *not loving the king* and criticising the king's speeches or the interpretations thereof – are liable to be seen as the violations of Article 112. However, this use of language by TSD and lèse majesté law to influence public opinion is not without any dissent. Somsak's use of the word *chao* was thus a good example of Perusek's culture as a "web of significance" characterised not only with constraining forces (i.e. social hierarchy, royal language) but also with enabling forces – in this case, the nature of Thai language enabled Somsak to criticise the king without directly referring to him. The following chapters will further seek to demonstrate how these language suppression and encouragement techniques of TSD seek to influence public opinion on democracy.

CHAPTER 3

'Thai-Style Democracy' Rhetoric and the 2006 coup d'état

Introduction

As the previous chapter demonstrated TSD rhetoric seeks to influence public opinion through the language encouragement on the one hand, and language suppression on the other. The

aim of this chapter is to further advance the previous chapter's findings by examining how TSD rhetoric seeks to influence people's ideas and perceptions of democracy on the example of the 2006 coup d'état. The military-staged coup d'état of 19 September 2006 has been one of the most controversial developments in recent Thai political history. It has left Thai society deeply divided over its legitimacy and aroused a considerable degree of criticism from the international society concerned about the state of Thai democracy. On the analysis of language used to justify the 2006 coup, this chapter will demonstrate that the language suppression and encouragement techniques employed by TSD rhetoric succeeded in delegitimizing Thaksin's government in the eyes of public to the extent that the coup was seen as the only possible option to dispose of Thaksin.

The first part of this chapter provides a brief background to the resurgence of TSD rhetoric as a dominant political force in Thailand at the beginning of twenty-first century. As this section points out, the economic and socio-political developments of 1997 created a fertile ground for the re-emergence of TSD. The following three sections analyse the use of language by the coup group and the related TSD prescriptive discourses that were imposed on the public prior to and in the coup's aftermath. These sections will argue that the particular language choices were of a profound importance in rendering Thaksin's government illegitimate, thereby sanctioning the coup as necessity.

1997 and the revival of TSD rhetoric

The year 1997 is often considered as a turning point in Thai history (Baker and Pasuk 2005: 255; Pasuk 2004: 14) since it created unique economic and socio-political circumstances for the rise of new political forces in the twenty first century Thailand. The 1997 economic crisis that replaced four decades of strong economic development and brought the Thai economy to the brink of collapse resulted in a significant shift from domestic to foreign business ownership and a desire for a political change (Baker and Pasuk 2005: 255-7; Pasuk and Baker 2004: 17). An unprecedented flow of foreign investment to capitalise on bankrupt domestic businesses following the crisis (Pasuk and Baker 2004: 16-7) revived the appeal of TSD rhetoric and created a fertile ground for the imposition of prescriptive discourses with a strong nationalistic element preaching a return to Thai 'culture'.

King Bhumibol's idea of *sufficient economy*, which was rendered anachronistic during the prosperous years, is a prime example of how these economic developments enabled the country's network monarchy to encourage certain uses of language while suppressing others. King Bhumibol's 1997 birthday speech criticising all those who supported unbridled capitalism and consumerism as oppose to his ideas of *sufficiency* in a "I told you so" fashion (Bhumibol Adulyadej quoted in Handley 2006: 414), created a fertile ground for an imposition of a powerful prescriptive discourse of a humble Buddhist kingdom as against the previous period of sustained globalisation, foreign investment and the rise in consumerism (Handley 2006: 414-5; Baker and Pasuk 2005: 256). The concept of s*ufficient economy* finally found resonance within the wider

public now devastated by the effects of the crisis and through a careful dissemination and language encouragement in a form of political speeches, media commentaries and temple sermons, the king's *sufficient economy* effectively became a new cultural catchword (Handley 2006: 415).

On a more political level, the year 1997 was significant on at least two grounds. Firstly, as the responsibility for the economic mismanagement was increasingly ascribed to the corrupt politicians, there was a growing public demand to see a change in the old political system. This was especially the case of Thai businessmen many of whom were deeply affected by the crisis and wanted to assume a more active role in Thai politics to directly control globalisation and to restore the state's protection over their business interests (Handley 2006: 409; Baker and Pasuk 2005: 255-6; Pasuk and Baker 2004: 17-8; Pasuk 2004: 14). Secondly, the growing demands for a reform of the political system culminated in passing of the 1997 constitution (McCargo and Ukrist 2005: 12; Pasuk and Baker 2004: 22). Besides the greater emphasis on human rights and political participation than its predecessors, which earned it the name *People's Constitution* (Noranit 2006), the 1997 constitution also enhanced the powers of prime minister, whose position became almost inviolable. The opposition would have to gather two-fifths of votes in the lower house to express a parliamentary no-confidence (McCargo and Ukrist 2005: 215).

The 1997 economic crisis and growing demands for political change reflected in the new constitution favoured the rise of Thaksin Shinawatra, a billionaire telecommunications tycoon turned politician of Sino-Thai origin, who was able to capitalise on these developments (Baker and Pasuk 2005: 257-8; Pasuk and Baker 2004: 62; Kasian 2002: 339). Thaksin was elected to become the first Thai prime minister under the new 1997 constitution winning a landslide victory in 2001 general elections. He was the first Thai prime minister to gain almost an absolute majority of seats in the parliament and the first Thai prime minister to be re-elected for another four-year term in 2005. Yet, Thaksin's re-election success was rather short-lived. In February 2006, the *People's Alliance for Democracy* (hereafter PAD) began a series of street protests against Thaksin that led to the dissolution of Thai parliament and a new round of elections scheduled for April 2006. Despite winning the April elections, which were boycotted by the opposition parties and later annulled following the king's intervention, Thaksin was ousted from power on 19th September 2006 in a military coup (Hewison 2010; Pye and Schaffar 2008; Case 2007). The re-emergence of TSD rhetoric in the post-1997 period thus shall be mostly seen as a direct response to Thaksin and his politics. The following section examines how TSD rhetoric sought to influence public opinion on the 2006 coup by suppressing and encouraging particular language use.

