รายงานวิจัยฉบับสมบูรณ์

โครงการ

The Dynamic of the Rise, Conflict and Transformation of the Grassroots Yellow Shirts: Political Opportunity, Mobilization Structure and Framing Process

พลวัตการเติบโต ความขัดแย้ง และการเปลี่ยนผ่านของคนเสื้อเหลืองในระดับรากหญ้า: โอกาสทางการเมือง โครงสร้างการเคลื่อนไหว และกระบวนการสร้างกรอบโครง

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Abstract

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During the past two decades, the Thai politics has been dominated by the complicated and intense colour-coded conflict between the 'anti-Thaksin movement' opposing the exiled former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and his alleged 'nominee' governments, and the pro-Thaksin and anti-coup. This work explains the complicated and intense conflict in Thailand during the past decade by analyzing the anti-Thaksin movement. Firstly, it attempts to analyse the complicated and contesting nature of the anti-Thaksin movement: who were supporters of the anti-Thaksin movement? Secondly, it examines the rise, decline and transformation of the movement between 2004 and 2014 through a study of both leadership and ordinary supporters. Lastly, it askes why earlier liberal and various groups within the movement eventually shifted to conservative direction.

To do so, this research selectively applies concepts of social movement theory including political opportunity structure, mobilisation structure, and framing process in exploring the origin, emergence, development, dynamics and transformation of the anti-Thaksin movement. Empirical field research from interviews of more than 100 anti-Thaksin informants shows their initial diversity in terms of contesting ideological strategies in three main groupings: unswerving/doctrinaire conservatives; compromised liberal; and liberal marginalized groups. These elements fought against one another throughout the development of the movement as it gradually shifted in conservative directions. During its initial stage, the movement's inclusive

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campaign issues and strategies had drawn support from “liberal” proponents who then played crucial roles in mass mobilisation at local levels. However, the more conservative-oriented campaigns had later succeeded in engaging proponents of royalism, nationalism and religious moralism.

This paper explains why these earlier diverse and contesting movements have gradually become dominated by the more conservative forces. Firstly, the successful strategy to mobilize the earlier scattered and weak conservatives, and apolitical middle class into the main mass of supporters allowed the conservative wing to take over the movement. Secondly, the more liberal element compromised with the conservatives because they were convinced by the master frame of ‘Threat-Mega Crisis-Action Now’ promoted by the movement’s leaders. Thirdly, in each round of internal conflict among these different elements, those who were more liberal lost and were gradually alienated from the movement. Lastly, through the political opportunity structure framework, this research tries to understand the effects of democratic institution-building during post-regime changes and efforts to consolidate democracy in the middle class inside the anti-Thaksin movement. The first is the failure of the middle class to establish themselves in democratic institutions and processes in either the legislature/executive, political parties, local government or structured interest groups. They learnt the uncertainty of free elections and how the elected executive benefitted other classes but not them. The second is the missing prerequisite of democracy. Insufficient understanding of the rules of ‘majoritarian supremacy’ and ‘two-turnover elections’, caused the middle class who were disappointed with the outcome of democratic regimes and systems, to easily turn away from democracy.

Keywords: Thai Politics, Social Movement, Political Conflict, Anti-Thaksin Movement, Middle Class, Anti-democratic Movement

บทคัดย่อ

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ตลอดเกือบ 2 ทศวรรษที่ผ่านมา การเมืองไทยต้องเผชิญกับความขัดแย้งทางการเมืองอย่างรุนแรง ระหว่างกลุ่มต่อต้านระบอบทักษิณ และกลุ่มที่สนับสนุนทักษิณและกลุ่มต่อต้านการรัฐประหาร งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้พยายามทำความเข้าความซับซ้อนของความขัดแย้งดังกล่าวผ่านการวิเคราะห์พลังที่สำคัญอย่างกลุ่มต่อต้านระบอบทักษิณ *หนึ่ง* งานชิ้นนี้พยายามศึกษาคุณลักษณะที่หลากหลายและซับซ้อนของขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณ ว่าพวกเขาคือใคร *สอง* งานวิจัยวิเคราะห์การเติบโต ความถดถอยในบางช่วง การฟื้นตัว และการเปลี่ยนแลงของขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณในระวห่างปี 2547 – 2557 โดยเน้นศึกษาทั้งแกนนำและผู้สนับสนุน *สาม* งานชิ้นนี้พยายามหาคำตอบว่าเหตุใดพลังเสรีนิยมและกลุ่มต่างๆที่หลากหลายจึงหันไปสนับสนุนแนวทางอนุรักษ์นิยม

ในการตอบคำถามงานวิจัยเหล่านี้ นักวิจัยได้นำทฤษฎีขบวนการเคลื่อนไหวทางสังคม (social movement theory) ไม่ว่าจะเป็น ทฤษฎีโครงสร้างโอกาสทางการเมือง (political opportunity structure) โครงสร้างการระดมทรัพยากร (resource mobilisation structure) และ กระบวนการกรอบโครงความคิด (framing process) ใช้ในการวิเคราะห์จุดกำเนิด พัฒนาการ พลวัต และการเปลี่ยนผ่านของขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณ งานชิ้นนี้อาศัยข้อมูลเชิงประจักษ์โดยการสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกผู้สนับสนุนขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณจากหลากหลายภูมิหลังและระดับการสนับสนุนขบวนการฯจำนวน 100 คน งานชิ้นนี้พบว่าในช่วงแรกขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณประกอบไปด้วยผู้สนับสนุนและแกนนำที่มีความหลากหลายทั้งในทางความคิดและยุทธศาสตร์ในการเคลื่อนไหวโดยประกอบไปด้วยกลุ่มหลัก 3 กลุ่มได้แต่ กลุ่มอนุรักษ์นิยม กลุ่มเสรีนิยมที่ยอมประนีประนอม และกลุ่มเสรีนิยมที่ไม่ยอมประนีประนอมกับกลุ่มอนุรักษ์นิยม โดยในช่วงแรกพลังเสรีนิยมเป็นพลังหลักในการผลักดันการเคลื่อนไหวต่อต้านทักษิณ ในระยะต่อมาเมื่อ

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ขบวนการเริ่มเติมโตขึ้นทั้ง 3 กลุ่มต่อสู้การอย่างเข้มข้นเพื่อผลักดันยุทธศาสตร์และแนวคิดของกลุ่มตนในการเคลื่อนไหว แต่อย่างไรก็ตามในระยะต่อมากลุ่มที่สนับสนุนแนวคิดแบบอนุรักษ์นิยมประสบความสำเร็จในการเข้าแทนที่และมีบทบาทนำ และนำขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณเคลื่อนตัวเข้าสู่แนวทางการเคลื่อนไหวแบบอนุรักษ์นิยม โดนเน้นยุทธศาสตร์ทางความคิดแบบ กษัตริย์นิยม ชาตินิยม และศีลธรรม-ศาสนา

ในการตอบคำถามว่าเหตุใดขบวนการที่เคยประกอบไปด้วยองค์ประกอบที่หลากหลายกลับเคลื่อนไหวไปสู่ยุทธศาสตร์ทางความคิดแบบอนุรักษ์นิยม และการเติบโตของพลังอนุรักษ์นิยมในการนำการเคลื่อนไหวนั้น งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้ค้นพบคำตอบสำคัญหลัก 4 ประเด็น *หนึ่ง* ความสำเร็จของกลุ่มเสรีนิยมในการระดมมวลชนอนุรักษ์นิยมที่ก่อนหน้านี้เคยอ่อนแอและไม่ได้รับการจัดตั้ง และกลุ่มชนชั้นกลางที่ไม่สนใจทางการเมือง ซึ่งเป็นการเปิดโอกาสให้กลุ่มอนุรักษ์นิยมเข้ายึดกุมการนำของขบวนการฯ *สอง* เสรีนิยมบางกลุ่มยอมประนีประนอมกับกลุ่มอนุรักษ์นิยมทั้งเพื่อผลประโยชน์ในการขบวนการฯ และยอมรับกรองโครงความคิดแบบ “ภัยคุกคามทักษิณ – วิกฤตการณ์ครั้งยิ่งใหญ่ – เราต้องจัดการเดี๋ยวนี้” *สาม* ในการต่อสู้ทางความระหว่างพลังเสรีนิยมและอนุรักษ์นิยมในการนำการเคลื่อนไหวของขบวนการ พลังเสรีนิยมที่ไม่ยอมประนีประนอมกลับพ่ายแพ้ และท้ายที่สุดก็ถูกเบียดขับออกจากขบวนการฯ และ *สี่* ปัญหาของโครงสร้างโอกาสทางการเมือง โดยเฉพาะผลกระทบที่เกิดจากการสร้างสถาบันทางการเมืองแบบประชาธิปไตยที่มีต่อชนชั้นกลางและชนชั้นสูง โดยชนชั้นกลางไม่ประสบความสำเร็จในการผลักดันผลประโยชนของตนเข้าไปในกระบวนการทำงานของสถาบันและขบวนการประชาธิปไตย ไม่ว่าจะเป็นสถาบันนิติบัญญัติ ฝ่ายบริหาร พรรคการเมือง รัฐบาลท้องถิ่น และกลุ่มผลประโยชน์ พวกเขาเห็นว่าการเลือกตั้งเสรีเห็นเรื่องที่ไม่แน่นอนสำหรับพวกเขา และฝ่ายบริหารที่มาจากการเลือกตั้งก็เอื้อประโยชนให้กับชนชั้นอื่น ๆที่ไม่ใช่พวกเขา นอกจากนั้นการขาดความเข้าใจและความพร้อมในการรับประชาธิปไตยของชนชั้นกลางยังเป็นปัจจัยสำคัญที่ทำให้พวกเขาหันไปจับมือกับพลังอนุรักษ์นิยม พวกเขาขาดความเข้าใจต่อหลักเกณฑ์เรื่อง “อำนาจของเสียงข้ามมาก (majoritarian supremacy)” และ “การชนะสองสมัยในการเลือกตั้ง (two-turnover elections)” ผลคือ ชนชั้นกลางที่เคยสนับสนุนแนวคิดเสรีนิยมผิดหวังกลับผลลัพย์ของความพยายามในการลงหลักปักฐานของประชาธิปไตย

คำหลัก : การเมืองไทย ขบวนการเคลื่อนไหวทางสังคม ความขัดแย้งทางการเมือง ขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณ ชนชั้นกลาง

บทสรุปผู้บริหาร (Executive Summary)

ที่มาและความสำคัญของปัญหา-ทบทวนวรรณกรรม

ตลอดเกือบ 2 ทศวรรษที่ผ่านมา การเมืองไทยต้องเผชิญกับความขัดแย้งทางการเมืองอย่างรุนแรง ระหว่างกลุ่มต่อต้านระบอบทักษิณ และกลุ่มที่สนับสนุนทักษิณและกลุ่มต่อต้านการรัฐประหาร งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้พยายามทำความเข้าความซับซ้อนของความขัดแย้งดังกล่าวผ่านการวิเคราะห์พลังที่สำคัญอย่างกลุ่มต่อต้านระบอบทักษิณ *หนึ่ง* งานชิ้นนี้พยายามศึกษาคุณลักษณะที่หลากหลายและซับซ้อนของขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณ ว่าพวกเขาคือใคร *สอง* งานวิจัยวิเคราะห์การเติบโต ความถดถอยในบางช่วง การฟื้นตัว และการเปลี่ยนแลงของขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณในระวห่างปี 2547 – 2557 โดยเน้นศึกษาทั้งแกนนำและผู้สนับสนุน *สาม* งานชิ้นนี้พยายามหาคำตอบว่าเหตุใดพลังเสรีนิยมและกลุ่มต่างๆที่หลากหลายจึงหันไปสนับสนุนแนวทางอนุรักษ์นิยม

วัตถุประสงค์

- เพื่อวิเคราะห์การก่อร่างสร้างตัว พัฒนาการ พลวัติ ปัญหา และข้อจำกัดของขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณ
- เพื่อศึกษาจุดเริ่มต้น พัฒนาการ และการเปลี่ยนแปลง ของยุทธศาสตร์และแนวคิดทางการเมืองของขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณ
- เพื่อวิเคราะห์และนำเสนอทางเลือกในการทำความเข้าใจตัวตน การสรุปบทเรียน การพัฒนาตนเอง ทางออกความขัดแย้ง ของแกนนำและผู้สนับสนุนขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณ
- เพื่อยกระดับความเข้าใจที่มีต่อขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณในวงกว้างของสังคม
- เพื่อนำเสนอการวิเคราะห์และข้อมูลพื้นฐานเพื่อการวิจัยและการนำเสนอแนวทางการแก้ไขปัญหาความขัดแย้งทางการเมืองในอนาคต

วิธีทดลอง แผนการดำเนินงาน ผลการทดลอง สรุปและวิจารณ์ผลการทดลอง และข้อเสนอแนะสำหรับงานวิจัยในอนาคต

ในการศึกษาขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณงานวิจัยชิ้นนี้เลือกใช้เครื่องมือวิจัยหลัก 2 อย่างได้แก่ การวิจัยจากเอกสาร (documentary research) และการสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึก (in-depth interview) ผู้ให้ข้อมูลกว่า 100 คน งานชิ้นนี้พบว่าในช่วงแรกขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณประกอบไปด้วยผู้สนับสนุนและแกนนำที่มีความหลากหลายทั้งในทางความคิดและยุทธศาสตร์ในการเคลื่อนไหวโดยประกอบไปด้วยกลุ่มหลัก 3 กลุ่มได้แต่ กลุ่มอนุรักษ์นิยม กลุ่มเสรีนิยมที่ยอมประนีประนอม และกลุ่มเสรีนิยมที่ไม่ยอมประนีประนอมกับกลุ่มอนุรักษ์นิยม โดยในช่วงแรกพลังเสรีนิยมเป็นพลังหลักในการผลักดันการเคลื่อนไหวต่อต้าน

ทักษิณ ในระยะต่อมาเมื่อขบวนการเริ่มเติมโตขึ้นทั้ง 3 กลุ่มต่อสู้การอย่างเข้มข้นเพื่อผลักดันยุทธศาสตร์และแนวคิดของกลุ่มตนในการเคลื่อนไหว แต่อย่างไรก็ตามในระยะต่อมากลุ่มที่สนับสนุนแนวคิดแบบอนุรักษ์นิยมประสบความสำเร็จในการเข้าแทนที่และมีบทบาทนำ และนำขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณเคลื่อนตัวเข้าสู่แนวทางการเคลื่อนไหวแบบอนุรักษ์นิยม โดนเน้นยุทธศาสตร์ทางความคิดแบบ กษัตริย์นิยม ชาตินิยม และศีลธรรม-ศาสนา

ในการตอบคำถามว่าเหตุใดขบวนการที่เคยประกอบไปด้วยองค์ประกอบที่หลากหลายกลับเคลื่อนไหวไปสู่ยุทธศาสตร์ทางความคิดแบบอนุรักษ์นิยม และการเติบโตของพลังอนุรักษ์นิยมในการนำการเคลื่อนไหวนั้น งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้ค้นพบคำตอบสำคัญหลัก 4 ประเด็น *หนึ่ง* ความสำเร็จของกลุ่มเสรีนิยมในการระดมมวลชนอนุรักษ์นิยมที่ก่อนหน้านี้เคยอ่อนแอและไม่ได้รับการจัดตั้ง และกลุ่มชนชั้นกลางที่ไม่สนใจทางการเมือง ซึ่งเป็นการเปิดโอกาสให้กลุ่มอนุรักษ์นิยมเข้ายึดกุมการนำของขบวนการฯ *สอง* เสรีนิยมบางกลุ่มยอมประนีประนอมกับกลุ่มอนุรักษ์นิยมทั้งเพื่อผลประโยชน์ในการขบวนการฯ และยอมรับกรอบโครงความคิดแบบ “ภัยคุกคามทักษิณ – วิกฤตการณ์ครั้งยิ่งใหญ่ – เราต้องจัดการเดี๋ยวนี้” *สาม* ในการต่อสู้ทางความระหว่างพลังเสรีนิยมและอนุรักษ์นิยมในการนำการเคลื่อนไหวของขบวนการ พลังเสรีนิยมที่ไม่ยอมประนีประนอมกลับพ่ายแพ้ และท้ายที่สุดก็ถูกเบียดขับออกจากขบวนการฯ และ *สี่* ปัญหาของโครงสร้างโอกาสทางการเมือง โดยเฉพาะผลกระทบที่เกิดจากการสร้างสถาบันทางการเมืองแบบประชาธิปไตยที่มีต่อชนชั้นกลางและชนชั้นสูง โดยชนชั้นกลางไม่ประสบความสำเร็จในการผลักดันผลประโยชนของตนเข้าไปในกระบวนการทำงานของสถาบันและขบวนการประชาธิปไตย ไม่ว่าจะเป็นสถาบันนิติบัญญัติ ฝ่ายบริหาร พรรคการเมือง รัฐบาลท้องถิ่น และกลุ่มผลประโยชน์ พวกเขาเห็นว่าการเลือกตั้งเสรีเห็นเรื่องที่ไม่แน่นอนสำหรับพวกเขา และฝ่ายบริหารที่มาจากการเลือกตั้งก็เอื้อประโยชนให้กับชนชั้นอื่นๆที่ไม่ใช่พวกเขา นอกจากนั้นการขาดความเข้าใจและความพร้อมในการรับประชาธิปไตยของชนชั้นกลางยังเป็นปัจจัยสำคัญที่ทำให้พวกเขาหันไปจับมือกับพลังอนุรักษ์นิยม พวกเขาขาดความเข้าใจต่อหลักเกณฑ์เรื่อง “อำนาจของเสียงข้ามมาก (majoritarian supremacy)” และ “การชนะสองสมัยในการเลือกตั้ง (two-turnover elections)” ผลคือ ชนชั้นกลางที่เคยสนับสนุนแนวคิดเสรีนิยมผิดหวังกลับผลลัพย์ของความพยายามในการลงหลักปักฐานของประชาธิปไตย

ในการทำความเข้าใจความซับซ้อนของการก่อร่างสร้างตัว พัฒนาการ พลวัติ ปัญหา และข้อจำกัดของขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณ จะช่วยนำเสนอแนวทางในการการทำความเข้าใจตัวตน การสรุปบทเรียน การพัฒนาตนเอง ทางออกความขัดแย้ง ของแกนนำและผู้สนับสนุนขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณ รวมทั้งช่วยยกระดับความเข้าใจที่มีต่อขบวนการต่อต้านทักษิณในวงกว้างของสังคม นอกจากนั้นงานวิจัยยังเป็นข้อมูลพื้นฐานที่สำคัญในการพัฒนาแนวทางการแก้ไขปัญหาความขัดแย้งทางการเมืองในอนาคตต่อไป

Chapter 1

Introduction

Nearly the past 2 decades, Thai politics has been dominated by the complicated and intense colour-coded conflict between the anti-Thaksin 'Yellow Shirts' (People's Alliance for Democracy – PAD) opposing the exiled former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and his alleged 'nominee' governments, and the pro-Thaksin and anti-coup 'Red Shirts' (United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship – UDD). Recently, much of their membership has been transformed into more diverse forms and movements. In understanding this protracted colour-coded conflict, a profound analysis of the nature and dynamics of the anti-Thaksin movement and its later transformation is crucial. However, research and studies on the anti-Thaksin have so far been limited. Most literature on the anti-Thaksin movement concentrates on the period between its emergence in 2006 and its peak, particularly the occupation of Government House and the international airports in 2008 (e.g., Ammar and Somchai 2012; Apichat, Niti and Yukti 2012; Asma 2010; Connors 2007; 2008a; 2008b; 2009; 2011; Giles 2009; Giles, et al, ed. 2006; Hewison 2007; 2008; 2010; Hewison and Kengkij 2010; Kengkij and Hewison 2009a; 2009b; Kasian 2006; McCargo 2009; Nelson 2010; Nithi 2010; Panitan 2012; Pasuk 2007; Pye and Schaffar 2008). The focus has been mainly on the leadership of both conservative and liberal wings. Few have conducted systematic research on the mass of supporters (Asma 2010; Giles 2009; Giles, et al, ed. 2006). After the rise of the Red Shirt movement against the Democrat government in 2009 and the climax of the bloody April-May 2010 clashes between the Red Shirts and the authorities, in-depth research on the color-coded conflict switched attention to both the leadership and mass support of the Red Shirt movement (e.g., Apichat, Niti and Yukti 2012; Askew (ed.) 2010a; Ivarsson and Isager (eds.) 2010; Montesano et al. (eds.) 2012; Naruemon and McCargo 2011). This leaves a significant gap in the understanding of the anti-Thaksin movement, not only in terms of timeframe but more importantly on the mass support of

the anti-Thaksin. Without understanding this support, earlier explanations of the rise and conservative trajectory of the anti-Thaksin movement as a whole tend to be based on the interpretation of studies on its liberal and conservative elites. While this approach may have been useful during the rise of the anti-Thaksin movement, it has difficulty in explaining more recent phenomena, particularly internal conflicts, the decline in mass support for and the transformation of the anti-Thaksin movement.