TSD rhetoric and the 2006 coup

After seizing power, the coup group issued an official statement giving reasons behind the overthrow of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and his elected government. As the coup group's leader, General Sonthi Boonyaratklin, explained Thaksin's administration has led to:

> "a severe social disunity unprecedented in Thai society before. [...] corruption, bad conduct and a wide-scale cronyism [...] which has an impact on national security and the country's economy as a whole, including carrying out precarious political activities towards committing lèse majesté against His Majesty the King who is respected and revered by the Thai people, therefore the Council for the Administration's Reform under Democracy with the King as the Head of State (Th. *khana pathirup kanpokkhrong nai rabop prachathipatai an mi phramahakasat song pen pramuk*) needed to seize power [...] in order to control and to solve the country's situation to restore normalcy and to quickly build social unity" (Thai Coup Proceeding 1 2006, own translation)

Although the official statement does not directly recall TSD as a legitimising force behind the coup, General Sonthi's choice of words is of a particular semantic importance disclosing a close congruence with TSD rhetoric while seeking to justify the 2006 coup in the public's eyes as a *necessity*. The most obvious connection between the coup and TSD rhetoric can be found in the selected name of the coup group itself. Albeit the majority of English language literature refers to General Sonthi's coup group as *the Council for Democratic Reform under the Constitutional Monarchy* (Hewison 2010; Ukrist 2008; Pattana 2006; Borwornsak n.d.), this translation is rather misleading as it implies that the coup group's intention was to achieve a democratic reform within the political system of constitutional monarchy. This dissertation thus uses a more nuanced translation of the group's name – *Council for the Administration's Reform under Democracy with the King as the Head of State* (own translation) – which reveals two important ideological connections with the TSD rhetoric. First, by placing its activities under the *democracy with the king as the head of state* framework, the coup group effectively established that its activities cannot be comprehended through the lens of Western models of democracy since *democracy with the king as the head of state* is understood as a *democracy appropriated to the Thai cultural context* (Somsak 2006; see previous chapter).

Second, this more nuanced translation reveals the genuine intention of the coup-makers, which is *to reform the country's administration* and not to make a democratic reform. As General Sonthi's speech does not contain any long-term goals and/or provisions, it is possible to argue that the coup was reactionary in nature (Ukrist 2008: 127) and the overthrow of Thaksin's government may be seen as essentially accomplishing what was meant by a *reform of the country's administration*. However, the real significance of General Sonthi's speech is to be found in his use of prescriptive and royally ordained language effectively framing Thaksin as a threat to *the monarchy* (political activities verging on lèse majesté), *the nation* (social disunity), and Thailand's *democracy* (corruption, bad conduct and cronyism) concluding that staging the coup was a *necessity* in order to "restore normalcy" (Thai Coup Proceeding 1 2006). The power of this prescriptive language can be seen in the writings of Thai academics, such as Kien (2006) or Pattana (2006: 2), who seem to readily accept this justification by adopting the same language and echoing the coup group when conceptualising the coup as a *necessary evil*.

Thaksin as a threat to the nation and democracy

The language used in General Sonthi's speech seeks to justify the 2006 coup by labelling Thaksin's government as essentially *amoral*, which may be seen as detrimental to *national security*. This careful choice of words enabled General Sonthi to make implicit reference to a number of existing prescriptive discourses in Thai society and thereby encouraging the public to frame and see the coup as the only solution left to solve the country's problems. General Sonthi's (Thai Coup Proceeding 1 2006) description of Thaksin's government as characterised with "corruption, bad conduct and wide scale cronyism" capitalises on a prescriptive discourse of *clean politics*, which is based on a maxim that all Thai politicians are extremely corrupt. The *clean politics* prescriptive discourse thus calls for politics without corruption, big money and vote-buying. As Thongchai (2008: 24) points out there would be nothing wrong in calling for 'clean' politics, if this discourse was not used by the country's elites to disparage the emerging parliamentary system in order to create a prominent role for the monarchy as the highest moral authority that is *above* these amoral political practices. King Bhumibol's well-known comparison of corruption being the country's most damaging plague – echoed by many prominent public figures to ensure that the king's comparison penetrates the public discourse – has successfully heighten the perceived severity of this problem in the eyes of Thai public. Many Thais thus believe that Thai politicians are the most corrupt in the world and Thailand is on the verge of demise because of corruption (Thongchai 2008: 24-5). General Sonthi can be said to have known what the 'right' words were to choose in order to encourage the public to see the coup as a *necessity* by indicating that Thaksin's *corruption*, *cronyism* and *bad conduct* were a threat to *national security*. The power of this prescriptive discourse in influencing public opinion is reflected in the fact that corruption has become an effective justification tool for military coups in Thailand since the 1980s (Thongchai 2008: 25).

Another important word choice General Sonthi makes in his speech is that of calling Thaksin a source of a major *social disunity*, which is also linked to the threat to *national security* and perhaps also the *country's economy*. Here, General Sonthi makes use of the royally ordained language, which has been a recurring theme in the king's birthday speeches (Baker and Pasuk 2005: 237; McCargo 2005: 506; Hewison 1997: 64-5). For King Bhumibol *unity* and *the need for good people to rule the country* are seen as the cornerstones of the nation's *survival*, *progress* and *prosperity* (Connors 2003: 134). By describing Thaksin's government as corrupt, General Sonthi already made it clear that Thaksin was *not a good person* while by conceptualising Thaksin as a source of social disunity, he hinted on another powerful prescriptive discourse – a "tale of two democracies" (Kasian 2006: 15). According to this prescriptive discourse, rural and urban people have different understanding of democracy making the society inherently divided. However, Thailand's rural population – due to the poverty and lack of education – is said to *not* understand the politics making it prone to political manipulation through vote-buying (Kasian 2006: 14; Pattana 2006: 5-6; Borwornsak n.d.: 4-5). A post-coup interview reveals that General Sonthi himself believed this maxim:

"I suspect many Thais still lack a proper understanding of democracy. [...] I think it is important to educate the people about true democratic rule. It is a challenge to enable all 60 million Thais to gain an in-depth understanding of democracy and all its rights, duties and rules. Democracy will thrive once the people learn its true meaning." (General Sonthi in The Nation 2006)

General Sonthi's use of language thus may be seen as deliberately constructed to encourage the public to see Thaksin as taking advantage of this inherent *social disunity* in Thai society. In this context, Thaksin's pro-poor policies are seen as a form of vote-buying aimed at exploiting the numerical supremacy of the *uneducated* and *easily manipulated* rural population, who in turn would secure his hold on power through elections. Kasian (2006: 15) and Kien (2006) refer to this as *the tyranny of the rural majority* effectively echoing General Sonthi's speech by justifying the coup as a *necessity* claiming that it would have been impossible to dispose of Thaksin through election means.

In his justification, Kien (2006) goes as far as to compare Thaksin with Adolf Hitler arguing that the tyranny of the majority, as proven throughout history, is "much more dangerous than military dictatorship" (own translation). Here, Kien's words resemble King Bhumibol's birthday speech, in which he defends dictators by stating that if they are *good people*, they can still do good things for their populations (Hewison 1997: 68). Following this logic, a military coup that disposed of Thaksin was seen as a better option than letting Thaksin stay in power any longer (Thongchai 2008: 11). Controversial as it may be, this example demonstrates the power prescriptive discourses and 'right' word choice have over public opinion. This highly biased perception of Thailand's manipulated rural population, which encourages the language that *elections are not be-all end-all of democracy*, had a profoundly negative impact on the legitimacy of Thaksin's government (Thogchai 2008: 24-25). It is possible to argue that General Sonthi's rationale of the coup is carefully constructed through the language choice and the related meanings these words attained thus encouraging the public to speak about the coup as a *necessity.* The post-coup Suan Dusit surveys also indicate that this form of language encouragement has been successful seeing that over 80 per cent of Thai population said to have supported the coup (Ukrist 2008; Kien 2006; Pattana 2006).