The anti-Thaksin movement began their political campaign as a vibrant liberal movement which styled itself as a democratic watchdog dealing with a broad range of issues including anti-corruption, anti-neo-liberalism, anti-capitalism, participatory democracy, anti-authoritarianism, etc. PAD campaigns covered broad range of criticisms of the TRT government: the inefficiency of its populist policies, neo-liberal direction, corruption, and authoritarian and hyper-capitalist nature (Connors 2008b, 483; Kasian 2006; Montesano 2009, 2-3), in addition to promoting participatory democracy and extra-parliamentary politics. Through this inclusive strategy and agenda, the movement successfully mobilised a wide range of support and alliances, bringing into the movement those opposed to Thaksin, including radical NGO activists, liberal reformists, the nouveaux riche who had suffered from the 1997 economic crisis, conservative politicians, the Democrat party and the royalist elite.

The development of the movement has seen a constant battle among these contradictory elements. However, as the movement expanded, it shifted toward a more and more conservative and ultra-right wing direction[3]. The movement's strategies were gradually framed around more controversial concepts including royalism, nationalism and anti-democratic

[3]'Conservative', 'right-wing' and 'liberal' are contested concepts. They are multi-faceted, far from static, changing over time and context, and can be even imaginative (Eatwell and O'Sullivan 1989, 75). This article defines conservative elements of the anti-Thaksin movement as religiously and culturally conservative, royalist, moralistic, pro-order, pro-authority, pro-aristocracy, ultra-negative-nationalist, anti-universal suffrage, anti-electoral democracy, anti-political equality. Right-wingers are those who subscribed and/or advocated these conservative elements. It limits the meaning of liberalism to elements who are pro-republic, pro-electoral democracy, pro-decentralization, anti-establishment, opposed to military authoritarian government and coups as means to overcome corrupt electoral government, secular, cosmopolitan and respectful of cultural diversity.

ideas (e.g., Askew 2010b, 3-4 and 8-9; Askew 2010c, 34-35; Connors 2008b, 483 and 489-490; McCargo 2009, 18; Montesano 2009; Nelson 2010; Pavin 2010; Thongchai 2008b, 30-33). The more conservative elements within the movement gradually became the dominant majority force. Those less royalist and nationalist and more supportive of democracy gradually either compromised with the conservative forces or were alienated from the movement. Eventually, the movement as a whole shifted in a conservative direction. Between 2006 and 2008, the PAD successfully mobilized mass movements and strongly consolidated elitist anti-Thaksin forces. The military coup successfully pushed the Thaksin regime out in 2006 and appointed a government led by royalists, old bureaucrats and liberal-royalist forces. The PAD mass movement pressured and managed to oust two elected governments headed by Thaksin's nominees through seizing Government House and Bangkok's two international airports in 2008. The PAD was instrumental in bringing about the formation of the government of Abhisit Vejjajiva, leader of the Democrat party, the second biggest. However, this point marked their fragmentation and long-term decline. Even though the anti-Thaksin elite still holds the upper hand for the immediate term and their ultra-right wing ideology is still influential, the conflict between the Democrat party and the newly established 'New Politics' party backed by the PAD, and disagreements among different alliance partners about the ultra-royalist and ultra-nationalist campaign of the PAD diminished the mass mobilization and support of the PAD. A rally by Pitak Siam (Protect Thailand), a later anti-Thaksin royalist movement, who called for Premier Yingluck Shinawatra to step down, ended up with only around 20,000 protesters despite intensive organization and a promise of 1,000,000 participants. The movement ended less than one day after a minor clash with the authorities on 24 November 2012. The long, aggressive campaign to claim the disputed area around Preah Vihear Temple for Thailand, which had been powerful in the heyday of the PAD in discrediting the Samak government, also recently failed to rekindle nationalist sentiment among the anti-Thaksin masses. There were several effort to revive the anti-TRT movement in a more decentralised form in the white-mask movement, has still been unable to mobilise mass support as it did during 2006-2007.

After a long decline and fragmentation, the anti-Thaksin movement revived and regained its success in 2013-2014. However, this time, it came under the new movement

organization, the People's Democratic Reform Committee (KorPorPorSor – PDRC). Most of their leaders were former Democrat MPs. It successfully organized one of biggest and longest mass protests occupying major governmental offices as well as business areas of Bangkok. The movement declared its triumph of their political campaign after forcing Yingluck Shinawatra to dissolve her government, obstructing the February 2014 general election, and eventually the May 2014 military coup.

Research questions

This research expects different answers and findings by asking three sets of questions.

First of all, it examines the heterogeneous and contesting nature of the anti-Thaksin movement: Who were the supporters of the anti-Thaksin movement?

Second of all, it traces the processes behind the rise, decline and transformation of the anti-Thaksin movement between 2004 and 2013 through a study of ordinary anti-Thaksin supporters. The research will ask a variety of its participants why they joined and became anti-Thaksin movement, and what were the processes of mass mobilization, the ideological function of the mass, the shift from an inclusive and liberal movement to an exclusive and conservative one, and will explore conflict, fragmentation and decline.

Lastly, the research asked why earlier liberal and various groups within the movement eventually shifted to conservative direction.

Objectives

- To analyse the formation, development, dynamics, problems and limitations of the anti-TRT or anti-Thaksin movement before, during and after the dominant period of the People’s Alliance for Democracy.
- To examine the origins, development and transformation of the political strategy and ideology of the anti-Thaksin movement.

- To provide analysis and alternative perception for further self-reflection, lesson learning, self-development and long-term conflict resolution among the anti-Thaksin leadership and mass supporters.
- To promote better understanding about the complex nature and development of the anti-Thaksin movement among wider public.
- To produce a basic analysis and data for future analyse on the on-going and protracted colour-coded conflict and its long-term resolution.

Expected benefits

- An analysis on formation, development, dynamics, problem and limitation of the anti-TRT or the anti-Thaksin movement both before, during and after the leadership of the (People's Alliance for Democracy – PAD)
- Understanding on origins, development and transformation of political strategy and ideology of the anti-Thaksin movement
- An analysis and alternative perceptions for further self-reflection, lesson learning, self-development and long-term conflict resolution among the anti-Thaksin leadership and mass supporters.
- An analysis on complex nature and development of the anti-Thaksin movement laid a foundation to overcome the stigmatised picture of the homogenous and one-sided picture of the anti-Thaksin movement drawn up from the leadership-centric.
- A basic analysis and data for the future analysis on the on ongoing and protracted colour-coded conflict and the long-term resolution.

Literature Reviews

In exploring earlier literature on the anti-Thaksin movement, this work finds three sets of works including who are the anti-Thaksin movement supporters, why did they joined and

support the movement, and why earlier liberal and various groups within the movement moved toward conservative direction.

Who are the anti-Thaksin movement supporters and why did they join and support the movement?

All agreed that the anti-Thaksin movement comprised a wide range of groups. The composition of the anti-TRT movement is widely agreed to include the conservative elite, the urban and upcountry middle class, and liberal-leaning academics, NGO workers and grassroots movements. For example, Connors (2008b, 490-491; 2012, 100-103) proposes that the anti-Thaksin or the anti-TRT movement was a collaboration of liberalist-conservative forces with ideologies connected to the palace, military, bureaucracy; and liberal elite against the politics of new capital; and their mass support of the middle class, members of the rural poor and unionists opposed to privatization programmes. Stent (2012, 32) explains the anti-Thaksin movement as elite groups, a large majority of the Bangkok and upcountry middle classes, particularly in Southern Thailand, and a small number of villagers and urban labourers. Giles (2006, 308-309 and 2009) portrays the Yellow Shirts as an alliance of the rich conservative and royalist elites, academics, NGOs, the middle class and the business community. Kengkij and Hewison (2009a, 121-155) perceive the Yellow Shirts as a cross-class alliance between the conservative aristocracy, and the leadership of progressive social movements. Pasuk (2007) explains them as an organized urban network with powerful media including elite urban civic groups, the military, the bureaucracy, middle class activists, communitarian NGO workers, conservative academics, political forces and royalists. Meanwhile Pye and Schaffar (2008) argue that the Yellow Shirts were a heterogeneous combination. The movement was not simply made up of royalist followers of Sondhi and an urban, free-market elite, but also pro-democratic anti-Thaksin NGO networks and labour groups.

While some focus on the role and influence of conservative and royalist elites like the royal institution, military, Privy Council, judiciary, network monarchy and intra-elite networks (e.g., Chairat 2012; Giles, et al, ed. 2006; Giles 2009; Hewison 2008; Ivarsson and Isager

2010; McCargo 2005; Stent 2012; Thongchai 2008a; Ukrist 2008), others draw attention to liberal forces and their collaboration with the conservative wing (Connors 2011; Giles 2009; Hewison 2000; Kengkij and Hewison 2009a and 2009b; Pasuk 2007; Pye and Schaffar 2008), and also on the PAD leadership (Kasian 2006; Panitan 2012).

In explaining why these diverse element joined the anti-Thaksin movement, earlier studies came up with various arguments. Firstly, it was the response of the conservative elite, royalist bureaucracy and business interests who lost out to Thaksin both in the 1997 economic crisis and because of his populist policies (Hewison 2010, 126-127; Kasian 2006, 32; Ukrist 2008). The colour-coded war was a battle among the elite over the determination of political order between the palace and military or the network monarchy on the one side, and Thaksin, who emerged as a competitor with electoral support on the other. While the former succeeded in maintaining autonomy within the rise of a pluralist order by 'power sharing' throughout the 1980s and 1990s (Connors 2008b; McCargo 2005, 501-504 and 515-517), the latter forcefully challenged their power. For example, Thaksin, empowered by the electoral process, aimed at decentralizing political power long dominated by conservative leaders in Bangkok (Pavin 2011, 1021). Thaksin's intervention in southern Thailand, which had been long dominated by HM the King, Prem and the Democrat party, broke nerve of the conservative elite (Kasian 2006, 32; McCargo 2005, 515-517; Ukrist 2006 and 2008).

Secondly, the leading figures of liberal forces, including academics, NGO workers, social activists and leaders of several grassroots movements, participated in the anti-Thaksin movement from the very beginning because of their disagreement with populist and neo-liberal TRT policies (Pye and Schaffar 2008), as well as the initial broad alliance and inclusive agenda of the PAD.

Thirdly, joining the anti-Thaksin movement was the reaction of various non-elitist elements whose political power and interests were threatened by the policies and political direction of Thaksin (Asma 2010; Hewison 2010; Pasuk and Baker 2012, 223-224). Pasuk and Baker (2012, 223 - 224) roughly view the PAD as a movement of the middle class to protect their interests. Hewison (2010) looks at how the legacy of Thaksin affected different groups including political parties, businesses, social movements, the middle class, the monarchy, the

judiciary and labour. He points out the frustration of the middle class with Thaksin, who, from their perspective, squeezed them for his own political and economic benefit. Taxes paid by the middle class were misused to keep corrupt politicians in power through policies that appealed to poor voters, while allowing Thaksin and his cronies to get wealthier (Hewison 2010, 126-127).

Fourthly, the rise of the anti-Thaksin movement was mainly the success of the movement leader in mobilizing people from different networks. Asma (2010) argues that even though the PAD was an alliance among the middle class, business groups outside the Thaksin network, and NGO networks, the real mass support was the middle class mobilised by Sondhi and Chamlong including PAD-sponsoring matrons, Sondhi's fan club, the Dharma Army, professional managers, intellectuals, singers/artists, civil servants/state enterprise workers, professionals, etc.

Fifthly, joining the anti-Thaksin movement was the fight of the minority upper middle class against the majority lower class in electoral politics and Thaksin's populism which empowered them. Kasian (2006) looks at the PAD as the outcome of Thaksin's failure to sustain the interests of the middle class during a period of economic volatility as he had promised, opting instead to support the majority of lower class voters. Many studies show that the Yellow and Red Shirts are clearly different in terms of both social and economic attributes. Statistically, the Yellow Shirts are more likely to be employed in the formal sector, to have a higher education, and to have an urban, upper middle class and wealthier background than the Red Shirts (Apichat, Niti and Yukti 2012; Ammar and Somchai 2012, 66-67). Socially and politically, drawing on 'Two Tales of Democracy' by Anek (1996)[4], Kasian (2006) portrays a

[4] Anek Laothamatas, Thammasat University lecturer, set out his analysis and reform proposals through his powerful article, 'A Tale of Two Democracies: Conflicting Perceptions of Elections and Democracy in Thailand' (1996). From his observations of Thai electoral politics until May 1992, he argued that Thai society and politics were divided into two. The majority of uneducated rural constituencies dominated power in choosing and forming governments. They tended to choose corrupt politicians who responded to their short term needs. Meanwhile, an educated urban middle-class minority played a crucial role in overthrowing corrupt

profound conflict between rural and urban middle classes. Initially, these middle classes supported Thaksin. But when Thaksin's pro-poor policies responded to the demands and insecurity of the informal masses, the middle class felt more alienated. This provoked the urban middle class to join the anti-Thaksin movement partly out of fear that they would be obliged to pay for the redistributive schemes of Thaksin, but more out of fear that they would no longer be in a privileged position to influence the state agenda. The growing power of the majority poor in electoral politics threatened the ability of key sections of the middle class to influence politics – businessmen through money, bureaucrats through position and tradition, and media and intellectuals through their command of public space (Pasuk and Baker 2008, 77-81 and 2012, 223-224).

Lastly, participating in the movement was the expression of the middle class's frustration against the corrupt politicians. Although the anti-Thaksin masses were better off than the Red Shirts, surprisingly, they were more concerned with the social gap than the Red Shirts, particularly the gap between themselves and those richer (Apichat, Niti and Yukti 2012). Ammar and Somchai (2012, 66-67) argue that those whose economic conditions had worsened were more likely to support the anti-Thaksin movement. For these members of the middle class, the economic and social gap is not about poverty but about the unacceptable differences between them and the upper class. Economic growth during the previous 2-3 decades had benefitted big business and politicians, while the middle class who rely on slow growth salaries, rents and interest suffered, particularly after the 1997 economic crisis (Nithi 2010).

Why did earlier liberal element in the movement moved toward conservative direction?

The switches back and forth between liberal/progressive/democratic positions and conservative/anti-democratic positions among the progressive middle classes[5] are recognized

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governments chosen by the majority rural class. They were more concerned with transparent and effective government (Anek 1996).

[5] Even though the middle class is generally termed as the class of people in the middle of the socio-economic hierarchy, Marxists, modern social theorists and economists continue debating over what

constitutes and what defines the middle class. Various levels and elements of socio-economic status, credentials, cultural perceptions etc. have been taken into account in different periods of history and places (Devine *et al.* 2004). Left wing readers primarily define the middle class through their relationship with the means of production as those below the ruling class but above the proletariat. In different conditions, Marxists explain the middle class in two ways. On the one hand, it is applied to the bourgeoisie like urban merchants and the professional classes which arose between the aristocracy and the proletariat by the end of feudalism. On the other hand, other Marxists define the middle class in more modern developed countries as the petite bourgeoisie comprising owners of small to medium-sized businesses, who derive their income from the exploitation of wage-labourers, as well as the highly educated professional classes. They are in between the ruling capitalist 'owners of the means of production' and the working class (whose income is derived solely from hourly wages). In the meantime, other modern economists and sociologists define the middle class differently. In modern America, this class is used as a self-description by those people whom Marxists and economists would otherwise call the working class (Gilber 1998). While those in the developing world often define the middle class through socio-economic categories like per capita income, purchasing-power parity, education level, etc. (Banerjee and Duflo 2008; Kharas 2010). These have been used in classifying the middle class who played an active role in promoting the Arab spring. The unemployed educated population with USD 10-100 per capita per day in purchasing-power parity terms was the main driver in pushing political change in Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, Jordan and Morocco (Ghanem 2016, 39-64).

In the case of Thailand, the term middle class has been identified differently in the changing social and political context. It was used to explain the small groups of bureaucrats, technocrats, intellectuals, journalists, etc., who had been either educated in western countries or influenced by early 20th century liberal and democratic ideas from Europe during the early 1930s. Several works refer to the People's Party (Khana Ratsadon), which included the bureaucratic elite who acted as a core power in the Constitutional Revolution from the absolute monarchy to the constitutional monarchy in 1932, as middle class (Nakharin 2010; Reynolds 2004). Differently, the middle class in the 1930's to 1940's usually referred to "merchants, ethnic Chinese, or Bourgeois" (Mackie 1988; Szanton 1983). However, these middle classes were a minority in the Thai society. A new category of Thai middle class started to expand by the end of the 1960s. Owing to the proliferation of mass higher education and the Cold War economic boom during the US-backed Sarit Thanarat dictatorship , many former members of the lower class rose into the newly emerging middle class or petite bourgeoisie (tradesmen and white-collar workers) (Anderson 1977). Many moved even further upward into the higher or established middle class, or even the haute bourgeoisie (bankers and industrialists) by profiting from the economic boom of the 1990s (Anek 1993). From the democratic transition in the early 1970s until the democratic reform of the late 1990s, the middle class was recognized as a 'progressive' force that pushed Thailand in liberal and democratic directions (Anderson 1977; Anek 1993; Anek 1997; Englehart 2003, 261; Funatsu and Kagoya 2003, 246; Girling 1996; Morell and Chai-anan 1981; Ockey 1999; Yoshifumi 2004, 32-33).

throughout modern world political history. To explain these phenomena, many analysts from Marxist, modernization and contingency perspectives have proposed countless arguments (Anek 1997; Becker 1984; Bell 1998; Koo 1991; Bellin 2000; Bertrand 1998; Brown and Jones 1995; Chen 2013; Diamond 1992; Englehart 2003; Hewison, Robison, and Rodan 1993, 6; Huntington 1991; Jones 1998; Marshall 1950; Moore 1966, 413-414; Robison 1993, 41; Rodan 1993; Saxer 2014; Therborn 1977; Thompson 1963; Wu, Chang, and Pan 2017). The development of the Thai middle class (*chonchan klaang* in Thai) in democratization is one of the most paradoxical examples. Modernization theory explains the middle class as one of the pinnacles in the development of democratization (Funatsu and Kagoya 2003, 243).

In analysing the inconsistent relationship between the middle class and democratization in contemporary Thai politics, this article instead uses the term middle class to refer to the 'upper' or 'old' middle class defined by the new set of literature. These works respond to the more complicated and diverse nature of the Thai middle class. They apply a hybrid approach including quantitative data on socio-economic status as well as lifestyle including income, education level, career type and assets in classifying the diverse nature of middle class (Apichat and Anusorn 2017; Chalita 2017; Thorn and Chanon 2017). They argue that the continued economic growth since the late 1980s to 2000s, in spite of the brief 1997 Asian economic crisis, allowed the earlier vast majority of the poor to successfully climb above the poverty line and turn themselves into a "new" or "lower" middle class. Meanwhile, it benefited even more those members of the middle class who had emerged since the 1960-70s and changed them into "old" or "higher" middle class (Apichat and Anusorn 2017). Statistically, in 2010, the upper and lower middle classes comprised respectively 14.3 million or 21 per cent and 36 million or 54 per cent of the total population (Thorn and Chanon 2017). The lower middle class includes those with higher incomes than the lower class. Most still have a lower education than the upper middle class. They are in either the seasonal-agricultural and informal sector, or lower level and temporary staff in the public and private sectors (Apichat and Anusorn 2017; Chalita 2017). The upper middle class comprises the urban and highly educated middle class with a luxurious lifestyle. They are either professionals or entrepreneurs with or without employees but definitely outside the agricultural sector (Apichat and Anusorn 2017; Thorn and Chanon 2017). Furthermore, this research proposes that the divergence among these middle classes has laid the foundation for the political conflict in Thailand during the 2000s until today. While the lower middle class was more in support of the Thaksin government and the Red Shirt movement, the upper middle class tended to support the anti-Thaksin movement, the Yellow Shirts under the leadership of the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) or the People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) (Apichat and Anusorn 2017; Apichat, Niti and Yukti 2012).

After *The End of History* of Fukuyama (1989), it was an axiom that democracy would never be reversed (Fukuyama 1989). However, the middle class has taken a paradoxical role in democratization throughout the world both in the past and recently. The middle class switches back-and-forth between being the engine of liberal change and taking a reactionary stance against democracy. Much has been written in an attempt to explain the different ideological nature and changes among the middle class. Some put a lot of effort into illustrating them as the main liberalist, democratic and progressive force at specific points in time. Others criticize and condemn the middle class as a reactionary bourgeoisie in different political transitions.

Middle class: democratic engine and anti-democratic forces

On the positive side, many works depict the middle class as a major force for liberalism and democratization. Writers highlight how the legacies of middle-class revolts in earlier history have had a long-term impact on our world today. Many works portray how the middle class were among the first to reject hereditary privilege, state religion and absolutist monarchy, and to replace absolutism with representative democracy and the rule of law (Anek 1997; Beetham 1974, Chapters 2 and 3; Brown and Jones 1995; Johnston 2006). In the famous dictum, 'No bourgeoisie, no democracy,' Barrington Moore insists that the middle class is the decisive factor in democratization (Moore 1966, 418). Besides historical comparative studies, the modernization-correlation school further explores the positive link between the rise of the middle class, economic development and democracy (Bollen 1983; Brown and Jones 1995, 78; Lipset 1963). Samuel Huntington argues that modernization and economic development produce a middle class which in turn plays a pivotal role in bringing about democracy (Huntington 1984).