Thaksin as a threat to the monarchy

Although General Sonthi mentions the monarchy only once – Thaksin "carrying out precarious political activities [...] towards committing lèse majesté" (Thai Coup Proceeding 1 2006) – the above mentioned word choices he makes to describe Thaksin and his government are conducive to the notion of the monarchy being the highest moral authority. General Sonthi's speech thus encourages the use of language identifiable with the Buddhist concepts of power to justify the *necessity* of staging the coup. Since in Thai society, King Bhumibol is seen as *thammaratcha* or the righteous king as discussed in the second chapter of this dissertation (Jackson 2010: 35-37; Bowornsak 2009b), he is in possession of *phra khun* or benevolent power (Pattana 2006:5) which stems from his charisma and ritual magico-divinity (Jackson 2010: 33-

34). General Sonthi's characterisation of Thaksin and his government as marked with *corruption*, *bad conduct* and *cronyism* implicitly identifies Thaksin with the use of *phra det* (Pattana 2006: 5) – crude, *amoral* political power (Th. *amnat*) (Jackson 2010: 33). Following this Buddhist perceptions of power, it is possible to conceptualise the 2006 coup as *mara* (En. Buddhist evil) versus *thammaratcha* or in other words, Thaksin versus the king (Pattana 2006: 3-4), which may be a seen as a powerful justification for the *need* to stage the coup. The effect General Sonthi's speech had on the people's perceptions of the coup may have been reflected on a public display following the coup. After General Sonthi announced the coup's accomplishment, people came on the streets of Bangkok greeting the soldiers and giving them flowers, which may be seen as a sign of popular approval of the 2006 coup.

Seeing that Thaksin was neither the only corrupt politician in Thai history nor the only one who used and abused political power for his own benefit and benefit of his cronies, the mobilisation of all these prescriptive discourses to delegitimise Thaksin may indicate that the real reasons for staging the coup went far beyond General Sonthi's words of Thaksin being an *amoral* leader who was causing social *disunity*. Thaksin's authoritarian assault on power combined with his pro-poor policies alarmed the old conservative elites, who saw Thaksin as a direct challenge to the *royal liberalism* as discussed in chapter 1. Thaksin's political campaign centred around the growth-oriented pro-poor policies, such as the one million baht per village scheme or the thirty baht health scheme, were in a stark contrast with the king's conservative ideas on state welfare – he disapproved of it (Hewison 1997: 66-7) – and *sufficient economy*. By positioning himself as a 'champion of the rural poor', Thaksin was competing with the king over the "hearts and minds of the masses" (Hewison 2010: 129) and was perceived as a direct challenge to the Thai monarchy that has been cultivating an image of the people's monarchy over the years through an extensive number of royal rural developmental projects (i.e. dams) and ideologies (i.e. sufficient economy) (Hewison 2010: 129; Connors 2008: 148; Kasian 2006: 32). The indication that the coup was staged in the interest of the Thai monarchy rather than the military was also implicitly reflected in General Sonthi's speech (Thai Coup Proceeding 1 2006) when he expressed that the coup group "has no intention to become the kingdom's administrator and will return power [...] to Thai people as quickly as possible" (own translation).

Being accused of not one hundred per cent loyalty to the monarchy, Thaksin was seen as overly dangerous. As Sulak (Top chot 2013) explains the concern was that Thaksin wanted to abolish the monarchy (Th. *lom chao*) and he had the power – *amnat* – to do so. Although there is no direct evidence suggesting Thaksin's desires to overthrow the monarchy (Somsak in Top chot 2013), Thaksin's political activities, especially military and bureaucratic reshuffles aimed at consolidating his influence over Thai politics, encroached on the network monarchy by displacing its members from the key positions of control and power (McCargo 2005: 501). General Sonthi's reform of the country's administration and the *return to normalcy* may thus be best understood as a desire to restore the powers of the country's network monarchy.

Conclusion

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The aim of this chapter was to analyse the use of language in relation to the 2006 coup to advance the previous chapter's findings that TSD rhetoric seeks to influence public opinion through language suppression on the one hand, and language encouragement on the other. As demonstrated on the example of the coup group's post-coup rationale, a careful selection of language had a profound influence in stirring up the public discourse in the direction of pre-existing TSD prescriptive discourses, such as *clean politics* or *"tale of two democracies"* (Kasian 2006: 15). These prescriptive discourses then encouraged the public to see Thaksin and his government as increasingly illegitimate despite his high election popular support by – in the language of TSD – the *uneducated* and *corruptible*, which made the public to see the coup as the only possible option to dispose of Thaksin. Yet, as the following chapter will demonstrate these language suppression and encouragement techniques employed by the network monarchy are only successful to the extent they are appropriated by different segments of Thai society.

CHAPTER 4

'Thai-Style Democracy' Rhetoric and the 'Red Shirts' and 'Yellow Shirts' Movements

Introduction

As already outlined in the previous chapter, the extent to which TSD rhetoric may be considered as successful in influencing people's perceptions and ideas on democracy is dependent on whether and how the language inherent in TSD rhetoric is used by different segments of Thai society to frame their respective understanding of democracy. Therefore, this chapter seeks to explore the extent to which TSD rhetoric – through its language encouragement and language

suppression techniques – managed to successfully penetrate public discourse and influence people's ideas and perceptions on democracy. As this chapter will demonstrate, TSD rhetoric can be said to have informed the language used by both, pro-Thaksin and anti-Thaksin movements. However, the way how this TSD rhetoric was used by both movements differs significantly, thereby validating Perusek's thesis that culture may be seen as constraining as well as enabling force.

The first part of this chapter briefly analyses the use of TSD rhetoric within the PAD movement prior to the 2006 coup d'état. The following section will then analyse different uses of TSD rhetoric by PAD and UDD movements respectively throughout the post-coup period of 2007-2010 with a special emphasis on how TSD rhetoric informed the movements' respective ideas and perceptions of democracy. This section will demonstrate that although TSD rhetoric may be said to have succeeded in influencing PAD's ideas on democracy, the same rhetoric was used by UDD to create a powerful counterforce challenging the TSD rhetoric and the country's network monarchy.

PAD before the 2006 coup

Since February 2006 when the PAD started their first mass anti-Thaksin demonstrations until the 2010 government crackdown on the pro-Thaksin forces or *United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship* (hereafter UDD) culture constituted an important rallying theme. Both movements were using strong cultural symbolism to frame their respective ideas on the form of Thai democracy and although both considered themselves *democratic*, their activities and their respective perceptions of democracy were often highly controversial, if not openly undemocratic.

The old elites' opposition to Thaksin and his government was fully apparent by 2004, but as Connors (2008: 151) points out various efforts on the part of the elites to remove Thaksin from the office of prime minister failed. It was only the PAD, under the leadership of a media mogul Sondhi Limthongkul, that managed to capitalise on this elite disquietude and mobilised the public support that paved the way for the 2006 coup (Connors 2008: 151-2). PAD's ability to mobilise a mass public opposition against Thaksin may be attributed to Sondhi's careful use of language and a successful imposition of prescriptive discourses on the public to frame Thaksin and his government. Although the general dissatisfaction with Thaksin and his governments was growing throughout the years prior to the coup (Pye and Schaffar 2008: 39-40), there was a need for a *unifying force* that would bring together all the dissatisfied groups in Thai society and join their respective grievances under a common umbrella. Sondhi found this *unifying force* in the language related to the monarchy. The PAD's positioning as a royalist movement attracted a substantial public support and penetrated many aspects of the movement's campaign. The symbolic yellow t-shirts donned by its supporters were the most explicit manifestation of the use of cultural symbolism in general and the royal symbolism in particular since in Thai culture yellow

is a colour of Monday, a day on which King Bhumibol was born (McCargo 2009: 12; Pye and Schaffar 2008: 41).

Yet Sondhi did not only campaign on the monarchy. The tax-free sale of Thaksin's Shin Corp to a Singaporean company in January 2006 led to a public outcry and became a strong theme of PAD anti-Thaksin rallies as were the issues of media censorship, free trade agreements with China and Australia, and the extrajudicial killings in the Muslim South under the auspices of Thaksin's 'War on Drugs' (Pye and Schaffar 2008: 41-2). By placing an emphasis on these often very controversial practices, Sondhi effectively challenged the legitimacy of Thaksin and his government within the confines of *royal liberalism* (Connors 2008: 144-5; see chapter 1), thereby encouraging his supporters to see the monarchy as a source of liberalism and alternative legitimacy vis-à-vis Thaksin and his authoritarianism. Imposition of this prescriptive discourse had a powerful effect on Sondhi's supporters. At the early stages of anti-Thaksin protests, many groups joined Sondhi's PAD under the condition that he would stop calling for the royal intervention under Article 7 of 1997 Constitution in order to dispose of Thaksin (Pye and Schaffar 2008: 41-2). Yet, Thaksin's unwillingness to surrender his power made Sondhi's demands of the royal intervention sound very appealing since within the prescriptive discourse of *royal liberalism*, king Bhumibol is seen as a supreme ombudsman, who intervenes in Thai politics to resolve the country's crises and helps it to return back on the path towards democracy (Thongchai 2008: 22-3). Together with the use of language related to Buddhist concepts of power, *clean politics* and *'a tale of two democracies'* as discussed in the previous chapter, it is not surprising that by March 2006 even those PAD supporters who were originally against the idea of royal intervention came to support it (Pye and Schaffar 2008: 54). Despite the king's refusal to use the royal prerogative in April 2006 as being unconstitutional and PAD's subsequent retreat to the background of anti-Thaksin struggles (Connors 2008: 160; Pye and Schaffar 2008: 55-6), the anti-Thaksin campaign laid some important ideological foundations for the use of TSD rhetoric to justify the 2006 coup.

Different colours of Thai democracy

As already indicated in the previous chapter, the aim of the 2006 coup was to overthrow Thaksin and his government. Although the coup succeeded in doing so, it failed to remove Thaksin's influence over Thai politics (Hewison 2010: 119-20; Lintner 2009: 111). This was manifested in the first post-coup elections in December 2007 that was won by a successor to Thaksin's *Thai Rak Thai* (hereafter TRT) party – the *People's Power Party* (hereafter PPP). PPP comprised of relatives and spouses of the former TRT politicians who after a court ruling of TRT's election fraud were banned from politics for a five-year period (Kitti 2009: 175; Lintner 2009: 111). Dissatisfied with the election results, the PAD renewed its demonstrations in March 2008 (Hewison 2010: 120; Lintner 2009: 111). Whereas the rallying themes of the post-2006 PAD followed the similar pattern as the ones prior to the coup (McCargo 2009: 15), the new PAD rhetoric became considerably radicalised drawing on an extreme interpretation of the prescriptive discourses used before and shortly after the 2006 coup.

Sondhi Limthongkul's concept of the '*new politics*' is a good example of the PAD's rhetoric radicalisation. This can be seen on the language Sondhi used when proposing his new model of a political representation in Thai parliament. According to Sondhi, Thai parliament should comprise only thirty per cent of elected and seventy per cent of appointed representatives, thereby adjusting democracy to Thailand's needs. As Sondhi explains in an interview for Asia Times Online:

> "Let's not get democracy as you would go to McDonalds and order a hamburger, because democracy is still a Western export. [...] Maybe we don't need a 100% elected parliament. Maybe 70% (appointed) – 30% (elected). [...] we could find new ways to get more people participating in politics from all walks of life. That's new politics." (Crispin 2008)

Sondhi's use of language is significant on at least two grounds since it reflects a successful proliferation of prescriptive discourses that encourages a particular use of language on the one hand, and suppresses another use of language on the other. First, by saying that Thailand cannot '*get its democracy like a hamburger from McDonald's*', the language strikingly reminiscent of Ritzer's (2010) cultural critique of globalisation as a forceful spread of American culture and values – from there *McDonaldisation*, Sondhi echoes the general opinion of the country's elites that globalisation, including its political mutations such as *liberal democracy*, is alien to Thai culture. Therefore, liberal democracy needs to be culturally adjusted if not completely rejected (See also General Prem in Murphy 2006). By referring to *McDonald's*, Sondhi creates a powerful image to demonstrate his point. After all, as every Thai knows even *McDonald's* chain of fast food restaurants has been 'culturally adjusted' to Thailand's 'needs' with the figure of Ronald McDonald performing the traditional Thai *wai* at the entrance of every restaurant (See Appendix 5).

Having established the grounds for cultural relativism, Sondhi proposes his controversial and rather undemocratic model of parliamentary representation, which is a second example of a successful proliferation of language control and prescriptive discourses at work. Sondhi's rationale of this 30%-70% representation model is reflected in his belief that the rural poor "lack access to the right information" (Sondhi in Crispin 2008), therefore they are unable to make informed political judgements. This particular language use clearly echoes Kien's (2006) and Kasian's (2006) *tyranny of the rural majority* that is being blamed for enabling corrupt politicians to gain political power as mentioned in the previous chapter. The proliferation of this prescriptive discourse within PAD's rhetoric is even more pronounced in another interview given by Sondhi, when he argues that:

> "The rural poor [...] go where the money goes. [...] They have been bought all the time. [...] This is the heart of the problem. [...] don't just look at Thaksin as a champion of the poor. I can be champion of the poor if I start giving them the money, because they lack a complete understanding of what politics are all about." (Shah 2006).