In contrast to this sanguine picture of the middle class, many writers take a pessimistic view. Throughout western political history, Marxists and socialists have looked at the middle class as the retrograde 'monster of fascism' and a reactionary class, while other non-Marxist liberal-radicals condemn white-collar workers as alienated, confused, miserable and deeply deluded (Johnston 2006, 4-6). Recently, the role of the middle class has again been questioned. Amidst the recent crises of electoral democracy, they have switched to alliances

with conservative and non-elected elites like the bureaucracy and military to overthrow elected governments. The middle class in many countries such as Ukraine, Egypt, Turkey and Venezuela, have become resistant to democratic development and institutionalization (Kurlantzick 2013; Saxer 2014). This has occurred not only in the western world; the burgeoning middle classes in Asia who had earlier supported democratic transition, later turned their backs on democratic government (Brown and Jones 1995). In many cases, the middle class seemed quite ambivalent about democracy, illiberal, and with vested interests in the continuity and stability of authoritarian rule, since they had been the main beneficiaries of state-led economic growth in previous decades (Bell 1998; Bertrand 1998; Brown and Jones 1995; Chen 2013; Englehart 2003; Hewison, Robison, and Rodan 1993, 6; Jones 1998; Koo 1991). Recent phenomena in Thailand, Egypt, Bangladesh, Chile, Venezuela and Fiji demonstrate middle class support for democratic reversal. The middle class has been sympathetic to military coups against democratic governments (Sinpeng and Arugay 2015; Therborn 2014). Against the backdrop of this antithetical history, many have developed analyses on the conditions that have turned the middle class against democracy. Many works look to structural explanations. Marxist, modernization or other contingency proposals argue that the liberalizing role of the middle class in democratization is 'problematic' (Brown and Jones 1995, 79). Marxist analysts explain that the middle class pushed representative democracy and the protection of civil liberties but opposed equality or rights for lower classes (Marshall 1950; Thompson 1963; Therborn 1977) because of a lack of class ideology (Koo 1991, 492-493). Dependency scholars argue that the domestic bourgeoisie in Third World countries could neither institute democracy nor maintain democratic consolidation because they act only as servants of foreign interests rather than bearers of national interest (Becker 1984). Many modernization theorists admit that what happened earlier in the west (bourgeois democracy) would not necessarily repeat itself in the late-developing countries of the present (Anek 1997; Moore 1966, 413-414). The relationship between economic development and democratization is dynamic and controversial (Chen 2013). Only specific interests and historical situations can explain why rapid development in some cases may result in the rise of democracy (Koo 1991; Englehart 2003; Huntington 1991; Jones 1998; Moore 1966, 418). Lastly, many scholars propose countless contingent

democrat hypotheses. Many argue that the middle class is sensitive to an unstable social order, and opportunistic in responding to self-interest and the performance of the government (Brown and Jones 1995, 97-98; Chen 2013, 10; Koo 1991, 490-492). Some, based on an economic determinism approach, argue that the petty bourgeoisie are economically vulnerable. They are therefore easily manipulated during economic crises (KuvaČiĆ 1979, 338-342).

A large group of contingency scholars focus on the dominant role of a powerful non-democratic state over the middle class. The state successfully co-opts the middle class into taking a dependent relationship with the state rather than opposing it. Also, through connections, employment, socio-political orientation and dependency culture, the middle class is motivated to defend or show loyalty to whichever leader can best offer protection (Bellin 2000; Brown and Jones 1995; Chee 1993; Chen 2013; Wu, Chang, and Pan 2017; Jones 1998, 152-156; Robinson 1991, 41). Besides dependency on the state, more contemporary works from a contingency perspective provide a long list of factors that may turn the middle class against liberalism and democracy, including external intervention like US support for right-wing groups, corruption among elected politicians, a lack of economic development, limited experience of democracy, limited government capacity, ethnic and religious conflicts, a preference for consensus rather than confrontation, the legacy of colonization and a lack of confidence in the unpredictable outcome of democratic states (Anek 1997; Bertrand 1998, 357; Brown and Jones 1995; Chee 1993; Chen 2013, 6; Fukuyama 2012; Jones 1998; Robinson 1991, 41).

The paradox of the Thai middle class in democratization

Similar to the global phenomena, the relationship between the Thai middle and democratization has been inconsistent. The middle class has been back-and-forth in supporting democratic movements and ideas throughout different transitions and efforts to consolidate democracy. On 14th October 1973, student activists successfully mobilized a mass movement to end the fifteen-year-long series of corrupt authoritarian governments and called for democratic government (Anderson 1977; Morell and Chai-anan 1981). But the middle class, who had earlier supported the democratic transition of 1973, soon switched its sympathies to the military

with the expectation that it would restore political and economic stability after the upheavals of the student and labour movements between 1973 and 1976. After 1973, the Thai middle class supported right-wing movements against the student, labour and peasant movements (Anderson 1977; Funatsu and Kagoya 2003, 245-246; Prajak 2006).

During political liberalization in the early 1990s, the Thai middle class grew during the 1990s and established themselves as both financially and socially 'upper' middle class (Apichat and Anusorn 2017). This middle class also switched back-and-forth. In 1991, a military junta, the National Peacekeeping Council (NPKC), staged a coup against the democratically elected government of Chatichai Choonhavan (1988-1991). Initially, the coup seemed to be widely welcomed and supported by the upper middle class (Anek 1993, 77–80; Englehart 2003, 257-258). Only after the coup leaders had revealed their intention to take control over parliamentary politics did the middle class start to campaign against the military and call for democracy (Englehart 2003, 257-258; Yoshifumi 2008). Mass mobilization of the Bangkok and provincial 'middle class', urban professionals, academics and young blood politicians marched out onto the street. They successfully revolted against the efforts of the military to prolong their domination over parliamentary politics and appealed for the return of an elected government and premier (Anek 1993; Englehart 2003, 261; Funatsu and Kagoya 2003, 246; Girling 1996; Ockey 1999). However, it is hard to prove that the upper middle class formed the majority of the protesters. White-collar and blue-collar workers are underrepresented among the casualties of the May 1992 incident (Englehart 2003, 263). Above all, majority of the middle class accepted and welcomed the king's political intervention in the reconciliation process between the junta and protesters (Sinpeng and Arugay 2015, 109).

Aside from pushing forward democratic transitions, the role of the upper middle class was erratic during the post-regime transition in two major processes; the rise of social movements and the political reform in the second half of the 1990s. Countless journalists, NGO workers, academics, and socially-concerned professionals acted as major supporters and worked hand-in-hand with various groups of underprivileged people who had been negatively affected by the unjust consequences of government developmental projects and macro-economic development policies (Baker 2000; Kanokrat 2003; Missingham 2003). At the same

time, they acted as a crucial force in promoting a political reform movement. They supported the 1997 so-called 'People's Constitution', one of the most democratic-oriented constitutions in Thai political history (Englehart 2003; McCargo 2002; Missingham 2003, 59-62; Naruemon 1998). Nevertheless, there are ongoing debates of how far these efforts promoted democracy. In promoting social movements during the 1990s, the Thai middle class, either as NGO workers or academics, took control over various movements and advocated middle class values and agenda (Kanokrat 2003). As for political and constitution reform, in spite of the utmost efforts to make the process of drafting the 1997 constitution as participatory as possible, many questions were raised as to how democratic the constitution was. There were various elements within the constitution which discriminated against the lower middle and lower class as well as empowered non-elected bodies over elected politicians (McCargo 2002; Naruemon 1998; Somchai 2002; Veerayooth 2016, 490).

The most paradoxical move of the Thai upper middle class in contemporary politics came during the rise of the Thaksin government and his successors in the early 2000s and the later political conflict among anti-and-pro Thaksin movements throughout the 2010s up until today. From the very beginning, the upper middle class acted as one of the major forces to support Thaksin Shinawatra and his Thai Rak Thai (TRT) party. Countless groups of academics, professional groups, NGO workers and other social activists took part in the consultation and policy-making process of the TRT party from the very initial stage. Nevertheless, after the overwhelming victory in the 2001 election, the TRT party shifted their interest and emphasis more toward pro-lower middle class, pro-poor and rural based policies. The universal healthcare service, the village funds, etc., successfully promoted its popularity among the majority lower classes. At the same time, the Thaksin government implemented strong measures against its political opponents (Pasuk and Baker 2004; McCargo and Ukrist 2005).

As the frustrations among the upper middle class mounted, they began to mobilize pressure through the media and mass movements against the government. While this pattern of mobilization had been successful in getting rid of the governments they disapproved of, particularly in October 1973 and May 1992, as well as achieving their demands during the 1997

political reform, it hardly worked under the Thaksin governments. Owing to the design of the 1997 constitution, the success of the policy platform of the TRT, and its abuse of power, the Thaksin government took control over parliamentary politics, the bureaucratic system, the courts, the independent bodies and popular support from the majority of the Thai population.

In fighting against the corrupt, populist and semi-authoritarian elected Thaksin governments and their successors, the Thai upper middle class gradually went further to support anti-democratic and conservative-oriented movements and allied itself with ultra-conservative masses and elites in overthrowing Thaksin and suppressing those who supported democracy. By 2006, they stood up in support of the PAD, the anti-Thaksin movement organization. They shifted from merely campaigning against corrupt and suppressive government to advocating royalism, ultra-nationalism and above all, anti-democratic ideas and systems. Going against liberal democracy and egalitarian ideas, they were in favour of a strong political order. They supported the appeal for a prime minister directly appointed by the King, based on the putative applicability of Article 7 of the constitution. They invited military intervention and legitimized the coups toppling the Thaksin government in 2006. Afterward, in 2008, countless numbers of the middle class backed an anti-Thaksin movement using confrontation and violent strategies like seizing international airports and government offices, to remove the governments of Samak Sundaravej (January – September 2008) and Somchai Wongsawat (September – December 2008), crony governments of Thaksin. Between 2009 and 2013, many even organized, participated in and supported ultra-nationalist and royalist campaigns in attacking mass supporters of Thaksin in the Red Shirt movement. In 2013, the mass movement of the upper middle class reformed under the new movement organization of the PDRC led by former politicians of the Democrat party. Their mass protests successfully pressured Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, Thaksin's sister, to dissolve parliament. However, they did not stop there. The upper middle class mass mobilization continued. They forcefully campaigned for the suspension and obstruction of the general election as well as openly calling for military intervention. Subsequently, the military staged a coup on May 2014 (Askew 2010b, 3-4; Kanokrat 2016; Montesano 2009; Saxer 2014; Thongchai 2008b, 30-33).

Moreover, in the recent 2019 general election, the upper middle class was the major constituency who voted for the Palang Pracharat party allied to the military (Kanokrat 2019).

To explain why these so-called progressive actors in Thai politics eventually joined hands with conservative and elitist forces in promoting a royalist, nationalist and anti-democratic campaign to oppose Thaksin and the Red Shirts, the previous literature offers six major arguments including pragmatism, liberal–procedural hypothesis, the legacies and newly constructed dominant supremacy and right-wing hegemonies, framing processes, failure of the liberal forces and cultural clash between middle and lower classes.

Pragmatism

The first argument describes the Thai middle class as pragmatist. The relationship between the Thai middle class and democracy is contingent on whether its interests, both financial and political, can be protected (Sinpeng and Arugay 2015, 112-113; Jager 2013). The call for democratization and political liberalization during the 1970s-1990s was merely to protect themselves from an abusive bureaucratic elite. Materialistically, during the Thaksin regimes, the middle class felt itself squeezed between and threatened by the rapid increase in wealth of rich upper class and the lower class (Apichat and Anusorn 2017; Nithi 2010). Giles (2007) argues that the middle class supported the military coup in order to preserve their wealth and social status. He (Giles 2009, 90-91) sees this phenomenon merely as the expression of self-interest of the leadership, exemplified by some prominent NGO workers who hoped that the military would select them as senators.

Several argue that the shift of the anti-Thaksin movement toward a royalist and anti-democratic campaign was a rational option among PAD leadership and members. The Yellow Shirts are rational actors and pragmatists. They made use of royalist and conservative ideas as a powerful ideological tool and alliance in fighting against Thaksin (Thonchai 2008). The nationalist and royalist ideologies and discourses offered an alternative to the devastated market since the economic crisis (Hewison 2000). The problem was that these academics and activists underestimated the power of the old elite. Thongchai (2008a) argues that they

misunderstood the process of political development in Thailand. They underestimated the old elite and perceived their threat to be elected politicians, not the royalists and conservatives. Initially, they adopted royalism as a political tool without believing in it. Nonetheless, the broad alliance of the PAD was too weak; only the royal institution was strong enough to fight the TRT and this eventually came to dominate the movement (Kasian 2006, 36).

Liberal–procedural hypothesis

This hypothesis argues the upper urban classes called for the removal of the democratically elected Thaksin to rescue liberal proceduralism from a populist and authoritarian leader (Jager 2013). Allying with the powerful conservative elite and mass, and eventually promoting a military coup were the limited choices they had to save liberal democracy (Thongchai 2008b, 30-31). They backed the PAD movement which presented itself as a safeguard for liberal democracy (Chang 2006a; Chang 2006b). Several academics argued in support of the PAD and legitimized elitist intervention in politics such as the 2006 coup. Many argued that Thaksin had already destroyed democracy and the 1997 constitution. Thus, the coup was not anti-democratic but was necessary as the only way to restore democracy (e.g., Anek 2006; Khien 2006; Thirayuth 2007).

However, these works are mainly dominated by the advocacy work of the anti-Thaksin supporters. The works of anti-Thaksin academics and social activists generally echo messages identifying the anti-Thaksin mass as the politically active middle class wanting to protect democracy from corrupt politicians and to promote human rights and social justice against the abusive Thaksin regime (Kasit 2012; Pittaya 2008; Thirayuth 2006).

Success of right-wing hegemonies

The shift in a conservative and non-democratic direction was due to the successful efforts of the royalist and right-wing elite in laying a conservative foundation in Thai society before the rise of the anti-Thaksin movement as well as their hegemonic role in asserting a right-wing ideology in the anti-Thaksin movement (Hewison 2010: Kasian 2009: Stent 2012).

A series of studies emphasized the triumph of the royalists and monarchy in promoting and utilizing the Thai ideology of royalism-nationalism to legitimize their political power in a changing context (Connors 2008a; Fong 2009; Ivarsson and Isager (eds.) 2010; Jackson 2009; Kasian 2009; Thongchai 2008a). Kasian (2006, 18-20) outlines the formation of the Thai ideology of royalism-nationalism through King Rama V as anti-colonialist hero, King Rama VII as guarantor of democracy, and finally King Rama IX as national and democratic savior from military dictatorship and communism in the 1970s. More importantly, in the 21st century, the pre-modern discourse of 'god-king' was revitalised through visual media and neo-liberal to auraticise Rama IX (Jackson 2009). The royal institution constructed the power, rule and royalist ideas by sacralising the nation as rooted in a glorious place and legitimising the king's place and continued relevance in Thai politics (Fong 2009). The success of monarchism since 1973 in assuming the status of a superior realm in Thai politics rests on being sacred, popular and democratic. Also the royal institution managed to claim the high moral ground above corrupt politicians. The image was created of a clean polity with a distaste for electoral politics as extremely corrupt and undemocratic (Thongchai 2008a; Jackson 2009). Furthermore, the royalists and the Thai monarchy have long developed a relationship with liberal intellectuals and had a long-term ambition to forge a metaphoric unity between king and people/nation (Connors 2008a, 149).

Hewison (2010) argues that the Yellow Shirts rose in the middle of a power struggle of conservative and authoritarian forces to control Thailand's political reform over the democratic prescriptions in the 1997 constitution, judicialisation and the monarchy. Also Connors (2007, 14; 2008a, 146) argues that royal liberalism has been long promoted and exercised by different groups. Liberals are held to emerge in constitutional struggles against authoritarianism, rather than in bourgeois struggles against an absolute monarchy. Stent (2012, 32) refers to a small portion of Yellow Shirt villagers and urban labourers following ingrained instincts of loyalty to traditional institutions (Stent 2012). Kasian (2009) conducts interesting research on the prominence and plurality of ethnic Chinese participants and supporters in the PAD movement, especially from Bangkok's Chinatown. He points out the long success of Thai state in assimilating the Thai-Chinese, as well as the long process by which the Thai-Chinese were

used as a political instrument of conservative forces and authoritarian regimes. These laid the foundation for the patriotic and nationalist campaign of the PAD to attract the Thai-Chinese and other 'ethnic diversity' to the PAD movement (Kasian 2009)

Along with their higher educational, social and economic status, the Thai middle class developed a sense of intellectual superiority over the lower classes. They became very proud of their superiority in education, access to information, political morality (no vote-buying), and moral and ethical standards (not relying on financial support from politicians). They looked down upon the lower class for voting for corrupt politicians in exchange for short-term financial benefits (Sinpeng and Arugay 2015, 110-111). On top of that, right-wing institutions successfully promoted their hegemonic project. Thais, including the middle class, have long been socialized through hierarchical social structures. For them, inequality is not only natural but moral (Mulder 1997, 308). The middle class share political thoughts based on religious beliefs and moral 'good man's politics,' which fundamentally differ from democracy. The power to rule is tied to personal virtue rather than support from a majority of the population (Apichat and Anusorn 2017). At the same time, radical and progressive Thai activists and academics failed to propose to the Thai middle class any alternative ideology or ideological strategy to communitarianism-nationalism-royalism (Giles, 2009; Kanokrat 2016, 36; Kanokrat 2017; Kasian 2006; McCargo 2005; Pye and Schaffar 2008; Thongchai 2008b).

Framing processes

The last argument is based on the success of a framing process through both the media and master frame of the anti-Thaksin movement. Using the information-gap hypothesis, Jager (2013) argues that the middle class consume different media from those in the lower class in the countryside, particularly with respect to negative information about Thaksin and his performance.

Many studies emphasises the dominant framing role of the PAD leaders in moving in a conservative direction and delegitimizing electoral democracy. Many works focus on the dominant role of the movement leaders in shifting the movement into a conservative direction

and delegitimizing electoral democracy (Hewison 2007; Hewison and Kengkit 2010; Pasuk and Baker 2012, 224; Pavin 2011; Thongchai 2008, 30-31). Their pragmatist leadership and members made use of royalist and conservative ideas as a powerful ideological tool and alliance in fighting against Thaksin (Thongchai 2008). Many argue that the movement's leaders promoted issues which successfully mobilized the anti-Thaksin movement and promoted a right-wing agenda. Thongchai (2008b, 30-31) underlines the influential role of the royalist-liberal alliance among a royalist leader like Sondhi Limthongkul, ''people's sector'' activists and intelligentsia, and a number of blue-blooded aristocrats and minor royals in calling for the use of the so-called royal prerogative. Pasuk and Baker (2012, 224) mention the PAD leader's allegation that Thaksin was a threat to the monarchy, his attack on electoral democracy as dominated by corrupt politicians and money politics, and his proposal to move away from 'one person, one vote' toward the appointment of MPs based on representation of occupational groups and the transfer of power to the monarchy, bureaucracy and judiciary. Pavin (2010 and 2011) highlights the process in which PAD leaders and the traditional Thai elite including royalists, the military and the bureaucracy, developed the use of the tropes of 'Thainess' and 'traitor' against Thaksin and the Red Shirts to conceal their own dark reality and to legitimise the 2006 coup. Pavin unpacks the issues promoted by the leadership, including the controversy over the Preah Vihear Temple, the allegations of anti-monarchy sentiment among the Red Shirts, Thaksin's role in promoting consumerism against the King's sufficiency economy, and the sense of the Yellow Shirts as 'defenders of Thai nationhood'. Also, Hewison and Kengkij (Hewison 2007; Hewison and Kengkit 2010) point to how the non-elected Thai elite, the PAD leadership and anti-Thaksin intellectuals revitalized use of the discourse of 'Thai-style democracy' which had been long used by royalists to delegitimize democratic forms of government and to legitimise conservatism and coups. More recent work of Panitan (Panitan 2012) plays up the influential and effective role of the vibrant media and political campaign promoted by the PAD leaders that Thaksin was a threat to Nation, Religion and King and the PAD had to stand up to protect these institutions. Panitan compiles an extensive list of television and radio programmes, newspapers, plays, T-shirt campaigns, etc., initiated and promoted by the PAD leaders.

Failure of the liberal forces

Various readers see this phenomenon as ideological and strategic problems and failures of progressive Thai activists and academics. Giles, Hewison and Kengkij all agree that the change in the Thai activists is an ideological problem in the post-Communist era. These activists abandoned leftist ideas and opted for community anarchism and localism (Giles 2009, 93; Kengkij and Hewison 2009a). Royalist and nationalist ideas had been adopted among Thai progressives wing for quite some time before the rise of the PAD. NGOs were linked with the royalists through their promotion of the 'sufficiency economy' during the late 1990s arguing that this was the way to insulate communities from capitalism (Giles 2009, 94). They exercised the 'Communitarianism-Nationalism' with the King as a leader since the economic crisis (Kengkij and Hewison 2009a, 125). Pye and Schaffar (2008, 55) explain that these progressive forces were unable to propose any alternative to royal intervention. Also, in the post-communist period, Thai progressive forces went against electoral politics owing to the dirty money politics and promoted powerless direct democracy (Giles 2009, 94). They could hardly compete in electoral politics (Pye and Schaffar 2008, 55).

Furthermore, because of strategic problems, after the collapse of the communism, these activists shifted away from a class-based movement towards lobby politics and a cross-class alliance strategy of the New Social Movement concept (Giles 2009, 93; Kengkij and Hewison 2009a). In a context where Thai politics and political regimes were dominated by a co-existence of liberal and authoritarian (military and royalist) forces during the last 30 years (Connors 2009)[6], there had long been alliances between so-called progressive NGOs, academics and social activists and the 'royalist liberal' wing of the network monarchy, particularly through Prawes Wasi and Anand Panyarachun (McCargo 2005).

[6] Connors argues that Thai politics has been under a 'liberalising bureaucratic–authoritarian regime' (1978–88), an 'emergent liberal–conservative regime' (1988–90, 1992–95, 1997–2000), and an 'electoral pluto-populist regime' (1996–97, 2001–6) (Connors 2009).

Cultural clash between middle and lower classes and elected politicians

The last set of studies underscores the conservative direction of the anti-Thaksin movement as a result of the clash of identity and culture with the majority lower class Red Shirts and corrupt elected politicians. Stent (2012, 32) argues that the anti-Thaksin movement comprised the Bangkok aristocracy, high-ranking businesspeople, and the upper levels of the bureaucracy who have had little understanding of and tolerance for the urban poor, villagers or workers. Thus, they could hardly distinguish the legitimate grievances of the Red Shirt protestors from the interests of Thaksin. They are dismissive of the protestors as a ragged bunch of paid hooligans with whom it is useless to negotiate.

Nithi (2010) and Apichat et al. (2012, 89-92) point to the cultural gaps and differences between the Yellow Shirt middle class and the rest of society in the changing socio-economic context which caused them frustration and the eventual shift toward royalist and anti-democratic campaigns against the lower class and elected politicians.

Firstly, with the rise of consumerist culture, middle-class salaries could not sustain a new life style. The solution is to use the concept of the sufficiency economy to claim that they are self-sufficient while the politicians are not but are instead corrupt. Even though in daily life, the middle class are used to corruption, the corruption of politicians is painful to them, because politicians exploit the taxes they pay. These politicians have no legitimacy to govern and so reducing the number of elected politicians to 30 per cent of parliament in the 'new politics' proposed by the PAD, is acceptable to the middle class (Nithi 2010).

Secondly, the replacement of earlier hierarchical social structures with money and more equality made the middle class feel insecure. In the past, the middle class maintained their privilege through education and family and professional connections. In a more competitive society, these channels to power and prestige were threatened. Money and efficiency became more important. Therefore, joining the Yellow Shirts and being known as the 'mob with connections' (ม็อบมีเส้น) made them feel secure again. Middle-class nostalgia for hierarchical social relationships influenced those who could hardly compete in a new structure of more equal and competitive social relations to the point where they felt the new social order was immoral. To return to the good old days, they needed 'good' men to rule. In thinking this way,

they looked up to the old elitist class. Thus, allying with elitist groups was not a problem for them (Nithi 2010).

Thirdly, populist policies did not benefit them and raised the lower class to a status equal to them. In the struggle to keep their prestige status, ideas like the sufficiency economy promoted by royalist groups became the answer to return the lower class to their earlier status separate from them (Nithi 2010; Apichat, Niti and Yukti 2012).

Limitations of Earlier Literatures

The broad explanations of the formation and conservative direction of the anti-Thaksin movement in the earlier literature are limited in three major aspects.

Firstly, earlier researches covered only the peak period of the anti-Thaksin movement under the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) movement organization before the rise of the Red Shirts between 2006 and 2009. There has been no systematic research on the profound internal conflicts and gradual decline in mass support in the early 2010s as well as their revival and peak under the new leadership of the PDRC between 2013 and 2014.

Secondly, most literature pays attention to the leading actors within the anti-Thaksin movement; few studies are concerned with the mass of supporters. Earlier examinations of the growth and mobilization of the anti-Thaksin movement and the formation of the anti-Thaksin movement and the PAD have focused on the conservative and liberal leaders, not the mass support or rank-and-file (e.g., Askew 2010b, 3-4 and 8-9; Askew 2010c, 34-35; Connors 2008b, 483 and 489-490; McCargo 2009, 18; Montesano 2009; Nelson 2010; Pavin 2010; Thongchai 2008b, 30-33). Most of earlier studies explain the rise of the anti-Thaksin movement through the study of elite conflict, and the conservative and liberal leadership of the movement. However, an understanding of the elite or leadership cannot stand as an analysis of the anti-Thaksin movement as a whole. For instance, as mass support declined, the elite in the PAD and the conservative culture were still highly visible and considered powerful; earlier analyses could hardly explain this phenomenon.

Earlier readers on the masses use information and analyses derived from the conservative elitist and liberal leadership. Most of them posit the conflicting interests and ideologies of the leading figures within the PAD against Thaksin as the driving forces for the mass support for the PAD and the shift in a conservative direction. Without deeper and more systematic research on the diversity among middle-class Yellow Shirts, the heterogeneous, contradictory and contesting nature of Yellow Shirt supporters could hardly be explained. At the same time, many such studies focus on the hegemonic role of the PAD leadership and conservative forces in constructing and promoting the ultra-right, royalist, nationalist and anti-democratic campaigns of the anti-Thaksin movement without understanding how these ideological strategies functioned in the movement. The middle class are seen as passive actors who were easily turned into conservative zombies. This fails to characterize properly those who earlier acted as progressive forces critical toward the royal and conservative norms. Before the 2000s, the middle class included those who were most critical of the legitimacy of the royal institution. In Asma (2010), her research does not focus on what she calls 'the real mass support'. She instead uses an analysis derived from the leading figures from business, the NGOs and academia to explain that the middle class as a whole stood up against Thaksin and joined the PAD in order to protect their political power and economic interests which were threatened by the Thaksin regime.

Lastly, although the literature makes countless references to the mass middle class of the PAD, few studies focus on this element. Most focus on either the conservative or liberal leaders. Most of the more critical studies merely offer arguments without systematic in-depth research (Nithi 2010; Pasuk and Baker 2008, 77-81) and few of these have conducted research specifically on the middle class and other groups at the rank-and-file level of the movement rather extrapolate information or interpretations derived from an analysis of the leadership or comparisons with the Red Shirts (e.g., Asma 2010; Apichat, Niti and Yukti 2012; Ammar and Somchai 2012; Brown and Hewison 2005).

In conclusion, earlier studies fail to explain the recent internal conflict and decline in the anti-Thaksin movement and the supporters are insufficiently studied. This research will look at the period of decline of the PAD from 2010 onward, focusing on the mass supporters of both

the PAD and the PDRC rather than the leadership and elite forces behind the movement in explaining the rise and transformation of the anti-Thaksin movement. This will test the arguments proposed by earlier studies through the collection of more detailed and nuanced data from different groups of PAD and PDRC members.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

In filling gaps in the literature mentioned above and constructing a more comprehensive analytical framework, this research finds inspiration from social movement theory. The scholarly literature on social movements provides useful analytical tools for understanding the emergence, development and transformation of the anti-Thaksin movement. For example, writings on 'cycles' of mobilisation offer guidance by showing that mobilisation and demobilisation of social movements unfold in a predictable fashion. This is a useful starting point for understanding the anti-Thaksin movement, not only in terms of their mobilisation but also their demobilisation. In the mobilisation phase, the cycle of contention begins when political opportunities are opened for well-placed 'early risers,' when their claims resonate with those of significant others, and when these give rise to objective or explicit coalitions among disparate actors and create or reinforce instability in the elite. In understanding the emergence and evolution of anti-Thaksin movement, this literature suggests we should consider heightened conflict, broad sectoral and geographical diffusion, the expansion of the repertoire of contention, the appearance of new organisations and the empowerment of old ones, the creation of new 'master frames' linking the actions of disparate groups to one another, and intensified interaction between challengers and the state, lending to particular state responses a key pivoting role in determining which direction the cycle will take. In understanding the decline of the anti-Thaksin movement, social movement theorist Sidney Tarrow identifies several key factors, including exhaustion and fractionalisation/polarisation, institionalisation and violence, and repression and facilitation (Tarrow 1998, 144-150).

In explaining the cycle of mobilisation and demobilisation of the anti-Thaksin movement, this research selectively draws concepts from the social movement literature including political

opportunity structure, mobilisation structures, and framing. These terms provide systematic frameworks in exploring the origin, emergence and transformation of, and conflict among, Yellow Shirts. Rather than emphasising the grievance-based conceptions of social movements, it takes issues, actors, and constraints as given, and focuses on how the actors develop strategies and interact with their environment to pursue their interests (Canel 1992, 38-39), and mobilisation processes and the formal organisational manifestations of these processes (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996, 3-4).

Political Opportunity Structure

Notion of political opportunity structure helps to identify political opportunities for collective action by the anti-Thaksin movement and the constraints affecting conflict among them. The term 'political opportunity structure' means a set of conditions that shape the prospects for collective action and the forms of movements, foremost among which were the opportunity-threat to challengers and facilitation-repression by authorities. The model focuses on an interaction of movement and institutionalised politics (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996, 2-3; Tilly 1978, Chapter 3, 4, 6). Political opportunity is significant as a key explanatory variable of the timing of collective action and outcomes of movement activity (McAdam 1996a, 24-31). Social movements and revolutions are shaped by the broader set of political constraints and opportunities unique to the national context in which they are embedded (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996, 2-3).

Scholars of social movements argue that shifts in political opportunity are crucial for enabling and impelling mobilisation. Proponents of the model (e.g., Jenkins and Perrow 1977; McAdam 1982; Tarrow 1983; Tilly 1978) say the timing and path of a movement is largely dependent upon the opportunities afforded insurgents by the shifting institutional structure and ideological disposition of those in power. The political opportunity is also created and increased by movements and for themselves (McAdam 1996a, 23 and 34; Tarrow 1994, 82).

At the domestic level, the change in nature of the state power structure and life-course of the Yellow Shirts was crucial. In understanding changes in state attributes, one needs to

observe six different classifications of political opportunity structure including the reduction in the degree of repression by the state (Tarrow 1998, 80), the opening of institutional access to new actors, realignment/shifts within elite politics, new potential elite alliances, splits/conflicts/divisions within the elite, and the decline of the state's capacity and facility in policy implementation (Rucht 1996; Tarrow 1994, 761; Tarrow 1996, 53; Tarrow 1998, 71).

Mobilizing Structure

A second element of the literature on social movements which helps to illuminate the trajectory of the anti-Thaksin movement is the notion of 'mobilising structure.' Here the focus rests on the collecting, assembling and use of resources (material and/or non-material), and the dissemination of information within a movement, above all for sustaining movement activities and achieving its goals and the explicit purposes of a movement's interests (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996, 3; McCarthy 1996, 141; Rucht 1996, 186-187). For movement to start and survive, insurgents must be able to create a more enduring organisational structure to sustain collective action (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996, 13).

In analysing the process of the re-establishment of the anti-Thaksin movement, this focus on 'mobilising structures' helps us to explore the ability of the anti-Thaksin movement to recruit and sustain mobilisation. In the case of the Yellow Shirts, this research identifies 'pre-existing social networks' (McAdam 1988; Snow et al. 1980) as important infrastructures. These personal networks drew on previous experiences of collective action, facilitated communication and exchange, and kept the movement's identity alive even when public campaigns were not in progress (Diani 1992, 110-111). Furthermore, informal and personal networks contained strong 'netness', the denseness of their social relationship foundations linking movement constituencies to movement institutional ties (McCarthy 1996, 142-143; Tilly 1978). Above all, these informal networks were a source of 'social capital'. Personal networks and commitments counted for much in the maintenance of activism among the Yellow Shirts (Tarrow 1998, 168-169).

The specific mobilising structures of the anti-Thaksin movement have functioned to mobilise resources and promote collective action. Firstly, different individuals, groups and organisations within the anti-Thaksin networks have functioned as connecting points in exchanging information and resources in order to support the anti-Thaksin movement in three major dimensions including inter-organisational exchanges, individual/social movement organisation exchanges, and personal exchanges/networks. Inter-organisational exchanges have consisted of direct exchanges through personal ties of friendship or overlapping membership in developing a common understanding of the problem issues they confront. From time to time, they join forces to lend resources to other groups and access the media.

Secondly, all actors, organisations and networks within the anti-Thaksin movement have collaborated in forming what scholars call a 'movement family'. A 'movement family' is a free-standing protest campaign group which links networks, organisations, and caucuses together in order to coordinate events and efforts (McCarthy 1996, 143-144). Under this concept, we then understand how different actors within the anti-Thaksin movement created specific lobbying groups which connect and bring together their diverse membership to support the movement.

Finally, the anti-Thaksin movement has functioned by alternately using various types of movement technologies. At the broadest level, the movement has functioned through a strategy package of 'action technologies', sets of knowledge about how to carry out a particular action and what its consequences are likely to be. There are two types of action technologies. Production technologies are sets of knowledge about ways of achieving goals, such as lobbying, demonstrations, strikes, or attending public hearings. Mobilisation technologies are sets of knowledge about ways of accumulating the resources (such as time and money) necessary for production technologies. In pushing forward specific goals, different actors within the anti-Thaksin movement have selectively chosen either 'insider' tactics (e.g., lobbying, litigating) or 'outsider' tactics (e.g., demonstrations, attempts to get media coverage) according to the nature and degree of conflict in the political environment they have faced, internal organisational resources, the character of their membership, principal sources of financial support (Oliver and Marwell 1992, 251-255), and past knowledge and experience of mobilisation technology.

Framing Process

The third notion of the literature on social movement is 'framing'. It helps to explain how Yellow Shirts constructed and utilised cognitive and discursive frames to promote their movement as well as how these processes triggered changes and conflicts among them. A 'frame' is any set of ideas, beliefs, problem issues, and movement symbols which were raised in the movement. Frames are the specific metaphors, symbolic representations, and cognitive cues used to render or cast behaviour and events in an evaluative mode and to suggest alternative modes of action (Zald 1996, 261–262). A framing process is a process in which frames are constructed in response to the particular purposes and goals of the movement (Tarrow 1994, 123). Here the research focuses on two major dimensions of the framing process: framing as a resource mobilising strategy; and framing as a means of collective identity and movement construction.

First of all, 'strategic framing' and 'framing alignment' offer useful concepts in explaining forms of resource mobilisation. Literally, strategic framing is a process in making a linkage between culture, ideology and frame. Practically, a frame assigns meaning to and interprets relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilise potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystanders' support, and to demobilise antagonists. Strategic framing guides us to understand how a frame is used as an active tactic and strategy in constructing meaning and legitimacy, and defining a pathway for initiating, promoting, and sustaining change for the movement (McAdam 1996b, 338-339).

Framing alignment is a process by which participants in social protests and movements construct any given set of ideas, beliefs, problematic issues and symbols, and put these into function (Snow et al. 1986). It functions both in bringing the movement's 'message' (demands and grievances) to power holders and the public (Snow and Benford 1992, 136), and in providing motivation-generating energy for participation in the movement (Zald 1996, 265). The process can range between interpretations from context and from the flow of pre-existing ideas or beliefs, and the inherited culture and values of the target population, as well as those related to the new frames and values of the movement in responding to the particular purposes and

goals of the movement (Baud and Rutten 2004, 1-18 and 197-217; Snow et al. 1986; Tarrow 1994, 123).

To be more specific, there are four framing alignment processes which help us to understand the anti-Thaksin movement. The first is frame bridging, which involves the linkage of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem. It manages to create the sense of 'we-ness' among people with different orientations through overlap of individual political identities and the collective identity of a movement (Klatch 1999, 6). The second is frame amplification. It refers to the clarification and invigoration of an interpretive frame on a particular issue, problem or set of event. The third is frame extension. It involves the expansion of the boundaries of a 'movement's primary framework so as to encompass interests or points of view that are incidental to its primary objectives but of considerable salience to potential adherents'. The fourth is frame transformation. This refers to a redefinition of 'activities, events, and biographies that are already meaningful from the standpoint of some primary framework, such that they are now seen by the participants to be quite something else' (Snow et al. 1986, 467-474).

Second of all, the framing process helps in the construction of a collective identity among participants and in the formulation of a movement structure. It builds up a collective identity as an incentive to participate in the movement and interpretive orientations linking individuals and the movement. Collective identities provide congruent and complementary sets of individual interests, values, and beliefs and movement activities, goals, and ideology (Snow et al. 1986, 464; Friedman and McAdam 1992, 156). This overcomes the argument that individuals join collective action only when they expect the private benefits of participation to exceed the cost. In reality, there is also a collective identity benefit in being part of the movement. The nature of collective identities produced by social movements changes over time. Initially, framing works in attracting new recruits and sustaining supporters. A successful movement usually does not create attractive collective identities from scratch. A new collective identity is planted in the soil of pre-existing collective identities, and to an extent it is embedded within them. The most important decision is to define the boundaries of the group, whether inclusive or exclusive. Eventually, a collective identity becomes a public good and faces the

free-rider problem. Once a movement has managed to fashion an identity, it is difficult to control its consumption unless it is a highly exclusive one. In effect, the collective identity becomes a public good that all can consume without contributing to its production (Friedman and McAdam 1992, 156-157 and 161-169).

However, not all framing efforts manage to mobilise resources and constituencies. The term ‘frame resonance’ helps in analysing how and why the anti-Thaksin movement successfully mobilised on some occasions while at other times the framing efforts fell on deaf ears and may even have been counterproductive (Snow and Benford 1988, 198-210). Frame resonance comprises core framing tasks, infrastructural constraints of belief systems, and phenomenological constraints. ‘Core framing’ tasks mean robustness, completeness and thoroughness of the framing efforts (Klandermans 1984). The success of a mobilising campaign relies upon its ability to effectively produce ‘diagnostic’, ‘prognostic’ and ‘motivational’ framings. ‘Diagnostic framing’ involves identification of a problem and the attribution of blame or causality. ‘Prognostic framing’ is a proposed solution to the diagnosed problem as well as identification of strategies, tactics, and targets which need to be pursued. ‘Motivational framing’ is a call to arms and rationale for engaging in ameliorative or collective action and to go beyond the diagnosis and prognosis. Since the agreement about the causes and solutions to a particular problem does not automatically produce collective action, it follows that consensus mobilisation does not necessarily yield to mobilisation (Snow and Benford 1988, 200–202).

The second component of framing resonance is the infrastructural constraints of belief systems comprising levels of centrality and interrelatedness. With respect to centrality, the effectiveness of the framing process depends upon the larger belief system. If the values or beliefs the movement seeks to promote or defend are of low importance within the larger belief system, the mobilisation potential is weakened considerably. With respect to interrelatedness, if the framing effort links to only one core belief or value, then the movement is vulnerable to being discounted. In order to deal with this dilemma and expand their potential constituency, movements may extend the boundaries of their primary framework by incorporating values that were initially incidental to its central objectives (Snow and Benford 1988, 205-206).

The third feature is phenomenological constraints. The successful frame needs to consider the relevance of the frame to the world and life situation of the participants. There are three interrelated but analytically distinct constraints that bear upon the issue of relevancy including empirical credibility, experiential commensurability and narrative fidelity. Empirical credibility refers to the fit between the framing and events in the world. Experiential commensurability relates to whether the frame can compete in a framing dispute. Does it suggest answers and solutions to troublesome events and situations and harmonise with the things which participants have been or are currently experiencing? Or is the framing too abstract and distant from the everyday experiences of potential participants? Narrative fidelity is a framing that resonates with cultural narrations, with the stories, myths, and folk tales that are part and parcel of one's cultural heritage (Snow and Benford 1988, 207–210).

Furthermore, the success of the framing process in promoting the rise to prominence of the Yellow Shirts has relied heavily on how far it is able to open up new political opportunities. One significant purpose of the framing process is to promote changes in the prevailing cultural climate, the history of the country and issues of concern. In short, inserting new framing should help in promoting a new political climate and expanding cultural opportunities (Gamson and Mayer 1996, 279).

Beside benefits from the framing process, it is necessary to consider another of its consequences toward both the movement and its frame specialists[7]. At the movement level, de-radicalisation and changes of political goals were the consequences of playing roles as popular intellectuals and specialists in the framing process. A social movement is the product of the interaction of different social and political groups. Therefore, acting as popular intellectuals in a social movement, the Yellow Shirts had to attract many groups with different backgrounds. At the same time, they had to compromise with diverse alliances, opponents and media. During this process, they ran the risk of losing their ideological coherence, or being incorporated into

[7] A framing specialist is person who develops, borrows, adapts, and reworks interpretive frames that promote collective action and that define collective interest and identities, rights and claims (Baud and Rutten 2004, 6).

hegemonic politics and mainstream society. From time to time, in extending their frame to link with the wider belief system of liberal democracy, they overextended the frame in a liberal direction (Snow and Benford 1988, 205–206).

At an individual level, one has to bear in mind that politics is personal. Personal consequences and disillusioned memories of post-intensive participation in a political and revolutionary movement affected individuals differently. On return from a revolution, individuals faced a 'rebound effect' or threw themselves into a public and private life which was different from their time with the movement. Furthermore, they encountered disillusionment, due to the gap between the ambition of their earlier leftist movement and actual outcomes (Tarrow 1994, 164-165).

In addition, the transformation of the Yellow Shirts came as a result of the integration of new ideas they learnt from their political exile, new class status and new political settings. The construction of post-1970s networks often went beyond the activists' original movement membership. The framing process suggests post-revolutionary life turned activists upside down and brought them to connect with new social ties which immediately took them away from their radical lifestyles and ideas. Their private sphere was expanded. Furthermore, new social institutions established on their return forced these people into a new type of political socialisation. This allowed activists to select a good deal from past positions and to be engaged in networks of international debate to internal party politics, and to socialism as theory and praxis (Hite 2000, 129). Furthermore, changes in class affiliation bring about a transformation of political stances among activists. The political behaviour and the diversity of the leftist movement were also in some measure determined by their class character (Mars 1998, 39-40).