By placing considerable emphasis on *money*, Sondhi only reiterates the arguments laid out in the *tyranny of the rural majority* prescriptive discourse and reinforces the essentialist notion of rural people as being *easily corruptible* therefore not worthy to have their political opinions taken seriously. This is an example how TSD rhetoric works to suppress certain language use as it discredits the opinions formulated by Thailand's rural populations. It is possible to assume that Sondhi's use of language related to this particular prescriptive discourse was also aimed at increasing his movement's credibility by building its identity through disparaging the 'Red Shirts' movement as rural in character, thereby bribed by Thaksin and his cronies to stage pro-Thaksin's demonstrations. When asked whether he is not underestimating the rural population, Sondhi's reply: "No, not at all. I lived there, I've been there, I fought against Thaksin and I know them all." (Shah 2006). – is only a reassertion of the power of this prescriptive discourse to encourage a specific use of language. The confidence coming out from this quote only demonstrates how deeply and successfully this prescriptive discourse is entrenched in the minds of many middle-class Thai citizens (Hewison 2010: 127; Thonchai 2008: 25). Paradoxically, Sondhi's solution of this 'rural problem' in a form of *new politics* and its 30%-70% representation model is not new. It is possible to link Sondhi's ideas with King Bhumibol's ideas from the early 1990s. Here, the king also proposes a representative parliament that would consist of people from *all walks of life*, as can be found in Sondhi's rationale, yet none of these 'representatives' would be elected – they would all be appointed (Hewison 1997: 69). It is possible to assume that this is what Sondhi meant by the 'new' way of increasing popular participation.

Despite claiming allegiance to democracy in the movement's name, Sondhi's radicalising rhetoric was drifting further away from democracy, such as is the case of his *new politics* agenda, and has gradually alienated many of his original supporters (Kitti 2009: 180; McCargo 2009: 19). Sondhi's use of language in 2008 may thus be considered as TSD rhetoric taken to the extreme. However, Sondhi's rhetoric was not the only aspect of the PAD demonstrations that became more and more radicalised. From August until December 2008, PAD was engaged in increasingly violent and undemocratic practices including the seizure of Government House and violent clashes with UDD protesters culminating in the PAD's seizure of two major Thai airports in Bangkok thus effectively closing the nation and paralysing the country's economy (Kitti 2009; McCargo 2009). The situation was temporarily resolved on December 2, when the Thai Constitutional Court dissolved three major parties with links to Thaksin, including the ruling PPP, on the basis of 2007 election fraud (Kitti 2009: 181; Montesano 2009: 219). Following these developments, the Democrat-led government was formed with Abhisit Vejjajiva becoming a new Thai Prime Minister.

Notwithstanding the country being plunged deeply into socio-political and economic crisis (especially after the airport closure that seriously affected revenues from the country's exports and tourism), Abhisit's government decided to make the *protection of the monarchy* their political priority (Streckfuss 2011: 205). This controversial decision was followed by an unprecedented

increase in the lèse majesté cases reaching an all-time high 164 cases in 2009 (Ferrara 2011: 148; Streckfuss 2011: 205), which may be seen as marking TSD rhetoric's failure to successfully influence people's ideas and perceptions of democracy (For similar rationalisation see Streckfuss 2011: 205; Streckfuss 2010: 107). The increased use of the lèse majesté was thus aimed at suppressing, rather than encouraging, a particular use of language in an attempt to revive the network monarchy's ability to control the language of the pro-Thaksin forces. If the year 2008 was dominated by the PAD and the 'yellow' rhetoric, the year 2009 was in turn the year of the UDD and their 'red' rhetoric (Kitti 2009: 206). The UDD challenged the 2006 coup and the later court rulings that dissolved pro-Thaksin parties, such as the PPP, in the post-2006 era as being unconstitutional and demanded Abisit's government to step down (Kitti 2009: 204).

Interestingly, the language framed within the rural-urban divide has also informed the democracy discourse within the UDD movement although its use significantly differs from that of PAD leader Sonthi Limthongkul or other proponents of TSD. The UDD rhetoric sees the poor as the ones fighting for the "Real Democracy" (Giles 2009: 83) as oppose to the popular perceptions of the poor being politically incompetent and immature as featured in the prescriptive discourses of *'tale of two democracies'* or *tyranny or rural majority*. UDD's demands under the "Real Democracy" may be seen as much more democratic than PAD's demands under *new politics* as they seem to advocate a democracy, where the monarchy has only a symbolic value and constitutions are complied with (Prachathipatai kap kankhlueanwai khong khon suea daeng 2 2010; Giles 2009: 83). Contrary to the TSD and PAD rhetoric, the UDD rhetoric used *the poor* to frame the post-2006 street politics in terms of a class war. Here, *the poor* is an all-encompassing term embracing the rural as well as the urban poor (Giles 2009: 83). The rural-urban divide has therefore attained a new dimension, which is reflected in the language chosen to describe this class-informed division.

In their respective interviews, UDD leaders Natthawut and Wira (Prachathipatai kap kankhlueanwai khong khon suea daeng 2 and 3 2010) refer to this class war by using the language of Thai feudalism as *phrai* versus *amat*, which may be seen as largely consistent with Giles's (2009: 83-5) conceptualisation of the poor versus the elites; yet this feudal language is much more powerful and semantically significant. This *phrai-amat* division is characteristic of an old Siamese feudal-like division of society (Th. *sakdina*) based on land ownership, where the term *phrai* was used to refer to *peasants*, who were at the bottom of social hierarchy. Yet, unlike slaves (Th. *that*) *phrai* were still personally free although liable to work under the corvée system. *Amat* denotes the *noblemen* or the higher rungs of Thai society (Ferrara 2011: 155-6; Baker and Pasuk 2005: 15-6, 164-5; Terwiel 1982: 48). The choice of this particular language to describe the political crisis in Thailand is rather interesting seeing that UDD and PAD movements may be said to have contained elements of both, *phrai* and *amat* alike (Lintner 2009: 112-3). As Natthawut explains, he has "chosen the word phrai in order to hit the feelings of all the Thai people" thereby showing them that there has been a class conflict going on in Thailand

for past 80 years (Prachathipatai kap kankhlueanwai khong khon suea daeng 3 2010 – own translation).

The significance of this particular word choice is in its semantic meaning that can be far more encompassing than Giles's poor-elites divide. The word *phrai* can also be translated as a *subject* (Ferrara 2011: 156; Terwiel 1982: 48), which enables Natthawut to directly address people from every social background since every Thai can consider themselves as a *royal subject*. Similarly, the word *amat*, which is commonly understood to include the country's *bureaucracy* or *kharatchakan* – a more widely used term in contemporary Thai language than *amat* – can attain much broader meaning. Stemming from the literal translation of the word for bureaucracy, *kharatchakan*, meaning *the royal servants* (Baker and Pasuk 2005: 164-5), the *amat* class thus may be understood to include also those who do not directly belong to the state's bureaucracy but consider themselves, figuratively, as *the royal servants*. This would include the network monarchy, which as McCargo's (2009: 11) explains is loyal to the king and acts based on what it believes the king's intentions are. This broad semantic meaning of *phrai-amat* class war may become even more profound when the calls of UDD leaders to dismantle the structures of *amat* are taken into consideration (Prachathipatai kap kankhlueanwai khong khon suea daeng 2 and 3 2010 – own translation). This call thus may not only be aimed at what Wira explicitly formulates as a more symbolic role for the monarchy with the Privy Council having only limited powers within the confines of the constitution (Prachathipatai kap kankhlueanwai khong khon suea daeng 2 2010), but also at dismantling the network monarchy as a whole.