Aside from transformation, the framing process also caused conflict among the Yellow Shirts. Although the framing process may help a social movement to forge a collective identity and specific form of solidarity, social movements are diverse and heterogeneous, and they change over time. A social movement is an outcome of constant tension between diverging orientations and different sets of belief and culture (Diani 1992, 111-112). Therefore, a frame is generated by a diverse set of actors in relation to a variety of audiences inside and outside a movement. Often, the framing process is competitive and contested (Diani 1992, 111-112;

Gamson and Mayer 1996, 283; Zald 1996, 269). Thereafter, in participating in these frame competitions, the Yellow Shirts were naturally at risk of fighting against each other in promoting their agendas and ideas.

In summary, the scholarly literature on social movements provides an analytical framework for understanding how the Yellow Shirts emerged and successfully mobilised their movement. As we shall see, the Yellow Shirts exploited shifts in the structure of political opportunities and engaged in a process of constructing and utilising frames. Also the social movement literature also helps to explain how competition and confrontation among Yellow Shirts eventually developed.

Research Methodology

In conducting research on the anti-Thaksin movement, this research pays attention to three major interrelated approaches and methods to gather information for analysis in filling the gaps of earlier literature and researches: press reports and other written documentary materials, oral histories/in-depth interviews, and discourse analysis.

First of all, this research draws on documents written by outsiders from various perspectives including newspapers, related research, printed matter and archives. Also, the research draws on interviews, self-written documents (diaries and short stories), and organisation materials of different groups within the anti-Thaksin movement between 2005 and 2013 (books, pamphlets, meeting minutes, papers and political statements). In addition to documentary research, this research also draws on ethnographic and participant observation. Planning to attend protests and meetings of these Yellow Shirts, the author expects to find additional sources of information and insight beyond written materials otherwise available.

Secondly, the research draws upon oral histories. Through in-depth interviews, the researcher will gather information on a specific period or a single aspect of an individual's political biography and socialisation over his/her life course by which individuals construct a core self that is political (della Porta 1992, 168–172; Klatch 1999, 6). On the one hand, these interviews provide insight into the individuals' own understanding of their political life

trajectories, including why they came to think about politics and their political roles as they did. On the other hand, the interviews relate the individual narratives to the broader questions of political identity formation in changing historical and political contexts (Hite 2000, xix). In this research, oral history is a method of studying the construction and transformation of an individual's political identity and activism.

However, in drawing on oral histories, the research confronts several problematic issues including the reliability of sources, the representation of the sample, the comparability of the results of interviews, and the degree of manipulation in the presentation and interpretations of the results. To overcome these difficulties, one should compare different biographies, use an 'inter-disciplinary approach' to evaluate interviewees interpretations (della Porta 1992, 181) and cross-check data from interviewees with other sources of information that consider key informants from different types of social groups, gender and form of participation. Thereafter, while acknowledging the value of memories, the research is based on a critical examination of the correspondence between interviewees' accounts and other sources of information.

Although it was impossible to conduct interviews with all Yellow Shirts in this project, in having wider off opinion, the project attempts to cover a wide range of people who can represent the diversity of the anti-Thaksin movement. The first criterion is political setting. Representatives from the PAD-sponsoring matrons (Mea Yok Pantamit - แม่ยกพันธมิตร) including retired civil servants, entrepreneurs, Santi-Asoke, Yellow Shirts in the western countries, Democrat Party, southern Yellow Shirt networks, NGO workers, young Yellow Shirts (Young PAD, Makkawan Administrative School, etc), business community, bureaucrats, former leftist – CPT members, the New Politics party politicians and supports, artist and singers will be approached and interviewed.

The second selection criterion is the political function and degree of political engagement. In each group, the research selects people who worked in as many different parts of the country, functions and positions as possible. It tries to cover people with different functions including both leaderships and rank-and-file members. Also, it interviews Yellow Shirts with different degree of political support and activism who either actively or regularly

participated in the protests, or even those who kept a low profile but provide morale and financial supports.

The third selection criterion is the pattern of relationship with the anti-Thaksin movement in different political trajectories of the movement. Efforts will be made to select people from as many different relationships with the movement as possible. The interviews will cover Yellow Shirts ranging from those who actively participated in the anti-Thaksin movement despite the shift toward the conservative direction, supported the movement but took side on either the Democrat party or the New Politics party after the internal conflict, or disagreed with several conservative campaigns but still in support of the movement. Also it is interested in those who actively supported the Yellow Shirt only at the initial stage when the movement was more liberal and inclusive but abandoned the movement and then shifted to be sympathetic and supported the Red Shirt movement.

The last criterion is the geo-political condition. The interviews cover key informants who are politically active in both Yellow Shirt and Red Shirt heartlands, both in Bangkok and upcountry, and in both rural and urban areas. The research plans to conduct in-depth interviews of more than 100 politically active individual Yellow Shirt members in different areas of Bangkok, and in both urban and rural areas in 8 other provinces and locations including Chiang Mai-Lamphun, Hat Yai, Surat Thani, Phuket, Phetchaburi, Nakhon Prathom, Udon Thani and Maha Sarakham.

In conducting interviews, this project started with contacts and names of activists found through archival research. Yellow Shirts were then located according to the different criteria mentioned above. In-depth interviews focused on four sets of issues. The first took up the demographic background of Yellow Shirt members including family background and dynamic, parent's political beliefs, socio-economic conditions, and early political and gender socialisation. The second set centred on the pre-Yellow Shirt political experiences and participations. The questions asked about the causes, degree and patterns of participation in different political transition including the 14 October 19763, 6th October 1976, political struggle with the CPT, the 1992 May people's uprising, the rise of social movements in the 1990s, the late 1990s political reform, and the rise of the Thaksin government. The third set was their roles and attitudes

toward the rise, transition, conflict and decline of the anti-Thaksin movement. The questions ask the causes, degree, patterns of participation in, and agreement/disagreement with the different trajectories of the movement. To be more specific, the research tries to ask why the member joined the movement, why they and the movement shifted toward the conservative and non-democratic direction, and why the movement decline in mass support. The last was their views on their own ideological transformation by recounting their life histories and then discussing their views of democracy, royal institute, military coup, the rise of the Red Shirt, and vision and concerns for Thailand's future.

The last method to be employed in the research was discourse analysis. This method was used to unpack the political ideologies and world views of Yellow Shirts, and how they have linked these to particular structural problems in their political activities. Donati (1992, 143-147) suggests that the process of discourse analysis can be undertaken through 'frame analysis': topic selection and definition, text and frame.

As mentioned earlier, the role and significance of the Yellow Shirts' political assets in these processes have been underestimated. Thus, this research focuses on the influence of their socio-economic background and earlier political ideologies and experience, and their integration within the new political discourse in their participation in anti-Thaksin movement. In this method, the newly emerging political discourses and activities of Yellow Shirts are analysed, by exploring the new political discourse that Yellow Shirts used in legitimising and empowering their political activism, including terms like 'democracy', 'new politics', 'people politics', and etc. The author then collected related political materials including documents written by Yellow Shirts and their organisations, political statements on related discourse, and interviews with the Yellow Shirts who were pioneers in framing these discourses and those who turned this rhetoric into action.

Research Structure

In answering all research questions, this report is divided into five major parts. The first chapter provides introduction to the research including research questions, literature review,

methodology and theoretical frameworks. In the second chapter, it unpacks the complex and contesting nature of the anti-Thaksin movement. It illustrates how the three different categories of anti-Thaksin participants including the unswerving conservative, compromised and marginalized liberal supporters collaborated and their battles in asserting their political ideological strategies throughout the development of the movement. The third chapter analyses the efforts and success in reviving the anti-Thaksin movement after a certain period of fragmentation and decline. It illustrated why and how the massive mobilization took place under the new leadership of the Democrat party's members in the name of PDRC. The fourth and the fifth chapters offer comprehensive examinations of why and how the earlier movement with diverse ideological forces shifted to the conservative direction and being dominated by right-wing forces. In doing so, they apply the social movement theory including the Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT), framing process and Political Opportunity Structure (POS).

Chapter 2

Diverse and Contesting Anti-Thaksin Movement

During the past decades, Thai politics has been dominated by the colour-coded conflict among different shades of the anti-Thaksin forces, and the pro-Thaksin and anti-coup individuals and groups. In understanding this protracted conflict, a profound analysis of the nature and dynamics of the anti-Thaksin movement is crucial. At the beginning, the movement was diverse and contested. It comprised people who supported various ideas ranging from anti-electoral democracy, nationalism and royalism, to those who were pro-democracy and neither nationalist nor royalist (Connors 2008b, 488-489; Kasian 2006; Pye and Schaffer 2008, 40-42).

Diverse Anti-Thaksin Movement

Through extensive interviews and focus group discussions with around 100 rank-and-file participants of the anti-Thaksin movement both in Bangkok and other provinces in four regions, this work integrates diverse groups of participants with different socio-economic and class background into the analysis. From this information, this chapter divides the anti-Thaksin supporters into three categories: unswerving conservatives, the compromised and marginalized liberals.

Unswerving conservatives (UC)

The unswerving conservative group shared a conservative ideological socialization. What these informants from mixed backgrounds have is profound socialization through conservative ideas, and organizations to exercise political action to support right-wing movements and institutions at specific points of time before the rise of the anti-Thaksin movement. Their early social and political orientations were primarily dominated by the four major conservative ideas and right-wing organizations including anti-communist, ultra-nationalist, royalist and orthodox religious ideas. In participating in the anti-Thaksin movement,

many individual conservatives were attracted to the anti-Thaksin movement through the conservative agendas advocated by the leaders of movement in different periods, whilst others started joining the movement under the guidance of their conservative social affiliations, particularly their religious leaders.

Many UC informants grew up in communities which through advocacy and organization had been highly supportive of the counter insurgency against the spread of the communist movement in Thailand during the 1960s-1970s. Many had supported the military government against the student movement during the 1970s (UC informants, interviewed by author, Phetchaburi and Bangkok, May 25-28, and April 18-20, 2013). At the same time, many UC participants, particularly in the North-eastern part of Thailand, had either first-hand experience or memories to support nationalist campaigns against Cambodia over the Preah Vihear Temple[8] instigated by the military governments during the 1950s-1970s (UC informants, interviewed by author, Khonkaen, January 23, 2015). There were countless others among the UC who were socialized through ultra-royalist ideas and communities. An outstanding example comes from Phetchaburi Province. People in Phetchaburi have a long history of connections with the royal institution because of three palaces, Khao Wang (palace hill), a summer palace of King Mongkut (Rama IV) (1851-1868), Maruekhathaiyawan, a summer palace of King Vajiravudh (Rama VI), and Klai Kangwon Palace ('far from worries' palace), a summer palace of King Bhumibol (Rama IX) in nearby PrachuapKhirikhan Province. The history of people in these provinces is interwoven with the court in their localities. More than70 per cent of interviewees in Phetchaburi and Prachuap Khirikhan Provinces are UC and all of them developed a strong royalist sentiment since they were young. Every interviewee has their own personal history and first-hand experience of meeting or greeting the King and his family members when they came to visit the summer palaces, either through activities promoted by

[8]PreahVihear Temple is an ancient Hindu temple located on the border between Thailand and Cambodia. After a long dispute between the two countries over ownership of the temple, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the Hague ruled in 1962 that the temple is in Cambodian territory. However, the case was raised by ultra-nationalist leaders and political forces as political tool in mobilizing mass support. From time to time, it led to periodic outbreaks of violence.

their schools, families, or local governments (UC informants, interviewed by author, Phetchaburi, May 25-28 2013).

Another interesting category includes orthodox religious groups. These UC participants had been active followers of different Buddhist groups, like Santi-Asoke[9], Luangta Mahabua, etc. In addition to their religious practices, these people wholeheartedly dedicated their time, money any energy to support political activities led by their group leaders. All adherents of the Santi-Asoke group we interviewed actively participated in political campaigns to support Chamlong Srimuang, its leading member, in the Bangkok governor elections, and worked as main political supporters of the Moral Force Party (Palang Dharma) initiated by Chamlong. For them, supporting Chamlong and the Moral Force Party was helping people with high morals to purify immoral and corrupt electoral politics (McCargo 1997; KL interviews with Santi-Asoke UC informants, April 18 2013 in Bangkok). Similarly, disciples of Luangta Mahabua vigorously supported him in his nationalist campaigns against the economic reform policies of the IMF and the government of the Democrat Party (DP) after the 1997 economic crisis. They donated a huge amount of money to the 'Donation for National Recue' (phapachuai chat) programme led by Luangta to collect money to donate to the Bank of Thailand as national reserves in rescuing the country from the economic crisis. After 16 rounds of fund raising, the fund reached 19,000 million baht or 560 million dollars and became one of the biggest religious fund-raising efforts. Many of these informants, especially those from Udonthani, the stronghold of Luangta, gave up their jobs and dedicated their time and lives to work for Luangta, especially during the National Recue campaign (Baan Tad temple 2011; Luangta Mahabua's followers, interviewed by author, Udonthani, May 19-20, 2013).

[9]Santi Asoke, a Buddhist sect established by Samana Phothirak, campaigned in support of the Moral Force Party (Palang Dharma) (1988-2007) in general elections and of Chamlong Srimuang, one of its main followers, in his elections for Bangkok Governor (1985 and 1990) (McCargo 1998).

Compromised liberal (CL) participants

The compromised participants are those who had been exposed to several liberal and progressive elements through first-hand political experience with democratic and other social movements before joining the anti-Thaksin movement. Nevertheless, during their participation in the anti-Thaksin movement, they accepted and compromised with many main ideas advocated by the conservative forces.

In spite of growing up in a conservative ambience like the UC group, all of them had the opportunity to explore radical, democratic and other liberal ideas through their participation in various movements. Half of the CL in formants were active participants in democratic and left-wing student movements between the 1970s and 1980s. Many younger informants grew up as a new generation of social activists in the 1990s-2000s. Nearly all of them played active roles either as leaders or active rank-and-file members in the May 1992 anti-military movement, the 1990s social movements or the political reform of 1997. A couple of them had long been dedicated NGO workers on children's and environmental issues and were a part of the rise of social movements throughout the 1990s (CL informants, interviewed by author, Bangkok, April 1, 20, 25 and 28, 2013, February 14-17 and March 9, 2015, Chiang Mai, May 3, 2013, Udonthani, May 17-18 and 24, 2013, Khonkaen, January 24 and 26, 2015, Nakhonratchasima, February 7 and 10, 2015).

Owing to active political awareness and political analytical and social mobilization skills obtained from their earlier political experiences, the CL as well as ML (will be discussed later) participants were among very first groups of people to join the anti-Thaksin movement as organizers, leaders or active participants in various locations. Many of them were self-organized and actively worked with the core group of leaders to lay out the movement's strategy and ideas at both the national and local levels. In many provinces like Chiang Mai, Khonkaen, Nakhonratchasima and Udonthani provinces, many CL and ML informants were the first individuals to lead street demonstrations and set up protest stages, as well as mobilize people in their local areas to support the main protest stage in Bangkok (CL and ML informants, interviewed by author, Chiang Mai, Khonkaen, Nakhonratchasima and Udonthani 2013 and 2015).

In contrast to the UC group which focused mainly on nationalist and royalist concerns, the major turning points for the CL group to go against Thaksin were more on the abuse of power, corruption, excessive use of violence, violations of law and order, and electoral and parliamentary malpractice (CL informants, interviewed by author, Bangkok, April 1, 20 and 25, 2013 and February 14-17and March 9, 2015, Chiang Mai, May 3, 2013, Udonthani, May 17-18 and 24, 2013, Khonkean, January 24 and 26 2015). When the political conflict intensified, many of them became more and more conservative and collaborated with conservative forces. In spite of their earlier anti-establishment activities and ideas, during the peak of the anti-Thaksin agitation, all the CL informants became sympathetic towards a military coup and the subsequent appointed military government as a short-term solution or the only solution to deter and prevent further violence and confrontation between the opposing movements (CL informants, interviewed by author, all interviewed locations, 2013 and 2015).

Marginalized liberals (ML)

Similar to the CL, all ML informants share a common background of either socialization through leftist and liberal ideas or direct participation in different political transitions. The marginalized-liberals initially joined the anti-Thaksin movement because of their discontent with the Thaksin government and with a more liberal approach than the UC and CL. From the interviews, ML informants showed a more refined analysis of the root causes of political conflict, solutions to current political crises, and above all a more intricate evaluation of their opponents. The majority state that Thaksin was not the real cause of problem. They point instead to the long historical development and problems of the bureaucratic system, over-centralization of political power and resources, elite conflict and the judicial system. For them, a military coup d'état was not the way out. To overcome all the problems Thailand faces requires a long-term development plan, decentralization of political power to local areas, political reform to increase the power and roles of the check-and-balance system, etc. Above all, more than half of them had a subtle understanding of the Red Shirts. Some who worked with the grassroots and urban poor explained the Red Shirts as a byproduct of the long-standing problem of inequality in

Thailand. They understand why grassroots people were sympathetic towards Thaksin and his public policies. Others accept that there are different shades of Red Shirts ranging from the Thaksin fan-club to radical to progressive intellectuals (ML informants, interviewed by author, all interviewed locations, 2013 and 2015).

Unlike the UC and CL, the ML informants think and act independently. All of them argue that they don't belong to any group or follow any leadership, and they criticize the leaders of different anti-Thaksin organizations. Above all, they disagreed with and criticized the ultra-royalism, ultra-nationalism, militant strategy, opposition to electoral democracy, and support for a coup of the anti-Thaksin movement. Different from the CL, as the movement shifted in a more conservative direction, the ML expressed their disagreement and insisted on their liberal stands. Nonetheless, they either were alienated or distanced themselves from the movement.

Contesting Nature of the Anti-Thaksin Movement

Against the backdrop of ideological differences, this part looks at conflict among these counterparts which caused disintegration and fragility in the anti-Thaksin movement. Even though there were many efforts to conceal these problems, these rivalries brought about the fragmentation and weakness of the movement. The movement was revitalized at the end of 2013 under a new organization, the People's Democratic Reform Committee (khanakamakanprachachonphueakanplianplaengprathetthaihai pen prachathipataisombunan mi phramahakasat song pen pramuk – KorPorPorSor – PDRC) and the leadership of former Democrat Party (DP) members, the movement successfully reorganized to accommodate the differences and contesting elements. The new loose organization structure allowed political space to all factions and their political stands. Nevertheless, the dominant ideological strategy was still under the guidance and domination of the more conservative wing.

The internal conflicts and weakness of the anti-Thaksin movement

Throughout the development of the anti-Thaksin movement, there are three dimensions of conflict that caused fragmentation and weakness: disagreement on the conservative

ideological and militant strategic directions of the movement; conflict between the PAD and the DP; and competition between the PAD and the New Politics Party.

The first is the dispute over the ultra-royalist and ultra-nationalist ideological and militant strategies of the movement. Drawing support from royalist and nationalist leaders and masses brought about disagreements with liberal and more radical forces within the movement. Many ML and some CL informants believed that ultra-nationalist campaigns would bring about unnecessary regional insecurity and have a negative economic impact on the country. Several ML informants who started expressing their disagreements overtly were gradually alienated from the movement. Others kept a low profile and distanced themselves from the movement. Many radical groups even shifted toward the radical wings of the Red Shirt movement. Furthermore, many CL and most ML informants disagreed with the militant strategies particularly the invasion of three ministries, the headquarters of the National Broadcasting Services of Thailand (NBT), and the occupation of Government House and Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi and Don Mueang international airports in 2008, as well as the seizure of several government buildings, obstruction of the February 2014 general election, and the blocking of various public spaces in 2013-2014. They argued that these confrontations would not lead to a solution. Many ML informants, particularly those in Bangkok, decided not to participate in the movement during the confrontations. Other even condemned the movement's leader for pushing ordinary people to resort to violence for their victory (CL and ML informants, interviewed by author, in all interviewed locations, 2013 and 2015).

On the contrary, the militant ultra-right-wing groups were disappointed with the PAD leaders in pursuing a compromising strategy with the Abhisit government. Many right-wing leaders re-organized themselves in new groups and organizations like the Thais with Patriotic Hearts group (klumkhonthaihuojairakchat-TPH). They promoted more militant and confrontational moves to reclaim Preah Vihear from Cambodia. For instance, they organized protests, marched into the conflict area and acted as main organizers of the dogged protest against the Abhisit government in front of Government House for 154 days. They eventually turned their backs permanently against the PAD and the DP after several of their leaders were arrested by the Cambodian government and both the DP and the PAD leadership failed to

provide sufficient support to bring back their leader from a Cambodian jail. At a later stage they even called for support from the Red Shirt patriotic group (Manager 2011a; UC informants, interviewed by author, Bangkok, April 18-20, 2013, Udonthani, May 16-20, 2013, Phetchaburi, May 25-28, 2013, Khonkaen, January 23 2015).

The second is the battle between the PAD and the DP. During the initial inclusive mobilizing strategies, the DP was one of the main supporters of the movement. Although the party leaders did not officially join the PAD leaders, they publicly echoed the same anti-Thaksin message (Manager 2008). Furthermore, from interviews, half of the informants were either direct supporters of the DP or indirectly fans of individual charismatic party leaders like Chuan Leekpai and Abhisit Vejjajiva before joining the movement. Two levels of conflict between the PAD and the DP started after Abhisit, the DP leader, took power as Prime Minister (all informants, interviewed by author, in all interviewed locations, 2013 and 2015). First of all, the PAD was disappointed with the performance of the DP. The PAD leaders argued that the success of the DP was a result of the efforts of the PAD. They were disappointed with the Abhisit government in not responding to their requests and demands, such as immediate action to eradicate Thaksin's power, and to follow the ultra-nationalist direction of the conservative wing within of the PAD in dealing with the broader conflict between Thailand and Cambodia. Subsequently, the PAD and their followers publicly denounced the DP severely. They alleged Abhisit pursued several policies similar to Thaksin's and collaborated with corrupt politicians who formerly supported Thaksin. The conservative and militant wing within the movement, mainly supported by the TPH and Santi-Asoke group, staged protests for 154 days in 2011 against the Abhisit government's diplomatic policy on Preah Vihear. Moreover, they were angry with the Abhisit government for using the Internal Security Act to charge the PAD leaders for protesting against the DP government. Second of all, with their distrust of and disappointment with the DP, the PAD leaders decided to organize their own political party, the New Politics Party, to compete with the DP and Thaksin's crony party. In doing so, they lost the mass of participants who had been supportive of and sympathetic to the DP. This can be observed from the sharp decline in the number of protesters in subsequent protests against the Abhisit government. Various public figures and all informants who had been and were sympathetic to

the DP declined to attend the later rallies, particularly the 154-day protest against Abhisit on the Preah Vihear issue (Thai Post 2011; DP sympathizer informants, interviewed by author, Bangkok, April 19, 2013, February 13-15and March 4-5, 2015, Udonthani, May 22, 2013, Petchaburi, May 25, 2013, Nakhonratchasima, February 8, 2015).

The third dimension of conflict is the internal conflict within the PAD. Leadership battles over the control of mass mobilization, the political party and the direction of electoral politics were the crucial causal conditions leading to the dissolution of the PAD and the temporary decline of the anti-Thaksin movement from mid 2011 until its revival in late 2013 under the new leadership of the PDRC. After their disappointment with the DP, Sondhi and the core PAD leaders established their own political party, the New Politics Party, in May 2009. Nonetheless, this caused indignant tension with other PAD leaders who had already planned to establish a political party. For instance, while Chaiwat Sinsuwong, a leading member of Santi-Asoke who had tried to revive the Moral Force Party of Santi-Asoke, and Veera Somkwamkid, General Secretary of People's Network Against Corruption (kruekaiprachachontortan corruption) who had clashed with Sondhi over donations to the movement, collaborated with Admiral Bannawit Kengrien and several of the older generation of PAD leaders to establish the People Revolution Party (prachapiwat). At the same time, there were also conflicts within organizations allied with the anti-Thaksin movement like Santi-Asoke. While Chamlong Srimuang, key leader of Santi-Asoke and a member of the inner circle of the PAD leadership, insisted on following Sondhi and the PAD, Veera and Chaiwat, key followers of Santi-Asoke, moved in the opposite direction. They were frustrated and condemned Sondhi as a liar for launching the New Politics Party after promising not to play a role in electoral politics (Siam Intelligence 2009; Manager 2011a). Eventually, they all left the PAD and started independent campaigns.

At the same time, the forces opposing electoral democracy within the PAD started distrusting and criticizing Sondhi for betraying their intention by establishing a political party and joining electoral politics. Thereafter, briefly after setting up the party, Sondhi refused to accept the position of party leader. Instead, he switched to a campaign against joining electoral politics by advocating a ‘Vote No’ strategy, going against all political parties, and calling for political reform to eliminate all corrupt politicians before elections. But that went against the will of the

group who supported electoral politics within the movement. Some leaders like, Somsak Kosaisook, took over as party leader and insisted on pushing the party forward to take part in the 2011 general election. He publicly denounced Sondhi and other leaders (Mthai 2011). At this point, leaders and individual at all levels of the PAD broke up not only at the national level, but also at the local level, where leaders and supporters split and fought against each other. The anti-Thaksin movement was divided. From interviews with both leaders and rank-and-file members at the provincial level, the anti-democratic and anti-election individuals and groups were strongly against Somsak and those working for the party. They publicly denounced these people for using the anti-Thaksin movement as a path to power in electoral politics. Those who sided with the party and Somsak tried to legitimize their political position and castigated Sondhi and other leaders for their dishonesty to the party. Nevertheless, the latter groups were gradually marginalized from the PAD (supporters of the New Politics Party, interviewed by author, Udonthani, May 18-19, 2013, Phetchaburi, May 26, 2013, Khonkaen, January 24, 2015). They were able to set up only around 8 provincial branches in the 76 provinces in Thailand. Twenty-four MP candidates were nominated for the 2011 election but all lost.

At this stage, the anti-Thaksin movement temporarily declined. The minority who disagreed with the royalist, nationalist and militant strategies either distanced themselves from the movement or downplayed their political role. The decision to set up their own political party caused a lot of participants who either supported the DP or opposed electoral democracy to abandon the movement and the party. Even though Sondhi quickly deserted the party, it was too late. Instead, it provoked conflict and fragmentation within the movement. Those who still insisted on continuing with the party were indignant with Sondhi and eventually left the PAD.

Chapter 3

The Revival and Reunification of the Anti-Thaksin Movement

This chapter brings the diverse and contesting elements to explain the arguments mentioned above: how the unswerving conservative groups gradually became dominant in the movement as it developed: and how the compromised and liberal elements either compromised with the conservatives or were estranged from the movement.

Initial Failure to Revive the Anti-Thaksin Movement

After these battles, the anti-Thaksin movement deteriorated into small competing independent groups. Different attempts to revitalize the mass anti-Thaksin movement were hardly successful. None of the individual anti-Thaksin fragments managed to re-mobilize their mass support. The most substantial effort was the 154-day protest against the compromise in foreign policy of the Abhisit government over the Preah Vihear problem. It was organized mainly by Santi-Asoke and the TPH. They were able to mobilize a maximum of only around 1,000 ultra-right-wingers and militants compared to 30,000 at the peak of the PAD (Manager 2011b; participants in the 154-day protest, interviewed by author, Bangkok, April 18, 2013, Udonthani, May 18-20, 2013).

In contrast, many new independent groups sprang up with their own leaders and campaign issues. These leaders and rank-and-file individuals distrusted the PAD leadership and were suspicious of one another. They refused to call themselves Yellow Shirt supporters. Group leaders and hardliners collaborated on different occasions but in the media still insisted on their independence in leadership and campaign issues. For instance, after splitting from the PAD, several leaders like Chaiwat, Veera, Bannawit, etc., started their own political TV channel, ‘13Siam Thai’. This TV station became the gathering point for those were disillusioned with the PAD, particularly the militant ultra-right-wing. They mainly advocated the ultra-right-wing campaign on the Preah Vihear problem and the use of Article 112, the lèse majesté law

(13Siam Thai supporters, interviewed by author, Bangkok, April 25, 2013: Bangkok Post 2013). At the same time, disillusioned leaders like those in the TPH group collaborated with Santi-Asoke to promote the 154-day protest in front of Government House against the Abhisit government on the Preah Vihear issue, while Sondhi and the PAD decided not to join the protest after getting a warning signal from the DP that the Internal Security Act would be used against the protest. Up to this point, the TPH and other ultra-nationalists declared their antagonism against the PAD and ASTV reporters were driven out of their protest site (Manager 2011a).

An example of the failure of newly emerging hard core royalists is the Preserve Siam (Pitak Siam) group, under the leadership of Gen Boonlert Kaewprasit, an ultra-royalist retired military officer. It was supported by those who had left the PAD, a new generation of anti-Thaksin individual leaders who distrusted Sondhi, like the Thai Patriot Network, some sections of the Assembly of the Poor, Somsak Kosaisuk, etc. They presented themselves as a royalist force protecting the throne against the Thaksin regime. In calling for Premier Yingluck Shinawatra to step down, it promised a rally of 1,000,000 participants but ended up with only around 20,000 protesters despite intensive mobilization. The rally ended less than one day after a minor clash with the authorities on November 24, 2012 (Sinpeng 2012). Interviews reveal that only half of the hard-core active royalist UC informants joined the protest. None of the CL and ML informants did. They neither agreed with the royalist issue and militant strategy highlighted by the movement, nor trusted the leadership (all CL and ML informants, interviewed by author, all interviewed locations, 2013 and 2015).

There were several futile efforts to seek a different inclusive strategy to revive the mass anti-Thaksin movement. The first was to de-colourize the anti-Thaksin movement. Initially, Tul Sithisomwong, a right-wing medical doctor and lecturer at the Faculty of Medicine of Chulalongkorn University, set up the Network of Citizen Volunteers Protecting the Land (klumprachachonpuerpitak chat sartkasat), later renamed as the Multi-coloured Shirt (klum sue laksi) group to lessen the resemblance to the Yellow Shirts in the anti-Thaksin movement in the middle of their legitimacy crisis and public boredom with the colour-coded conflict. The Multi-coloured Shirt group mobilized daily militant flash mobs to attack and delegitimize the Red Shirt

protest against the Abhisit government in the Ratchaprasong business district in 2010, independently from the PAD. The group strongly supported the Abhisit government's use of force to deal with the Red Shirt protest to maintain law and order (Bangkok Post 2010).

The second effort was to distribute the anti-Thaksin leadership to overcome the earlier leadership crisis. Two interesting examples are the Uprising People group (prachachonthonmaiwai-URP) and the White Mask (nakaakkao) or V for Vendetta Thailand flash mob. The URP was a royalist middle-class Bangkok anti-Thaksin group. Their major campaign activity was accusing the political talk shows on the 'royal institution under the constitution' on the 'Answering Question' programme of Thai PBS (Thai Public Broadcasting Service), a public television channel, of violating the lèse majesté law. They mobilized several small groups of royalist supporters in Bangkok to protest repeatedly in front of the TV station (Manager 2013a). The White Mask movement was another effort initiated by an independent new generation of Thaksin opponents. In their activities, anyone wearing a white mask could be a leader or follower in the anti-Thaksin movement, thereby successfully solving the earlier problem of a centralized leadership and opening up a new political space for various fragmented groups of anti-Thaksin campaigners. Nearly all the UC and CL informants, either pro-PAD, anti-PAD or DP supporters both in Bangkok and other provinces, used this new platform as an alternative means to re-organize their groups to protest on different issues and occasions against the Yingluck government. Although the White Mask movement spread throughout the country, it was still unable to mobilize the level of support seen during 2006-2007. The biggest gathering was around 1,000 protesters (Nation 2013; author interviews with all informants in 2013 and 2015). In sum, in spite of these various efforts, the movement was still fragmented. The movement could only mobilize temporary flash mobs, not a powerful and unified force.

Revival under the PDRC

After several failures, the mass anti-Thaksin movement was eventually revitalized under a new movement organization, the PDRC, in late 2013. This success came under the

leadership of Democrat MPs. Although they all officially resigned from their political and party positions to show their independence from party politics, it was hard to deny the close relationship between the PDRC and the DP. Under the new leadership, the anti-Thaksin movement successfully mobilized countless rounds of mass protest occupying major political and business areas of Bangkok. Even though the four to six million participants claimed at its peak by the PDRC leader is debatable, it was undeniable it reached at least 150,000 – 200,000 people, similar to the 14th October 1976 anti-dictatorship movement. Above all, they successfully reconciled the earlier conflicts among different anti-Thaksin fragments to become part of this grand alliance of the anti-Thaksin movement (Manager 2013b: Head 2013). This chapter argues that five conditions explain their success.

Firstly, the shared concerns over the controversial amnesty bill created a new political opportunity to reunite the earlier fractures in the anti-Thaksin movement. The attempt to amend the amnesty bill to extend the amnesty to the leaders of both the Red and Yellow Shirt groups, as well as the authorities involved in confronting both Red and Yellow Shirt protests during the past decade, brought back the shared anti-Thaksin sentiment. Those who previously focused on the Preah Vihear problem, or problematic mega projects of the Yingluck government, etc., all unified to demonstrate against this amnesty bill. The DP started organizing street protests and eventually took the lead in setting up the PDRC. Even after the senate rejected the bill and government gave up this effort, the PDRC continued to use this opportunity to promote a new round where the powerful anti-Thaksin movement called for the dissolution of the government and suspension of elections until political reforms to eliminate all corrupt politicians from Thai politics were completed (all anti-Thaksin informants, interviewed by author, all interviewed locations, 2015).

Secondly, the Democrat leadership brought back with it the earlier mass support among Democrats and non-Democrats, as well as new political resources and infrastructure to the movement. Under the new PDRC leadership, participants who had earlier distanced themselves from the movement because of their disappointment with and distrust of the PAD leadership over the conflict with the DP, returned to the anti-Thaksin protest. For instance, Democrat supporters from the South, the stronghold of the DP, started joining the protest after

withdrawing their support for the PAD, and became one of the main and long-term protesters. Furthermore, from the very beginning, various groups of local Democrat politicians functioned as organizers at the local level mobilizing participation in protest events in Bangkok as well as organizing parallel protests at the local level, particularly in their stronghold of the 14 provinces in the Southern Thailand. At the same time, in September 2013, only one month before the DP started the new round of the anti-Thaksin movement, the PAD leadership broadcast their announcement of a permanent halt to their political activity. Many former PAD supporters who had condemned the DP agreed to support the movement temporarily, in spite of their skepticism of PDRC leaders from the DP (all anti-Thaksin informants, interviewed by author, all interviewed locations, 2015: Prachatai 2013).

Thirdly, the PDRC leaders redesigned the movement's organization to accommodate all earlier factions into the movement. The loose and pluralistic structure of the protest stages helped to revive the earlier movement. Unlike earlier protests which had only one or a few main centralized stages and camps, the PDRC encouraged each faction to set up its own protest stages scattered throughout Bangkok. The main stages at Pathumwan Intersection and Ratchadamnoen Avenue were under the control of the PDRC leaders. Other sites had high degree of independence and authority to mobilize supporters, raise funds, set campaign agendas etc. From time to time, each faction sent participants to join the major protest campaigns and rallies promoted by the PDRC like seizing government offices in November 2013, the 'Shut Down Bangkok' campaign on 13th January 2014, etc. In this way, each group had its own political space and channel to communicate their issues to the public. Even though in reality, there were still battles among these protest factions, particularly on the issues of leadership and financing (Manager 2013c; all active informants during the PDRC mobilization between November 2013 to March 2014, interviewed by author, Nakhonratchasima, February 7-9 and 15, 2015, Bangkok, February 14-16 and March 5 and 9, 2015), the anti-Thaksin movement as a whole looked a lot more unified and bigger in terms of number of participants, political space and negotiating power.

Fourthly, the PDRC highlighted conservative ideas while allowing little space for more progressive ideas to gain support from all contesting parties. The PDRC revived the inclusive

strategy which was used to promote the initial success of the anti-Thaksin movement. On the main stage at Pathumwan Intersection, the PDRC leaders emphasized the royalist, nationalist and moralistic element of the anti-Thaksin agenda (Isranews Agency 2013). The DP started their campaign against the amnesty bill by arguing that the bill would extend the amnesty to those who violated the lèse majesté law to attract the support from royalist groups. At the same time, they allowed space for those from more progressive wings to work on decentralization, labour issues, the farmers' movement, anti-dam campaigns etc. However, the overall campaign was dominated by the more conservative ideological strategy rather than a vibrant and inclusive movement.

Lastly, promoting a new trendy middle-class lifestyle protest successfully popularized and depoliticized the protest movement in attracting a new and younger generation to the movement. The strategy of organizing protest stages in various central locations in Bangkok, particularly at Sky train stations, a mode of transportation popular with the Bangkok middle class, made it convenient for the middle class throughout Bangkok to join the protests. The new leadership of the PDRC followed professional and creative event organizers to create activities during the protests oriented to a middle-class lifestyle (Hataikarn and Nipawan 2014). Unlike the earlier anti-Thaksin protests, which focused mainly on the content and demands of the movement, this round of protest comprised various fashionable entertainment activities, including protest fashion shows and 'Art Lane', music concerts by famous pop singers, high-quality free food stalls, etc., supported by leading designers and fashionistas and business groups in the entertainment community. The protests became street festivals where the younger generation could hang out, dine, shop and watch celebrities on the protest stages. Pretty young protesters at the protest sites were termed 'protest angels' (Manager 2014a). The protest organizers regularly came up with creative, vibrant and playful activities and slogans. For instance, they organized a 'National Picnic' day on the February 2014 election day to invite people to the protest sites instead of going to vote. Furthermore, in depoliticizing the protest, the leaders launched the campaign of 'just one pair of trainers and a courageous heart' (kea rongtaophabaikab jai tungtung) to give people the idea that all people needed to join the protest was a pair of trainers and courage (Nithithorn and Chana 2014). In the interviews, many first-

time young protesters decided to join the PDRC because they felt the protest is safe, fun and convenient (young informants, interviewed by author, Bangkok, April 13-15 and March 4-5, 2015).

In brief, the anti-Thaksin movement has never been homogenous. It has been diverse, contradictory and contesting. Even though it began as inclusive movement mobilizing support and alliances from many different ideological groups, the battles among different parties within the movement as it evolved, and the political confrontation with the DP brought about the decline of the movement. The PDRC successfully revived the movement by restoring the inclusive strategy.

Chapter 4

Toward a Unified Conservative Movement: RMT and Framing process

Against this backdrop of a diverse, contesting, declining and revived anti-Thaksin movement, conservative ideas and leaders gradually dominated the movement. The more liberal who disagreed with and questioned the conservative elements compromised, were alienated from the movement, or downplayed their activities. In understanding this phenomenon, this section attempts to answer three questions: Why was the anti-Thaksin movement eventually dominated by conservative forces and ideas? Why did some participants who had earlier been skeptical about the conservatives eventually compromise with conservative forces? And why were some liberal forces who disagreed with the conservative direction gradually marginalized from the movement? In responding to these questions, this chapter applies the social movement theory particularly the 'Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT)' and the 'Framing Process.' While, the RMT helps in understanding how the liberal forces successfully mobilised previously scattered and weak right-wing individuals and groups, as well as, organised an unorganised and apolitical middle class. The frame alignment process explains why did earlier liberals who had been skeptical the conservative ideas and direction compromised with conservative forces. Meanwhile, the frame contesting process illustrates how other liberals failed in insisting their liberal ideas in the movement and eventually alienated.

Why Has the Anti-Thaksin Movement Been Dominated by the Conservatives?

In answering the question, this paper looks at how the movement revitalized and mobilized two pre-existing social networks including previously scattered right-wing groups and the apolitical middle class through conservative ideas. Subsequently, when these two forces collaborated, the movement became dominated by conservative forces and supporters.

Mobilizing previously scattered and weak right-wing individuals and groups

A militant right-wing mass has not been a major political instrument of the Thai state and conservative elites for at least the past 20 years. Before the 1970s, the Thai conservative elites had not systematically mobilized right-wing masses. Only between 1973 and 1976 did authoritarian governments and royalist elites organize ultra-royalist, ultra-nationalist and religious militant individuals and groups as key political instruments for promoting anti-communist and royalist campaigns (Bowie 1997: Buddhapol 2003). However, after the outbreak of violence by ultra-right-wing masses against the student movement in the 6th October 1976 incident, the decline of the ultra-conservative government and the shift of US foreign policy to promote democracy, the Thai state and conservative elites shifted to maintain these right-wingers through long-term royalist, nationalist and moralistic ideological hegemonic projects rather than through mass mobilization (Chanida 2007). Subsequently, they became rather scattered and unorganised. Only a few religious groups like the Santi-Asoke sect and Luangta Mahabua's followers utilized their mass support to advocate specific political issues and to campaign to support political groups they favoured. Aside from these efforts, right-wing forces have been neither organized nor unified to become a mass right-wing movement.

The anti-Thaksin movement leaders were among the very first in Thai contemporary politics to revitalize and unify these earlier scattered and disorganized ultra-royalist, ultra-nationalist and religious militants and groups and successfully turn them into their main political support. Among various ideas for expanding mass support for the movement, the anti-Thaksin movement chose to advocate a conservative ideology, particularly royalist, nationalist, anti-democratic and moralist. As a result, these issues attracted to the movement the previously un-mobilized and diverse royalist, nationalist and religious individuals and groups. Initially, these individuals joined the anti-Thaksin movement as rank-and-file participants. After affiliating with the anti-Thaksin movement, these individual right-wingers were strengthened, unified and became an active political force.

In the middle of the first round of the anti-Thaksin rally in 2006, PAD leaders started delegitimizing Thaksin and his mass supporters among the poor as a threat to the royal institution and alleged that they were anti-monarchists with the intention of establishing a

republic. They termed themselves the ‘Yellow Shirt’ movement (yellow represents the colour of the day of the week on which the King was born) and symbolized their own movement as warriors of the King (tahanpraracha). Moreover, they called for direct royal intervention in politics through appointing a premier, based on the putative applicability of Article 7 of the 1997 constitution.

By underscoring royalist campaign, the anti-Thaksin movement successfully attracted and recruited royalist elites and UC individuals throughout the country as its mass supporters. Firstly, distant members of the royal family who lately had less and less political significance started marching out to support the movement. They regularly and publicly announced their support for the movement in the name of the ‘royal family member and clan’ (rachanikul lea rachasakul) network particularly. At the same time, they took aggressive moves against reform of the Article 112 lèse majesté law and sued those opposing the law.