The different use of the language framed within TSD rhetoric by the PAD and UDD movements thus demonstrates that language control techniques used to protect interests of certain groups in power can also be used to undermine the credibility of these very same groups. This is another example of culture acting as enabling rather than constraining force as was the case of Somsak's use of *chao* to avoid the lèse majesté law discussed in chapter 2 of this dissertation. As Ferrara (2011: 156) points out in accepting this feudally derived *phrai* status the UDD effectively challenged the TSD rhetoric based on the assumption of a natural and culturally-derived social hierarchy as presented by Borwonsak (2009b) in chapter 2 of this dissertation, where the higher social status reflects one's higher goodness and morality. The UDD discourse on democracy and the use of rural-urban divide is thus in a stark contrast with Sondhi's *new politics* in calling for a more equal and representative democracy where *phrai* and *amat* share the state power (Prachathipatai kap kankhlueanwai khong khon suea daeng 3 2010). However, similarly to PAD in 2008, UDD activities in 2009 also put their commitment for "Real Democracy" (Giles 2009: 83) into question as they engaged in many violent and undemocratic demonstrations culminating in the final March 2010 protests followed by a governmental crackdown, which ended in arson attacks and caused around sixty casualties (Ferrarra 2011: 156-68).

Conclusion

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The aim of this chapter was to examine to the extent which TSD rhetoric – through its language encouragement and language suppression techniques – managed to successfully penetrate public discourse and influence people's ideas and perceptions on democracy. As this chapter demonstrated on the example of PAD and UDD respective rhetoric, TSD rhetoric can be said to have informed the language used by both movements although in a very different way. In case of PAD, the movement's rhetoric was very much in line with TSD rhetoric although in the post-coup period it became increasingly radicalised. PAD's concept of *new politics* can thus be seen as an example of TSD rhetoric's success in influencing people's ideas and perceptions of democracy. On the other, and what is perhaps even more interesting, the use of TSD rhetoric within UDD movement as demonstrated throughout this chapter created forces that were in a direct opposition to TSD rhetoric and the efforts of the network monarchy to control public opinion. Here, yet again, culture may be seen as an enabling force making it possible for UDD to challenge the idea of natural socially hierarchisation through the use of language pertinent to Thai feudalism. This chapter's findings thus not only demonstrate that TSD works through language encouragement on the one hand, and language suppression on the other, in order to influence people's ideas and perceptions on democracy but it also provides scope for creating the counter force by using exactly the same mechanisms. The following section will summarise all the main findings outlined in the respective chapters of this dissertation and formulate the paper's overall conclusions in relation to the research question set at the beginning of this study: how does TSD rhetoric, as a cultural and linguistic tool, seek to influence popular perceptions and ideas of democracy?

CONCLUSION

The aim of this dissertation was to contribute to the academic debate on the culture-democracy relationship by examining the role culture plays in concepts of democracy in Thailand. The research question this paper set out to explore was: *How does 'Thai-style democracy' rhetoric, as a cultural and linguistic tool, seek to influence popular ideas and perceptions of democracy?* The study's original hypothesis envisaged that TSD rhetoric influences popular ideas and perceptions of democracy through language encouragement on the one hand, and language suppression on the other. The language-focused approach selected for the purpose of this study can also be said to have proved as beneficial as this is a rather underexplored research area

within the academic literature on TSD, which conventionally addresses TSD as a *concept* or *ideology* rather than *rhetoric*. This more dynamic approach has allowed this dissertation to explore how TSD rhetoric seeks to influence popular ideas and perceptions on democracy.

The findings of this dissertation indicate that TSD rhetoric works through the imposition of prescriptive discourses and language control techniques on public that have enabled the country's elites to encourage certain uses of language, while suppressing others. In this context, particular word choices and semantic engineering were of a profound importance capable of stirring public opinion towards or away from democracy. The impact this word choice and semantic engineering, which were reinforced through explicit or implicit references to culture, has had on the general Thai public could have been seen on the example of the audience's reaction to Phongphat's speech in chapter 2 or the public reaction to the 2006 coup in chapter 3 of this dissertation. In both cases, a careful language choice and culture-informed meanings produced strong emotions within Thai public. Phongphat's speech brought some members of the audience to tears whereas the rhetoric used in General Sonthi's speech saw many people come on the streets of Bangkok greeting and giving flowers to the soldiers, who had just overthrown Thaksin's elected government. As these two examples demonstrated, the power of the rhetoric stirred the public towards the rhetoric's objectives whether these were to express an open support for the monarchy as in the case of Phongphat's speech or to see the 2006 coup as a necessary step to solve the nation's problems.

However, as demonstrated in chapter 4 of this dissertation, TSD rhetoric has not been accepted by all segments of Thai society evenly, which may indicate that the mechanisms of language suppression and encouragement are only partially successful in influencing people's ideas and perceptions on democracy. This chapter thus provided the dissertation with some important findings, which were not envisaged or expected for in the study's original hypothesis. The analysis of the democratic rhetoric of UDD or the 'Red Shirts' movement revealed that the very same mechanisms as employed by the country's elites to control public opinion may be used in reverse to challenge the basic concepts and assumptions behind TSD. For instance, the use of *phrai-amat* classification enabled UDD leaders to challenge the powers of the network monarchy and the often assumed natural-character of the country's social hierarchisation as discussed in chapter 4. A brief analysis of Somsak's use of word *chao* in order to avoid the charges under the lèse majesté law when criticising the monarchy in chapter 2 of this dissertation yielded similar results, which seems to indicate a growing tendency to use the mechanisms of a careful word choice and language encouragement to challenge TSD. These findings seem to validate Perusek's (2007: 832-3) conceptualisation of culture as a "web of significance" characterised with a set of enabling and constraining forces as outlined in chapter 1 of this dissertation.

The example of Thai democracy has demonstrated that a carefully constructed culture-informed rhetoric may be used to encourage certain uses of language while suppressing others, thereby seeking to influence popular ideas and perceptions on democracy. Yet, this process may yield some unexpected side-effects as shown throughout this study that challenge exactly those who

seek to control public opinion. Due to the limited scope, this dissertation was unable to determine the factors that empowered the public to use the mechanisms of language control to challenge the country's elites seeking to control public opinion on democracy. Neither was this dissertation able to provide a more in-depth analysis of whether these counter forces have been successful in challenging the country's elite or not. Therefore, future research into these two areas may yield interesting results that could further validate the hypothesis advanced in this paper. This paper also acknowledges that the relatively small number of selected primary sources may have influenced this paper's ability to provide a completely unbiased view on the role culture plays in concepts of democracy. Nevertheless, the study's analysis of the use of TSD rhetoric may be said to have yielded some important findings in relation to the role culture may play in concepts of democracy that can be summarised as follows: a carefully constructed culture-informed rhetoric has an ability to influence public perceptions and ideas on democracy, whether this be in a positive or negative sense. The same techniques of careful word choice and culture-informed meanings may also be used by the public to directly challenge the country's elites and their hold on power by undermining the basic concepts behind their rhetoric. This study thus recommends that the approach of analysing culturally-informed democracy rhetoric is applied to other cultural contexts as this rhetoric has a significant impact on popular ideas and perceptions on democracy as demonstrated by this dissertation.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Phongphat Wachirabanchong's acceptance speech

This is a transcript of Phongphat Wachirabanchong's acceptance speech given on 15th May 2010 as translated by the author of this dissertation:

"[...] it is an award that received a part from a person who is a father. Please, allow me to speak a little bit about the father ... The father is a pillar of the house. My house is big, very big. Many people live together there. I live in this house that is very beautiful... beautiful and warm. But before it became like this, the father's ancestors were sweating, bleeding, laying down their lives before they could build a house like this.

Up to this day, this father too, is exhausted that he looks after the house and he also looks after the happiness of every person in the house. If there is someone angry at someone – I don't know, didn't get what they wanted – I don't know and then quarrels with father, hates the father, criticises the

father, thinks to drive the father out from the house – I will go to say to these people that if they hate the father, [if they] do not love the father anymore: leave from here! Because this is the fathers house, because this is the fathers land!

I love the king and I believe that every person who is here now also loves the king. We are the same colour!

I present my life to the king. Thank you!"

For the full speech in original language see:

AUNONLINE. 2010. *Of Phongphat at Rangwan Nattarat (Of Phongphat at the Royal Thai Film Awards Ceremony)* [online]. [Accessed 13th June 2013]. Available from: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBJN_s54y_Q

Appendix 2: The Monarchy (Top chot)

The topic of the Top chot programme broadcasted on 14th March 2013 was the Thai monarchy. The two invited guest speakers were an academic and a social critic Sulak Sivaraksa, and an Associate Professor of History at Thammasat University Somsak Jeamteerasakul. Below is a brief summary of the debate between Sulak and Somsak with some transcribed excerpts that the author of this dissertation found particularly important. All translations are the author's own.

The discussion starts with Sulak talking about his reasons for openly supporting Thailand's Democrat Party, which is in his opinion a "lesser evil" than supporting Phue Thai Party, which has links to Thaksin. Somsak, however, criticises Sulak's position asking Sulak how he can call for a reform of the monarchy on the one hand, and support the Democrat Party on the other, which has been involved in palace politics for years now. Even though Sulak admits that the

Democrat Party has been hurting democracy since the 1947 coup d'état, he is still adamant that supporting the Democrat Party is a "lesser evil" than Thaksin-linked parties as he believes that Thaksin posed a threat to the monarchy. Somsak believes that those who want to protect the monarchy should not support the Democrat Party, which he strongly criticises for excessive use of the lèse majesté law during their last time in power [2008-2010].

Here, it is possible to see a fundamental difference in opinion between Sulak and Somsak as Sulak believes that the increase in the lèse majesté charges during the time of Democrat rule was not related to the Democrat Party. He believes that the Democrat Party was not able to enforce the lèse majesté law as it did not have a control over the National Police, which he believes is "a state within the state" and is still controlled by Thaksin. Sulak thus accuses Thaksin of using the lèse majesté law to harm the monarchy.

> Sulak: "This Article 112, it is about the monarchy. If this article brings charges excessively and gives too much power to the police, [then] keeping this Article harms the monarchy and the king."

Sulak argues that Yingluck [current Thai PM and Thaksin's sister] should solve these issues related to Article 112 but she refuses to do so. The reason being, according to Sulak, that Yingluck is related to Thaksin.

Somsak does not believe that Thaksin would still be in control of the police because the majority of people who were charged under the lèse majesté law [during the time of Democrat-led government] were Thaksin's supporters. Somsak's opinion on lèse majesté is as follows:

> Somsak: "If we are serious that we really need to protect the monarchy, in that case we cannot accuse people [with lèse majesté] because this kind of accusing, it is the same as if we were stressing the undemocratic status of the monarchy and we were using this status that is this kind of pretext, this kind of accusation... it would be completely meaningless, if the Thai monarchy was already democratic, you know, saying that wanting to abolish the monarchy is harming the monarchy – that does not make sense. It only makes sense within the context of the monarchy that has duties which are not democratic in many ways. Here, we might need to admit that it [monarchy] is not democratic, it needs to be reformed."

Somsak refers to Wiki leaks saying that even Prem [General Prem Tinsulanonda, the president of the king's Privy Council] did not think Thaksin had intentions to abolish the monarchy.

> Somsak: "If [we] need to protect the monarchy, [we] must not use this accusation because this accusation is an accusation that does not make sense or is completely meaningless if we need to be a real democracy in viewpoint of the monarchy. It makes sense when we need to protect status that is based on the main principle of the monarchy being able to accuse whoever, which is something that is not right according to democratic principles."

Here Sulak argues that he is not concerned about the people who want to abolish the monarchy, he is only concerned with those who want to abolish the monarchy and have power to do so – that is what he thinks is dangerous. As an example, Sulak names Thaksin.

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Sulak generally agrees with Somsak's claim that the Thai monarchy is not democratic yet but he believes that Thais have duty to help the monarchy democratise.

> Sulak: "The monarchy can be abolished only by itself and by the people who surround the monarchy, especially the Crown Property Bureau. If the Crown Property Bureau is too close to the king and uses excessive powers to deprive the poor in the king's name, this is dangerous. Therefore, I am proposing that the Crown Property Bureau needs to be outside the monarchy so that it was under the control of the government; it would be the government's responsibility. Second, the army... the army needs to be separate from the monarchy. Even all the Privy Councillors that have a status above the law... that is dangerous. I think this has to change."

Somsak returns to the point of the lèse majesté by saying:

> Somsak: "Actually in Thailand, proposition of abolishing the monarchy breaks the law, which is something that *ajarn* [referring to Sulak] know is not right according to democratic principles. In democratic societies, whether the monarchy exists or not, it should be the right of people [to decide]. It does not matter whatever you propose in England. If people want republic, they can say so. They can also campaign for that, right? This is another accusation related to abolishing the monarchy, which is used at present. It reflects this undemocratic status of the monarchy."

Somsak criticises Sulak for using these kinds of accusations too saying that if the monarchy shall be reformed, these accusations should not be used at all. He further reiterates that these accusations are meaningful only within undemocratic conditions and that every time this kind of accusation is brought it only reproduces the culture of using the lèse majesté to sue whoever we want to. He gives an example of Thai politics, where the lèse majesté law is commonly used to charge one's political opponents.