Secondly, the royalist campaign helped to restore countless rank-and-file royalist UC participants who had been earlier organized to fight against communist and left-wing activists since the 1960s. Many individuals with royalist backgrounds immediately jumped onto the movement owing to their concerns about the information and interpretation by Sondhi Limthongkul and other leaders of Thaksin’s actions and policies violating the royal institution. Some who used to be sympathetic toward Thaksin as an effective PM turned against him immediately after being informed that Thaksin attempted to act as equal to the King by sitting in the area for royal family members when he presided over a national religious ceremony at Phrakaew or Phra Sirattanasatsadaram temple in the Grand Palace. Therefore, when the PAD campaigned for the King to intervene in politics through Article 7, these people promptly supported the idea. Their hatred of Thaksin was motivated by the allegations by various leaders that Thaksin was an anti-monarchist who intended to establish a republic and promote himself as president.The royalist campaign of the anti-Thaksin movement reintroduced these individual royalist informants to political life. More than 90 per cent of informants in Phetchaburi emphasized that their main impulse to join the anti-Thaksin movement was their concern about the royal institution. For them, joining the movement was an opportunity to protect the royal institution from the efforts of Thaksin to overthrow the monarchy and to establish a republic

(royalist informants, interviewed by author, Udonthani, May 16-20 and 25, 2013, Phetchaburi, May 25-28, 2013).

Apart from ultra-royalism, advocacy of various hybrid-nationalist issues also brought individuals with different and sometime contradictory nationalist sentiments into the movement. In the history of the building of the modern Thai nation-state, different Thai political forces ranging from royalist and authoritarian, to liberal and leftist, have had a long history of competing to define and use nationalist ideologies to mobilize support and legitimize their political stands (Baker and Pasuk 2014). The anti-Thaksin movement successfully unified all these earlier contesting nationalist individuals and groups. The leaders wisely convinced all contradictory nationalist groups that Thaksin was a threat to all aspects of national interest.

The leaders portrayed Thaksin as a national traitor and the anti-Thaksin movement as national patriots. The campaigns featured the business activities and public and foreign policies of the Thaksin government as exploiting national assets for his personal gain. Pro-poor polices were termed populist, using public funds to secure popular support for himself. His decision to sell his satellite and later shareholdings in Shin Corporation to Temasek, a Singaporean company, and his tax evasion were emphasized. His state enterprise privatization policies, particularly in the energy sector, were strongly condemned as transferring national assets into private hand, particularly those of his cronies. His collaboration with foreign governments, either military exercises with the US or economic collaboration with the Cambodian government, were interpreted through conspiracy theories as Thaksin selling national interests to foreigners for his own interests. The relationship between Thaksin and the Cambodian government was alleged to be an exchange of concessions for Thaksin's telecommunications businesses for national resources determined by the maritime boundary between Cambodia and Thailand and the rights of Cambodia over Preah Vihear Temple. These issues successfully mobilized the national movement against Cambodia and the Thaksin government.

Aside from depicting Thaksin as a national traitor, the leaders convinced individual nationalists that joining the movement was a way to fulfill their mission to protect the national interest. Many individuals with ultra-nationalist and xenophobic paranoid sentiments were convinced of this and decided to join the movement because Thaksin was a national traitor for

avoiding tax on the sale of his Shin Corp shares to Temasek, and his support for Cambodian sovereignty over the area around Preah Vihear and fossil fuels in the Gulf of Thailand in exchange for his business interests in Cambodia. Many with pro-military and anti-democratic backgrounds bolstered the PAD direction in calling for the military to intervene against the TRT government and to keep law and order (ultra-nationalist informants, interviewed by author, Bangkok, Udonthani, Phetchaburi, April 18, May 20 and 25, 2015).

In addition, various earlier contesting nationalist groups unified to promote the anti-Thanksin movement. Local nationalists who had been politically active since the 1960s-70s protests against US military bases in Udonthani Province during the Cold War, and against Cambodia on the Preah Vihear issue in Khonkaen and Nakhonratchasima provinces worked hand in hand with former 1970s liberal and leftist student activists who had strong nationalist sentiments against the US military during the Cold War and were then opposing a foreign potassium mining company in Udonthani Province. In spite of several disagreements, they compromised on their common nationalist concerns (nationalist informants, interviewed by author, Udonthani, May 19-22, 2013, Khonkaen, January 23, 2015, Nakhonratchasima, February 7-10, 2015).

The nationalist ideology was not used to reorganize only Thai nationalists. The anti-Thaksin movement leaders also used ‘twisted nationalism’ to attract different ethnic groups to the Thai nationalist campaign which included *lukthai* (Thais), *luk chin* (Thai-born Chinese), *luklao* (Laotians), *lukkhaek* (Indians), *lukyuan* (Vietnamese) and farang (Westerners) (Kasian 2006, 265). The case of the Thai Chinese is interesting. Despite several ultra-nationalist campaigns against Chinese, the assimilation process among the Chinese and Thai-Chinese made later Chinese generations more Thai (Skinner 1957, 244-253). The leadership of the anti-Thaksin movement revitalized these twisted nationalist ideas to mobilize later generations of Thai-Chinese to join the movement. They developed a new narrative and identity to legitimize these participants as ‘Patriotic Thais of Chinese Extraction’. Many Thai-Chinese adopted this narrative to explain their participation (Kasian 2006, 265-6: UC informants, interviewed by author, Bangkok, March 27 and April 19 2013).

Furthermore, moralistic and Buddhist rhetoric was utilized to attract religious groups to support the movement. The leaders of the anti-Thaksin movement and different Buddhist sects developed a moralistic narrative to explain the corruption, political violence, suppression measures and abuse of power of Thaksin as sin, wickedness and immorality, and participation in the anti-Thaksin movement as means to battle against sinful Thaksin. Under the guidance of their leaders, countless local individual adherents of Santi-Asoke, Luangta Mahabua, SuanMok (Mokkhaplaram Religion Practice Garden), Buddha Issara, etc., were convinced that joining the anti-Thaksin movement was a part of religious practice to purify society desecrated by Thaksin.

Many UC participants sided with the anti-Thaksin movement under guidance of their religious leaders. Even though in the past there were several times in Thai politics when religious forces had been mobilized to support political campaigns, these were incomparable to what happened during the anti-Thaksin movement. Their strong leadership and well-organized networks made them the strongest group and successfully mobilized mass support for the movement. In 1996, when Chamlong invited Thaksin to be his successor as the leader of the Moral Force Party (Palang Dharma), all Santi-Asoke informants were in support of Thaksin. But when Thaksin later abandoned the party to establish his own party and Chamlong joined hands with Sondhi, these people shifted wholeheartedly to the anti-Thaksin movement. They were convinced that Thaksin brought in corrupt politicians to destroy their moralistic Moral Force Party. Under the leadership of Chamlong, Santi-Asoke's followers became permanent key participants in providing logistic support for the movement. The leaders of Santi-Asoke termed their mobilization as the action of Dharma Warriors (kongtaptham). Similarly, the majority of Luangta Mahabua disciples were initially sympathetic to Thaksin because he was a key follower of Luangta and provided significant financial support to him. They followed Luangta's teaching that since Thaksin is rich, he will not be corrupt. But when Luangta became later disillusioned with Thaksin, and turned against him to take the side of Sondhi as one of his major disciples, they followed suit. These followers argue that they believe in Luangta's leadership and moral and political judgment. For them, joining the anti-Thaksin movement was also amoral mission to fight against an immoral and corrupt figure (Santi-Asoke's and Luangta Mahabua's followers, Bangkok, April 18, 2013, Udonthani, May 19-20, 2013).

Due to their huge numbers, dedication and militancy, not only did they become one of the biggest groups of participants, but their negotiating power increased in the decisions made by the movement. Quickly, they started taking leadership positions at various levels and successfully pushed conservative issues as the main ideological strategy for the movement. From interviews, the UC were the biggest in terms of number at more than 63 per cent of participants. Not only numbers made the right-wingers powerful; their dedication and militancy also turned them into the backbone of the movement in its battle against its opponents. In interviews, UC informants in every province showed themselves to be the most dedicated supporters of the anti-Thaksin movement compared to the CL and ML. The well-off UC provided financial resources to support the less well-off to be full-time protesters at the sleep-in protest camps in Bangkok and regularly protested on stages in their provinces. 76 per cent of the UC informants were full-time sleep-in protesters (UC informants, interviewed by author, every interviewed province, 2013 and 2015).

Aside from numbers and dedication, the UC were the most militant forces against the counter movement and extremists in promoting conservative ideas and strategies. They developed a strong hatred of Thaksin and the Red Shirts as threats to the nation and monarchy and constituted the militant forces on the front line at each political confrontation against the countermovement. The majority of those working as security guards were militant right-wingers. For example, the UC informants in Udonthani were on the frontline to fight against the Red Shirt masses on several occasions. At the same time, they were one of the most militant groups confronting the police in Bangkok during the rally led by the Preserve Siam (Pitak Siam) group, a gathering of ultra-royalists. In terms of political opinion, many informants had violent political attitudes. They argue that only Thaksin's death would end the current political conflict (UC militant informants, interviewed by author, Bangkok, March 27 and April 18 and 25, 2013, Udonthani, May 19-21, 2013, Khonkaen, January 23, 2015,Nakhonratchasima, February 7-8, 2015).

Organizing an unorganised and apolitical middle class

Another strategy which turned the earlier diverse anti-Thaksin movement into a more conservative direction was mobilizing an earlier unorganized and apolitical middle class through a conservative ideological infrastructure. Before joining the anti-Thaksin movement, majority of the middle class or at least 63out of 100 informants had not been interested in politics, had first-hand political experience, or belonged to any political association. They perceived politics and electoral politics in general as distant from their lives, dirty, full of corruption and undynamic. Many educated middle-class members were proud to say that they were clean because they did not read newspapers, watch political news or affiliate with any political party or group. In organizing the anti-Thaksin movement, the leaders empowered and brought them into a new political structure and affiliation. Furthermore the new forms of media, including cable TV and social media, as well as the loose movement structure, particularly under the PDRC, allowed the middle class, who perceived themselves independent from political authority and domination by any particular political party or leadership, to feel comfortable participating in the movement (middle class informants, interviewed by author, every interviewed province, 2013 and 2015).

At the beginning, without previous political experience or skills, these middle class members were merely rank-and-file newcomers. They quickly became one of the major grassroots support groups as well as the main resource mobilizers of the movement. The majority of this group came from an upper middle-class background. Thus, they not only became major financial and technical sponsors in support of the movement, but their pre-existing middle-class careers, life-style and networks also offered the movement extensive access to new sources of alliances and support. Thereafter, the leaders of the movement paid attention to these middle class groups and offered them political space. Many of them were invited into the inner circle of the leadership. They gradually became powerful and took over the leadership at various levels, especially at the local level. For instance, two informants who had earlier been apolitical were appointed provincial and district leaders at different peak periods of mobilization and representatives of the New Politics Party (supporters of the New Politics Party,

interviewed by author, Udonthani, May 18-19, 2013, Phetchaburi, May 26, 2013, Khonkaen, January 24, 2015).

Conservative ideas were the dominant ideological infrastructure in bringing the middle class into the movement. Many of these apolitical and unorganised middle-class people had not been conservative from the beginning. They were living in a changing world. They thus held various liberal views on social and economic issues, such as homosexuality, sex before marriage, foreign migration, multiculturalism, welfare, equality, political decentralization, disagreement over military coups d'état, anti-bureaucratic polity and anti-authoritarianism. Nevertheless, instead of choosing a liberal and progressive ideological agenda, they affiliated themselves with conservative ideas and forces within the anti-Thaksin movement. Gradually, they joined hands with conservatives to advocate nationalist, royalist and morally motivated anti-corruption views in the movement at both the local and grassroot levels (all informants, interviewed by author, all interviewed location, 2013 and 2015). The chapter explains this phenomenon through two reasons. Firstly, conservatism is a handy legitimate ideological identity in conservative Thai society. Even though they supported several liberal ideas, they had grown up in conservative Thai society. For them, conservative ideas are easier to understand and to use in legitimizing their roles in a conservative ambience than liberal ones. Secondly, these conservative political identities helped to differentiate them from others, particularly Thaksin supporters. Meanwhile, Thaksin and the Red Shirts identified themselves as for democracy and a market economy, and against conservative political institutions, etc. The royalism, nationalism and opposition to corrupt elected politicians offered them a legitimate role to oppose Thaksin and their Red Shirt movement.

In conclusion, in advocating right-wing ideologies, the movement leaders successfully recruited right-wing individuals and groups to the movement. At the same time, the middle class compromised and collaborated with the right-wingers rather than liberals in order to survive in conservative Thai society and to legitimize their political roles in the anti-Thaksin movement. Owing to their large numbers, dedication and militancy, they gradually became a powerful force, dominating the movement.

Why did Liberal and Progressive Elements Compromise with the Conservative Forces and Ideological Directions?

In responding to this question, this paper argues that the power of the framing process and master frame[10] of 'Threat-Mega Crisis-Action Now' convinced liberals to go along with conservative forces to identify Thaksin as their common threat rather than the old elite, in the belief that Thaksin's policies and actions had pushed the country into a deep crisis, and it was necessary to join the movement as the only way to end the crisis, even though they disagreed with the majority conservative forces and their ideological direction.

The movement leaders successfully framed Thaksin as a threat to cross-class groups ranging from the conservative elites and the masses, and the apolitical and progressive to liberal activists. While Thaksin was constructed as a threat to conservative institutions and values like the status quo of the network monarchy, the national interest, etc., all liberals in the movement were convinced by the constructed picture of Thaksin over his authoritative administrative style, abuse of power, neo-liberalist economic policies, structural corruption, etc. (CL informants, interviewed by author, all interviewed locations, 2013 and 2015).

Apart from framing Thaksin as a common threat, the movement leaders framed or reinterpreted problems and negative consequences of his policies, actions and use of power as a national mega crisis which has never happened in Thailand before. Although it is debatable whether several problems were caused by the Thaksin government or were continuations of problems before him, or whether the impacts and violence of his political actions were greater than those of earlier governments, the leadership successfully constructed new narratives turning these problems into a mega crisis. In doing so, conservative elements were bridged to

[10] A 'frame' is any set of ideas, beliefs, problem issues, and movement symbols which were raised in the movement (Zald 1996, 261–262). Frames are the specific metaphors, symbolic representations, and cognitive cues used to render or cast behaviour and events in an evaluative mode and to suggest alternative modes of action (Zald 1996, 261 –62). A framing process is a process in which frames are constructed in response to the particular purposes and goals of the movement (Tarrow 1994, 123). 'Master frames' link the actions of disparate groups to one another, and intensify interaction between challengers and the state, lending to particular state responses a key pivoting role in determining which direction the cycle will take (Tarrow 1998, 144-50).

liberal concerns. For instance, the royalist campaign claiming that Thaksin was trying to overthrow the constitutional monarchy and establish a republic was framed as liberal concern over the balance of political power. The frame portrayed the royal institution as the only and last source of power to counter the excessive power of the Thaksin regime. The ultra-nationalist campaign against Thaksin on his decision to sell his shares in Shin Corporation to Temasek, a Singaporean company, and avoiding tax, was framed as a crisis of accountability among political leaders in the eyes of liberals (Sutthipong 2012). The political suppression and violent policies to deal with the situation in southern Thailand and the Assembly of the Poor, the anti-drug policy, etc., were denounced and resonated as a crisis of political violence with the harshest violations of human rights in Thai political history. The economic policies of the governments of Thaksin and his later nominees, which in reality were a mixture of different types of policies including Keynesian (policies to support the disadvantaged, industrial and agricultural subsidies, government investment in large-scale infrastructure, etc.) and neo-liberal (privatization, free trade agreements, etc.), were hyperbolized and explained as a crisis of neo-liberalism. His governments were labeled neo-liberal and his economic policies depicted as the most aggressive in destroying local Thai livelihoods and national resources (Sutthipong 2012). A series of populist or infrastructure policies including the universal healthcare scheme, the village funds, the rice pledging scheme, the 350 billion baht water management project, the 2 trillion baht high speed rail project, etc., were explained as the cause of a debt crisis and misuse of the public budget. Expenditure on these policies and projects were depicted as the exploitation of middle-class tax payers and highest debt burden in Thai political history. Aggressive efforts to push an amnesty bill were characterized as a crisis in the rule of law as Thaksin and his nominee government attempted to break the whole system.

In addition to the identification of threats and crises, the master frame also included the idea of ‘Action Now’. While the crisis created by Thaksin was portrayed as a mega-crisis, to deal with the crisis, everyone needed to take action by immediately joining the anti-Thaksin movement. Otherwise the whole nation would collapse. In each round of mobilization, this frame would be applied to mobilize the masses to support the movement. Each round of mobilization, starting from the initial peak during the PAD to the more recent success of the

PDRC, the leaders explained the mass mobilization as a war to end the mega-crisis created by Thaksin. They argued that in order to win the war, all needed to take immediate action to support and participate in the protests as a part of the 'People's Army' (Matichon 2013). At their pinnacles, the PAD and the PDRC both encouraged the idea of 'Action Now' among participants by emphasizing each of their political campaigns as 'the Last War against Thaksin'. The 'Last War' campaign of the PAD starting from May 2008 successfully mobilized mass protests to occupy Government House, the international airports, etc. In the same vein, between 2014 and 2015, the PDRC leaders called for the 'Last Round' or 'Last War' of protest against Thaksin and his cronies more than 10 times, calling for 1 million participants at the Victory Monument on 24th November 2014, support from government officials on 26th November 2014, mass protests to 'Shut Down' Bangkok' on 13th January 2015, etc. (Prachatai 2014).

Against this backdrop, many liberal and politically active people who had been skeptical of the conservative ideas and militant strategy of the movement would return and compromise with the movement when the leaders promoted the 'Threat-Mega Crisis-Action Now' frame. Many informants stopped supporting and participating in the anti-Thaksin movement after it adopted strategies that were too ultra-royalist, ultra-nationalist, confrontational and extremely anti-democratic, particularly after the leadership indirectly supported and was sympathetic to the 2006 and 2014 military coups. Many liberal rank-and-file informants had disagreed with military coups d'état to solve the corruption problem since 1991, and were skeptical about the bureaucratic polity and pro-democratic before joining the anti-Thaksin movement. Nonetheless, they returned to the movement again during the second round of the last war against Thaksin under the guidance of the PAD leaders in 2008 along the line with the 'Threat-Mega Crisis-Action Now' frame identified and amplified by the leadership. They were convinced that Thaksin had become a threat to all parties in society and had created a mega-crisis, and above all they needed to do something in order to stop these crises. But after the militant strategies of seizing Government House and the international airports, they distanced themselves from the movement again. They rejoined the movement after the campaigns against populist policies and the amnesty bill of the Yingluck government. But when the anti-Thaksin movement under the PDRC shifted in a more royalist and anti-democratic direction, boycotting the February2014

general election in spite of the resignation of the Yingluck government and calling for extra-constitutional power to promote political reform to eliminate corruption before elections, these liberal forces again distanced themselves from the movement (CL informants, interviewed by author, all interviewed location, 2013 and 2015).

Why were Liberals who Disagreed with the Conservative direction Alienated from the Movement?

Many liberals with extensive political experience and skills participated in the anti-Thaksin movement as main coordinating staff, mobilizers, local leaders or active rank-and-file participants from the beginning. When the movement started to be dominated by and took a more conservative ideological direction, many questioned this and expressed their disagreements publicly as well as in the inner decision-making circles. Nevertheless, their voices were subdued. Many were alienated from the movement and their roles were reduced. Some decided to abandon the movement and either kept a low profile or moved to counter the anti-Thaksin movement. In explaining this phenomenon, this paper argues that these liberals lost in every round of their battle against conservative forces within the movement. Owing to their earlier dominant political skills, roles and networks, they overestimated their political negotiating power and underestimated the power of the conservative forces they organized to support the movement. They had either perceived themselves as key movement leaders or main participants with high negotiating power and the ability to control the conservative rank-and-file and local leaders in political mobilization and decision making. However, in reality, the conservatives, revitalized by the anti-Thaksin movement, became unified, well organized, and great in terms of numbers, resources and alliance networks. Their negotiating power was intensified, while the former liberals were small in number as well as poor in real power and resources. From the 100 informants, there were only 13 who expressed discontent with the conservative elements in the movement (all ML informant, interviewed by author, all interviewed locations, 2013 and 2015). At the same time, their liberal ideologies had less space and power to mobilize mass in conservative Thai society.