Upon being questioned whether he loved the king or not, Somsak responds that at this moment in Thai society that is not democratic

> "If someone says that they love the king or they hate the king, these [claims] have no meaning because in real practice – suppose if someone hates the king, they cannot say it. In practice, the person who says that breaks the law, right? ... which in the opposite meaning, if there is a real love for the king... a person who says that they love the king - it is also meaningless [...]. In circumstances when we are forced that we can only speak in certain way, it is completely meaningless [...] because there is no freedom to speak both ways equally."

Sulak explains that people can insult the monarchy since the monarchy as an institution is not protected under Article 112 – people are free to love or hate the monarchy. Yet, Somsak points out that there is a play on words as people are not allowed to say they hate the king so by using a different word they seek to avoid accusations under Article 112. Similarly, Sulak further explains that people may hate those protected under Article 112 but they have to use words that are not derogatory.

Both, Sulak and Somsak agree that Article 112 should be discontinued. But Sulak argues that it is necessary to protect the monarchy for the future generations so that they could see that the

monarchy is necessary for the democratic system. In a response to Somsak, Sulak argues that Somsak needs to accept that Thailand is not a democracy like any other constitutional monarchy in Europe – it is Thai-style democracy. Within this context, Sulak argues, people can still criticise thoso under the protection of Article 112 but they have to criticise by using polite, modest and respectful words – they have to criticise through using 'tricks'. This needs to be accepted and it will change but the change will be slow and gradual.

For the full debate in original language see:

THINKBOX007. 2013. *Top chot sathaban phramahakasat (4) (Answering Issues The Monarchy)* [online]. [Accessed 13th June 2013]. Available from: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAx1d64Rl9k

Appendix 3: Coup announcement

This is a transcript of the coup group's first public statement following the 2006 coup d'état as translated by the author of this dissertation:

> "Dear respected citizens,
>
> In reference of that the Council for the Administration's Reform under the Democracy with the King as the Head of State has already completed the governmental power seizure and [that] it has consequences for the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand of 1997, the Senate, House of Representatives, the cabinet and the constitutional court, which have been dissolved.
>
> As such the Council for the Administration's Reform under the Democracy with the King as the Head of State, which consists of the military Commander in Chief, Commander in Chief of the armed forces, Commander of the National Police, is of the joint opinion that the kingdom's administration by the government, and the preceding events have caused a severe social disunity unprecedented in Thai society before, administering the kingdom in the direction of corruption, bad

conduct and a wide-scale cronyism. Further there was a conduct of intervening with power of independent organisations to the extent that they were unable to carry out their duties that is successfully solving important issues of the nation.

If the situation was left to go like this further which has an impact on national security and the country's economy as a whole, including carrying out precarious political activities towards committing lèse majesté against His Majesty the King who is respected and revere by the Thai people, therefore the Council for the Administration's Reform under the Democracy with the King as the Head of State needed to seize power from the country's administration in order to control and to solve the country's situation to restore normalcy and to quickly build social unity.

Hereby the Council for the Administration's Reform under the Democracy with the King as the Head of State confirms that it has no intention to become the kingdoms administrator and will return governmental power under the democracy with the king as the head of state to Thai people as quickly as possible. It will also uphold peace and national security, worship the monarchy which is loved extremely by Thai people. Therefore [we] would like to ask for cooperation from you, the citizens, to stay peaceful and to later help the operation to achieve its altruistic intentions. Thank you."

To listen to the announcement in the original language see:

GTDJ. 2006. *Thai Coup Proceeding 1* [online]. [Accessed 22nd March 2013]. Available from:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=endscreen&v=dOW0Ffsm8rg&NR=1

Appendix 4: Democracy and the 'Red Shirts' Movement

The Intelligence programme series broadcasted on 17th April 2010 was called 'Democracy and the 'Red Shirts' movement'. Below is a brief summary of two discussions with UDD leaders, Wira Musikkaphong (part 2) and Natthawut Saiguea (part 2-3) with some transcribed excerpts that the author of this dissertation found particularly important. All translations are the author's own.

When asked how the 'Red Shirts' movement understands democracy, Wira explains that for them democracy means having a constitution and every one follows it. The 'Red Shirts' movement's notion of democracy also includes the monarchy and the king as the head of state, because as Wira explains Thailand and the king are tied together but the Privy Council needs to know where its duties and power lie – it must not intervene into Thai politics, manipulate the politics, political parties and the government or intervene into military when there are selections

of high ranking officials. The 'Red Shirts' intend to overthrow *amat* (the country's bureaucracy) not the monarchy.

When asked what the 'Red Shirts' demands are, Nattawut explains that they want the government to dissolve the Parliament with an immediate effect and they want equal opportunities for every political party to take part in the country's elections. Political parties should formulate their respective policies, which will become the source of voters' decision-making. Political parties should leave the voters to decide what policies they want to support.

> Nattawut: "[we want to] dissolve the parliament and then fight for the state power and after that we will use the state power to overthrow the structures of the bureaucracy. I assure you that the word 'to overthrow structures' means not to overthrow structures of the bureaucracy in order to build new structures – structures of the 'Red Shirts'. [...] It is not like that. We only want them [bureaucracy] to come down and become equal so that they accept immediately that this country is equally theirs as well as ours. We and the bureaucracy are partners, not servant. We and the bureaucracy are Thai people that own the country together, [we are] not inferior."

Nattawut believes that after these protests, regardless of the outcome, Thai society will be forever changed. The things the 'Red Shirts' have been talking about publically now are the things that couple of years ago people would not dare to speak aloud. When asked whether Thai society is ready to fight the class war, Nattawut replies:

> Nattawut: "I have chosen the word *phrai* in order to hit the feelings of all the Thai people asking them: are you *phai* or not? And in being or not being *phrai*, the thing we propose today is that this is a class conflict., this is a class war that has been going on for 70-80 years now – what do you think about this? [...] I am secretly glad that this was at least the beginning that created a discussion in Thai society. "

Nattawut, like Wira, reaffirms that the 'Red Shirts' want democracy with the king as the head of state but with limits on the monarchy's power to intervene into Thai politics – this is Nattawut's "new state".

For the full debate in original language see: and

VOICETVCOTH. 2010. *Prachathipatai kap kankhlueanwai khong khon suea daeng chunk 2 (Democracy and the Red Shirts Movement)* [online]. [Accessed 12 July 2013]. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3EUrRoBA7g0

VOICETVCOTH. 2010. *Prachathipatai kap kankhlueanwai khong khon suea daeng chunk 3 (Democracy and the Red Shirts Movement)* [online]. [Accessed 12 July 2013]. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WB2WXSY20PA

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Appendix 5: McDonald's

Source: https://www.google.sk/ [Accessed 4th July 2013]

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