A very early conflict started when the movement chose a royalist ideological strategy, particularly calling for royal political intervention. Many liberals started to condemn this strategy. However, they were delegitimized and alienated from the movement by the conservative wings (Isranews Agency 2014). Several were disappointed with the movement and opted for a more radical direction, particularly those in the radical wing in the Red Shirt movement, to promote a more liberal campaign (author interviews with all ML in seven provinces studied in 2013 and 2015). The clash between the liberal and the militant groups took place from time to time particularly when the movement leaders led, allowed or encouraged the movement to move toward confrontation and the use of violence to pressure the government. The seizure of Government House, the international airports, streets, and other official premises under the leadership of small militant groups and individuals was challenged by several supporters. Many liberal leaders battled with militant leaders over these decisions. Nonetheless, they were gradually delegitimized and their political space was reduced. The contest over democracy was another turning point that pushed liberals out of the movement. While conservative forces within the anti-Thaksin movement campaigned for military intervention in parliamentary politics which led to the military coups d'état in 2006 and 2014, and called for the suspension of electoral politics until corrupt politicians were eliminated from Thai society, the liberal minority disagreed with these moves. Leaders attempted to push the movement into electoral democracy through the New Politics Party, but were gradually subdued by the 'Vote No' campaign. Later this group split from the PAD and was disempowered (author interviews with ML informants in 2013 and 2015). Under the new leadership of the PDRC, several liberal groups and individuals returned to join the anti-Thaksin movement due to the amnesty bill and the more inclusive movement structure. Many of them were frustrated with the violation of the rule of law in the effort to pass the amnesty bill in the parliament. At the same time, the new movement structure allowed space for them to act independently from other ultra-right-wing groups. Nevertheless, because of the decentralized structure of the movement and domination of conservative ideas and forces over the inner circle of the PDRC structure, they no longer had negotiating power to mainstream their liberal agenda in the movement. These liberal elements could only act as marginal small groups within the movement (author interviews with all ML in Bangkok, February

14 and 16 and March 17 2015). In battle after battle between the liberal and conservative forces within the anti-Thaksin movement, the liberals were gradually delegitimized and alienated from the movement one by one, while the conservatives bit by bit dominated and took control over the movement at many levels. The conservative ideas and militant strategy were mainstreamed into the movement.

Chapter 5

Toward the Anti-Democracy: Political Opportunity Structure

From the democratic transition in the early 1970s until the democratic reform of the late 1990s, the Thai middle class was recognized as a 'progressive' force that pushed Thailand in liberal and democratic directions (Anderson 1977; Anek 1993; Anek 1997; Englehart 2003, 261; Funatsu and Kagoya 2003, 246; Girling 1996; Morell and Chai-anan 1981; Ockey 1999; Yoshifumi 2004, 32-33). Nevertheless, from the mid-2000s onward, the middle class shifted to support right-wing and anti-democratic campaigns against the powerful elected governments of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and his later successors including Samak Sundaravej, Somchai Wongsawat and Yingluck Shinawatra. In fighting against Thaksin and his cronies, they supported a movement which opposed electoral democracy and legitimized the coups toppling the Thaksin government and its successor in 2006 and 2014 (Englehart 2003; Sinpeng and Arugay 2015, 109).

In explaining why the former agents of democracy turned into campaigners for anti-democratic ideas and allies of conservatives, this chapter takes into account the consequences of democratic institution-building during the post-regime change of Democratic Transition (DT) and the efforts to promote Democratic Consolidation (DC). Democratization does not end with the overthrow of a non-democratic regime, subsequent elections and the establishment of democratic government. Further long processes and complicated consequences are waiting ahead. The Thai middle class who had played an active role in ending authoritarian power, held wishful thoughts about the post-regime transition. However, the results of the process did not come out as they had expected. This chapter assesses the outcomes of their efforts to establish themselves in different democratic institutions, as well as their performance in handling the consequences. It evaluates their endeavours to access political power and process in the legislature, the executive, political parties, local/regional government, and structured interest groups.

This chapter argues two causal effects including the failures of the middle class in democratic institutions as well as the missing prerequisite of democracy. Firstly, the about-turn of the middle class was shaped by assessing its losses after democratic institutions were established. The results of the political liberalization of the 1990s and free elections opened political opportunities for the 'uneducated mass' of the lower middle class and rural poor, and for elected politicians. Under the strong and powerful elected governments led by Thaksin, electoral democracy was no longer a useful political tool for them. The second causal effect is the missing prerequisite of democracy among the Thai middle class and the Thai society. The lack of profound understanding about the rules of 'majoritarian supremacy' and 'two-turnover elections', pushed the frustrated middle class to disagree with democracy after losing in different stages of democratic competition. In illustrating these arguments, this chapter portrays the about-turn of the Thai middle class in the anti-Thaksin movement and earlier arguments to explain this and offers an alternative explanation why the middle class which had earlier supported democratic transition, turned against democracy.

The Middle Class and the Consequences of Democratization

In proposing an alternative explanation of the paradoxical relationship between the middle class in the anti-Thaksin movement and democracy, this work looks at changes in political structure and their consequences. It is particularly interested in how political institutions and structures after the democratic transition have affected the middle class and their political stand on democracy by using the case of the Thai middle class. The question is what conditions made the middle class change their political stand on democracy. In responding to this question, this work considers the consequences of institutional changes, as well as, other conditions particularly the available prerequisites of democracy among the middle class.

In terms of the effects of institutional and structural change, this work particularly focuses on the consequences of democratic institution building for the middle class. The period of this study is the overlapping period between the post-regime change of Democratic Transition (DT) and the preparation process of Democratic Consolidation (DC), i.e. the period

after the transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic regime, including: formal legal changes to limit the arbitrary use of power; constitutional and legal changes to eliminate the non-accountable power of veto-groups; constitution drafting and ratification to guarantee equal civil and political rights and freedoms to all citizens; regular free and fair elections; and, above all, acceptance of the results of elections (Schneider and Schmitter 2004, 66). These are part of the process of promoting democratic institutions and trust in democracy during DC. Accomplishing DC means that all citizens, whether elites, politicians or masses, agree with the unequivocal and consistent commitment to democracy (Diamond 1994, 15; Haynes 2000, 132; Linz and Stepan 1996; Schedler 1997; Schedler 2001; Schneider and Schmitter 2004, 68). In this process, institutionalizing democracy, avoiding democratic breakdown, avoiding democratic erosion, completing democracy, and deepening democracy are essential (Schedler 1997). This work tries to answer the question of how the unpredictable results of the democratic institutional building during DT and DC affected the political stand of the middle class. This work follows what Gill (2008) suggests as a means for the middle class to participate in democratic politics including the legislature/executive, political parties, local government, and interest groups (Gill 2008).

In addition to the structural change, the missing prerequisites of democracy among the middle class are taken into account. In the case of the Thai middle class, this work purpose two crucial consequences of DC including the rules of ‘two-turnover elections’ and ‘majoritarian supremacy.’ Huntington (1991) and many other observers suggest the two-turnover test as a prerequisite for democracy, particularly in the aspect of free and competitive elections. Huntington writes that a democracy becomes consolidated ‘if the party or group that takes power in the initial election at the time of transition loses a subsequent election and turns over power to those election winners, and if those election winners then peacefully turn over power to the winners of a later election’ (Huntington 1991, 267). In short, those who win in the democratic transition generally win only the first round of subsequent elections. The next round they normally lose (Haynes 2000).

At the same time, ‘majoritarian supremacy’ is one of the crucial elements of democracy. ‘Majoritarian Democracy’ is the conventional form of democracy in many countries. It is based

on the idea that the elected leadership is responsible to the electorate and the will of the majority, while the views and values of the opposition minority need to be respected. Nevertheless, there have been long debates over how to protect democracy from the 'tyranny of democracy' (Arter 2006). Different perceptions toward 'majoritarianism' bring about different tracks in tackling the problem and its consequences. Understanding the danger of both tyrannies of the majority and oligarchy, various societies like Switzerland, Germany, Denmark and Belgium, have tried to promote 'consensus democracy'. They have attempted to develop an inclusive decision-making structure which involves as broad a range of opinions as possible, as opposed to systems where minority opinions can potentially be ignored by vote-winning majorities (Arter 2006). Other countries with sceptical views of and wary of the majority, like America, opted for 'Republican democracy'. They moulded a constitution system with protections for minorities and of individual rights (Falk 2014). In contrast, various forms of authoritarian democracy, like fascism and Stalinism, reject majoritarian democracy. They value dynamic organized minorities rather than disorganized majorities (Arblaster 1994). Different ideological foundations for 'majoritarianism' of each society would lead to different reactions toward the form and development of democracy after a period of institutionalizing democracy.

The Consequences of Democratization on the Thai Middle Class in the anti-Thaksin movement

This work found the loss of middle-class influence in democratic political institutions and the missing prerequisites of democracy. These pushed the middle class from being fighters for democracy to anti-democratic supporters. After promoting democracy, they failed to establish themselves in new democratic mechanisms, including political parties, the legislature/executive, local government, and interest groups. Also, the middle class did not commit sufficiently to democratic ideas, especially an understanding of 'majoritarian supremacy' and 'two-turnover elections'.

The loss of the middle class in democratic institutions

By the mid-1990s, the newly emerging middle class during the 1970s moved up the social ladder to become the established middle class, either in terms of social, political or economic status. In this promising environment, many of them promoted participatory democracy and campaigned for political reform to prevent the return of authoritarian government and for institutionalizing democratic mechanisms. In 1994, the upper middle class groups successfully put pressure on the Chuan Leekpai government (September 1992 – July 1995) to establish the Democratic Development Committee (khanakamakan phathana prachathipatai) and one of the most deliberative constitution drafting processes in Thai political history. The 1997 Constitution was the first to be drafted by a popularly-elected Constitutional Drafting Assembly (sapha rang rathathamanun) with a nation-wide process of public consultations. In the reform process, they tried to deal with the problems of money politics in the electoral system, the lack of ideological political parties and policy platforms, and the instability of coalition governments by institutionalizing political parties, increasing executive power and decentralization (McVey 2000; Nakharin 1991).

After a decade of political reform to consolidate democracy, the Thai upper middle class failed to establish themselves and promote their interests in the new democratic mechanisms whether through promoting their own political parties, securing legislative and executive power, establishing power in decentralized local government or enhancing the power of check-and-balance mechanisms.

Firstly, the upper middle-class political parties failed in electoral competitions. Throughout the 1990s, they relied on the Democrat and Moral Force (Palang Dharma) parties. These parties had moralistic and upper middle-class reputations with highly educated 'good men', who were polite, non-corrupt, religious, honest, dedicated, etc (Askew 2006; McCargo 1997). The constituencies of these parties were confined to the urban middle class and the South. They barely reached rural areas and other regions like the North or the North East, where the majority of the Thai population resides. In the 1997 constitution, there were several measures to foster more promising alternative parties and to solve the earlier unstable coalition government system. In institutionalizing political parties as more policy- and member-based

parties and eliminating small- and medium-sized parties to create a more stable government with a two-party system, all parties were obliged to have branches in all regions with a certain number of members in each branch, a party list system, etc. In addition, there were efforts to change from multi-party coalitions to a two-party system. This was designed to reduce the power of corrupt politicians elected from rural constituencies, and to increase the power of upper middle-class parties like the Democrats.

The result did not turn out as the upper middle class had imagined. Nearly all small- and medium-sized parties were destroyed and a two-party system was established. Thaksin took over the Moral Force party and established a new policy-based party, the Thai Rak Thai (TRT). This new party was not a pro-middle-class party. Although at the beginning, it presented itself as an all-class party with middle-class support, gradually, the party learned that their victory came from the mass of lower middle-class and rural voters. The TRT party later secured majority support through pro-poor policies which threatened the legitimacy and power of the minority urban middle class in the political process (Connors 2008b; Kanokrat 2016, Chapter 7; Kasian 2006). The upper middle class was disappointed that the TRT did not represent their interests as they had dreamed. At the same time, the Democrat party, with a limited constituency, was hardly able to compete with the powerful TRT.

Secondly, the upper middle class failed to secure power both in the legislative and executive branches. Throughout the 1990s, the Thai political system had been characterized by strong legislatures and weak executives (Connors 2009; Hicken 2001). Electoral features like the ‘multiple-member constituency’ encouraged the growth of small- and medium-sized parties. The legal possibility for MPs to switch parties gave individual MPs and small- and medium-sized parties high negotiating power over governments. Therefore, the 1997 constitution boosted the power of the executive branch and made parliament much more subordinate to the executive. No-confidence debates became more difficult with the requirement of two-fifths of the lower house to demand a no-confidence vote on the Prime Minister and twenty percent for other ministers (Pasuk and Baker 2004, 94-95). The constitution was also designed to make the position of political cliques and small parties virtually untenable with political power concentrated among a limited number of larger parties. For example, the election law required

MPs to register for parties at least 90 days before an election and constrained party swapping during the term of a government. This made most MPs vulnerable to conflict with party leaders. Otherwise, they could be frozen out of an election. Only those parties securing more than five percent of the popular vote were entitled to party-list seats.

As expected, the outcome of the 1997 reforms was strong government and the disappearance of small parties. However, the party controlling the executive branch was the TRT, representing largely the lower middle class with a rural background. The urban middle class, which had earlier played a crucial role in removing unsatisfactory governments in 1973 and 1992, found that it was nearly impossible to compete with the strong TRT government (Askew 2010b; Kanokrat 2016, Chapter 7; Pasuk and Baker 2008). Thaksin used executive power to support pro-poor policies in the interests of his allies, and denounced the unelected check-and-balance system of the new constitution (Jäger 2012; 1143). This made the established middle class lose hope in electoral democracy.

Thirdly, decentralization and the rise of local government since 1997 benefited the rural population more than the urban middle class. In order to solve the earlier problem of the excessive power of the bureaucracy in rural development, the 1997 constitution put utmost effort into promoting decentralization of political and financial power to rural areas and local government. It initiated a new form of local elections with legislative and administration functions at the village and sub-district levels to replace bureaucrats sent from the Ministry of Interior. Also, these bodies were given power to collect certain taxes and administer their own budgets. But the urban middle class benefited very little compared to those in rural areas, while the rural population, who had previously been abandoned by the central government, enjoyed new sources of development and political participation. Urban populations had long profited from trickle-down development policies with a propensity to spend development budgets on urban areas and the “middle class,” as the major beneficiary of the fruits of urban-centred development (Funatsu and Kagoya 2003, 249-250). The urban middle class had imagined that decentralization and local government would help them to take the administration of local communities away from the central government, instead it became a mechanism for lower middle and rural classes to extract resources from the central government.

Lastly, both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary non-elected check-and-balance mechanisms promoted by the upper middle class failed to check the strong governments of Thaksin. The Thai urban middle class had long experience in developing their role and political activities in extra-parliamentary politics. Under both authoritarian regimes and elected governments during the 1970-90s, their political participation had focused mainly on street politics through protests, petitions, symbolic actions, etc., in putting pressure on either authoritarian or elected governments. Newspapers and the electronic media have long been used to perform a watchdog role. They successfully countered power through mass movements, the media and interest/professional groups. Mass mobilizations were used during the successful 1973 and 1992 middle-class movements. Social media and professional groups were keys to pressuring the coalition governments during the 1990s (Suchit 1997, 164-165).

Under the 1997 reforms, the new non-elected independent bodies and elected senate were expected to help the established middle class as a check-and-balance mechanism against elected government. However, under the strong governments of Thaksin, both extra-parliamentary and new independent bodies were hardly able to challenge the power and legitimacy of the elected government. Thaksin suppressed the earlier strong social movements supported by the middle class. Civil society organizations and NGOs suffered from stronger laws and violent measures by the government in controlling and delegitimizing demonstrations (Pasuk and Baker 2004,148). The government dissolved the protest efforts of the Assembly of the Poor (Kanokrat 2016, Chapter 7). While the upper middle class had hoped the independent bodies and participatory politics like social movements would function to counter a powerful elected government, Thaksin denounced and intervened against independent bodies like the Constitutional Court (Klein 2003). Furthermore, Thaksin started to claim absolutist power through majoritarian legitimacy against the political expression of the minority middle class. He restricted freedom of the press through intimidation and by building up his own media empires and suppressed media (Jäger 2012, 1143).

The missing prerequisite of democracy among the Thai middle class

The shift of the middle class from democracy toward anti-democratic movements was not merely a result of their failure to access state power and the public policy process during the effort to consolidate democracy. This failure in the democratic competition was further driven by the insufficient prerequisite of democracy among the Thai middle class.

The long success of hyper-royalism conservative hegemonic projects, particularly during the 1970s onward, greatly influenced Thai society, including the newly emerging middle class (Thongchai 2016). Although they played crucial role during the 1970s and the 1990s DTs, the focus was merely on regime change, political freedom and elections. The democratic elements in their campaigns were very limited and largely hybrid with and influenced by the conservative ideas of either nationalism or royalism (Kanokrat 2016, chapter 2). Even during the 1990s DC, royal liberalism was a dominant element in political reform and democratic institution building (Connors 2007; 2008a; 2009).

Against this backdrop, most of the politically active upper middle class had a limited ideological commitment to and understanding about the post-transition institutions, procedures and consequences (Quigley 1996), particularly, the rules of 'two-turnover elections' and 'majoritarian supremacy'. With little understanding about democratic institution-building and its consequences, the Thai middle class had faulty expectations about their roles and influence over political processes in the post-transition period. Defeat in the second round of elections for key democratic fighters was common. The Thai middle class found that they were rather influential during the early stages of political liberalization, particularly during the coalition politics of the 1990s. The middle-class political parties, particularly the Democrat and the Moral Force parties, won several elections at different levels. The Democrat party, under the Chuan Leekpai premiership, won elections and formed the government twice, in 1992-1995 and 1997-2001. The Moral Force Party leader Chamlong Srimuang was successfully elected to the Bangkok governorship in 1985 on an anti-corruption platform inspired by Buddhist principles. The upper middle class was not prepared to accept that after this initial stage, they may not be the core group to rule forever. In later rounds after the new electoral rules of democratic reform of the 1997 constitution, they lost.

Aside from the rule of the 'two-turnover elections', the Thai upper middle class had little understanding about 'majoritarian supremacy'. During the fight against authoritarian regimes, both during the 1970s and 1990s, they were sympathetic to the mass of rural and urban lower classes as major strategic allies. Nevertheless, the disparities and different interests of the upper middle class and lower classes soon emerged. Urban middle-class interests in public policy were in conflict with those of rural farmers. Throughout the 1990s, the upper middle class had been the major beneficiary of the fruits of urban-centred development. They did not support the idea of allocating budgets to the rural areas, seeing it as an obstacle to industrialization (Funatsu and Kagoya 2003, 248-249).

As democracy began to take root, the minority middle class started to feel threatened by the 'majoritarianism' of the rural lower class. The royal liberalism element is shaped by fear of a 'tyranny of the majority' widely advocated among the middle class in promoting political reform and 1997 constitutional drafting (Connors 2007). Electoral competition and the redistributive policies of elected governments provided power to the rural poor and newly emerging lower middle class who were now the majority of the population in Thailand. DC turned the upper middle class into a minority vulnerable to electoral democracy. After many election defeats and no sign of future victory, their voice seemed to be permanently subject to the supremacy of majority lower classes. They subsequently felt that they could hardly accept democratic rule. Furthermore, the democratic state failed to propose redistributive policies that would satisfy the middle class. Prior to the transition, most public policies benefited the elite. Under democracy, redistributive policies were introduced to support the majority lower class. Successful political parties focused their campaigns on the interests of the majority rural constituency rather than the minority urban middle class. The success of the TRT in securing majority support among the poor through pro-poor and pro-lower middle class policies threatened the privilege and power of the minority upper middle class in the political process. They argued that these policies were short-sighted, and delivered only short-term benefits for a wider group of less well-off people without considering national fiscal problems and the greater debt burden for the middle class who pay taxes (Connors 2008b, 483; Kanokrat 2016, Chapter 7; Kasian 2006).

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This work provides an analysis of the dynamics and constraints of liberalism within the conservative movement in Thailand in the last two decades. It analyzes the dynamics and problems of liberals in contemporary politics with the triumph of conservative forces within the anti-Thaksin movement. At the initial stage, the anti-Thaksin movement was a gathering of participants with diverse ideological elements including unswerving conservatives, the compromised liberal and liberal marginalized groups. After competition among these different groups to push forward their values, agenda and ideas, the more conservative group gradually took control over the movement and successfully advocated conservative and militant ideological strategies for the movement. Some of those who had questioned and disagreed with these directions either compromised or were alienated from the movement.

The domination of the conservatives was the result of a strategy to mobilize the previously weak and unmobilized mass of right-wingers and to organise a hitherto unorganized and apolitical middle class by equipping them with conservative ideas. At the beginning, these conservatives were only ordinary rank-and-file members. Gradually, owing to their numbers, dedication and access to resources, the conservative forces became dominant in the movement and took over various leading positions at both the local and national levels. Moreover, they also triumphed in asserting their conservatism as the mainstream ideological strategy of the movement. Those liberals who initially disagreed with these conservative directions eventually compromised with the conservatives in exchange for support being convinced by the master frames of ‘Thaksin-common threat’, and ‘all need to take action now to stop the crisis created by Thaksin’. At the same time, liberals who resisted the conservatives lost against their royalist, conservative, nationalist and militant ideological strategies. As a result, the liberals either kept a low profile or distanced themselves from the movement.

Similar to many other countries, Thailand has a middle class that has faced political dilemmas during different stages of democratization. This work offers an alternative proposal to those earlier by looking at the impacts of democratic transition and consolidation on the middle class. At the same time, it takes the prerequisites of democracy into account in considering the transition of the middle class in democratization. This work finds that the negative consequences of democratic institution-building limited the power of the middle class. During the effort to consolidate democracy, the upper middle class was unable to establish themselves in new democratic institutions, whether political parties, the legislature/executive, local government or interest groups. In a more institutionalized democracy, the mass of lower classes and elected elites claimed their legitimacy through democracy and liberalism and became more powerful. The minority upper middle class felt they were marginalized. They subsequently questioned liberalism and democracy, both in terms of strategy and ideology. On top of that, the frustrated established middle class did not have the necessary prerequisite commitment to democracy in handling the consequences of the establishment of democracy. Without acceptance of the rules of ‘majoritarian supremacy’ and ‘two-turnover elections’, they distrusted the uncertainty of democracy rather than see it as a part of democratization.

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